

handful of leaves 1



HANDFUL OF LEAVES

Volume One

HANDFUL
OF
LEAVES

*Volume One:
An Anthology
from the
Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas*

Translated by

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(Geoffrey DeGraff)

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Once the Blessed One was staying at Kosambī in the simsapā forest. Then, picking up a few simsapā leaves with his hand, he asked the monks, "What do you think, monks: Which are more numerous, the few simsapā leaves in my hand or those overhead in the simsapā forest?"

"The leaves in the hand of the Blessed One are few in number, lord. Those overhead in the forest are far more numerous."

"In the same way, monks, those things that I have known with direct knowledge but haven't taught are far more numerous [than what I have taught]. And why haven't I taught them? Because they aren't connected with the goal, don't relate to the rudiments of the holy life, and don't lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding. That's why I haven't taught them.

"And what have I taught? 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress': This is what I have taught. And why have I taught these things? Because they are connected with the goal, relate to the rudiments of the holy life, and lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding. This is why I have taught them."

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Abbreviations

AN	Āṅguttara Nikāya
Cv	Cullavagga
DN	Dīgha Nikāya
Dhp	Dhammapada
Iti	Itivuttaka
Khp	Khuddakapāṭha
MN	Majjhima Nikāya
Mv	Mahāvagga
SN	Saṃyutta Nikāya
Sn	Sutta Nipāta
Thag	Theragāthā
Thig	Therīgāthā
Ud	Udāna

References to DN, Iti, and MN are to discourse (*sutta*). Those to Dhp are to verse. Those to Cv and Mv are to chapter, section, and sub-section. References to other texts are to section (*saṃyutta*, *nipāta*, or *vagga*) and discourse.

All translations are based on the Royal Thai Edition of the Pali Canon (Bangkok: Mahāmakut Rājavidyālaya, 1982).

Acknowledgements

In early 1996, John Bullitt asked me to provide a few translations from the Pali Canon for his fledgling website, Access to Insight. What began as a casual project quickly grew to a major production in the years 1997-98, as the positive response to the initial translations showed a widespread desire for clear, reliable English translations of the Buddha's teachings, available free of charge. Although I have pursued other projects in the years since, I have continued providing translations as time has allowed. Currently the sutta translations on Access to Insight number more than 700, most of them mine. The website as a whole—thanks to John's scrupulous care and selfless gift of his time—has become a premier source for people all over the world who are interested in reliable reading materials on the Theravada tradition.

In recent years, friends have suggested that my sutta translations be offered in book form, to make them freely available to people (like myself) without Internet access. Conditions weren't right for this project, though, until September of last year, when Gil Fronsdal and the board members of the Sati Center for Buddhist Studies generously offered their support in a form that made the project feasible. The final obstacle to the project—my mental block to compiling the indexes—was removed later in the year when Susan Miller, an old friend from my days in Oberlin and Chiangmai, kindly offered her professional skills to compile them for free.

In addition to the people named here, many others—too numerous to name, and most of whom I have never met—have helped proofread the translations and/or check them against the original Pali. Others have contributed to the book funds at the Sati Center and at Metta Forest Monastery that have underwritten the publishing costs. Thus this volume—along with the

remaining three in the set—would not have been possible without the generous help offered by many, many people. I would like to offer them in return my heartfelt appreciation, and I hope that you, the reader, will send thoughts of gratitude and good will in their direction, too. Gratitude encourages more goodness in the world.

Any mistakes that remain in these volumes are totally my own. If you notice any, please inform me so that they can be corrected in future editions. The Sati Center is in charge of distributing these books, so requests for copies should be sent there.

Peace.

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Introduction

This volume is the first in a four-volume anthology of suttas (discourses) drawn from the Sutta Piṭaka (Discourse Basket or Repository) of the Pali Canon. This volume contains suttas drawn from the first two of the five collections comprising the Sutta Piṭaka: the Dīgha Nikāya (Long Collection) and Majjhima Nikāya (Middle Collection). Suttas from the remaining three collections—the Saṃyutta Nikāya (Connected Collection), the Aṅguttara Nikāya (Numerical Collection), and the Khuddaka Nikāya (Short Collection)—constitute the remaining three volumes.

The suttas I have selected and translated for these volumes were chosen for the interest they might hold for a person intent on understanding and practicing the Buddhist teachings, or Dhamma. Some have been chosen for their detailed discussions of basic doctrines; others, for the vivid stories or similes they use to illustrate those doctrines. Although they constitute only a small portion of the Sutta Piṭaka, taken together they present a fairly comprehensive picture of the Piṭaka's essential teachings.

And it's a remarkable picture. The Buddha as portrayed in the suttas is one of the most inspiring human beings imaginable: noble, brave, and compassionate in his character; precise, helpful, and profound in his teachings. The teachings, too, are remarkable. In addition to asserting the ability of human beings to bring about their own happiness, they also offer a program of training to direct that ability to the Deathless: the total transcendence of all suffering and stress.

The Theravada tradition, dominant in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand, regards these suttas as the authentic and authoritative record of the Buddha's own words. When Western scholars—piqued by issues of authority and authenticity—first learned of these claims in the 19th century, they began employing the historical method to test them. And although every conceivable scrap of literary or archeological evidence seems to have been examined, no air-tight historical proof or disproof of these claims has surfaced. What *has* surfaced is a mass of minor facts and probabilities—showing that the Pali Canon is *probably* the closest detailed record we have of the Buddha's teachings—but nothing more certain than

that. Archeological evidence shows that Pali was probably not the Buddha's native language, but is this proof that he did not use Pali when talking to native speakers of that language? The Canon contains grammatical irregularities, but are these signs of an early stage in the language, before it was standardized, or a later stage of degeneration? And in which stage of the language's development did the Buddha's life fall? Fragments of other early Buddhist canons have been found, with slight deviations from the Pali Canon in their wording, but not in their basic doctrines. Is their unanimity in doctrine a sign that they all come from the Buddha himself, or was it the product of a later conspiracy to remake and standardize the doctrine in line with changed beliefs and tastes? Scholars have proven eager to take sides on these issues, but the inevitable use of inference, conjecture, and probabilities in their arguments lends an air of uncertainty to the whole process.

Many have seen this uncertainty as sign of the inadequacy of the Theravadin claims to authenticity, but simply to dismiss the teachings of the suttas for this reason would be to deprive ourselves of the opportunity to test their practical worth. Perhaps we should instead question the methods of the historians, and view the uncertainty of their conclusions as a sign of the inadequacy of the historical method as a tool for ascertaining the Dhamma. The suttas themselves make this point in their own recommendations for how the authenticity and authority of the Dhamma is best ascertained. In a famous passage, they quote the Buddha as saying:

"Kālāmas, don't go by reports, by legends, by traditions, by scripture, by logical conjecture, by inference, by analogies, by agreement through pondering views, by probability, or by the thought, 'This contemplative is our teacher.' When you know for yourselves that, 'These dhammas are unskillful; these dhammas are blameworthy; these dhammas are criticized by the wise; these dhammas, when adopted & carried out, lead to harm & to suffering'—then you should abandon them When you know for yourselves that, 'These dhammas are skillful; these dhammas are blameless; these dhammas are praised by the wise; these dhammas, when adopted & carried out, lead to welfare & to happiness'—then you should enter & remain in them."

Because this passage is contained in a religious scripture, the statements attracting the most attention have been those rejecting the authority of religious teachers, legends, traditions, and scripture; along with those insisting on the importance of knowing for oneself. These remarkably anti-dogmatic statements—sometimes termed the Buddha's Charter of Free Inquiry—have tended to divert attention from the severe strictures that the passage places on what "knowing for oneself" entails. In questioning the authority of reports, it dismisses the basic material on which the historical method is based. In questioning the authority of inference and probability, it dismisses some of the method's basic techniques. In questioning the authority of logical conjecture, analogies, and agreement through pondering views, it dismisses the methods of free-thinking rationalism in general.

This leaves only two methods for ascertaining the Dhamma, both of them related to the question raised in this passage and central to other teachings in the Canon: What is skillful, what is unskillful? In developing any skill, you must (1) pay attention to the results of your own actions; and (2) listen to those who have already mastered the skill. Similarly, in ascertaining the Dhamma, you must (1) examine the results that come for putting a particular teaching in practice; and (2) check those results against the opinions of the wise.

Two aspects of the Dhamma, however, make it a skill apart. The first is reflected in the fact that the word Dhamma means not only teaching, but also quality of the mind. Thus the above passage could also be translated:

"When you know for yourselves that, 'These qualities are unskillful; these qualities are blameworthy; these qualities are criticized by the wise; these qualities, when adopted & carried out, lead to harm & to suffering'—then you should abandon them When you know for yourselves that, 'These qualities are skillful; these qualities are blameless; these qualities are praised by the wise; these qualities, when adopted & carried out, lead to welfare & to happiness'—then you should enter & remain in them."

In fact, this is more likely the correct translation, as the discussion following this passage focuses on the results of acting on qualities of the mind: greed, aversion, and delusion in the

unskillful set; and lack of greed, lack of aversion, and lack of delusion in the skillful one. This points to the fact that Dhamma practice is primarily a skill of the *mind*.

The second aspect that sets the Dhamma apart as a skill is its goal: nothing less than the total ending of suffering.

While this second aspect of the Dhamma makes it an attractive skill to master, the first aspect presents difficulties in determining who has mastered the skill and is thus qualified to speak about it with authority. After all, we can't look into the minds of others to see what qualities are there and what the internal results of the practice are. At best, we can detect hints of these things in their actions, but nothing more. Thus, if we look to others for the last word on the Dhamma, we will always be in a position of uncertainty. The only way to overcome uncertainty is to practice the Dhamma to see if it brings about an end to suffering within our own minds.

Traditionally, the texts state that uncertainty about the Dhamma ends only with the attainment of Stream-entry, the first of the four levels of Awakening. Even though a person who has reached this level of Awakening is not totally immersed in the ending of suffering, he or she has seen enough of the end of suffering to know without a doubt that that is where the practice of the Dhamma leads. So it is not surprising that the four factors the suttas identify as bringing about Stream-entry are also the four methods they recommend for ascertaining whether they themselves are a truly authoritative and authentic guide to the end of suffering.

Those factors, listed in SN LV.5, are:

association with people of integrity,
listening to the true Dhamma,
appropriate attention, and
practice in accordance with the Dhamma.

Passages from the suttas dealing with each of these factors help show how the two sources of skill—the counsel of the wise and the lessons learned by observing the results of your own actions—can be properly balanced and integrated so as to ascertain what the true Dhamma is. And because listening to the true Dhamma now includes reading the true Dhamma, a knowledge of these factors and their interrelationships gives guidance in how to read the suttas collected in these volumes. In particular, these factors show how the suttas themselves say they should

be read, and what other actions provide the skillful context for getting the most benefit from reading them.

As you explore the explanations of these factors, you find that their presentation as a short list is deceptively simple, inasmuch as each factor contains elements of the other factors as well. For instance, associating with people of integrity is of great help in practicing the Dhamma, but for a person to recognize people of genuine integrity requires that he or she have some experience in practicing the Dhamma. Thus, although the form of the list suggests a simple linear progression, the individual factors of the list are inter-related in complex ways. What this means in practice is that the process of ascertaining the Dhamma is a complex one, requiring sensitivity and discernment in balancing and integrating the factors in an appropriate way.

Association with people of integrity. Because the Dhamma consists primarily of qualities of the mind, any written account of the Dhamma is only a pale shadow of the real thing. Thus, to gain a sense of the Dhamma's full dimensions, you must find people who embody the Dhamma in their thoughts, words, and deeds, and associate with them in a way that enables you to absorb as much of the Dhamma as possible. The passages explaining this factor thus offer advice in two areas: how to recognize people of integrity and how best to associate with them once you have found them.

The immediate sign of integrity is gratitude.

"A person of integrity is grateful & acknowledges the help given to him. This gratitude, this acknowledgment is second nature among admirable people. It is entirely on the level of people of integrity."

AN II.31

Gratitude is a necessary sign of integrity in that people who do *not* recognize and value the goodness and integrity in others are unlikely to make the effort to develop integrity within themselves. On its own, though, gratitude does not constitute integrity. The essence of integrity lies in three qualities: truth, harmlessness, and discernment.

"There is the case where a monk lives in dependence on a certain village or town. Then a householder or householder's son goes to him and observes him with regard to three mental qualities—qualities based on greed, qualities based on aversion, qualities based on delusion: 'Are there in this venerable one any such qualities based on greed ... aversion ... delusion that, with his mind overcome by these qualities, he might say, "I know," while not knowing, or say, "I see," while not seeing; or that he might urge another to act in a way that was for his/her long-term harm & pain?' As he observes him, he comes to know, 'There are in this venerable one no such qualities based on greed ... aversion ... delusion His bodily behavior & verbal behavior are those of one not greedy ... aversive ... deluded. And the Dhamma he teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise."

MN 95

As this passage shows, knowledge of a person's truthfulness requires that you be so observant of his or her behavior that you can confidently infer the quality of his or her mind. This level of confidence, in turn, requires that you not only be observant, but also discerning and willing to take time, for as another passage points out, the appearance of spiritual integrity is easy to fake.

Then King Pasenadi Kosala went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. Then seven coiled-hair ascetics, seven Jain ascetics, seven naked ascetics, seven one-cloth ascetics, & seven wanderers—their nails grown long, their body-hair grown long—walked past not far from the Blessed One On seeing them, King Pasenadi arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, knelt down with his right knee on the ground, saluted the ascetics with his hands before his heart, and announced his name to them three times: "I am the king, venerable sirs, Pasenadi Kosala. I am the king, venerable sirs, Pasenadi Kosala. I am the king, venerable sirs, Pasenadi Kosala." Then not long after the ascetics had passed, he returned to the Blessed One and,

on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "Of those in the world who are arahants or on the path to arahantship, are these among them?"

"Your majesty, as a layman enjoying sensual pleasures; living crowded with wives & children; using Kāsi fabrics and sandalwood; wearing garlands, scents, & creams; handling gold and silver, it is hard for you to know whether these are arahants or on the path to arahantship.

[1] "It's through living together that a person's virtue may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

[2] "It's through trading with a person that his purity may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

[3] "It's through adversity that a person's endurance may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

[4] "It's through discussion that a person's discernment may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning."

"How amazing, lord! How astounding! How well that was put by the Blessed One! ... These men, lord, are my spies, my scouts, returning after going out through the countryside. They go out first, and then I go. Now, when they have scrubbed off the dirt & mud, are well-bathed & well-perfumed, have trimmed their hair & beards, and have put on white clothes, they will go about endowed and provided with the five strings of sensuality."

AN IV.192 expands on these points and indicates that the ability to recognize a person of integrity requires you to have a strong sense of integrity yourself. In fact, MN 110 insists that you must *be* a person of integrity in your actions, views, and friendships if you are to recognize integrity in another.

Listening to the True Dhamma. Once you have determined to the best of your ability that certain people embody integrity, the suttas advise listening to their Dhamma, both to learn *about* them—to further test their integrity—and to learn *from* them, to gain a sense of what the Dhamma might be. And again, the suttas recommend both how to listen to the Dhamma and how to recognize true Dhamma when you hear it.

MN 95 recommends that you spend time near people of integrity, develop a sense of respect for them, and pay close attention to their Dhamma.

SN VI.2 and AN VIII.2 explain the purpose for respect here: it's a prerequisite for learning. Neither passage elaborates on this point, but its truth is fairly obvious. You find it easier to learn from someone you respect than from someone you don't. Respect is what opens your mind and loosens your preconceived opinions to make room for new knowledge and skills. At the same time, a person with a valuable teaching to offer will feel more inclined to teach it to someone who shows respect than to someone who doesn't. However, respect does not necessarily mean giving your full approval to the teaching. After all, part of the purpose in listening to the Dhamma is to test whether the person teaching the Dhamma has integrity in his views or hers. Full approval can come only when you have put the teaching in practice and tasted its results. This is why the Vinaya, the monastic discipline, never requires that a student take vows of obedience to a teacher. Here respect means, in the words of Sn II.9, a lack of stubbornness. Or, in the words of AN VI.88, "the patience to comply with the teaching": the willingness to listen with an open mind and to take the time and effort needed to give any teachings that seem reasonable a serious try.

The reasonability of the teaching can be gauged by the central principle in views of integrity as explained above in MN 110. That principle is conviction in *kamma*, the efficacy of human action: that people are responsible for their actions, that their intentions determine the quality—the skillfulness or unskillfulness—of their actions, that actions give results, and that the quality of the action

determines the quality of the result. A person who does not believe in these principles cannot be trusted.

Because the distinction between skillfulness and unskillfulness is central to the principle of kamma—and also to the project of putting an end to suffering and stress—MN 135 recommends approaching potential teachers and asking them:

“What is skillful? What is unskillful? What is blameworthy? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What, having been done by me, will be for my long-term harm & suffering? Or what, having been done by me, will be for my long-term welfare & happiness?”

The texts give a few examples of what might be called the lowest common denominator for judging whether answers to this question embody integrity. In essence, these teachings constitute “what works” in eliminating blatant levels of suffering and stress in one’s life.

“Now what is unskillful? Taking life is unskillful, taking what is not given...sexual misconduct...lying...abusive speech...divisive tale-bearing...idle chatter is unskillful. Covetousness...ill will...wrong views are unskillful. These things are termed unskillful.

“And what are the roots of unskillful things? Greed is a root of unskillful things, aversion is a root of unskillful things, delusion is a root of unskillful things. These are termed the roots of unskillful things.

“And what is skillful? Abstaining from taking life is skillful, abstaining from taking what is not given...from sexual misconduct...from lying...from abusive speech...from divisive tale-bearing...abstaining from idle chatter is skillful. Lack of covetousness...lack of ill will...right views are skillful. These things are termed skillful.

“And what are the roots of skillful things? Lack of greed is a root of skillful things, lack of aversion is a root of skillful things, lack of delusion is a root of skillful things. These are termed the roots of skillful things.”

"These three things have been promulgated by wise people, by people who are truly good. Which three? Generosity...going-forth [from the home life]...& service to one's mother & father. These three things have been promulgated by wise people, by people who are truly good."

AN III.45

However, the true Dhamma has a dimension going far beyond the lowest common denominator. To repeat the words of MN 95, it is "deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise." The principle of skillfulness—of cause and effect that can be tested in your own actions—still applies in this dimension, but the standards for "what works" on this level are correspondingly subtler and more refined. Two famous passages indicate what these standards are.

"Gotamī, the dhammas of which you may know, 'These dhammas lead—

to passion, not to dispassion;
to being fettered, not to being unfettered;
to accumulating, not to shedding;
to self-aggrandizement, not to modesty;
to discontent, not to contentment;
to entanglement, not to seclusion;
to laziness, not to aroused persistence;
to being burdensome, not to being unburdensome':

You may definitely hold, 'This is not the Dhamma, this is not the Vinaya, this is not the Teacher's instruction.'

"As for the dhammas of which you may know, 'These dhammas lead—

to dispassion, not to passion;
to being unfettered, not to being fettered;
to shedding, not to accumulating;
to modesty, not to self-aggrandizement;
to contentment, not to discontent;
to seclusion, not to entanglement;
to aroused persistence, not to laziness;
to being unburdensome, not to being burdensome':

You may definitely hold, 'This is the Dhamma, this is the Vinaya, this is the Teacher's instruction.'"

AN VIII.53

“Upāli, the dhammas of which you may know, ‘These dhammas do not lead to utter disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, nor to Unbinding’: You may definitely hold, ‘This is not the Dhamma, this is not the Vinaya, this is not the Teacher’s instruction.’

“As for the dhammas of which you may know, ‘These dhammas lead to utter disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding’: You may definitely hold, ‘This is the Dhamma, this is the Vinaya, this is the Teacher’s instruction.’”

AN VII.80

AN VIII.30 expands on some of the principles in the first of these two passages. But here we will focus on the points where these two passages intersect—in the requirement that the Dhamma lead to dispassion and to being unfettered—for the standard test for a genuine experience of Awakening is that it arises from dispassion and cuts the fetters of the mind.

“There are these ten fetters. Which ten? Five lower fetters & five higher fetters. And which are the five lower fetters? Self-identity views, uncertainty, grasping at precepts & practices, sensual desire, and ill will. These are the five lower fetters. And which are the five higher fetters? Passion for form, passion for what is formless, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. These are the five higher fetters.”

AN X.13

As MN 118 explains, stream-entry cuts the first three fetters; once-returning, the second level of Awakening, weakens passion, aversion, and delusion; non-returning, the third level, cuts the fetters of sensual desire and ill will; and arahantship, the final level of Awakening, cuts the remaining five.

Ultimately, of course, the only proof for whether a teaching leads in this direction comes when, having put the teaching into practice, you actually begin to cut these fetters from the mind. But as a preliminary exercise, you can contemplate a teaching to make sense of it and to see if there are good reasons for believing that it will lead in the right direction.

“Hearing the Dhamma, one remembers it. Remembering it, one penetrates the meaning of those dhammas. Penetrating the meaning, one comes to an agreement through pondering those dhammas. There being an agreement through pondering those dhammas, desire arises. With the arising of desire, one becomes willing. Willing, he contemplates (lit: ‘weighs,’ ‘compares’).”

MN 95

The process of pondering, weighing, and comparing the teachings is based on adopting the right attitude and asking the right questions about them. As AN II.25 points out, some of the teachings are meant to have their meaning inferred, whereas others are not, and to misapprehend which of these two classes a particular teaching belongs to is a serious mistake. This is where the next factor for stream-entry plays a role.

Appropriate attention. MN 2 draws the line between appropriate and inappropriate attention on the basis of the questions you choose to pursue in contemplating the Dhamma.

“There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person...does not discern what ideas are fit for attention, or what ideas are unfit for attention This is how he attends inappropriately: ‘Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?’ Or else he is inwardly perplexed about the immediate present: ‘Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?’

“As he attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of view arises in him: The view *I have a self* arises in him as true & established, or the view *I have no self*...or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self*...or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self*...or the view *It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self* arises in him as true & established, or else he has a view like this: *This very self of mine—the*

knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions—is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will endure as long as eternity. This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is not freed from birth, aging, & death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from stress.

“The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones ...discerns what ideas are fit for attention, and what ideas are unfit for attention He attends appropriately, *This is stress...This is the origination of stress...This is the cessation of stress...This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.* As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: self-identity views, doubt, and grasping at precepts & practices.”

MN 2

Some of the most useless controversies in the history of Buddhist thought have come from ignoring this teaching on what is and is not an appropriate object for attention. Buddhists have debated fruitlessly for centuries, and continue to debate today, on how to define a person’s identity—the answer to the question, “What am I?”—or whether a person does or does not have a self—the answer to the questions, “Am I? Am I not?” The fruitlessness of these arguments has proven repeatedly the point made by this passage: that any answer to these questions leads to entanglement in the fetters that the Dhamma is meant to cut away.

To avoid these controversies, the passage recommends focusing on four truths that constitute the appropriate object for attention—stress, its origination, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation. These truths are directly related to the question of skillfulness, which divides reality into two sets of variables: cause and effect, skillful and unskillful. The origination of stress is an unskillful cause, and stress its result. The way leading to the cessation of stress is a skillful cause, and the cessation of stress its result. To look at experience in these terms is to attend appropriately in a way that can help cut the fetters underlying unskillfulness in the mind.

For instance, SN LVI.11 defines the truth of stress as the five clinging-aggregates and maintains that this truth should to be comprehended in such a way as to lead to dispassion for the clinging. This, too, is a function of appropriate attention.

“A virtuous monk should attend in an appropriate way to the five clinging-aggregates as inconstant, stressful, a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction, alien, a dissolution, an emptiness, not-self. Which five? Form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness as a clinging-aggregate. A virtuous monk should attend in an appropriate way to these five clinging-aggregates as inconstant, stressful, a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction, alien, a dissolution, an emptiness, not-self. For it is possible that a virtuous monk, attending in an appropriate way to these five clinging-aggregates as inconstant ... not-self, would realize the fruit of stream-entry.”

SN XXII.122

Thus appropriate attention entails a way of looking at the Dhamma not only as it is presented in a teaching, but also as it presents itself directly as experience to the mind.

Practice in accordance with the Dhamma. Once you have gained a sense of the Dhamma through appropriate attention, the remaining step is to practice in accordance with the Dhamma. As with the first two factors for stream-entry, this process is twofold: adapting your actions to follow in line with the Dhamma (rather than trying to adapt the Dhamma to follow your own preferences), and refining your understanding of the Dhamma as it is tested in experience.

MN 61 offers explicit instructions on how this is to be done.

“What do you think, Rāhula: What is a mirror for?”

“For reflection, sir.”

“In the same way, Rāhula, bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts are to be done with repeated reflection.

“Whenever you want to perform a bodily act, you should reflect on it: ‘This bodily act I want to perform—would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both?’

Is it an unskillful bodily act, with painful consequences, painful results? If, on reflection, you know that it would lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it would be an unskillful bodily act with painful consequences, painful results, then any bodily act of that sort is absolutely unfit for you to do. But if on reflection you know that it would not cause affliction ... it would be a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then any bodily act of that sort is fit for you to do.

“While you are performing a bodily act, you should reflect on it: ‘This bodily act I am doing—is it leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful bodily act, with painful consequences, painful results?’ If, on reflection, you know that it is leading to self-affliction, to affliction of others, or both ... you should give it up. But if on reflection you know that it is not ... you may continue with it.

“Having performed a bodily act, you should reflect on it ... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful bodily act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should confess it, reveal it, lay it open to the Teacher or to a knowledgeable companion in the holy life. Having confessed it ... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities.

[Similarly for verbal acts and mental acts, although the final paragraph concerning mental acts says:]

“Having performed a mental act, you should reflect on it ... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful mental act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should feel distressed, ashamed, & disgusted with it. Feeling distressed ... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction ... it was a skillful mental action with

happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities."

MN 61

The process of self-examination recommended in this passage includes the principles discussed under the first three factors for stream-entry. You pay appropriate attention to your own intentions and actions, and to their results, to see whether they qualify as skillful or unskillful. If you notice that any of your bodily or verbal actions have led to harmful results, you approach a person of integrity and listen to his/her advice. In this way you combine the two principles that Iti 16 & 17 recommend as the most helpful internal and external principles for awakening: appropriate attention and friendship with admirable people. It is no coincidence that these are precisely the two principles recommended in the discourse to the Kālāmas.

Self-examination of this sort, however, shares yet another feature with the first factor for stream-entry: the need for integrity. Just as your integrity is a prerequisite for your ability to detect integrity in others, so it is a prerequisite for your ability to gauge the true nature of your intentions and the results of your actions. These are commonly the two areas of experience where people are least honest with themselves. Yet, for your practice to accord with the Dhamma, you must resist any habitual tendency to be less than totally scrupulous about them. This is why, as a preface to the above advice, the sutta shows the Buddha lecturing on the importance of truthfulness as the most essential quality for a person on the path.

Although Rāhula reportedly received the above advice when he was a child, MN 19 maintains that the principles it contains can lead all the way to full Awakening. This means, of course, that they can lead to the first level of Awakening, which is stream-entry.

Stream-entry is often called the arising of the Dhamma eye. What stream-enterers see with this Dhamma eye is always expressed in the same terms:

Then Ven. Assaji gave this exposition of Dhamma to Sāriputta the Wanderer:

“Whatever phenomena arise from a cause:
 Their cause
 & their cessation.
 Such is the teaching of the Tathāgata,
 the Great Contemplative.”

Then to Sāriputta the Wanderer, as he heard this exposition of Dhamma, there arose the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye: “*Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation.*”

Mv I.23.5

A subsequent passage shows that the concept “all that is subject to origination” occurs in conjunction with a glimpse of what stands in opposition to “all that is subject to origination”—in other words, the Unfabricated: deathlessness.

[Immediately after attaining the Stream] Sāriputta the Wanderer went to where Moggallāna the Wanderer was staying. Moggallāna the Wanderer saw him coming from afar and, on seeing him, said, “Your faculties are bright, my friend; your complexion pure & clear. Could it be that you have attained the Deathless?”

“Yes, my friend, I have....”

Mv I.23.5

The suttas describe the experience of the Deathless in only the sketchiest terms. What little description there is, is intended to show that the Deathless lies beyond most linguistic categories. However, there are a few indicators to show what the Deathless is not.

To begin with, it cannot be described as a state of either being nor non-being.

Mahā Koṭṭhita: With the remainderless stopping & fading of the six spheres of contact [vision, hearing, smell, taste, touch, & intellection] is it the case that there is anything else?

Sāriputta: Don’t say that, my friend.

Mahā Koṭṭhita: With the remainderless stopping & fading of the six spheres of contact, is it the case that there is not anything else?

Sāriputta: Don't say that, my friend.

Mahā Koṭṭhita: ...is it the case that there both is & is not anything else?

Sāriputta: Don't say that, my friend.

Mahā Koṭṭhita: ...is it the case that there neither is nor is not anything else?

Sāriputta: Don't say that, my friend.

Mahā Koṭṭhita: Being asked...if there is anything else, you say, 'Don't say that, my friend'. Being asked...if there is not anything else...if there both is & is not anything else... if there neither is nor is not anything else, you say, 'Don't say that, my friend'. Now, how is the meaning of this statement to be understood?

Sāriputta: Saying...is it the case that there is anything else... is it the case that there is not anything else...is it the case that there both is & is not anything else...is it the case that there neither is nor is not anything else, one is complicating non-complication. However far the six spheres of contact go, that is how far complication goes. However far complication goes, that is how far the six spheres of contact go. With the remainderless fading & stopping of the six spheres of contact, there comes to be the stopping, the allaying of complication.

AN IV.173

Second, the dimension of the Deathless is not devoid of awareness, although the awareness here must by definition lie apart from the consciousness included in the five aggregates of fabricated experience.

"Monks, that dimension should be known where the eye (vision) stops and the perception (mental noting) of form fades. That dimension should be known where the ear stops and the perception of sound fades ... where the nose stops and the perception of aroma fades ... where the

tongue stops and the perception of flavor fades ... where the body stops and the perception of tactile sensation fades ... where the intellect stops and the perception of idea/phenomenon fades: That dimension should be known."

SN XXXV.117

"Having directly known the extent of designation and the extent of the objects of designation, the extent of expression and the extent of the objects of expression, the extent of description and the extent of the objects of description, the extent of discernment and the extent of the objects of discernment, the extent to which the cycle revolves: Having directly known that, the monk is released. [To say that,] *'The monk released, having directly known that, does not see, does not know is his opinion,'* that would be mistaken."

DN 15

Consciousness without feature, without end
 luminous all around:
 Here water, earth, fire, & wind have no footing.
 Here long & short,
 coarse & fine,
 fair & foul,
 name & form
 are all brought to an end.
 With the stopping
 of [the aggregate of] consciousness,
 each is here brought to an end.

DN 11

"Consciousness without feature, without end, luminous all around, does not partake of the solidity of earth, the liquidity of water, the radiance of fire, the windiness of wind, the divinity of devas (and so on through a list of the various levels of godhood to) the allness of the All (i.e., the six sense spheres)."

MN 49

"Even so, Vaccha, any form ... feeling ... perception ... fabrication ... consciousness by which one describing the

Tathāgata would describe him: That the Tathāgata has abandoned, its root destroyed, like an uprooted palm tree, deprived of the conditions of existence, not destined for future arising. Freed from the classification of form ... feeling ... perception ... fabrication ... consciousness, Vaccha, the Tathāgata is deep, boundless, hard to fathom, like the sea. 'Reappears' doesn't apply. 'Does not reappear' doesn't apply. 'Both does & does not reappear' doesn't apply. 'Neither reappears nor does not reappear' doesn't apply."

MN 72

"Freed, dissociated, & released from ten things, Bāhuna, the Tathāgata dwells with unrestricted awareness. Which ten? Freed, dissociated, & released from form, the Tathāgata dwells with unrestricted awareness. Freed, dissociated, & released from feeling ... Freed, dissociated, & released from perception ... Freed, dissociated, & released from fabrications ... Freed, dissociated, & released from consciousness ... Freed, dissociated, & released from birth ... Freed, dissociated, & released from aging ... Freed, dissociated, & released from death ... Freed, dissociated, & released from stress ... Freed, dissociated, & released from defilement, the Tathāgata dwells with unrestricted awareness.

"Just as a red, blue, or white lotus born in the water and growing in the water, rises up above the water and stands with no water adhering to it, in the same way the Tathāgata—freed, dissociated, & released from these ten things—dwells with unrestricted awareness."

AN X.81

These are not the words of a person who has found release in unconsciousness.

Finally, although the Deathless is sometimes called consciousness without feature, without end, it is not to be confused with the formless stage of concentration called the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. One of the main differences between the two is that the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness is fabricated and willed (see MN 140). The element of will, though, can be very attenuated while one is in that dimension, and only discernment at an extremely subtle level can ferret it out. One

way of testing for it is to see if there is any sense of identification with the knowing. If there is, then there is still the conceit of I-making and my-making applied to that state. Another test is to see if there is any sense that the knowing contains all things or is their source. If there is, then there is still fabrication in that state of mind, for when the Deathless is fully comprehended, the sense of unrestricted awareness as containing or acting as the source of other things is seen to be an ignorant conceit.

