Feeling (Vedanā)

Bhante Bodhidhamma · Notable Dhamma Teachers — Bhante Bodhidhamma · 46:01

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa — Homage to the Buddha, the blessed, noble and fully self-awakened one.

So last week, last couple of talks, we covered *rūpa*. The first one was really about the sense bases, how the mind receives information, how it's then processed. And then the second one, which I should have done first, I suppose, was about the body as body as a contemplation object. So it was about movement, bringing mindfulness to movement, the cemetery contemplations, contemplating death and things like that.

So now the next one is *vedanā*. So of the five aggregates, because that's what we're looking at, the five aggregates. And to start with *vedanā*, we've got to go back to the point of contact, *phassa*. So at *phassa*, what we have is some information coming in at the sense bases. There has to be a sense base and then there has to be this consciousness. So it must arise on some sort of field, a screen upon which it can be known. So those are your three absolutes.

And whatever comes in at that base is very minimal sensation, but it still comes under just about the idea of feeling. The distinction between that and feeling is that when it comes to feeling, it's defined as being pleasant or unpleasant. And the definitions get even more complicated. But at the point of *phassa*, there's definitely a feeling. So some of them are very difficult to catch, like the feeling of photons on the retina. I'm not so sure that can be felt. But the fact that we can actually perceive light, that it's actually touching, is a sign that something must be being contacted.

With the ear, it's a little bit better because at the eardrum, you can actually experience the sound waves just as pressure. I mean, that's possible. And then you really know that there is a point where at the sense base, you're just getting raw data. And then the next thing is it takes it into the mind, the mind door. And it's at the mind door that we begin to perceive it differently.

So this *vedanā* feeling and perception, they arise together. I'll try and do a bit about perception, but I think there's a lot to be done here. So we'll see. And this point of contact is even there when it comes to the transcendental experiences. There must be some sort of contact that's known. And then after the experience, one reflects upon it, right?

And those three contacts are, first of all, not self. So the contact of being empty of self. *Śūnyatā*, empty of anything there at all. There's also what's known as the signless contact, which is basically that there's no impermanence. That's what they call it, signless. And then there's the freedom from desire. That's the one

to do with *dukkha*, the suffering. So each one of these experiences which release us from delusion also have this point of that point of knowing, that point of contact, you see, and then the rest is reflection.

How important is that point of contact just in the order of daily life? Well, there was, I think I mentioned this before, for those of you who've listened to all my talks. When I used to go to work we there were all these billboards and suddenly that appeared these adverts for an Australian perfume and it had a cork with a sort of Australian hat with corks of hanging around it you see and what had happened was that people with this modern advertising had lost faith in these billboards didn't think they're having much in effect.

But the amount of inquiries about this Australian perfume was such that, of course, they began to realise, in fact, it has an enormous effect. So just consider you're sitting on a bus and you're in a half dream. You're thinking about this, you're thinking about that and all that. But, of course, you avert, your eye catches this thing and it goes in. And that's it. It just goes in. And once it's in, you're conditioned. And the next minute, you know, you're craving for this Australian perfume.

So that point of contact is the point of the beginning of conditioning. So that's why the Buddha says, this business of restraint, restraint of the senses, not to look at things that are going to build up old bad habits, to look at those things that are going to build up good habits. Well, that's one of the reasons for statuary and pictures, you see. As soon as you see, I mean, now, as you know, the Buddha statues become a sort of garden gnome. You can buy these things anywhere and stick them in your garden. Oh, there's a Buddha. So you can see it has people, even if they know nothing about Buddhism at all, they see in the statue some sort of expression of peacefulness, I presume, anyway. So that's how important that point of contact is.

So now, this word *vedanā*, interestingly enough, is rooted in the word *vid*, which is similar to our idea of feel, when somebody says, oh, I feel it's wrong. So there's a feeling content, there's a sort of knowledge content with feeling, it arises, right? And that you could put down to knowing whether the feeling was wholesome or unwholesome. And you'll see later on, all sorts of other categories.

Just as an aside, a writer does suggest that this split between the body and mind is a sort of Cartesian duality. You know, the mind is one thing and the body is something else. But they reckon it's a sort of spectrum of energy that moves from the physical energy into mental energy. And I dare say there's a truth in that. But there's also the mental body is actually has its own existence, as it were, which in traditional Buddhist understanding, when you die, that's what comes out, your mental body. And it's the mental body that then seeks rebirth. And if it hangs around where you actually died, that's your hungry ghost.

