Enlightened TIMES

Issue 1, 2020.
On Friday, December 20th, 2019, the Mormon Church invited myself, as President of the BSWA, and my wife Heidi to an interfaith concert at the Concert Hall. They have been doing this for the past five years as an initiative they call “Light the World”. The formalities start with a dinner at their centre in Dianella a couple of weeks before hand, but they engage long before with the other faith and spiritual communities in Perth and ask them to provide an item each for the concert.

This year Boon Tan, our treasurer, put up his hand and co-opted our members Sarah Long, a flautist, and his sister in law Judith Antonia Tan to join him in song. Boon also plays guitar. I knew Boon was musical, playing in groups from time to time, and I had heard that Judith had a beautiful voice, but I had no idea of the talent that would be representing the BSWA.

The organisers of the concert work with a brilliant and full Symphony Orchestra. They are a collection of musicians; I promise professional and amateur, who come together and call themselves the Perth Charity Orchestra. They have raised many thousands of dollars. They work together with each act from the different communities and provide the most wonderful backing for each item.

The Sikh and Hindu groups really stand out with their focus on the Harmonium, Tabla and Sitar, where the Symphonia Orchestra can pick up the rhythm and make it fly. Some organisations had choirs. All the acts were so good and taken to another level with the Symphony Orchestra. One standout contribution came from a Brother at the New Norcia Monastery, who played two pieces on the Grand Steinway, pieces that he had composed for the event.

So how did the BSWA fare with its act? It was magnificent. They did two items, first a group of Buddhist Devotional songs and then they sang John Lennon’s ‘Imagine’. Boon’s voice harmonised along with Judith’s angelic voice, all well supported with Boon’s guitar and Sarah’s flute. The sound floated and hung in the auditorium, waiting; expectant; and then the Symphony Orchestra picked it all up and raised it up to the heights. It gave me goose bumps. What a night, the Mormon community covered itself in glory and our BSWA contribution was, as I have said, magnificent.

By Dennis Sheppard.
At Bodhinyana Monastery, we are commencing two building projects. One is for a new office which is to be built close to the workshop at Bodhinyana Monastery with an estimated cost of over $130,000.

The second project, which we first applied for six years ago, is for six kutis (new monks huts) to be built at our adjacent property Hermit Hill behind Jhana Grove, across the road from Bodhinyana Monastery. We have finally received the development approval for these. In preparation, we now want to install the firefighting water tank, which will cost around $60,000.

Also we are planning to put in a bush fire refuge bunker, in the event that if any monks are caught up there in a fire situation, they can be protected. The bunker will cost an estimated $36,000.

We need your support in the hope of raising adequate funds for these projects soon. Anyone wishing to support the project may donate by cheque or direct transfer to Bodhinyana Monastery Monks Building Fund, Bankwest, BSB 306-073 Account 0686966. Narration: build2020. For tax deductible receipts and further information please contact admin@bswa.org.

By Ven. Kassapa

Projects at Bodhinyana

A goodbye lunch for our administrator Dimithri de Fonseka. She is now an anagarikaa at Dhammasara.
Past BSWA president Cecilia Mitra has recently written about her experience with the loss of her son in a book titled, 'Opens Like a Flower, Cut it With a Knife - A Buddhist Mother’s Journey through Grief’. The book records her personal journey and shares her insights with you. She openly discusses how Meditation was her only medication. And how the dhamma provided all tools required to heal from a most devastating loss.

Here’s the introduction and an excerpt from Chapter one of the book:

At some point in our lives, we will encounter a life-changing moment when we are forced to question our very existence. For me, it was when I found my thirty-year-old son, for no apparent reason, dead on his bed on an otherwise ordinary Monday morning.

I have written this book with the hope that it can help someone else through their own loss and grief.

The death of a child, at whatever age, is the most tragic experience for a parent, especially if the death is sudden. It’s like a part of our body has been cruelly torn off. We will never get over the death of our child, nor should we have to. Our lives will never be the same. We will think about our child every day for the rest of our lives, and we will continue with a background ache for our child.

We will never get over the death of our child, nor should we have to. Our lives will never be the same. We will think about our child every day for the rest of our lives, and we will continue with a background ache for our child. But I have found out that we can heal from the trauma and the excruciating pain, and we can even laugh again.

To heal well, we have to alter our views, our values, our attitudes, and our relationships. Expect that healing is a process which will take time.

