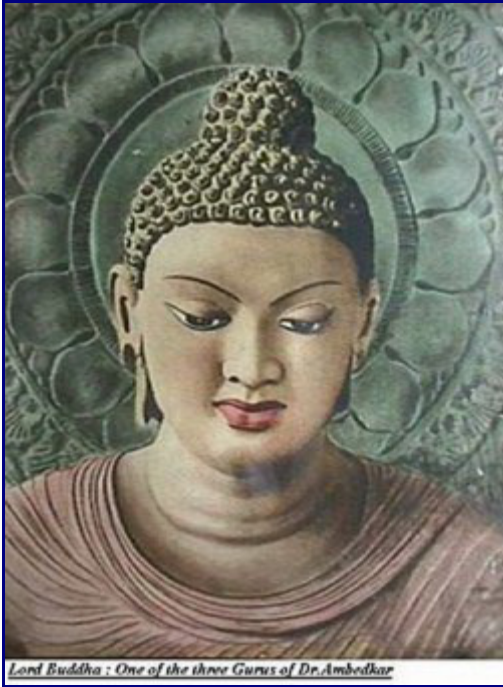


The Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas - Explanation by the Tripitaka Master Hsuan Hua



Lord Buddha : One of the three Gurus of Dr. Ambedkar

The Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas Explanation by the Tripitaka Master Hsuan Hua

INTRODUCTION

Shastra:

The Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas.

Commentary:

The Dharma spoken by the Buddha constitutes the Sutras, the precepts which the Buddha established make up the Vinaya, and the writings of the patriarchs are called the Shastras. Sutras reveal the study of samadhi, Vinaya texts disclose the study of precepts, and Shastras discuss the study of wisdom. You could say this is the first time since the founding of the Buddhist Lecture Hall here in San Francisco that a shastra is being thoroughly explained. Although we have had classes on shastras before, the explanations have been quite simple. This explanation will go into more depth. A lecture series like this is very rare in the West, which is why when people in the West wish to learn to understand shastras, there is almost no opportunity to do so. But if people do not understand the Shastras, they will not be able to cultivate. If they cannot cultivate, they will not become Buddhas. And if they do not become Buddhas, they will revolve forever on the wheel of rebirth, being born then dying, and after dying being reborn. When born, people are completely muddled and do not know what happened; and at the time of death they are just about to understand, but time will not wait for them. They die just as muddled, and much as they would like to understand, there is no more time. The reason they do not understand is that they have not investigated The Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas, and so they are born muddled and die confused over and over again as they turn in the six paths of the revolving wheel. And so now we are lecturing this Shastra.

Someone may ask, "What is The Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas? Not only have I never seen it, I've never even heard of it before."

That is good. You speak very honestly. When you know, you say you know; and, when you do not know, you say you do not. That means you can still be taught. The trouble is that many people tend to say they know something when they do not in fact know it. If one does not know something but says one does in an attempt to fool people, one is actually only fooling oneself. Someone who claims to know what he does not know, and denies knowing what he does know, is the most foolish kind of person. An example would be if you have never heard of The Shastra on the Door to Understanding the Hundred Dharmas, but when someone asks you if you are familiar with it you reply, "Oh, I know that one." Then, when asked what the Shastra discusses you say, "Oh, I've forgotten." That is a clear-cut case of a person saying he knows what he does not in fact know, saying he has mastered what he has not mastered, saying he understands what he does not understand, and claiming to be perfectly clear about what is not at all clear to him. That is the stupidest thing a person can do, and it leads to rebirth as a pig. People who get reborn as pigs were great pretenders in their former lives and acted as though they knew absolutely everything. That is why I feel such pity for pigs when I encounter them. I tell them, "You are lamentable. You just wouldn't listen to instructions in the least. You didn't rely upon the Dharma to cultivate, and so you've fallen into the bodies of pigs."

There are not merely one hundred dharmas; there are 660 dharmas. But there are not merely 660 dharmas; there are actually 84,000 dharmas. The Buddha set forth 84,000 Dharma-doors, and every door is a path to accomplishing Buddhahood. Later on, because living beings' basic natures were too obtuse, 84,000 Dharma-doors became too many. Therefore, Maitreya Bodhisattva very

[compassionately](#) composed the Yogacharyabhumi [Shastra](#) (T. 1579), which consolidated the 84,000 Dharma-doors into 660 [dharma](#)s. But 660 [dharma](#)s were still many, and just to clearly remember their names took several years of [effort](#). Then [Vasubandhu](#), “[Heavenly Relative](#),” [Bodhisattva](#) contemplated and saw that [people](#) in the [future](#) whose natures were suited to the [Great Vehicle](#) would prefer abbreviation. So he selected the one hundred most important leading [dharma](#)s from the Yogacharyabhumi [Shastra](#)’s 660 [dharma](#)s and condensed them into The [Shastra](#) on the Door to [Understanding](#) the Hundred [Dharma](#)s. That way, all [people](#) in the [world](#) with dispositions suited to the [Great Vehicle](#) could easily remember and understand its [dharma](#)s, and no longer have to spend several years just to remember their names. The most obtuse [person](#) could memorize these Dharma-doors in an hour, and the smartest [person](#) could understand all one hundred [dharma](#)s in as little as ten minutes. Would you not call that fast? If you understand these hundred [dharma](#)s, you can use them to enter the door of the [Buddhadharma](#). That is why it is called the “Door to [Understanding](#).”

Before explaining The [Shastra](#) on the Door to [Understanding](#) the Hundred [Dharma](#)s, I would first like to level a [criticism](#). [Note: the year was 1970.] From what I have seen and heard of [people](#) in the [West](#) who explain the [Buddhadharma](#), if you were to ask them what The [Shastra](#) on the Door to [Understanding](#) the Hundred [Dharma](#)s is, what reply would they give? They would not say a [word](#). Now, that would definitely not be as when [Manjushri Bodhisattva](#) asked [Upasaka Vimalakirti](#) what [truth](#) in the primary [sense](#) was, and [Upasaka Vimalakirti](#) did not say anything at all. His not [speaking](#) was in itself [truth](#) in the primary [sense](#). If he had spoken, [truth](#) in the primary [sense](#) would have vanished. So he really did express [truth](#) in the primary [sense](#) by his [silence](#). But the hundred [dharma](#)s are not the same as [truth](#) in the primary [sense](#). They must be spoken. If instead of [speaking](#), a [person](#) closed his [mouth](#), closed his [eyes](#), and put on a big show of studying [truth](#) in the primary [sense](#), that [person](#) would be wrong. That is because the very fact that there are one hundred kinds of [dharma](#)s means they have to be expressed. Without [speaking](#), there is no way to represent those hundred [dharma](#)s.

There are those who profess to be [teachers](#) of [Dharma](#) but who do not really know how to expound upon a single [dharma](#), not to speak of a hundred. Since they cannot explain even one, they have nothing to say. All they can do is go into some kind of tight-lipped, mystic-eyed [trance](#). Wouldn’t you say that was [sad](#)? But although there is not a single [dharma](#) they understand or speak, still they go outside the hundred [dharma](#)s to talk about “[Dharma](#)” left and right, up and down. And [people](#) who do not understand the [Buddhadharma](#) say, “That [person](#) can really speak [Dharma](#).” But as soon as [people](#) who already understand the [Buddhadharma](#) hear him, they say, “What is that nonsense all about? He is just singing a song.”

This is as when a counterfeiter takes his counterfeit [money](#) to the countryside and passes it off to [people](#) who cannot tell it is not real, but later at the mint, the officials can see right away that the hallmarks and serial numbers are completely wrong and that the [money](#) is phony. It is proved false when compared to the true. In the same way, it may be “[Dharma](#)” spoken, but you have to have the Dharma-selecting [eye](#) to tell [Dharma](#) from non-Dharma and to distinguish which are [defiled](#) and which are [pure dharma](#)s, which are [wholesome](#) and which are [unwholesome dharma](#)s, which are deviant and which are proper [dharma](#)s. If you know, then you have the Dharma-selecting [eye](#). It should not be that if someone speaks “[Dharma](#)” in a booming [voice](#), or sings it like a wailing [chant](#), you become so confused you could not [sleep](#) even if you wanted to. Wouldn’t you say that was pathetic?!

EXPLANATION OF THE TITLE

Since I cannot sing, I will talk a bit. The hundred [dharma](#)s are derived like this: one becomes ten, and ten become one hundred. The hundred [dharma](#)s divide into: I. Eleven [Form Dharma](#)s.

II. Eight [Mind Dharma](#)s.

III. Fifty-one [Dharma](#)s Belonging to the [Mind](#).

IV. Twenty-four [Activities Dharma](#)s Not Interactive with the [Mind](#).

V. Six [Unconditioned Dharma](#)s.

Each kind in each of these categories will be explained in the [Shastra](#) proper. They will not be explained in detail now, during the explanation the title. If we explained them thoroughly right now, there would be nothing to discuss when we got to the [Shastra](#). So, now the kinds and numbers of each are mentioned, and if you understand all about them from that, then you do not have to come back to listen further. But if you do not understand what they are all about yet, then you will have to continue to listen more about them.

[People](#) will go home wondering, “What did he mean by eleven kinds of [form dharma](#)s, and eight kinds of [mind dharma](#)s? That [Dharma Master](#) just brought up their names, but he did not tell us anything about them. I really do not want to go back and listen again; but then, there will always remain in my [mind](#) this [matter](#) that I never got clear about. I’m going to have to go listen.”

So now you see why, when introducing the title, we do not go into detail. That is [logical](#) enough, wouldn’t you say?

Someone who lectures on the [Sutras](#) and [Shastras](#) has to have a pattern to his talks. He has to have good timing. Then there will be no way for those seriously [interested](#) in hearing the [Shastra](#) to fail to come and listen. If, of course, the [person](#) has the [attitude](#), “I’m not the least bit [interested](#) in [learning](#) what you mean by a hundred [dharma](#)s, or a thousand [dharma](#)s or a million [dharma](#)s. I don’t even care about a single [dharma](#),” then there is nothing to be said. But if you are someone who would like to understand the [Buddhadharma](#), then you are definitely going to want to come and listen.

“Door to [Understanding](#)” means not being confused, not being muddled, and not being [ignorant](#). It means clarity, clarity about the [path](#) of these hundred Dharma-doors, which enable one to cultivate.

“[Shastra](#)” is a [Sanskrit word](#) that means [discussion](#), [discourse](#). We can use that interpretation here and say that this explanation of the [Shastra](#) is also a [discussion](#), and that anyone who does not agree with the way I explain it can bring up his or her own theories, and we will discuss them. That means, if you have questions, I can answer you. A [discourse](#) refers to an expression of one’s [principles](#). You say what yours are, and I say what mine are, and then we can discuss them and investigate the [Dharma](#). However, the [Dharma](#) I speak is not my [Dharma](#). What I express is the [Buddhadharma](#). If anyone [thinks](#) that I am [speaking](#) incorrectly, all you have to do is bring up your [reasons](#), and we will investigate them. I can meet any of your objections. You can come at me with objections, and I can answer them all. That includes all the [people](#) in the entire [world](#), no [matter](#) what their nationality. Anyone at all can bring up his or her [principles](#), and we will hold a huge symposium. I can answer any question put by any [person](#) throughout the [ten directions](#).

“Aha!” you wonder. “How can [people](#) come from the [ten directions](#)? I can see them coming from four [directions](#) or eight [directions](#), but from ten?” Well, now we have airplanes, so suppose someone lands right here in a helicopter, he has come from the upper [direction](#), right? And someone out of a submarine from the sea is [equivalent](#) to coming out of the [earth](#), right? So I say again, anyone throughout the [ten directions](#) can ask any question they want and we will hold a large symposium to discuss the [Buddhadharma](#). It makes no difference what [religion](#) they subscribe to—Buddhism or

any other. If they have a question, they can come and ask it. If they have some difficulty, I will use my sword of [wisdom](#) to slice right through it for them. I will slice out their tongues, if need be. Then they will not be able to say anything more. You should be clear about this, however. I will slice out their tongues of [foolishness](#), leaving their tongues of [wisdom](#). I will remove their tongues of [foolishness](#) and replace them with tongues of [wisdom](#). I am capable of making [tongue](#) transplants, as well as [brain](#) transplants. If their [brains](#) are unclear, I can give them a new set.

Now we will discuss the [word](#) “[shastra](#).” You will remember I said before that the hundred [dharmas](#) must be expressed. Why is that? If they were not expressed, there would be no [shastras](#). [Shastras](#) are discussions of which there are five types.

Five Kinds of Discussions in [Shastras](#)

1. Right and wrong.
2. Deviant and proper.
3. [Good and evil](#).
4. [Cause and effect](#).
5. [Defilement](#) and [purity](#).

First of all, they distinguish what is right and what is wrong. Right is right, and wrong is definitely wrong. One must not take what is right as wrong, nor should one take what is wrong as right. So we discuss things, and in this way come to understand them clearly. For [people](#) who enter [monastic life](#), cultivation is right, and failing to cultivate is wrong.

The second thing that [shastras](#) discuss is what is deviant and what is proper. What is deviant is definitely deviant, and what is proper is decidedly proper. You must not take what is deviant and consider it to be proper, nor take what is proper and consider it to be deviant. That is another [reason](#) why there must be discussions. The third [reason](#) for discussions is to distinguish good from [evil](#). Good is good, and [evil](#) is [evil](#). You cannot regard what is good as being [evil](#), nor regard what is [evil](#) as being good.

The fourth [function](#) of [shastras](#) is to discuss [cause and effect](#). A [cause](#) is decidedly a [cause](#), and an effect is definitely an effect. You cannot call a [cause](#) an effect, nor an effect a [cause](#). You must make your discriminations clearly.

The fifth aspect of [shastras](#) is to clarify [defilement](#) and [purity](#). [Defilement](#) is [defilement](#), and [purity](#) is [purity](#). You must not take [defilement](#) to be [purity](#) nor take [purity](#) to be [defilement](#). You must not be upside down. And so the [function](#) of [shastras](#) is to discriminate these clearly.

However, it is true that right can turn into wrong, and wrong can become right. If you get rid of what is wrong, then you are right. If you dispense with what is right, you are wrong. The other four meanings also contain this qualification.

[Shastras](#) have the above five functions and are thus able to delineate [dharmas](#)

quite precisely. We can also say, however, that the right is not apart from the wrong and vice-versa. What is right is wrong; what is wrong is right. What is good is just [evil](#), and what is [evil](#) is just good. What is deviant is itself proper; what is proper is itself deviant. What is [cause](#) is just effect; what is effect is just [cause](#). What is [defilement](#) is just [purity](#); what is [purity](#) is just [defilement](#). So now you see that when it comes to [discussion](#), you can discuss things any way you want. It is just to be feared you do not have anything to discuss. You say right is wrong and wrong is right? Well, let us see how you explain that. That is the way questions are investigated. “How is it done?” you ask. If you do not know, then you have to study. After you study you will know it yourself. That is the wonder of it. If you only know a little [Buddhadharma](#), you cannot [recognize](#) that there is a lot of it. But if you know a lot of it, you cannot say there is only a little. This has been a general explanation of the title: The [Shastra](#) on the Door to [Understanding](#) the Hundred [Dharmas](#). [Discussion](#) finished!

THE AUTHOR

Shastra:

Composed by [Vasubandhu Bodhisattva](#).

Commentary:

This [Shastra](#) was composed by [Vasubandhu Bodhisattva](#), whose given [name](#) translates as “[Heavenly Relative](#)” and also as “The Lord’s [Relative](#)”. Some say that he was the younger brother of [Lord God](#). There is really no need to try and research this; [people](#) just take it on [faith](#). [Vasubandhu Bodhisattva](#) had two brothers. [Vasubandhu](#) was their family [name](#). His elder brother’s [name](#) was [Asanga](#), which means “Unattached.” “[Heavenly Relative](#)” was the second-born, and the youngest of the three was named Virinchivatsa. “Virinchi” was their mother’s [name](#), and [vatsa](#) is the [Sanskrit word](#) which means “son of,” and so he was known as “the son of Virinchi”. But this brother is too young to come into our [present discussion](#), other than to be introduced to you. All three of these brothers were extremely [intelligent](#). They lived about nine hundred years after the [Buddha](#) entered [Nirvana](#). Although they were [intelligent](#), each initially held his own prejudiced [view](#). Later on, they gave up their prejudices.

To begin with, the eldest brother wanted to be “unattached,” and although he had no [attachments](#), he preferred the [Great Vehicle Buddhadharmā](#). [Heavenly Relative](#) was [attached](#) to [Small Vehicle Buddhadharmā](#). He felt that it was the true [Buddhadharmā](#), and he not only studied it, but aided those involved in [Small Vehicle Buddhism](#) in berating and slandering the [Great Vehicle](#).

Even though his older brother studied [Great Vehicle Buddhism](#), [Heavenly Relative](#) still said it was not true and that the [Buddha](#) had not spoken any such [Dharma](#). He did not believe the [Dharma Flower Sutra](#), the [Shurangama Sutra](#), the [Flower Adornment Sutra](#), or any [Great Vehicle Buddhism](#). He, in fact, became a specialist in undermining [Great Vehicle Dharma](#). And so, here we have two brothers, the elder of whom studied [Great Vehicle Dharma](#) but did not criticize the [Small Vehicle](#) at all, and the younger of whom studied the [Small Vehicle](#), criticized and tried to destroy the [Great Vehicle](#). They did not actually fight, because the contention was only on the part of [Heavenly Relative](#). The whole [reason](#) that the [Great Vehicle](#) is called by that [name](#) is because [Great Vehicle Buddhadharmā](#) can even include within it that which is incorrect. But the [Small Vehicle](#) cannot include what is not correct within it. That is why it is so small. The [Great Vehicle](#) can include what is correct and what is incorrect. So, no [matter](#) how many offenses his younger brother had, [Asanga](#) did not hold them against him, but he did want to save him.

What method did [Asanga](#) use to save [Heavenly Relative](#)? He wrote his younger brother saying, “Although we do not study the same teachings, still, our relationship as brothers is a fact. We are close relatives for sure, and we both [acknowledge](#) this true relationship which [exists](#) between us. Now, I know that I am going to [die](#) pretty soon, and I would like to see you. This is especially so because I would like your help in doing something, and I believe that you will fulfill my wish in spite of everything. If you do not do this for me, then when I [die](#), I will not be able to close my [eyes](#).” Notice that he did not say he was dying, but said, “...when I [die](#),” leaving the [time](#) unfixed.

How could a younger brother not respond to such a sincere [letter](#)? Even though they studied two different teachings, [Heavenly Relative](#) decided he should go visit his brother [Asanga](#). When he got there he asked what it was his elder brother wished him to do so that [Asanga](#) would be able to close his [eyes](#) when he [died](#). [Asanga](#) said, “I would like you to help me recite the [Dharma Flower Sutra](#), the [Shurangama Sutra](#), and the [Flower Adornment Sutra](#). I would like you to read each one of them to me.” That was the method he chose, because he knew his younger brother was extremely [intelligent](#) and never forgot anything he read.