“There is the case, monks, where an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person ... perceives Unbinding as Unbinding. Perceiving Unbinding as Unbinding, he conceives things about Unbinding, he conceives things in Unbinding, he conceives things coming out of Unbinding, he conceives Unbinding as ‘mine,’ he delights in Unbinding. Why is that? Because he has not comprehended it, I tell you....

“A monk who is a Worthy One, devoid of mental fermentations—who has attained completion, finished the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, destroyed the fetters of becoming, and is released through right knowledge ... directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, *does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding*, does not conceive Unbinding as ‘mine,’ does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because he has comprehended it, I tell you.”

MN 1

However, in line with the instructions to Gotami and Upāli, the true test of an experience of stream-entry is not in its description, but the results it produces. The texts describe these in two ways: four factors that characterize a person who has entered the stream, and three fetters that stream-entry automatically cuts.

The four factors, according to AN X.92, are: unwavering conviction in the Buddha, unwavering conviction in the Dhamma, unwavering conviction in the Saṅgha, and “virtues that are appealing to the noble ones—untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, leading to concentration.” The three fetters are: self-identity views, doubt, and grasping at precepts & practices.

The two lists find common ground in the experience of the path to stream-entry. As the path—the noble eightfold path—yields to the fruit of stream-entry, you see that although ordinary action can lead to pleasant, unpleasant, or mixed results on the level of fabricated experience, the noble eightfold path is a form of action that produces none of these results, but instead leads to the end of action (see AN IV.237). This experience cuts through any doubt about the truth of the Buddha's Awakening, thus ensuring that your conviction in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha will not waver. Having seen the results that ordinary actions do have on the fabricated level, however, you wouldn't dare transgress the five precepts that embody the virtues appealing to the noble ones (see AN VIII.39). Still, because the Deathless is the end of action, you don't grasp at precepts and practices as the goal in and of themselves. And because you have seen the aggregates of form, feeling, perception, fabrication, and consciousness fade away in the experience of the Deathless, you would never construct an identity view around them.

The texts describe the results of stream-entry in some detail:

To Upāli the householder, as he was sitting right there, there arose the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye: *"Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation."* Then—having seen the Dhamma, having reached the Dhamma, known the Dhamma, plunged entirely into the Dhamma, having crossed over & beyond doubt, having had no more questioning—Upāli the householder gained fearlessness and became independent of others with regard to the Teacher's message.

MN 56

"And how is one afflicted in body but unafflicted in mind? There is the case where a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones ... doesn't assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He isn't obsessed with the idea that 'I am form' or 'Form is mine.' As he isn't obsessed with these ideas, his form changes & alters, but he doesn't fall into sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, or despair over its change & alteration.

“He doesn’t assume feeling ... perception ... fabrications to be the self....

“He doesn’t assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. He isn’t obsessed with the idea that ‘I am consciousness’ or ‘Consciousness is mine.’ As he isn’t obsessed with these ideas, his consciousness changes & alters, but he doesn’t fall into sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, or despair over its change & alteration.

“This, householder, is how one is afflicted in body but unafflicted in mind.”

SN XXII.1

That, too, say the skilled,
is a binding knot: that
in dependence on which
you regard another
as inferior.

So a monk shouldn’t be dependent
on what’s seen, heard, or sensed,
or on precepts & practices;
nor should he conjure a view in the world
in connection with knowledge
or precepts & practices;
shouldn’t take himself
to be “equal”;
shouldn’t think himself
inferior or superlative....

A brahman not led
by precepts or practices,
gone to the beyond
—Such—
doesn’t fall back.

Sn IV.5

Although the traditional lists of the results of stream-entry provide stringent standards for judging one’s own attainment, the texts—and living Buddhist traditions today—record many

instances of people who have over-estimated their attainment. Thus when you have what seems to be an attainment of this sort, you have to examine it carefully and test the mind to see if the three fetters are actually cut. And because the attainment itself is what proves or disproves the authority and authenticity of the texts, as well as the integrity of your teachers, you are ultimately left with only one guarantee of your attainment: your own integrity, which you hope has been adequately developed along the path. In keeping with the principle that the Dhamma is ultimately a quality of the mind as embodied in the entire person, the only way you can ultimately gauge the truth of the Dhamma is if you as a person are true.

Because the attainment of stream-entry can make such an enormous difference in your life, it is worth every ounce of integrity needed to attain it and to ascertain the attainment.

Then the Blessed One, picking up a little bit of dust with the tip of his fingernail, said to the monks, "What do you think, monks? Which is greater: the little bit of dust I have picked up with the tip of my fingernail, or the great earth?"

"The great earth is far greater, lord. The little bit of dust the Blessed One has picked up with the tip of his fingernail is next to nothing. It's not a hundredth, a thousandth, a one hundred-thousandth ... when compared with the great earth."

"In the same way, monks, for a disciple of the noble ones who is consummate in view, an individual who has broken through [to stream-entry], the suffering & stress totally ended & extinguished is far greater. That which remains in the state of having at most seven remaining lifetimes is next to nothing: it's not a hundredth, a thousandth, a one hundred-thousandth, when compared with the previous mass of suffering. That's how great the benefit is of breaking through to the Dhamma, monks. That's how great the benefit is of obtaining the Dhamma eye."

SN XIII.1

For a person who has been relieved of this much suffering, the question of the historical Buddha becomes irrelevant. If the genuine Deathless is not the historical Buddha's attainment, it's

what a genuine Buddha would have attained. The Dhamma leading to this attainment could not have come from anyone else. As SN XXII.87 quotes the Buddha as saying, “One who sees the Dhamma sees me,” i.e., the aspect of the Buddha that really matters, the aspect signaling that total freedom, the total end of suffering, is an attainable goal.

Sole dominion over the earth,
going to heaven,
lordship over all worlds:
the fruit of Stream-entry
excels them.

Dhp 178

These are audacious claims, and they obviously require an approach more audacious than the historical method to test them. As the suttas indicate, nothing less than genuine integrity of character, developed through careful training and practice, will suffice. Given that “dhamma” means both teaching and quality of mind, it stands to reason that truth of character is needed to measure the truth of the teaching. Only true people can know the truth of the suttas’ claims. This may seem an exclusionary or elitist thing to say, but actually it’s not. The sort of education needed to master the historical method isn’t open to everyone, but integrity is—if you want to develop it. The suttas say that the best things in life are available to those who are true. The only question is whether you’re true enough to want to know if they’re right.

A Note on the Translations

The translations contained in these volumes are based on the Thai edition of the Pali Canon, although I occasionally made use of variant readings found in other editions. In some spots—especially in the Saṃyutta and Aṅguttara Nikāyas—the Thai numbering of the suttas, which I have followed here, differs from that in other editions. I apologize for any difficulties that this creates for people more familiar with other systems of numbering.

People who are *not* familiar with the suttas may encounter another difficulty as they read them here: the style. The Pali Canon was, originally, an entirely oral tradition. As a result, it tends to be terse in some areas and repetitive in others. I've made an effort to cut out as many of the repetitions as possible, but I'll have to ask your patience for those that remain. Think of them as the refrains in a piece of music. Also, when the Buddha is referring to monks doing this and that, keep in mind that his audience was frequently composed entirely of monks. The commentaries state that the word "monk" includes anyone—male or female, lay or ordained—who is serious about the practice, and this meaning should always be kept in mind. I apologize for the gender bias in the translations. Although I have tried to figure out ways to minimize it, I find myself stymied because it is so thoroughly embedded in a literature originally addressed to male monastics.

Some of the suttas have their own introductions, which are printed in italics to distinguish them from the suttas themselves. And some have explanatory notes, which are placed in each case at the end of the sutta. These notes are based primarily on passages found in other suttas, and occasionally on passages from the extensive commentarial literature that has formed around the suttas over the centuries. Many, but not all, Theravadins regard the commentaries as authoritative, but the questions asked and answered by the commentators often fall into the list of questions that MN 2 classifies as inappropriate for attention. Two examples are the questions of whether or not there is a self; and, if there is no self, what constitutes a human being. To make the suttas answer these questions is like deforming a round peg to fit it into a square hole: you might get something to fill the square, but the whole point of designing the peg in the first place was to make it round. Thus a more reliable way at getting at the meaning of an individual passage in the suttas is first to see what light other passages in the same stratum of literature, addressing the same questions, may throw on it. The commentaries, in the areas where they seem to accord with the line of inquiry in the suttas, can then be consulted as secondary sources. Thus the approach taken here.

The format of the suttas—as dialogues and discourses given at specific times and places—helps to emphasize one of their analogies for the Buddha's teachings: as medicine for specific

illnesses of the mind. To see the teachings applied to specific situations helps give them context, providing a sense of which medicine is appropriate for which disease. However, the weakness of this approach is that overarching principles and interrelationships can sometimes get lost in the particulars. To overcome this shortcoming, many of the suttas here are cross-referenced to other suttas in the collection. I recommend that you follow these cross-references wherever you find them at the end of a sutta that holds special interest for you, to get a sense of the larger patterns among the teachings. This in turn will give you a better perspective on how to put the teachings of the suttas to best use, to see if they can help cure the suffering and stress afflicting your own mind.

The
Digha
Nikaya

AN ANTHOLOGY

The Dīgha Nikāya, or Long Collection, is named after the length, not of the collection, but of its individual suttas. There are 34 in all, many of them among the most polished literary compositions in the Pali Canon. This anthology contains complete translations of five suttas, and partial translations of two.

2 *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*

The Fruits of the Contemplative Life

This discourse is one of the masterpieces of the Pali Canon. At heart, it is a comprehensive portrait of the Buddhist path of training, illustrating each stage of the training with vivid similes. This portrait is placed in juxtaposition to the Buddhist view of the teachings of rival philosophical teachers of the time, showing how the Buddha—in contradistinction to the inflexible, party-line approach of his contemporaries—presented his teaching in a way that was pertinent and sensitive to the needs of his listeners. This larger portrait of the intellectual landscape of early Buddhist India is then presented in a moving narrative frame: the sad story of King Ajātasattu.

Ajātasattu was the son of King Bimbisāra of Magadha, one of the Buddha's earliest followers. Urged on by Devadatta—the Buddha's cousin, who wished to use Ajātasattu's support in his bid to usurp the Buddha's position as head of the Saṅgha—Ajātasattu arranged for his father's death so that he could secure his own position on the throne. As a result of this evil deed, he was destined not only to be killed by his own son—Udāyibhadda (mentioned in the discourse)—but also to take immediate rebirth in one of the lowest regions of hell.

In this discourse, Ajātasattu visits the Buddha in hopes that the latter will bring some peace to his mind. The question he puts to the Buddha shows the limited level of his own understanding, so the Buddha patiently describes the steps of the training, beginning at a very basic level and gradually moving up, as a way of raising the king's spiritual horizons. At the end of the talk, Ajātasattu takes refuge in the Triple Gem. Although his earlier deeds were so heavy that this expression of faith could have only limited consequences in the immediate present, the Commentary assures us that the king's story would ultimately have a happy ending. After the Buddha's death, he sponsored the First Council, at which a congress of arahant disciples produced the first standardized account of the Buddha's teachings. As

a result of the merit coming from this deed, Ajātasattu is destined—after his release from hell—to attain Awakening as a Private Buddha.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Rājagaha, in Jivaka Komarabhacca's mango grove, with a large community of monks—1,250 monks in all. Now at that time—it being the observance day, the full-moon night of the water-lily season, the fourth month of the rains—King Ajātasattu of Magadha, the son of Queen Videhā, was sitting on the roof terrace of his palace surround by his ministers. Then he felt inspired to exclaim: "How wonderful is this moonlit night! How beautiful ... How lovely ... How inspiring ... How auspicious is this moonlit night! What priest or contemplative should we visit tonight who might enlighten and bring peace to our mind?"

When this was said, one of the ministers said to the king: "Your majesty, there is Purāṇa Kassapa, the leader of a community, the leader of a group, the teacher of a group, honored & famous, esteemed as holy by the mass of people. He is aged, long gone forth, advanced in years, in the last phase of life. Your majesty should visit him. Perhaps, if you visited him, he would enlighten and bring peace to your mind."

When this was said, the king remained silent.

Then another minister said to the king: "Your majesty, there is Makkhali Gosāla ... " ... "Your majesty, there is Ajita Kesakambalin ... " ... "Your majesty, there is Pakudha Kaccayāna ... " ... "Your majesty, there is Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta ... " ... "Your majesty, there is Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, the leader of a community, the leader of a group, the teacher of a group, honored & famous, esteemed as holy by the mass of people. He is aged, long gone forth, advanced in years, in the last phase of life. Your majesty should visit him. Perhaps, if you visited him, he would enlighten and bring peace to your mind."

When this was said, the king remained silent.

All this time Jivaka Komārabhacca was sitting silently not far from the king. So the king said to him, "Friend Jivaka, why are you silent?"

"Your majesty, there is the Blessed One, worthy & rightly self-awakened, staying in my mango grove with a large community of monks—1,250 monks in all. Concerning this Blessed One, this admirable report has been spread: 'Surely, the Blessed

One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of tamable people, teacher of beings human & divine, awakened, blessed.' Your majesty should visit him. Perhaps, if you visited him, he would enlighten and bring peace to your mind."

"Then in that case, friend Jivaka, have the riding elephants prepared."

Having replied, "As you say, your majesty," having had five hundred female elephants prepared as well as the king's personal tusker, Jivaka announced to the king: "Your majesty, your riding elephants are prepared. Do what you think it is now time to do."

Then the king, having had five hundred of his women mounted on the five hundred female elephants—one on each—and having mounted his own personal tusker, set out from the capital in full royal state, with attendants carrying torches, headed for Jivaka Komarabhacca's mango grove. But when the king was not far from the mango grove, he was gripped with fear, trepidation, his hair standing on end. Fearful, agitated, his hair standing on end, he said to Jivaka Komārabhacca: "Friend Jivaka, you aren't deceiving me, are you? You aren't betraying me, are you? You aren't turning me over to my enemies, are you? How can there be such a large community of monks—1,250 in all—with no sound of sneezing, no sound of coughing, no voices at all?"

"Don't be afraid, great king. Don't be afraid. I'm not deceiving you or betraying you or turning you over to your enemies. Go forward, great king, go forward! Those are lamps burning in the pavilion hall."

Then the king, going as far on his tusker as the ground would permit, dismounted and approached the door of the pavilion on foot. On arrival, he asked Jivaka: "Where, friend Jivaka, is the Blessed One?"

"That is the Blessed One, great king, sitting against the middle pillar, facing east, surrounded by the community of monks."

Then the king approached the Blessed One and, on reaching him, stood to one side. As he was standing there—surveying the community of monks sitting in absolute silence, as calm as a lake—he felt inspired to exclaim: "May my son, Prince Udāyibhadda, enjoy the same peace that this community of monks now enjoys!"

[The Blessed One said:] "Have you come, great king, together with your affections?"

"Venerable sir, my son, Prince Udāyibhadda, is very dear to me. May he enjoy the same peace that this community of monks now enjoys!"

Then, bowing down to the Blessed One, and saluting the community of monks with his hands palm-to-palm over his heart, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One: "I would like to ask the Blessed One about a certain issue, if he would give me the opportunity to explain my question."

"Ask, great king, whatever you like."

The King's Question

"Venerable sir, there are these common craftsmen: elephant-trainers, horse-trainers, charioteers, archers, standard bearers, camp marshals, supply corps officers, high royal officers, commandos, military heroes, armor-clad warriors, leather-clad warriors, domestic slaves, confectioners, barbers, bath attendants, cooks, garland-makers, laundry men, weavers, basket-makers, potters, calculators, accountants, & any other craftsmen of a similar sort. They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now. They give happiness & pleasure to themselves, to their parents, wives, & children, to their friends & colleagues. They put in place an excellent presentation of offerings to priests & contemplatives, leading to heaven, resulting in happiness, conducive to a heavenly rebirth. Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?"

"Do you remember, great king, ever having asked this question of other priests & contemplatives?"

"Yes, I do."

"If it isn't troublesome for you, how did they answer?"

"No, it's not troublesome for me wherever the Blessed One—or someone like the Blessed One—is sitting."

"Then speak, great king."

Non-action

"Once, venerable sir, I approached Purāṇa Kassapa and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, I sat to one side. As I was sitting there I asked him: 'Venerable Kassapa, there are these common craftsmen They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now Is it possible, venerable sir, to

point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?

“When this was said, Purāṇa Kassapa said to me, ‘Great king, in acting or getting others to act, in mutilating or getting others to mutilate, in torturing or getting others to torture, in inflicting sorrow or in getting others to inflict sorrow, in tormenting or getting others to torment, in intimidating or getting others to intimidate, in taking life, taking what is not given, breaking into houses, plundering wealth, committing burglary, ambushing highways, committing adultery, speaking falsehood—one does no evil. If with a razor-edged disk one were to turn all the living beings on this earth to a single heap of flesh, a single pile of flesh, there would be no evil from that cause, no coming of evil. Even if one were to go along the right bank of the Ganges, killing & getting others to kill, mutilating & getting others to mutilate, torturing & getting others to torture, there would be no evil from that cause, no coming of evil. Even if one were to go along the left bank of the Ganges, giving & getting others to give, making sacrifices & getting others to make sacrifices, there would be no merit from that cause, no coming of merit. Through generosity, self-control, restraint, & truthful speech there is no merit from that cause, no coming of merit.’

“Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Purāṇa Kassapa answered with non-action. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit, were to answer with a mango: In the same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Purāṇa Kassapa answered with non-action. The thought occurred to me: ‘How can anyone like me think of disparaging a priest or contemplative living in his realm?’ Yet I neither delighted in Purāṇa Kassapa’s words nor did I protest against them. Neither delighting nor protesting, I was dissatisfied. Without expressing dissatisfaction, without accepting his teaching, without adopting it, I got up from my seat and left.

Purification through Wandering-on

“Another time I approached Makkhali Gosāla and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, I sat to one side. As I was sitting there I asked him: ‘Venerable Gosāla, there are these common

craftsmen They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?’

“When this was said, Makkhali Gosāla said to me, ‘Great king, there is no cause, no requisite condition, for the defilement of beings. Beings are defiled without cause, without requisite condition. There is no cause, no requisite condition, for the purification of beings. Beings are purified without cause, without requisite condition. There is nothing self-caused, nothing other-caused, nothing human-caused. There is no strength, no effort, no human energy, no human endeavor. All living beings, all life, all beings, all souls are powerless, devoid of strength, devoid of effort. Subject to the changes of fate, serendipity, & nature, they are sensitive to pleasure & pain in the six great classes of birth.

“There are 1,406,600 principle modes of origin. There are 500 kinds of kamma, five kinds, & three kinds; full kamma & half kamma. There are 62 pathways, 62 sub-eons, six great classes of birth, eight classes of men, 4,900 modes of livelihood, 4,900 kinds of wanderers, 4,900 nāga-abodes, 2,000 faculties, 3,000 hells, 36 dust-realms, seven spheres of percipient beings, seven spheres of non-percipient beings, seven kinds of jointed plants, seven kinds of deities, seven kinds of human beings, seven kinds of demons, seven great lakes, seven major knots, seven minor knots, 700 major precipices, 700 minor precipices, 700 major dreams, 700 minor dreams, 84,000 great aeons. Having transmigrated & wandered on through these, the wise & the foolish alike will put an end to pain.

“Though one might think, “Through this morality, this practice, this austerity, or this holy life I will ripen unripened kamma and eliminate ripened kamma whenever touched by it”—that is impossible. Pleasure & pain are measured out, the wandering-on is fixed in its limits. There is no shortening or lengthening, no accelerating or decelerating. Just as a ball of string, when thrown, comes to its end simply by unwinding, in the same way, having transmigrated & wandered on, the wise & the foolish alike will put an end to pain.’

“Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Makkhali Gosāla answered with purification through wandering-on. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit, were to answer with a mango. In the

same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Makkhali Gosāla answered with purification through wandering-on. The thought occurred to me: 'How can anyone like me think of disparaging a priest or contemplative living in his realm?' Yet I neither delighted in Makkhali Gosāla's words nor did I protest against them. Neither delighting nor protesting, I was dissatisfied. Without expressing dissatisfaction, without accepting his teaching, without adopting it, I got up from my seat and left.

Annihilation

"Another time I approached Ajita Kesakambalin and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, I sat to one side. As I was sitting there I asked him: 'Venerable Ajita, there are these common craftsmen They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?'

"When this was said, Ajita Kesakambalin said to me, 'Great king, there is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed. There is no fruit or result of good or bad actions. There is no this world, no next world, no mother, no father, no spontaneously reborn beings; no priests or contemplatives who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves. A person is a composite of four primary elements. At death, the earth (in the body) returns to and merges with the (external) earth-substance. The fire returns to and merges with the external fire-substance. The liquid returns to and merges with the external liquid-substance. The wind returns to and merges with the external wind-substance. The sense-faculties scatter into space. Four men, with the bier as the fifth, carry the corpse. Its eulogies are sounded only as far as the charnel ground. The bones turn pigeon-colored. The offerings end in ashes. Generosity is taught by idiots. The words of those who speak of existence after death are false, empty chatter. With the break-up of the body, the wise & the foolish alike are annihilated, destroyed. They do not exist after death.'

"Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Ajita Kesakambalin answered with annihilation. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit,

were to answer with a mango. In the same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Ajita Kesakambalin answered with annihilation. The thought occurred to me: 'How can anyone like me think of disparaging a priest or contemplative living in his realm?' Yet I neither delighted in Ajita Kesakambalin's words nor did I protest against them. Neither delighting nor protesting, I was dissatisfied. Without expressing dissatisfaction, without accepting his teaching, without adopting it, I got up from my seat and left.

Non-relatedness

"Another time I approached Pakudha Kaccāyana and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, I sat to one side. As I was sitting there I asked him: 'Venerable Kaccāyana, there are these common craftsmen They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?'

"When this was said, Pakudha Kaccāyana said to me, 'Great king, there are these seven substances—unmade, irreducible, uncreated, without a creator, barren, stable as a mountain-peak, standing firm like a pillar—that do not alter, do not change, do not interfere with one another, are incapable of causing one another pleasure, pain, or both pleasure & pain. Which seven? The earth-substance, the liquid-substance, the fire-substance, the wind-substance, pleasure, pain, & the soul as the seventh. These are the seven substances—unmade, irreducible, uncreated, without a creator, barren, stable as a mountain-peak, standing firm like a pillar—that do not alter, do not change, do not interfere with one another, & are incapable of causing one another pleasure, pain, or both pleasure & pain.

"And among them there is no killer nor one who causes killing, no hearer nor one who causes hearing, no cognizer nor one who causes cognition. When one cuts off [another person's] head, there is no one taking anyone's life. It is simply between the seven substances that the sword passes.'

"Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Pakudha Kaccāyana answered with non-relatedness. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit,

were to answer with a mango. In the same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Pakudha Kaccāyana answered with non-relatedness. The thought occurred to me: 'How can anyone like me think of disparaging a priest or contemplative living in his realm?' Yet I neither delighted in Pakudha Kaccāyana's words nor did I protest against them. Neither delighting nor protesting, I was dissatisfied. Without expressing dissatisfaction, without accepting his teaching, without adopting it, I got up from my seat and left.

Fourfold Restraint

"Another time I approached Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, I sat to one side. As I was sitting there I asked him: 'Venerable Aggivessana, there are these common craftsmen They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?'

"When this was said, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta said to me, 'Great king, there is the case where the Nigaṇṭha—the knotless one—is restrained with the fourfold restraint. And how is the Nigaṇṭha restrained with the fourfold restraint? There is the case where the Nigaṇṭha is obstructed by all waters, conjoined with all waters, cleansed with all waters, suffused with all waters. This is how the Nigaṇṭha is restrained with the fourfold restraint. When the Nigaṇṭha—a knotless one—is restrained with such a fourfold restraint, he is said to be a Knotless One (Nigaṇṭha), a son of Nāṭa (Nāṭaputta), with his self perfected, his self controlled, his self established.'

"Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta answered with fourfold restraint. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit, were to answer with a mango: In the same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta answered with fourfold restraint. The thought occurred to me: 'How can anyone like me think of disparaging a priest or contemplative living in his realm?' Yet I neither delighted in Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta's words nor did I protest against them. Neither delighting nor protesting, I was dissatisfied. Without

expressing dissatisfaction, without accepting his teaching, without adopting it, I got up from my seat and left.

Evasion

"Another time I approached Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, I sat to one side. As I was sitting there I asked him: 'Venerable Sañjaya, there are these common craftsmen They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?'

"When this was said, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta said to me, 'If you ask me if there exists another world [after death], if I thought that there exists another world, would I declare that to you? I don't think so. I don't think in that way. I don't think otherwise. I don't think not. I don't think not not. If you asked me if there isn't another world ... both is & isn't ... neither is nor isn't ... if there are beings who transmigrate ... if there aren't ... both are & aren't ... neither are nor aren't ... if the Tathāgata exists after death ... doesn't ... both ... neither exists nor exists after death, would I declare that to you? I don't think so. I don't think in that way. I don't think otherwise. I don't think not. I don't think not not.'

"Thus, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta answered with evasion. Just as if a person, when asked about a mango, were to answer with a breadfruit; or, when asked about a breadfruit, were to answer with a mango: In the same way, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta answered with evasion. The thought occurred to me: 'This—among these priests & contemplatives—is the most foolish & confused of all. How can he, when asked about a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, answer with evasion?' Still the thought occurred to me: 'How can anyone like me think of disparaging a priest or contemplative living in his realm?' Yet I neither delighted in Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta's words nor did I protest against them. Neither delighting nor protesting, I was dissatisfied. Without expressing dissatisfaction, without accepting his teaching, without adopting it, I got up from my seat and left.

The First Visible Fruit of the Contemplative Life

“So, venerable sir, I ask the Blessed One as well: There are these common craftsmen: elephant-trainers, horse-trainers, charioteers, archers, standard bearers, camp marshals, supply corps officers, high royal officers, commandos, military heroes, armor-clad warriors, leather-clad warriors, domestic slaves, confectioners, barbers, bath attendants, cooks, garland-makers, laundry men, weavers, basket-makers, potters, calculators, accountants, & any other craftsmen of a similar sort. They live off the fruits of their crafts, visible in the here & now. They give happiness & pleasure to themselves, to their parents, wives, & children, to their friends & colleagues. They put in place an excellent presentation of offerings to priests & contemplatives, leading to heaven, resulting in happiness, conducive to a heavenly rebirth. Is it possible, venerable sir, to point out a similar fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?”

“Yes, it is, great king. But first, with regard to that, I will ask you a counter-question. Answer however you please. Suppose there were a man of yours: your slave, your workman, rising in the morning before you, going to bed in the evening only after you, doing whatever you order, always acting to please you, speaking politely to you, always watching for the look on your face. The thought would occur to him: ‘Isn’t it amazing? Isn’t it astounding?—the destination, the results, of meritorious deeds. For this King Ajātasattu is a human being, and I, too, am a human being, yet King Ajātasattu enjoys himself supplied & replete with the five strings of sensuality—like a deity, as it were—while I am his slave, his workman ... always watching for the look on his face. I, too, should do meritorious deeds. What if I were to shave off my hair & beard, put on the ochre robes, and go forth from the household life into homelessness?’

“So after some time he shaves off his hair & beard, puts on the ochre robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness. Having thus gone forth he lives restrained in body, speech, & mind, content with the simplest food & shelter, delighting in solitude. Then suppose one of your men were to inform you: ‘You should know, your majesty, that that man of yours—your slave, your workman ... always watching for the look on your face ... has gone forth from the household life into homelessness ... content with the simplest food & shelter,

delighting in solitude.' Would you, thus informed, say, 'Bring that man back to me. Make him again be my slave, my workman ... always watching for the look on my face!'"

"Not at all, venerable sir. Rather, I am the one who should bow down to him, rise up out of respect for him, invite him to a seat, invite him to accept gifts of robes, almsfood, lodgings, & medicinal requisites for the sick. And I would provide him with righteous safety, defense, & protection."

"So what do you think, great king. With that being the case, is there a visible fruit of the contemplative life, or is there not?"

"Yes, venerable sir. With that being the case, there certainly is a visible fruit of the contemplative life."

"This, great king, is the first fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now, that I point out to you."

The Second Visible Fruit of the Contemplative Life

"But is it possible, venerable sir, to point out yet another fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?"

"Yes, it is, great king. But first, with regard to that, I will ask you a counter-question. Answer however you please. Suppose there were a man of yours: a farmer, a householder, a taxpayer swelling the royal treasury. The thought would occur to him: 'Isn't it amazing? Isn't it astounding?—the destination, the results, of meritorious deeds! For this King Ajātasattu is a human being, and I, too, am a human being, yet King Ajātasattu enjoys himself supplied & replete with the five strings of sensuality—like a deity, as it were—while I am a farmer, a householder, a taxpayer swelling the royal treasury. I, too, should do meritorious deeds. What if I were to shave off my hair & beard, put on the ochre robes, and go forth from the household life into homelessness?"

"So after some time he abandons his mass of wealth, large or small; leaves his circle of relatives, large or small; shaves off his hair & beard, puts on the ochre robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness. Having thus gone forth he lives restrained in body, speech, & mind, content with the simplest food & shelter, delighting in solitude. Then suppose one of your men were to inform you: 'You should know, your majesty, that that man of yours—the farmer, the householder, the taxpayer swelling the royal treasury ... has gone forth from the household life into homelessness ... content with the simplest food & shelter, delighting in solitude.' Would you, thus informed, say, 'Bring that man back to me. Make him again be a farmer, a householder, a taxpayer swelling the royal treasury!'"

"Not at all, venerable sir. Rather, I am the one who should bow down to him, rise up out of respect for him, invite him to a seat, invite him to accept gifts of robes, almsfood, lodgings, & medicinal requisites for the sick. And I would provide him with righteous safety, defense, & protection."

"So what do you think, great king. With that being the case, is there a visible fruit of the contemplative life, or is there not?"

"Yes, venerable sir. With that being the case, there certainly is a visible fruit of the contemplative life."

"This, great king, is the second fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now, that I point out to you."

Higher Fruits of the Contemplative Life

"But is it possible, venerable sir, to point out yet another fruit of the contemplative life, visible in the here & now?"

"Yes, it is, great king. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak.

"There is the case, great king, where a Tathāgata appears in the world, worthy & rightly self-awakened. He teaches the Dhamma admirable in its beginning, admirable in its middle, admirable in its end. He proclaims the holy life both in its particulars and in its essence, entirely perfect, surpassingly pure.

"A householder or householder's son, hearing the Dhamma, gains conviction in the Tathāgata and reflects: 'Household life is confining, a dusty path. Life gone forth is the open air. It isn't easy, living at home, to practice the holy life totally perfect, totally pure, a polished shell. What if I, having shaved off my hair & beard and putting on the ochre robe, were to go forth from the household life into homelessness?'

"So after some time he abandons his mass of wealth, large or small; leaves his circle of relatives, large or small; shaves off his hair & beard, puts on the ochre robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness.

"When he has thus gone forth, he lives restrained by the rules of the monastic code, seeing danger in the slightest faults. Consummate in his virtue, he guards the doors of his senses, is possessed of mindfulness & alertness, and is content.

The Lesser Section on Virtue

"And how is a monk consummate in virtue? Abandoning the taking of life, he abstains from the taking of life. He dwells with his rod laid down, his knife laid down, scrupulous, merciful,

compassionate for the welfare of all living beings. This is part of his virtue.

"Abandoning the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given. He takes only what is given, accepts only what is given, lives not by stealth but by means of a self that has become pure. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Abandoning uncelibacy, he lives a celibate life, aloof, refraining from the sexual act that is the villager's way. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Abandoning false speech, he abstains from false speech. He speaks the truth, holds to the truth, is firm, reliable, no deceiver of the world. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Abandoning divisive speech he abstains from divisive speech. What he has heard here he does not tell there to break those people apart from these people here. What he has heard there he does not tell here to break these people apart from those people there. Thus reconciling those who have broken apart or cementing those who are united, he loves concord, delights in concord, enjoys concord, speaks things that create concord. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Abandoning abusive speech, he abstains from abusive speech. He speaks words that are soothing to the ear, that are affectionate, that go to the heart, that are polite, appealing & pleasing to people at large. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Abandoning idle chatter, he abstains from idle chatter. He speaks in season, speaks what is factual, what is in accordance with the goal, the Dhamma, & the Vinaya. He speaks words worth treasuring, seasonable, reasonable, circumscribed, connected with the goal. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"He abstains from damaging seed & plant life.

"He eats only once a day, refraining from the evening meal and from food at the wrong time of day.

"He abstains from dancing, singing, instrumental music, & from watching shows.

"He abstains from wearing garlands & from beautifying himself with scents & cosmetics.

"He abstains from high & luxurious beds & seats.

"He abstains from accepting gold & money.

"He abstains from accepting uncooked grain ... raw meat ... women & girls ... male & female slaves ... goats & sheep ... fowl & pigs ... elephants, cattle, steeds, & mares ... fields & property.

"He abstains from running messages ... from buying & selling ... from dealing with false scales, false metals, & false measures ... from bribery, deception, & fraud.

"He abstains from mutilating, executing, imprisoning, highway robbery, plunder, & violence.

"This, too, is part of his virtue.