The first step in the healing process, was for me to learn to forgive and love myself for having outlived my beloved son, and having gone against the expected order of things. It was not my doing, and it was not within my control - It’s just life!

I had to accept that my son's death can never be undone. And I faced the painful truth that to be born is to die, and that life gave me no choice as to when, how or who died first.

Grief is devastatingly painful. It can either leave us with anger and bitterness or can be used as a new awareness to give a realistic perspective and meaning to our lives.

Viktor Frankl, in his book, ‘Man's Search for Meaning’, wrote about his life as a Nazi concentration camp prisoner where he chose to transform his darkest despair into a search for meaning and he said, 'It did not really matter what we expected from life, but rather what life expected from us.'

Our most difficult moments are our best teachers; for it is only when we encounter life-shattering moments, that we can see things as they truly are. But only if we become awakened by the tragedy and pick ourselves up - realising that we ourselves must make the effort to walk the path.

'Opens like a flower, cut it with a knife' is also the title of a song written by my son, Brian, some five years before he died. I came across this song only after he died. When I examined the lyrics, I felt it was almost as if my son, knew that he would have a short life and had left me insights on how to deal
with life without him through his song.

It helped me understand that although grief cuts deep like a knife and leaves a gaping hole in your heart; it is nonetheless, the very source from which a flower can bloom. It is only when you come to acceptance of your grief that paradoxically, beautiful insights can arise. But this can only happen if we are prepared to delve deeper to investigate the meaning of it all - each for ourselves.

I learned through the depths of sadness that before you can know kindness at its deepest levels, you must first understand suffering in its darkest places.

Through my most difficult times, I understood the significance of the Triple Gem in my life - the Buddha as the best physician; the Dhamma as medicine; and the Sangha, as mentors for me not just to survive, but to emerge a better person. I only wish I could have gone through this journey without the death of my son but this is the journey that has been thrust upon me, albeit not by choice.

Happiness and grief are part of human existence. Both joy and sorrow are inseparable, as beautifully expressed by Kahlil Gibran in his book The Prophet:

"Your joy is your sorrow unmasked and the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was oftentimes filled with your tears. And how else can it be? The deeper the sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain," and he said,

'When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy.

When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.'

The deep agonising emotional pain made me physically sick. I felt a constant ache of my left shoulder and my stomach was in perpetual pain. For a while I thought I was dying too. The numbness, the anguish, the sadness, the pain that followed was unbearable. On some days even breathing was difficult.

I wished there had been a Buddhist mother who had experienced the same loss that I could have turned to. As a Buddhist mother, I was conflicted. I believed I had understood the teachings of the Buddha - that life is suffering, attachment causes suffering, that all conditioned things are subject to death, but now I realised that this was mostly theoretical knowledge.

I was overwhelmed with pain that was unyielding - an intense, unbearable pain, 'What should I do?'

In the words of Ajahn Chah, 'Theory and practice—the first knows the name of a medicinal plant, and the second goes to find it and uses it.'

So for me as a Dhamma practitioner of over twenty years, walking the Noble Eightfold Path meant being able to apply the teachings at this most painful time in my life. To survive, I had no choice but to use the Dhamma as my raft to get up to higher ground lest I drown. It provided the tools, but I had to have the confidence to use it as medicine for my grief.

We have no choice at what life throws us, but we have what Viktor Frankl called, 'the last of the human freedoms, freedom to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances'.

When we choose the last of human freedoms—we can choose to be a survivor and not the victim of the circumstances.

About six months after my son's death, I was fortunate enough to meet some incredible mothers who shared their stories. A mother whose only child had been found dead in the park and who had to identify his body at the mortuary, a mother whose teenage child was found hanging in his room, a mother whose son died of a work accident, a mother whose adult son died of a terminal illness, and a mother whose daughter went out dancing with friends to celebrate her twenty-first birthday and that same night died while dancing.

On hearing their stories, I was overwhelmed with compassion for these amazing women, and somehow my own grief became lighter.

I found I could even extend support to a mother whose only child had just died. Months later, she told me that I had really helped her at her darkest time because I understood how she felt. At that moment, I knew that I would survive my grief.

Cecilia's book is available for purchase at amazon.com.au
The Power of Reflection

In a Sutta that was discussed by Ven Ajahn Brahmali, (AN 2:11), during the Sutta Retreat he conducted in June 2019. Ajahn taught us about the two powers that the Lord Buddha had advised HIS disciples to practise. They are the power of Meditation (Bhāvanā Bala) and the power of Reflection (Patisankhāna Bala).