Thereupon, [Heavenly Relative](#), in order to fulfill his elder brother’s last wish, proceeded to do something that he really did not want to do. He read those three [Great Vehicle Sutras](#) aloud for his brother [Asanga](#). When he had finished reading the [Dharma Flower Sutra](#), the [Shurangama Sutra](#),

and the [Avatamsaka](#), he knew that he had been completely wrong in the [past](#) for criticizing and berating the [Great Vehicle Buddhadharma](#) and slandering the [Great Vehicle Sutras](#). He had gone about saying that those [Sutras](#) were inauthentic. He now knew how mistaken he had been, and he felt tremendous [regret](#). He became a bit frantic [thinking](#), “What shall I do? I’ve spent so much [time](#) and [energy](#) on slandering the [Great Vehicle Buddhadharma](#). It’s for sure those offenses will [cause](#) me to fall into the [hells](#). There’s no question about it. What a [despicable tongue](#) I have!” whereupon, he grabbed a knife and was bent upon cutting out his own [tongue](#).

Why did I say earlier that I would cut out people’s tongues: their dumb tongues, their dull-witted tongues, their stupid tongues? It is just because [Heavenly Relative Bodhisattva](#) himself wanted to slice out his own [tongue](#). He wanted to get rid of his stupid [tongue](#). Anyway, you can [imagine](#) the tenseness of the situation. [Heavenly Relative](#) had his [tongue](#) pulled out and the knife poised over it, ready to lay the blow. It was no joking [matter](#). He was really going to do it. At that point his elder brother, “Unattached,” said soothingly, “Second brother, what are you doing? How about telling me what you’re up to?”

[Heavenly Relative](#) said, “My offenses are too great. I’ve been continually slandering the [Great Vehicle Buddhadharma](#). Now upon reading those three [Sutras](#), I know that the [doctrines](#) of the [Great Vehicle](#) are incomparably wonderful. My [slander](#) of the [Great Vehicle](#) is going to put me in the ‘Hell of Pulling Out Tongues,’ is it not? So I will just cut out my own [tongue](#) right now while I am still alive. What do you think of this [idea](#)?” He asked his elder brother’s advice.

“Unattached” replied, “Don’t be so [foolish](#). You can exchange your [tongue](#).” “What do you mean? How?” asked the distraught [Heavenly Relative](#).

“Before, you used your [tongue](#) to [slander](#); now, you can use it to praise [Great Vehicle Sutras](#). All you have to do is change your way of talking. That’s a much more positive way of going about it. There’s no need to cut your [tongue](#) out.”

Hearing that, [Heavenly Relative](#) [thought](#), “He’s right. If I cut out my [tongue](#), of what use will that be to [Great Vehicle Buddhism](#)? I’ll change and praise [Great Vehicle Buddhism](#) with it, instead.”

As soon as he had that [thought](#), [Heavenly Relative](#)’s [inherent wisdom manifested](#), and he then composed The [Shastra](#) on the Door to [Understanding](#) the Hundred [Dharmas](#). And so he was a [person](#) who changed his faults. He had courageous [spirit](#) and valiantly changed what was wrong with him. When he said he was going to change, he actually did it. And after that, all the [books](#) he wrote were in praise of the [Great Vehicle](#). He destroyed all the [books](#) he had previously written, and the [Shastras](#) he wrote in praise of the [Great Vehicle](#) circulated all over the [world](#). That is the story, in brief, of [Vasubandhu](#).

[Bodhisattva](#) is a [Sanskrit word](#). [Bodhi](#) means [enlightenment](#); [sattva](#) means [sentient being](#):

Two Meanings of [Bodhisattva](#)

1. [Enlightener](#) of [sentient beings](#). The [Bodhisattva](#) takes the [enlightenment](#) that he has testified to, the [wisdom](#) that he has opened, and uses that [enlightened wisdom](#) to [enlighten](#) all other [beings](#) who have [sentience](#).
2. An [enlightened sentient being](#). The [Bodhisattva](#) is also a [sentient being](#), but he is one who has become [enlightened](#).

Together, these two meanings show that a [Bodhisattva](#) is an [enlightened sentient being](#) who enlightens other [sentient beings](#). That is the meaning of “[Bodhisattva](#)”.

“[Bodhisattva](#)” is a pretty good [name](#) to have, and so lots of [people](#) want to give themselves that title. They want others to call them by that [name](#). In [China](#), [monastics](#) call each other “[Bodhisattva](#),” as a [form](#) of mutual praise. But “[Bodhisattva](#)” is a title that should be bestowed upon one. It is not that [people](#) decide they deserve the title and then give themselves that [name](#). On the other hand, there was [Great Master](#) Tai Shu, who said, “All [people](#) should call me ‘[Bodhisattva](#)’ instead of ‘[bhikshu](#)’.

Why? I received both the [Bhikshu](#) and the [Bodhisattva Precepts](#) at full [ordination](#), and so just as you call me a [bhikshu](#), so should you call me '[Bodhisattva](#)'. But, since I haven't yet become a [Buddha](#), you shouldn't call me a '[Buddha](#)'."

Of course, he was just joking. In fact, [Great Master](#) Tai Shu was a [Bodhisattva](#), and so whether or not anyone called him that made absolutely no difference. It is just for that [reason](#) he was able to joke about it. He was chiding when he said, "You should all call me '[Bodhisattva](#)'." Similarly, the [Living Buddha](#) of [Gold](#) Mountain announced that everyone should call him a living [Buddha](#). Both those comments were made in the same [spirit](#).

But in this case, was it that [Heavenly Relative](#), who composed this [Shastra](#), signed his [name](#), "[Heavenly Relative Bodhisattva](#)"? No. He just signed his [name](#) to the [Shastra](#) without adding any titles. Later on, devoted [scholars](#), out of reverence for him, added that title to his [name](#). It was not like Ph.D.'s of today who have that print that title on their calling cards and go about advertising their [status](#). I often say to such [people](#), with no [malice](#) intended, "What's so great about a Ph.D.s, anyway? You've got a [Ph.D.](#) So what?"

The title itself has no intrinsic value. The point is that if you have what it takes, you do not need to praise yourself. It is better for others to do the praising. The same applies to [monastics](#) who add the title "[Dharma Master](#)" to their names when [printing](#) their cards or introducing themselves, because they like the [sound](#) of the title. But that title is not something one gives oneself. Therefore, I am sure that [Heavenly Relative Bodhisattva](#) did not add a title to his [name](#). Everyone should look into this. Do not become infatuated with [name](#) and [fame](#). It is better to call yourself a [dead person](#) or a corpse. Pick a [name](#) nobody else wants, and then no one will fight you for it. I believe that is a better solution. It is said:

The [superior person](#) goes without a [name](#).

The [inferior person](#) is fond of titles.

Decide for yourselves which type of [person](#) you want to be.

THE TRANSLATOR

[Shastra](#):

Translated by [Tripitaka Master Xuan Zang](#) of the [Tang Dynasty](#).

Commentary:

Translated by [Tripitaka Master Xuan Zang](#). Now we will discuss the [translator](#). The

[Shastra](#) was composed in [Sanskrit](#), the [language](#) of [India](#), thus it had to be translated in order to be studied by those of other countries. If it had not been translated, then only [Indian people](#) would have been able to understand it, and [people](#) of other countries would not have had a chance to learn from it. The [person](#) who translated this [Sutra](#), therefore, has a lot of [merit](#) and [virtue](#). If because of studying this [Shastra](#) we are able to understand all [dharma](#)s and rely upon [Dharma](#)s to cultivate, we have the [translator](#) to thank in part. Thus, to begin we should know who the [translator](#) was and what contributions he made to [Buddhism](#).

The Monk from Tang

This Monk was of the Tang Dynasty. His contributions to Buddhism were exceptionally great. It can be said that from ancient times to the present, there has never been anyone who can compare to this Dharma Master in his achievements. His secular surname was Chen. His father was an official, but a poor one. Why did he end up poor? It was because he did not take bribes. He was not after the citizens' money, nor that of the government. He was not like officials these days who always feel they are earning too little money so that, on top of their government salary, they try to get the citizens' hard-earned money as well. Dharma Master Xuan Zang's father did not want money. He remained a poor official his entire life. Even though he was poor, he had a virtuous nature. And because of that, among his several children he had two sons who became monks. Dharma Master Xuan Zang's elder brother was a monk who lectured on sutras and was an adept cultivator of his time.

Dharma Master Xuan Zang became a monk and commenced his study of the Buddhadharma at the age of thirteen. During those early years of study, any time a Dharma Master lectured on a Buddhist text, no matter who the Dharma Master was or how far away the lecture was being held, he was sure to go to listen. Whether it was a sutra lecture, a shastra lecture, or a vinaya lecture, he went to listen to them all. Wind and rain could not keep him away from lectures on the Tripitaka, to the point that he even forgot about being hungry. He simply consumed the Dharma, taking the Buddhadharma as his food and drink. He did this for five years, and then he received the Complete Precepts.

However, the principles he had heard Dharma Masters lecturing on during those five years were all different. They all explained the same Sutras in very different ways, each with his own interpretation. And there was a big difference between the lectures of those with wisdom and those without wisdom. But Dharma Master Xuan Zang had not yet really opened enlightenment and he did not have the Dharma-selecting Eye, so how could he know whose lectures to rely on? At that time he vowed to go to India, saying, "The Buddhadharma was transmitted from India, and so there is certainly true and genuine Buddhadharma to be found in India."

Thereupon, he wrote a request for permission to go to India to seek the Dharma, and presented it to the Emperor. The Emperor Tai Zong of the Tang Dynasty did not grant his wish. But Dharma Master Xuan Zang, who was already resolved to go, said, "I would prefer to disobey the Son of Heaven and have my head cut off than not to go to India seeking the Dharma."

So he returned to the monastery and began to practice mountain climbing. He piled chairs, tables, and benches together to simulate mountains, and practiced jumping from one piece of furniture to the next. That was his method of practicing mountain climbing. From morning until night he leaped from table to chair. Probably there were not any big mountains where he lived, so he had to practice in the temple. All the young, middle-aged, and elder novices wondered what he was up to, jumping on furniture all day long instead of reciting sutras or cultivating. He did not tell anyone that he was training to climb the Himalayas, so most people thought he was playing. Eventually he trained his body so that it was very strong, and then when he was physically able, he started his trip through Siberia.

On the day of his departure, when the Emperor Tai Zong learned that he intended to go even without Imperial consent, the Emperor asked him, "I have not given you permission, and you still insist on going. When will you be back?"

Dharma Master Xuan Zang replied, "Look at that pine tree. The needles are pointing toward the west. When those needles turn around and face east, I will return."

He did not say how many years that would be. So he set out. At that time there were no airplanes, steamboats, buses, or trains. There were boats, but they were made of wood and were not too sturdy. Furthermore, since he did not have Imperial permission, he probably could not have gotten the use of a boat anyway. So he traveled by land through many countries, from the Siberian area of the

[Russian](#) border to [India](#). He was gone for more than a decade. When he reached [India](#), he did not know the [language](#) at all. But gradually he studied [Sanskrit](#), and over [time](#) he listened to many [Indian Dharma Masters](#) lecture on the [Buddhadharma](#). Some [people](#) say this took him fourteen years. Others say it took nineteen. In general, he went through a great deal of [suffering](#) and difficulty to study the [Buddhadharma](#) and then, when he had completed his studies, he returned to [China](#).

When his return was imminent, the needles on the pine [tree](#) turned to the [east](#). As soon as the [Emperor](#) saw that the pine needles were indeed pointing [east](#), he knew that [Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) was returning, and he sent out a party of officials to the [western](#) gate to welcome and escort him back. When they reached the gate, there, indeed, was [Dharma Master](#) Zang returning.

[Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) then [concentrated](#) on translating the [Sutras](#) and other works that he had brought back with him. He translated from [Sanskrit](#) to [Chinese](#). When he was translating the [Great Prajna Sutra](#) the peach [trees](#) blossomed [six times](#) within that one single year. That was a sign of the auspiciousness of the [Great Prajna Sutra](#) and its importance to all of us. The fact that it was being translated moved even the wooden [trees](#) and [plants](#) to display their [delight](#).

[Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) translated a great many [sutras](#). While in [India](#), he [bowed](#) to the [Buddha's sharira](#), his [relics](#), teeth and bones. He saw where the [Buddha](#) in a previous [life](#) had sacrificed his [eyes](#), and went to the place where the [Buddha](#) in a previous [life](#) had sacrificed his head. He visited the location where the [Buddha](#) in a former [life](#) had practiced the conduct of [patience](#), and went to the site where the [Buddha](#) in a previous [incarnation](#) had given up his [body](#) for the sake of a [tiger](#). He also went to see the [Bodhi tree](#) under which the [Buddha](#) had sat and accomplished the Way. He went to all of those places celebrated in [Buddhism](#). Those [pilgrimages](#) are another indication of the extent of his true sincerity. While in [India](#), whenever he met [Dharma Masters](#), he never looked down on them, no [matter](#) whether they cultivated or not. He was extremely respectful. He was not the least bit [arrogant](#) or haughty. When he finished his studies, many [Small Vehicle Dharma Masters](#) and [masters](#) of externalist ways came to [debate](#) with him, but none was able to defeat him.

[Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) is known as a [Tripitaka Master](#). [Tripitaka](#) means “Three Stores, [Three Baskets](#)”. The [Tripitaka](#) includes the [Sutra](#) Store, the [Shastra](#) Store and the [Vinaya](#) Store. He was honored with this title because he understood all three Stores without any obstruction and could explain them all.

Two Meanings of [Dharma Master](#)

1. One who bestows the [Dharma](#) upon [people](#).
2. One who takes the [Dharma](#) as his [master](#).

As to his [name](#), Xuan means “[esoteric](#) and wonderful”. He was [esoteric](#) in the [sense](#) that none could really understand him. [Tsang](#) means “awe-inspiring”. He was awe-inspiring in that he could do what others could not do. He was an outstanding [person](#) among his peers. His [wisdom](#) surpassed all those around him. He is the one who translated this [Shastra](#) on the Door to [Understanding](#) the Hundred [Dharmas](#) into [Chinese](#). Because the [Dharma Master](#) understood both [Chinese](#) and [Sanskrit](#), he did not make mistakes in his translations of the [sutras](#), and his translations of [shastras](#) are even more reliable.

The Three Cart Patriarch

At that time, Dharma Master Xuan Zang had more than eight hundred bhikshus helping him translate the Sutras spoken by the Buddha. They were a group of extremely talented people. The most renowned among them was Dharma Master Kuei Ji. He was known as the “Three Cart Patriarch”. Why was he called that? It is because, prior to his becoming a monk, he presented some conditions to the Emperor. His consenting to the imperial edict he had received ordering him to leave domestic life was contingent upon being given three carts. He wanted those three carts to follow him wherever he went. One of these carts was to be filled with wine. Basically monks do not drink wine, but he considered himself special. Another cart was to carry fresh meat, because he liked to eat it. And the third cart had to contain beautiful women. Now you see how he got his nickname. However, you should be clear that the Three Cart Patriarch was not an ordinary person. For one thing, no ordinary person would dare present such conditions to the Emperor when he had been commanded to become a monk. In order to understand how special he was, we have to look into his previous life.

When Dharma Master Xuan Zang was on his way to India, he encountered an old cultivator way up in the mountains. The old cultivator had been meditating there for so long that the dust that had accumulated on his clothing was an inch or more thick. The birds, unafraid, had obviously made a seasonal habit of nesting in his hair. They had built their nests, laid their eggs, and reared their young while he remained there in samadhi. It would be hard to say how many years he had been sitting in that same spot unmoving. Anyway, Dharma Master Xuan Zang rang his bell to bring the old cultivator out of samadhi. The old fellow came out of samadhi all right, but he could not move. He was as stiff as a board, but he was able to ask, “Why did you ring the bell and bring me out of meditation?”

Dharma Master Xuan Zang asked him, “Old cultivator, how long have you been sitting here in samadhi? What’s the sense of never coming out of meditation?”

The old cultivator replied, “I’m waiting for the Red Yang Buddha to come into the world. Then I’m going to help him propagate the Buddhadharma.”

Dharma Master Xuan Zang said, “But the Red Yang Buddha has come and gone already. He entered the world and has already passed into Nirvana. You sat here waiting and didn’t even know the Red Yang had arrived and the Red Yang Buddha’s Dharma was in the world.”

“Well, what era is it?” asked the cultivator, and Dharma Master Xuan Zang related that he was from the Tang Dynasty, and that it was the first year of the Jen Guan reign period. “That’s all right,” said the cultivator. “If the Red Yang Buddha has come and gone, I’ll wait for the White Yang Buddha,” and he prepared to re-enter samadhi.

Dharma Master Xuan Zang called him back saying something like, “Old Bodhisattva!” or “Dhyana companion!” or “Old cultivator!” Those were the standard forms of address at that time. He said, “Don’t re-enter samadhi! It would be better if you followed me to help propagate the Buddhadharma. Although Shakyamuni Buddha, the Red Yang Buddha, has already gone to Nirvana, his Dharma is still in the world. Come along and help me spread the teaching.”

“How can I help propagate it?” asked the old cultivator.

The Dharma Master said, “You go to Chang An, and when you come to the house with the yellow-tiled roof, get reborn there, and you can eventually help propagate the Dharma.” That is because his present physical body was useless, and he would need to trade it in for a new one. “You first go there and get reborn, and when I get back you can help me propagate the Buddhadharma.”

The old cultivator thought it over and agreed. So the old cultivator went off to rebirth in Chang An, and Dharma Master Xuan Zang went on his way to India to bring back the sutras. When he got back, the first thing he did was congratulate the T’ang Dynasty Emperor Tai Zong on the birth of his son. “I sent you back someone to be your son. That was been a happy event indeed!”

But the [Emperor](#) said, “No. I didn’t have a son while you were away.”

“No?” said the [Dharma Master](#), and he looked into it and [realized](#) that the old cultivator had gotten off the track and been [reborn](#) in the house of the Defense Minister Yu [Chi Gong](#) instead. Yu [Chi Gong](#) was tough and had a black face. He was very talented and worked hard at his job, helping the [Emperor](#) maintain the country and rule the [empire](#). Probably the old cultivator was a bit sloppy when he did things, so although [Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) had told him clearly to get born in the house with the yellow-tiled roof, the old fellow got it wrong, chose the one with the blue tiles, and ended up becoming the nephew of the flamboyant Defense Minister. Perhaps you can [imagine](#) what it was like being the nephew of Yu [Chi Gong](#). As soon as he was old enough, he took a tremendous fancy to eating meat, drinking wine, and entertaining women. Perhaps because he had cultivated for [kalpas](#), sitting in [samadhi](#) without ever coming out, he had had a few false [thoughts](#) like, “Meat isn’t bad as I recall. And I remember it was [pleasant](#) to drink wine. As for women, they weren’t bad either.” So that when he [reincarnated](#), he could not put down the contents of those three carts.