The Intermediate Section on Virtue

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to damaging seed & plant life such as these—plants propagated from roots, stems, joints, buddings, & seeds—he abstains from damaging seed & plant life such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to consuming stored-up goods such as these—stored-up food, stored-up drinks, stored-up clothing, stored-up vehicles, stored-up bedding, stored-up scents, & stored-up meat—he abstains from consuming stored-up goods such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to watching shows such as these—dancing, singing, instrumental music, plays, ballad recitations, hand-clapping, cymbals & drums, magic-lantern scenes, acrobatic & conjuring tricks, elephant fights, horse fights, buffalo fights, bull fights, goat fights, ram fights, cock fights, quail fights; fighting with staves, boxing, wrestling, war-games, roll calls, battle arrays, & regimental reviews—he abstains from watching shows such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to heedless & idle games such as these—eight-row chess, ten-row chess, chess in the air, hopscotch, spillikins, dice, stick games, hand-pictures, ball-games, blowing through toy pipes, playing with toy plows, turning somersaults, playing with toy windmills, toy measures, toy chariots, toy bows, guessing letters drawn in the air, guessing thoughts, mimicking deformities—he abstains from heedless & idle games such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to high & luxurious furnishings such as these—over-sized couches, couches adorned with carved animals, long-haired coverlets, multi-colored patchwork coverlets,

white woolen coverlets, woolen coverlets embroidered with flowers or animal figures, stuffed quilts, coverlets with fringe, silk coverlets embroidered with gems; large woolen carpets; elephant, horse, & chariot rugs, antelope-hide rugs, deer-hide rugs; couches with canopies, couches with red cushions for the head & feet—he abstains from using high & luxurious furnishings such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to scents, cosmetics, & means of beautification such as these—rubbing powders into the body, massaging with oils, bathing in perfumed water, kneading the limbs, using mirrors, ointments, garlands, scents, creams, face-powders, mascara, bracelets, head-bands, decorated walking sticks, ornamented water-bottles, swords, fancy sunshades, decorated sandals, turbans, gems, yak-tail whisks, long-fringed white robes—he abstains from using scents, cosmetics, & means of beautification such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to talking about lowly topics such as these—talking about kings, robbers, ministers of state; armies, alarms, & battles; food & drink; clothing, furniture, garlands, & scents; relatives; vehicles; villages, towns, cities, the countryside; women & heroes; the gossip of the street & the well; tales of the dead; tales of diversity [philosophical discussions of the past & future], the creation of the world & of the sea, and talk of whether things exist or not—he abstains from talking about lowly topics such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to debates such as these—*You understand this doctrine & discipline? I'm the one who understands this doctrine & discipline. How could you understand this doctrine & discipline? You're practicing wrongly. I'm practicing rightly. I'm being consistent. You're not. What should be said first you said last. What should be said last you said first. What you took so long to think out has been refuted. Your doctrine has been overthrown. You're defeated. Go and try to salvage your doctrine; extricate yourself if you can!*”—he abstains from debates such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, are addicted to running messages & errands for people such as these—kings, ministers of state, noble warriors, priests,

householders, or youths [who say], 'Go here, go there, take this there, fetch that here'—he abstains from running messages & errands for people such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, engage in scheming, persuading, hinting, belittling, & pursuing gain with gain, he abstains from forms of scheming & persuading [improper ways of trying to gain material support from donors] such as these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

The Great Section on Virtue

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by such lowly arts as:

- reading marks on the limbs [e.g., palmistry];
- reading omens & signs;
- interpreting celestial events [falling stars, comets];
- interpreting dreams;
- reading marks on the body [e.g., phrenology];
- reading marks on cloth gnawed by mice;
- offering fire oblations, oblations from a ladle, oblations of husks, rice powder, rice grains, ghee, & oil;
- offering oblations from the mouth;
- offering blood-sacrifices;
- making predictions based on the fingertips;
- geomancy;
- laying demons in a cemetery;
- placing spells on spirits;
- reciting house-protection charms;
- snake charming, poison-lore, scorpion-lore, rat-lore, bird-lore, crow-lore;
- fortune-telling based on visions;
- giving protective charms;
- interpreting the calls of birds & animals—

he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as these.

"Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by such lowly arts as: determining lucky & unlucky gems, garments, staffs, swords, spears, arrows, bows, & other weapons; women, boys, girls, male slaves, female slaves; elephants,

horses, buffaloes, bulls, cows, goats, rams, fowl, quails, lizards, long-eared rodents, tortoises, & other animals—he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as these.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by such lowly arts as forecasting:

the rulers will march forth;
 the rulers will march forth & return;
 our rulers will attack, and their rulers will retreat;
 their rulers will attack, and our rulers will retreat;
 there will be triumph for our rulers and defeat for their rulers;
 there will be triumph for their rulers and defeat for our rulers;
 thus there will be triumph, thus there will be defeat—
 he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as these.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by such lowly arts as forecasting:

there will be a lunar eclipse;
 there will be a solar eclipse;
 there will be an occultation of an asterism;
 the sun & moon will go their normal courses;
 the sun & moon will go astray;
 the asterisms will go their normal courses;
 the asterisms will go astray;
 there will be a meteor shower;
 there will be a darkening of the sky;
 there will be an earthquake;
 there will be thunder coming from a clear sky;
 there will be a rising, a setting, a darkening, a brightening of the sun, moon, & asterisms;
 such will be the result of the lunar eclipse ... the rising, setting, darkening, brightening of the sun, moon, & asterisms—
 he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as these.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by such lowly arts as forecasting:

there will be abundant rain; there will be a drought;

there will be plenty; there will be famine;
 there will be rest & security; there will be danger;
 there will be disease; there will be freedom from disease;
 or they earn their living by counting, accounting, calculation,
 composing poetry, or teaching hedonistic arts & doctrines—
 he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as
 these.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food
 given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by
 such lowly arts as:

calculating auspicious dates for marriages, betrothals,
 divorces; for collecting debts or making investments & loans;
 for being attractive or unattractive; curing women who have
 undergone miscarriages or abortions;

reciting spells to bind a man’s tongue, to paralyze his jaws, to
 make him lose control over his hands, or to bring on deafness;

getting oracular answers to questions addressed to a mirror,
 to a young girl, or to a spirit medium;

worshipping the sun, worshipping the Great Brahmā, bring-
 ing forth flames from the mouth, invoking the goddess of luck—

he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as
 these.

“Whereas some priests & contemplatives, living off food
 given in faith, maintain themselves by wrong livelihood, by
 such lowly arts as:

promising gifts to deities in return for favors; fulfilling such
 promises;

demonology;

teaching house-protection spells;

inducing virility & impotence;

consecrating sites for construction;

giving ceremonial mouthwashes & ceremonial bathing;

offering sacrificial fires;

preparing emetics, purgatives, expectorants, diuretics,
 headache cures; preparing ear-oil, eye-drops, oil for treatment
 through the nose, collyrium, & counter-medicines; curing
 cataracts, practicing surgery, practicing as a children’s doctor,
 administering medicines & treatments to cure their after-effects—

he abstains from wrong livelihood, from lowly arts such as
 these. This, too, is part of his virtue.

“A monk thus consummate in virtue sees no danger anywhere from his restraint through virtue. Just as a head-anointed noble warrior king who has defeated his enemies sees no danger anywhere from his enemies, in the same way the monk thus consummate in virtue sees no danger anywhere from his restraint through virtue. Endowed with this noble aggregate of virtue, he is inwardly sensitive to the pleasure of being blameless. This is how a monk is consummate in virtue.

Sense Restraint

“And how does a monk guard the doors of his senses? On seeing a form with the eye, he does not grasp at any theme or details by which—if he were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the eye—evil, unskillful qualities such as greed or distress might assail him. On hearing a sound with the ear ... On smelling an odor with the nose ... One tasting a flavor with the tongue ... On touching a tactile sensation with the body ... On cognizing an idea with the intellect, he does not grasp at any theme or details by which—if he were to dwell without restraint over the faculty of the intellect—evil, unskillful qualities such as greed or distress might assail him. Endowed with this noble restraint over the sense faculties, he is inwardly sensitive to the pleasure of being blameless. This is how a monk guards the doors of his senses.

Mindfulness & Alertness

“And how is a monk possessed of mindfulness & alertness? When going forward & returning, he acts with alertness. When looking toward & looking away ... when bending & extending his limbs ... when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe, & his bowl ... when eating, drinking, chewing, & tasting ... when urinating & defecating ... when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, & remaining silent, he acts with alertness. This is how a monk is possessed of mindfulness & alertness.

Contentedness

“And how is a monk content? Just as a bird, wherever it goes, flies with its wings as its only burden; so too is he content with a set of robes to provide for his body and alms food to provide for his hunger. Wherever he goes, he takes only his barest necessities along. This is how a monk is content.

Abandoning the Hindrances

“Endowed with this noble aggregate of virtue, this noble restraint over the sense faculties, this noble mindfulness & alertness, and this noble contentment, he seeks out a secluded dwelling: a wilderness, the shade of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a forest grove, the open air, a heap of straw. After his meal, returning from his alms round, he sits down, crosses his legs, holds his body erect, and brings mindfulness to the fore.

“Abandoning covetousness with regard to the world, he dwells with an awareness devoid of covetousness. He cleanses his mind of covetousness. Abandoning ill will & anger, he dwells with an awareness devoid of ill will, sympathetic with the welfare of all living beings. He cleanses his mind of ill will & anger. Abandoning sloth & drowsiness, he dwells with an awareness devoid of sloth & drowsiness, mindful, alert, percipient of light. He cleanses his mind of sloth & drowsiness. Abandoning restlessness & anxiety, he dwells undisturbed, his mind inwardly stilled. He cleanses his mind of restlessness & anxiety. Abandoning uncertainty, he dwells having crossed over uncertainty, with no perplexity with regard to skillful mental qualities. He cleanses his mind of uncertainty.

“Suppose that a man, taking a loan, invests it in his business affairs. His business affairs succeed. He repays his old debts and there is extra left over for maintaining his wife. The thought would occur to him, ‘Before, taking a loan, I invested it in my business affairs. Now my business affairs have succeeded. I have repaid my old debts and there is extra left over for maintaining my wife.’ Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

“Now suppose that a man falls sick—in pain and seriously ill. He does not enjoy his meals, and there is no strength in his body. As time passes, he eventually recovers from that sickness. He enjoys his meals and there is strength in his body. The thought would occur to him, ‘Before, I was sick....Now I am recovered from that sickness. I enjoy my meals and there is strength in my body.’ Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

“Now suppose that a man is bound in prison. As time passes, he eventually is released from that bondage, safe & sound, with no loss of property. The thought would occur to him, ‘Before, I was bound in prison. Now I am released from

that bondage, safe & sound, with no loss of my property.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"Now suppose that a man is a slave, subject to others, not subject to himself, unable to go where he likes. As time passes, he eventually is released from that slavery, subject to himself, not subject to others, freed, able to go where he likes. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was a slave....Now I am released from that slavery, subject to myself, not subject to others, freed, able to go where I like.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"Now suppose that a man, carrying money & goods, is traveling by a road through desolate country. As time passes, he eventually emerges from that desolate country, safe & sound, with no loss of property. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, carrying money & goods, I was traveling by a road through desolate country. Now I have emerged from that desolate country, safe & sound, with no loss of my property.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"In the same way, when these five hindrances are not abandoned in himself, the monk regards it as a debt, a sickness, a prison, slavery, a road through desolate country. But when these five hindrances are abandoned in himself, he regards it as unindebtedness, good health, release from prison, freedom, a place of security. Seeing that they have been abandoned within him, he becomes glad. Glad, he becomes enraptured. Enraptured, his body grows tranquil. His body tranquil, he is sensitive to pleasure. Feeling pleasure, his mind becomes concentrated.

The Four Jhānas

"Quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, he enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal. Just as if a skilled bathman or bathman's apprentice would pour bath powder into a brass basin and knead it together, sprinkling it again and again with water, so that his ball of bath powder—saturated, moisture-laden, permeated within and without—would nevertheless not drip; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal. There is nothing of his entire body

unpervaded by rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal. This is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

“Then, with the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters and remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of composure, one-pointedness of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of composure. Just like a lake with spring-water welling up from within, having no inflow from the east, west, north, or south, and with the skies supplying abundant showers time and again, so that the cool fount of water welling up from within the lake would permeate and pervade, suffuse and fill it with cool waters, there being no part of the lake unpervaded by the cool waters; even so, the monk permeates... this very body with the rapture & pleasure born of composure. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture & pleasure born of composure. This, too, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

“And then, with the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful & alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters and remains in the third jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.’ He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. Just as in a lotus pond, some of the lotuses, born and growing in the water, stay immersed in the water and flourish without standing up out of the water, so that they are permeated and pervaded, suffused and filled with cool water from their roots to their tips, and nothing of those lotuses would be unpervaded with cool water; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded with pleasure divested of rapture. This, too, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

“And then, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters and remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain. He sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. Just as if a man were sitting covered from head to foot with a white cloth so that there would be

no part of his body to which the white cloth did not extend; even so, the monk sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by pure, bright awareness. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

Insight Knowledge

“With his mind thus concentrated, purified, & bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge & vision. He discerns: ‘This body of mine is endowed with form, composed of the four primary elements, born from mother & father, nourished with rice & porridge, subject to inconstancy, rubbing, pressing, dissolution, and dispersion. And this consciousness of mine is supported here and bound up here.’ Just as if there were a beautiful beryl gem of the purest water—eight faceted, well polished, clear, limpid, consummate in all its aspects, and going through the middle of it was a blue, yellow, red, white, or brown thread—and a man with good eyesight, taking it in his hand, were to reflect on it thus: ‘This is a beautiful beryl gem of the purest water, eight faceted, well polished, clear, limpid, consummate in all its aspects. And this, going through the middle of it, is a blue, yellow, red, white, or brown thread.’ In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to knowledge & vision. He discerns: ‘This body of mine is endowed with form, composed of the four primary elements, born from mother & father, nourished with rice & porridge, subject to inconstancy, rubbing, pressing, dissolution, and dispersion. And this consciousness of mine is supported here and bound up here.’ This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

The Mind-made Body

“With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to creating a mind-made body. From this body he creates another body, endowed with form, made of the mind, complete in all its parts,

not inferior in its faculties. Just as if a man were to draw a reed from its sheath. The thought would occur to him: 'This is the sheath, this is the reed. The sheath is one thing, the reed another, but the reed has been drawn out from the sheath.' Or as if a man were to draw a sword from its scabbard. The thought would occur to him: 'This is the sword, this is the scabbard. The sword is one thing, the scabbard another, but the sword has been drawn out from the scabbard.' Or as if a man were to pull a snake out from its slough. The thought would occur to him: 'This is the snake, this is the slough. The snake is one thing, the slough another, but the snake has been pulled out from the slough.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, the monk directs and inclines it to creating a mind-made body. From this body he creates another body, endowed with form, made of the mind, complete in all its parts, not inferior in its faculties. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

Supranormal Powers

"With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to the modes of supranormal powers. He wields manifold supranormal powers. Having been one he becomes many; having been many he becomes one. He appears. He vanishes. He goes unimpeded through walls, ramparts, and mountains as if through space. He dives in and out of the earth as if it were water. He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. Sitting cross-legged he flies through the air like a winged bird. With his hand he touches and strokes even the sun & moon, so mighty & powerful. He exercises influence with his body even as far as the Brahmā worlds. Just as a skilled potter or his assistant could craft from well-prepared clay whatever kind of pottery vessel he likes, or as a skilled ivory-carver or his assistant could craft from well-prepared ivory any kind of ivory-work he likes, or as a skilled goldsmith or his assistant could craft from well-prepared gold any kind of gold article he likes; in the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and

attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to the modes of supranormal powers He exercises influence with his body even as far as the Brahmā worlds. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

Clairaudience

“With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to the divine ear-element. He hears—by means of the divine ear-element, purified and surpassing the human—both kinds of sounds: divine & human, whether near or far. Just as if a man traveling along a highway were to hear the sounds of kettledrums, small drums, conchs, cymbals, & tom-toms. He would know, ‘That is the sound of kettledrums, that is the sound of small drums, that is the sound of conchs, that is the sound of cymbals, and that is the sound of tom-toms.’ In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to the divine ear-element. He hears—by means of the divine ear-element, purified and surpassing the human—both kinds of sounds: divine & human, whether near or far. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

Mind Reading

“With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge of the awareness of other beings. He knows the awareness of other beings, other individuals, having encompassed it with his own awareness. He discerns a mind with passion as a mind with passion, and a mind without passion as a mind without passion. He discerns a mind with aversion as a mind with aversion, and a mind without aversion as a mind without aversion. He discerns a mind with delusion as a mind with delusion, and a mind without delusion as a mind without delusion. He discerns a restricted mind as a restricted mind, and a scattered mind as a scattered mind. He discerns an enlarged mind as an enlarged

mind, and an unenlarged mind as an unenlarged mind. He discerns an excelled mind [one that is not at the most excellent level] as an excelled mind, and an unexcelled mind as an unexcelled mind. He discerns a concentrated mind as a concentrated mind, and an unconcentrated mind as an unconcentrated mind. He discerns a released mind as a released mind, and an unreleased mind as an unreleased mind. Just as if a young woman—or man—fond of ornaments, examining the reflection of her own face in a bright mirror or a bowl of clear water would know 'blemished' if it were blemished, or 'unblemished' if it were not. In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to knowledge of the awareness of other beings. He knows the awareness of other beings, other individuals, having encompassed it with his own awareness. He discerns a mind with passion as a mind with passion, and a mind without passion as a mind without passion ... a released mind as a released mind, and an unreleased mind as an unreleased mind. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

Recollection of Past Lives

"With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge of the recollection of past lives (lit: previous homes). He recollects his manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two births, three births, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, one hundred, one thousand, one hundred thousand, many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion, many aeons of cosmic contraction & expansion, [recollecting], 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose here.' Thus he recollects his manifold past lives in their modes & details. Just as if a man were to go from his home village to another village, and then from that village to yet

another village, and then from that village back to his home village. The thought would occur to him, 'I went from my home village to that village over there. There I stood in such a way, sat in such a way, talked in such a way, and remained silent in such a way. From that village I went to that village over there, and there I stood in such a way, sat in such a way, talked in such a way, and remained silent in such a way. From that village I came back home.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to knowledge of the recollection of past lives. He recollects his manifold past lives ... in their modes & details. This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

The Passing Away & Re-appearance of Beings

"With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge of the passing away & re-appearance of beings. He sees—by means of the divine eye, purified and surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech, & mind, who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile the noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.' Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified and surpassing the human—he sees beings passing away and re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma. Just as if there were a tall building in the central square [of a town], and a man with good eyesight standing on top of it were to see people

entering a house, leaving it, walking along the street, and sitting in the central square. The thought would occur to him, 'These people are entering a house, leaving it, walking along the streets, and sitting in the central square.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, & bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to knowledge of the passing away & re-appearance of beings. He sees—by means of the divine eye, purified and surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime.

The Ending of Mental Fermentations

"With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, the monk directs and inclines it to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. He discerns, as it is actually present, that 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress ... These are mental fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' His heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, 'Released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.' Just as if there were a pool of water in a mountain glen—clear, limpid, & unsullied—where a man with good eyesight standing on the bank could see shells, gravel, and pebbles, and also shoals of fish swimming about and resting, and it would occur to him, 'This pool of water is clear, limpid, & unsullied. Here are these shells, gravel, and pebbles, and also these shoals of fish swimming about and resting.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. He

discerns, as it is actually present, that 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress ... These are mental fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' His heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, 'Released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.' This, too, great king, is a fruit of the contemplative life, visible here & now, more excellent than the previous ones and more sublime. And as for another visible fruit of the contemplative life, higher and more sublime than this, there is none."

When this was said, King Ajātasattu said to the Blessed One: "Magnificent, venerable sir! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has the Blessed One—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the community of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life.

"A transgression has overcome me, venerable sir, in that I was so foolish, so muddle-headed, and so unskilled as to kill my father—a righteous man, a righteous king—for the sake of sovereign rulership. May the Blessed One please accept this confession of my transgression as such, so that I may restrain myself in the future."

"Yes, great king, a transgression overcame you in that you were so foolish, so muddle-headed, and so unskilled as to kill your father—a righteous man, a righteous king—for the sake of sovereign rulership. But because you see your transgression as such and make amends in accordance with the Dhamma, we accept your confession. For it is a cause of growth in the Dhamma & discipline of the noble ones when, seeing a transgression as such, one makes amends in accordance with the Dhamma and exercises restraint in the future."

When this was said, King Ajātasattu said to the Blessed One: "Well, then, venerable sir, I am now taking leave. Many are my duties, many my responsibilities."

"Then do, great king, what you think it is now time to do."

So King Ajātasattu, delighting & rejoicing in the Blessed One's words, rose from his seat, bowed down to him, and—after circumambulating him—left. Not long after King Ajātasattu had left, the Blessed One addressed the monks: "The king is wounded, monks. The king is incapacitated. Had he not killed his father—that righteous man, that righteous king—the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye would have arisen to him as he sat in this very seat."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

See also: SN XLVI.51; SN LVI.11; AN VI.86-87

11 Kevaṭṭa Sutta To Kevaṭṭa

This discourse (also known as the Kevaddha Sutta) discusses the role of miracles and conversations with heavenly beings as a possible basis for faith and belief. While not denying the reality of such experiences, the Buddha points out that—of all possible miracles—only the miracle of instruction in the proper training of the mind is reliable. As for heavenly beings, they are subject to greed, anger, and delusion, and so the information they give—especially with regard to the miracle of instruction—is not necessarily trustworthy. Thus the only valid basis for faith is the instruction that, when followed, brings about the end of one’s own mental defilements.

The tale concluding the discourse is one of the finest examples of the early Buddhist sense of humor.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Nālandā in Pāvārika’s mango grove. Then Kevaṭṭa the householder approached the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: “Venerable sir, this Nālandā is powerful, both prosperous and populous, filled with people who have faith in the Blessed One. It would be good if the Blessed One were to direct a monk to display a miracle of psychic power from his superior human state so that Nālandā would to an even greater extent have faith in the Blessed One.”

When this was said, the Blessed One said to Kevaṭṭa the householder, “Kevaṭṭa, I don’t teach the monks in this way: ‘Come, monks, display a miracle of psychic power to the lay people clad in white.’”

A second time A third time, Kevaṭṭa the householder said to the Blessed One: “I won’t argue with the Blessed One, but I tell you: Venerable sir, this Nālandā is powerful, both prosperous and populous, filled with people who have faith in the Blessed One. It would be good if the Blessed One were to direct

a monk to display a miracle of psychic power from his superior human state so that Nālandā would to an even greater extent have faith in the Blessed One."

A third time, the Blessed One said to Kevatta the householder, "Kevatta, I don't teach the monks in this way: 'Come, monks, display a miracle of psychic power to the lay people clad in white.'

"Kevatta, there are these three miracles that I have declared, having directly known and realized them for myself. Which three? The miracle of psychic power, the miracle of telepathy, and the miracle of instruction.

The Miracle of Psychic Power

"And what is the miracle of psychic power? There is the case where a monk wields manifold psychic powers. Having been one he becomes many; having been many he becomes one. He appears. He vanishes. He goes unimpeded through walls, ramparts, and mountains as if through space. He dives in and out of the earth as if it were water. He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. Sitting cross-legged he flies through the air like a winged bird. With his hand he touches and strokes even the sun and moon, so mighty and powerful. He exercises influence with his body even as far as the Brahmā worlds.

"Then someone who has faith and conviction in him sees him wielding manifold psychic powers ... exercising influence with his body even as far as the Brahmā worlds. He reports this to someone who has no faith and no conviction, telling him, 'Isn't it amazing. Isn't it astounding, how great the power, how great the prowess of this contemplative! Just now I saw him wielding manifold psychic powers ... exercising influence with his body even as far as the Brahmā worlds.'

Then the person without faith, without conviction, would say to the person with faith and with conviction: 'Sir, there is a charm called the Gandhāri charm by which the monk wielded manifold psychic powers ... exercising influence with his body even as far as the Brahmā worlds.' What do you think, Kevatta—isn't that what the man without faith, without conviction, would say to the man with faith and with conviction?"

"Yes, venerable sir, that's just what he would say."

"Seeing this drawback to the miracle of psychic power, Kevatta, I feel horrified, humiliated, and disgusted with the miracle of psychic power.

The Miracle of Telepathy

“And what is the miracle of telepathy? There is the case where a monk reads the minds, the mental events, the thoughts, the ponderings of other beings, other individuals, [saying,] ‘Such is your thinking, here is where your thinking is, thus is your mind.’

“Then someone who has faith and conviction in him sees him reading the minds ... of other beings He reports this to someone who has no faith and no conviction, telling him, ‘Isn’t it awesome. Isn’t it astounding, how great the power, how great the prowess of this contemplative. Just now I saw him reading the minds ... of other beings’

Then the person without faith, without conviction, would say to the person with faith and with conviction: ‘Sir, there is a charm called the Maṇikā charm by which the monk read the minds ... of other beings’ What do you think, Kevaṭṭa—isn’t that what the man without faith, without conviction, would say to the man with faith and with conviction?”

“Yes, venerable sir, that’s just what he would say.”

“Seeing this drawback to the miracle of telepathy, Kevaṭṭa, I feel horrified, humiliated, and disgusted with the miracle of telepathy.

The Miracle of Instruction

“And what is the miracle of instruction? There is the case where a monk gives instruction in this way: ‘Direct your thought in this way, don’t direct it in that. Attend to things in this way, don’t attend to them in that. Let go of this, enter and remain in that.’ This, Kevaṭṭa, is called the miracle of instruction.

“Then there is the case where a Tathāgata appears in the world, worthy and rightly self-awakened. He teaches the Dhamma admirable in its’beginning, admirable in its middle, admirable in its end. He proclaims the holy life both in its particulars and in its essence, entirely perfect, surpassingly pure.

“A householder or householder’s son, hearing the Dhamma, gains conviction in the Tathāgata and reflects: ‘Household life is confining, a dusty path. The life gone forth is like the open air. It is not easy living at home to practice the holy life totally perfect, totally pure, like a polished shell. What if I were to shave off my hair and beard, put on the ochre robes, and go forth from the household life into homelessness?’

"So after some time he abandons his mass of wealth, large or small; leaves his circle of relatives, large or small; shaves off his hair and beard, puts on the ochre robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness.

"When he has thus gone forth, he lives restrained by the rules of the monastic code, seeing danger in the slightest faults. Consummate in his virtue, he guards the doors of his senses, is possessed of mindfulness & alertness, and is content [for details, see DN 2]

Abandoning the Hindrances

"Endowed with this noble aggregate of virtue, this noble restraint over the sense faculties, this noble mindfulness and alertness, and this noble contentment, he seeks out a secluded dwelling: a forest, the shade of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hill-side cave, a charnel ground, a jungle grove, the open air, a heap of straw. After his meal, returning from his alms round, he sits down, crosses his legs, holds his body erect, and brings mindfulness to the fore.

"Abandoning covetousness with regard to the world, he dwells with an awareness devoid of covetousness. He cleanses his mind of covetousness. Abandoning ill will and anger, he dwells with an awareness devoid of ill will, sympathetic with the welfare of all living beings. He cleanses his mind of ill will and anger. Abandoning sloth & drowsiness, he dwells with an awareness devoid of sloth & drowsiness, mindful, alert, percipient of light. He cleanses his mind of sloth & drowsiness. Abandoning restlessness & anxiety, he dwells undisturbed, his mind inwardly stilled. He cleanses his mind of restlessness & anxiety. Abandoning uncertainty, he dwells having crossed over uncertainty, with no perplexity with regard to skillful mental qualities. He cleanses his mind of uncertainty.

"Suppose that a man, taking a loan, invests it in his business affairs. His business affairs succeed. He repays his old debts and there is extra left over for maintaining his wife. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, taking a loan, I invested it in my business affairs. Now my business affairs have succeeded. I have repaid my old debts and there is extra left over for maintaining my wife.' Because of that he would experience joy and happiness.

"Now suppose that a man falls sick—in pain and seriously ill. He does not enjoy his meals, and there is no strength in his body.

As time passes, he eventually recovers from that sickness. He enjoys his meals and there is strength in his body. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was sick....Now I am recovered from that sickness. I enjoy my meals and there is strength in my body.' Because of that he would experience joy and happiness.

"Now suppose that a man is bound in prison. As time passes, he eventually is released from that bondage, safe and sound, with no loss of property. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was bound in prison. Now I am released from that bondage, safe and sound, with no loss of my property.' Because of that he would experience joy and happiness.

"Now suppose that a man is a slave, subject to others, not subject to himself, unable to go where he likes. As time passes, he eventually is released from that slavery, subject to himself, not subject to others, freed, able to go where he likes. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was a slave....Now I am released from that slavery, subject to myself, not subject to others, freed, able to go where I like.' Because of that he would experience joy and happiness.

"Now suppose that a man, carrying money and goods, is traveling by a road through desolate country. As time passes, he eventually emerges from that desolate country, safe and sound, with no loss of property. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, carrying money and goods, I was traveling by a road through desolate country. Now I have emerged from that desolate country, safe and sound, with no loss of my property.' Because of that he would experience joy and happiness.

"In the same way, when these five hindrances are not abandoned in himself, the monk regards it as a debt, a sickness, a prison, slavery, a road through desolate country. But when these five hindrances are abandoned in himself, he regards it as unindebtedness, good health, release from prison, freedom, a place of security. Seeing that they have been abandoned within him, he becomes glad. Glad, he becomes enraptured. Enraptured, his body grows tranquil. His body tranquil, he is sensitive to pleasure. Feeling pleasure, his mind becomes concentrated.

The Four Jhānas

"Quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, he enters and remains in the first jhāna: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied

by directed thought and evaluation. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal. Just as if a skilled bathman or bathman's apprentice would pour bath powder into a brass basin and knead it together, sprinkling it again and again with water, so that his ball of bath powder—saturated, moisture-laden, permeated within and without—would nevertheless not drip; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of withdrawal. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal.

"This, too, is called the miracle of instruction.

"Then, with the stilling of directed thought and evaluation, he enters and remains in the second jhāna: rapture and pleasure born of composure, one-pointedness of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation—internal assurance. He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of composure. Just like a lake with spring-water welling up from within, having no inflow from the east, west, north, or south, and with the skies supplying abundant showers time and again, so that the cool fount of water welling up from within the lake would permeate and pervade, suffuse and fill it with cool waters, there being no part of the lake unpervaded by the cool waters; even so, the monk permeates... this very body with the rapture and pleasure born of composure. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture and pleasure born of composure.

"This, too, is called the miracle of instruction.

"And then, with the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful and fully aware, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters and remains in the third jhāna, and of him the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous and mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. Just as in a lotus pond, some of the lotuses, born and growing in the water, stay immersed in the water and flourish without standing up out of the water, so that they are permeated and pervaded, suffused and filled with cool water from their roots to their tips, and nothing of those lotuses would be unpervaded with cool water; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded with pleasure divested of rapture.

"This, too, is called the miracle of instruction.

"And then, with the abandoning of pleasure and stress—as with the earlier disappearance of elation and distress—he enters and remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity and mindfulness, neither-pleasure nor stress. He sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. Just as if a man were sitting covered from head to foot with a white cloth so that there would be no part of his body to which the white cloth did not extend; even so, the monk sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by pure, bright awareness.

"This, too, is called the miracle of instruction.

Insight Knowledge, etc.

"With his mind thus concentrated, purified, & bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge & vision ... to creating a mind-made body ... to the modes of supranormal powers ... to the divine ear-element ... to knowledge of the awareness of other beings ... to knowledge of the recollection of past lives ... to knowledge of the passing away & re-appearance of beings ... to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. He discerns, as it is actually present, that 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress ... These are mental fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' His heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, 'Released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.' Just as if there were a pool of water in a mountain glen—clear, limpid, and unsullied—where a man with good eyesight standing on the bank could see shells, gravel, and pebbles, and also shoals of fish swimming about and resting, and it would occur to him, 'This pool of water is clear, limpid, and unsullied. Here are these shells, gravel, and pebbles, and also these shoals of fish swimming about and resting.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability—the monk directs and inclines it to

the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. He discerns, as it is actually present, that 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress ... These are mental fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' His heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, 'Released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

This, too, is called the miracle of instruction.

"These are the three miracles that I declare, Kevaṭṭa, having directly known and realized them for myself.

Conversations with the Gods

"Once, Kevaṭṭa, this train of thought arose in the awareness of a certain monk in this very community of monks: 'Where do these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder?' Then he attained to such a state of concentration that the way leading to the gods appeared in his centered mind. So he approached the gods of the retinue of the Four Great Kings and, on arrival, asked them, 'Friends, where do these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the gods of the retinue of the Four Great Kings said to the monk, 'We also don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. But there are the Four Great Kings who are higher and more sublime than we. They should know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder.'