There is no doubt that most of us have a good understanding on meditation. Similarly, most of us have the desire to learn the Dhamma, desire to do good things, desire to meditate, the desire to end suffering. That is why you are reading this article instead of reading a magazine on sensual pleasures! This is the Desire that the Buddha called Chanda, one of the four Means of Accomplishment, called Cattāro Iddhipādā in Pali. It is the Kusalachanda, the desire to be virtuous, one of the 37 Factors of Enlightenment. Having the desire is essential but, that itself would not be sufficient to fulfill the spiritual goals. One of the tools that the Lord Buddha has given us to improve our progress on the path is the Power of Reflection. We all have “a little or a lot of dust in our eyes”. That is why we don’t see reality as it is. We see good as bad, happiness as suffering and so on and so forth! So, reflecting upon what we do and their intended outcomes would certainly help! That is Reflection!

How would one develop the power of Reflection? Lord Buddha has given the answer to this question, too! 'Bad conduct of body, speech, or mind has a bad, painful result in both this life and the next.’ 'Reflecting like this, they give up bad conduct by way of body, speech, and mind, and develop good conduct by way of body, speech, and mind, keeping themselves pure. This is called the power of reflection.' (An 2:11)

How could this power of reflection be done skilfully? It is when one reflects on whether what one is doing by body, speech and mind, is skilful or unskilful, is it good or bad, would it lead to happiness or sadness, will they make you depressed or cheer you up, will they make you energised (uplifted) or demoralised. If the answers are positive, then one is on the right path otherwise, there is room for improvement.

We know that this Samsara is nothing but suffering. Repeated rebirth brings nothing but, Dukkha! So, one must make every effort to escape from Samsara, to end all suffering! The way to do this is to follow the Noble Eightfold Path. Power of Reflection is one of the vehicles to travel this path in the right way!

Instead of getting immersed in sensual pleasures, one could get immersed in spiritual happiness. Instead of living in large houses, driving luxury cars, going on luxury cruises, one could practise renunciation. The best way to practise renunciation is to practise generosity. It is a good start. Help those in need, provide support to good, virtuous practising Sangha who are practising the good Dhamma, in the good way. If you look for them, you will find them! They are right here!

Lord Buddha likened sensual pleasures to a skeleton, a piece of meat, a grass torch, pit of glowing coals, a dream, borrowed goods, fruits on a tree (Refer, Potaliya Sutta, With Potaliya the Wanderer, MN 54, for details).

The Blessed One has stated that sensual pleasures provide little gratification, much suffering and despair and the danger in them is still more, (Refer, Alagaddūpama Sutta, The Simile of the Snake, MN 22, for details). So, we have to train ourselves to give up material happiness or at least, attenuate its intensity which is temporary in nature in favour of more stable and much higher spiritual happiness. That will bring us joy, happiness and a lot of good Kamma and no doubt, will bring us good results in this life and in the next life.

A person once said that he realised that attending to good things such as helping others, doing generous acts etc are stained with defilements therefore, he doesn’t any more concentrate on such things but, only on the spiritual happiness that he would aspire...
to gain from meditation! This is like someone telling that because of his knowledge on basic algebra and geometry at year 8 level is bad, he would straight away start a master’s course in Applied Maths at a university! It is good to realise that one’s meritorious deeds are not completely pure and that they are stained with defilements. That is the way they are. That is seeing the Dhamma! The important thing is not to give up such deeds but, to work on them and make them as pure as possible.

Attemping to gain spiritual happiness of meditation without practising generosity would not work! Generosity is the starting step on the Path to Liberation!

Lord Buddha has given another tool for us to reflect on our good qualities. The whole of the Maha Mangala Sutta is a nice blueprint to compare one’s behaviour with what the Lord Buddha has set as standards, the Gold Standard. There is a very meaningful, simple English translation of this Sutta by Ven Ajahn Brahmali in Suttacentral which is given as an attachment to this Dhamma Piece. One could check the standard of one’s own spiritual qualities in comparison to the standard set by the Lord Buddha for each aspect of life, covered in each stanza of this great Sutta and reflect upon them. If one’s practice is up to the Gold Standard that way one could be really happy! If not, we have work to do!

If we could reflect like that, no doubt, it would make us much happier, not sadder. We would be elated not depressed! If you are happier you would make the people around you happier, too. So that way, you will be making merits, too!