But as soon as [Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) learned from the [Emperor](#) that there was no [prince](#), he checked things out and knew that the old cultivator was in fact Yu [Chi Gong](#)’s nephew. So he approached the Defense Minister and said, “You know, there’s someone in your family whom I sent here to help propagate the [Buddhadharma](#).”

The Defense Minister said shortly, “Well, you told him to come, so you tell him to go.” Thus was he told; but he would not go.

Finally [Dharma Master Xuan Zang](#) related the [causes](#) and [conditions](#) to [Emperor](#) Tai Zong who said immediately, “I’ll issue an [Imperial](#) Command and order him to leave home.”

“Fine,” said [Master Xuan Zang](#). “But it’s likely he’ll want to make it [conditional](#). Whatever [conditions](#) he demands, just agree to them.”

The [Emperor](#) assented, and thereupon commanded the nephew of Yu [Chi Gong](#) to appear in court for an audience. “You must leave home,” was the Emperor’s order. “If I want to leave home I will, and if I don’t want to leave home, I won’t.”

“This is a [royal](#) command, and if you don’t obey it, you will be beheaded.”

That put a scare into the nephew, and so he complied; but he still had the audacity to set up three [conditions](#). “I want a cart of meat, a cart of wine, and a cart of women to follow me wherever I go.

“Agreed,” said the [Emperor](#). So it was decided, and the nephew headed for Da [Xing](#) Shan, “Great Flourishing [Goodness](#),” [Monastery](#) to become a [monk](#). Since he was the son of a prominent official, there was quite a fanfare, and as the procession neared the [temple](#) gates, the big [bell](#) was [rung](#) and the gigantic [drum](#) was beaten to welcome him. As soon as he heard [bell](#) and [drum](#) he opened [enlightenment](#) and said, “Oh, that’s the way it is. To start with I was an old cultivator on that mountain.” With a flick of his hand he waved away the carts, “Take them back. I don’t want them anymore.” But although he dismissed the carts upon [leaving home](#), still [people](#) called him “The Three Cart [Patriarch](#).”

THE SHASTRA

Shastra:

As the World Honored One has said, “All dharmas have no self.”

Commentary:

Now we begin the discussion of the Shastra proper. The word “as” indicates that what is about to be said is a quote from the World Honored One himself. And who is the World Honored One? “World Honored One” is one of the ten titles of a Buddha. It represents how the Buddha is “honored in the world and beyond the world.” It is used here instead of the word “Buddha” to enhance the literary quality of the Chinese text, which in general employs four-character phrases.

The Buddha has said, “All dharmas have no self.” All dharmas must be without a self.

“But why?” you wonder. “The self is truly and actually present, so why is it said there should be no self?”

You say that the self, your own self, is truly and actually present? Let us suppose that is so. But then when you die, the corpse is still your same old body. Where did the self of you go off to? If when you die the self disappears, then how can there actually be a self when you are still alive? There is a problem inherent in your supposition.

The Buddha talked about all dharmas, but qualified it by saying that all dharmas have to be without a self. There should not be a self. You should not be like people who do not understand the Dharma and yet brag, “I spoke such-and-such Dharma, I lectured such-and-such a Sutra,” thrusting the self out in front. Recently when we set thirty-six

pigeons free, two of them stayed. Why are they pigeons now? It is just because of clinging to a self. Before, when they were people, they did not listen to the Dharma spoken by the Buddha and were unable to be without a self, so they wound up being birds, in the animal realm.

The Shastra begins by quoting the Buddha, saying, “All dharmas have no self.” The self referred to here is a view of self. It does not refer one’s own body. There should not be any view of self. In the Vajra Sutra the Buddha spoke about a view of self, a view of others, a view of living beings and a view of life spans. One should not have any of those views.

Not only should one not have a self, there should not even be any dharmas. All dharmas, as well, do not exist. And if no dharmas exist, even less does a self exist. Because of that, people who cultivate the Way should get to the point of having no self, and then each and every dharma is perfected. If one can truly be without self, then all dharmas interpenetrate without obstruction. Whatever dharma one takes up does not fail to be of the Dharma Realm; each has the nature of the Dharma Realm. And all dharmas then appear before one. Although all dharmas manifest, one should be so there also are no dharmas. The Wonderful is just at that point, and the difficulty is also right at that point. For all dharmas whatsoever to manifest before one, and yet for one to have no attachments to any dharmas, means that one has emptied dharmas of all marks. There are no marks of dharmas at all. When one gets to that point, then one really experiences true interpenetration without obstruction, and one obtains incredible freedom and ease. If one can be without self, then one will have freedom; but if one cannot manage to get rid of the self, one will be incapable of being free. Therefore, what is important is not to have a self.

And yet, how can one not have a self? It is not easy. One may think, “Here I am listening to the Shastra being lectured, and how can you tell me that I don’t have a self, that I’m not here?”

I repeat, if you can be here listening to the Shastra and yet not know that you are here listening to the Shastra—forgetting about people and having no ego, emptying your self, so there are no people, there is no self and there are no dharmas, so that people and dharmas are both empty—then you will be truly free and at ease. But your attachments keep you from being free of self. What are you

attached to? You are attached to the five skandhas: form, feeling, thinking, activities, and consciousness. Among the five skandhas you reckon the form body, this false self, to be your self. But actually, did I not just point out that when you die it is still your body, but it does not have any awareness, and so where did the self go? Your self is huge-like Mount Sumeru. When you die, where does it go? You do not know. Wouldn't you say that is tragic?

Those of externalist ways are attached to a “great self,” a “small self,” and a “spiritual self.” They have a whole collection of selves. They say the “great self” is such that there is nothing greater, and the “small self” is such that there is nothing smaller. This aspect of their theories has no use. The only useful part is the “spiritual self” in between. That is the “spiritual self” to which those of externalist ways become attached, their attachment being to the “spiritual self.”

Those of the Small Vehicle, the Two Vehicles, also have their attachments. They have an attachment to a lopsided view of Nirvana, called a biased view of the self. Bodhisattvas, too, have attachments. What are their attachments? They are attached to the existence of living beings that can be liberated, to a Buddha Way that can be sought, and to a True Thusness to which they certify. Their certification has not reached the point of being without knowing and without attaining. They still have something to which they certify, something that they attain. They certify to and attain True Thusness. Since Bodhisattvas have these attachments, they also have not forgotten the self. They still have a self. And as long as one has a self, one still has falseness. In the Buddhadharma, one wants to be without a self in one's cultivation of all dharmas. Then one can obtain the state of the Great Vehicle.

The Shastra begins with this quotation of what was spoken by the Buddha, that “All dharmas have no self.” The subsequent text was written by Heavenly Relative Bodhisattva.

Shastra:

What are “all dharmas,” and what is meant by “having no self”? All dharmas may be generally grouped into five categories.

Commentary:

What are all dharmas, and what is meant by “having no self”? Now Heavenly Relative Bodhisattva will analyze the Buddha's words. All dharmas may be generally grouped into five categories. This is looking at them from a broad and comprehensive viewpoint. What are the five categories?

The Five Categories

- I. The Eight Mind Dharmas.
- II. The Fifty-one Dharmas Belonging to the Mind.
- III. The Eleven Form Dharmas.
- IV. The Twenty-four Activities Dharmas Non-interactive with the Mind.
- V. The Six Unconditioned Dharmas.

Shastra:

I. Mind Dharmas

Commentary:

The first one, Mind Dharmas, refers to dharmas of the Mind King. The mind is called King, because each and every dharma is established based upon the mind. If there were no Mind Dharmas, then no dharmas would exist at all. It is said:

The Buddha spoke all dharmas for the sake of the minds of all living beings.
If it were not for all those minds, of what use would all dharmas be?

There are eight Mind King dharmas, but we will not talk about them yet, as they will be discussed later.

Shastra:

II. Dharmas Belonging to the Mind.

Commentary:

There are two ways to interpret the second category, Dharmas Belonging to the Mind. *On the one hand they are Dharmas Belonging to the Mind, and on the other, they are servants of the mind.* They work for the mind. The mind is King, and the Dharmas Belonging to the Mind are his servants. But they are also like great ministers. The King is unable to carry out actions himself, so he uses those belonging to the mind to do things. That is the meaning of belonging to the mind. They are also known as enumerations of the mind, because they have a fixed number; there are fifty-one of them. Since these dharmas arise from the mind, they are of the same family as the mind. Hence they are called Dharmas Belonging to the Mind, the second category.

Shastra:

III. Form Dharmas.

Commentary:

Form Dharmas is the third category. Anything that has form and shape, that has a substantial aspect to it, is known as a form dharma. This does not just refer to their color but also to their tangible form, their substantive aspect. There are eleven Form Dharmas. They, too, will be discussed later on.

Shastra:

IV. Activities Dharmas Non-interactive With the Mind.

Commentary:

Category four, Activities Dharmas Non-interactive with the Mind, refers to dharmas that do not interact, do not work together with the dharmas of any of the other categories. These kinds of dharmas are produced on their own from the mind without interacting. They are related to and have aspects of activities. There are twenty-four such dharmas.

Shastra:

V. Unconditioned Dharmas.

Commentary:

The previous four categories were all conditioned dharmas. This final category, number five, is that of Unconditioned Dharmas. *These are dharmas used in cultivation of the world-transcending Great Vehicle.* The states they represent can be certified to if one cultivates transcendental dharmas.

We have not said anything in detail about the five categories of dharmas yet, because they will all be discussed in detail later when we come to them in the text.

To review, the first four categories are conditioned dharmas and the fifth is Unconditioned Dharmas. If one only knows about the first four kinds, then one is an ordinary person or an externalist. If one only knows the dharmas of the last category, the Unconditioned Dharmas, then one resides in the one-sided emptiness of the Small Vehicle, which has not reached the state of the Great Vehicle. What is the state of the Great Vehicle?

Right in the midst of the conditioned is the unconditioned.

It is right within conditioned dharmas that one sees Unconditioned Dharmas. It is not that one

leaves [conditioned dharmas](#) behind and finds other [dharmas](#) that are [unconditioned](#). Rather, its being [conditioned](#) or [unconditioned](#) just differs by a single [thought](#). [Understanding](#) the [unconditioned](#) while in the midst of the [conditioned](#) is what is meant by “being in the [world](#) while transcending the [world](#).” Being that way while in the [world](#), one does not fight, is not [greedy](#), has no impeding obstructions, and is free and at ease. One [exists](#) in a state of interpenetration, and it is extremely blissful. To be in the [world](#) while transcending the [world](#) is the state of a [Great Vehicle Bodhisattva](#). If at that point one can progress further and use the [principle](#) of [selflessness](#) to cultivate courageously and vigorously, then one can obtain the [fruition](#) of Wonderful [Enlightenment](#).

This has been an overall [view](#) of the Five Categories of [Dharmas](#).

[Shastra](#):

They are in this sequence because the first are supreme, the second interact with the first, the third are the shadows [manifest](#) by the previous two, the fourth are separate from the positions of the previous three, and the fifth are revealed by the previous four.

[Commentary](#):

They are in this sequence because of the following [reasons](#). The first refers to the [Mind Dharmas](#). They are supreme over all else, since the [mind](#) is [king](#) and all [dharmas](#) arise from it. The second interact with the first. The second category is [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#). They obey the orders of the [Mind King](#). The third are the shadows [manifest](#) by the previous two. [Form Dharmas](#) are the third category. [Form Dharmas](#) come into being from the shadows cast by the [Mind Dharmas](#) and the [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#). Therefore, [Form Dharmas](#) belong to the marks division of the [eighth consciousness](#).

Two Divisions of the [Eighth Consciousness](#)

1. [Seeing](#) division.
2. Marks division.

The marks division basically has no [nature](#) of its own. We see all sorts of things as having shape, [form](#), marks, or [characteristics](#), but basically they do not [exist](#) at all. It is simply that the [eighth consciousness](#) makes them appear.

The fourth are separate from the positions of the previous three. The fourth category is [activities dharmas](#) not interactive with the [mind](#). They are separate from [Mind Dharmas](#), [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#), and [Form Dharmas](#). And the fifth are revealed by the previous four. Those in the fifth category, [Unconditioned Dharmas](#), are extremely profound. There is no way one could understand them. But in order to attempt to understand them, one must make use of the [conditioned dharmas](#). **The [Unconditioned Dharmas](#) are revealed by the [conditioned dharmas](#).**

The categories of the Hundred [Dharmas](#) are in this sequence. They go from [Mind Dharmas](#), to [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#), to [Form Dharmas](#), to [Activities Dharmas](#) Non-interactive with the [Mind](#), to [Unconditioned Dharmas](#). They appear in that order for the [reasons](#) just given.

[Shastra](#):

The first, [Mind Dharmas](#), include in general eight:

1. the [eye consciousness](#);
2. the [ear consciousness](#);
3. the [nose consciousness](#);
4. the [tongue consciousness](#);
5. the [body consciousness](#);
6. the [mind consciousness](#);
7. the [manas consciousness](#); and
8. the [alaya consciousness](#).

Commentary:

Now, at last, we are going to discuss some **dharmas**. The first, **Mind Dharmas**, include in general eight. One, the **eye consciousness**. **We say that eyes can see, but it is not actually the eyes themselves that see. It is the eye consciousness that sees.** Two, the **ear consciousness**. **We say the ears can hear, but if your ears were sliced off and laid aside, would they be able to hear by themselves? No.** If your **eyes** were gouged and set aside would they be able to see? Could you say, “I’m not going to the movies, but I’ll send my **eyes** along, and they can take in the show.” Obviously not. **The eyes cannot see by themselves. It is the eye consciousness that does the seeing. And from where does the eye consciousness come? It comes from the mind, the Mind King.** The same is true for all the other **consciousnesses** as well: three, the **nose consciousness**; four, the **tongue consciousness**; five, the **body consciousness**; and six, the **mind consciousness**. **The six sense faculties of eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind combine with the six defiling sense objects of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch and dharmas. When that occurs, a consciousness arises between each pair. On the inside there are six faculties, on the outside there are six sense objects, and in the middle, in between the faculties and their objects, the six consciousnesses arise. Taken together, these three sets of six make up the Eighteen Realms. I** discussed these in detail when I lectured the **Heart Sutra**, so if you want to further explore them, you can look into that text.

The mind consciousness, the sixth or “intellectual” consciousness, is not actually the substance of the mind. The sixth consciousness is the function of the mind, whose **substance** is seven, the **manas consciousness**, also called the “transmitting” **consciousness**, or the “defiling” **consciousness**. **The seventh consciousness is the substance of the mind. It continually takes the functions of the sixth consciousness and transmits them to the eighth, the alaya consciousness. The eighth consciousness is called the alaya, which means “store,” because it stores all information transmitted to it by the seventh. If it is turned around, it becomes the Nature of the Treasury of the Thus Come One.**

When the **eight consciousnesses** are turned around, they become four kinds of **wisdom**.

Four Kinds of **Wisdom**

1. The **great perfect mirror wisdom**.
2. The **wisdom of equality**.
3. The **wisdom of wonderful contemplation**.
4. The **wisdom** that accomplishes what is done.

How does one turn them around? One must work hard at cultivation, and then one will know how to do it. I cannot tell you now, because even if I were to tell you, in the **future** you still would not know.

Upon **awakening**, one naturally obtains them.

If you yourself cultivate, then you yourself will know. Before you know, it does not do any good to be told. But once you know, you very naturally will have the use of them.

Alaya is a **Sanskrit word** that means “storehouse.” The **alaya** is the **store consciousness**, because it is like the ground in which we plant **seeds**, storing them away until they sprout. That is why there are often analogies made likening the **mind** to the ground or to a field. For instance it is said,

Plant the ground of the **mind**;
Nurture the field of the **nature**.

All the different external and internal states we **experience**, whether good or bad, **defiled** or **pure**, are planted as **seeds** in the **eighth consciousness**. The **seeds** of every event, circumstance, and **experience** are stored away in that **store consciousness**. If you cultivate and turn that **store consciousness** around, then it becomes the **Nature** of the Treasury of the **Thus Come One**. It is just a

matter of being able to use it. If you can use it, then the great perfect mirror wisdom will appear. If you cannot use it, then you just keep on having false thinking. And all the false thoughts you have, whether they come about or not, still get stored in the eighth consciousness. Even the most subtle kinds of mental activities, impulses of which you are completely unaware, get stored there as seeds.

In a single unenlightened thought,
The three subtle marks appear.

[Note: The Three Subtle Marks are the mark of karma, the mark of turning, and the mark of manifesting.] When they appear, the Thus Come One's Treasury turns into the eighth consciousness. However, if you are able to turn that eighth consciousness back around to become the Nature of the Treasury of the Thus Come One, then you are one who has returned to the origin and gone back to the source.

This has been a general explanation of the Eight Mind Dharmas. When discussed in detail, the subject is quite complex.

Among the Eight Mind Dharmas, the sixth is called the mind consciousness. And why is the seventh also called the manas, “mind” or “intellectual” consciousness? It is because the sixth exists in reliance on the seventh consciousness. The seventh is the basis, the fundamental mind consciousness. It is the root of the mind consciousness, whereas the sixth is the function of the mind consciousness. The seventh consciousness is called the “defiled consciousness.” It is also known as “that on which defiled and pure rely.” The sixth consciousness is defiled, and the eighth consciousness is pure. The purity of the eighth consciousness relies upon the seventh consciousness, hence its name: “that on which defiled and pure rely.”

The eighth consciousness is the alaya consciousness. Alaya means “non-vanishing,” and it also means “store.” “Non-vanishing” refers to how True Thusness accords with birth and death and yet remains and does not vanish. True Thusness is never lost; it does not disappear. “Store” consciousness has three meanings.

The Three Meanings of Store Consciousness

1. That which stores.
2. That which is stored.
3. Attaching and storing.

The first meaning is “that which stores,” because it stores all good and evil seeds within it. The second meaning is “that which is stored,” referring to the seeds stored in the eighth consciousness. All good and evil karma is stored here. The third meaning is “attaching and storing,” for attachment and storing take place within the eighth consciousness.

Absolutely everything we do, every thought we have, be it good or bad, is stored in the eighth consciousness. All dharmas whatsoever are manifestations from the eighth consciousness. The things that we see comprise the marks division of the eighth consciousness. Our ability to see them makes up the seeing division of the eighth consciousness. That is why it is said that the myriad dharmas are consciousness only; they arise from consciousness alone. Consciousness is just True Thusness when it is bound. Consciousness is also what we refer to as the Buddha-nature. It is also the source of all good and evil. And it is the original home, the ancestral village, of all ordinary people and sages.

Shastra:

The second, Dharmas Belonging to the Mind, include, in general, fifty-one. They are grouped into six categories:

1. Five universally interactive;
2. Five particular states;
3. Eleven wholesome;
4. Six fundamental afflictions;
5. Twenty derivative afflictions; and,
6. Four unfixed.

One, the five universally interactive are:

1. attention;
2. contact;
3. feeling;
4. thinking; and,
5. deliberation.