"So the monk approached the Four Great Kings and, on arrival, asked them, 'Friends, where do these four great elements ... cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the Four Great Kings said to the monk, 'We also don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. But there are the gods of the Thirty-three who are higher and more sublime than we. They should know'

"So the monk approached the gods of the Thirty-three and, on arrival, asked them, 'Friends, where do these four great elements ... cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the gods of the Thirty-three said to the monk, 'We also don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. But there is Sakka, the ruler of the gods, who is higher and more sublime than we. He should know'

"So the monk approached Sakka, the ruler of the gods, and, on arrival, asked him, 'Friend, where do these four great elements ... cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, Sakka, the ruler of the gods, said to the monk, 'I also don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. But there are the Yāma gods who are higher and more sublime than I. They should know'

"The Yāma gods said, 'We also don't know But there is the god named Suyāma He should know'

"Suyāma said, 'I also don't know But there is the god named Santusita He should know'

"Santusita said, 'I also don't know But there are the Nimmānarati gods They should know'

"The Nimmānarati gods said, 'We also don't know But there is the god named Sunimmita He should know'

"Sunimmita said, 'I also don't know But there are the Paranimmitavasavatti gods They should know'

"The Paranimmitavasavatti gods said, 'We also don't know But there is the god named Paranimmita Vasavatti He should know'

"So the monk approached the god Vassavatti and, on arrival, asked him, 'Friend, where do these four great elements ... cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the god Vassavatti said to the monk, 'I also don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. But there are the gods of the retinue of Brahmā who are higher and more sublime than I. They should know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder'

"Then the monk attained to such a state of concentration that the way leading to the gods of the retinue of Brahmā appeared in his centered mind. So he approached the gods of the retinue of Brahmā and, on arrival, asked them, 'Friends, where do these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the gods of the retinue of Brahmā said to the monk, 'We also don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. But there is Brahmā, the Great

Brahmā, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. He is higher and more sublime than we. He should know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder.'

"But where, friends, is the Great Brahmā now?'

"Monk, we also don't know where Brahmā is or in what way Brahmā is. But when signs appear, light shines forth, and a radiance appears, Brahmā will appear. For these are the portents of Brahmā's appearance: light shines forth and a radiance appears.'

"Then it was not long before Brahmā appeared.

"So the monk approached the Great Brahmā and, on arrival, said, 'Friend, where do these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, the Great Brahmā said to the monk, 'I, monk, am Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be.'

A second time, the monk said to the Great Brahmā, 'Friend, I didn't ask you if you were Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. I asked you where these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder.'

"A second time, the Great Brahmā said to the monk, 'I, monk, am Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be.'

"A third time, the monk said to the Great Brahmā, 'Friend, I didn't ask you if you were Brahmā, the Great Brahmā, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have Been and Shall Be. I asked you where these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder.'

"Then the Great Brahmā, taking the monk by the arm and leading him off to one side, said to him, 'These gods of the retinue

of Brahmā believe, "There is nothing that the Great Brahmā does not know. There is nothing that the Great Brahmā does not see. There is nothing of which the Great Brahmā is unaware. There is nothing that the Great Brahmā has not realized." That is why I did not say in their presence that I, too, don't know where the four great elements ... cease without remainder. So you have acted wrongly, acted incorrectly, in bypassing the Blessed One in search of an answer to this question elsewhere. Go right back to the Blessed One and, on arrival, ask him this question. However he answers it, you should take it to heart.'

"Then—just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm—the monk disappeared from the Brahmā world and immediately appeared in front of me. Having bowed down to me, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to me, 'Venerable sir, where do these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder?'

"When this was said, I said to him, 'Once, monk, some seafaring merchants took a shore-sighting bird and set sail in their ship. When they could not see the shore, they released the shore-sighting bird. It flew to the east, south, west, north, straight up, and to all the intermediate points of the compass. If it saw the shore in any direction, it flew there. If it did not see the shore in any direction, it returned right back to the ship. In the same way, monk, having gone as far as the Brahmā world in search of an answer to your question, you have come right back to my presence.

"Your question should not be phrased in this way: Where do these four great elements—the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, and the wind property—cease without remainder? Instead, it should be phrased like this:

""Where do water, earth, fire, & wind
 have no footing?
 Where are long & short,
 coarse & fine,
 fair & foul,
 name & form
 brought to an end?"

""And the answer to that is:

""Consciousness without feature,¹

without end,
 luminous all around:
 Here water, earth, fire, & wind
 have no footing.
 Here long & short
 coarse & fine
 fair & foul
 name & form
 are all brought to an end.
 With the cessation of consciousness²
 each is here brought to an end.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Kevaṭṭa the householder delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTES

1. *Vīññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ*. This term is nowhere explained in the Canon, although MN 49 mentions that it “does not partake of the allness of the All”—the “All” meaning the six internal and six external sense media (see SN XXXV.23). In this it differs from the consciousness factor in dependent co-arising, which is defined in terms of the six sense media. Lying outside of time and space, it would also not come under the consciousness-aggregate, which covers all consciousness near and far; past, present, and future. However, the fact that it is outside of time and space—in a dimension where there is no here, there, or in between (Ud I.10), no coming, no going, or staying (Ud VIII.1)—means that it cannot be described as permanent or omnipresent, terms that have meaning only within space and time. The standard description of nibbāna after death is, “All that is sensed, not being relished, will grow cold right here.” (See MN 140 and Iti 44.) Again, as “all” is defined as the sense media, this raises the question as to whether consciousness without feature is not covered by this “all.” However, AN IV.173 warns that any speculation as to whether anything does or doesn’t remain after the remainderless stopping of the six sense media is to “complicate non-complication,” which gets in the way of attaining the non-complicated. Thus this is a question best put aside.

2. See DN 15, SN XII.64, and SN XXII.53. This apparently refers to consciousness as an aggregate and a factor in dependent co-arising.

See also: SN I.20; SN XXXV.82; AN IV.45

12 Lohicca Sutta

To Lohicca

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was on a wandering tour among the Kosalans with a large community of monks—approximately 500 monks in all—and arrived at Sālavatikā. Now at that time the brahman Lohicca was reigning with feudatory rights over Sālavatikā—together with its wealth, grass, timber, & grain—through a royal grant bestowed by King Pasenadi Kosala. And at that time an evil viewpoint to this effect had arisen to him: “Suppose that a priest or contemplative were to arrive at a skillful doctrine. Having arrived at a skillful doctrine, he should not declare it to anyone else, for what can one person do for another? It would be just the same as if, having cut through an old bond, one were to make another new bond. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?”

Then Lohicca heard it said, “Gotama the contemplative—the son of the Sakyans, having gone forth from the Sakyan clan—on a wandering tour among the Kosalans with a large community of monks, approximately 500 monks in all—has arrived at Sālavatikā. And of that Master Gotama this fine reputation has spread: ‘He is indeed a Blessed One, worthy, & rightly self-awakened, consummate in knowledge & conduct, well-gone, a knower of the cosmos, an unexcelled trainer of those persons ready to be tamed, teacher of human & divine beings, awakened, blessed. He has made known—having realized it through direct knowledge—this world with its devas, māras, & brahmās, its generations with their contemplatives & priests, their rulers & common people; has explained the Dhamma admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end; has expounded the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely perfect, surpassingly pure. It is good to see such a worthy one.’”

So Lohicca said to Rosika the barber: “Come, dear Rosika. Go to Gotama the contemplative and, on arrival, ask whether he

is free from illness & affliction, is carefree, strong, & living in comfort, saying: 'The brahman Lohicca, Master Gotama, asks whether you are free from illness & affliction, are carefree, strong, & living in comfort.' And then say: 'May Master Gotama, together with the community of monks, consent to tomorrow's meal with the brahman Lohicca.'"

Responding, "As you say, sir," to the brahman Lohicca, Rosika the barber went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, bowing down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One, "The brahman Lohicca, lord, asks whether the Blessed One is free from illness & affliction, is carefree, strong, & living in comfort. And he says, 'May the Blessed One, together with the community of monks, consent to tomorrow's meal with the brahman Lohicca.'" The Blessed One consented through silence.

Then Rosika the barber, understanding the Blessed One's consent, rose from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One, circumambulated him—keeping him to his right—and returned to the brahman Lohicca. On arrival he said to him, "I have informed the Blessed One of your words, [saying,] 'The brahman Lohicca, lord, asks whether the Blessed One is free from illness & affliction, is carefree, strong, & living in comfort. And he says, 'May the Blessed One, together with the community of monks, consent to tomorrow's meal with the brahman Lohicca.'" And the Blessed One has consented."

Then, as the night was ending, the brahman Lohicca had choice staple & non-staple foods prepared in his own home and then said to Rosika the barber, "Come, dear Rosika. Go to Gotama the contemplative and on arrival announce the time, [saying,] 'It is time, Master Gotama. The meal is ready.'"

Responding, "As you say, sir," to the brahman Lohicca, Rosika the barber went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, bowing down to him, stood to one side. As he was standing there, he announced the time, [saying,] "It is time, lord. The meal is ready."

Then the Blessed One, having put on his robes early in the morning, carrying his bowl & outer robe, went together with a community of monks to Sālavatikā. Meanwhile, Rosika the barber was following right behind the Blessed One and said to him, "Lord, an evil viewpoint to this effect has arisen to the brahman Lohicca: 'Suppose that a priest or contemplative were to arrive at a skillful doctrine. Having arrived at a skillful doc-

trine, he should not declare it to anyone else, for what can one person do for another? It would be just the same as if, having cut through an old bond, one were to make another new bond. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?' It would be good if the Blessed One would extract the brahman Lohicca from this evil viewpoint."

"Perhaps that will be, Rosika. Perhaps that will be."

Then the Blessed One went to the brahman Lohicca's home. On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready. The brahman Lohicca, with his own hand, served & satisfied the Blessed One & the community of monks with choice staple & non-staple foods. Then, when the Blessed One had eaten and had removed his hand from his bowl, the brahman Lohicca took a lower seat and sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, "Is it true, Lohicca, that an evil viewpoint to this effect has arisen to you: 'Suppose that a priest or contemplative were to arrive at a skillful doctrine. Having arrived at a skillful doctrine, he should not declare it to anyone else, for what can one person do for another? It would be just the same as if, having cut through an old bond, one were to make another new bond. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?'"

"Yes, Master Gotama."

"What do you think, Lohicca. Don't you reign over Sālavatikā?"

"Yes, Master Gotama."

"Now, suppose someone were to say, 'The brahman Lohicca reigns over Sālavatikā. He alone should consume the fruits & revenues of Sālavatikā, and not share them with others.' Would someone speaking in this way be a creator of obstacles for your subjects, or would he not?"

"He would be a creator of obstacles, Master Gotama."

"And, being a creator of obstacles, would he be sympathetic for their welfare or not?"

"He would not be sympathetic for their welfare, Master Gotama."

"And in one not sympathetic for their welfare, would his mind be established in good will for them, or in animosity?"

"In animosity, Master Gotama."

"When the mind is established in animosity, is there wrong view or right view?"

"Wrong view, Master Gotama."

"Now, for one of wrong view, Lohicca, I tell you, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal womb.

"What do you think, Lohicca. Doesn't King Pasenadi Kosala reign over Kāsi & Kosala?"

"Yes, Master Gotama."

"Now, suppose someone were to say, 'King Pasenadi Kosala reigns over Kāsi & Kosala. He alone should consume the fruits & revenues of Kāsi & Kosala, and not share them with others.' Would someone speaking in this way be a creator of obstacles for King Pasenadi's subjects—you & others—or would he not?"

"He would be a creator of obstacles, Master Gotama."

"And, being a creator of obstacles, would he be sympathetic for their welfare or not?"

"He would not be sympathetic for their welfare, Master Gotama."

"And in one not sympathetic for their welfare, would his mind be established in good will for them, or in animosity?"

"In animosity, Master Gotama."

"When the mind is established in animosity, is there wrong view or right view?"

"Wrong view, Master Gotama."

"Now, for one of wrong view, Lohicca, I tell you, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal womb.

"So then, Lohicca, if anyone were to say, 'The brahman Lohicca reigns over Sālavatikā. He alone should consume the fruits & revenues of Sālavatikā, and not share them with others,' he, speaking in this way, would be a creator of obstacles for your subjects. Being a creator of obstacles, he would not be sympathetic for their welfare. In one not sympathetic for their welfare, the mind would be established in animosity for them. When the mind is established in animosity, there is wrong view. For one of wrong view, I tell you, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal womb. In the same way, if anyone were to say, 'Suppose that a priest or contemplative were to arrive at a skillful doctrine. Having arrived at a skillful doctrine, he should not declare it to anyone else, for what can one person do for another? It would be just the same as if, having cut through an old bond, one were to make another new bond. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?'—he, speaking in this way, would be a creator of obstacles for those children of good family who, coming to the doctrine & discipline revealed by the Tathāgata, attain the sort of grand distinction where they attain the fruit of stream-entry, the

fruit of once-returning, the fruit of non-returning, the fruit of arahantship; and for those who ripen deva wombs for the sake of bringing about the deva state. Being a creator of obstacles, he would not be sympathetic for their welfare. In one not sympathetic for their welfare, the mind would be established in animosity for them. When the mind is established in animosity, there is wrong view. For one of wrong view, I tell you, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal womb.

"And if anyone were to say, 'King Pasenadi Kosala reigns over Kāsi & Kosala. He alone should consume the fruits & revenues of Kāsi & Kosala, and not share them with others,' he, speaking in this way, would be a creator of obstacles for King Pasenadi's subjects—you & others. Being a creator of obstacles, he would not be sympathetic for their welfare. In one not sympathetic for their welfare, the mind would be established in animosity for them. When the mind is established in animosity, there is wrong view. For one of wrong view, I tell you, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal womb. In the same way, if anyone were to say, 'Suppose that a priest or contemplative were to arrive at a skillful doctrine. Having arrived at a skillful doctrine, he should not declare it to anyone else, for what can one person do for another? It would be just the same as if, having cut through an old bond, one were to make another new bond. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?'—he, speaking in this way, would be a creator of obstacles for those children of good family who, coming to the doctrine & discipline revealed by the Tathāgata, attain the sort of grand distinction where they attain the fruit of stream-entry, the fruit of once-returning, the fruit of non-returning, the fruit of arahantship; and also for those who ripen deva wombs for the sake of bringing about the deva state. Being a creator of obstacles, he would not be sympathetic for their welfare. In one not sympathetic for their welfare, the mind would be established in animosity for them. When the mind is established in animosity, there is wrong view. For one of wrong view, I tell you, there is one of two destinations: either hell or the animal womb.

"Lohicca, there are these three sorts of teacher who are worthy of criticism in the world, and when anyone criticizes these sorts of teachers, the criticism is true, factual, righteous, & unblameworthy. Which three?

"There is the case where a certain teacher has not attained the goal of the contemplative life for which one goes forth from

the home life into homelessness. He, not having attained that goal of the contemplative life, teaches his disciples, 'This is for your welfare. This is for your happiness.' His disciples don't listen, don't lend ear, don't put forth an intent for gnosis. They practice in a way deviating from the teacher's instructions. He should be criticized, saying, 'You, venerable sir, have not attained the goal of the contemplative life for which one goes forth from the home life into homelessness. Not having attained that goal of the contemplative life, you teach your disciples, "This is for your welfare. This is for your happiness." Your disciples don't listen, don't lend ear, don't put forth an intent for gnosis, and practice in a way deviating from the teacher's instructions. It's just as if a man were to pursue [a woman] who pulls away, or to embrace one who turns her back. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?' This is the first teacher who is worthy of criticism in the world, and when anyone criticizes this sort of teacher, the criticism is true, factual, righteous, & unblameworthy.

"Then there is the case where a certain teacher has not attained the goal of the contemplative life for which one goes forth from the home life into homelessness. He, not having attained that goal of the contemplative life, teaches his disciples, 'This is for your welfare. This is for your happiness.' His disciples listen, lend ear, put forth an intent for gnosis, and practice in a way not deviating from the teacher's instructions. He should be criticized, saying, 'You, venerable sir, have not attained the goal of the contemplative life for which one goes forth from the home life into homelessness. Not having attained that goal of the contemplative life, you teach your disciples, "This is for your welfare. This is for your happiness." Your disciples listen, lend ear, put forth an intent for gnosis, and practice in a way not deviating from the teacher's instructions. It's just as if a man, neglecting his own field, were to imagine that another's field should be weeded. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?' This is the second teacher who is worthy of criticism in the world, and when anyone criticizes this sort of teacher, the criticism is true, factual, righteous, & unblameworthy.

"Then there is the case where a certain teacher has attained the goal of the contemplative life for which one goes forth from the home life into homelessness. He, having attained that goal of

the contemplative life, teaches his disciples, 'This is for your welfare. This is for your happiness.' His disciples don't listen, don't lend ear, don't put forth an intent for gnosis. They practice in a way deviating from the teacher's instructions. He should be criticized, saying, 'You, venerable sir, have attained the goal of the contemplative life for which one goes forth from the home life into homelessness. Having attained that goal of the contemplative life, you teach your disciples, "This is for your welfare. This is for your happiness," but your disciples don't listen, don't lend ear, don't put forth an intent for gnosis, and practice in a way deviating from the teacher's instructions. It's just as if, having cut through an old bond, one were to make another new bond. I say that such a thing is an evil, greedy deed, for what can one person do for another?' This is the third teacher who is worthy of criticism in the world, and when anyone criticizes this sort of teacher, the criticism is true, factual, righteous, & unblameworthy."

When this was said, the brahman Lohicca said to the Blessed One, "But is there, Master Gotama, any teacher who is not worthy of criticism in the world?"

"There is, Lohicca, a teacher who is not worthy of criticism in the world."

"But which teacher, Master Gotama, is not worthy of criticism in the world?"

"There is the case, Lohicca, where a Tathāgata appears in the world, worthy & rightly self-awakened. He teaches the Dhamma admirable in its beginning, admirable in its middle, admirable in its end. He proclaims the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely perfect, surpassingly pure.

"A householder or householder's son, hearing the Dhamma, gains conviction in the Tathāgata and reflects: 'Household life is confining, a dusty path. The life gone forth is like the open air. It is not easy living at home to practice the holy life totally perfect, totally pure, like a polished shell. What if I were to shave off my hair & beard, put on the ochre robes, and go forth from the household life into homelessness?'

"So after some time he abandons his mass of wealth, large or small; leaves his circle of relatives, large or small; shaves off his hair & beard, puts on the ochre robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness.

"When he has thus gone forth, he lives restrained by the rules of the monastic code, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

Consummate in his virtue, he guards the doors of his senses, is possessed of mindfulness & alertness, and is content [for details, see DN 2]

Abandoning the Hindrances

"Endowed with this noble aggregate of virtue, this noble restraint over the sense faculties, this noble mindfulness & alertness, and this noble contentment, he seeks out a secluded dwelling: a wilderness, the shade of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a forest grove, the open air, a heap of straw. After his meal, returning from his alms round, he sits down, crosses his legs, holds his body erect, and brings mindfulness to the fore.

"Abandoning covetousness with regard to the world, he dwells with an awareness devoid of covetousness. He cleanses his mind of covetousness. Abandoning ill will & anger, he dwells with an awareness devoid of ill will, sympathetic with the welfare of all living beings. He cleanses his mind of ill will & anger. Abandoning sloth & drowsiness, he dwells with an awareness devoid of sloth & drowsiness, mindful, alert, percipient of light. He cleanses his mind of sloth & drowsiness. Abandoning restlessness & anxiety, he dwells undisturbed, his mind inwardly stilled. He cleanses his mind of restlessness & anxiety. Abandoning uncertainty, he dwells having crossed over uncertainty, with no perplexity with regard to skillful mental qualities. He cleanses his mind of uncertainty.

"Suppose that a man, taking a loan, invests it in his business affairs. His business affairs succeed. He repays his old debts and there is extra left over for maintaining his wife. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, taking a loan, I invested it in my business affairs. Now my business affairs have succeeded. I have repaid my old debts and there is extra left over for maintaining my wife.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"Now suppose that a man falls sick—in pain & seriously ill. He does not enjoy his meals, and there is no strength in his body. As time passes, he eventually recovers from that sickness. He enjoys his meals and there is strength in his body. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was sick....Now I am recovered from that sickness. I enjoy my meals and there is strength in my body.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"Now suppose that a man is bound in prison. As time passes, he eventually is released from that bondage, safe &

sound, with no loss of property. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was bound in prison. Now I am released from that bondage, safe & sound, with no loss of my property.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"Now suppose that a man is a slave, subject to others, not subject to himself, unable to go where he likes. As time passes, he eventually is released from that slavery, subject to himself, not subject to others, freed, able to go where he likes. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, I was a slave....Now I am released from that slavery, subject to myself, not subject to others, freed, able to go where I like.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"Now suppose that a man, carrying money & goods, is traveling by a road through desolate country. As time passes, he eventually emerges from that desolate country, safe & sound, with no loss of property. The thought would occur to him, 'Before, carrying money & goods, I was traveling by a road through desolate country. Now I have emerged from that desolate country, safe & sound, with no loss of my property.' Because of that he would experience joy & happiness.

"In the same way, when these five hindrances are not abandoned in himself, the monk regards it as a debt, a sickness, a prison, slavery, a road through desolate country. But when these five hindrances are abandoned in himself, he regards it as unindebtedness, good health, release from prison, freedom, a place of security. Seeing that they have been abandoned within him, he becomes glad. Glad, he becomes enraptured. Enraptured, his body grows tranquil. His body tranquil, he is sensitive to pleasure. Feeling pleasure, his mind becomes concentrated.

The Four Jhānas

"Quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, he enters and remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. He permeates & pervades, suffuses & fills this very body with the rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal. Just as if a skilled bathman or bathman's apprentice would pour bath powder into a brass basin and knead it together, sprinkling it again & again with water, so that his ball of bath powder—saturated, moisture-laden, permeated within & without—would nevertheless not drip; even so, the monk permeates...this very body with the

rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal. When a disciple of a teacher attains this sort of grand distinction, Lohicca, that is a teacher not worthy of criticism in the world, and if anyone were to criticize this sort of teacher, the criticism would be false, unfactual, unrighteous, & blameworthy.

“Then, with the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second *jhāna*... the third *jhāna* ... the fourth *jhāna*: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain. He sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. Just as if a man were sitting covered from head to foot with a white cloth so that there would be no part of his body to which the white cloth did not extend; even so, the monk sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by pure, bright awareness. When a disciple of a teacher attains this sort of grand distinction, Lohicca, that is a teacher not worthy of criticism in the world, and if anyone were to criticize this sort of teacher, the criticism would be false, unfactual, unrighteous, & blameworthy.

Insight Knowledge, etc.

“With his mind thus concentrated, purified, & bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, he directs and inclines it to knowledge & vision ... to creating a mind-made body ... to the modes of supranormal powers ... to the divine ear-element ... to knowledge of the awareness of other beings... to knowledge of the recollection of past lives ... to knowledge of the passing away & re-appearance of beings ... to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. He discerns, as it is actually present, that ‘This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress ... These are mental fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.’ His heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, ‘Released.’ He discerns that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’ Just as if there were a pool of water in a mountain glen—clear, limpid, & unshaded—where a man with good eyesight standing on the bank could

see shells, gravel, & pebbles, and also shoals of fish swimming about & resting, and it would occur to him, 'This pool of water is clear, limpid, & unsullied. Here are these shells, gravel, & pebbles, and also these shoals of fish swimming about & resting.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, & bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability—the monk directs & inclines it to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. He discerns, as it is actually present, that 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress ... These are mental fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' His heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, 'Released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.' When a disciple of a teacher attains this sort of grand distinction, Lohicca, that is a teacher not worthy of criticism in the world, and if anyone were to criticize this sort of teacher, the criticism would be false, unfactual, unrighteous, & blameworthy."

When this was said, the brahman Lohicca said to the Blessed One: "Master Gotama, it's as if a man, having seized by the hair another man who was falling into the pit of hell, were to pull him up & set him on firm ground. In the same way, Master Gotama has pulled me up as I was falling into the pit of hell and has set me on firm ground. Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, & to the community of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life."

See also: MN 95; SN VI.1; AN II.19; AN III.22; AN III.62; AN IV.111; AN X.95; Sn II.8

15 Mahā-Nidāna Sutta

The Great Causes Discourse

This is one of the most profound discourses in the Pali Canon. It gives an extended treatment of the teachings of dependent co-arising (paṭicca samuppāda) and not-self (anattā) in an outlined context of how these teachings function in practice.

The first part of the discourse takes the factors of dependent co-arising in sequence from effect to cause, tracing them down to the mutual dependency of name-&-form (mental and physical activity) on the one hand, and consciousness on the other. In connection with this point, it is worth noting that the word "great" in the title of the discourse may have a double meaning: modifying the word "discourse"—it's a long discourse—and modifying "causes," referring to the fact that name-&-form and consciousness as causal factors can account for everything describable in the cosmos.

After tracing the basic sequence of factors in the causal pattern, the discourse then reviews their inter-relationships, showing how they can explain stress and suffering both on the individual and on the social level.

The second part of the discourse, taking up the teaching of not-self, shows how dependent co-arising gives focus to this teaching in practice. It begins with a section on Delineations of a Self, classifying the various ways in which a sense of "self" might be defined in terms of form. The scheme of analysis introduced in this section—classifying views of the self according to the variables of form and formless; finite and infinite; already existing, naturally developing in the future, and alterable through human effort—covers all the theories of the self proposed in the classical Upaniṣads, as well as all theories of self or soul proposed in more recent times. The inclusion of an infinite self in this list gives the lie to the belief that the Buddha's teachings on not-self were denying nothing more than a sense of "separate" or "limited" self. The discourse points out that even a limitless, infinite, all-embracing sense of self is based on a view-obsession (see AN VII.11) that has to be abandoned.

The following section, on Non-delineations of a Self, shows that it is possible for the mind to function without reading a "self" into experience. The remaining sections focus on ways in which this can be done by treating the sense of self as it relates to different aspects of name-&-form. The first of these sections—Assumptions of a Self—focuses on the sense of self as it relates to feeling, one of the "name" factors in name-&-form. The next section—Seven Stations of Consciousness—focuses on form, formlessness, and perception, which is another one of the "name" factors that allows a place for consciousness to land and grow on the "macro" level in the cycle of death and rebirth. The last section—Eight Emancipations—focuses on form, formlessness, and perception on the "micro" level in the practice of meditative absorption (jhāna).

In each of these cases, once the sense of attachment and identification with name-&-form can be broken, the mutual dependency between consciousness and name-&-form is broken as well. This brings about total freedom from the limits of "the extent to which there are means of designation, expression, and delineation...the extent to which the dimension of discernment extends, the extent to which the cycle revolves for the manifesting (discernibility) of this world—i.e., name-&-form together with consciousness." This is the release at which the Buddha's teachings are aimed.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was living among the Kurus. Now, the Kurus have a town named Kammāsadhamma. There Ven. Ānanda approached the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "It's amazing, lord, it's astounding, how deep this dependent co-arising is, and how deep its appearance, and yet to me it seems as clear as clear can be."

[The Buddha:] "Don't say that, Ānanda. Don't say that. Deep is this dependent co-arising, and deep its appearance. It's because of not understanding and not penetrating this Dhamma that this generation is like a tangled skein, a knotted ball of string, like matted rushes and reeds, and does not go beyond transmigration, beyond the planes of deprivation, woe, & bad destinations.

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for aging & death?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition do aging & death come?' one should say, 'Aging & death come from birth as their requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for birth?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does birth come?' one should say, 'Birth comes from becoming as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for becoming?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does becoming come?' one should say, 'Becoming comes from clinging as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for clinging?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does clinging come?' one should say, 'Clinging comes from craving as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for craving?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does craving come?' one should say, 'Craving comes from feeling as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for feeling?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does feeling come?' one should say, 'Feeling comes from contact as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for contact?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does contact come?' one should say, 'Contact comes from name-&-form as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for name-&-form?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does name-&-form come?' one should say, 'Name-&-form comes from consciousness as its requisite condition.'

"If one is asked, 'Is there a demonstrable requisite condition for consciousness?' one should answer, 'There is.'

"If one is asked, 'From what requisite condition does consciousness come?' one should say, 'Consciousness comes from name-&-form as its requisite condition.'

"Thus, Ānanda, from name-&-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness. From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form. From name-&-form as a requisite condition comes contact. From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging. From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. From birth as a requisite condition, aging, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress.

Aging & Death

"'From birth as a requisite condition come aging & death.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from birth as a requisite condition come aging & death. If there were no birth at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., of devas in the state of devas, of celestials in the state of celestials, of spirits in the state of spirits, of demons in the state of demons, of human beings in the human state, of quadrupeds in the state of quadrupeds, of birds in the state of birds, of snakes in the state of snakes, or of any being in its own state—in the utter absence of birth, from the cessation of birth, would aging and death be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for aging & death, i.e., birth.

Birth

"'From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from becoming as a requisite condition comes birth. If there were no becoming at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., sensual becoming, form becoming, or formless becoming—in the utter absence of becoming, from the cessation of becoming, would birth be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for birth, i.e., becoming.

Becoming

"'From clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from clinging as a requisite condition comes becoming. If there were no clinging at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., clinging to sensuality, clinging to precepts and practices, clinging to views, or clinging to doctrines of the self—in the utter absence of clinging, from the cessation of clinging, would becoming be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for becoming, i.e., clinging.

Clinging

"'From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from craving as a requisite condition comes clinging. If there were no craving at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for no becoming—in the utter absence of craving, from the cessation of craving, would clinging be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for clinging, i.e., craving.

Craving

"'From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from feeling as a requisite condition comes craving. If there were no feeling at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., feeling born of contact at the eye, feeling born of contact at the ear, feeling born of contact at the nose, feeling born of contact at the tongue, feeling born of contact at the body, or feeling born of contact at the intellect—in the utter absence of feeling, from the cessation of feeling, would craving be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for craving, i.e., feeling.

Dependent on Craving

"Now, craving is dependent on feeling,
 seeking is dependent on craving,
 acquisition is dependent on seeking,
 ascertainment is dependent on acquisition,
 desire and passion is dependent on ascertainment,
 attachment is dependent on desire and passion,
 possessiveness is dependent on attachment,
 stinginess is dependent on possessiveness,
 defensiveness is dependent on stinginess,

and because of defensiveness, dependent on defensiveness, various evil, unskillful phenomena come into play: the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies.

"And this is the way to understand how it is that because of defensiveness various evil, unskillful phenomena come into play: the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies. If there were no defensiveness at all, in any way, of anything anywhere, in the utter absence of defensiveness, from the cessation of defensiveness, would various evil, unskillful phenomena—the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies—come into play?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for the coming-into-play of various evil, unskillful phenomena—the taking up of sticks and knives; conflicts, quarrels, and disputes; accusations, divisive speech, and lies—i.e., defensiveness.

"'Defensiveness is dependent on stinginess.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how defensiveness is dependent on stinginess. If there were no stinginess at all, in any way, of anything anywhere, in the utter absence of stinginess, from the cessation of stinginess, would defensiveness be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for defensiveness, i.e., stinginess.

(Similarly back through the chain of conditions: stinginess, attachment, possessiveness, desire and passion, ascertainment, acquisition, and seeking.)

“‘Seeking is dependent on craving.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how seeking is dependent on craving. If there were no craving at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for no becoming—in the utter absence of craving, from the cessation of craving, would seeking be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

“Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for seeking, i.e., craving. Thus, Ānanda, these two phenomena [the chain of conditions leading from craving to birth, aging, and death, and the chain of conditions leading from craving to quarrels, etc.], as a duality, flow back into one place at feeling.

Feeling

“‘From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from contact as a requisite condition comes feeling. If there were no contact at all, in any way, of anything anywhere—i.e., contact at the eye, contact at the ear, contact at the nose, contact at the tongue, contact at the body, or contact at the intellect—in the utter absence of contact, from the cessation of contact, would feeling be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

“Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for feeling, i.e., contact.

Contact

“‘From name-&-form as a requisite condition comes contact.’ Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how, from name-&-form as a requisite condition comes contact. If the qualities, traits, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of name-group (mental activity) were all absent, would designation-contact with regard to the form-group (the physical body) be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

“If the permutations, signs, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of form-group were all absent, would resistance-contact with regard to the name-group be discerned?”

"No, lord."

"If the permutations, signs, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of name-group and form-group were all absent, would designation-contact or resistance-contact be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for contact, i.e., name-&-form."

Name-&-Form

"From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form. If consciousness were not to descend into the mother's womb, would name-&-form take shape in the womb?"

"No, lord."

"If, after descending into the womb, consciousness were to depart, would name-&-form be produced for this world?"

"No, lord."

"If the consciousness of the young boy or girl were to be cut off, would name-&-form ripen, grow, and reach maturity?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for name-&-form, i.e., consciousness."

Consciousness

"From name-&-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness.' Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how from name-&-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness. If consciousness were not to gain a foothold in name-&-form, would a coming-into-play of the origination of birth, aging, death, and stress in the future be discerned?"

"No, lord."

"Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for consciousness, i.e., name-&-form."

"This is the extent to which there is birth, aging, death, passing away, and re-arising. This is the extent to which there are means of designation, expression, and delineation. This is the extent to which the dimension of discernment extends, the extent

to which the cycle revolves for the manifesting (discernibility) of this world—i.e., name-&-form together with consciousness.

Delineations of a Self

“To what extent, Ānanda, does one delineate when delineating a self? Either delineating a self possessed of form & finite, one delineates that ‘My self is possessed of form & finite.’ Or, delineating a self possessed of form & infinite, one delineates that ‘My self is possessed of form & infinite.’ Or, delineating a self formless & finite, one delineates that ‘My self is formless & finite.’ Or, delineating a self formless & infinite, one delineates that ‘My self is formless & infinite.’

“Now, the one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as possessed of form & finite, either delineates it as possessed of form & finite in the present, or of such a nature that it will [naturally] become possessed of form & finite [in the future/after death], or he believes that ‘Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.’ This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form & finite obsesses him.