Happiness leads to more happiness! Don’t worry, Be happy!

May all beings be Happy, Healthy, Peaceful and Reflective!

Upasako

Notes:

AN = Anguttara Nikāya (Numerical Discourses)
MN = Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Length Discourses)

Appendix:
The Greatest Good Fortune
(Maha Mangala Sutta)

1"This is what I have heard. At one time the Blessed One was staying at Sāvatthī in the Jeta Grove, Anāthapindika's Monastery. On that occasion, as the night was coming to an end, a certain god of great beauty approached the Blessed One while illuminating the whole Jeta Grove. After bowing to the Blessed One, they stood to one side and spoke a verse:

2"Many gods and humans, Desiring well-being, Are seekers of good fortune: Please tell me the greatest good fortune."

3"Not to associate with fools, But to associate with the wise, And to honour those worthy of honour:
This is the greatest good fortune.

4"To live in a suitable place, Having previously done good karma, And to apply oneself in the right way:
This is the greatest good fortune.

5"To be educated and to have a vocation, To be well-trained in one’s chosen field, And to speak words that are well-spoken:
This is the greatest good fortune.

6"To support one’s mother and father, To cherish one’s partner and children, And to have a job without stress:

This is the greatest good fortune.

7"Generosity and an upright life, Kindness towards one’s relatives, And the doing of blameless deeds:
This is the greatest good fortune.

8"To refrain from what is unwholesome, To abstain from all intoxicants, And to be steadfast in good qualities, This is the greatest good fortune.

9"Respect and humility, Contentment and gratitude, And the timely hearing of Dharma:
This is the greatest good fortune.

10"Being patient and easy to correct, The seeing of monks and nuns, And timely discussion on Dharma:
This is the greatest good fortune.

11"Asceticism and the spiritual life, Insight into the noble truths, And the seeing for oneself of Nirvana:
This is the greatest good fortune.

12"A mind that remains unshaken By the ups and the downs of the world, Sorrowless, stainless and safe:
This is the greatest good fortune.

13"Having performed these things, Nowhere can they be conquered— They are secure wherever they go. This is their greatest good fortune."

English Translation by Bhikkhu Brahmali, 2015;
Courtesy of Suttacentral.net
(Suttanipāta Cūla Vagga)
The Work of Monks and Nuns

The original practices of Buddhist monks and nuns were quite clear regarding the dangers of societal involvement. Are they relevant today? Apart from the Buddha's teachings that have bettered society, are the activities of present-day monks and nuns bettering society as well?

One of a society’s goals is keeping its citizens economically productive. Most religious organisations adhere to this rationale by way of cultural and societal altruism. This ‘giving’ is a tour de force where everyone is doing good works, such as social services or spreading the religion. This provides a medium in which the religion is propagated. But are we in danger of going too far in this direction? Might the essence of the Buddha’s teachings be forgotten? Would we then be left with only the shell of beautiful buildings and cavernous cathedrals in which we might sit and ponder what the point of our religion might be?

In the Buddha’s older Theravada suttas, he never placed a high priority on altruism or proselytising. Instead, he praised those who worked for their own enlightenment higher than those who sacrificed for others (An 4.95). The Buddha clearly taught that a monk or nun should turn his/her back on society and work toward detachment, dispassion, cessation, seclusion. Working within rather than working outwardly for material betterment of society. Once someone had attained enlightenment, then it was up to them whether they taught or not depending on their inclinations.

The Buddha considered those who ‘both became enlightened and also taught’ as superior to those who ‘became enlightened and didn’t teach.’ He also considered those same people who are enlightened and don’t teach to be superior to those who teach others before they become enlightened, which diverges from the Bodhisattva vow in Mahayana Buddhism. In other words, the Buddha was saying that when measured against the personal attainment of enlightenment, the altruistic function of helping others falls short.

In line with the old Zen saying that one should “Follow the footsteps of the master rather than his words,” I cite the first four stanzas of the Sutta Nipata 1.3: The Rhinoceros and a sampling of 1.4: The Farmer Bhāradvāja

**Sutta Nipata 1.3**
Renouncing violence for all living beings, harming not even a one, you would not wish for offspring, so how a companion? Wander alone like a rhinoceros.

For a sociable person there are allurements; on the heels of allurement, this pain. Seeing allurement’s drawback, wander alone like a rhinoceros.