Commentary:

Now we will discuss the second, Dharmas Belonging to the Mind. Dharmas Belonging to the Mind also belong to Mind Dharmas, but they are subjects of the mind, not the Mind King. The Mind King is the eighth consciousness. The Mind King, at the time of direct perception—that is, perception through the nature—pervades the entire Dharma Realm and has no wearisome defilements. It can stop all karmic retribution. But, these Dharmas Belonging to the Mind help the mind enact deeds of good and evil, creating good or evil karma. The Mind King is like an emperor. Just as an emperor orders his ministers to carry out his commands, so, too, the Mind King relies on the Dharmas Belonging to the Mind in order to get things done. In this case, they include, in general, fifty-one. They are also known as servants of the mind. Another name for them is enumerations of the mind. The mind has so many of these kinds of deliberations that they could never be counted, but there are fifty-one enumerations of the mind that are most important. They—these Fifty-one Dharmas Belonging to the Mind—are further grouped into six categories.

These six categories are like departments. The first one is the five universally interactive dharmas, which are called that because they pervade all places. They operate universally, and there are five specific dharmas listed in this division. Two is the five particular states dharmas; they are independent. Whereas the universally interactive dharmas pervade all places, these particular states do not pervade at all. They are isolated. They are very special, solitary, and exclusive states. There are also five of these listed. Three is the eleven wholesome dharmas. Eleven specific ones are listed.

Four, the six fundamental afflictions, is the next division. We talk about having afflictions, but now we will learn more specifically just what types of afflictions there are, along with where they come from. The six fundamental afflictions are just six kinds of poison. Division five is the twenty derivative afflictions. The six kinds of afflictions just discussed are the basic ones, but there are also subsidiary afflictions, twenty in number. These twenty afflictions are further subdivided into minor, moderate, and strong afflictions. And six, the last division is the four unfixed Dharmas Belonging to the Mind.

Now we will begin discussing the first one, the five universally interactive. What are they? The text goes on to explain: One, attention. Attention is as when paying attention, putting one's mind's attention on something, or literally “making a mind”. Attention is an attempt to grasp onto a state. Basically, the Mind King does not enter into this act of attention by itself. But because of good and evil karma planted as seeds in the eighth consciousness from long-distant past kalpas to the present, the eighth consciousness becomes permeated by these habitual tendencies, just as smoke permeates food being cured, or incense permeates the atmosphere of the Buddhahall. When the permeation

reaches a saturation point, [movement](#) arises within the [eighth consciousness](#). That [movement](#) takes the [form](#) of [attention](#). Therefore, [attention](#) marks the beginning of the [mind](#) giving rise to a state.

The situation of a [Bodhisattva](#) is such that he is [omniscient](#) without having to perform the act of [attention](#). He can know [good and evil](#), [causes](#) and effects without making an [effort](#) to do so. [Arhats](#), however, do have to perform the act of [attention](#). They must pay [attention](#) to see what is going on. Once they have gone through the process of [attention](#), then they can know what something is all about. They can know the [causes](#) and results of any given situation that occurs.

For example, why did the thirty-four pigeons fly away? Basically, it is because when they were [people](#) they created certain kinds of [karma](#). They did not work hard at their cultivation. They [thought](#) they would leave home, but they never did. They [thought](#) they would get around to cultivating, but they never did. They [thought](#) they would become [vegetarians](#), but they never did. They [thought](#) they would recite the [Buddha's name](#), but they never did. They never got around to doing what they were supposed to be doing.

This does not apply just to pigeons. Some [people](#) who come to the [Buddhist](#) Lecture Hall never leave. Others come but do not stay. Still others intend to come but never make it in the door. You should not look upon these [conditions](#) as ordinary, nothing special, and take them for granted. They are, in fact, quite [extraordinary](#). [People](#) without [good roots](#) simply cannot get themselves inside the door of the [Buddhist](#) Lecture Hall. If the [people](#) here did not have [good roots](#), they would not be able to listen to [sutra](#) lectures. All those who are able to listen to [sutra](#) lectures have [good roots](#). However, even then, there are great [good roots](#) and small [good roots](#); there are those with many [good roots](#) and those with few [good roots](#). If you want to bring forth the resolve for [Bodhi](#), you must listen to more and more [Dharma](#) lectures. When you come to understand a lot of [Buddhadharma](#), then very naturally, you will resolve your [mind](#) on [Bodhi](#). That is what is meant by [attention](#).

[Attention](#) is universally interactive, and the second universally interactive [dharma](#), is [contact](#), which is also what the remaining three universally interactive dharmas—feeling, [thinking](#), and deliberation—rely upon. Once [contact](#) is established, [feeling](#) arises. Once [feeling](#) arises, there is [thinking](#), and then there is [deliberation](#). Therefore, [contact](#) provides the locus for [feeling](#), [thinking](#), and [deliberation](#) to base themselves upon. [Contact](#) is not something you should want. As soon as you have reached the state of [contact](#), there will be [feeling](#) belonging to the [mind](#), [thinking](#) belonging to the [mind](#), and [deliberation](#) belonging to the [mind](#). With [attention](#), as mentioned above, comes the start of a state [arising](#) from the [mind](#). However, with [contact](#) comes the start of a [mind arising](#) from the state, a kind of [mental](#) false [thought](#). As a false [thought](#) of the [mind](#) arises, then a [mental attitude](#) of [feeling](#) is produced toward the state. There is a drive to [experience](#) the [feeling](#), which is [thinking](#); [thinking](#) about the state and then pursuing it. Therefore, the false [thinking](#) is produced from the state. Once there is [thinking](#), then there will be [deliberation](#). What is [deliberation](#)? [Deliberation](#) captures the [mind](#), causing the [mind](#) to take stock, to calculate and reckon: “How can I get that state? What can I do?” The five just discussed are called the five universally interactive. They are universally interactive because they pervade the [three natures](#) and extend throughout the three periods of [time](#).

The Three [Moral](#) Aspects

1. The good [nature](#).
2. The [evil nature](#).
3. The [indeterminate nature](#).

“[Indeterminate](#)” means it is not known whether it is good or [evil](#).

The Three Periods of [Time](#)

1. Past.
2. Present.

3. Future.

These are also referred to as [past time](#), [present time](#), and [future time](#), covering all times. What is meant by “[past](#)”? What is meant by “[present](#)”? What is meant by “[future](#)”? I will tell you. Today is the [present](#), yesterday was the [past](#), and tomorrow is the [future](#). The [future](#) does not [exist](#), because it has not come. The [present](#) keeps changing and does not stay still, so it does not [exist](#) either. The [past](#) is already gone, and so it does not [exist](#). Therefore, although the five universally interactive [dharmas](#) pervade the three periods of [time](#), ultimately they cannot be got at.

If one could put a stop to the five kinds of universally interactive dharmas—which one could do whenever one wanted—then one would not create [evil karma](#). But if you do not stop them, they continue to [exist](#). Actually, with the coming into being of the five universally interactive [dharmas](#), one still has not created any good or [evil karma](#). It is when the five particular states arise that there is no stopping the creation of [good and evil karma](#).

[Shastra](#):

Two, the five particular states are:

1. [desire](#);
2. resolution;
3. [recollection](#);
4. [concentration](#); and,
5. [judgment](#).

Commentary:

“Particular” can have several meanings, such as “special,” “[distinct](#),” and “[individual](#)”. The word “particular” is used to describe these [dharmas](#) as different from the five universally interactive. Each one of the five universally interactive [dharmas](#) includes the meanings of all five. But the five particular states are not the same as each other and are, in fact, quite [distinct](#) and [individual](#), not [pervasive](#), making them just the opposite of the previous group of five universally interactive. Each one of these is individually produced from “climbing upon” a certain state, separate from the other four, hence the name “particular state”. These five come into being when the “climbing [mind](#)” climbs upon an associated state.

As has already been discussed, at the level of the five universally [pervasive dharmas](#), [thoughts of good and evil](#) have not yet formed. At that point, one could suppress the [mind processes](#) and thereby keep such [thoughts](#) from being produced. If one works hard at cultivating, one can keep from producing [thoughts of good and evil](#). If one can manage not to produce [thoughts of good and evil](#), then there will not be any creation of good or [evil karma](#). However, if one gives rise to these [dharmas](#) of five particular states, among the [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#), then one can no longer stop [thoughts of good and evil](#) from [arising](#). Therefore, the actual “doing” of [good and evil](#) begins with these five particular states.

Of the five particular states, the first one is [desire](#). What is meant by [desire](#)? It is the wanting of something. Once one wants something, the next thing that happens is that one tries to get it—to [grasp](#) at it. That is the result of [desire](#). What does one want to get most? [Pleasurable](#) states. One wants to have [pleasurable experiences](#).

Two, resolution, is rendered in [Chinese](#) by a pair of characters that mean literally “supreme [understanding](#).” This [mental dharma](#) functions when a state arises that one wants to investigate, to figure out. One becomes involved in the situation, and is determined to figure it out, to understand what it is all about. One becomes quite intent upon this, [thinking](#) things like, “What shall I do about it? I’ve got to come to terms with this and resolve it.” One [feels](#) one must make up one’s [mind](#) about it and know exactly what’s going on with it. When one is intent upon this process of resolution, if other [causes](#) and [conditions](#) arise during that [time](#), they will not be able to shake one’s [mind](#) or

prevent it from making this resolution. That is why the [Chinese](#) uses “supreme [understanding](#),” to try and indicate the intensity behind this [dharma](#) of resolution.

Three, [recollection](#) means “remembering clearly.” What does one remember clearly? One remembers the states one has already [experienced](#). For example, an adult may be able to recollect what he studied in [grammar](#) school. That is an example of this dharma—clearly remembering and not forgetting—which is the third particular state. Although the [Sanskrit](#) for four, [concentration](#), is [samadhi](#), what is being described is not [samadhi](#) as defined in the list of [precepts](#), [samadhi](#), and [wisdom](#): the three non-outflow studies. Here we render the [word](#) in English as [concentration](#), because it means exclusively paying [attention](#) to something. It means to be without distractions in one’s [mind](#). It means continually [thinking](#) about something or focusing one’s [attention](#) on it. When this [dharma](#) is functioning, your [mind](#) will be [concentrated](#) on one particular [experience](#) to the exclusion of all others. This kind of single-minded [concentration](#) is something an [ordinary person](#) is capable of. One uses it when performing some [activity](#) which one wants to bring to successful [accomplishment](#).

And sometimes, with that much [concentration](#), five, an accuracy of [judgment](#) will arise, which is the fifth particular state. Although the [Sanskrit](#) for this fifth [dharma](#) is [prajna](#), it is not referring to genuine [wisdom](#), but to an ability which the average [person](#) possesses. It is not the [prajna wisdom](#) which [people](#) who cultivate the Way are working to bring forth. Here, we call it [judgment](#), for it refers to being [worldly wise](#), which involves the ability to make judgments and decisions, to have a “[sense of judgment](#).” It functions when one tries to figure out if something one did was done well or not, done correctly or incorrectly. That is [judgment](#), [worldly wisdom](#).

When it is a question of [wisdom](#) of world-transcending [dharma](#)s, [samadhi](#) and [prajna](#) help each other out. [Samadhi](#) assists [prajna wisdom](#), and [prajna wisdom](#) enhances [samadhi](#). That is how [samadhi](#) and [wisdom](#) work on the world-transcending level. But when we speak of the [concentration](#) and [judgment](#) which are [worldly dharma](#)s, they remain isolated from each other. They do not mutually [function](#). It is not the case that if one has [concentration](#) then one will have [judgment](#), or that if one has [judgment](#) one will have [concentration](#). These [worldly dharma](#)s of [concentration](#) and [judgment](#) cannot happen at the same [time](#). When one is in the midst of [concentration](#), one will not be using the [dharma](#) of [judgment](#); and when one is in the process of using [judgment](#), one will not be simultaneously using [concentration](#). Hence, at the [mundane](#) level, these two [dharma](#)s of [concentration](#) and [judgment](#) are separate.

All of these five particular states are the same way, isolated from each other. Each one deals with its own particular state. It is not that each one pervades all five, so that one state includes all five states. The previous five universally interactive [dharma](#)s were such that one kind of state was replete with five types of [minds](#). These five particular states are isolated from each other, so their states are altogether different. Since they are not the same, let us look at how each arises. [Desire](#) arises for [pleasurable](#) states. In states requiring decisiveness, resolution is produced. Toward states one has already [experienced](#), one gives rise to [recollection](#). [Concentration](#) is initiated toward states that one [contemplates](#), and then [judgment](#) arises. Thus we distinguish them from the previous five universally interactive, and call them the five particular states.

[Shastra](#):

Three, the eleven [wholesome dharma](#)s are:

1. [faith](#);
2. [vigor](#);
3. remorse;
4. [shame](#);
5. absence of [greed](#);
6. absence of [anger](#);
7. absence of [foolishness](#);

8. light ease;
9. non-laxness;
10. [renunciation](#); and,
11. non-harming.

Commentary:

This is the third of six divisions of the Fifty-one [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#). These eleven [wholesome dharmas](#) are good [dharmas](#), and so are called [wholesome](#). They help you to cultivate and accomplish your work.

Of the eleven wholesome dharmas, the first is faith. Faith is necessary in whatever one does. One needs to have a sense of confidence, an attitude of belief. First one needs to have faith in oneself. What kind of faith? One needs to have faith that one certainly can become a Buddha. One has to believe that there is no difference between the Buddha and oneself. But that non-differentiation is in the Buddha-nature. In order to actually become a Buddha, cultivation is still required. If one cultivates, one will become a Buddha. In order to do so, one must have an initial belief in that principle.

Second, not only does one want to believe that one can become a [Buddha](#) oneself, but also to believe that all [people](#) can become [Buddhas](#). However, not only can all [people](#) become [Buddhas](#), one should believe that all [living beings](#) have the [Buddha-nature](#) and are capable of becoming [Buddhas](#). If one has that kind of [faith](#), then one should begin by following the rules oneself. To follow the rules means to hold the [precepts](#). First, one holds the [precepts](#), and then one can become a [Buddha](#). One does that oneself, and also encourages others, all [living beings](#), to do so as well. [Faith](#) must be solid, like a rock, firm and sturdy. [Faith](#) should not be like a pile of ashes that seems to have some [substance](#) to it, but crumbles at the slightest disturbance. Do not be too soft. One's [faith](#) must be strong and solid.

Once one has solid [faith](#), then one should put it into [action](#) with the second [wholesome dharma](#), [vigor](#). What should one be vigorous doing? One should be vigorous in cultivating. Be [mindful](#) of the [Buddha](#), [mindful](#) of the [Dharma](#), and [mindful](#) of the [Sangha](#). Use [vigor](#) in doing that. Do not always be retreating. One should always keep advancing, being more and more vigorous.

Three is remorse, which also carries the meaning of repentance. This [dharma](#) is enacted with regard to one's [self](#). One should bring forth an [attitude](#) of remorse and repentance, [thinking](#), "The things I have done are really not right. I ought to change and become a new [person](#)."

Number four is [shame](#). This [dharma](#) of [shame](#) is enacted with regard to others. One should harbor a [sense of shame](#) akin to [embarrassment](#), [thinking](#), "I'm not up to that [person](#). I should not [feel](#) that I am better than other [people](#). That [person](#) is actually much better than I am. See how that [person](#) is always in such good [spirits](#) and free from [worry](#)? Why is it that I have so many worries?" That is the kind of [attitude](#) one should have.

Five is absence of greed. Do not be [greedy](#). The way [greed](#) works is that if there is something one has not gotten, then one wants to get it. But after getting it, one [fears](#) losing it. Both the [desire](#) to obtain and the [fear](#) of losing are aspects of [greed](#). Therefore, do not be [greedy](#) for [wealth](#), do not be [greedy](#) for beautiful [forms](#), do not be [greedy](#) for [fame](#), and do not be [greedy](#) for profit.

I teach you not to be [greedy](#), but I, myself, must be [greedy](#). However, I am being [greedy](#) on your behalf. I am [greedy](#) for everyone else's sake, not for my own sake. The [greed](#) that I have [exists](#) on behalf of all [cultivators](#) in [America](#). What is it I am [greedy](#) for? I am [greedy](#) for a Way-place for you [Americans](#) to cultivate in. If you all have a Way-place together, you can cultivate the Way. If you do not even have a Way-place, how can you cultivate the Way? To have the Way, you must have a place. And so, I have become [greedy](#) for a Way-place, and now it is about to appear as a response to my [greed](#). To begin with, I was not going to become [greedy](#); but I see that if I am not, your opportunities for becoming [Buddhas](#) will evolve a lot more slowly. That is the [motivation](#) behind

my [greed](#), that all of you can become [Buddhas](#) a little sooner. All of you should help me out with this [greed](#) of mine. I just told you not to be [greedy](#), and now I am telling you to be [greedy](#)! But this kind of [greed](#) is for the sake of others, not for oneself, so do not hesitate to have more of this kind of [greed](#).

[Greed](#), [anger](#), and [foolishness](#) are known as the [three poisons](#), and absence of [greed](#), absence of [anger](#), and absence of [foolishness](#) are called the three kinds of [good roots](#).

The [Three Poisons](#)

1. [Greed](#).
2. [Anger](#).
3. [Foolishness](#).

The Three Kinds of [Good Roots](#)

1. Absence of [greed](#).
2. Absence of [anger](#).
3. Absence of [foolishness](#).

We are told not to be [greedy](#). If one is [greedy](#) for oneself, one is indeed [greedy](#); but if one is [greedy](#) for the sake of [living beings](#), one is not actually being [greedy](#). However, a certain fault can develop out of this. It is very easy for [people](#) to become hypocritical, rationalizing that what they want is [for the sake of all beings](#), when in fact they want it for their own sakes. [People](#) who have this fault can be very clever at instigating what they want in a way that others fail to [recognize](#) their real motives. But, as long as one has a personal stake in it, there is still [greed](#).

What, then, is meant by not having a personal stake in it? If one is not seeking [fame](#) for oneself; if one is not seeking profit for oneself; if one is not seeking any kind of [self-benefit](#) at all, then one does not have a personal stake in it.

Why is [greed](#) considered [unwholesome](#)? Because it is a [defiled](#) kind of [dharma](#). It is unclean. Anyone who is [greedy](#), therefore, is also unclean. One has [defilement](#) and filth, and one has [attachments](#). That is why [greed](#) is not good. Retributions involving [suffering](#) come as a result of having been [greedy](#) in the [past](#). Any [suffering](#) due you in the [future](#), would be the result of [present greed](#).

Six is absence of [anger](#). Do not be [angry](#), either. [Anger](#) is a kind of [hostility](#) harbored within.

Seven is absence of [foolishness](#) and is characterized by murkiness. It is [ignorance](#), a lack of clarity.

Absence of [greed](#), absence of [anger](#), and absence of [foolishness](#) become the Three Kinds of [Good Roots](#).