“The one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as possessed of form & infinite, either delineates it as possessed of form & infinite in the present, or of such a nature that it will [naturally] become possessed of form & infinite [in the future/after death], or he believes that ‘Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.’ This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form & infinite obsesses him.

“The one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as formless & finite, either delineates it as formless & finite in the present, or of such a nature that it will [naturally] become formless & finite [in the future/after death], or he believes that ‘Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.’ This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless & finite obsesses him.

“The one who, when delineating a self, delineates it as formless & infinite, either delineates it as formless & infinite in the present, or of such a nature that it will [naturally] become formless & infinite [in the future/after death], or he believes that ‘Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.’ This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless & infinite obsesses him.

Non-Delineations of a Self

"To what extent, Ānanda, does one not delineate when not delineating a self? Either not delineating a self possessed of form & finite, one does not delineate that 'My self is possessed of form & finite.' Or, not delineating a self possessed of form & infinite, one does not delineate that 'My self is possessed of form & infinite.' Or, not delineating a self formless & finite, one does not delineate that 'My self is formless & finite.' Or, not delineating a self formless & infinite, one does not delineate that 'My self is formless & infinite.'

"Now, the one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as possessed of form & finite, does not delineate it as possessed of form & finite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will [naturally] become possessed of form & finite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form & finite doesn't obsess him.

"The one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as possessed of form & infinite, does not delineate it as possessed of form & infinite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will [naturally] become possessed of form & infinite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self possessed of form & infinite doesn't obsess him.

"The one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as formless & finite, does not delineate it as formless & finite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will [naturally] become formless & finite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless & finite doesn't obsess him.

"The one who, when not delineating a self, does not delineate it as formless & infinite, does not delineate it as formless & infinite in the present, nor does he delineate it as of such a nature that it will [naturally] become formless & infinite [in the future/after death], nor does he believe that 'Although it is not

yet that way, I will convert it into being that way.' This being the case, it is proper to say that a fixed view of a self formless & infinite doesn't obsess him.

Assumptions of a Self

"To what extent, Ānanda, does one assume when assuming a self? Assuming feeling to be the self, one assumes that 'Feeling is my self' [or] 'Feeling is not my self: My self is oblivious [to feeling]' [or] 'Neither is feeling my self, nor is my self oblivious to feeling, but rather my self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling.'

"Now, one who says, 'Feeling is my self,' should be addressed as follows: 'There are these three feelings, my friend—feelings of pleasure, feelings of pain, and feelings of neither pleasure nor pain. Which of these three feelings do you assume to be the self? At a moment when a feeling of pleasure is sensed, no feeling of pain or of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed. Only a feeling of pleasure is sensed at that moment. At a moment when a feeling of pain is sensed, no feeling of pleasure or of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed. Only a feeling of pain is sensed at that moment. At a moment when a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed, no feeling of pleasure or of pain is sensed. Only a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain is sensed at that moment.'

"Now, a feeling of pleasure is inconstant, fabricated, dependent on conditions, subject to passing away, dissolution, fading, and cessation. A feeling of pain is inconstant, fabricated, dependent on conditions, subject to passing away, dissolution, fading, and cessation. A feeling of neither pleasure nor pain is inconstant, fabricated, dependent on conditions, subject to passing away, dissolution, fading, and cessation. Having sensed a feeling of pleasure as 'my self,' then with the cessation of one's very own feeling of pleasure, 'my self' has perished. Having sensed a feeling of pain as 'my self,' then with the cessation of one's very own feeling of pain, 'my self' has perished. Having sensed a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain as 'my self,' then with the cessation of one's very own feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, 'my self' has perished.

"Thus he assumes, assuming in the immediate present a self inconstant, entangled in pleasure and pain, subject to arising and passing away, he who says, 'Feeling is my self.' Thus in this manner, Ānanda, one doesn't see fit to assume feeling to be the self.

"As for the person who says, 'Feeling is not the self: My self is oblivious [to feeling],' he should be addressed as follows: 'My friend, where nothing whatsoever is sensed (experienced) at all, would there be the thought, "I am"?"'

"No, lord."

"Thus in this manner, Ānanda, one doesn't see fit to assume that 'Feeling is not my self: My self is oblivious [to feeling].'

"As for the person who says, 'Neither is feeling my self, nor is my self oblivious [to feeling], but rather my self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling,' he should be addressed as follows: 'My friend, should feelings altogether and every way stop without remainder, then with feeling completely not existing, owing to the cessation of feeling, would there be the thought, "I am"?"'

"No, lord."

"Thus in this manner, Ānanda, one doesn't see fit to assume that 'Neither is feeling my self, nor is my self oblivious [to feeling], but rather my self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling.'

"Now, Ānanda, in as far as a monk doesn't assume feeling to be the self, nor the self as oblivious, nor that 'My self feels, in that my self is subject to feeling,' then, not assuming in this way, he isn't sustained by anything (doesn't cling to anything) in the world. Unsustained, he isn't agitated. Unagitated, he is totally unbound right within. He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"If anyone were to say with regard to a monk whose mind is thus released that 'The Tathāgata exists after death,' is his view, that would be mistaken; that 'The Tathāgata does not exist after death' ... that 'The Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death' ... that 'The Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death' is his view, that would be mistaken. Why? Having directly known the extent of designation and the extent of the objects of designation, the extent of expression and the extent of the objects of expression, the extent of description and the extent of the objects of description, the extent of discernment and the extent of the objects of discernment, the extent to which the cycle revolves: Having directly known that, the monk is released. The view that, 'Having directly known that, the monk released does not see, does not know': that would be mistaken.¹

Seven Stations of Consciousness

"Ānanda, there are these seven stations of consciousness and two dimensions. Which seven?

"There are beings with diversity of body and diversity of perception, such as human beings, some devas, and some beings in the lower realms. This is the first station of consciousness.

"There are beings with diversity of body and singularity of perception, such as the devas of the Brahmā hosts generated by the first [jhāna] and [some] beings in the four realms of deprivation.² This is the second station of consciousness.

"There are beings with singularity of body and diversity of perception, such as the Radiant Devas. This is the third station of consciousness.

"There are beings with singularity of body and singularity of perception, such as the Beautifully Lustrous Devas. This is the fourth station of consciousness.

"There are beings who, with the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, thinking, 'Infinite space,' arrive at the dimension of the infinitude of space. This is the fifth station of consciousness.

"There are beings who, with the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of space, thinking, 'Infinite consciousness,' arrive at the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. This is the sixth station of consciousness.

"There are beings who, with the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, thinking, 'There is nothing,' arrive at the dimension of nothingness. This is the seventh station of consciousness.

"The dimension of non-percipient beings and, second, the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. [These are the two dimensions.]

"Now, as for the first station of consciousness—beings with diversity of body and diversity of perception, such as human beings, some devas, and some beings in the lower realms: If one discerns that [station of consciousness], discerns its origination, discerns its passing away, discerns its allure, discerns its drawbacks, discerns the escape from it, would it be proper, by means of that [discernment] to take delight there?"

"No, lord."

(Similarly with each of the remaining stations of consciousness and two dimensions.)

"Ānanda, when knowing—as they actually are—the origination, passing away, allure, drawbacks of—and escape from—these seven stations of consciousness and two dimensions, a monk is released through lack of clinging, he is said to be a monk released through discernment.

Eight Emancipations

"Ānanda, there are these eight emancipations. Which eight?

"Possessed of form, one sees forms. This is the first emancipation.

"Not percipient of form internally, one sees forms externally. This is the second emancipation.

"One is intent only on the beautiful. This is the third emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of perceptions of [physical] form, with the disappearance of perceptions of resistance, and not heeding perceptions of diversity, thinking, 'Infinite space,' one enters and remains in the dimension of the infinitude of space. This is the fourth emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of space, thinking, 'Infinite consciousness,' one enters and remains in the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. This is the fifth emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, thinking, 'There is nothing,' one enters and remains in the dimension of nothingness. This is the sixth emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of nothingness, one enters and remains in the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. This is the seventh emancipation.

"With the complete transcending of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, one enters and remains in the cessation of perception and feeling. This is the eighth emancipation.

"Now, when a monk attains these eight emancipations in forward order, in reverse order, in forward and reverse order, when he attains them and emerges from them wherever he wants, however he wants, and for as long as he wants, when through the ending of the mental fermentations he enters and remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release and discernment-release, having directly known and realized them in the here &

now, he is said to be a monk released in both ways. And as for another release in both ways, higher or more sublime than this, there is none."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ānanda delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTES

1. The various readings for this sentence all seem corrupt. The sense of the paragraph, read in light of AN X.96, demands that the view expressed in the last sentence be *about* the monk released, unlike the four earlier views, which are wrongly *attributed* to the monk released. In other words, the monk released has no opinion on the question of whether the Tathāgata does, doesn't, etc., exist after death. This might lead to the supposition that his lack of opinion comes from a lack of knowledge or vision. The description of what he comes to know in the course of gaining release shows that this supposition is inappropriate. He does know, he does see, and what he knows and sees about the limitations of language and concepts shows him that the question of the existence of the Tathāgata after death should be set aside.

Thus I would reconstruct the Pali of the final sentence in this paragraph as: *Tadabhiññā vimutto bhikkhu na jānāti na passati iti sā diṭṭhi tadakallaṃ.*

2. This last phrase—"and [some] beings in the four realms of deprivation"—is found in the Thai edition of the Canon, but not in the PTS or Burmese editions. It seems to be required by the context in order to cover the beings living in the lower realms not included in the first station of consciousness.

See also: SN XII.2; SN XII.23; SN XII.67; SN XXII.53-54; SN XXII.56; AN II.30; AN VII.11-12; AN IX.43-45; AN X.96; Sn III.12; Sn IV.11

16 Mahā-Parinibbāna Sutta

The Great Discourse on the Total Unbinding (Excerpt)

V.

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda: “Ānanda, let’s go to the far shore of the Hiraññavati River. We’ll head for Upavattana, the Mallans’ sal-grove near Kusinārā.”

“As you say, lord,” Ven. Ānanda responded to the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One with a large community of monks went to the far shore of the Hiraññavati River and headed for Upavattana, the Mallans’ sal-grove near Kusinārā. On arrival, he said to Ven. Ānanda, “Ānanda, please prepare a bed for me between the twin sal-trees, with its head to the north. I am tired and will lie down.”

Responding, “As you say, lord,” Ven. Ānanda prepared a bed between the twin sal-trees, with its head to the north. Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side in the lion’s sleeping posture, with one foot on top of the other, mindful & alert.¹

Now at that time the twin sal-trees were in full bloom, even though it was not the time for flowering. They showered, strewed, & sprinkled on the Tathāgata’s body in homage to him. Heavenly coral-tree blossoms fell from the sky, showering, strewing, & sprinkling the Tathāgata’s body in homage to him. Heavenly sandalwood powder fell from the sky, showering, strewing, & sprinkling the Tathāgata’s body in homage to him. Heavenly music was playing in the sky, in homage to the Tathāgata. Heavenly songs were sung in the sky, in homage to the Tathāgata.

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda, “Ānanda, the twin sal-trees are in full bloom, even though it’s not the flowering season. They shower, strew, & sprinkle on the Tathāgata’s body in homage to him. Heavenly coral-tree blossoms are falling from the sky Heavenly sandalwood powder is falling

from the sky Heavenly music is playing in the sky Heavenly songs are sung in the sky, in homage to the Tathāgata. But it is not to this extent that a Tathāgata is worshipped, honored, respected, venerated, or paid homage to. Rather, the monk, nun, male lay follower, or female lay follower who keeps practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, who keeps practicing masterfully, who lives in accordance with the Dhamma: that is the person who worships, honors, respects, venerates, & pays homage to the Tathāgata with the highest homage. So you should train yourselves: 'We will keep practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, we will keep practicing masterfully, we will live in accordance with the Dhamma.' That's how you should train yourselves."

Now at that time Ven. Upavāṇa was standing in front of the Blessed One, fanning him. Then the Blessed One dismissed him, saying, "Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me." Then the thought occurred to Ven. Ānanda, "For a long time, now, this Ven. Upavāṇa has been an attendant to the Blessed One, staying near him and traveling with him. But now, in his final hour, he dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me.' Now what is the reason, what is the cause, why the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me?'"

Then Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "For a long time, now, this Ven. Upavāṇa has been an attendant to the Blessed One, staying near him and traveling with him. But now, in his final hour, he dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me.' Now what is the reason, what is the cause, why the Blessed One dismisses him, saying, 'Go away, monk. Don't stand in front of me?'"

"Ānanda, most of the devatās from ten world-systems have gathered in order to see the Tathāgata. For twelve leagues all around Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusinārā, there is not the space even of the tip of a horse-tail hair that is not occupied by eminent devatās. The devatās, Ānanda, are complaining, 'We have come a long distance to see the Tathāgata.² Only once in a long, long time does a Tathāgata—worthy & rightly self-awakened—arise in the world. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of the Tathāgata will occur. And this eminent monk is standing in front of the Blessed One, blocking the way. We aren't getting to see the Blessed One in his final hour.'"

"But, lord, what is the state of the devatās the Blessed One is referring to?"

"Ānanda, there are devatās who perceive space to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them,³ they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon, the Blessed One will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One Well-gone will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes (alternate reading: the Eye) will disappear from the world!' Then there are devatās who perceive earth to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon, the Blessed One will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One Well-gone will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes will disappear from the world!' But those devatās who are free from passion acquiesce, mindful & alert: 'Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?'"

"In the past, lord, the monks in all directions, after ending the Rains retreat, came to see the Tathāgata. Thus we got to see & attend to the monks who inspire the heart. But now, after the Blessed One is gone, we won't get to see or attend to the monks who inspire the heart."

"Ānanda, there are these four places that merit being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merit his feelings of urgency & dismay (saṃvega). Which four? 'Here the Tathāgata was born' is a place that merits being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merits his feelings of urgency & dismay. 'Here the Tathāgata awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening' 'Here the Tathāgata set rolling the unexcelled wheel of Dhamma' 'Here the Tathāgata was totally unbound in the remainderless property of Unbinding' is a place that merits being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merits his feelings of urgency & dismay. These are the four places that merit being seen by a clansman with conviction, that merit his feelings of urgency & dismay. They will come out of conviction, Ānanda—monks, nuns, male lay followers, & female lay followers—to the spots where 'Here the Tathāgata was born,' 'Here the Tathāgata awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening,' 'Here the Tathāgata set rolling the unexcelled wheel of Dhamma,' 'Here the Tathāgata was totally unbound in the

remainderless property of Unbinding.’ And anyone who dies while making a pilgrimage to these memorials with a bright, confident mind will—on the break-up of the body, after death—reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world.”

“Lord, what course should we follow with regard to womenfolk?”

“Not-seeing, Ānanda”

“But when there is seeing, lord, what course should be followed?”

“Not-addressing, Ānanda.”

“But when we are addressed, what course should be followed?”

“Mindfulness should be established, Ānanda.”

“And, lord, what course should we follow with regard to the Tathāgata’s body?”

“You are not to be concerned about the Tathāgata’s funeral. Please, Ānanda, strive for the true goal, be committed to the true goal, dwell heedful, ardent, & resolute for the sake of the true goal. There are wise nobles, brahmans, & householders who are highly confident in the Tathāgata. They will conduct the Tathāgata’s funeral.”

“But, lord, what course should be followed with regard to the Tathāgata’s body?”

“The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Ānanda, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathāgata.”

“And what, lord, is the course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch?”

“Ānanda, they wrap the body of a wheel-turning monarch in new linen cloth. Having wrapped it in new linen cloth, they wrap it in teased cotton-wool. Having wrapped it in teased cotton-wool, they wrap it in new linen cloth. Having done this five hundred times, they place the body in an iron oil-vat, cover it with an iron lid, make a pyre composed totally of perfumed substances, and cremate the body. Then they build a burial mound for the wheel-turning monarch at a great four-way intersection. That is the course that they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch. The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Ānanda, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathāgata. A burial mound for the Tathāgata is to be built at a great four-way intersection. And those who offer a garland, a scent, or a perfume powder there, or bow down there, or brighten their minds there: that will be for their long-term welfare & happiness.

"There are these four who are worthy of a burial mound. Which four? A Tathāgata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, is worthy of a burial mound. A Private Buddha ... a disciple of a Tathāgata ... a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a burial mound.

"And for what reason is a Tathāgata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a Tathāgata, worthy & rightly self-awakened,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then—on the break-up of the body, after death—they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world. It is for this reason that a Tathāgata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, is worthy of a burial mound.

"And for what reason is a Private Buddha worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a Private Buddha,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then—on the break-up of the body, after death—they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world

"And for what reason is a disciple of a Tathāgata worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a disciple of a Tathāgata,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then—on the break-up of the body, after death—they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world

"And for what reason is a wheel-turning monarch worthy of a burial mound? [At the thought,] 'This is the burial mound of a wheel-turning monarch,' many people will brighten their minds. Having brightened their minds there, then—on the break-up of the body, after death—they will reappear in a good destination, the heavenly world. It is for this reason that a wheel-turning monarch is worthy of a burial mound.

"These are the four who are worthy of a burial mound."

Then Ven. Ānanda, going into a [nearby] building, stood leaning against the door jamb, weeping: "Here I am, still in training, with work left to do, and the total Unbinding of my teacher is about to occur—the teacher who has had such sympathy for me!"

Then the Blessed One said to the monks, "Monks, where is Ānanda?"

"Lord, Ven. Ānanda, having gone into that building, stands leaning against the door jamb, weeping: 'Here I am, still in training, with work left to do, and the total Unbinding of my teacher is about to occur—the teacher who has had such sympathy for me!'"

Then the Blessed One told a certain monk, "Come, monk. In my name, call Ānanda, saying, 'The Teacher calls you, my friend.'"

"As you say, lord," the monk answered and, having gone to Ven. Ānanda, on arrival he said, "The Teacher calls you, my friend."

"As you say, my friend," Ven. Ānanda replied. Then he went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, "Enough, Ānanda. Don't grieve. Don't lament. Haven't I already taught you the state of growing different with regard to all things dear & appealing, the state of becoming separate, the state of becoming otherwise? What else is there to expect? It's impossible that one could forbid anything born, existent, fabricated, & subject to disintegration from disintegrating.

"For a long time, Ānanda, you have waited on the Tathāgata with physical acts of good will—helpful, happy, whole-hearted, without limit; with verbal acts of good will ... with mental acts of good will—helpful, happy, whole-hearted, without limit. You are one who has made merit. Commit yourself to exertion, and soon you will be without mental fermentations."

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks, those who, in the past, were worthy ones, rightly self-awakened, had foremost attendants, just as I have had Ānanda. Those who, in the future, will be worthy ones, rightly self-awakened, will have foremost attendants, just as I have had Ānanda. Ānanda is wise, he knows, 'This is the time to approach to see the Tathāgata. This is the time for monks, this the time for nuns, this the time for male lay-followers, this the time for female lay-followers, this the time for kings & their ministers, this the time for sectarians, this the time for the followers of sectarians.

"There are these four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ānanda. If a group of monks approaches to see Ānanda, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks Dhamma to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. If a group of nuns approaches to see Ānanda ... If a group of male lay followers approaches to see Ānanda ... If a group of female lay followers approaches to see Ānanda, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks Dhamma to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. These are the four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ānanda. There are these four marvelous & amazing qualities in a wheel-turning monarch. If a group of noble warriors

approaches to see him ... If a group of brahmans approaches to see him ... If a group of householders approaches to see him ... If a group of contemplatives approaches to see him, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. In the same way, monks, there are these four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ānanda. If a group of monks ... a group of nuns ... a group of male lay followers ... a group of female lay followers approaches to see Ānanda, they are gratified at the sight of him. If he speaks Dhamma to them, they are gratified with what he says. Before they are sated, he falls silent. These are the four marvelous & amazing qualities in Ānanda."

When this was said, Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "Lord, may the Blessed One not be totally unbound in this little town, this dusty town, this branch township. There are other great cities: Campā, Rājagaha, Sāvatti, Śāketa, Kosambi, Vāṇāraṣī. May the Blessed One be totally unbound there. In those cities there are many wealthy noble warriors, brahmans, & householders who have high confidence in the Tathāgata. They will conduct the Tathāgata's funeral."

"Don't say that, Ānanda. Don't say that: 'this little town, this dusty town, this branch township.' In the past, Ānanda, a king named Mahā Sudassana was a wheel-turning monarch, a righteous king ruling righteously, who was a conqueror of the four directions, a stabilizer of his country, endowed with the seven treasures. This Kusinārā was his capital city, named Kusāvati: twelve leagues long from east to west, seven leagues wide from north to south. Kusāvati was powerful, rich, & well-populated, crowded with people & prosperous. Just as the capital city of the devas, named Alakamandā, is powerful, rich, & well-populated, crowded with yakkhas & prosperous; in the same way, Kusāvati was powerful, rich, & well-populated, crowded with people & prosperous. By day or by night, it was never lacking in ten sounds: the sound of elephants, horses, carts, drums, tabors, lutes, songs, cymbals, gongs, with cries of 'Eat! Drink! Snack!' as the tenth.

"Now, Ānanda, go into Kusinārā and announce to the Kusinārā Mallans, 'Tonight, Vasiṭṭhas, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of the Tathāgata will occur. Come out, Vasiṭṭhas! Come out, Vasiṭṭhas! Don't later regret that "The Tathāgata's total Unbinding occurred within the borders of our very own town, but we didn't get to see him in his final hour!'"

Responding, "As you say, lord," Ven. Ānanda put on his robe and—carrying his bowl & outer robe—went unaccompanied into Kusinārā. Now at that time the Kusinārā Mallans had met for some business in their assembly hall. Ven. Ānanda went to the assembly hall and on arrival announced to them, "Tonight, Vasiṭṭhas, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of the Tathāgata will occur. Come out, Vasiṭṭhas! Come out, Vasiṭṭhas! Don't later regret that 'The Tathāgata's total Unbinding occurred within the borders of our very own town, but we didn't get to see him in his final hour!'" When they heard Ven. Ānanda, the Mallans together with their sons, daughters, & wives were shocked, saddened, their minds overflowing with sorrow. Some of them wept, tearing at their hair; they wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon, the Blessed One will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One Well-gone will be totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes will disappear from the world!"

Then the Mallans together with their sons, daughters, & wives—shocked, saddened, their minds overflowing with sorrow—went to Ven. Ānanda at Upavattana, the Mallans' salgrove near Kusinārā. The thought occurred to Ven. Ānanda, "If I let the Mallans pay reverence to the Blessed One one by one, the night will be over before they have finished paying reverence. What if I were to have them pay reverence to the Blessed One arranging them family by family, announcing, 'Lord, the Mallan named so-&-so, together with his children & wives, servants & retainers, bows down with his head at the Blessed One's feet.'"⁴ So Ven. Ānanda, arranging the Mallans family by family, had them pay reverence to the Blessed One, [saying,] "Lord, the Mallan named so-&-so, together with his children & wives, servants & retainers, bows down with his head at the Blessed One's feet."

In this way Ven. Ānanda got the Mallans to pay reverence to the Blessed One within the first watch of the night.

Now at that time Subhadda the Wanderer was staying in Kusinārā. He heard, "Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of Gotama the contemplative will take place." Then the thought occurred to him: "I have heard the elder wanderers, teachers of teachers, saying that only once in a long, long time do Tathāgatas—worthy ones, rightly self-awakened—appear in the world. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total

Unbinding of Gotama the contemplative will occur. Now there is a doubt that has arisen in me, but I have faith that he could teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I might abandon that doubt."

So he went to Upavattana, the Mallans' sal-grove and, on arrival, said to Ven. Ānanda, "I have heard the elder wanderers, teachers of teachers, saying that only once in a long, long time do Tathāgatas—worthy ones, rightly self-awakened—appear in the world. Tonight, in the last watch of the night, the total Unbinding of Gotama the contemplative will occur. Now there is a doubt that has arisen in me, but I have faith that he could teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I might abandon that doubt. It would be good, Ven. Ānanda, if you would let me see him."

When this was said, Ven. Ānanda said to him, "Enough, friend Subhadda. Don't bother the Blessed One. The Blessed One is tired."

For a second time ... For a third time, Subhadda the Wanderer said to Ven. Ānanda, "...It would be good, Ven. Ānanda, if you would let me see him."

For a third time, Ven. Ānanda said to him, "Enough, friend Subhadda. Don't bother the Blessed One. The Blessed One is tired."

Now, the Blessed One heard the exchange between Ven. Ānanda & Subhadda the Wanderer, and so he said to Ven. Ānanda, "Enough, Ānanda. Don't stand in his way. Let him see the Tathāgata. Whatever he asks me will all be for the sake of knowledge, and not to be bothersome. And whatever I answer when asked, he will quickly understand."

So Ven. Ānanda said to Subhadda the Wanderer, "Go ahead, friend Subhadda. The Blessed One gives you his leave."

Then Subhadda went to the Blessed One and exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One, "Venerable sir, these priests & contemplatives, each with his group, each with his community, each the teacher of his group, an honored leader, well-regarded by people at large—i.e., Purāṇa Kassapa, Makkhali Gosāla, Ajita Kesakambalin, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta, & the Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta: Do they all have direct knowledge as they themselves claim, or do they all not have direct knowledge, or do some of them have direct knowledge and some of them not?"

"Enough, Subhadda. Put this question aside. I will teach you the Dhamma. Listen, and pay close attention. I will speak."

"Yes, lord," Subhadda answered, and the Blessed One said, "In any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path is not found, no contemplative of the first ... second ... third ... fourth order [stream-winner, once-returned, non-returned, or Arahant] is found. But in any doctrine & discipline where the noble eightfold path *is* found, contemplatives of the first ... second ... third ... fourth order *are* found. The noble eightfold path is found in this doctrine & discipline, and right here there are contemplatives of the first ... second ... third ... fourth order. Other teachings are empty of knowledgeable contemplatives. And if the monks dwell rightly, this world will not be empty of Arahants.

At age twenty-nine I went forth,
 seeking what might be skillful,
 and since my going forth
 more than fifty years have past.

Outside of the realm
 of methodical Dhamma,
 there is no contemplative.

And no contemplative of the second ... third ... fourth order. Other teachings are empty of knowledgeable contemplatives. And if the monks dwell rightly, this world will not be empty of Arahants."

Then Subhadda the Wanderer said, "Magnificent, lord! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has the Blessed One—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the community of monks. Let me obtain the going forth in the Blessed One's presence, let me obtain admission."

"Anyone, Subhadda, who has previously belonged to another sect and who desires the going forth & admission in this doctrine & discipline, must first undergo probation for four months. If, at the end of four months, the monks feel so moved, they give him the going forth & admit him to the monk's state. But I know distinctions among individuals in this matter."

"Lord, if that is so, I am willing to undergo probation for four years. If, at the end of four years, the monks feel so moved, let them give me the going forth & admit me to the monk's state."

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda, "Very well then, Ānanda, give Subhadda the going forth."

"Yes, lord," Ānanda answered.

Then Subhadda said to Ven. Ānanda, "It is a gain for you, Ānanda, a great gain, that you have been anointed here in the Teacher's presence with the pupil's anointing."⁵

Then Subhadda the Wanderer obtained the going forth in the Blessed One's presence, he obtained admission. And not long after his admission—dwelling alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute—he in no long time reached & remained in the supreme goal of the holy life, for which clansmen rightly go forth from home into homelessness, knowing & realizing it for himself in the here & now. He knew: "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world." And thus Ven. Subhadda became another one of the Arahants, the last of the Blessed One's face-to-face disciples.

VI.

Then the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda, "Now, if it occurs to any of you—'The teaching has lost its authority; we are without a Teacher'—do not view it in that way. Whatever Dhamma & Vinaya I have pointed out & formulated for you, that will be your Teacher when I am gone.

"At present, the monks address one another as 'friend,' but after I am gone they are not to address one another that way. The more senior monks are to address the newer monks by their name or clan or as 'friend.' The newer monks are to address the more senior monks as 'venerable' or 'sir.'

"After I am gone, the Saṅgha—if it wants—may abolish the lesser & minor training rules."⁶

"After I am gone, the monk Channa should be given the Brahmā penalty."

"What, lord, is the Brahmā penalty?"

"Channa may say what he wants, Ānanda, but he is not to be spoken to, instructed, or admonished by the monks."⁷

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "If even a single monk has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Saṅgha, the path or the practice, ask. Don't later

regret that 'The Teacher was face-to-face with us, but we didn't bring ourselves to ask a counter-question in his presence.'"

When this was said, the monks were silent.

A second time, the Blessed One said, "If even one of the monks has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Saṅgha, the path or the practice, ask. Don't later regret that 'The Teacher was face-to-face with us, but we didn't bring ourselves to ask a counter-question in his presence.'"

A second time, the monks were silent.

A third time, the Blessed One said, "If even one of the monks has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Saṅgha, the path or the practice, ask. Don't later regret that 'The Teacher was face-to-face with us, but we didn't bring ourselves to ask a counter-question in his presence.'"

A third time, the monks were silent.

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Now, if it's out of respect for the Teacher that you don't ask, let a friend inform a friend."

When this was said, the monks were silent.

Then Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "It's amazing, lord. It's marvelous. I'm confident that, in this community of monks, there is not even a single monk who has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Saṅgha, the path or the practice."

"You, Ānanda, speak out of confidence, while there is knowledge in the Tathāgata that, in this community of monks, there is not even a single monk who has any doubt or perplexity concerning the Buddha, Dhamma, or Saṅgha, the path or the practice. Of these 500 monks, the most backward is a stream-winner, not destined for the planes of deprivation, headed to self-awakening for sure."

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Now, then, monks, I exhort you: All fabrications are subject to decay. Bring about completion by being heedful."

Those were the Tathāgata's last words.

Then the Blessed One entered the first jhāna. Emerging from that he entered the second jhāna. Emerging from that, he entered the third ... the fourth jhāna ... the dimension of the infinitude of space ... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from that, he entered the cessation of perception & feeling.

Then Ven. Ānanda said to Ven. Anuruddha, "Ven. Anuruddha,⁸ the Blessed One is totally unbound."

"No, friend Ānanda. The Blessed One isn't totally unbound. He has entered the cessation of perception & feeling."

Then the Blessed One, emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling, entered the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. Emerging from that, he entered the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of the infinitude of space ... the fourth jhāna ... the third ... the second ... the first jhāna. Emerging from the first jhāna he entered the second ... the third ... the fourth jhāna. Emerging from the fourth jhāna, he immediately was totally Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, there was a great earthquake, awesome & hair-raising, and the drums of the devas sounded.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Sahampati Brahmā uttered this verse:

All beings—all—in the world,
will cast off the bodily heap
in the world
where a Teacher like this
without peer in the world
the Tathāgata, with strength attained,
the Rightly Self-Awakened One,
has been totally
Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Sakka, ruler of the devas, uttered this verse:

How inconstant are compounded things!
Their nature: to arise & pass away.
They disband as they are arising.
Their total stilling is bliss.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Ven. Anuruddha uttered this verse:

He had no in-&-out breathing,
 the one who was Such,⁹ the firm-minded one,
 imperturbable
 & bent on peace:
 the sage completing his span.

With heart unbowed
 he endured the pain.
 Like a flame's unbinding
 was the liberation
 of awareness.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, Ven. Ānanda uttered this verse:

It was awe-inspiring.
 It was hair-raising
 when, displaying the foremost
 accomplishment in all things,
 the Rightly Self-Awakened One
 was totally Unbound.

When the Blessed One was totally Unbound, simultaneously with the total Unbinding, some of the monks present who were not without passion wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!" But those monks who were free from passion acquiesced, mindful & alert: "Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?"

Then Ven. Anuruddha addressed the monks, "Enough, friends. Don't grieve. Don't lament. Hasn't the Blessed One already taught the state of growing different with regard to all things dear & appealing, the state of becoming separate, the state of becoming otherwise? What else is there to expect? It's impossible that one could forbid anything born, existent, fabricated, & subject to disintegration from disintegrating. The devatās, friends, are complaining."

[Ānanda:] "But, Ven. Anuruddha, what is the state of the devatās the Blessed One is referring to?"

"Friend Ānanda, there are devatās who perceive space to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!' Then there are devatās who perceive earth to be earth. Tearing at their hair, they are weeping. Uplifting their arms, they are weeping. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fall down and roll back & forth, crying, 'All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!' But those devatās who are free from passion acquiesce, mindful & alert: 'Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?'"

Then Ven. Anuruddha & Ven. Ānanda spent the remainder of the night in Dhamma talk.

Then Ven. Anuruddha said to Ven. Ānanda, "Go, friend Ānanda. Entering Kusinārā, announce to the Kusinārā Mallans, 'The Blessed One, Vasiṭṭhas, is totally unbound. Now is the time for you to do as you see fit.'"

Responding, "As you say, sir," Ven. Ānanda in the early morning put on his robe and—carrying his bowl & outer robe—went unaccompanied into Kusinārā. Now at that time the Kusinārā Mallans had met for some business in their assembly hall. Ven. Ānanda went to the assembly hall and on arrival announced to them, "The Blessed One, Vasiṭṭhas, is totally unbound. Now is the time for you to do as you see fit."

When they heard Ven. Ānanda, the Mallans together with their sons, daughters, & wives were shocked, saddened, their minds overflowing with sorrow. Some of them wept, tearing at their hair; they wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!"