I have no problem with that sort of understanding because even when I set up this place in London, a little meditation center we're trying to set up a meditation center there, there was definitely somebody in the house and I could hear them moving about, I could hear them rattling around. At that time there was a friend of, actually, she was on the trust, Ramini, and she brought a friend along who was a medium. And we were just talking about this and that. And then I said, you know, I think there's somebody here who's

hanging about. I said, because, you know, I got a feel for it and I can hear it. I can hear him. I didn't know whether it was a him or her. I just said him. I remember saying that.

And she went into a silence, closed her eye and went into a silence. And it was about maybe three, four, five minutes. And when she came out, she said, it's all right. I've helped him find somewhere else to live. And from that time onwards, I didn't hear anything. And there were no mice. There was nobody. There was no dogs, no cats. So anyway.

So the one thing that I think we need to ask ourselves is, when I seek happiness, what am I actually seeking? So, for instance, when I eat lovely food or see a film or have a romance and all that, there's obviously a base of things that I want, the food, the romance, etc, etc. But what is it that, for want of a better word, I really want from those experiences? What does I really want?

Can I suggest that what we really want is a beautiful inner environment. We want to feel happy. We want actually an emotional state, a mental state in which we are happy. In other words, the food is secondary, the romance is secondary, everything's secondary. What I want to do is feel happy, not think happy. That doesn't get me anywhere, does it? And I can think, well, the word happy, it doesn't do much for me. But I want to feel happy. Am I getting regular nods at the back there? The four judges. Sitting on a high plane. Yes.

So if we just take that for a moment, that actually all I want is to feel happy. And then, of course, I'm taught by society, et cetera, et cetera, culture and nurture and all that as to I'm brought up to believe that this type of food makes me happy, this type of music, this type of person, et cetera, et cetera. So I then begin to manipulate the world to try and really feel happy. Yeah. And in meditation, of course, that's what we're all yearning for, isn't it? The end of this continuous suffering and to just get blissed out for a moment or two and hopefully get into *jhānas* and stay there forever.

So it's OK. Once we realize that, then what it does is it turns your attention towards the feeling content of your experience. You see. And then the question is, the question arises, is it worth it? Is it worth it? What I'm doing is the energy that I'm putting out there in order to get this inner feeling. Is that worth it? Now I'm being a bit cynical here because obviously there's a whole business of ethics involved, but we won't get into that just now.

So it's the feeling tone of our existence, isn't it, as living beings, sentient beings. And the Buddha splits them all into different types. And so I just want to go through this particular discourse, which does that for us. It's called the Pañcakaṅga Sutta. And Pañcakaṅga was a carpenter and he went to Venerable Udāyin and on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. He was sitting there.

As he was sitting there, he said to Venerable Udāyin, "Venerable Sir, how many feelings has the Blessed One spoken of?"

"Householder, the Blessed One, has spoken of three feelings, the feeling of pleasure, the feeling of pain,

and the feeling of neither pleasure or pain. These are the three feelings that the Blessed One has spoken of."

Now when this was said, Pañcakaṅga, the carpenter, said to Venerable Udāyin, "The Blessed One has not spoken of three feelings, he's spoken of two feelings, a feeling of pleasure and a feeling of pain. And as for the feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, the Blessed One has spoken of it as a refined pleasure."

The second time, Venerable Udāyin said to Pañcakaṅga the carpenter, "The Blessed One has spoken of three feelings." And the second time, Pañcakaṅga the Carpenter said to Udāyin, "No, the Buddha has not spoken of three feelings, but of two feelings."

The third time, the Venerable Udāyin said to Pañcakaṅga, "Householder, the Blessed One has not spoken of two feelings." And the third time, Pañcakaṅga said, "No, the Blessed One has not spoken of two feelings."

Now the Venerable Ānanda overheard this discussion between Venerable Udāyin and Pañcakaṅga. So he went to the Blessed One and on arrival, having bowed to him, sat to one side. And as he was sitting there, he told the Blessed One the entire discussion between... heck of a discussion. I'm not so sure it was a discussion, but it's often the way we sort of talk to each other. Yes, I am. No, I'm not. Yes, yes.