Eight, light ease, is an initial expedient in the cultivation of [Chan samadhi](#). In the process of cultivation, before [samadhi](#) is actually achieved, one [experiences](#) a kind of light ease. Where does this state come from? It comes from being vigorous in cultivating [wholesome dharmas](#) and in stopping [evil dharmas](#). Along with being vigorous in [wholesome dharmas](#), one must vigorously abstain from [greed](#), abstain from [anger](#), and abstain from [foolishness](#), practicing the three kinds of [good roots](#) discussed above. The resultant [merit](#) and [virtue](#) will [manifest](#) as a state of light ease, an incredibly comfortable [feeling](#) of both [body](#) and [mind](#). Then, whenever one sits in [meditation](#) investigating [Chan](#), one [experiences](#) an [unsurpassed happiness](#), an extremely blissful state. That is what is meant here by light ease.

Nine is non-laxness. Not being lax means adhering the rules. When one is not lax, one adheres to the rules and relies on the [Dharma](#) to cultivate. To never be casual or aloof at any [time](#) is what is meant by not being lax.

And what is an example of being lax? During the first summer session (1968), when listening to

lectures, one of my [disciples](#) used to take his [legs](#) out of full [lotus](#), stretch them out full length and prop them on a cushion in front of him. That is an example of being lax. However, he does not do that anymore, which is an example of non-laxness.

Ten, [renunciation](#), specifically refers to renouncing everything within the [activities skandha](#). One renounces whatever is not in accord with the rules. The [renunciation](#) one does with regard to the [activities skandha](#) is different from the [renunciation](#) that takes place with regard to the [feeling skandha](#). Renunciations within the [feeling skandha](#) are made as soon as one has an [awakening](#) to them. But [renunciation](#) within the [activities skandha](#) is not so obvious. We know that the [activities skandha](#) involves a ceaseless flow of [thoughts](#). Within this, one must [renounce](#) everything that arises which is not in accord with the rules. For every little bit that is renounced, one comes that much closer to a response with the Way. If in every [thought](#) one is capable of this kind of [renunciation](#), then in every [thought](#) one enters the Way.

Eleven is non-harming. This means not harming any [living being](#). Absence of [anger](#) is different from non-harming. Absence of [anger](#) involves not reciprocating when someone else directs [anger](#) at one, or shows [hostility](#) towards one, or does not do what one wants him or her to do. It is a passive stance. But non-harming is a restraint on one's own aggressive tendencies. It refers to how one treats others, specifically by not harming them. Absence of [anger](#) means not retaliating when confronted with opposition, whereas non-harming means not [initiating](#) any kind of harm toward others.

“Climbing upon” is [alambana](#) in [Sanskrit](#) and means “support,” in this case, for a [thought](#) or [mental](#) process. The [Chinese](#) use of the characters that mean “climb upon” to describe the [action](#) of the [mind](#) on a [dharma](#) comes from this meaning. The [mind](#) “climbs upon” [dharma](#)s in the same way that other [senses](#) respond to their corresponding [sense objects](#). “Climbing upon” refers to the various ways in which the [mind](#) sets up factors that make states arise or act as a support for those states.

Shastra:

Four, the six fundamental [afflictions](#) are:

1. [greed](#);
2. [anger](#);
3. [foolishness](#);
4. [arrogance](#);
5. [doubt](#); and,
6. improper [views](#).

Commentary:

Division four is the six fundamental [afflictions](#), which in turn bring about the subsidiary or derivative [afflictions](#). The six fundamental [afflictions](#) are actually the Five Dull Servants: [greed](#), [anger](#), [foolishness](#), [arrogance](#) and [doubt](#), together with the Five Sharp Servants, or improper [views](#): the [view](#) of a [body](#), extreme [views](#), the [view](#) of [grasping](#) at prohibitions, the [view](#) of [grasping](#) at [views](#), and deviant [views](#).

The Five Dull Servants

1. [Greed](#).
2. [Anger](#).
3. [Foolishness](#).
4. [Arrogance](#).
5. [Doubt](#).

The Five Sharp Servants

1. [View](#) of a [body](#).
2. Extreme [views](#).
3. [View](#) of [grasping](#) at prohibitions.
4. [View](#) of [grasping](#) at [views](#).
5. Deviant [views](#).

[Greed](#), [anger](#), [foolishness](#), [arrogance](#) and [doubt](#) are called the five dull servants, because they entail a lack of [understanding](#), an inability to make [sound](#) judgments. Furthermore, their onset is very slow and obtuse : hence the [name](#), “dull servants.” The sharp ones, on the other hand, are very quick, able to assess situations quite rapidly and decisively.

The first one of these [afflictions](#) is [greed](#). [Greed](#) is impossible to satisfy. There is [greed](#) for [wealth](#), for [sex](#), for [fame](#), for [food](#), and for [sleep](#), as well as [greed](#) for [forms](#), [sounds](#), [smells](#), [tastes](#), and [objects](#) of [touch](#).

Second is [anger](#). Being [greedy](#) and then not obtaining the [object](#) of one’s [greed](#) leads to the [arising](#) of [anger](#). When things do not go according to one’s wishes, one becomes [angry](#). Once [anger](#) arises, it culminates in [foolish behavior](#). [Foolishness](#) is just [ignorance](#), a lack of clarity, a [confusion](#) that [causes](#) one to do muddled and inappropriate things. In this frame of [mind](#), one might do anything.

Four is [arrogance](#). Being [arrogant](#), proud, and haughty, one looks down on everyone else and has a very contemptuous [attitude](#).

Five is [doubt](#). Being [doubtful](#), when something comes up, one cannot make up one’s [mind](#) about it, is never quite sure about it, and never [knows](#) quite what to think.

Six is improper [views](#). As mentioned, this single fundamental [affliction](#) divides into five parts.

1. The [view](#) of a [body](#). One is [attached](#) to one’s own [body](#) as being “me” or “mine.” One regards the [body](#) as belonging to and comprising oneself and regards what belongs to a [self](#) as actually being oneself.

2. Extreme [views](#). The [view](#) of a [body](#) leads to extreme [views](#), and then causing one to be prejudiced to one extreme or another. If one does not lean too far to the left, then one leans too far to the right. If one does not go too far, one does not go far enough. One is not in accord with the [Middle Way](#), hence the term “extreme [views](#)”.

3. The [view](#) of [grasping](#) at [views](#). This kind of [grasping](#) is the same [grasping](#) found in the Twelve-fold [Conditioned Arising](#). This is the deviant [view](#) of mistaking what is not a result for a result. [People](#) with this kind of [view](#) may claim to have [attained](#) an unattainable result.

4. The [view](#) of [grasping](#) at prohibitions. This is the [observance of precepts](#) that should not be observed. For instance, in [India](#) there are those who adopt the [behavior](#) of cows and [dogs](#) as [precepts](#). A [person](#) with this kind of [view](#) mistakes what was not a legitimate [cause](#) for a legitimate [cause](#).

5. Deviant [views](#). [People](#) with deviant [knowledge](#) and deviant [views](#) would not speak proper [Dharma](#). However, they would willingly talk about [defiled dharmas](#). This means particularly discussing the affairs between men and women, saying what men are like and what women are like. That is to be steeped in deviant [views](#), leading them to say things like, “You do not need to hold the [precepts](#); only stupid [people](#) hold [precepts](#). [People](#) with [wisdom](#) do not need to hold them.” They continue talking about [defiled dharmas](#), until eventually their listeners, who originally did not harbor [thoughts of desire](#) or have [defiled thinking](#), are [caused](#) to give rise to them. Someone may be very [pure](#) and clear of [mind](#) and just on the verge of obtaining the state of [Chan samadhi](#), having gotten rid of the “guest-dust.” But, encountering someone who discusses [defiled](#) things, that [person](#) lets the “guest-dust” back in again, and starts having [thoughts of desire](#).

And so, when you lecture on the [Dharma](#), whether you are a [monastic](#) or a [layperson](#), a man or woman, you should not discuss [defiled dharmas](#). You should speak on the [Dharmas](#) of [purity](#). You

should [purify](#) the [six sense faculties](#), and not [cause people](#) to have [thoughts of desire](#). If you do speak about [defiled dharmas](#), in the [future](#) you are sure to undergo a most terrible retribution.

Thus far we have discussed the eleven [wholesome dharmas](#), followed by the six fundamental [afflictions](#). Next, we will discuss the twenty derivative [afflictions](#), which arise in the wake of the six fundamental [afflictions](#).

Shastra:

Five, the twenty derivative [afflictions](#) are:

1. [wrath](#);
2. [hatred](#);
3. [rage](#);
4. covering;
5. [deceit](#);
6. flattery;
7. [conceit](#);
8. harming;
9. [jealousy](#);
10. [stinginess](#);
11. lack of remorse;
12. [lack of shame](#);
13. lack of [faith](#);
14. [laziness](#);
15. laxness;
16. [torpor](#);
17. [restlessness](#);
18. [distraction](#);
19. improper [knowledge](#); and,
20. scatteredness.

Commentary:

Division five is the twenty derivative [afflictions](#), called “derivative,” because they result from the six fundamental [afflictions](#).

The Three Grades of Derivative [Afflictions](#)

1. Major-grade derivative [afflictions](#)
2. Intermediate-grade derivative [afflictions](#)
3. Minor-grade derivative [afflictions](#)

The Three Groups of Derivative [Afflictions](#)

1. Typical intermediate-grade [afflictions](#)
2. Typical major-grade [afflictions](#)
3. Typical minor-grade [afflictions](#)

These groupings are illustrated by the saying:

[People](#) of the same type [gather](#) together.
Things are classed in similar groups.

For instance, [people](#) who study the [Buddhadharma](#) [gather](#) together in one place. [People](#) who study [demonic dharmas](#) go to places where [demonic dharmas](#) are taught. [People](#) who want to learn [mundane dharmas](#) find a place where [mundane dharmas](#) can be studied. Things, too, are divided into separate groups according to their type. Their varieties and distinctions are inexpressibly many.

The Three Factors Involving Derivative Afflictions

1. Reinforcement by types.
2. Pervasive infection by the unwholesome nature.
3. Permeation by two defilements of the mind.
 - a. Defilement by covering.
 - b. Indeterminate defilement.

1. Reinforcement by types. This is when intermediate-grade afflictions are produced together with other intermediate-grade afflictions, major-grade afflictions are produced together with other major-grade afflictions, and minor-grade afflictions are produced together with other minor-grade afflictions.

2. Pervasive infection by the unwholesome nature. Pervasive infection means that the afflictions interact and influence each other. For instance, lack of remorse also brings about lack of shame, because if one is not repentant, one will also not feel ashamed. Another example is lack of faith, which gives rise in turn to laziness, laxness, and other derivative afflictions.

3. Permeation by two defilements of the mind.

- a. Defilement by covering.

Covering means keeping things hidden and not allowing anyone to know.

Indeterminate defilement.

Indeterminate means the defilement cannot be categorized as to its relative goodness or evil. If all three factors are present, the affliction is a major grade one. If two factors are present, the affliction is an intermediate grade one. If none of the three factors is present, then the affliction that has arisen is an isolated one and is thus classified as a minor-grade affliction.

First, we will discuss the ten minor derivative afflictions. Number one is wrath. Wrath occurs when a state arises which is in opposition to one's wishes. When something is not going one's way, when something is really bothering one, when one becomes very emotional about something, then wrath can arise. It comes on suddenly and is a combination of anger and hatred, an unexpected and intense emotional reaction.

Two is hatred. This affliction occurs when one is faced with situations similar to the ones described above, but one does not vent one's wrath. Instead, one represses the emotional feelings deep inside. The hatred which results then becomes like a rope, binding one's heart in a tight knot.

Three is rage. The Chinese character for rage also occurs in the pair of Chinese characters that means affliction. This emotional reaction is much more severe than hatred. When rage happens, one literally explodes. When things become unbearable, one gets infuriated. Rage is a very fierce emotional reaction.

Four is covering. This is hiding something inside, keeping it bottled up and not allowing it to surface. Basically, one is quite afflicted about something, feeling the kinds of wrath, hatred, and rage described above, but fears the reactions of the other person. And so one keeps the emotions to oneself and is not straightforward about expressing those feelings. One does not say, "I can't stand you," "I'm not happy with you," or anything of the sort. One conceals and represses one's feelings, storing them up inside and not revealing them to the person directly. Then, when the time comes, one assassinates the person. Openly one might not succeed in harming him, so one stabs him in the back to do him in.

Five is deceit. Deceit is a false kindness and phony intention. One appears to be kindly but in fact is not really that way. For instance, one may say, "I have some dope here which I'll give you free. Here, take some." The person takes the drugs and thereupon becomes addicted. Having an addiction, he is then forced to buy dope from the one who "gave" him the stuff "free" to begin with. That is an example of deceit.

Six is flattery. This means playing up to [people](#), being obsequious. It means being a [sycophant](#), puffing [people](#) up, giving them high hats to wear. For instance one says, “Oh, Sir, where are you going. I was [thinking](#) of going to see you. I have a [friend](#) who really [thinks](#) highly of you. He is going to want to get together with you and include you in a big business deal he has going,” and so forth.

Flattery means playing up to those who are rich when one is poor. Just because someone is wealthy, one addresses that [person](#) with all kinds of deference, using [venerable](#) titles and [polite](#) phrases. “You’re quite a fellow, a truly great man. You are a distinguished [person](#). You’re really wonderful.” This occurs when [ordinary people](#) are before the President. They scramble for words, searching for all the nicest things to say and falling all over themselves to make an [impression](#) in expressing them.

Seven is [conceit](#). One caught up in this [affliction](#) has a disproportionate [sense](#) of one’s own worth. Basically, one does not have much [sense](#), but one [thinks](#) more highly of oneself than one does of others. For example, one may be uneducated and yet say things like, “What do [people](#) with [education](#) know anyway? What good does it do them? I’ve never studied, but look at me. There’s good [food](#) on my table and I’ve got plenty of [money](#) in my pocket.” That is being conceited. One [feels](#) one’s own value surpasses that of other [people](#).

Eight is harming. With this [affliction](#) one wants to harm others. One of the eleven [wholesome dharmas](#) was non-harming. This [affliction](#) is the exact opposite of the good [dharma](#).

Nine is [jealousy](#). This [affliction](#) occurs when one becomes envious of those who surpass one in some way or other. For example, someone may be endowed with an [excellent memory](#). Because of this, one becomes [jealous](#) of that [person thinking](#), “If only that [person](#) weren’t around, then I would be number One. As long as he’s here I don’t get to be First.” That is [jealousy](#). Or one may get [jealous](#) of someone with a higher level of [education](#) than one possesses, and end up [thinking](#) the same kind of [thought](#): “As long as that [person](#) is around, I can’t be Number One. Without that [person](#), I would be the most highly educated one here.” Being [jealous](#) of anyone who surpasses one in any way is included in the [definition](#) of this [affliction](#).

Ten is [stinginess](#). With this [affliction](#), one is tight with one’s benefits, not wishing to share them with others. One is unable to give anything away. For instance, if a stingy [person](#) has [money](#) and it is suggested he part with some of it, he simply cannot bring himself to do so. He hangs on to that [money](#), squeezing every penny of it so tightly that it turns to liquid and melts away in his palm. Then he wonders where it went. The pigeons were no [doubt](#) stingy in [past lives](#) in addition to being [greedy](#). They could not give up their possessions so now they must endure the retribution of always having to “sponge” off others. They do not have anything of their own. If you suggested to a [pigeon](#) that it give anything away, it would not be able to do it. Those are the ten minor-grade derivative [afflictions](#). Next are the two intermediate-grade derivative [afflictions](#).

Eleven is lack of remorse. One of the eleven [wholesome dharmas](#) is remorse, and so this [affliction](#) is its opposite. One who lacks remorse always [feels](#) self-righteous. One assumes one is entitled to do whatever one wishes. One considers oneself a special [person](#), an [exceptional individual](#). Those who call themselves [extraordinary](#) simply have no [sense](#) of remorse. They lack a [feeling](#) of repentance.

Twelve is [lack of shame](#). One who lacks [shame](#) never really examines whether or not one is up to the standards of others. One never [feels](#) that what one does might not be on a par with what others do, nor does one [fear](#) ridicule or reprisal. One has no [concern](#) for public opinion and [feels](#) no [sense](#) of [embarrassment](#) even when the things one does are in fact mean and lowly. Such a [person](#) lacks the [feeling](#) of [shame](#). Last, we will look at the eight major-grade derivative [afflictions](#).

Thirteen is lack of [faith](#). Among the eleven [wholesome dharmas](#) was [faith](#). This [affliction](#) is the exact opposite. One does not believe in anyone. One does not [trust](#) one’s [teacher](#) or anyone else. If the [teacher](#) lacks [faith](#), he does not [trust](#) his [disciples](#). If the [disciples](#) lack [faith](#), they do not [trust](#) the

[teacher](#). A son who lacks [faith](#) will not [trust](#) even his father, and a father who lacks [faith](#) will not believe his son, much less need we mention siblings. Brothers and sisters who lack [faith](#) will not believe in each other. Their [attitude](#) will be, “How can you expect me to [trust](#) you? You should believe in me.”

When one gets to the point of [thinking](#) that others should believe in one, always convinced that one is quite great, then no [matter](#) what others tell one, one will [doubt](#) its validity. If one speaks the [Dharma](#) for a [person](#) who lacks [faith](#), the [reaction](#) will be, “That’s just a bunch of phony words; it’s all false. You call that [Dharma](#)? What kind of [Dharma](#), anyway? You’re just trying to trick us.” That is the [attitude](#) of one who lacks [faith](#). But actually that is not so far off, for when I speak the [Dharma](#), there is not a single bit of [truth](#) in it. You should not listen to it. In fact, you should run away really fast. An example is the [person](#) outside the door who stated clearly, “I’m an outsider,” and upon being asked to come in, ran away. That is lack of [faith](#).

Fourteen is [laziness](#). This [affliction](#) is the exact opposite of [vigor](#). It is being actively non-vigorous. It is another [name](#) for indolence.

Fifteen is laxness. Another of the eleven [wholesome dharmas](#) was non-laxness. This [affliction](#) is its opposite. It means one does not follow the rules but does whatever one pleases. It is akin to the “freedom” or “[independence](#)” that [Americans](#) advocate. When that [concept](#) is carried too far it results in laxness. Laxness means not obeying one’s [parents](#), but proceeding to do exactly what one wants. This particular [affliction](#) is a major [reason](#) why it is such a headache [teaching Americans](#). You [laugh](#), but it is true.

Sixteen is [torpor](#). This is the [affliction](#) of wanting to nod off during the [sutra](#) lectures. In fact, it does not [matter](#) what one is doing, with this [affliction](#), one wants to fall asleep in the process. Reading a [sutra](#), one wants to fall asleep. Bowing to the [Buddhas](#), one wants to nod off. While translating [sutras](#), one has the [urge](#) to [sleep](#). Listening to the [sutra](#) lectures, one is even less willing to stay awake. [Torpor](#) is another [name](#) for sleepiness. However, [torpor](#) is different from [foolishness](#). [Foolishness](#) is a general [darkness](#) and lack of clarity, an inability to understand what is going on. [Torpor](#) is a dream-like, foggy [state of mind](#) in which one is oblivious to what is going on around one. One is sitting there, and suddenly everything goes blank. One cannot remember anything that has been happening. Listening to [sutras](#), one suddenly can not remember anything that was just said. It is like being in a [dream](#) and yet is not actually dreaming. It is what is described in the verse:

If one who is deluded transmits it to another,
After all is said and done, neither one [understands](#).
The [teacher](#) falls into the [hells](#),
And the [disciple](#) burrows in after him.