Then the Kusinārā Mallans ordered their men, "In that case, I say, gather scents, garlands, & all the musical instruments in Kusinārā!" Then, taking scents, garlands, & all the musical instruments in Kusinārā, along with 500 lengths of cloth, the Kusinārā Mallans went to the Blessed One's body in Upavattana,

the Mallans' sal-grove near Kusināra. On arrival, they spent the entire day in worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, in making cloth canopies and arranging floral wreaths. Then the thought occurred to them, "It's too late today to cremate the Blessed One's body. We'll cremate the Blessed One's body tomorrow." And so they spent the second day, the third day, the fourth day, the fifth day, the sixth day in worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, in making cloth canopies and arranging floral wreaths.

Then on the seventh day the thought occurred to them, "Worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating to the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, let's carry it to the south, around the outside of the town, and cremate it to the south of the town."

Then eight leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, "We'll lift up the Blessed One's body," were unable to lift it. So the Kusināra Mallans asked Ven. Anuruddha, "What is the reason, Ven. Anuruddha, what is the cause, why these eight leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, 'We'll lift up the Blessed One's body,' are unable to lift it?"

"Your intention, Vasiṭṭhas, is one thing. The devas' intention is another."

"But what, Ven. Anuruddha, is the devas' intention?"

"Your intention, Vasiṭṭhas, is, 'Worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, let's carry it to the south, around the outside of the town, and cremate it to the south of the town.' The devas' intention is, 'Worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with heavenly dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents, let's carry it to the north of the town, enter the town through the north gate, carry it through the middle of the town and out the east gate to the Mallans' memorial called Makuta-bandhana, to cremate it there.'"

"Then let it be, venerable sir, in line with the devas' intention."

Now at that time Kusināra—even to its rubbish heaps & cesspools—was strewn knee-deep in coral-tree flowers. So the devas & the Kusināra Mallans, worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating the Blessed One's body with heavenly & human dances,

songs, music, garlands, & scents, carried it to the north of the town, entered the town through the north gate, carried it through the middle of the town and out the east gate to the Mallans' memorial called Makuṭa-bandhana. There they set it down.

Then the Kusinārā Mallans said to Ven. Ānanda, "Venerable sir, what course should we follow with regard to the Tathāgata's body?"

"The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch, Vasiṭṭhas, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathāgata."

"And what, venerable sir, is the course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch?"

"Vasiṭṭhas, they wrap the body of a wheel-turning monarch in new linen cloth. Having wrapped it in new linen cloth, they wrap it in teased cotton-wool. Having wrapped it in teased cotton-wool, they wrap it in new linen cloth. Having done this five hundred times, they place the body in an iron oil-vat, cover it with an iron lid, make a pyre composed totally of perfumed substances, and cremate the body. Then they build a burial mound for the wheel-turning monarch at a great four-way intersection. That is the course that they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch. The course they follow with regard to the body of a wheel-turning monarch; Vasiṭṭhas, is the course that should be followed with regard to the body of the Tathāgata. A burial mound for the Tathāgata is to be built at a great, four-way intersection. And those who offer a garland, a scent, or a perfume powder there, or bow down there, or brighten their minds there: that will be for their long-term welfare & happiness."

So the Kusinārā Mallans ordered their men, "In that case, I say, gather the Mallans' teased cotton-wool."

Then they wrapped the Blessed One's body in new linen cloth. Having wrapped it in new linen cloth, they wrapped it in teased cotton-wool. Having wrapped it in teased cotton-wool, they wrapped it in new linen cloth. Having done this five hundred times, they placed the body in an iron oil-vat, covered it with an iron lid, made a pyre composed totally of perfumed substances, and set the body on the pyre.

Now at that time Ven. Mahā Kassapa was traveling on the highway from Pāva to Kusinārā with a large community of monks, approximately 500 monks in all. Leaving the road, he sat down at the foot of a tree. Meanwhile, a certain naked

ascetic, carrying a coral-tree flower from Kusinārā, was traveling on the highway to Pāva. Ven. Mahā Kassapa saw the naked ascetic coming from afar, and on seeing him said to him, "Do you know our teacher, friend?"

"Yes, friend, I know him. Seven days ago Gotama the contemplative was totally unbound. That's how I got this coral-tree flower."

With that, some of the monks present who were not without passion wept, uplifting their arms. As if their feet were cut out from under them, they fell down and rolled back & forth, crying, "All too soon is the Blessed One totally unbound! All too soon is the One Well-gone totally unbound! All too soon, the One with Eyes has disappeared from the world!" But those monks who were free from passion acquiesced, mindful & alert: "Fabrications are inconstant. What else is there to expect?"

Now at that time a monk named Subhadda,¹⁰ who had gone forth when old, was sitting among the group. He said to the monks, "Enough, friends. Don't grieve. Don't lament. We're well rid of the Great Contemplative. We've been harassed by [his saying], 'This is allowable. This is not allowable.' But now we will do what we want to do, and not do what we don't want to do."¹¹

Then Ven. Mahā Kassapa addressed the monks, "Enough, friends. Don't grieve. Don't lament. Hasn't the Blessed One already taught the state of growing different with regard to all things dear & appealing, the state of becoming separate, the state of becoming otherwise? What else is there to expect? It's impossible that one could forbid anything born, existent, fabricated, & subject to disintegration from disintegrating."

Then four leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, "We'll ignite the Blessed One's pyre," were unable to ignite it. So the Kusinārā Mallans asked Ven. Anuruddha, "What is the reason, Ven. Anuruddha, what is the cause, why these four leading Mallans, having bathed their heads and wearing new linen cloth, thinking, 'We'll ignite the Blessed One's pyre,' are unable to ignite it?"

"Your intention, Vasiṭṭhas, is one thing. The devas' intention is another."

"But what, Ven. Anuruddha, is the devas' intention?"

"The devas' intention, Vasiṭṭhas, is, 'This Ven. Mahā Kassapa is traveling on the highway from Pāva to Kusinārā with a large community of monks, approximately 500 monks in all. The

Blessed One's pyre will not catch fire until Ven. Mahā Kassapa has worshipped the Blessed One's feet with his head."

"Then let it be, venerable sir, in line with the devas' intention."

So Ven. Mahā Kassapa went to the Blessed One's pyre at Makuṭa-bandhana, the Mallans' memorial near Kusinārā. On arrival, arranging his robe over one shoulder, he placed his hands palm-to-palm over his heart, circumambulated the pyre, uncovered the Blessed One's feet,¹² and worshipped them with his head. And the 500 monks, arranging their robes over one shoulder, placed their hands palm-to-palm over their hearts, circumambulated the pyre, and worshipped the Blessed One's feet with their heads. As soon as it had been worshipped by Ven. Mahā Kassapa and the 500 monks, the Blessed One's pyre caught fire of its own accord. In the burning of the Blessed One's body, no cinder or ash of the outer skin, inner skin, flesh, tendons, or oil of the joints could be discerned. Only the bone-relics¹³ remained. Just as in the burning of ghee or oil, no cinder or ash can be discerned; in the same way, in the burning of the Blessed One's body, no cinder or ash of the outer skin, inner skin, flesh, tendons, or oil of the joints could be discerned. Only the bone-relics remained. And of the five hundred twin-wrappings only two were burnt: the innermost & the outermost.

When the Blessed One's body was consumed, a cascade of water fell from the sky, extinguishing the Blessed One's pyre. Water shot up from a sal-tree as well, extinguishing the Blessed One's pyre. The Kusinārā Mallans, with all kinds of scented water, extinguished the Blessed One's pyre. Then for seven days they kept the bone-relics in their assembly hall—setting them round with a lattice of spears surrounded by ramparts of bows—worshipping, honoring, respecting, & venerating them with dances, songs, music, garlands, & scents.

Then King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So he sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. I, too, am a noble warrior. I deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. I, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Licchavis of Vesālī heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed

One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Sakyans of Kapilavatthu heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was the greatest of our relatives. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Buliyans of Allakappa The Koliyans of Rāmagāma heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Brahman of Veṭṭha Island heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So he sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. I am a brahman. I deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. I, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

The Pāva Mallans heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

When this was said, the Kusinārā Mallans said to the groups & factions, "The Blessed One was totally unbound within the borders of our own town. We will not give up a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics."

When this was said, Doṇa the brahman addressed the groups & factions,

"Listen, good sirs,
to a word from me.
Our Awakened One taught
 forbearance.
It's not good that there should be combat
over the relics of the highest one.
Let's unite in concord,
 on friendly terms,
and make eight shares.

Let there be
 burial mounds
 in the various directions,
 many people made confident
 in the One with Eyes."

"In that case, brahman, you yourself divide the Blessed One's bone-relics into eight equal shares."

Responding, "As you say, good sirs," to the groups & factions, Doṇa the brahman divided the Blessed One's bone-relics into eight equal shares and then said to the groups & factions, "Good sirs, give me this urn. I will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for the urn." They gave him the urn.

Then the Moriyans of Pippalivana heard, "The Blessed One, they say, has been totally unbound in Kusinārā." So they sent an envoy to the Kusinārā Mallans: "The Blessed One was a noble warrior. We, too, are noble warriors. We deserve a share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. We, too, will build a burial mound and hold a ceremony for them."

"There is no [remaining] share of the Blessed One's bone-relics. They have been divided. Take the embers from here." They took the embers from there.

Then King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Rājagaha.

The Licchavis of Vesāli built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Vesāli.

The Sakyans of Kapilavatthu built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Kapilavatthu.

The Buliyans of Allakappa built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Allakappa.

The Koliyans of Rāmagāma built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Rāmagāma.

The brahman of Veṭṭha Island built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics on Veṭṭha Island.

The Pāva Mallans built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Pāva.

The Kusinārā Mallans built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the Blessed One's relics in Kusinārā.

Doṇa the brahman built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the urn.

The Moriyans of Pippalivana built a burial mound and held a ceremony for the embers in Pippalivana.

Thus there were eight burial mounds for the bone-relics, a ninth for the urn, and a tenth for the embers.

That is how it was in the past.

NOTES

1. In preceding sections of the discourse, the standard phrase describing the Buddha's act of lying down to rest reads, "Then the Blessed One lay down on his right side in the lion's sleeping posture, with one foot on top of the other, mindful & alert, having made a mental note to get up." Here, however, the Buddha is lying down for the last time and will pass away in this posture, so he makes no mental note to get up.

2. From Vedic times, it has been considered auspicious in India to gaze on a holy person or heavenly being, and to be gazed on by such a being as well. Here the fact that heavenly beings themselves want to gaze on the Buddha indicates the high regard they have for him (this is also the motive for their Great Meeting in DN 20); the phrase later in this paragraph, "the One with Eyes," indicates that they also regarded his gaze as highly auspicious for them. Later passages in this discourse indicate that human beings have similar feelings about the auspiciousness of the Buddha's gaze and the Buddha as an object of one's own gaze. A great deal of the later history of Buddhism in India—including devotional practice, Buddhology, meditation practice, and even the architecture of monasteries—grew out of the continuing desire to have a vision of the Buddha and to be gazed on by the Buddha, even after his Parinibbāna.

It is sometimes assumed, based on a passage in SN XXII.87, that the Pali Canon is uniformly negative toward this aspect of Buddhist tradition. There, Ven. Vakkali, who is ill, states that "For a long time have I wanted to come & see the Blessed One, but I haven't had the bodily strength to do so," and the Buddha comforts him, "Enough, Vakkali. Why do you want to see this filthy body? Whoever sees the Dhamma sees me; whoever sees me sees the Dhamma." It should be noted, however, that the Buddha's treatment of this topic is sensitive to the context. In SN XXII.87, he is talking to a monk who (1) is too sick to come

see the Buddha on his own strength; and (2) is on the verge of arahantship. Here in DN 16, however, the Buddha dismisses Ven. Upavāṇa so as to honor the desire of the devas who want to see him in his last hour; and he sends Ven. Ānanda into Kusinārā to inform the lay people there so that they too will be able to see him in his last hour. His motive here may be similar to that given for encouraging the building of a burial mound dedicated to him: seeing him will help human & heavenly beings brighten their minds, and that will be for their long-term welfare & happiness. Thus the attitudes expressed on this topic in the Pali Canon, when taken in their entirety, are more complex than is generally recognized.

3. Reading *chinna-pāda* with the Thai edition.

4. The desire to have one's name announced to a holy person appears to have been a part of pre-Buddhist devotional practice in India. This passage, along with others in the Canon, indicates that it was quickly adopted into Buddhist devotional practice as well. It lived on in later Buddhist practice in the custom of having the donor's name inscribed in bas-reliefs and other offerings placed near or on a stūpa, even in locations where the name would not be visible to human eyes.

5. The Commentary notes that Subhadda makes this statement based on non-Buddhist practices he knew from his previous sectarian affiliation.

6. The Cullavagga (XI.9) tells of how the monks at the First Council could not agree on which rules should be classed as lesser & minor. Ven. Ānanda himself confessed that he neglected to ask the Buddha on this point. One of the monks made a motion that—since many of the rules affect the laity, and the laity would look down on the monks for rescinding them after the Buddha's death—none of the rules should be rescinded. This motion was adopted by the Council.

7. A monk named Channa is depicted at several spots in the Vinaya as despising all other monks on the grounds that "The Buddha is mine, the Dhamma is mine, it was by my young master that the Dhamma was realized." (Saṅghādisesa 12) This would fit in with the post-canonical tradition identifying Channa as the horseman who accompanied the young Prince Siddhattha on the night of the latter's Great Renunciation. Two rules in the Vinaya— Saṅghādisesa 12 & Pācittiya 12—depict him as devious & impossible to admonish. Cv.XI reports events

after the Parinibbāna, telling of how news of the Brahmā-penalty shocked Channa to his senses. As a result, he changed his ways and eventually became an arahant. As Ven. Ānanda then explains in that passage, the Brahmā-penalty was automatically lifted at the moment of Ven. Channa's final attainment. SN XXII.90 tells a different version of how Ven. Channa changed his attitude and broke through to the Dhamma.

8. Ven. Ānanda, assuming that the Buddha has passed away, addresses Ven. Anuruddha—his senior—as “venerable sir,” in line with the Buddha's instructions.

9. Such (*tādin*): An adjective applied to the mind of one who has attained the goal. It indicates that the mind “is what it is”—indescribable but not subject to change or alteration.

10. A different Subhadda from the Buddha's last face-to-face disciple.

11. In Cullavagga XI.1, Ven. Mahā Kassapa cites this statement as good reason to hold a council for standardizing the Dhamma & Vinaya “before what is not-dhamma shines out and dhamma is obscured, before what is not-discipline shines out and discipline is obscured; before those who speak what is not-dhamma become strong and those who speak what is dhamma become weak; before those who speak what is not-discipline become strong and those who speak what is discipline become weak.” Thus the First Council was held during the first Rains Retreat following the Buddha's Parinibbāna.

12. The Commentary notes that Ven. Mahā Kassapa entered the fourth jhāna, which he used as the basis for a display of psychic power so that the Buddha's feet would appear out of their extensive wrappings.

13. Up to this point in the narrative, the Buddha's body is called a *sarīra* (singular). Here the noun becomes plural—with the meaning of “relics”—and remains plural for the remainder of the narrative.

See also: SN XXII.85-86; SN XXXV.69; SN LXI.10; Thag XIV.1; Ud VIII.9-10

21 *Sakka-pañhā Sutta* Sakka's Questions (Excerpt)

....Having been given leave by the Blessed One, Sakka the deva-king asked him his first question: "Fettered with what, dear sir—though they think, 'May we live free from hostility, free from violence, free from rivalry, free from ill will, free from those who are hostile'—do devas, human beings, asuras, nāgas, gandhabbas, & whatever other many kinds of beings there are, nevertheless live in hostility, violence, rivalry, ill will, with those who are hostile?"

Thus Sakka asked his first question of the Blessed One, and the Blessed One, when asked, replied: "Devas, human beings, asuras, nāgas, gandhabbas, & whatever other many kinds of beings there are, are fettered with envy & stinginess, which is why—even though they think, 'May we live free from hostility, free from violence, free from rivalry, free from ill will, free from those who are hostile'—they nevertheless live in hostility, violence, rivalry, ill will, with those who are hostile."

Thus the Blessed One answered, having been asked by Sakka the deva-king. Gratified, Sakka was delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words: "So it is, O Blessed One. So it is, O One Well-gone. Hearing the Blessed One's answer to my question, my doubt is now cut off, my perplexity is overcome."

Then Sakka, having delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words, asked him a further question: "But what, dear sir, is the cause of envy & stinginess, what is their origination, what gives them birth, what is their source? When what exists do they come into being? When what doesn't exist do they not?"

"Envy & stinginess have dear-&-not-dear as their cause, have dear-&-not-dear as their origination, have dear-&-not-dear as what gives them birth, have dear-&-not-dear as their source. When dear-&-not-dear exist, they come into being. When dear-&-not-dear are not, they don't."

"But what, dear sir, is the cause of dear-&-not-dear, what is their origination, what gives them birth, what is their source? When what exists do they come into being? When what doesn't exist do they not?"

"Dear-&-not-dear have desire as their cause, have desire as their origination, have desire as what gives them birth, have desire as their source. When desire exists, they come into being. When desire is not, they don't."

"But what, dear sir, is the cause of desire, what is its origination, what gives it birth, what is its source? When what exists does it come into being? When what doesn't exist does it not?"

"Desire has thinking as its cause, has thinking as its origination, has thinking as what gives it birth, has thinking as its source. When thinking exists, desire comes into being. When thinking is not, it doesn't."

"But what, dear sir, is the cause of thinking, what is its origination, what gives it birth, what is its source? When what exists does it come into being? When what doesn't exist does it not?"

"Thinking has the perceptions & categories of complication¹ as its cause, has the perceptions & categories of complication as its origination, has the perceptions & categories of complication as what gives it birth, has the perceptions & categories of complication as its source. When the perceptions & categories of complication exist, thinking comes into being. When the perceptions & categories of complication are not, it doesn't."

"And how has he practiced, dear sir: the monk who has practiced the practice leading to the right cessation of the perceptions & categories of complication?"

"Joy is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued. Grief is of two sorts: to be pursued & not to be pursued. Equanimity is of two sorts: to be pursued & not to be pursued."

"'Joy is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of a feeling of joy, 'As I pursue this joy, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,' that sort of joy is not to be pursued. When one knows of a feeling of joy, 'As I pursue this joy, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,' that sort of joy is to be pursued. And this sort of joy may be accompanied by directed thought & evaluation or free of directed thought & evaluation. Of the two, the latter is the more refined. 'Joy is of

two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

"'Grief is of two sorts, I tell you: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of a feeling of grief, 'As I pursue this grief, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,' that sort of grief is not to be pursued. When one knows of a feeling of grief, 'As I pursue this grief, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,' that sort of grief is to be pursued. And this sort of grief may be accompanied by directed thought & evaluation or free of directed thought & evaluation. Of the two, the latter is the more refined. 'Grief is of two sorts, I tell you: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

"'Equanimity is of two sorts, I tell you: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of a feeling of equanimity, 'As I pursue this equanimity, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,' that sort of equanimity is not to be pursued. When one knows of a feeling of equanimity, 'As I pursue this equanimity, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,' that sort of equanimity is to be pursued. And this sort of equanimity may be accompanied by directed thought & evaluation or free of directed thought & evaluation. Of the two, the latter is the more refined. 'Equanimity is of two sorts, I tell you: to be pursued & not to be pursued.' Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

"This is how he has practiced, deva-king: the monk who has practiced the practice leading to the right cessation of the perceptions & categories of complication."

Thus the Blessed One answered, having been asked by Sakka the deva-king. Gratified, Sakka was delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words: "So it is, O Blessed One. So it is, O One Well-gone. Hearing the Blessed One's answer to my question, my doubt is now cut off, my perplexity is overcome."

Then Sakka, having delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words, asked him a further question: "But how has he practiced, dear sir: the monk who has practiced for restraint in the Paṭimokkha?"

"Bodily conduct is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued. Verbal conduct is of two sorts: to

be pursued & not to be pursued. Searching is of two sorts: to be pursued & not to be pursued.

“‘Bodily conduct is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.’ Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of bodily conduct, ‘As I pursue this bodily conduct, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,’ that sort of bodily conduct is not to be pursued. When one knows of bodily conduct, ‘As I pursue this bodily conduct, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,’ that sort of bodily conduct is to be pursued. ‘Bodily conduct is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.’ Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

“‘Verbal conduct is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.’ Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of verbal conduct, ‘As I pursue this verbal conduct, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,’ that sort of verbal conduct is not to be pursued. When one knows of verbal conduct, ‘As I pursue this verbal conduct, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,’ that sort of verbal conduct is to be pursued. ‘Verbal conduct is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.’ Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

“‘Searching is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.’ Thus was it said. And in reference to what was it said? When one knows of a search, ‘As I pursue this search, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline,’ that sort of search is not to be pursued. When one knows of a search, ‘As I pursue this search, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase,’ that sort of search is to be pursued. ‘Searching is of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued.’ Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said.

“‘This is how he has practiced, deva-king: the monk who has practiced the practice for restraint in the Pāṭimokkha.’”

Thus the Blessed One answered, having been asked by Sakka the deva-king. Gratified, Sakka was delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words: “So it is, O Blessed One. So it is, O One Well-gone. Hearing the Blessed One's answer to my question, my doubt is now cut off, my perplexity is overcome.”

Then Sakka, having delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words, asked him a further question: "But how has he practiced, dear sir: the monk who has practiced for restraint with regard to the sense faculties?"

"Forms cognizable by the eye are of two sorts, I tell you, deva-king: to be pursued & not to be pursued. Sounds cognizable by the ear Aromas cognizable by the nose Flavors cognizable by the tongue Tactile sensations cognizable by the body Ideas cognizable by the intellect are of two sorts: to be pursued & not to be pursued."

When this was said, Sakka the deva-king said to the Blessed One, "Dear sir, I understand the detailed meaning of the Blessed One's brief statement. If, as one pursues a certain type of form cognizable by the eye, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline, that sort of form cognizable by the eye is not to be pursued. But if, as one pursues a certain type of form cognizable by the eye, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase, that sort of form cognizable by the eye is to be pursued.

"If, as one pursues a certain type of sound cognizable by the ear

"If, as one pursues a certain type of aroma cognizable by the nose

"If, as one pursues a certain type of flavor cognizable by the tongue

"If, as one pursues a certain type of tactile sensation cognizable by the body

"If, as one pursues a certain type of idea cognizable by the intellect, unskillful mental qualities increase, and skillful mental qualities decline, that sort of idea cognizable by the intellect is not to be pursued. But if, as one pursues a certain type of idea cognizable by the intellect, unskillful mental qualities decline, and skillful mental qualities increase, that sort of idea cognizable by the intellect is to be pursued.

"This is how I understand the detailed meaning of the Blessed One's brief statement. Hearing the Blessed One's answer to my question, my doubt is now cut off, my perplexity is overcome."

Then Sakka, having delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words, asked him a further question: "Dear sir, do all priests & contemplatives teach the same doctrine, adhere to the same precepts, desire the same thing, aim at the same goal?"

"No, deva-king, not all priests & contemplatives teach the same doctrine, adhere to the same precepts, desire the same thing, aim at the same goal."

"Why, dear sir, don't all priests & contemplatives teach the same doctrine, adhere to the same precepts, desire the same thing, aim at the same goal?"

"The world is made up of many properties, various properties. Because of the many & various properties in the world, then whichever property living beings get fixated on, they become entrenched & latch onto it, saying, 'Only this is true; anything else is worthless.' This is why not all priests & contemplatives teach the same doctrine, adhere to the same precepts, desire the same thing, aim at the same goal."

"But, dear sir, are all priests & contemplatives utterly complete, utterly free from bonds, followers of the utterly holy life, utterly consummate?"

"No, deva-king, not all priests & contemplatives are utterly complete, utterly free from bonds, followers of the utterly holy life, utterly consummate."

"But why, dear sir, are not all priests & contemplatives utterly complete, utterly free from bonds, followers of the utterly holy life, utterly consummate?"

"Those monks who are released through the total ending of craving are the ones who are utterly complete, utterly free from bonds, followers of the utterly holy life, utterly consummate. This is why not all priests & contemplatives are utterly complete, utterly free from bonds, followers of the utterly holy life, utterly consummate."

Thus the Blessed One answered, having been asked by Sakka the deva-king. Gratified, Sakka was delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words: "So it is, O Blessed One. So it is, O One Well-gone. Hearing the Blessed One's answer to my question, my doubt is now cut off, my perplexity is overcome."

Then Sakka, having delighted in & expressed his approval of the Blessed One's words, said to him: "Yearning is a disease, yearning is a boil, yearning is an arrow. It seduces one, drawing one into this or that state of being, which is why one is reborn in high states & low. Whereas other outside priests & contemplatives gave me no chance to ask them these questions, the Blessed One has answered at length, so that he has removed the arrow of my uncertainty & perplexity."

"Deva-king, do you recall having asked other priests & contemplatives these questions?"

"Yes, lord, I recall having asked other priests & contemplatives these questions."

"If it's no inconvenience, could you tell me how they answered?"

"It's no inconvenience when sitting with the Blessed One or one who is like him."

"Then tell me, deva-king."

"Having gone to those whom I considered to be priests & contemplatives living in isolated dwellings in the wilderness, I asked them these questions. But when asked by me, they were at a loss. Being at a loss, they asked *me* in return, 'What is your name?'

"Being asked, I responded, 'I, dear sir, am Sakka, the deva-king.'

"So they questioned me further, 'But what kamma did you do to attain to this state?'

"So I taught them the Dhamma as far as I had heard & mastered it. And they were gratified with just this much: 'We have seen Sakka, the deva-king, and he has answered our questions!' So, instead of my becoming their disciple, they simply became mine. But I, lord, am the Blessed One's disciple, a stream-winner, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening."

"Deva-king, do you recall ever having previously experienced such happiness & joy?"

"Yes, lord, I do."

"And how do you recall ever having previously experienced such happiness & joy?"

"Once, lord, the devas & asuras were arrayed in battle. And in that battle the devas won, while the asuras lost. Having won the battle, as the victor in the battle, this thought occurred to me: 'Whatever has been the divine nourishment of the asuras, whatever has been the divine nourishment of the devas, the devas will now enjoy both of them.' But my attainment of happiness & joy was in the sphere of violence & weapons. It didn't lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge to self-awakening, to Unbinding. But my attainment of happiness & joy on hearing the Blessed One's Dhamma is in the sphere of no violence, the sphere of no weapons. It leads to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to calm, to direct knowledge to self-awakening, to Unbinding"....

Then Sakka, the deva-king, touched the earth with his hand and said three times, "Homage to the Worthy One, the Blessed One, the Rightly Self-awakened One! Homage to the Worthy One, the Blessed One, the Rightly Self-awakened One! Homage to the Worthy One, the Blessed One, the Rightly Self-awakened One!"

While this explanation was being given, there arose to Sakka the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye—"Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation"—as it also did to [his following of] 80,000 other devas.

Such were the questions that the Blessed One answered at Sakka's bidding. And so this discourse is called "Sakka's Questions."

NOTE: 1. Complication = *papañca*. The tendency of the mind to proliferate issues from the sense of "self." This term can also be translated as self-reflexive thinking, reification, falsification, distortion, elaboration, or exaggeration. In the discourses, it is frequently used in analyses of the psychology of conflict. The categories of complexity stem from the self-reflexive thought, "I am the thinker," (see Sn IV.14), and include the categories of inappropriate attention (see MN 2): being/not-being, me/not-me, mine/not-mine, doer/done-to. The perceptions of complexity include such thoughts as "This is me. This is mine. This is my self." These perceptions and categories turn back on the person who allows them to proliferate, giving rise to internal conflict & strife, which then expand outward. For more on these terms, see MN 18.

See also: SN XI.5; AN VIII.30; Ud II.4; Sn IV.11

22 Mahā-Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta

The Great Frames of Reference Discourse

The word “satipaṭṭhāna” is the name for an approach to meditation aimed at establishing sati, or mindfulness. The term sati is related to the verb sarati, to remember or to keep in mind. It is sometimes translated as non-reactive awareness, free from agendas, simply present with whatever arises, but the formula for satipaṭṭhāna doesn’t support that translation. Non-reactive awareness is actually an aspect of equanimity, a quality fostered in the course of satipaṭṭhāna. The activity of satipaṭṭhāna, however, definitely has a motivating agenda: the desire for Awakening, which is classed not as a cause of suffering, but as part of the path to its ending (see SN LI.15). The role of mindfulness is to keep the mind properly grounded in the present moment in a way that will keep it on the path. To make an analogy, Awakening is like a mountain on the horizon, the destination to which you are driving a car. Mindfulness is what remembers to keep attention focused on the road to the mountain, rather than letting it stay focused on glimpses of the mountain or get distracted by other paths leading away from the road.

As a compound term, satipaṭṭhāna can be broken down in two ways, either as sati-paṭṭhāna, foundation of mindfulness; or as sati-upaṭṭhāna, establishing of mindfulness. Scholars debate as to which is the proper interpretation, but in practice both provide useful food for thought.

The first interpretation focuses on the objects of the meditation practice, the focal points that provide mindfulness with a foundation—or, to use the more idiomatic English phrase adopted here, a frame of reference. Altogether there are four: the body in and of itself; feelings in and of themselves; mind in and of itself; and mental qualities in and of themselves. The “in and of itself” here is crucial. In the case of the body, for instance, it means viewing the body on its own terms rather than in terms of its function in the context of the world (for in that case the world would be the frame of reference). Dropping any concern for how the body’s beauty, agility, or strength fits into the world, the meditator simply stays with the direct experience of its breathing, its movements, its postures, its elementary properties, and its inevitable decay. A similar principle applies to the other frames of reference.

The second interpretation of *satipaṭṭhāna*—*sati-upaṭṭhāna*—focuses on the process of the meditation practice, on how a frame of reference is established. This sutta gives three stages for this process, applied to each frame of reference. The first stage, as applied to the body, is this:

The monk remains focused on the body in and of itself—ardent, alert, and mindful—putting aside greed and distress with reference to the world.

“Remaining focused” refers to the element of concentration in the practice, as the meditator holds to one particular frame of reference amid the conflicting currents of experience. “Ardent” refers to the effort put into the practice, trying to abandon unskillful states of mind and develop skillful ones in their stead, all the while trying to discern the difference between the two. “Alert” means being clearly aware of what is happening in the present. “Mindful,” as mentioned above, means being able to keep the frame of reference continually in mind. As these qualities work together, they bring the mind to a solid state of concentration. Although *satipaṭṭhāna* practice is often said to be separate from the practice of *jhāna*, a number of suttas—such as MN 125 (not in this collection) and AN VIII.63—equate the successful completion of this first stage with the attainment of the first level of *jhāna*. This point is confirmed by the many suttas—MN 118 among them—describing how the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* brings to completion the factors for Awakening, which coincide with the factors of *jhāna*.

The second stage of *satipaṭṭhāna* practice is this:

One remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body.

The “phenomena of origination and passing away” covers events either directly or indirectly related to one’s chosen frame of reference. “Directly” means changes in the frame of reference itself. For instance, when focused on the body, one may notice the arising and passing away of breath sensations within it. “Indirectly,” here, means events in any of the other three frames of reference as they relate to the body. For example, one might notice the arising and passing away of feelings of pleasure or mental states of irritation in connection to events in the body. Or one might notice lapses of mindfulness in one’s focus on the body.

In each of these cases, if the origination and passing away is of neutral events such as the aggregates, one is directed simply to be aware of them as events, and to let them follow their natural course so as to see what factors accompany them and lead to their comings and goings. However, when skillful or unskillful mental qualities—such as the factors for Awakening or the Hindrances—arise and pass away, one is encouraged to foster the factors that strengthen jhāna and eliminate the factors that weaken it. This means actively getting engaged in maximizing skillful mental qualities and minimizing unskillful ones. One thus develops insight into the process of origination and passing away by taking an active and sensitive role in the process, just as you learn about eggs by trying to cook with them, gathering experience from your successes and failures in attempting increasingly difficult dishes.

As this process leads to stronger and more refined states of concentration, it makes one sensitive to the fact that the grosser one's participation in the process of origination and passing away in the mind, the grosser the level of stress that results. This leads one to let go, first of grosser levels of participation, and then increasingly refined ones as one is able to detect them, leading to the third and final stage in satipaṭṭhāna practice:

Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body (feeling, mind, mental quality)' is maintained [simply] to the extent of knowledge & recollection. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world.

This stage corresponds to a mode of perception that the Buddha in MN 121 terms "entry into emptiness":

Thus he regards it [this mode of perception] as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: "there is this."

This is the culminating equipoise where the path of the practice opens to a state of non-fashioning and from there to the fruit of Awakening and release.

At first glance, the four frames of reference for satipaṭṭhāna practice sound like four different meditation exercises, but MN 118 makes clear that they can all center on a single practice: keeping the breath in mind. When the mind is with the breath, all four frames of reference are right there. The difference lies simply in the subtlety of one's focus. It's like learning to play the piano. As you get more proficient at playing, you also become sensitive in listening to ever more subtle levels in the music. This allows you to play even more skillfully. In the same

way, as a meditator get more skilled in staying with the breath, the practice of satipaṭṭhāna gives greater sensitivity in peeling away ever more subtle layers of participation in the present moment until nothing is left standing in the way of total release.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the Kuru country. Now there is a town of the Kurus called Kammāsadhamma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & for the realization of Unbinding—in other words, the four frames of reference. Which four?"

"There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings ... mind ... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

A. Body

"And how does a monk remain focused on the body in & of itself?"

