

● SATI CENTER · SATURDAY, JUNE 27, 2026

This Was Said

A Practice-Focused Encounter with the Itivuttaka

Kodo Conlin

9:00 am – 12:00 pm Pacific Time

Our morning together

SCHEDULE

9:00	Welcome, schedule, group poll
9:10	Introduction to the text
9:30	Guided meditation
9:45	Lecture 1
10:15	Small groups — first prompt
10:35	Break
10:45	Whole-group Q&A
11:00	Lecture 2
11:20	Small groups — second prompt
11:40	Whole-group reflection
11:53	Closing meditation & reading of §112

Introduction to the Text

Why this collection

Among the fifth major collection of the Pāli Canon, the Khuddaka Nikāya, a volume of 112 short teachings of the Buddha.

Itivuttaka · “This Was Said”

The 112 suttas of the Itivuttaka begin with a unique formulation:

MOST OF THE PĀLI CANON

evaṃ me sutaṃ

“Thus have I heard.”

Attributed to Ven. Ānanda.

THE ITIVUTTAKA

*vuttañhetam bhagavatā,
vuttamarahatā iti me sutaṃ*

*“This was said by the Blessed One,
said by the Arahant, so I have heard.”*

Seven motivations

Hidden gem

Ancient and canonical, yet still relatively unread.

Earliness

Per Anālayo and Mahendra: among the earliest strata of the Canon.

Usefulness

Karma and appropriate attention: a foundation for practice.

Equity

Memorized and taught by Khujjuttarā: a lay woman, to lay women.

Brevity & clarity

Short suttas, short collection; less rhetorical emphasis, more didactic.

Underrepresented

Sparse in modern scholarship and Dharma talks.

Inspiration

Practice instructions paired with a vivid vision of liberation.

“...the itivuttakas cover the full range of Buddhist practice.”

— *Thanissaro Bhikkhu, Introduction.*

Gil Fronsdal — on studying the suttas

“Studying scripture is not just about acquiring knowledge — those who consider the text sacred approach it with a **willingness to be changed by it**. ... Perhaps the times you find yourself doubtful, uncomfortable, or disagreeing with what you read may be more valuable than the times when you approve or are inspired. ... Perhaps the meaning of the teachings is to be found in how they can benefit us. If this is so, the teachings may require us to discover how they might be beneficial.”

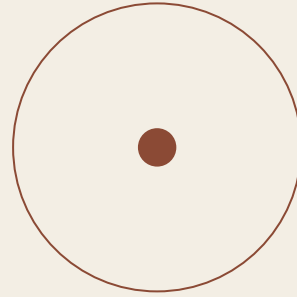
Fronsdal, “Introduction to the Study of the Middle Length Discourses,” Sati Center, 2023.

The origin story of the Itivuttaka

“Following the meal the Buddha gave a discourse to his hosts, and as he spoke **his words went directly to Khujjuttarā’s heart.** Listening with total attention, tranquil and uplifted, she took in every word as though it was intended just for her, and by the time the Buddha concluded his talk **she had attained the path and fruit of stream-entry.** . . . Khujjuttarā had an outstanding memory, and what she had heard only once she could repeat verbatim. . . .

*Later on Khujjuttarā made a collection of the short discourses she had heard from the Buddha, which became the book of the Pāli Canon now called the **Itivuttaka** (The Buddha’s Sayings), composed of 112 suttas in mixed prose and verse.”*

Nyanaponika Thera and Hecker, Great Disciples of the Buddha, p. 287.



Guided Meditation

Settling in, before we turn to the Group of Ones.

Qualities, Actions, Destinations

An internal scheme visible from the first chapter

Qualities to cultivate and abandon · actions to take and renounce · the destinations that follow.

Six suttas, one structure

The Group of Ones opens with six nearly identical suttas. Only the quality (and an adjective) change each time:

§1
greed

§2
aversion

§3
delusion

§4
anger

§5
contempt

§6
conceit

Khujjuttarā memorized and recited these in order. The patterning itself is part of the teaching.

§7 deepens the verb, from “rightly knowing & clearly seeing” to

*“**fully knowing & fully understanding.**”*

§§8–13 repeat the six qualities at another register.

“Abandon one quality... I guarantee you non-return.”

“Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality?”

Abandon greed as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return.”

*The greed with which / beings go to a bad destination, / coveting: / from rightly knowing that greed, / those who see clearly / let go. /
Letting go, / they never come to this world / again.*

“Abandon one quality... I guarantee you non-return.”

“Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality?”

Abandon aversion as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return.”

The aversion with which / beings go to a bad destination, / upset: / from rightly knowing that aversion, / those who see clearly / let go. / Letting go, / they never come to this world / again.

“Abandon one quality... I guarantee you non-return.”

“Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality?”

Abandon delusion as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return.”

*The delusion with which / beings go to a bad destination, / confused: / from rightly knowing that delusion, / those who see clearly / let go.
/ Letting go, / they never come to this world / again.*

“Abandon one quality... I guarantee you non-return.”

“Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality?”

Abandon conceit as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return.”

*The conceit with which / beings go to a bad destination, / proud: / from rightly knowing that conceit, / those who see clearly / let go. /
Letting go, / they never come to this world / again.*

Three threads, twelve guarantees

QUALITIES

What is abandoned: greed, aversion, delusion, anger, contempt, conceit.

ACTIONS

What is done: rightly knowing, clearly seeing, letting go, abandoning.

DESTINATIONS

What follows: “they never come to this world again.”

The Buddha guarantees the outcome twelve times across six consecutive suttas.

This three-thread scheme runs through the entire text.

Six rough groupings

Observation & discernment

rightly knowing · fully understanding · clearly seeing

Letting go

abandoning greed, aversion, delusion, anger, contempt, conceit

Effort

striving appropriately · doing what wise friends advise

Beautiful friendship

admirable friendship (§17) · bringing concord (§19)

Acts of merit

meritorious deeds (§22) · giving and sharing (§26) · good will (§27)

Heedfulness & saṃvega

heedfulness regarding skillful qualities (§23) · urgency (§24)

§16 — a one-line summary:

“A monk who attends appropriately abandons the unskillful and develops the skillful.”

The quality that keeps both kinds of benefit secure

*“Heedfulness with regard to skillful qualities. This is the one quality that, when developed & pursued, keeps both kinds of benefit secure:
benefit in this life & in lives to come.”*

*They praise heedfulness, the wise, / in doing acts of merit. / When heedful, wise, /
you achieve both kinds of benefit: / benefit in this life, / & benefit in lives to come.*

Appamāda — vigilance, earnestness. A condition for what is skillful; a protector of what is gained.

One continuum, three scales of benefit

Destination	Suttas	Example phrasing
Present life	§22, §23	<i>“benefit in this life”; “long experienced desirable, pleasing, charming results”</i>
Heavens / good destinations	§19, §20–21, §22, §26, §27	<i>“rejoices for an eon in heaven”; “clear-mindedness → good destination”</i>
Liberation	§7, §8, §24, §27, §43, §44	<i>“conquering the bond of conceit, go beyond all bonds”; “the ending of all fetters”</i>

§27 — *mettā* — names all three destinations within a single sutta.

§43 and §44 — the unborn, and the two nibbāna properties

§43

The unborn, unbecome, unmade, unfabricated

Names the born, fabricated, etc. as “unfit for delight,” and the escape is the peaceful — “the unborn, unproduced, sorrowless, stainless state, the cessation of stressful qualities, the stilling-of-fabrications bliss.”

§44

The two nibbāna properties — with fuel remaining, and without

As Thanissaro notes: a topic

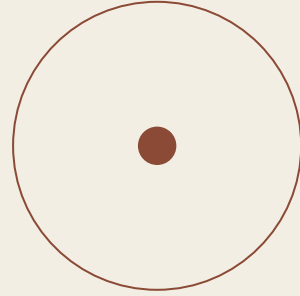
“found nowhere else in the Canon.”

§24 — samvega, the bones, and the four noble truths in verse — the first explicit mention of the FNT in the text.

The path defined by negation, and a vivid image

“Even if a monk, taking hold of my outer cloak, were to follow right behind me, placing his feet in my footsteps, yet if he were to be greedy for sensual pleasures, strong in his passions, malevolent in mind, corrupt in his resolves, his mindfulness muddled, unalert, uncentered, his mind scattered, and his faculties uncontrolled, then he would be far from me, and I from him. Why is that?

Because he does not see the Dhamma. Not seeing the Dhamma, he does not see me.”



Interlude

If this material is indeed early —

Anālayo (Nibbāna Sermons) and Anagarika Mahendra (2022): among the earliest strata of the Pāli Canon, with the Sutta Nipāta, the Dhammapada, and the verses of the Udāna.

§27 — mettā

*“If with uncorrupted mind you feel good will for even one being,
you become skilled from that.”*

Awareness-release through good will surpasses all other grounds for merit at least sixteen fold. All three destinations are present in this one sutta.

INTO THE TWOS

“Endowed with two things, monks...”