And then Venerable Ānanda, true was the exposition of Pañcakaṅga the carpenter would not accept from Venerable Udāyin and true was the exposition that Venerable Udāyin would not accept from Pañcakaṅga the carpenter. "There is the exposition by which I've spoken of two feelings."

So now he goes on. We actually get to 108, believe it or not, by the time it's finished. This is this whole business of deconstruction and trying to, through that deconstruction, trying to categorize different types of feelings so that we're clear as to what we want to develop in our own hearts.

So the first two, of course, are a very simple split between pain and pleasure or what is unpleasant and what is pleasant. And in a sense, that at the base is the dual world we live in. You can't escape that. I mean, it's just part of our existence that we either feel happy or unhappy and so on.

But then he goes a little bit more into categorizing. And then he's got the three feelings, which is *dukkha*, *s ukha*, *ka* means to bear, *dukha* is hard, *sukha* is easy. So hard to bear, easy to bear. And that which is neither easy to bear nor hard to bear. Now, the reason for that, of course, is to make us in our meditation become much more aware of these more subtle feelings that we tend to ignore.

So we're usually aware of what's painful and what's pleasurable. But there's a whole set of feelings, neutral feelings that we're not particularly interested in. And it's just becoming aware of them. And of course, when there are no strong physical feelings, painful or pleasant feelings around then that's what you have you have that sort of pleasant neither pleasant nor unpleasant and of course the obvious one is the breath that's usually as long as there's no tension around the area that's usually very very neutral it's neither pleasant nor unpleasant.

And then he takes us just a little bit further and he talks about *dukkha*, *sukha*, *domanassa*, *somanassa* and *adukkhamassukham*. So this is trying to distinguish again. So he's always trying to deconstruct what we have. Those pleasures and pains that come from the body and the pleasure and pain has to do with the mind. So mental pleasures, mental happiness, happiness and unhappiness. So I suppose we would translate it as pain and pleasure. Happiness, unhappiness and neither. And that neither covers both types. So those are your three feelings.

Now, again, it's the case of sort of in our meditation, just being aware that some feelings, some sensations are body based and some sensations are heart based. And again, that's that split. And of course, that does affect what we do in our meditation, because if it's something physical, we have to discern whether in fact it is truly just physical pain in the knee or something like that, or whether the physicality, the pain in the chest also has some sort of mental feeling involved in it, some sort of tension.

And it's by investigating that that you might actually discover this separation where the physical feeling actually separates from the mental feeling. And of course, if you have that sort of experience, then the teacher becomes very clear to you that this mental feeling is causing this physical upset. And the physical pain or pleasure is like a sounding board. It makes everything louder. Mental feelings are not so loud but when they affect the body and then the body comes back as it were so anger is anger but when the body gets heated up and comes back with tension and ferociousness a ferocious sort of tightness then of course it makes it just that much more obvious to us.

So that's the reason for making that sort of distinction.

Then there are the six feelings and they're based on your senses. Some of them are pretty straightforward, like hearing and smelling. Some are more subtle, like the eye. And then again, what comes in through the sense bases may have a physical base, but of course it's taken into the mind base. And that's when we determine it as being pleasant or unpleasant. So those are your six feelings.

Then there are 18 feelings depending on the sense base. So each of these sense bases has an unpleasant and a pleasant and a neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling. So you end up with 18 different types of feelings. And the sixth one, don't forget the sixth one, which is, of course, the mind. So our experience of that we call emotions or feeling, emotions or moods. Even feeling covers that in our language. In the Buddha's language, there was this seemingly, was just this one word, *vedanā*, which covered it all and had to be defined.

And then finally, so that leaves you with 18, three types. That's right. Then you can split them all again and get 36 different types of feelings, depending upon whether these feelings, physical, mental, etc., are worldly or non-worldly. Now that, of course, is an important thing because if you remember in one discourse, the Buddha says, one of the things he realized was that these thoughts were wholesome and these thoughts were unwholesome. And that if he followed the unwholesome thoughts, things got worse. And if he followed the wholesome thoughts, things got better.

So this, in a sense, is at the feeling level. So these 18 are dependent on those three types of feelings multiplied by the six sense bases. And the sixth one is the mental one. So it includes all our emotional and mood life. He says, this is another discourse, this is what he actually says.