[1] "There is the case where a monk—having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building—sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect and setting mindfulness to the fore [lit: the front of the chest]. Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"Breathing in long, he discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, he discerns that he is breathing out long. Or breathing in short, he discerns that he is breathing in short; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short. He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to the entire body and to breathe out sensitive to the entire body. He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication (the breath) and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication. Just as a skilled turner or his apprentice, when making a long turn, discerns that he is making a long turn, or when making a short turn discerns that he is

making a short turn; in the same way the monk, when breathing in long, discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short....He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication, and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[2] "Furthermore, when walking, the monk discerns that he is walking. When standing, he discerns that he is standing. When sitting, he discerns that he is sitting. When lying down, he discerns that he is lying down. Or however his body is disposed, that is how he discerns it.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[3] "Furthermore, when going forward & returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward & looking away...when bending & extending his limbs...when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe & his bowl...when eating, drinking, chewing, & savoring...when urinating & defecating...when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, & remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally

& externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[4] "Furthermore...just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain—wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice—and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, 'This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice,' in the same way, the monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: 'In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[5] "Furthermore ... just as a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads cutting it up into pieces, the monk contemplates this very body—however it stands, however it is disposed—in terms of properties: 'In this body there is the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, & the wind property.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the

phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

[6] "Furthermore, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground—one day, two days, three days dead—bloated, livid, & festering, he applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate'...

"Or again, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground, picked at by crows, vultures, & hawks, by dogs, hyenas, & various other creatures...a skeleton smeared with flesh & blood, connected with tendons ... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, connected with tendons ... a skeleton without flesh or blood, connected with tendons ... bones detached from their tendons, scattered in all directions—here a hand bone, there a foot bone, here a shin bone, there a thigh bone, here a hip bone, there a back bone, here a rib, there a chest bone, here a shoulder bone, there a neck bone, here a jaw bone, there a tooth, here a skull ... the bones whitened, somewhat like the color of shells...piled up, more than a year old ... decomposed into a powder: He applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself.

B. Feelings

"And how does a monk remain focused on feelings in & of themselves? There is the case where a monk, when feeling a painful feeling, discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling. When feeling a pleasant feeling, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant

feeling. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling.

"When feeling a painful feeling of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling of the flesh. When feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a painful feeling not of the flesh. When feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant feeling of the flesh. When feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a pleasant feeling not of the flesh. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling of the flesh. When feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh, he discerns that he is feeling a neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling not of the flesh.

"In this way he remains focused internally on feelings in & of themselves, or externally on feelings in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on feelings in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to feelings, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to feelings, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to feelings. Or his mindfulness that 'There are feelings' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on feelings in & of themselves.

C. Mind

"And how does a monk remain focused on the mind in & of itself? There is the case where a monk, when the mind has passion, discerns that the mind has passion. When the mind is without passion, he discerns that the mind is without passion. When the mind has aversion, he discerns that the mind has aversion. When the mind is without aversion, he discerns that the mind is without aversion. When the mind has delusion, he discerns that the mind has delusion. When the mind is without delusion, he discerns that the mind is without delusion.

"When the mind is restricted, he discerns that the mind is restricted. When the mind is scattered, he discerns that the mind is scattered. When the mind is enlarged, he discerns that the mind is enlarged. When the mind is not enlarged, he discerns that the mind is not enlarged. When the mind is surpassed, he

discerns that the mind is surpassed. When the mind is unsurpassed, he discerns that the mind is unsurpassed. When the mind is concentrated, he discerns that the mind is concentrated. When the mind is not concentrated, he discerns that the mind is not concentrated. When the mind is released, he discerns that the mind is released. When the mind is not released, he discerns that the mind is not released.

"In this way he remains focused internally on the mind in & of itself, or externally on the mind in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the mind in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the mind, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the mind, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the mind. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a mind' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the mind in & of itself.

D. Mental Qualities

"And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves?

[1] "There is the case where a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the **five hindrances**. And how does a monk remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances? There is the case where, there being sensual desire present within, a monk discerns that 'There is sensual desire present within me.' Or, there being no sensual desire present within, he discerns that 'There is no sensual desire present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen sensual desire. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of sensual desire once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no further appearance in the future of sensual desire that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining hindrances: ill will, sloth & drowsiness, restlessness & anxiety, and uncertainty.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon

of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five hindrances.

[2] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the **five clinging-aggregates**. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates? There is the case where a monk [discerns]: 'Such is form, such its origination, such its disappearance. Such is feeling ... Such is perception ... Such are fabrications ... Such is consciousness, such its origination, such its disappearance.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the five clinging-aggregates.

[3] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the **sixfold internal & external sense media**. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media? There is the case where he discerns the eye, he discerns forms, he discerns the fetter that arises dependent on both. He discerns how there is the arising of an unarisen fetter. And he discerns how there is the abandoning of a fetter once it has arisen. And he discerns how there is no further appearance in the future of a fetter that has been abandoned. (The same formula is repeated for the remaining sense media: ear, nose, tongue, body, & intellect.)

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the sixfold internal & external sense media.

[4] "Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the **seven factors for awakening**. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for awakening? There is the case where, there being mindfulness as a factor for awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a factor for awakening is present within me.' Or, there being no mindfulness as a factor for awakening present within, he discerns that 'Mindfulness as a factor for awakening is not present within me.' He discerns how there is the arising of unarisen mindfulness as a factor for awakening. And he discerns how there is the culmination of the development of mindfulness as a factor for awakening once it has arisen. [The same formula is repeated for the remaining factors for awakening: analysis of qualities, persistence, rapture, serenity, concentration, & equanimity.]

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the seven factors for awakening.

[5] “Furthermore, the monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the **four noble truths**. And how does he remain focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths? There is the case where he discerns, as it is actually present, that ‘This is stress...This is the origination of stress...This is the cessation of stress...This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.’

[a] “Now what is the noble truth of stress? Birth is stressful, aging is stressful, death is stressful; sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are stressful; association with the unbeloved is stressful; separation from the loved is stressful; not getting what is wanted is stressful. In short, the five clinging-aggregates are stressful.

“And what is *birth*? Whatever birth, taking birth, descent, coming-to-be, coming-forth, appearance of aggregates, & acquisition of [sense] spheres of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called birth.

“And what is *aging*? Whatever aging, decrepitude, brokenness, graying, wrinkling, decline of life-force, weakening of the faculties of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called aging.

“And what is *death*? Whatever deceasing, passing away, breaking up, disappearance, dying, death, completion of time, break up of the aggregates, casting off of the body, interruption in the life faculty of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called death.

“And what is *sorrow*? Whatever sorrow, sorrowing, sadness, inward sorrow, inward sadness of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called sorrow.

“And what is *lamentation*? Whatever crying, grieving, lamenting, weeping, wailing, lamentation of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called lamentation.

“And what is *pain*? Whatever is experienced as bodily pain, bodily discomfort, pain or discomfort born of bodily contact, that is called pain.

“And what is *distress*? Whatever is experienced as mental pain, mental discomfort, pain or discomfort born of mental contact, that is called distress.

“And what is *despair*? Whatever despair, despondency, desperation of anyone suffering from misfortune, touched by a painful thing, that is called despair.

"And what is the stress of *association with the unbeloved*? There is the case where undesirable, unpleasing, unattractive sights, sounds, aromas, flavors, or tactile sensations occur to one; or one has connection, contact, relationship, interaction with those who wish one ill, who wish for one's harm, who wish for one's discomfort, who wish one no security from the yoke. This is called the stress of association with the unbeloved.

"And what is the stress of *separation from the loved*? There is the case where desirable, pleasing, attractive sights, sounds, aromas, flavors, or tactile sensations do not occur to one; or one has no connection, no contact, no relationship, no interaction with those who wish one well, who wish for one's benefit, who wish for one's comfort, who wish one security from the yoke, nor with one's mother, father, brother, sister, friends, companions, or relatives. This is called the stress of separation from the loved.

"And what is the stress of *not getting what is wanted*? In beings subject to birth, the wish arises, 'O, may we not be subject to birth, and may birth not come to us.' But this is not to be achieved by wishing. This is the stress of not getting what one wants. In beings subject to aging...illness...death...sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair, the wish arises, 'O, may we not be subject to aging...illness...death...sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair, and may aging...illness...death...sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair not come to us.' But this is not to be achieved by wishing. This is the stress of not getting what is wanted.

"And what are the *five clinging-aggregates* that, in short, are stressful? Form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling as a clinging-aggregate, perception as a clinging-aggregate, fabrications as a clinging-aggregate, consciousness as a clinging-aggregate: These are called the five clinging-aggregates that, in short, are stressful.

"This is called the noble truth of stress.

[b] "And what is the noble truth of the origination of stress? The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now here & now there—i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming.

"And where does this craving, when arising, arise? And where, when dwelling, does it dwell? Whatever is endearing & alluring in terms of the world: that is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"And what is endearing & alluring in terms of the world? The eye is endearing & alluring in terms of the world. That is

where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"The ear....The nose....The tongue....The body....The intellect....

"Forms....Sounds....Smells....Tastes....Tactile sensations.... Ideas....

"Eye-consciousness.... Ear-consciousness.... Nose-consciousness.... Tongue-consciousness.... Body-consciousness.... Intellect-consciousness....

"Eye-contact....Ear-contact....Nose-contact....Tongue-contact.... Body-contact.... Intellect-contact....

"Feeling born of eye-contact....Feeling born of ear-contact.... Feeling born of nose-contact.... Feeling born of tongue-contact.... Feeling born of body-contact.... Feeling born of intellect-contact....

"Perception of forms....Perception of sounds....Perception of smells.... Perception of tastes....Perception of tactile sensations.... Perception of ideas....

"Intention for forms....Intention for sounds....Intention for smells.... Intention for tastes....Intention for tactile sensations.... Intention for ideas....

"Craving for forms....Craving for sounds....Craving for smells....Craving for tastes....Craving for tactile sensations.... Craving for ideas....

"Thought directed at forms....Thought directed at sounds.... Thought directed at smells....Thought directed at tastes....Thought directed at tactile sensations....Thought directed at ideas....

"Evaluation of forms....Evaluation of sounds....Evaluation of smells....Evaluation of tastes....Evaluation of tactile sensations.... Evaluation of ideas is endearing & alluring in terms of the world. That is where this craving, when arising, arises. That is where, when dwelling, it dwells.

"This is called the noble truth of the origination of stress.

[c] "And what is the noble truth of the cessation of stress? The remainderless fading & cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, & letting go of that very craving.

"And where, when being abandoned, is this craving abandoned? And where, when ceasing, does it cease? Whatever is endearing & alluring in terms of the world: that is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"And what is endearing & alluring in terms of the world? The eye is endearing & alluring in terms of the world. That is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"The ear....The nose....The tongue....The body.... The intellect....

"Forms....Sounds....Smells....Tastes....Tactile sensations....Ideas....

"Eye-consciousness.... Ear-consciousness.... Nose-consciousness.... Tongue-consciousness.... Body-consciousness.... Intellect-consciousness....

"Eye-contact....Ear-contact....Nose-contact....Tongue-contact.... Body-contact Intellect-contact....

"Feeling born of eye-contact....Feeling born of ear-contact.... Feeling born of nose-contact....Feeling born of tongue-contact.... Feeling born of body-contact.... Feeling born of intellect-contact....

"Perception of forms....Perception of sounds....Perception of smells.... Perception of tastes....Perception of tactile sensations.... Perception of ideas....

"Intention for forms....Intention for sounds....Intention for smells.... Intention for tastes....Intention for tactile sensations.... Intention for ideas....

"Craving for forms....Craving for sounds....Craving for smells....Craving for tastes....Craving for tactile sensations.... Craving for ideas....

"Thought directed at forms....Thought directed at sounds.... Thought directed at smells....Thought directed at tastes.... Thought directed at tactile sensations....Thought directed at ideas....

"Evaluation of forms....Evaluation of sounds....Evaluation of smells.... Evaluation of tastes....Evaluation of tactile sensations.... Evaluation of ideas is endearing & alluring in terms of the world. That is where, when being abandoned, this craving is abandoned. That is where, when ceasing, it ceases.

"This is called the noble truth of the cessation of stress.

[d] "And what is the noble truth of the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress? Just this very noble eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

"And what is right view? Knowledge with regard to (or: in terms of) stress, knowledge with regard to the origination of stress, knowledge with regard to the cessation of stress, knowledge with regard to the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress: This is called right view.

"And what is right resolve? The resolve for renunciation, for freedom from ill will, for harmlessness: This is called right resolve.

“And what is right speech? Abstaining from lying, from divisive speech, from abusive speech, & from idle chatter: This is called right speech.

“And what is right action? Abstaining from taking life, from stealing, & from illicit sex.¹ This is called right action.

“And what is right livelihood? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones, having abandoned dishonest livelihood, keeps his life going with right livelihood: This is called right livelihood.

“And what is right effort? There is the case where a monk generates desire, endeavors, arouses persistence, upholds & exerts his intent for the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities that have not yet arisen ... for the sake of the abandoning of evil, unskillful qualities that have arisen ... for the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen ... (and) for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plenitude, development, & culmination of skillful qualities that have arisen. This is called right effort.

“And what is right mindfulness? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves ... the mind in & of itself ... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. This is called right mindfulness.

“And what is right concentration? There is the case where a monk—quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities—enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture he remains in equanimity, mindful & alert, physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the Noble Ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.’ With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is called right concentration.

“This is called the noble truth of the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.

"In this way he remains focused internally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or externally on mental qualities in & of themselves, or both internally & externally on mental qualities in & of themselves. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to mental qualities, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to mental qualities, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to mental qualities. Or his mindfulness that 'There are mental qualities' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by (not clinging to) anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves with reference to the four noble truths.

E. Conclusion

"Now, if anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven years, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or—if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance—non-return.

"Let alone seven years. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for six years ... five ... four ... three ... two years ... one year ... seven months ... six months ... five ... four ... three ... two months ... one month ... half a month, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or—if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance—non-return.

"Let alone half a month. If anyone would develop these four frames of reference in this way for seven days, one of two fruits can be expected for him: either gnosis right here & now, or—if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance—non-return.

"This is the direct path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow & lamentation, for the disappearance of pain & distress, for the attainment of the right method, & for the realization of Unbinding—in other words, the four frames of reference.' Thus was it said, and in reference to this was it said."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTE: 1. SN XLV.8 defines right action as abstaining from killing, abstaining from taking what is not given, & abstaining from unchastity.

See also: MN 118; MN 119; SN LVII.6-8; AN VIII.63; Ud I.10

The
Majjhima
Nikaya

AN ANTHOLOGY

Like the Dīgha, the Majjhima Nikāya, or Middle Collection, is named after the length of its individual suttas. There are 152 in all. Of all the collections, it offers the most comprehensive picture of the teaching. This anthology contains complete translations of 32 suttas, and partial translations of five.

1 Mūlapariyāya Sutta The Root Sequence

The Buddha listed clinging to views as one of the four forms of clinging that tie the mind to the processes of suffering. He thus recommended that his followers relinquish their clinging, not only to views in their full-blown form as specific positions, but also in their rudimentary form as the categories & relationships that the mind reads into experience. This is a point he makes in the following discourse, which is apparently his response to a particular school of Brahmanical thought that was developing in his time—the Sāṅkhya, or classification school.

This school had its beginnings in the thought of Uddālaka, a ninth-century B.C. philosopher who posited a “root”: an abstract principle out of which all things emanate and which remains immanent in all things. Philosophers who carried on this line of thinking offered a variety of theories, based on logic and meditative experience, about the nature of the ultimate root and about the hierarchy of the emanation. Many of their theories were recorded in the Upaniṣads and eventually developed into the classical Sāṅkhya system around the time of the Buddha.

Although the present discourse says nothing about the background of the monks listening to it, the Commentary states that before their ordination they were brahmans, and that even after their ordination they continued to interpret the Buddha’s teachings in light of their previous training, which may well have been proto-Sāṅkhya. If this is so, then the Buddha’s opening lines —“I will teach you the sequence of the root of all phenomena”—would have them prepared to hear his contribution to their line of thinking. And, in fact, the list of topics he covers reads like a Buddhist Sāṅkhya. Paralleling the classical Sāṅkhya, it contains 24 items, begins with the physical world (here, the four physical properties), and leads back through ever more refined & inclusive levels of being & experience, culminating with the ultimate Buddhist concept: Unbinding (nibbāna). In the pattern of Sāṅkhya thought, Unbinding would thus be the ultimate “root” or ground of being immanent in all things and out of which they all emanate.

However, instead of following this pattern of thinking, the Buddha attacks it at its very root: the notion of a principle in the abstract, the “in”

(immanence) & "out of" (emanation) superimposed on experience. Only an ordinary uninstructed person, he says, would read experience in this way. In contrast, a person in training should look for a different kind of "root"—the root of suffering experienced in the present—and find it in the act of delight. Developing dispassion for that delight, the trainee can then comprehend the process of coming-into-being for what it is, drop all participation in it, and thus achieve true awakening.

If the listeners present at this discourse were indeed interested in fitting Buddhist teachings into a Sāṅkhyan mold, then it's small wonder that they were displeased—one of the few places where we read of a negative reaction to the Buddha's words. They had hoped to hear his contribution to their project, but instead they hear their whole pattern of thinking & theorizing attacked as ignorant & ill-informed. The Commentary tells us, though, they were later able to overcome their displeasure and eventually attain awakening on listening to the discourse reported in AN III.126.

Although at present we rarely think in the same terms as the Sāṅkhya philosophers, there has long been—and still is—a common tendency to create a "Buddhist" metaphysics in which the experience of emptiness, the Unconditioned, the Dharma-body, Buddha-nature, rigpa, etc., is said to function as the ground of being from which the "All"—the entirety of our sensory & mental experience—is said to spring and to which we return when we meditate. Some people think that these theories are the inventions of scholars without any direct meditative experience, but actually they have most often originated among meditators, who label (or in the words of the discourse, "perceive") a particular meditative experience as the ultimate goal, identify with it in a subtle way (as when we are told that "we are the knowing"), and then view that level of experience as the ground of being out of which all other experience comes.

Any teaching that follows these lines would be subject to the same criticism that the Buddha directed against the monks who first heard this discourse.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Ukkatthā, in the shade of a royal Sal tree in the Very Blessed Grove. There he addressed the monks, "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said, "Monks, I will teach you the sequence of the root of all phenomena [or: the root sequence of all phenomena]. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," they responded.

The Blessed One said: "There is the case, monks, where an ordinary uninstructed person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for men of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—perceives earth as earth. Perceiving earth as earth, he conceives [things] about earth, he conceives [things] in earth, he conceives [things] coming out of earth, he conceives earth as 'mine,' he delights in earth. Why is that? Because he has not comprehended it, I tell you.

"He perceives water as water ... fire as fire ... wind as wind¹ ... beings as beings ... gods as gods ... Pajāpati as Pajāpati ... Brahmā as Brahmā ... the luminous gods as luminous gods ... the gods of refulgent glory as gods of refulgent glory ... the gods of abundant fruit as the gods of abundant fruit ... the Great Being as the Great Being² ... the dimension of the infinitude of space as the dimension of the infinitude of space ... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness as the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness as the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception as the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception³ ... the seen as the seen ... the heard as the heard ... the sensed as the sensed ... the cognized as the cognized⁴ ... singleness as singleness ... multiplicity as multiplicity⁵ ... the All as the All⁶ ...

"He perceives Unbinding as Unbinding.⁷ Perceiving Unbinding as Unbinding, he conceives things about Unbinding, he conceives things in Unbinding, he conceives things coming out of Unbinding, he conceives Unbinding as 'mine,' he delights in Unbinding. Why is that? Because he has not comprehended it, I tell you.

The Trainee

"A monk who is a trainee—yearning for the unexcelled relief from bondage, his aspirations as yet unfulfilled—directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as earth, let him not conceive things about earth, let him not conceive things in earth, let him not conceive things coming out of earth, let him not conceive earth as 'mine,' let him not delight in earth. Why is that? So that he may comprehend it, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... fire as fire ... wind as wind ... beings as beings ... gods as gods ... Pajāpati as Pajāpati

... Brahmā as Brahmā ... the luminous gods as luminous gods ... the gods of refulgent glory as gods of refulgent glory ... the gods of abundant fruit as the gods of abundant fruit ... the Great Being as the Great Being ... the dimension of the infinitude of space as the dimension of the infinitude of space ... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness as the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness as the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception as the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception ... the seen as the seen ... the heard as the heard ... the sensed as the sensed ... the cognized as the cognized ... singleness as singleness ... multiplicity as multiplicity ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, let him not conceive things about Unbinding, let him not conceive things in Unbinding, let him not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, let him not conceive Unbinding as 'mine,' let him not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? So that he may comprehend it, I tell you.

The Arahant

"A monk who is a Worthy One, devoid of mental fermentations—who has attained completion, finished the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, destroyed the fetters of becoming, and is released through right knowledge—directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as earth, he does not conceive things about earth, does not conceive things in earth, does not conceive things coming out of earth, does not conceive earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth. Why is that? Because he has comprehended it, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... fire as fire ... wind as wind ... beings as beings ... gods as gods ... Pajāpati as Pajāpati ... Brahmā as Brahmā ... the luminous gods as luminous gods ... the gods of refulgent glory as gods of refulgent glory ... the gods of abundant fruit as the gods of abundant fruit ... the Great Being as the Great Being ... the dimension of the infinitude of space as the dimension of the infinitude of space ... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness as the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness as the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception as the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception

... the seen as the seen ... the heard as the heard ... the sensed as the sensed ... the cognized as the cognized ... singleness as singleness ... multiplicity as multiplicity ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, does not conceive Unbinding as 'mine,' does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because he has comprehended it, I tell you.

"A monk who is a Worthy One, devoid of mental fermentations ... directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as earth, he does not conceive things about earth, does not conceive things in earth, does not conceive things coming out of earth, does not conceive earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth. Why is that? Because, with the ending of passion, he is devoid of passion, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, does not conceive Unbinding as 'mine,' does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because, with the ending of passion, he is devoid of passion, I tell you.

"A monk who is a Worthy One, devoid of mental fermentations ... directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as earth, he does not conceive things about earth, does not conceive things in earth, does not conceive things coming out of earth, does not conceive earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth. Why is that? Because, with the ending of aversion, he is devoid of aversion, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, does not conceive Unbinding as 'mine,' does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because, with the ending of aversion, he is devoid of aversion, I tell you.

"A monk who is a Worthy One, devoid of mental fermentations ... directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as

earth, he does not conceive things about earth, does not conceive things in earth, does not conceive things coming out of earth, does not conceive earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth. Why is that? Because, with the ending of delusion, he is devoid of delusion, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, does not conceive Unbinding as 'mine,' does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because, with the ending of delusion, he is devoid of delusion, I tell you.

The Tathāgata

"The Tathāgata—a worthy one, rightly self-awakened—directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as earth, he does not conceive things about earth, does not conceive things in earth, does not conceive things coming out of earth, does not conceive earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth. Why is that? Because the Tathāgata has comprehended it to the end, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... fire as fire ... wind as wind ... beings as beings ... gods as gods ... Pajāpati as Pajāpati ... Brahmā as Brahmā ... the luminous gods as luminous gods ... the gods of refulgent glory as gods of refulgent glory ... the gods of abundant fruit as the gods of abundant fruit ... the Great Being as the Great Being ... the dimension of the infinitude of space as the dimension of the infinitude of space ... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness as the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness as the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception as the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception ... the seen as the seen ... the heard as the heard ... the sensed as the sensed ... the cognized as the cognized ... singleness as singleness ... multiplicity as multiplicity ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, does not conceive

Unbinding as 'mine,' does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because the Tathāgata has comprehended it to the end, I tell you.

"The Tathāgata—a worthy one, rightly self-awakened—directly knows earth as earth. Directly knowing earth as earth, he does not conceive things about earth, does not conceive things in earth, does not conceive things coming out of earth, does not conceive earth as 'mine,' does not delight in earth. Why is that? Because he has known that delight is the root of suffering & stress, that from coming-into-being there is birth, and that for what has come into being there is aging & death. Therefore, with the total ending, fading away, cessation, letting go, relinquishment of craving, the Tathāgata has totally awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening, I tell you.

"He directly knows water as water ... the All as the All ...

"He directly knows Unbinding as Unbinding. Directly knowing Unbinding as Unbinding, he does not conceive things about Unbinding, does not conceive things in Unbinding, does not conceive things coming out of Unbinding, does not conceive Unbinding as 'mine,' does not delight in Unbinding. Why is that? Because he has known that delight is the root of suffering & stress, that from coming-into-being there is birth, and that for what has come into being there is aging & death. Therefore, with the total ending, fading away, cessation, letting go, relinquishment of craving, the Tathāgata has totally awakened to the unexcelled right self-awakening, I tell you."

That is what the Blessed One said. Displeased, the monks did not delight in the Blessed One's words.

NOTES

1. Earth, water, fire, and wind are the four properties that comprise the experience of physical form.

2. In this section of the list, "beings" denotes all living beings below the level of the gods. "Gods" denotes the beings in the sensual heavens. The remaining terms—Pajāpati, Brahmā, the luminous gods, the gods of refulgent glory, the gods of abundant fruit, & the Great Being—denote gods in the heavens of form & formlessness.

3. The dimension of the infinitude of space, the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, the dimension of nothingness,

& the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception are four formless states that can be attained in concentration.

4. "The seen, the heard, the sensed, & the cognized" is a set of terms to cover all things experienced through the six senses.

5. Singleness = experience in states of intense concentration (jhāna). Multiplicity = experience via the six senses.

6. "What is the All? Simply the eye & forms, ear & sounds, nose & aromas, tongue & flavors, body & tactile sensations, intellect & ideas. This is termed the All. Anyone who would say, 'Repudiating this All, I will describe another,' if questioned on what exactly might be the grounds for his assertion, would be unable to explain, and furthermore, would be put to grief. Why is that? Because it lies beyond range." — SN XXXV.23 For more on this topic, see *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*, Chapter 1.

7. Unbinding = nibbāna (nirvāṇa).

See also: MN 140; SN XII.48; SN XXII.23; AN IV.24; AN IV.199; AN IV.200; AN IX.7

2 *Sabbāsava Sutta* All the Fermentations

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Sāvatti, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said, "Monks, the ending of the fermentations is for one who knows & sees, I tell you, not for one who doesn't know & doesn't see. For one who knows what & sees what? Appropriate attention & inappropriate attention. When a monk attends inappropriately, unarisen fermentations arise, and arisen fermentations increase. When a monk attends appropriately, unarisen fermentations do not arise, and arisen fermentations are abandoned. There are fermentations to be abandoned by seeing, those to be abandoned by restraining, those to be abandoned by using, those to be abandoned by tolerating, those to be abandoned by avoiding, those to be abandoned by destroying, and those to be abandoned by developing.

"[1] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by seeing? There is the case where an ordinary uninstructed person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for men of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—does not discern what ideas are fit for attention or what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he does not attend to ideas fit for attention and attends [instead] to ideas unfit for attention.

"And what are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality arises in him, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality increases; the unarisen fermentation of becoming arises in him, and the arisen fermentation of becoming increases; the unarisen fermentation of ignorance arises in him, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance increases. These are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to.

“And what are the ideas fit for attention that he does not attend to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality does not arise in him, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen fermentation of becoming does not arise in him, and the arisen fermentation of becoming is abandoned; the unarisen fermentation of ignorance does not arise in him, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance is abandoned. These are the ideas fit for attention that he does not attend to. Through his attending to ideas unfit for attention and through his not attending to ideas fit for attention, both unarisen fermentations arise in him, and arisen fermentations increase.

“This is how he attends inappropriately: ‘Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?’ Or else he is inwardly perplexed about the immediate present: ‘Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?’

“As he attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of view arises in him: The view *I have a self* arises in him as true & established, or the view *I have no self ...* or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self ...* or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self ...* or the view *It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self* arises in him as true & established, or else he has a view like this: *This very self of mine—the knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions—is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will stay just as it is for eternity.* This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the ordinary uninstructed person is not freed from birth, aging, & death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from suffering & stress.

“The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—who has regard for noble ones, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma; who has regard for men of integrity, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma—discerns what ideas are fit for attention and what ideas are unfit for attention. This being so,

he does not attend to ideas unfit for attention and attends [instead] to ideas fit for attention.

"And what are the ideas unfit for attention that he does not attend to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality arises in him, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality increases; the unarisen fermentation of becoming arises in him, and the arisen fermentation of becoming increases; the unarisen fermentation of ignorance arises in him, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance increases. These are the ideas unfit for attention that he does not attend to.

"And what are the ideas fit for attention that he does attend to? Whatever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality does not arise in him, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen fermentation of becoming does not arise in him, and the arisen fermentation of becoming is abandoned; the unarisen fermentation of ignorance does not arise in him, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance is abandoned. These are the ideas fit for attention that he does attend to. Through his not attending to ideas unfit for attention and through his attending to ideas fit for attention, unarisen fermentations do not arise in him, and arisen fermentations are abandoned.

"He attends appropriately, *This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.* As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: identity-view, doubt, and grasping at precepts & practices. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by seeing.

"[2] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by restraining? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, dwells restrained with the restraint of the eye-faculty. The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were to dwell unrestrained with the restraint of the eye-faculty do not arise for him when he dwells restrained with the restraint of the eye-faculty.

Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the ear-faculty

Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the nose-faculty

Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the tongue-faculty

Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the body-faculty

Reflecting appropriately, he dwells restrained with the restraint of the intellect-faculty. The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were to dwell unrestrained with the restraint of the intellect-faculty do not arise for him when he dwells restrained with the restraint of the intellect-faculty. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by restraining.

"[3] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by using? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, uses the robe simply to counteract cold, to counteract heat, to counteract the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles; simply for the purpose of covering the parts of the body that cause shame.

"Reflecting appropriately, he uses alms food, not playfully, nor for intoxication, nor for putting on bulk, nor for beautification; but simply for the survival & continuance of this body, for ending its afflictions, for the support of the holy life, thinking, 'Thus will I destroy old feelings [of hunger] and not create new feelings [from overeating]. I will maintain myself, be blameless, & live in comfort.'

"Reflecting appropriately, he uses lodging simply to counteract cold, to counteract heat, to counteract the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles; simply for protection from the inclemencies of weather and for the enjoyment of seclusion.

"Reflecting appropriately, he uses medicinal requisites that are used for curing the sick simply to counteract any pains of illness that have arisen and for maximum freedom from disease.

"The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to use these things [in this way] do not arise for him when he uses them [in this way]. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by using.

"[4] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by tolerating? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, endures. He tolerates cold, heat, hunger, & thirst; the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles; ill-spoken, unwelcome words & bodily feelings that, when they arise, are painful, racking, sharp, piercing, disagreeable, displeasing, & menacing to life. The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to tolerate these things do not arise for him when he tolerates them. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by tolerating.

"[5] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by avoiding? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, avoids a wild elephant, a wild horse, a wild bull, a wild

dog, a snake, a stump, a bramble patch, a chasm, a cliff, a cesspool, an open sewer. Reflecting appropriately, he avoids sitting in the sorts of unsuitable seats, wandering to the sorts of unsuitable habitats, and associating with the sorts of bad friends that would make his knowledgeable friends in the holy life suspect him of evil conduct. The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to avoid these things do not arise for him when he avoids them. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by avoiding.

"[6] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by destroying? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, does not tolerate an arisen thought of sensuality. He abandons it, destroys it, dispels it, & wipes it out of existence.

Reflecting appropriately, he does not tolerate an arisen thought of ill will ...

Reflecting appropriately, he does not tolerate an arisen thought of cruelty ...

Reflecting appropriately, he does not tolerate arisen evil, unskillful mental qualities. He abandons them, destroys them, dispels them, & wipes them out of existence. The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to destroy these things do not arise for him when he destroys them. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by destroying.

"[7] And what are the fermentations to be abandoned by developing? There is the case where a monk, reflecting appropriately, develops *mindfulness* as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion ... *dispassion* ... *cessation*, resulting in letting go. He develops *analysis of qualities* as a factor for awakening ... *persistence* as a factor for awakening ... *rapture* as a factor for awakening ... *serenity* as a factor for awakening ... *concentration* as a factor for awakening ... *equanimity* as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion ... *dispassion* ... *cessation*, resulting in letting go. The fermentations, vexation, or fever that would arise if he were not to develop these qualities do not arise for him when he develops them. These are called the fermentations to be abandoned by developing.

"When a monk's fermentations that should be abandoned by seeing have been abandoned by seeing, his fermentations that should be abandoned by restraining have been abandoned by restraining, his fermentations that should be abandoned by using have been abandoned by using, his fermentations that

should be abandoned by tolerating have been abandoned by tolerating, his fermentations that should be abandoned by avoiding have been abandoned by avoiding, his fermentations that should be abandoned by destroying have been abandoned by destroying, his fermentations that should be abandoned by developing have been abandoned by developing, then he is called a monk who dwells restrained with the restraint of all the fermentations. He has severed craving, thrown off the fetters, and—through the right penetration of conceit—has made an end of suffering & stress.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

See also: MN 63; MN 72; SN XII.20; SN XXII.122; AN IV.42; AN IV.200; AN X.93

4 *Bhaya-bherava Sutta* Fear & Terror

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then Jāṇussoṇi the brahman went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One, "Master Gotama, the sons of good families who have gone forth from the home life into homelessness out of conviction in Master Gotama: is Master Gotama their leader? Is Master Gotama their helper? Is Master Gotama their inspirer? Do they take Master Gotama as their example?"