Same framework; specific practices

§	Practice	Key formulation
§29	<i>Guarding sense doors · moderation in food</i>	<i>“lives in ease in the present life — at the break-up of the body, a good destination can be expected.”</i>
§34	<i>Ardency, compunction, mindfulness, absorbed in jhāna, heedful</i>	<i>“capable of self-awakening, of Unbinding, of attaining the unsurpassed safety from bondage.”</i>
§37	<i>Sense of urgency · investigate with discernment · awareness-tranquility</i>	<i>“committed to awareness-tranquility, would attain the ending of suffering and stress.”</i>
§45	<i>Heedfulness — and its opposite</i>	<i>“gnosis right in the here-and-non, or, if there be any remnant of clinging, non-return.”</i>
§46	<i>The trainings — heightened virtue, mind, discernment</i>	<i>“with discernment uppermost, release the essence, & mindfulness the governing principle.”</i>
§47	<i>Wakefulness — mindful, alert, centered, sensitive, clear, & calm</i>	<i>“Wakefulness is better than sleep. For those who are wakeful, there’s no danger, no fear.”</i>

Walking, standing, sitting, lying down

“If, while he is walking, any greed in a monk is done away with, any ill will... any sloth and torpor... any restlessness and anxiety is done away with, any uncertainty is abandoned; if his persistence is aroused and not lax; if his mindfulness is established and unmuddled; if his body is calm and unaroused; if his mind is centered and unified:

then a monk walking with such ardency and compunction is called continually and continuously resolute, one with persistence aroused.”

“Controlled in walking, / controlled in standing, / controlled in sitting, / controlled in lying down... / observing the arising and passing away / of phenomena, / of aggregates / a monk who dwells thus ardently, / not restlessly, at peace— / always mindful, / training in the mastery of awareness-tranquility — / is said to be continually / resolute.”

§104: associating with the consummate is itself a condition for joy, nobility, and liberation.

§§30–33 — discernment: conduct, habits, views

§30 Three types of bodily/verbal/mental misconduct · lack of discernment *“the undiscerning one reappears in hell.”*

§31 Abandoning the three types of misconduct · the discerning one *Reappears in heaven.*

§32 Evil habits and evil views *“as if carried off... placed in hell.”*

§33 Auspicious habits and auspicious views · sīla + diṭṭhi *“as if carried off... placed in heaven.”*

Discernment keeps the destinations framework oriented

“Look at the world — including its heavenly beings:

deprived of discernment, making an abode in name-and-form, it conceives that ‘This is the truth.’

The best discernment in the world is what leads to penetration, for it rightly discerns the total ending of birth and becoming.”

Heavenly destinations are beneficial in this text — but not ultimately reliable.

The iron ball image

Ordination is not sufficient for liberation. The Buddha emphasizes the development of qualities for monastics and laity alike.

*“Better to eat an iron ball — glowing, aflame — than that,
unprincipled and unrestrained, you should eat the alms of the country.”*

Fear of consequences · hiri and ottappa · samvega.

§108, in the Fours, returns to this point: monks of certain qualities are “not followers of mine.”

Two trains of thought: safety and seclusion

“Two trains of thought often occur to the Tathāgata, worthy and rightly Self-Awakened: the thought of

safety

and that of

seclusion

“The Tathāgata enjoys non-ill will, delights in non-ill will... ‘By this activity I harm no one at all, whether weak or firm.’

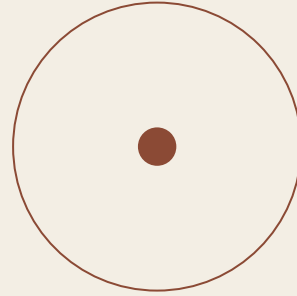
“The Tathāgata enjoys seclusion, delights in seclusion... ‘Whatever is unskillful is abandoned.’

“Thus, monks, you too should live enjoying non-ill will, delighting in non-ill will... enjoying seclusion, delighting in seclusion...”

The wise one with the all-around eye

To the Tathāgata, awakened, who endured what is hard to endure, two thoughts occur: safety the first, seclusion the second.

The dispeller of darkness, free / of effluent, / the great seer / who has / gone beyond, / reached attainment, / gained mastery, / crossed over the poisons; / who's released in the ending of craving: / that sage / bears his last body, / has shaken off Māra, I tell you, / has gone beyond aging. / As one standing on a rocky crag / would see the people all around below, / so the wise one, / with the all-around eye, / having scaled the tower / made of Dhamma, / having crossed over sorrow, / gazes on those overwhelmed with sorrow, / conquered by aging & death.



SMALL GROUPS · 20 MINUTES

Spiral Share

A thread that connects something you noticed in meditation with a teaching from the text — any specific lines?

How is the framework--qualities, actions, destinations--landing for you?

Generate one question per group, to bring back to the large group.

● TEN MINUTES

Break

We resume at 10:57 AM PT.

WHOLE-GROUP Q&A

What is arising?

What is one feeling and one idea you are carrying from the morning so far?

QUESTIONS FROM SMALL GROUPS

What questions did each small group generate? Let's bring them into the large group.