Seventeen is [restlessness](#). With this [affliction](#), one is agitated and cannot keep still, like the demon-king who came here the other day. One is unable to manage the cultivation of [calm](#), [pure](#) states. One runs around aimlessly and chaotically. Sitting, one gets restless

and decides to stand. [Standing](#), one gets agitated and decides to sit. Walking, one starts out going [north](#) and ends up headed [south](#) or starts out [east](#) and ends up going [west](#). One is all over the place, unable to settle down. That is what happens to the [body](#).

One’s [mouth](#) is just as chaotic. Saying whatever one pleases, one “runs off at the [mouth](#)” like that demon-king that day, full of chaotic and confusing talk.

[Restlessness](#) also affects the [mind](#). One does a tremendous amount of uncontrolled [thinking](#). One [thought](#) replaces the next in an aimless wandering that goes off on tangents and cannot stick to the point. One starts out [thinking](#) about one thing, and ends up [thinking](#) about something entirely different. One’s [thinking](#) enters “Never-never Land” and starts to fantasize wildly. “I ascended to the [heavens](#) where a [god](#) told me that in three days I’d get [reborn](#) in the [heavens](#). Now did that really happen?” One [thinks](#) about things one has no business [thinking](#) about. “I went to a certain

place in [meditation](#) and ended up suspended in [empty space](#). Did that really happen? Or will it happen?" The [mind](#) becomes tangled in [chaos](#) as one contrives all kinds of [non-existent experiences](#). See how pathetic this [Restlessness](#) is?

Eighteen is [distraction](#). With this [affliction](#) one loses proper [mindfulness](#), and is only [mindful](#) of the deviant. It is another way to enter "Fantasy Land." But in this case one ends up [thinking](#) about things that are not [wholesome](#). Whatever goes against the rules, this [person thinks](#) about. But what accords with the rules, he does not think about. His [thinking](#) does not accord with the rules when he indulges in this [affliction](#).

Nineteen is improper [knowledge](#). With this [affliction](#), one becomes obsessed with [defilement](#). It is all one [knows](#). There is nothing proper at all in one's [knowledge](#). And twenty is scatteredness. Scatteredness entails totally wild [confusion](#). The [mind](#) becomes mixed-up and divided against itself. This [affliction](#) is different from [restlessness](#).

If we were to go into the [subtle](#) details of each one, a lot could be said. This will suffice to introduce these twenty derivative [afflictions](#) to you. Now that you know about them, I [hope](#) that you will give rise to more [afflictions](#), to the point that you will eat your fill of [afflictions](#), and not have to eat [food](#). Then, if there were a famine, you would not [die](#) of hunger, because you would have lots of [afflictions](#) to eat.

[Shastra](#):

Six, the four unfixed are:

1. [sleep](#);
2. [regret](#);
3. [investigation](#); and,
4. examination.

Commentary:

The Fifty-one [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#) are grouped into six divisions, of which we have already discussed five. Now we come to division six, the four unfixed. They are known as unfixed because they are basically [indeterminate](#). Since there is nothing fixed about them, they are called unfixed. If there were anything definite about them, they would not be said to be "unfixed." They are [indeterminate](#) in that they are not necessarily [wholesome dharmas](#), and not necessarily [defiled dharmas](#). A decidedly [wholesome dharma](#) would be, for example, bringing forth the [Bodhi](#) resolve. A decidedly [defiled dharma](#) would be bringing forth [thoughts](#) of [lust](#). Another way these [dharmas](#) are unfixed is that they do not necessarily pervade all [minds](#) and do not necessarily pervade all grounds. How many unfixed [dharmas](#) are there? There are four kinds.

The first one is [sleep](#) in the text we are using, although most texts have what is here two, [regret](#), listed first. [Sleep](#) is a kind of dark [obscurity](#), a blackness and lack of clarity. But the lack of clarity does not mean inability to understand. Rather, it refers to a [darkness](#) that pervades all you do. [Sleep](#) can result in two problems. Externally, it deprives you of affinities with other [people](#), and internally it blocks contemplation.

Hence [sleep](#) can lead to [social](#) isolation, and can [cause](#) you to lack [wisdom](#). This dark lack of clarity is an unfixed [dharma](#).

The second one, [regret](#), is sometimes called [self](#) reproach. What does one [regret](#)? When these [dharmas](#) are being explained, you should pay close [attention](#). Be very attentive and do not let the explanation of them pass by your [ears](#) like a breeze, so that although I explain so many [dharmas](#) for you, afterwards you still do not understand. When it is [time](#) to lose your temper, you still lose your temper. When it comes [time](#) to get [angry](#), you go ahead and get [angry](#) just the same, and are not the least bit able to apply what you have learned. As soon as you hear it, it evaporates. If that is the case, then there has been no use at all in listening to this explanation. If you listen to the [Sutras](#) with that [attitude](#), then even a hundred great eons of doing so would not be of any great use.

It should be that, having heard a lecture you think, “The [Shastra](#) is telling me I shouldn’t have [afflictions](#), so from now on I’m not going to have even one of the twenty derivative [afflictions](#), and will basically not let the six fundamental [afflictions](#) arise.” That is the way someone who has brought forth the resolve for [Bodhi](#) applies them. It should not be that as the [afflictions](#) are being explained, and the more names for them you learn, the more of them you give rise to. That is what I was talking about when I advised you before that you could now “eat” more [afflictions](#). Previously you did not know, but now when you get [angry](#) you can wonder whether you should be using [wrath](#) or [hatred](#). Before, you did not understand there were so many [afflictions](#) to choose from, and now that you know, it has greatly expanded your repertoire. You think, “Let’s see, now is a good [time](#) to use [rage](#); or maybe covering is in order. That way I can destroy you behind your back.” If that is what you are [learning](#), then you are making a big mistake. You have listened to the [Shastra](#) in vain.

[Regret](#) is also sometimes listed as self-reproach, because it arises with regard to [deeds](#) not done right. “Why did I do that, anyway?” Having done something wrong, one regrets it. Or one regrets not having done some bad things to someone, [thinking](#) things like, “Why didn’t I do such-and-such a thing to that particular [person](#)? That would have put him in his place for sure. It would have totally done him in. Why didn’t I think of it then!” Or, “Why didn’t I hack off his arm with my knife when I had the chance? That way he couldn’t have hit me.” It is that kind of [regret](#) that is meant here. [Regret](#) arises when one is not satisfied with one’s [actions](#) or inactions, or when one [feels](#) one has done something the wrong way. That is the first, [regret](#) or self-reproach.

Three is [investigation](#), and four is examination. [Investigation](#) is a coarser [dharma](#) than examination. When you are just about to act in a way that could be good or bad, you do a kind of reckoning with yourself. You hold a meeting with yourself in your [mind](#), and take stock of what you are about to do. You think to yourself, “If I handle this [matter](#) in such-and-such a way, will it turn out well?” Then you answer yourself, “No! Don’t do that! How could you?” In this way you have a meeting with yourself. If this meeting in your [mind](#) is on a coarse level, then it is called [investigation](#). This is when you obviously are going back and forth with yourself.

But if your [thinking](#) is very [subtle](#), then it is called examination. These two unfixed [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#) have discursive [thought](#) as their basis and result in a kind of [discrimination](#). [Investigation](#) and examination are like that. We have now completed [discussion](#) of the sixth division; namely, the four unfixed [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#).

[Shastra](#):

The third is the [Form Dharmas](#). In general, there are eleven kinds:

1. [eyes](#);
2. [ears](#);
3. [nose](#);
4. [tongue](#);
5. [body](#);
6. [forms](#);
7. [sounds](#);
8. [smells](#);
9. [flavors](#);
10. [objects](#) of [touch](#); and,
11. [dharmas](#) pertaining to [form](#).

Commentary:

To review, so far we have discussed the first overall category of Eight [Mind Dharmas](#), and the second overall category of Fifty-one [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#). Now we come to the third major group, which is the [Form Dharmas](#). [Form Dharmas](#) are those which have shape and substantial [physical form](#), a kind of obstructive quality. They have substantial shape that can be seen, and obstructiveness that can be interacted with. They stand in contrast to the [Mind Dharmas](#)

and [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#).

Number one is [eyes](#). The [eyes](#) are classified as a [form dharma](#), because not only can they see all kinds of [forms](#), they are themselves [physical forms](#). They have a substantial shape and can be seen. When the [eyes](#) see things that are [enjoyable](#) to look at, they never get tired of looking at them. But if they look at things which are [unpleasant](#) to see, they [object](#) to the [sight](#) and resist looking.

Two is [ears](#). The [ears](#) hear all kinds of [sounds](#). If the [ears](#) hear [sounds](#) that are [pleasurable](#), they can listen day after day without any [sense](#) of [fatigue](#). But as soon as they hear something that is not [pleasant](#), they do not like it and quickly grow tired of it. Three is [nose](#). The [nose smells](#) scents, and if they are [pleasant](#) and fragrant, then the more it [smells](#) the better it likes it. It never grows tired of [smelling](#). But if it has to [smell](#) some stench, it will [object](#) from the moment it gets a whiff of it and grow tired of it immediately.

Four is [tongue](#). The [tongue tastes flavors](#). If they are [pleasant flavors](#), the [tongue](#) is [delighted](#) to [taste](#) them. If the [flavors](#) are [unpleasant](#), it does not like to [taste](#) them. It says, “Ugh, that’s too [bitter](#)! I don’t want to eat it!”

Five is [body](#). If the [body](#) likes something, it wants to get near it and come into [contact](#) with it. If it does not like something, it wants to stay far away from it. Those five [Form Dharmas](#) just discussed are the five internal [sense organs](#). The sixth in the list, the [faculty](#) of the [mind](#), is not a [form dharma](#), because the [intellect](#) belongs to the [sixth consciousness](#), making it a [mind dharma](#).

Six, [forms](#); seven, [sounds](#); eight, [smells](#); nine, [flavors](#); and ten, [objects of touch](#) are all included under the category of [Form Dharmas](#). They are the five external [sense objects](#), or dusts.

Number eleven of the [Form Dharmas](#) is [dharmas](#) pertaining to [form](#). This is classed as a type of [form dharma](#), because these [dharmas](#) are the shadows cast within the [intellect](#) by the five external dusts. Thus, even though they happen in the [mind](#), they belong to [form](#). What is the origin of these Eleven [Form Dharmas](#)? It is the [Nature](#) of the Treasury of the [Thus Come One](#). All these [dharmas](#) are composed of the [four elements](#).

The [Four Elements](#)

1. [Earth](#).
2. [Water](#).
3. [Fire](#).
4. [Air](#).

[Eyes](#), [ears](#), [nose](#), [tongue](#), [body](#), [forms](#), [sounds](#), [smells](#), [flavors](#), [objects of touch](#), and [dharmas](#) pertaining to [form](#) are composed of the [four elements](#). These [sense organs](#) and the [sense objects](#) are formed by the coming together of the [four elements](#).

Besides that, [earth](#), [air](#), [fire](#), and [water](#) fill the entire [Dharma Realm](#). In the [Shurangama Sutra](#), the [principle](#) of the [four elements](#) is discussed in detail, and it is shown how they are all the [nature](#) of the Treasury of the [Thus Come One](#). We ordinary we [people](#) consider [fire](#) and [water](#) to be incompatible. However, [water](#) pervades the entire [Dharma Realm](#), as does [fire](#). [Air](#) and [earth](#) also entirely pervade the [Dharma Realm](#). Within the [Dharma Realm](#) they assist one another and do not interfere with one another. [Water](#) is not incompatible with [fire](#) and [fire](#) does not hinder [water](#). They all get along just fine! How can this be? It is because in [nature](#) they are all the Treasury of the [Thus Come One](#). Our [bodies](#) start out as being the [four elements](#), and from these arise all the various [dharmas](#). [People](#) who have never listened to the [sutras](#) before may find it [hard to fathom](#) how our [bodies](#) are composed of the [four elements](#), but if you look into it in detail, it will become clear to you, and you will know that it is true.

Take for example the moist parts of your [body](#), the perspiration, [urine](#), and all the other liquids. These belong to the [element water](#). Your temperature belongs to the [element fire](#). Your [breath](#) belongs to the [element air](#). And your [skin](#), flesh, muscles, and bones belong to the [element earth](#). When the [four elements](#) come together in this way, then the Eleven [Form Dharmas](#) result. This has

been just a brief explanation of how these [Form Dharmas](#) come about. If you really want to know about them, you will have to become [enlightened](#), and then you will be able to completely fathom them.

There are only two major categories of [dharmas](#) left, and so my explanation of them will soon be completed. Then, the question of whether or not you enter this “door to [understanding](#)” lies with you. Whether I have explained them clearly is my [concern](#). Whether you have listened to them clearly is your [concern](#). If you are clear, then you will understand these hundred [dharmas](#). If you are not clear, then you will not have understood them. If you understand these hundred [dharmas](#), then you will be able to understand all the [essential principles](#) of [Buddhism](#). If you have understood them, then it can be said you have opened an [enlightenment](#). If you have not understood them, you can keep studying them gradually.

[Shastra](#):

The fourth is [Activities Dharmas](#) Non-interactive with the [Mind](#). In general, there are twenty-four:

1. [attainment](#);
2. life-faculty;
3. generic similarity;
4. dissimilarity;
5. the No-thought [Samadhi](#);
6. the [Samadhi](#) of [Extinction](#);
7. the Reward of No-Thought;
8. [bodies](#) of nouns;
9. [bodies](#) of sentences;
10. [bodies](#) of phonemes;
11. [birth](#);
12. dwelling;
13. [aging](#);
14. [impermanence](#);
15. revolving;
16. [distinction](#);
17. interaction;
18. speed;
19. sequence;
20. [time](#);
21. [direction](#);
22. numeration;
23. combination; and,
24. [discontinuity](#).

Commentary:

The fourth is the [Activities Dharmas](#) Non-interactive with the [Mind](#). Non-interactive explained in contemporary terms means not cooperating. You do not cooperate with me, and I do not cooperate with you. For example, if I say, “Let’s go [east](#),” and you insist on going [west](#), then that is not cooperating, and we are non-interactive. If we are interactive, then we cooperate. In that case, when I say “to the [east](#),” you also go [east](#), and when I suggest heading [west](#), you go [west](#), too. Another example of interaction is when we take some grain in our hands and the pigeons come and eat out of our hands. We have the grain and they want to eat it, so we interact. But if they did not eat it, then there would not be any interaction.

What is it that these twenty-four Non-interactive [Dharmas](#) do not interact with? They do not interact with the [Mind Dharmas](#). They do not interact with the [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#). They do not interact with the [Form Dharmas](#), and even less would they interact with the [Unconditioned](#)

Dharmas. That is because they are very special.

How is it that they do not interact with the Mind Dharmas or Dharmas Belonging to the Mind? Mind Dharmas and Dharmas Belonging to the Mind are able to “climb on” external states. They have that ability. But these twenty-four non-interactive dharmas do not have the same ability as Mind Dharmas and Dharmas Belonging to the Mind. They are not able to “climb upon” states. Therefore, they are not interactive with Mind Dharmas or Dharmas Belonging to the Mind.

You might say that if they do not interact with Mind Dharmas and Dharmas Belonging to the Mind, at least they should be interactive with Form Dharmas. But they are not interactive with those either. Why not? These dharmas cannot be called Form Dharmas, because they do not have any substance, and they do not have any marks. They have no physical characteristics. All twenty-four of these dharmas are false. They are absolutely and totally false, so do not mistake them for something real. The reason they do not interact with the other dharmas is that they are false and therefore cannot combine with anything else at all. Nonetheless they do exist. But although they exist, they have no substance of their own, no characteristics of their own. Therefore, they do not interact.

They do not have any real shape or characteristics, and so they are false.

You are listening to the Dharma, and there are both true dharmas and false dharmas. Now I am speaking false dharmas for you, but that is because it is necessary for you to know the false dharmas in order for your true nature can appear. If you do not know the false dharmas, how can you attain your true nature? If you mistake the false for the true, then that becomes the false within the false, unreality within unreality. It is false to start with, and you add some further unreality. That is to be like the Venerable Ananda. We cannot simply call him “Ananda,” but should add the title “Venerable.” He wanted to attain the true, but was afraid of losing the false. He could not give up the false. If you cannot let go of what is false, the true will not manifest. Hence there is the saying:

If you cannot give up the false,
You will not accomplish the true.
If you cannot give up death,
You cannot exchange it for life.

Now I am telling you about these twenty-four kinds of false dharmas. Although they have no shape or characteristics, they are still subject to production and extinction. Since they are subject to production and extinction, they also are not interactive with the Unconditioned Dharmas. The unconditioned is not subject to production or extinction, but these twenty-four false dharmas all have a nature subject to production and extinction. They are basically shadows cast by the interaction of Form Dharmas, Mind Dharmas, and Dharmas Belonging to the Mind. Consequently, they are false; there is actually nothing true about them.

Someone is thinking, “Today I really wanted to hear some true Dharma, but all this Dharma Master has talked about is false dharmas. If I had known his whole lecture was going to be about false dharmas, I wouldn’t have come to listen.” Well, if you refuse to hear about false dharmas, then there is no true Dharma. First you have to learn about false dharmas, and then you will be able to recognize true Dharma. Therefore, this is still a case of speaking the false for the sake of the true, and then the false is dispersed so the true appears.

As to these Activities Dharmas Non-interactive with the Mind, in general there are twenty-four. The first one is attainment. Attainment means starting out not having something and then getting it. And where does attainment generated from? It arises from greed. Within a state of not wanting anything, you suddenly want to gain something.

For example, you might say, “I’ve attained a piece of gold. Tell me, is this gold or not?” However, the gold itself is not the attainment. Attainment is a pseudonym, an unreal designation, hence it is a false dharma.

The life-faculty, or root of life, comes from seeds residing in the eighth consciousness. When these

[seeds](#) are vivified, there is [life](#). As soon as the [eighth consciousness](#) resides in your [body](#), your [body](#) is alive. When the [eighth consciousness](#) is in your [body](#), the [life faculty](#) is there. When the [eighth consciousness](#) leaves your [body](#), [life](#) goes with it. Therefore, the [root](#) of [life](#), the [life faculty](#), is false as well. Do not think, “This [life](#) of mine is true. No [matter](#) what, I’m going to take care of this [precious body](#) of mine. Nobody can get away with bumping into me. I will not allow anyone to say anything the least bit impolite to me.” It is just because you are unable to give up your [root](#) of [life](#) that you are unable to become [enlightened](#) and cannot achieve [Buddhahood](#). The [life faculty](#) is actually harmful to you, it is a detriment, but you do not realize it. You think it is a [precious treasure](#). You consider your [life](#) to be valuable and important. But that is just an [attachment](#). You are mistaking the false for the true. Your [self-nature](#) is true but your [life](#) is not true. The [life faculty](#) is false.