Seeing a form via the eye, one explores a form that can act as a basis for happiness. One explores a form that can act as the basis for distress. One explores a form that can act as a basis for equanimity. And he goes through the different ones, the ear and so on. And then finally, cognising an idea via the intellect. One explores an idea that can act as a basis for happiness. One explores an idea that can act for the basis of distress. And one explores an idea that can act for the basis of equanimity.

So that's one of the reasons why he split these into 18 different categories. It's what we do with the feeling that either makes it into something that's going to be wholesome or unwholesome. That's the 18.

So we can split these 18 again into what is wholesome and unwholesome, or as he would say, worldly and non-worldly. So now, if I can just read this. What are the six kinds of happiness? It's householder happiness. Here it's using the word householder, *agarika*. But the other word it uses would mean based on the flesh, based on sensual pleasure. Happiness that arises when one regards an acquisition, the acquisition of form cognizable by the eye, agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, connected with worldly baits. And when one recalls the previous acquisition of such forms after they have passed, ceased and changed, this is called householder happiness.

So you've only got to think of times when you decide to go to a restaurant and you go through all the things that you might like. Is it going to be a curry? Is it Chinese? Are you going for a pizza? And you're reliving past experiences, right? Which is based upon our physicality, upon being a householder.

However, we're renunciates. So what kind of six kinds of renunciation happiness? So the happiness that arises when experiencing the inconstancy of those forms, their change, fading and cessation, one sees with right discernment as it actually is, that all forms, past and present, are inconstant, stressful and subject to change. This is called renunciation happiness.

So it's not that I think he's not saying that we shouldn't go to restaurants and have pizzas and all that. It's just recognising that the attachment to that is going to cause distress. But when we see that even pizzas come to an end, then we liberate ourselves from the possibility of terrible depression. And of course, that's the same for all the other senses, for sensations and ideas. So that's to do with happiness.

So the similar formula. What are the six kinds of household distress? So the distress or unhappiness that arises when one regards as a non-acquisition, the non-acquisition of forms cognizable by the eye. The language gets a bit tortuous. Agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, connected with worldly baits. And when one recalls the previous non-acquisition of such forms, after they've passed, ceased and changed. This is called householder distress.

So in other words, you wanted the pizza, but it wasn't open. So now you've got distress. So now you're

going to have to have a Chinese, whether you like it or not. So that's what he's saying. If you don't get what you want, then you have this distress.

So then he says, what are the six kinds of renunciation that cause this distress? The distress coming from the longing that arises in one who is filled with the longing for the unexcelled, when experiencing the inconstancy of these, of those very forms, their change, fading and cessation, he sees with right discernment, as it actually is, that all forms, past and present, are inconstant, stressful, subject to change, and he is filled with this longing. Oh, when will I enter and remain in the sphere of the noble ones?

Now, enter and remain in. That's a strange sentence. And when will I enter and remain in the sphere that the noble ones enter, are now in and remain in? So in other words, when we actually discern the distress that comes from not getting what we want, then there's this longing to become liberated, to be with the Buddha. And that longing, if it really takes us, it's known as a *sanvega*, which translates as an urgency, a having to do it.

So then the next one, of course, is what are the six kinds of householder equanimity? The equanimity that arises when a foolish, deluded person, a run of the mill, untaught person who's not conquered his limitations, all the results of actions and who is blind to danger, sees a form with the eye. Such equanimity does not go beyond the form, which is why it is called householder equanimity.

So he's using the word equanimity, but it's a bit of a downer really, isn't it? It's the sort of feeling you get when you don't know the distress or the happiness you're in. You can't see where happiness is because you're too dull-minded. And even though you're in distress, you don't see yourself as being distressed. So people that say, I'm not angry, I'm not depressed, so when you get that deluded attitude which is driven by some wrong understanding then it's a sort of equanimity but obviously it's a poor equanimity. I suppose our word would be indifference.

What's six kinds of renunciation equanimity? So the equanimity that arises when experiencing the inconstancy of the very forms, their change, fading and cessation, one sees with right discernment as it actually is that all forms, past and present, are inconstant, stressful, subject to change. This equanimity goes beyond form, which is why it's called renunciation equanimity. So spiritual renunciation equanimity.