Beyond Becoming: Delight, Seeing, Release

“A sense of identity in a particular world of experience: your sense of what you are, focused on a particular desire.”

— Thanissaro, *fn. to AN 3.77*

Two directions

Delight that obstructs

delight in becoming (§8, §49: *bhavasammudita*)

delight in factions (§18: *vaggārāmo adhammattho*)

delight in activity, chatter, sleep (§79: *kammārāmo bhassārāmo, niddārāmo*)

delight in companions (§80: *sabanandī amaccehi*) (*commentary: overinvolvement*)

delight in sensual pleasures (§93: *rāgaggi*, §95: *kāmabhogino*)

relish in non-becoming (§49: *vibhavaṃ abhinandanti*)

Delight that supports

delight in non-ill will, in seclusion (§38: *pavivekārāmaṃ pavivekarataṃ*)

delight in concord (§19: *samaggarato dhammattho*)

delight in jhāna (§46: *jhānaratā*)

delight in heedfulness (§45: *appamādaratā*)

delight in the peaceful state (§62, §63: *santipade rato*)

delight in ending (§44: *khaye ratā*); “abandoned all becoming”

The delight itself is not the problem. What we delight in shapes what we become, if we become at all.

The bond

*“People are possessed by conceit, bound with conceit,
delighted with becoming.*

*Not comprehending conceit, they come to
further becoming.*

*But those who, letting go of conceit, are,
in its destruction, released,
conquering the bond of conceit, go beyond all bonds.”*

Some adhere · some slip right past · those with vision, see

“Overcome by two viewpoints, monks, some human and divine beings adhere, other human and divine beings slip right past, while those with vision see.”

“And how do some adhere? They enjoy becoming, delight in becoming, are satisfied with becoming. When the Dhamma is taught for the sake of the cessation of becoming, their minds do not take to it...”

“And how do some slip right past? Feeling horrified, humiliated, and disgusted with that very becoming, they relish non-becoming: ‘When this self, after death, perishes and is destroyed, and does not exist — that is peaceful, that is exquisite, that is sufficiency!’”

“And how do those with vision see? A monk sees what’s come to be as what’s come to be. Seeing what’s come to be as what’s come to be, he practices for disenchantment, dispassion, cessation of what’s come to be.”

Two stances toward becoming — and a third way

ADHERE

Enjoy becoming, delight in becoming, satisfied with becoming.

SLIP RIGHT PAST

Relish in non-becoming: “this self, after death, is destroyed — that is peaceful, exquisite, sufficiency.”

SEE

“Sees what’s come to be as what’s come to be.”

Practices for disenchantment, dispassion, cessation of what’s come to be.

SN 12.15 — Kaccāyanagotta Sutta

“By and large, Kaccāyana, this world is supported by a polarity, that of existence and non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it actually is with right discernment, ‘non-existence’ with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is, ‘existence’ with reference to the world does not occur to one.”

“‘Everything exists’: That is one extreme. ‘Everything doesn’t exist’: That is a second extreme. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma via the middle...”

The middle is not a third position about becoming, but a way of seeing: conditionally arisen.

§53 and §86 — gone beyond, at peace

§53

“Whoever sees...

From that he is there released. /

A master of direct knowing, /

at peace, /

he is a sage /

gone beyond bonds.”

§86

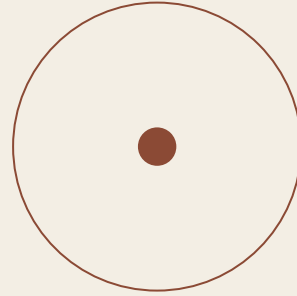
“Dhamma his dwelling, /

Dhamma his delight, /

*a monk pondering Dhamma, / calling Dhamma to mind, / doesn't fall
away / from true Dhamma. /*

*Whether walking, / standing, / sitting, or lying down — / his mind
inwardly restrained — / he arrives / right at peace.”*

Gone beyond bonds — not adhering. At peace — not slipping past. One has seen.



SMALL GROUPS · 20 MINUTES

From the text into practice

- *If you were to bring one teaching from today into your next month, what would it be, and how would you know it was working?*
- *Was there a part of the text or teaching that you find difficult to relate to, or that challenges your assumptions?*

Harvest & Reflection

From small groups:

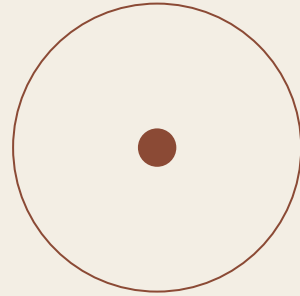
one word or phrase into the chat.

FINAL COMMENTS, QUESTIONS

What is alive in the room as we approach the close?

Closing Meditation

& Reading of §112 — Loka Sutta



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