Three, generic similarity, refers to a group having similar shares. For example, you have a [body](#), which is your share and I have a [body](#) which is my share. The fact that every [person](#) has a [body](#) is thus known as a generic similarity. [Ordinary people](#) have a generic similarity with other [ordinary people](#); those of the [Two Vehicles](#) have a generic similarity with others of the [Two Vehicles](#). There is a generic similarity among [Bodhisattvas](#). However, within these similarities there are also some dissimilarities, the next [dharma](#).

Dissimilarity. Let us take an example of two [people](#). Because they are both [people](#), they have a generic similarity. But one of these [people](#) is impetuous. He just barges right in and starts doing things, with a positive [attitude](#). The other [person](#) is [cautious](#) and somewhat negative. He hesitates to do anything. Now the impetuous [person](#) says of the [cautious person](#), “See that guy? He doesn’t do anything at all. Just eats and sleeps. What use is he anyway? I think we should just get rid of [people](#) like that.”

The [cautious person](#) says of the impetuous [person](#), “See that guy? He would do anything, anything at all! It’s guys like him who are ruining the [world](#)! I think we should simply do away with all such [people](#)!” Basically these are two [human beings](#) but they want to eliminate each other. They end up being [jealous](#) and obstructive of each other, and denouncing each other.

There is another good example of dissimilarities within similarities. Take the armor maker and the sword smith. They share a similar [occupation](#), production of armaments. But they are on opposite ends of the spectrum, because the armor maker is intent upon making a product that will be [invincible](#) against swords, lances, [spears](#), arrows, and similar kinds of [weapons](#). His aim is to [protect](#) the [warrior](#). The sword smith, on the other hand, tries to devise [weapons](#) that will pierce the armor. He aims to make his products so sharp that with a single blow they will rend the strongest armor. Although both products are armaments, one product is for defense and the other is for offense. That is a dissimilarity within similarity.

Another example is found within [Buddhism](#) itself. Basically all five divisions of [Buddhism](#) are similar in that they are aspects of [Buddhism](#). But when contention arises between members of various schools, then dissimilarity occurs within that similarity. That is why when someone came the other night and asked me what sect I adhered to, I replied, “I don’t adhere to any one sect.” If you do not align yourself with a particular sect, then there is no way anyone can attack you. But, once [people](#) align themselves within particular sects, then those of the [Chan](#) division say that the [teaching](#) school is no good; and those of the [teaching](#) division say that the [Chan](#) division is wrong. They all [slander](#) each other. That is another example of dissimilarity within a generic similarity.

Another example occurs among “worthies”. From [time](#) immemorial, the worthies have been getting down on one another. One will say, “Oh, [Confucius](#), he’s someone who didn’t have any [sense](#) at all.” Or, another will say, “[Mencius](#)? He understood even less. I have a lot more [wisdom](#) than either one of them.” You see? To begin with, they all had a generic similarity, but when they started slandering one another it ended up creating a dissimilarity, due to their varying propensities and [habits](#). This is just a simple explanation. There would be no way to finish if we discussed this in detail.

Five, the No-Thought [Samadhi](#), is cultivated by those of externalist ways. They distance themselves from production and [extinction](#). They forcefully prevent the [mind](#) and the [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#) from working. They bring the operation of the [mind](#) and the [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#) to a stop, so that there is no actual [thinking](#). But this is really a forced situation. It is similar to putting a heavy rock on a clump of crab grass to prevent the grass from growing up. But the [roots](#) remain. Those immersed in the No-thought [Samadhi](#) are still not free of the seventh consciousness's innate [attachment](#) to [self](#).

The Two Innate [Attachments](#) of the [Seventh Consciousness](#)

1. The innate [attachment](#) to [self](#).
2. The innate [attachment](#) to [dharmas](#).

Six is the [Samadhi](#) of [Extinction](#). This is also a [samadhi](#) cultivated by those of externalist ways. Again, it is a case of using a kind of force as a means to arrive at [extinction](#). Here, the [sixth consciousness](#) and the [Dharmas](#) Belonging to the [Mind](#) cease to [function](#), just as in the No-Thought [Samadhi](#) described above. That means that one in this [samadhi](#) does not strike up false [thoughts](#), yet again it is very forced. Since false [thinking](#) is forcibly [extinguished](#), this is called the [Samadhi](#) of [Extinction](#). However, the seventh consciousness's innate [attachment](#) to [dharmas](#) has not ceased to [function](#). In the one above it was the innate [attachment](#) to [self](#), which is the coarser of the two. Here, the [attachment](#) is a bit subtler and is the innate [attachment](#) to [dharmas](#). The [seventh consciousness](#) and the [eighth consciousness](#) still mingle together and one is not yet free of them. So, although this is called a [samadhi](#), the [Samadhi](#) of [Extinction](#) is not a true [samadhi](#).

Seven, the Reward of No-Thought is different from the No-Thought [Samadhi](#), in that the former is a [cause](#), whereas the latter is a result. The No-Thought [Samadhi](#) is a kind of state in which one has not yet relinquished one's [body](#). The Reward of No-Thought is when one has already relinquished one's [body](#) and receives this Reward of No-Thought. At that [time](#), one is [reborn](#) in the [Heaven](#) of No-Thought, in the [fourth dhyana](#). Although there is no longer any [thought](#), there remains a very [subtle attachment](#) to [form](#), which still [exists](#) in the [eighth consciousness](#) and which one assumes to be one's [life](#). This refers to an extremely [subtle](#) aspect of the marks division of the [eighth consciousness](#). It [causes](#) a [person](#) to still [feel](#) that he has a [life](#). But this [life](#) still has an end to it, and when that occurs, the [person](#) can still fall.

You may remember the [practitioner](#) who cultivated to attain the [Heaven](#) of No-Thought? When he sat in [meditation](#), he was continually disturbed by a [fish](#) jumping in the [water](#), until one day he got [angry](#). He said, "I'm going to turn into a kingfisher and get you, [fish](#). I'm going to eat you up." When he relinquished his [body](#), he was born in the [Heaven](#) of Neither [Thought](#) nor No-Thought, obtaining his reward of no-thought. But after his [heavenly blessings](#) were used up, he fell and was [reborn](#) as a kingfisher. When I tell you that these two pigeons here used to [monastics](#) who did not keep the [precepts](#), and that is how they have ended up, you should understand it is the same [principle](#).

Eight is [bodies](#) of nouns. Nouns are the names of [people](#), places, and things. Every [human being](#) is called a [person](#), which is a [noun](#). They also each have their own [individual](#) names, which are proper nouns. There is also the [distinction](#) of general and specific nouns that applies to material [objects](#). For example, we can call this a burner, or more specifically, an [incense burner](#). We can call that a vase, or more specifically a [flower](#) vase. Here we refer to a general [noun](#) simply as a [noun](#) and a [noun](#) compound as a [body](#) of nouns.

Nine is [bodies](#) of sentences. Just as [bodies](#) of nouns are used to delineate [dharmas](#), so too, are [bodies](#) of sentences used to clarify them. "All [activities](#) are [impermanent](#), characterized by production and [extinction](#)" is a sentence. When groups of sentences are used to reveal [dharmas](#), they are called [bodies](#) of sentences.

Ten is [bodies](#) of phonemes. Phonemes are [sounds](#) that carry meaning in a given [language](#). In [Chinese](#), each [character](#) is monosyllabic. When characters are [compounded](#) in a meaningful way,

they [form](#) a [body](#) of phonemes. The [Sutras](#) are all [bodies](#) of phonemes. All kinds of [books](#), articles, treatises, and so forth, are [bodies](#) of phonemes.

Eleven is [birth](#), and twelve is dwelling. Everything [subject](#) to [birth](#) will also dwell. [People](#), creatures, and things are all [subject](#) to thirteen, which is [aging](#), and fourteen, which is [impermanence](#). With [birth](#), something comes into being that previously did not [exist](#). [Aging](#) refers to the [decline](#) and [decay](#) of something that still [exists](#). Therefore, [aging](#) is also known as “changing.” During the stage of dwelling one remains [stable](#), but when [aging](#) sets in, things become different. These four refer to the cycle of coming into being, dwelling, decaying, and disappearing.

Fifteen, revolving; sixteen, [distinction](#); and seventeen, interaction also relate to each other. Revolving literally means “turning and flowing,” and refers to how we [people](#) have from beginningless [time](#) until the [present](#) been turning on the [wheel](#) of [rebirth](#) in the six [paths](#). We have been flowing and turning in [birth](#) and [death](#) for myriads of [kalpas](#) without rest. This process never stops and so it is called revolving.

Distinction means “determining of differences,” and refers, for example, to the distinctions that occur in the process of [cause and effect](#). Whatever kind of [cause](#) one [plants](#) will reap a corresponding result. But sometimes the same kinds of [causes](#) can lead to different effects, and that is known as [distinction](#).

Interaction is the next, [dharma](#) number seventeen. Someone is wondering how since these twenty-four are called non-interactive there can be one among them called interaction. That is a good question. It appears to be a [contradiction](#), but actually it is not. Basically, these twenty-four [dharma](#)s are non-interactive with the [dharma](#)s of the other four general categories. They do not interact with [Mind Dharma](#)s; they do not interact with [Dharma](#)s Belonging to the [Mind](#); they do not interact with [Form Dharma](#)s; and, they do not interact with [Unconditioned Dharma](#)s. But this [dharma](#) of interaction does interact with the [dharma](#)s within its own category, the rest of the Twenty-four [Activities Dharma](#)s Non-interactive with the [Mind](#). The interaction is that involved with the cycle of [cause and effect](#). The [cause](#) is the beginning of the cycle and the effect is the end outcome. Between the [cause](#) and the effect there is the mark of [karma](#), which interacts with both the [cause](#) and the effect. So this cycle involves the [revolution](#), the [distinction](#), and the interaction. The interaction which occurs is decisive, just like a shadow that follows a shape. It is never inexact by the least bit.

Eighteen, speed, refers to an extremely powerful forward momentum. It is found in the flash of [lightning](#); the velocity of [wind](#); the swiftness of a [bird](#) flying through the [air](#); the quickness of a [rabbit](#) on the run. These are all outward [manifestations](#) of speed. Nineteen, the [dharma](#) of sequence, refers to things being in regular succession, whether it is from above to below, from front to back, or to layers, series or gradations. It is the presence of ordering and the absence of [chaos](#) or [confusion](#).

Twenty is [time](#), is a [dharma](#) that is revealed in the marking of intervals, such as years, months, days, hours. The shortest [interval](#) of [time](#) is a [kshana](#). The longest [interval](#) of [time](#) is limitlessly many [kalpas](#). [Time](#), too, is a [dharma](#).

Twenty-one, [direction](#), refers to location or placement. We distinguish [direction](#) by referring to things as being “in front” or “behind,” to the “left” or to the “right,” “above” or “below,” and so forth in [relation](#) to other things.

Twenty-two, numeration, refers to numbering systems. This, too, is a [dharma](#).

Twenty-three, combination, can be blending and uniting, as when milk is homogenized. Or it may be a fitting together, such as of a jar with its lid.

Twenty-four, [discontinuity](#), is the opposite of combination, in that it refers to spontaneity as opposed to [causation](#). Externalists attach to the extreme [view](#) of spontaneity, whereas those of the [Two Vehicles](#) attach to [causation](#), the coming together of [causes](#) and [conditions](#). But the [Nature](#) of the Treasury of the [Thus Come One](#) is neither [causation](#) nor spontaneity, neither combination nor

[discontinuity](#).

Those are the twenty-four non-interactive [dharma](#)s. They do not belong to [Form Dharma](#)s, [Mind Dharma](#)s, [Dharma](#)s Belonging to the [Mind](#), or [Unconditioned Dharma](#)s, and so are termed the twenty-four not interactive.

[Shastra](#):

The fifth is the [Unconditioned Dharma](#)s, of which there are, in general, six:

1. [unconditioned empty space](#).
2. [unconditioned extinction attained](#) by selection.
3. [unconditioned extinction](#) that is unselected.
4. [unconditioned](#) unmoving [extinction](#).
5. [unconditioned extinction](#) of [feeling](#) and [thinking](#).
6. [unconditioned](#) True [Thusness](#).

Commentary:

The fifth major category is the [Unconditioned Dharma](#)s of which there are, in general, six. One is [unconditioned empty space](#). [Empty space](#) is basically [unconditioned](#), and could not be [conditioned](#). There is no way to describe it as [conditioned](#). It is [empty](#), [empty space](#). But here the [unconditioned](#) refers to one's ability to [contemplate empty space](#). It means to be able to "illumine and [view](#) the [five skandhas](#) all as [empty](#)." Then there is no mark of [self](#), no mark of others, no mark of [living beings](#), and no mark of a lifespan.

You may say, "Well, I cultivate and have a little skill. I always [sleep](#) sitting up and never lie down. I only eat one meal a day." But if you are still [aware](#) that you [sleep](#) sitting up and never lie down, then you still have not reached [unconditioned empty space](#). If you still know that you eat only one meal a day, then you still have not reached [unconditioned empty space](#). If you are [aware](#) that you cultivate, then you still have not reached [unconditioned empty space](#). That is because [unconditioned empty space](#) means your [self-nature](#) is like [empty space](#); your [body](#) is like [empty space](#); what you [contemplate](#) and cultivate is truly devoid of a mark of [self](#), a mark of others, a mark of [living beings](#), and a mark of a lifespan. When you reach that state, then if someone punched you, it would be as if they were punching [empty space](#). Just think what it would be like to punch [empty space](#). [Empty space](#) would not put up any resistance at all. [Empty space](#) certainly would not hit back. If you can cultivate to the point of being like [empty space](#), then nothing will be able to bother you, for you would have reached [empty space](#). That is the meaning of [unconditioned empty space](#).

[Unconditioned empty space](#) is extremely wonderful. I always tell you this, but you never think it is very [interesting](#), because you hear it every day. What is it? It is just, "Everything's okay." If you could really have it be that "everything's okay," then you would be like [empty space](#), because [empty space](#) contains everything within it. Can you think of anything that is not in [empty space](#)? And there is nothing that [empty space](#) rejects. It never gets upsets with you and says, "You, there, who are part of my [empty space](#). You got it so dirty! How can you have gone to the toilet there and gotten my [empty space](#) so dirty?" [Empty space](#) does not think that way. Pigeons, too, for their part are always up in [empty space](#) flying around, and [empty space](#) does not get in their way at all.

If we were to fully discuss [unconditioned empty space](#) in detail, there would be too much to say. Basically you should always [contemplate empty space](#) and reach the point that you have no mark of [self](#), no mark of others, no mark of [living beings](#), and no mark of a lifespan. Then you will unite with the myriad things.

Unite your [virtue](#) with [heaven](#) and [earth](#).

Unite your light with the [sun](#) and [moon](#).

Unite your order with that of the four seasons.

Unite your [good and bad luck](#) with the [ghosts](#) and [spirits](#).

Were you like that, then however great the [virtuous nature](#) of [heaven](#) was, your [virtuous nature](#)

would be just that great. The light of the [sun](#) is very bright, but your light would be just as bright as the sun's. The [moon](#) is also bright, but your light would be as bright as that of the [moon](#). That is what is meant by "uniting one's light with the [sun](#) and [moon](#)."

Spring, summer, fall, and winter are the four seasons. If you cultivate so that you become just like [empty space](#), then when springtime comes, you have the [representation](#) of spring within yourself. In the same way, you represent all the four seasons as they occur. In the spring the myriad things come into being. In the summer the myriad things increase and grow. In the fall the myriad things are harvested, and in the winter they are stored away. You can connect your order with that of the four seasons. And when you unite your [good and bad luck](#) with the [ghosts](#) and [spirits](#), you can know what the [ghosts](#) and [spirits](#) know. Would you call that wonderful or not? When you can reach [unconditioned empty space](#), then you become one with the [natural order](#) of things.

Two is [unconditioned extinction attained](#) by selection. Selection means choosing. You might say, "Well, if it's selected, it seems it would be [conditioned](#), wouldn't it?" Yes, the selection is [conditioned](#), but at the [time](#) when the [extinction](#) is reached, then it is [unconditioned](#). That is why this [dharma](#) is not considered to be a [conditioned dharma](#). The first ninety-four [dharmas](#) were all [conditioned](#). It is only these six that are [Unconditioned Dharmas](#). When one reaches [extinction](#) that is [attained](#) by selection, one has no [body](#), and so it belongs to the [unconditioned](#).

Three is [unconditioned extinction](#) that is unselected. That is when, without making use of the power to choose or select, one's basic [nature](#) is [purified](#). The previous [dharma](#), [unconditioned extinction attained](#) by selection, is the kind of state of [Nirvana](#) certified to by [Bodhisattvas](#) of provisional [enlightenment](#). In addition, when those of the [Two Vehicles](#) [contemplate emptiness](#) by dividing [form](#) into its separate [characteristics](#) until all marks disappear and [form](#) becomes emptied, that it is known as [unconditioned extinction attained](#) by selection. Now this [dharma](#), [unconditioned extinction](#) that is unselected, refers to the fundamental [purification](#) of one's [self-nature](#) without the use of any [effort](#) of [distinction](#) or selection. This is the state certified to by [Bodhisattvas](#) of actual [enlightenment](#).

By contrast, [Bodhisattvas](#) of provisional [enlightenment](#) sever one portion of [ignorance](#) in order to certify to one portion of [enlightenment](#). The [enlightenment](#) they certify to is directly proportionate to the amount of [ignorance](#) they cut off. That is [unconditioned extinction attained](#) by selection. However, [unconditioned extinction](#) that is unselected is the state certified to by [Bodhisattvas](#) of actual [enlightenment](#). This is further subdivided into two categories:

The Two Divisions of [Unconditioned Extinction](#) that is Unselected

1. Absence of [conditioning](#) factors.
2. Fundamental [purification](#) of the [self-nature](#).

With the first kind, absence of [conditioning](#) factors, the required factors for [conditioning](#) are not [present](#). This state of [unconditioned extinction](#) that is unselected can sometimes be [experienced](#) by [ordinary people](#) or those of the [Two Vehicles](#).

Four is [unconditioned](#) unmoving [extinction](#). Unmoving refers to cultivation of the [samadhi](#) of not moving. This kind of unmovingness is original and basic stillness. It is not the kind of non-movement [attained](#) in the No-Thought [Samadhi](#). Therefore, this is [unconditioned](#) unmoving [extinction](#).

Five is [unconditioned extinction](#) of [feeling](#) and [thinking](#). With the previous [unconditioned](#) unmoving [extinction](#), one is [reborn](#) in the [heavens](#) of the [Form Realm](#). With the [attainment](#) of [unconditioned extinction](#) of [feeling](#) and [thinking](#), one is [reborn](#) in the [Formless Realm](#). When one reaches the [Formless Realm](#), one's [mind](#) is not moved by

[suffering](#) or by [pleasure](#). There is no [concept](#) of what is meant by [suffering](#) or what is meant by [pleasure](#). One is not shaken by either of those states.