One whose mind is enmeshed in sympathy for friends & companions, neglects the true goal. Seeing this danger in intimacy, wander alone like a rhinoceros.

Like spreading bamboo, entwined, is concern for offspring & spouses. Like a bamboo sprout, unentangling, wander alone like a rhinoceros.

**Sutta Nipata 1.4**
Then the brahmin Kasi-Bhāradvāja addressed the Radiant One in verse:

Kasi-Bhāradvāja
A ploughman, so you claim to be but we see not your ploughmanship. If you’re a ploughman, answer me, make clear your ploughmanship!

Buddha
“With faith as seed and practice, rain and learning as my yoke and plough; my plough-pole, conscientiousness, memory, goad and ploughshare both.

My body’s guarded, so is my speech, Restrained is my belly’s food, The act of Truth is my cutting-off, Gentleness is my release.

My harnessed ox is energy— draws safe for yoking’s end, goes to where no sorrow is and turns not back again.

In this way is my ploughing ploughed towards the crop of Deathlessness— who finishes this ploughing’s work from all dukkha will be free.

Then Kasi-Bhāradvāja had a large bronze bowl filled with milk-rice and brought to the Radiant One. “May it please Master Gotama to eat the milk-rice, Master Gotama is a ploughman, since he does the ploughing that has the Deathless as its crop.”

Submitted by Ed Rock, senior member of meditationmatters@gmail.com

**SN 1.3 translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Available at accessstoinsight.org/ati/tipitaka/kn/snp/**

**SN 1.4 translated by Laurence Mills. Available at suttacentral.net/snp-uragavagga**
A welcome lunch for a great friend of the BSWA, Hugh Sykes.

The Artist & The Tree

Strolling through the forest
Desiring to paint the perfect tree
Leaves in the brightest hues of green
Branches aligned in perfect symmetry
Alas browining leaves and broken branches
Were all the artist could see
Realising his search was futile
He sat down for a sip of tea
Slowly he began to see beauty
In the worn and weathered trees
The tree which he went back to again and again
Though imperfect was indeed the most beautiful tree

The Enlightened Times Team

Samma Ditthi or Right View is the first factor of the Noble Eightfold Path, the path that will lead us to liberation, Nibbana. If one has no understanding of what Samma Ditthi is, one could be lost in the wilderness of Samsara, destined to experience the suffering for many, many lifetimes. So, as a Buddhist, it is of paramount importance, at least, to understand what Samma Ditthi is, so as to be on the right path to liberation. If penetrating the knowledge of Samma Ditthi is equal to conquering Mount Everest, then there are many smaller ridges, crests, hills that one needs to conquer, on the way.

What is Right View? In the Sammaditthi Sutta, (MN9), the Great Arahant Ven Sariputta Maha Thero discourses that Right View could be understood in 15 ways. One of the ways of understanding Right View is to understand the Four Noble Truths. That is the top of the Mount Everest, to see the Dhamma in its right perspective. That is to see the Suffering as Suffering not as happiness, understand the cause of suffering is craving or wanting (not that the wanting leads to happiness), that the suffering could be ended by rejecting that craving or wanting and that there is a path leading to the end of that suffering. This is the mountain top that we are aspiring to conquer but, before that there are other smaller hills that we have to navigate. What are they?

In the Maha Cattārīsaka Sutta @ MN117 (The Great Forty), The Lord Buddha discourses that the Right View is of twofold. The first type of right view is called the Mundane Right View and the second the Supermundane Right View, i.e. penetrating the Four Noble Truths. The Mundane Right View is also called the Worldly Right View which is based on the Nature of Reality. The Mundane view is affected by taints/defilements, partaking of merit, ripening in acquisitions. It keeps us bound to samsara but, has the potential to put us in a smaller cycle with a smaller orbit of samsara! It will help us train our minds in the right way, to be on the right path. So, to begin with, it is this mundane right view that we need to look at, first. If one hasn’t got a good understanding of at least the mundane right view and does not practise to develop the mundane right view then, it would almost be impossible to attain the Supermundane Right View. It would be like starting a PhD course in any field of study without even completing a basic course of study in that field!

We are ingrained with the wrong view through our conditioning over many lifetimes of roaming in this samsara which will be difficult to correct straight away. It needs a good understanding of the Dhamma and the persistent application and practice of the basic Dhamma principles, in a methodical, gradual way. What is needed is for us to practise renunciation, letting go of our attachments.