That's the equanimity when we accept the way things are. Things change, things pass, things die away, and so on and so forth. So that equanimity is to be discerned away from the equanimity that comes simply because we can't see. We're dull-minded equanimity.

So, having explained the 36, if we then, through our memory, remember past times of those six particular types, so the six types. And if we then dream or think about future things, like now most of you, I'm sure, are dreaming of the amazingly wonderful things that will happen when you leave this place. And a sense of freedom and liberation that comes with it. So that launching into the future, all that brings us now to 108 different feelings, which can either be pleasant, unpleasant, neutral. They can be worldly or

unworldly, spiritual renunciation and all that stuff.

So that's how he split up all these feelings. He does say somewhere that people see feelings differently, categorize in different ways. But all the categorizations that the Buddha does is always to make us see more clearly where the point of delusion lies. So all these are about making us discern feelings. First of all, from just this simple separation of pleasant and unpleasant. And then through to pleasant and neutral and so on and so forth. And how to discern what is good for us and what is not so good for us. To know what to do with it.

Just another discourse, just to read it out. Thus have I taught the Dharma by means of exposition. When I've taught the Dharma by means of exposition, it can be expected that when there are those who do not consent to, assent to or accept what is well spoken and well stated by another, there will be arguing, quarrelling and disputing, and they will dwell wounding one another with the sword of the tongue.

Thus have I taught the Dhamma by means of exposition. When I've taught the Dhamma by means of exposition, it is expected that when those who do consent, assent to and accept what is well said and well stated by another, they will live in harmony, with courtesy, without quarrelling, like milk mixed with water, regarding one another with friendly eyes.

Obviously, it's a little reference to Udayin and Panchakango, seeming like these other's throats.

Okay, there is a whole section then about the different types of refined feeling that come with concentration meditation and the eventual cessation of feeling and perception. So in the process of *jhāna*, they're all beautiful. So there's no negative mental states or anything like that. But the first one, as you might know in our tradition, there's what we call the soft *jhānas*. For which there are seemingly scriptural support for that. And there are other types of *jhāna*, which are deeper, which are known as the *Visuddhi jh ānas*. Written by Buddhaghosa. So that's a late text, about 700 years, I suppose, after the Buddha.

But there are these two types of beautiful mental states that we can achieve. But they do have an agreement between them as to what the contents are. So the first one is that there is still some sort of mentation, even like the noting it can be as simple as the noting but the general feel is one of a physical joy, a mental joy, and then have I missed one out? And then equanimity is that right? Yes before I've missed one out there's physical joy and there's mental joy oh dear.

I've lost it. And you ain't worried. I'm just trying to regain it. So you have the first two and then you drop one and you drop the other and then you go to equanimity. I think it's, yes, that's right, I think it's just the four.

So on the first one, there is this mentation going on, but there's also a physical feeling of pleasure, a mental feeling of happiness, and behind it all is equanimity. And then as you go deeper and deeper, as it were, you move away from the mind, then from the body, and then from the happiness in the mind until you reach that state of equanimity. And from there, you can even go into what's known as the *Arupajhāna*

s, where it's just pure equanimity.

We're talking now about the feeling content of these mental states. There is a point where even the last of the *Arupajhānas*, the ones that are not based on any material base. So, for instance, remember that when you start the *jhāna*, you start on the breath and that becomes your base, you see. But with the *Arupajhāna*, there's no base. There's nothing there as such.

So it says another pleasure, more extreme and refined. What, Ananda, is another pleasure more extreme and refined than that? What is the happiness which is even more refined than even these very refined *jhā na* states?

There is the case where a monk with the complete transcending of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, so that's the last of these *jhāna* states, enters and remains in the cessation of perception and feeling. This is another pleasure more extreme and refined than that one.

Now it's possible, Ananda, that some wanderers of other persuasions might say, Gautama the contemplative speaks of the cessation of perception and feeling and yet describes it as a pleasure. What is this? How can this be? When they say that, they are to be told, it is not the case, friends, that the Blessed One describes only pleasant feeling as included under pleasure. Wherever pleasure is found, in whatever terms, the Blessed One describes it as pleasure.