It is not like we [people](#) who, upon encountering a state of [suffering](#) cannot stand it; and upon

meeting a state of [pleasure](#) want to pursue it. We run around in pursuit of things. For example, you hear someone say, “[Ah!](#) Here’s something that doesn’t [exist](#) in this country. It’s really good to eat!” You say, “Really! I’ll try some!” and you go running after flavor. Do you see? That is your [mind](#) being moved by [pain](#) and [pleasure](#). But when one is certified to this [unconditioned extinction](#) of [feeling](#) and [thinking](#), [pleasure](#) and [pain](#) no longer move one’s [mind](#). You can [experience pleasure](#) and endure [pain](#) without any kind of [effort](#) on your part. You do not have to use [patience](#) to do it. You just basically do not move in the midst of it. This again is fundamentally “Everything’s okay.” When you are unmoved by [suffering](#) or [happiness](#), you have achieved this kind of [samadhi](#) of [unconditioned extinction](#) of [feeling](#) and [thinking](#). That is the fifth.

Take a look. When you think, what do you think of? When you [feel](#), what do you [feel](#)? You think about and [feel pleasure](#) and [pain](#). But when these do not move your [mind](#), then you have achieved [unconditioned extinction](#) of [feeling](#) and [thinking](#). Are there any of you who cultivate the Way who have managed to cultivate to this state? If you get to this state you can go to the [heavens](#) of the [Formless Realm](#), specifically, the [Five Heavens](#) of No Return, which are where [Arhats](#) of the third [fruition](#) abide.

When you have cultivated to the point that you do not register [pain](#) or [pleasure](#), then that is like [Shariputra’s](#) uncle, who held the [doctrine](#) of “non-acceptance” of anything. His meaning was that he did not accept [pleasure](#) or [pain](#), and this was supposed to indicate that he had that power of [samadhi](#). But when the [Buddha](#) asked him, “Well, do you accept your own [view](#) on this?” [Shariputra’s](#) uncle was stuck. He could not come up with an answer, because basically his [doctrine](#) of non-acceptance was itself a viewpoint. If he was not accepting [views](#), then basically he could not accept his own [doctrine](#). By asking one simple question, the [Buddha](#) toppled his [doctrine](#). That is because the uncle still had not reached the state of “Everything’s okay.” Since [Shariputra](#) was still holding this [doctrine](#) of non-acceptance, he was thereby defeated. Did he accept his non-acceptance? If he could have been without [acceptance](#) or non-acceptance, then there also would have been no victory or defeat. That is the [nature](#) of the [unconditioned](#).

Six is [unconditioned](#) True [Thusness](#). What is True [Thusness](#)? You may say, “I’ve heard this explained before. True [Thusness](#) is one’s basic [Buddha-nature](#), also called [Nirvana](#), and also known as the [Nature](#) of the Treasury of the [Thus Come One](#). It has many names. That’s True [Thusness](#), isn’t it?”

Yes, it is. But you still do not [recognize](#) what that is; even less do you know what it is not. What is “that”? It is non-falseness and non-inversion. Being non-false and non-inverted is being “Thus, Thus, Unmoving; clear and constantly [understanding](#).” That is True [Thusness](#). In order to know True [Thusness](#), we must first know about the [Three Natures](#).

The [Three Natures](#)

1. The [nature](#) pervasively calculated and [attached](#) to.
2. The [nature](#) that arises dependent on something else.
3. The perfectly accomplished real [nature](#).

We [living beings](#) have the first two kinds of inversion, while True [Thusness](#) is the perfectly accomplished real [nature](#).

To illustrate the [nature](#) pervasively calculated and [attached](#) to, suppose you were walking at night and you [thought](#) you had spotted a huge [snake](#) on the road ahead. You might shout, “Wow! That’s a really long [snake](#)! It’s several feet long! How horrible!” [Seeing](#) a [snake](#) in the distance like that is the [nature](#) pervasively calculated and [attached](#) to, and leads to your being terrified and deciding, “Oh! A [snake](#)! I’ve got to get out of here right away!” So you go running back down the road and overtake a [person](#) who had earlier passed the same spot you were approaching when you [thought](#) you saw the [snake](#).

The [person](#) asks you, “Why are you running?”

You reply, “You just came along that road. Didn’t you see the big [snake](#) back there?”

“Where?” says the other fellow. “Why don’t we go back and see where it is, and we can beat it to [death](#).” So the two of you go back, but when you get there it is no longer a [snake](#). It has turned into something else, a piece of rope lying on the road. That it is not a [snake](#) is the [nature](#) that arises dependent on something else. Considering it to be a [snake](#) to begin with was the [nature](#) pervasively calculated and [attached](#) to. Now it becomes the [nature](#) that arises dependent on something else: basically it is a piece of rope. So the [nature](#) pervasively calculated and [attached](#) to was false, [imaginary](#). However, the [nature](#) that arises dependent on something else turns out to be a distortion, for in fact the rope itself is made out of hemp. That it is made of hemp is the perfectly accomplished real [nature](#). What started out as hemp could turn into a piece of rope and then could turn into a [snake](#). Who would you say [caused](#) it to [transform](#)?

True [Thusness](#) is non-false, non-distorted, and not inverted. That is what is meant when it is said of [people](#) who have perfected their cultivation that they have ended all falseness and have already exhausted all inversion, so they are no longer upside-down.

That is the perfectly accomplished real [nature](#), also known as True [Thusness](#). However, this True [Thusness](#) is still not genuine True [Thusness](#). Because, what you can detect can still not be called real. Real True [Thusness](#) is that basically there is no True [Thusness](#). Real True [Thusness](#) is nothing at all. There is no common [identity](#) and no [distinction](#). There are no [dharma](#)s and no non-dharma.s. This refers to the basic [substance](#) of each and every [dharma](#), in the same way that [water](#) has waves, but the waves are not the [water](#). [Water](#) is its own [substance](#). And True [Thusness](#) is the basic [substance](#) of all [dharma](#)s. If it were not for True [Thusness](#), then [dharma](#)s would lack a basic [substance](#). It is like the rope. The rope’s basic [substance](#) is hemp. True [Thusness](#) is not singular, and yet it is [non-dual](#). It is [identical](#) and yet not different; not [dharma](#)s and yet not non-dharma.s. That is genuine True [Thusness](#), the sixth [unconditioned dharma](#).

[Shastra](#):

What is meant by there being [no self](#)? There are, in general, two kinds of [Non-self](#): one, the [Non-self](#) of [Pudgala](#), and two, the [Non-self](#) of [Dharma](#)s.

Commentary:

What is meant by there being [no self](#)? Someone says, “What do you mean ‘[no self](#)’? I’m right here. I’m truly and actually here, so how can you say I don’t [exist](#)? Aren’t you just trying to cheat us?” That way of [thinking](#) is just a case of misunderstanding [dharma](#)s. If you did understand the hundred [dharma](#)s, then you would know that it is impossible for there to be a [self](#).

There are, in general, two kinds of [Non-self](#): one, the [Non-self](#) of [Pudgala](#).

The Two kinds of [Non-Self](#)

1. The [non-self](#) of [pudgala](#). (no me or mine)
2. The [non-self](#) of [dharma](#)s. (no svabhava--inherent [nature](#))

[Pudgala](#) is a [Sanskrit word](#) which translates as “multiple [grasping](#) at destinies.” This refers to numerous comings and goings, revolving in the Six Destinies.

The Six Destinies [Three Good Paths](#)

1. [gods](#)
2. [asuras](#)
3. [people](#)

[Three Evil Paths](#)

4. [animals](#)
5. [ghosts](#)
6. [hell-beings](#)

All [ordinary people](#) and all creatures just keep turning around and around on the revolving [wheel](#) of the six [paths](#), which are also known as the Six Ordinary [Dharma Realms](#).

The Four Sagely [Paths](#)

1. [Buddhas](#)
2. [Bodhisattvas](#)
3. Those [Enlightened](#) to [Conditions](#)
4. [Sound Hearers](#)

Altogether those make the Ten [Dharma Realms](#). Where do these ten come from? They are all just the [manifestation](#) of a single [thought](#) of yours or mine. If your [mind thinks](#) of cultivating and becoming a [Buddha](#), then in the [future](#) you will be able to become a [Buddha](#). Your [thinking](#) of doing that makes it happen. If you think about cultivation to

become a [Bodhisattva](#), in the [future](#) you will to become a [Bodhisattva](#). If your [mind thinks](#) about becoming a [person](#) of the Two Vehicles—a [Sound](#) Hearer or One [Enlightened](#) to [Conditions](#)—then you will become one or the other. If your [mind thinks](#) about ascending to the [heavens](#), in the [future](#) you can be born in the [heavens](#). All you need do is hold the [five precepts](#) and practice the ten good acts and you will gain [rebirth](#) in the [heavens](#). If you say, “Well, I want to be a [person](#),” then just offer up all good conduct and do not do any [evil](#) and you can be a [person](#). If you are [thinking](#) of becoming an [asura](#), then get [angry](#) all the [time](#) and think about killing [people](#). If you do that, then that in itself is the [Dharma Realm](#) of the [asuras](#) and in the [future](#) you will become an [asura](#). Those are the [three good paths](#).

Then there are the [three evil paths](#). If you are constantly, tremendously [greedy](#) all the [time](#), then you can fall into the [hells](#). If your [hatred](#) is heavy, if you keep getting [angry](#) from morning to night, you can turn into a [hungry ghost](#). If you are extremely stupid, then you will end up as an [animal](#). So if you have [greed](#), [anger](#), and [foolishness](#) you will fall into the [evil paths](#). If you cultivate [precepts](#), [samadhi](#) and [wisdom](#), then you will be born into the [three good paths](#) and will have the possibility of becoming a [Buddha](#) in the [future](#). Turning in the Six [Paths](#) is [dangerous](#) business. There is an old saying about it:

Out of the [horse's](#) belly, into the [womb](#) of a [cow](#).
How many times have we gone in and out of [Yama's](#) halls?
First one swings by Shakra's Palace,
Then plunges down into [Lord Yama's](#) pot.

One just finishes being a [horse](#) and ends up back in the [womb](#) of a [cow](#). How many times have you done that? Too many. You are so familiar with that route by [Yama's](#) door that you could walk it with your [eyes](#) closed. You do not know how many times you have done it. You may make it up to the [Jade](#) Emperor's [heavenly](#) halls for a

[time](#), but once again you fall into the pot of boiling oil that [King Yama](#) always keeps [hot](#). Becoming a [person](#) is made from the [mind](#). Becoming an [animal](#) also comes about from the [mind](#). If you act like an [animal](#), in the [future](#) you will become an [animal](#). If you act like a [person](#), in the [future](#) you will be a [person](#). If you act like a [ghost](#), in the [future](#) you will be a [ghost](#).

Some [people](#) say they do not believe in [ghosts](#). Why do they say that? It is because they themselves are [ghosts](#), and they are afraid others will [recognize](#) them as such. So they are always telling others not to believe there are such things as [ghosts](#). I often say that basically there is no real difference between [Buddhas](#) and [ghosts](#). If you are [evil](#) to the [ultimate](#) point, then you are a [ghost](#). If you are good to the [ultimate](#) point, then you are a [Buddha](#). If you cultivate to the point of becoming [enlightened](#), then you are a [Buddha](#). If you do not get [enlightened](#) and keep being stupid, then you are a [ghost](#). Basically there is no difference.

Some [people](#) believe in the [Buddha](#) and say, “[Buddhas exist](#),” but they do not believe that there are [ghosts](#). They say, “There aren't any [ghosts](#).” Why do they say that? “I haven't seen any [ghosts](#),”

they argue, “so I don’t believe any such things [exist](#).”

I ask them, “Well have you seen [Buddhas](#)?” I can safely ask them that, because if they have not seen [ghosts](#), then they have not seen [Buddhas](#). So I say to them, “You have never seen [Buddhas](#) either, so why do you believe in them? If you haven’t seen them, you shouldn’t believe in them either, right?”

They say, “I have seen [Buddha](#) images.” Well there are pictures of [ghosts](#) around, too. If you see [Buddha](#) images and therefore believe in [Buddhas](#), then when you see pictures of [ghosts](#), shouldn’t you believe in [ghosts](#)? I will tell you right now that those who do not believe in [ghosts](#) are this way because they do not have the [wisdom](#) to believe [ghosts exist](#). They do not have the true and actual, perfectly interpenetrating and unobstructed [wisdom](#) to know this [principle](#).

If you do not believe in [ghosts](#), you should not believe in the [Buddhas](#), either. There just would not be anything at all. How would that be? Of course, it is true that originally there is nothing at all. Basically there is [no self](#) nor [people](#), nor [Buddhas](#), nor ghosts—nothing at all. But you have to reach that state. You must truly have achieved the level of [no self](#). It cannot be that you say there is [no self](#), but when [time](#) comes to eat you eat more than anyone else. There is a [self](#) in that. Or when it comes [time](#) to work you say, “I heard the [Dharma Master](#) say to be without [self](#), so I shouldn’t do any work.” But when the [time](#) comes to eat, your [self](#) is suddenly in [existence](#) again, because you definitely have to eat. You must genuinely without [self](#). That means being without any [attachments](#). If you are [attached](#) to the [existence](#) of a [self](#), then you have an [attachment](#) to [self](#), presenting [causes](#) and [conditions](#) that obstruct the Way. Hence you should have [no self](#).

Even if you are without a [self](#), you still need to be without [dharma](#)s. [Dharma](#)s must also disappear. [Dharma](#)s [exist](#) for the sake of the [self](#), so if there is [no self](#), what do you need [dharma](#)s for? Then [dharma](#)s have no use, either. If you do not have a [self](#), then you have broken your [attachment](#) to [self](#), which is also the [obstacle](#) of [afflictions](#). If you get rid of [dharma](#)s, then you have broken through the [attachment](#) to [dharma](#)s, as well as through the [obstacle](#) of the known.

The Two [Obstacles](#)

1. The [obstacle](#) of [afflictions](#).
2. The [obstacle](#) of the known.

The [obstacle](#) of the known [manifests](#) when you have not broken through your [attachment](#) to [dharma](#)s. You say things such as, “Take a look at me! See? I understand all six hundred rolls of the [prajna sutras](#). I’ve read them I don’t know how many times. I can lecture the [Dharma Flower Sutra](#) and explain the [Shurangama Sutra](#).” This indicates that you have the [obstacle](#) of the known. Whatever it is, you know about it. In this way you produce an [obstacle](#), the [obstacle](#) being, “I know and you do not know. I can lecture and you cannot lecture. I can cultivate and you cannot cultivate. I have all kinds of Way [virtue](#), and you don’t have any Way [virtue](#). I have [wisdom](#), and you don’t have [wisdom](#).”

If [dharma](#)s were also [empty](#), then you would not have this [obstacle](#), but would certify to the second kind of [non-self](#), which is the [non-self](#) of [dharma](#)s. Then, although you understand [dharma](#)s, it would be just as if you did not. “What in the [world](#) is the use of studying [Dharma](#), anyway, then?” you may conclude. Well, if you can know and yet not know, then that would really be [knowing](#). That would be having real [wisdom](#). Then you would have broken through the [obstacle](#) of the known and the [obstacle](#) of [afflictions](#).

Why do you have [afflictions](#)? They come from your [attachment](#) to [self](#). If you did not have a [self](#), where would you go to find [afflictions](#)? Therefore, the [non-self](#) of [pudgala](#) smashes the [obstacle](#) of [afflictions](#). Second is the [obstacle](#) of the known. The [non-self](#) of [dharma](#)s smashes the [obstacle](#) of the known, so this passage discusses the [non-self](#) of [pudgala](#) and the [non-self](#) of [dharma](#)s to explain the last part of the [Buddha’s](#) quote that began the [Shastra](#) :

As the [World Honored One](#) has said, all [dharma](#)s have [no self](#).

So it cannot be that you simply break through the [attachment](#) to [self](#) and yet harbor an [attachment](#) to

how well you comprehend dharmas. You also have to renounce the thought of understanding dharmas. This absence of self refers to one's view of self, not to the physical body. One should be devoid of a view of self and a view of dharmas.

All ordinary people are attached to the existence of a self. Those who manage not to be attached to a self become attached to dharmas. The Buddha knew what was in the minds of living beings, and he wanted to break through their obstacles of afflictions and their obstacles of the known. He spoke all kinds of Dharma for the purpose of destroying those obstacles. However, it is really easy to talk about having no view of self, but when a person gets to the point of not having a self, he thinks, "Hey! Look at me! I don't have a self!" So who is talking about not having a self? Who is that? Or else he speaks the Dharma coming and going and says, "I speak Dharma better than anybody! But it's not me speaking, it's the Bodhisattvas speaking," in a roundabout way ascribing to himself

a Bodhisattva position. Then, sitting upon that Bodhisattva pedestal he has fashioned for himself, he still has a self. So you see, it is not easy. It is not something that can be brought about merely by making that claim. You cannot just say, "I have no self" for it to be the case. Your "no self" still harbors a self within it. So in discussing dharmas you need to understand them in a fundamental way. It cannot be that you seem to understand them but really do not. Anyone with any knowledge will catch on to that very quickly and know that you are simply a person who is fond of wearing high hats. Your view of self is still not empty.

Now let us investigate the self. The head is called a "head." The hair is called "hair." The eyes are called "eyes." The ears are called "ears." The nose is called a "nose." And it goes on like that down through the hands being called "hands," and the feet being called "feet," and the fingernails being called "fingernails," and on down to the eighty-four thousand pores being called "pores." The three hundred and sixty bones are

called "bones," and yet each has its own individual name. But if you search throughout your entire body, from the top of your head to the soles of your feet, where can you find a "self"? What location can be given the name "self"? What bit of flesh has that name? What drop of blood is known as the "self"? Keep searching for the location of that "self," and you will find that in the entire body there is not a single place that can be called "self". So why are you still attached to a "self"?

You say, "I know where I am." It is fine if you really know. However, it may be that you do not truly, purely know, and that what you know is a kind of defiled dharma. But do you recognize your true, actual, pure self: your basic self-nature? Do you ultimately know where that is? Well, look for it. See if you can find it.

I am here lecturing and I have a self. You are there listening with "selves." So you wonder, "If I don't come and listen to the Sutras, does that mean I have no self?" No. If you do not come and listen to the Sutras, it just means your "self" is not here listening to the Sutras; but it does not mean that your self does not exist. However, if you could be here listening to the Sutras as if you were not here, then you would have attained a little bit of skill.

"Right!" someone thinks. "I have really got that kind of skill, because just now I had the false thought about going to a bar to drink some wine and about how fine that wine would taste."

That is just running off; it is not really being gone. It was just indulging in an idle thought. Many people here are having idle thoughts, and their "selves" are running off. But that does not mean their "selves" are gone. If you have a self, then it can run off. It should be that there is "no going and no coming." You neither run off, nor do you stay. If you are that way, then that is pretty much "it". Ultimately what's "it"? It is non-self.

Now I have finished lecturing the Shastra, and you can just consider it as if I had not said a thing, because there should be no self. I did not lecture and you did not listen. Everyone is devoid of self. This non-self is wonderful; it is the true non-self.