There are several aspects to Mundane Right View. Practising generosity, accepting the Principle of Kamma, (i.e. the cause and effect of one’s own intentional actions) and looking after one’s parents are three of those aspects. So, doing wholesome activities, refraining from doing unwholesome things and helping one’s parents and relatives is a pretty good start. That will be a very

Illustration: Temple Journeys by David Starlyte
Parents who bring their children to Dhamma School could set a good example to their children by putting their time to good use such as cleaning the toilets that they themselves use or else, sit in a corner and meditate. That way, they would be setting a very good example for their children, which no doubt, the children would be happy to emulate!

Be kind and nice to your spouse, to your parents, to your children and to the world at large. Change the views a little at a time. It is good to give with a good heart, to good practising Sangha that practise the good Dhamma in the good way! Such acts will help purify and straighten one's view. Do not listen to others who give negative feedback such as “don’t give to such and such place because they already receive so much” etc. Such views will pull you back in the wrong way! Wrong view would take a hold of you! You would be roaming in this samsara for a long, long time! It would be good to modify your views, amend your habits and change a little bit. As the Great Arahant Ven Kumara Kassapa Maha Thero discoursed by a simile, in the Payasi Sutta, don’t be the man who carried the bale of hemp! Drop the bale of hemp and exchange it, at least, for a bale of silk cloth, if not for the bundle of gold! (Payasi Sutta DN 23). That will make you much happier

"If you are happy, wisdom will arise. If you sit in meditation, morning, day and night, it is not enough. Every activity should be your meditation, every activity, every movement should be happy. Don’t worry about your sitting meditation. There are people here that have wrong understanding – they think that happiness comes from meditation. It is an eightfold path, not a one-fold path. Happiness comes from serving, working and all activities. When you sit in your kuti, you sit to give your mind a break from greed, hatred and delusion. This is why we sit in our kuti, to give the mind a break.”

Ven Luang Por Ganha Maha Thero (This is an extract from the notes made by a Perth based, monastic, practiced devotee who visited Ven Luang Por Ganha Maha Thero in May 2019. Many practising, virtuous, senior monks consider Ven Luang Por Ganha Maha Thero an Arahant! The writer also visited this great being in 2018, had a blissful experience and received valuable advice. Ven Luang Por Ganha Maha Thero is the monk who has famously patted a King Cobra on the head, in the wild! See page 107, titled, ‘the snake, the mayor and the monk’ in the book ‘Opening the Door of Your Heart’ by Ven Ajahn Brahm Maha Thero.

The best way to practise renunciation, letting go, would be to ordain as a monastic; if however, one cannot do that due to various worldly commitments of household life, the next best thing would be to help, encourage and support your own children, siblings or relatives to ordain. If not, one could support those other good people who wish to be ordained. That way, one would help minimise the suffering of another being and also would be helping to disseminate the Dhamma, the teachings of the Lord Buddha! These meritorious deeds, no doubt, would help scale the summit of Right View. That way, one would be practising Letting Go, a good basis for a start to develop the Supermundane Right View and .... beyond! May all beings be well and peaceful! May they develop the Right View and attain the blissful ending of suffering!

By Upasako
Being Enlightened is being the biggest loser. You’ve lost all your attachments and that means you are free.

If no-one else is found in front or behind, it’s extremely pleasant to be dwelling alone in a forest grove.

Come now, I’ll go alone to the wilderness praised by the Buddha. It’s pleasant for a mendicant to be dwelling alone and resolute.

Alone and self-disciplined, I’ll quickly enter the delightful forest, which gives joy to meditators, and is frequented by rutting elephants.

In Sitavana, so full of flowers, in a cool mountain cave, I’ll bathe my limbs and walk meditation alone.

When will I dwell alone, without a companion, in the great wood, so delightful, my task complete, free of defilements?

This is what I want to do: may my wish succeed! I’ll make it happen myself, for no-one can do another’s duty.

Fastening my armor, I’ll enter the forest. I won’t leave without attaining the end of defilements.

As the cool breeze blows with fragrant scent, I’ll split ignorance apart, sitting on the mountain-peak.

In a forest grove covered with blossoms, in a cave so very cool, I take pleasure in Giribbaja, happy with the happiness of freedom.

I’ve got all I wished for like the moon on the fifteenth day. With the utter ending of all defilements, now there are no more future lives.

From The Verses of the Senior Monks (Theragāthā) 10.2. Translated for SuttaCentral by Bhikkhu Sujato and Jessica Walton.