So it's the English here. He describes it as *sukha*. In other words, he describes it as happiness, right? So it's not physically based. So that's a state supposedly that can only be achieved by people who attain the third path and fruit, *anāgāmi*, the cessation of feeling and perception. And there is some dispute as to whether that is *nibbāna* or not. But we won't worry about that. Just for the moment.

Okay. So one of the misunderstandings of *kamma* is of course that everything that happens to us is *kamma* . Any bad feelings we have, physical anyway, is because in the past life we did something terrible, or even in this life we did something terrible. And the Buddha is quite clear about that. That doesn't hold.

So Sivaka, the song to purse called Sivaka. Some feelings arise on account of irregularities in the bile. Some on account of irregularities in the phlegm. Some in account of wind. Some on account of the confluence of numerous factors. Some on account of changes in the weather. Some account of irregular exercise. Some on account of external dangers, some on the account of *kamma* results.

So after all these, there are results from *kamma*. That feelings arise dependent on these different causes is something you can see for yourself and that people everywhere acknowledge. On this account, any recluse or holy man who claims all feelings that arise, be they pleasant or unpleasant, are entirely the result of previous *kamma*, can be rightly said to have spoken in excess of what is obvious to people everywhere. And I say that such views are wrong.

So that confusion is not just in present day Buddhists, but also in that time where everything was seen as

fate. There were teachers who taught that everything that happened to you is caused because of past *kam ma*. And his argument would be, what about what you do now? What is the effect? If you do something now, it has an effect on you. So it's not just the past coming at you, it's your decisions that you make now which have effect.

Monks, when there is an intentional, fixed and steady deliberation on any theme, that theme becomes an object for sustained consciousness. Where there is an object, consciousness has an abiding object. When consciousness is so firmly established and developed, birth in the new sphere ensues. That's the *bhava*. And when there arises into a new sphere of existence, birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation and pain. This is where the arising of this whole mass of suffering arises. This is where all that suffering arises.

So this is just something else that whatever happens to us now is not entirely dependent upon some past action. In fact, I would say a lot of things, most things aren't. It's just that to be able to distinguish why something has happened to us from some karmic act or from what's happening now. The Buddha said, try and work out your *kamma*, drive you mad.

But in terms of our inner life, you see, where there is an intentional fixed steady deliberation on a theme, where we're thinking about something, especially obsessively, that thing becomes the object of sustained consciousness. And where there is an object, consciousness has an abiding, right? So the consciousness has an abiding in what you're actually thinking about.

Now there is somewhere else where he actually says that the mind has its abiding in the body. If you remember on the earlier talk, we were wondering where was the sense base of the mind, right? So we know that with eyes, it's the retina and so on. So where's the mental sense base? So it becomes pretty clear that it's the whole body.

So when consciousness is so firmly established and developed, then you get that rebirth, right? So that's your dependent origination, that's *bhava*. Now *bhava* here means not only intention, an empowered intention, right? An act of will, right? It is an action and the self recreates itself. So you're constantly recreating that sense of me through time. And it's because of this that all the rest of it happens. A new sphere of existence. Birth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. That's quite a list, isn't it? This is the whole mass of suffering.

So just to recap there, *vedanā* has its base in the initial contact. And then from then on, it's all mentation. It's all the mind working with feelings. And our lives are a jumble of these feelings. And the question is, what sort of mental state do I want to develop? What sort of mental state do I want to be in all the time?

So if we look at the Buddha, we can presume that all that negativity had gone. So when he's in contact with somebody, the social virtues, love, compassion, joy, gratitude, they would all arise naturally as beautiful mental states. And when nobody's there, or when other people are there, but they're sitting quietly or whatever, the heart would just slowly come down to that equanimity. And that equanimity is

the basis for all the other mental states, because it stops the other mental states falling into their

subtle enemies, near enemies sometimes, it's translated as so. Love towards affection, compassion towards grief and joy towards excitement.

So that's where we want to get to, isn't it? We want to get to that underlying steady line of contentment, contentment and equanimity. And then you get these little pleasant blips that arrive. A bit of love, a bit of compassion, a bit of joy. And then just the silence of equanimity.

So that's where we're heading over the next couple of days, of course. Or we can live in hope. Why not?

So I can only hope my words have been of some assistance, that they have not caused even greater confusion. May you, by your constant effort to establish the right type of mental state, be fully liberated sooner rather than later.

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