"Yes, brahman, so it is. The sons of good families who have gone forth from the home life into homelessness out of conviction in me: I am their leader. I am their helper. I am their inspirer. They take me as their example."

"But, Master Gotama, it's not easy to endure isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. It's not easy to maintain seclusion, not easy to enjoy being alone. The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration."

"Yes, brahman, so it is. It's not easy to endure isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. It's not easy to maintain seclusion, not easy to enjoy being alone. The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration. Before my awakening, when I was still an unawakened Bodhisatta, the thought occurred to me as well: 'It's not easy to maintain seclusion, not easy to enjoy being alone. The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration.'

"The thought occurred to me: 'When priests or contemplatives who are unpurified in their bodily activities resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings, it's the fault of their unpurified bodily activities that they give rise to unskillful fear & terror. But it's not the case that I am unpurified in my bodily activities when I resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. I am purified in my bodily activities. I am one of

those noble ones who are purified in their bodily activities when they resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings.' Seeing in myself this purity of bodily activities, I felt even more undaunted about staying in the wilderness.

"The thought occurred to me: 'When priests or contemplatives who are unpurified in their verbal activities ... unpurified in their mental activities ... unpurified in their livelihood resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings, it's the fault of their unpurified livelihood that they give rise to unskillful fear & terror. But it's not the case that I am unpurified in my livelihood when I resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. I am purified in my livelihood. I am one of those noble ones who are purified in their livelihood when they resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings.' Seeing in myself this purity of livelihood, I felt even more undaunted about staying in the wilderness.

"The thought occurred to me: 'When priests or contemplatives who are covetous & fiercely passionate for sensuality ... I am not covetous ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who have minds of ill will, with destructive attitudes ... I have a mind of good will ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are overcome by sloth & drowsiness ... I am devoid of sloth & drowsiness ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are restless & with an unstilled mind ... I have a stilled mind ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are uncertain & doubting ... I have gone beyond uncertainty ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who tend to praise themselves & disparage others ... I do not praise myself or disparage others ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who tend toward panic & dread ... I have gone beyond horripilation ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are desirous of gains, offerings, & fame ... I am modest ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are lazy & lacking in persistence ... My persistence is aroused ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are muddled in their mindfulness & unalert ... I have mindfulness established ... '

" ... 'When priests or contemplatives who are unconcentrated, with straying minds ... I am consummate in concentration ... '

"The thought occurred to me: 'When priests or contemplatives who are drooling idiots resort to isolated forest or wilderness

dwelling, it's the fault of their drooling idiocy that they give rise to unskillful fear & terror. But it's not the case that I am a drooling idiot when I resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. I am consummate in discernment. I am one of those noble ones who are consummate in discernment when they resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings.' Seeing in myself this consummate discernment, I felt even more undaunted about staying in the wilderness.

"The thought occurred to me: 'What if—on recognized, designated nights such as the eighth, fourteenth, & fifteenth of the lunar fortnight—I were to stay in the sort of places that are awe-inspiring and make your hair stand on end, such as park-shrines, forest-shrines, & tree-shrines? Perhaps I would get to see that fear & terror.' So at a later time—on recognized, designated nights such as the eighth, fourteenth, & fifteenth of the lunar fortnight—I stayed in the sort of places that are awe-inspiring and make your hair stand on end, such as park-shrines, forest-shrines, & tree-shrines. And while I was staying there a wild animal would come, or a bird would drop a twig, or wind would rustle the fallen leaves. The thought would occur to me: 'Is this that fear & terror coming?' Then the thought occurred to me: 'Why do I just keep waiting for fear? What if I were to subdue fear & terror in whatever state they come?' So when fear & terror came while I was walking back & forth, I would not stand or sit or lie down. I would keep walking back & forth until I had subdued that fear & terror. When fear & terror came while I was standing, I would not walk or sit or lie down. I would keep standing until I had subdued that fear & terror. When fear & terror came while I was sitting, I would not lie down or stand up or walk. I would keep sitting until I had subdued that fear & terror. When fear & terror came while I was lying down, I would not sit up or stand or walk. I would keep lying down until I had subdued that fear & terror.

"There are some priests & contemplatives, brahman, who have the perception of 'day' when it is night, and of 'night' when it is day. This, I tell you, is their being in a dwelling of delusion. As for me, I have the perception of 'day' when it is day, and of 'night' when it is night. If anyone, when speaking rightly, were to say, 'A being not subject to delusion has appeared in the world for the benefit & happiness of many, out of sympathy for the world, for the welfare, benefit, & happiness of human & divine beings,' he would rightly be speaking of me.

“Unflagging persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established. My body was calm & unaroused, my mind concentrated & single. Quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, I entered & remained in the first *jhāna*: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, I entered & remained in the second *jhāna*: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture I remained in equanimity, mindful & alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. I entered & remained in the third *jhāna*, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.’ With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—I entered & remained in the fourth *jhāna*: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain.

“When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of recollecting my past lives*. I recollected my manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two ... five, ten ... fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many eons of cosmic contraction, many eons of cosmic expansion, many eons of cosmic contraction & expansion: ‘There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.’ Thus I recollected my manifold past lives in their modes & details.

“This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

“When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the passing away & reappearance of beings*. I saw—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing

away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech & mind, who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.' Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—I saw beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

"This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations*. I discerned, as it was actually present, that 'This is stress...This is the origination of stress...This is the cessation of stress...This is the way leading to the cessation of stress...These are fermentations...This is the origination of fermentations...This is the cessation of fermentations...This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the fermentation of sensuality, released from the fermentation of becoming, released from the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, 'Released.' I discerned that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

"Now, brahman, if the thought should occur to you, 'Perhaps Gotama the contemplative is even today not free of

passion, not free of aversion, not free of delusion, which is why he resorts to isolated forest & wilderness dwellings,' it should not be seen in that way. It's through seeing two compelling reasons that I resort to isolated forest & wilderness dwellings: seeing a pleasant abiding for myself in the present, and feeling sympathy for future generations."

"How truly future generations have been shown sympathy by Master Gotama, as by one who is worthy & rightly self-awakened! Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life."

See also: MN 36; SN V.1-10; SN XI.3; AN IV.184; Thag XVI.1; Thig XIV

18 Madhupiṇḍika Sutta The Ball of Honey

This discourse plays a central role in the early Buddhist analysis of conflict. As might be expected, the blame for conflict lies within, in the unskillful habits of the mind, rather than without. The culprit in this case is a habit called *papañca*. Unfortunately, none of the early texts give a clear definition of what the word *papañca* means, so it's hard to find a precise English equivalent for the term. However, they do give a clear analysis of how *papañca* arises, how it leads to conflict, and how it can be ended. In the final analysis, these are the questions that matter—more than the precise definition of terms—so we will deal with them first before proposing a few possible translation equivalents for the word.

Three passages in the discourses—DN 21, MN 18, and Sn IV.11—map the causal processes that give rise to *papañca* and lead from *papañca* to conflict. Because the Buddhist analysis of causality is generally non-linear, with plenty of room for feedback loops, the maps vary in some of their details. In DN 21, the map reads like this:

the perceptions & categories of *papañca* > thinking > desire > dear-&-not-dear > envy & stinginess > rivalry & hostility

In Sn IV.11, the map is less linear and can be diagramed like this:

perception > the categories of *papañca*

perception > name & form > contact > appealing & unappealing > desire > dear-&-not-dear > stinginess/divisiveness/quarrels/disputes

Here in MN 18, the map is this:

contact > feeling > perception > thinking > the perceptions & categories of *papañca*

In this last case, however, the bare outline misses some of the important implications of the way this process is phrased. In the full passage, the analysis starts out in an impersonal tone:

“Dependent on eye & forms, eye-consciousness arises [similarly with the rest of the six senses]. The meeting of

the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there is feeling.

Starting with feeling, the notion of an "agent"—in this case, the feeler—acting on "objects," is introduced:

What one feels, one perceives (labels in the mind). What one perceives, one thinks about. What one thinks about, one "papañcizes".

Through the process of papañca, the agent then becomes a victim of his/her own patterns of thinking:

Based on what a person papañcizes, the perceptions & categories of papañca assail him/her with regard to past, present, & future forms cognizable via the eye [as with the remaining senses].

What are these perceptions & categories that assail the person who papañcizes? Sn IV.14 states that the root of the categories of papañca is the perception, "I am the thinker." From this self-reflexive thought—in which one conceives a "self," a thing corresponding to the concept of "I"—a number of categories can be derived: being/not-being, me/not-me, mine/not-mine, doer/done-to, signifier/signified. Once one's self becomes a thing under the rubric of these categories, it's impossible not to be assailed by the perceptions & categories derived from these basic distinctions. When there's the sense of identification with something that experiences, then based on the feelings arising from sensory contact, some feelings will seem appealing—worth getting for the self—and others will seem unappealing—worth pushing away. From this there grows desire, which comes into conflict with the desires of others who are also engaging in papañca. This is how inner complications breed external contention.

How can this process be ended? Through a shift in perception, caused by the way one attends to feelings, using the categories of appropriate attention [see MN 2]. As the Buddha states in DN 21, rather than viewing a feeling as an appealing or unappealing thing, one should look at it as part of a causal process: when a particular feeling is pursued, do skillful or unskillful qualities increase in the mind? If skillful qualities increase, the feeling may be pursued. If unskillful qualities increase, it shouldn't. When comparing feelings that lead to skillful qualities, notice that those accompanied by thinking (directed thought) and evaluation are less refined than those free of thinking and evaluation, as in the higher stages of mental absorption, or jhāna.

When seeing this, there is a tendency to opt for the more refined feelings, and this cuts through the act of thinking that, according to MN 18, provides the basis for *papañca*.

In following this program, the notion of agent and victim is avoided, as is self-reflexive thinking in general. There is simply the analysis of cause-effect processes. One is still making use of dualities—distinguishing between unskillful and skillful (and affliction/lack of affliction, the results of unskillful and skillful qualities)—but the distinction is between processes, not things. Thus one's analysis avoids the type of thinking that, according to DN 21, depends on the perceptions and categories of *papañca*, and in this way the vicious cycle by which thinking and *papañca* keep feeding each other is cut.

Ultimately, by following this program to greater and greater levels of refinement through the higher levels of mental absorption, one finds less and less to relish and enjoy in the six senses and the mental processes based on them. With this sense of disenchantment, the processes of feeling and thought are stilled, and there is a breakthrough to the cessation of the six sense spheres. When these spheres cease, is there anything else left? Ven. Sāriputta, in AN IV.173 warns us not to ask, for to ask if there is, isn't, both-is-and-isn't, neither-is-nor-isn't anything left in that dimension is to *papañca* what is free from *papañca*. However, this dimension is not a total annihilation of experience. It's a type of experience that DN 11 calls consciousness without feature, luminous all around, where water, earth, fire, & wind have no footing, where long/short, coarse/fine, fair/foul, name/form are all brought to an end. This is the fruit of the path of arahantship—a path that makes use of dualities but leads to a fruit beyond them.

It may come as cold comfort to realize that conflict can be totally overcome only with the realization of arahantship, but it's important to note that by following the path recommended in DN 21—learning to avoid references to any notion of "self" and learning to view feelings not as things but as parts of a causal process affecting the qualities in the mind—the basis for *papañca* is gradually undercut, and there are fewer and fewer occasions for conflict. In following this path, one reaps its increasing benefits all along the way.

Translating *papañca*: As one writer has noted, the word *papañca* has had a wide variety of meanings in Indian thought, with only one constant: in Buddhist philosophical discourse it carries negative connotations, usually of falsification and distortion. The word itself is derived from a root that means diffuseness, spreading, proliferating. The Pali Commentaries define *papañca* as covering three types of

thought: craving, conceit, and views. They also note that it functions to slow the mind down in its escape from saṃsāra. And, as our analysis has shown, it functions to create baneful distinctions and unnecessary issues. For these reasons, I have chosen to render the word as "complication," although some of the following alternatives might be acceptable as well: self-reflexive thinking, reification, proliferation, exaggeration, elaboration, distortion. The word offers some interesting parallels to the postmodern notion of logocentric thinking, but it's important to note that the Buddha's program of deconstructing this process differs sharply from that of postmodern thought.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was living among the Sakyans near Kapilavatthu in the Banyan Park. Then in the early morning, having put on his robes and carrying his bowl & outer robe, he went into Kapilavatthu for alms. Having gone for alms in Kapilavatthu, after the meal, returning from his alms round, he went to the Great Wood for the day's abiding. Plunging into the Great Wood, he sat down at the root of a bilva sapling for the day's abiding.

Daṇḍapāṇi ("Stick-in-hand") the Sakyān, out roaming & rambling for exercise, also went to the Great Wood. Plunging into the Great Wood, he went to where the Blessed One was under the bilva sapling. On arrival, he exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he stood to one side. As he was standing there, he said to the Blessed One, "What is the contemplative's doctrine? What does he proclaim?"

"The sort of doctrine, friend, where one does not keep quarreling with anyone in the cosmos with its deities, Māras, & Brahmas, with its contemplatives & priests, its royalty & commonfolk; the sort [of doctrine] where perceptions no longer obsess the brahman who remains dissociated from sensual pleasures, free from perplexity, his uncertainty cut away, devoid of craving for becoming & non-. Such is my doctrine, such is what I proclaim."

When this was said, Daṇḍapāṇi the Sakyān—shaking his head, wagging his tongue, raising his eyebrows so that his forehead was wrinkled in three furrows—left, leaning on his stick.

Then, when it was evening, the Blessed One rose from his seclusion and went to the Banyan Park. On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready. As he was sitting there, he [told the

monks what had happened]. When this was said, a certain monk said to the Blessed One, "Lord, what sort of doctrine is it where one does not keep quarreling with anyone in the cosmos with its deities, Māras, & Brahmas, with its contemplatives & priests, its royalty & commonfolk; where perceptions no longer obsess the brahman who remains dissociated from sensual pleasures, free from perplexity, his uncertainty cut away, devoid of craving for becoming & non-?"

"If, monk, with regard to the cause whereby the perceptions & categories of complication assail a person, there is nothing there to relish, welcome, or remain fastened to, then that is the end of the obsessions of passion, the obsessions of resistance, the obsessions of views, the obsessions of uncertainty, the obsessions of conceit, the obsessions of passion for becoming, & the obsessions of ignorance. That is the end of taking up rods & bladed weapons, of arguments, quarrels, disputes, accusations, divisive tale-bearing, & false speech. That is where these evil, unskillful things cease without remainder." That is what the Blessed One said. Having said it, the One Well-gone got up from his seat and went into his dwelling.

Then, not long after the Blessed One had left, this thought occurred to the monks: "This brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he went into his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., 'If, with regard to the cause whereby the perceptions & categories of complication assail a person, there is nothing to relish ... that is where these evil, unskillful things cease without remainder': now who might analyze the unanalyzed detailed meaning of this brief statement?" Then the thought occurred to them, "Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana is praised by the Teacher and esteemed by his knowledgeable companions in the holy life. He is capable of analyzing the unanalyzed detailed meaning of this brief statement. Suppose we were to go to him and, on arrival, question him about this matter."

So the monks went to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, they sat to one side. As they were sitting there, they [told him what had happened, and added,] "Analyze the meaning, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana!"

[He replied:] "Friends, it's as if a man needing heartwood, looking for heartwood, wandering in search of heartwood—passing over the root & trunk of a standing tree possessing

heartwood—were to imagine that heartwood should be sought among its branches & leaves. So it is with you, who—having bypassed the Blessed One when you were face to face with him, the Teacher—imagine that I should be asked about this matter. For knowing, the Blessed One knows; seeing, he sees. He is the Eye, he is Knowledge, he is Dhamma, he is Brahmā. He is the speaker, the proclaimer, the elucidator of meaning, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma, the Tathāgata. That was the time when you should have questioned him about this matter. However he answered, that was how you should have remembered it.”

“Yes, friend Kaccāyana: knowing, the Blessed One knows; seeing, he sees. He is the Eye, he is Knowledge, he is Dhamma, he is Brahmā. He is the speaker, the proclaimer, the elucidator of meaning, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma, the Tathāgata. That was the time when we should have questioned him about this matter. However he answered, that was how we should have remembered it. But you are praised by the Teacher and esteemed by your knowledgeable companions in the holy life. You are capable of analyzing the unanalyzed detailed meaning of this brief statement. Analyze the meaning, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana!”

“In that case, my friends, listen & pay close attention. I will speak.”

“As you say, friend,” the monks responded.

Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana said this: “Concerning the brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he went into his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., ‘If, with regard to the cause whereby the perceptions & categories of complication assail a person, there is nothing there to relish, welcome, or remain fastened to, then that is the end of the obsessions of passion, the obsessions of resistance, the obsessions of views, the obsessions of uncertainty, the obsessions of conceit, the obsessions of passion for becoming, & the obsessions of ignorance. That is the end of taking up rods & bladed weapons, of arguments, quarrels, disputes, accusations, divisive tale-bearing, & false speech. That is where these evil, unskillful things cease without remainder’—I understand the detailed meaning to be this:

“Dependent on eye & forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there is feeling. What one feels, one perceives (labels in the mind). What one perceives, one thinks about. What one thinks about, one complicates. Based on what a person complicates, the

perceptions & categories of complication assail him/her with regard to past, present, & future forms cognizable via the eye.

“Dependent on ear & sounds, ear-consciousness arises

“Dependent on nose & aromas, nose-consciousness arises

“Dependent on tongue & flavors, tongue-consciousness arises

“Dependent on body & tactile sensations, body-consciousness arises

“Dependent on intellect & ideas, intellect-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there is feeling. What one feels, one perceives (labels in the mind). What one perceives, one thinks about. What one thinks about, one complicates. Based on what a person complicates, the perceptions & categories of complication assail him/her with regard to past, present, & future ideas cognizable via the intellect.

“Now, when there is the eye, when there are forms, when there is eye-consciousness, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of contact.¹ When there is a delineation of contact, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is a delineation of feeling, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is a delineation of perception, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is a delineation of thinking, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of complication.

“When there is the ear

“When there is the nose

“When there is the tongue

“When there is the body

“When there is the intellect, when there are ideas, when there is intellect-consciousness, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of contact. When there is a delineation of contact, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is a delineation of feeling, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is a delineation of perception, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is a delineation of thinking, it is possible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of complication.

“Now, when there is no eye, when there are no forms, when there is no eye-consciousness, it is impossible that one will delineate

a delineation of contact. When there is no delineation of contact, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is no delineation of feeling, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is no delineation of perception, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is no delineation of thinking, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of complication.

"When there is no ear

"When there is no nose

"When there is no tongue

"When there is no body

"When there is no intellect, when there are no ideas, when there is no intellect-consciousness, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of contact. When there is no delineation of contact, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of feeling. When there is no delineation of feeling, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of perception. When there is no delineation of perception, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of thinking. When there is no delineation of thinking, it is impossible that one will delineate a delineation of being assailed by the perceptions & categories of complication.

"So, concerning the brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he entered his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., 'If, with regard to the cause whereby the perceptions & categories of complication assail a person, there is nothing there to relish, welcome, or remain fastened to, then that is the end of the obsessions of passion, the obsessions of resistance, the obsessions of views, the obsessions of uncertainty, the obsessions of conceit, the obsessions of passion for becoming, & the obsessions of ignorance. That is the end of taking up rods & bladed weapons, of arguments, quarrels, disputes, accusations, divisive tale-bearing, & false speech. That is where these evil, unskillful things cease without remainder'—this is how I understand the detailed meaning. Now, if you wish, having gone to the Blessed One, question him about this matter. However he answers is how you should remember it."

Then the monks, delighting in & approving of Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana's words, rose from their seats and went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to him, they sat to one side. As they were sitting there, they [told him what had

happened after he had gone into his dwelling, and ended by saying,] "Then Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana analyzed the meaning using these words, these statements, these phrases."

"Mahā Kaccāyana is wise, monks. He is a person of great discernment. If you had asked me about this matter, I too would have answered in the same way he did. That is the meaning of this statement. That is how you should remember it."

When this was said, Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One, "Lord, it's as if a man—overcome with hunger, weakness, & thirst—were to come across a ball of honey. Wherever he might taste it, he would experience a sweet, delectable flavor. In the same way, wherever a monk of capable awareness might investigate the meaning of this Dhamma discourse with his discernment, he would experience gratification, he would experience confidence. What is the name of this Dhamma discourse?"

"Then, Ānanda, you can remember this Dhamma discourse as the 'Ball of Honey Discourse.'"

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ānanda delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTE: 1. The artificiality of this phrase—"delineate a delineation"—seems intentional. It underlines the artifice implicit in the process by which the mind, in singling out events, turns them into discrete things. See MN 109, note 2.

See also: DN 21; SN XXXV.207; AN III.73; AN VIII.30; Sn IV.11

19 *Dvedhavitakka Sutta* Two Sorts of Thinking

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Sāvatti, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said, "Monks, before my self-awakening, when I was still just an unawakened Bodhisatta, the thought occurred to me: 'Why don't I keep dividing my thinking into two sorts?' So I made thinking imbued with sensuality, thinking imbued with ill will, & thinking imbued with harmfulness one sort, and thinking imbued with renunciation, thinking imbued with non-ill will, & thinking imbued with harmlessness another sort.

"And as I remained thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, thinking imbued with sensuality arose. I discerned that 'Thinking imbued with sensuality has arisen in me; and that leads to my own affliction or to the affliction of others or to the affliction of both. It obstructs discernment, promotes vexation, & does not lead to Unbinding.'

"As I noticed that it leads to my own affliction, it subsided. As I noticed that it leads to the affliction of others...to the affliction of both...it obstructs discernment, promotes vexation, & does not lead to Unbinding, it subsided. Whenever thinking imbued with sensuality had arisen, I simply abandoned it, destroyed it, dispelled it, wiped it out of existence.

"And as I remained thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, thinking imbued with ill will arose. I discerned that 'Thinking imbued with ill will has arisen in me; and that leads to my own affliction or to the affliction of others or to the affliction of both. It obstructs discernment, promotes vexation, & does not lead to Unbinding.'

"As I noticed that it leads to my own affliction, it subsided. As I noticed that it leads to the affliction of others...to the affliction of both...it obstructs discernment, promotes vexation, & does not lead to Unbinding, it subsided. Whenever thinking imbued with ill will had arisen, I simply abandoned it, destroyed it, dispelled it, wiped it out of existence.

"And as I remained thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, thinking imbued with harmfulness arose. I discerned that 'Thinking imbued with harmfulness has arisen in me; and that leads to my own affliction or to the affliction of others or to the affliction of both. It obstructs discernment, promotes vexation, & does not lead to Unbinding.'

"As I noticed that it leads to my own affliction, it subsided. As I noticed that it leads to the affliction of others...to the affliction of both...it obstructs discernment, promotes vexation, & does not lead to Unbinding, it subsided. Whenever thinking imbued with harmfulness had arisen, I simply abandoned it, destroyed it, dispelled it, wiped it out of existence.

"Whatever a monk keeps pursuing with his thinking & pondering, that becomes the inclination of his awareness. If a monk keeps pursuing thinking imbued with sensuality, abandoning thinking imbued with renunciation, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with sensuality. If a monk keeps pursuing thinking imbued with ill will, abandoning thinking imbued with non-ill will, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with ill will. If a monk keeps pursuing thinking imbued with harmfulness, abandoning thinking imbued with harmlessness, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with harmfulness.

"Just as in the last month of the Rains, in the autumn season when the crops are ripening, a cowherd would look after his cows: He would tap & poke & check & curb them with a stick on this side & that. Why is that? Because he foresees flogging or imprisonment or a fine or public censure arising from that [if he let his cows wander into the crops]. In the same way I foresaw in unskillful qualities drawbacks, degradation, & defilement, and I foresaw in skillful qualities rewards related to renunciation & promoting cleansing.

"And as I remained thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, thinking imbued with renunciation arose. I discerned that 'Thinking imbued with renunciation has arisen in me; and that leads neither to my own affliction, nor to the affliction of others, nor to the affliction of both. It fosters discernment, promotes lack of vexation, & leads to Unbinding. If I were to think & ponder in line with that even for a night...even for a day...even for a day & night, I do not envision any danger that would come from it, except that thinking & pondering a long time would tire the body. When the body is tired, the mind is disturbed; and a disturbed mind is far

from concentration.' So I steadied my mind right within, settled, unified, & concentrated it. Why is that? So that my mind would not be disturbed.

"And as I remained thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, thinking imbued with non-ill will arose. I discerned that 'Thinking imbued with non-ill will has arisen in me; and that leads neither to my own affliction, nor to the affliction of others, nor to the affliction of both. It fosters discernment, promotes lack of vexation, & leads to Unbinding. If I were to think & ponder in line with that even for a night...even for a day...even for a day & night, I do not envision any danger that would come from it, except that thinking & pondering a long time would tire the body. When the body is tired, the mind is disturbed; and a disturbed mind is far from concentration.' So I steadied my mind right within, settled, unified, & concentrated it. Why is that? So that my mind would not be disturbed.

"And as I remained thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, thinking imbued with harmlessness arose. I discerned that 'Thinking imbued with harmlessness has arisen in me; and that leads neither to my own affliction, nor to the affliction of others, nor to the affliction of both. It fosters discernment, promotes lack of vexation, & leads to Unbinding. If I were to think & ponder in line with that even for a night...even for a day...even for a day & night, I do not envision any danger that would come from it, except that thinking & pondering a long time would tire the body. When the body is tired, the mind is disturbed; and a disturbed mind is far from concentration.' So I steadied my mind right within, settled, unified, & concentrated it. Why is that? So that my mind would not be disturbed.

"Whatever a monk keeps pursuing with his thinking & pondering, that becomes the inclination of his awareness. If a monk keeps pursuing thinking imbued with renunciation, abandoning thinking imbued with sensuality, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with renunciation. If a monk keeps pursuing thinking imbued with non-ill will, abandoning thinking imbued with ill will, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with non-ill will. If a monk keeps pursuing thinking imbued with harmlessness, abandoning thinking imbued with harmfulness, his mind is bent by that thinking imbued with harmlessness.

"Just as in the last month of the hot season, when all the crops have been gathered into the village, a cowherd would look after his

cows: While resting under the shade of a tree or out in the open, he simply keeps himself mindful of 'those cows.' In the same way, I simply kept myself mindful of 'those mental qualities.'

"Unflagging persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established. My body was calm & unaroused, my mind concentrated & single. Quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, I entered & remained in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, I entered & remained in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture I remained in equanimity, mindful & alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. I entered & remained in the third jhāna, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—I entered & remained in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of recollecting my past lives*. I recollected my manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two ... five, ten ... fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many eons of cosmic contraction, many eons of cosmic expansion, many eons of cosmic contraction & expansion: 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.' Thus I remembered my manifold past lives in their modes & details.

"This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose —as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, &

attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the passing away & reappearance of beings*. I saw—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech & mind, who reviled the Noble Ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile the Noble Ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.' Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—I saw beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

"This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations*. I discerned, as it was actually present, that 'This is stress...This is the origination of stress...This is the cessation of stress...This is the way leading to the cessation of stress...These are fermentations...This is the origination of fermentations...This is the cessation of fermentations...This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the fermentation of sensuality, released from the fermentation of becoming, released from the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, 'Released.' I discerned that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

“Suppose, monks, that in a forested wilderness there were a large low-lying marsh, in dependence on which there lived a large herd of deer; and a certain man were to appear, not desiring their benefit, not desiring their welfare, not desiring their rest from bondage. He would close off the safe, restful path that led to their rapture, and would open up a false path, set out a male decoy, place a female decoy, and thus the large herd of deer, at a later time, would fall into ruin & disaster. Then suppose that a certain man were to appear to that same large herd of deer, desiring their benefit, desiring their welfare, desiring their rest from bondage. He would open up the safe, restful path that led to their rapture, would close off the false path, take away the male decoy, destroy the female decoy, and thus the large herd of deer, at a later time, would come into growth, increase, & abundance.

“I have given this simile in order to convey a meaning. The meaning is this: ‘The large, low-lying marsh’ is a term for sensual pleasures. ‘The large herd of deer’ is a term for beings. ‘The man not desiring their benefit, not desiring their welfare, not desiring their rest from bondage’ is a term for Māra, the Evil One. ‘The false path’ is a term for the eightfold wrong path, i.e., wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration. ‘The male decoy’ is a term for passion & delight. ‘The female decoy’ is a term for ignorance. ‘The man desiring their benefit, desiring their welfare, desiring their rest from bondage’ is a term for the Tathāgata, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One. ‘The safe, restful path that led to their rapture’ is a term for the noble eightfold path, i.e., right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration.

“So, monks, I have opened up the safe, restful path, closed off the false path, removed the male decoy, destroyed the female. Whatever a teacher should do—seeking the welfare of his disciples, out of sympathy for them—that have I done for you. Over there are the roots of trees; over there, empty dwellings. Practice jhāna, monks. Don’t be heedless. Don’t later fall into regret. This is our message to you.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

See also: AN III.102; AN X.94; Ud IV.1

20 Vitakkasaṅṭhāna Sutta The Relaxation of Thoughts

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Sāvatti, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks, "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said: "When a monk is intent on the heightened mind, there are five themes he should attend to at the appropriate times. Which five?"

"There is the case where evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—arise in a monk while he is referring to and attending to a particular theme. He should attend to another theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful. When he is attending to this other theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful, then those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a skilled carpenter or his apprentice would use a small peg to knock out, drive out, and pull out a large one; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—arise in a monk while he is referring to and attending to a particular theme, he should attend to another theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful. When he is attending to this other theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful, then those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

"If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to this other theme, connected with what is skillful, he should scrutinize the drawbacks of those thoughts: 'Really, these thoughts of mine are unskillful, these thoughts of mine are blameworthy, these thoughts of mine result in stress.' As he is scrutinizing the

drawbacks of those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a young woman—or man—fond of adornment, would be horrified, humiliated, and disgusted if the carcass of a snake or a dog or a human being were hung from her neck; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to this other theme, connected with what is skillful, he should scrutinize the drawbacks of those thoughts: 'Really, these thoughts of mine are unskillful, these thoughts of mine are blameworthy, these thoughts of mine result in stress.' As he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

"If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, he should pay no mind and pay no attention to those thoughts. As he is paying no mind and paying no attention to them, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a man with good eyes, not wanting to see forms that had come into range, would close his eyes or look away; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, he should pay no mind and pay no attention to those thoughts. As he is paying no mind and paying no attention to them, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

"If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts, he should attend to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts. As he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as the

thought would occur to a man walking quickly, 'Why am I walking quickly? Why don't I walk slowly?' So he walks slowly. The thought occurs to him, 'Why am I walking slowly? Why don't I stand?' So he stands. The thought occurs to him, 'Why am I standing? Why don't I sit down?' So he sits down. The thought occurs to him, 'Why am I sitting? Why don't I lie down?' So he lies down. In this way, giving up the grosser posture, he takes up the more refined one. In the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts, he should attend to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts. As he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

"If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, then—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he should beat down, constrain, and crush his mind with his awareness. As—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he is beating down, constraining, and crushing his mind with his awareness, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a strong man, seizing a weaker man by the head or the throat or the shoulders, would beat him down, constrain, and crush him; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, then—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he should beat down, constrain, and crush his mind with his awareness. As—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he is beating down, constraining, and crushing his mind with his awareness, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

“Now when a monk ... attending to another theme ... scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts ... paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts ... attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts ... beating down, constraining and crushing his mind with his awareness ... steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it and concentrates it: He is then called a monk with mastery over the ways of thought sequences. He thinks whatever thought he wants to, and doesn't think whatever thought he doesn't. He has severed craving, thrown off the fetters, and—through the right penetration of conceit—has made an end of suffering & stress.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

See also: AN III.103; Ud IV.1

21 *Kakacūpama Sutta* The Simile of the Saw (Excerpt)

.... "Once, monks, in this same Sāvatti, there was a lady of a household named Vedehikā. This good report about Lady Vedehikā had circulated: 'Lady Vedehikā is gentle. Lady Vedehikā is even-tempered. Lady Vedehikā is calm.' Now, Lady Vedehikā had a slave named Kāli who was diligent, deft, & neat in her work. The thought occurred to Kāli the slave: 'This good report about my Lady Vedehikā has circulated: "Lady Vedehikā is even-tempered. Lady Vedehikā is gentle. Lady Vedehikā is calm." Now, is anger present in my lady without showing, or is it absent? Or is it just because I'm diligent, deft, & neat in my work that the anger present in my lady doesn't show? Why don't I test her?'

"So Kāli the slave got up after daybreak. Then Lady Vedehikā said to her: 'Hey, Kāli!'

"'Yes, madam?'

"'Why did you get up after daybreak?'

"'No reason, madam.'

"'No reason, you wicked slave, and yet you get up after daybreak?' Angered & displeased, she scowled.

Then the thought occurred to Kāli the slave: 'Anger is present in my lady without showing, and not absent. And it's just because I'm diligent, deft, & neat in my work that the anger present in my lady doesn't show. Why don't I test her some more?'

"So Kāli the slave got up later in the day. Then Lady Vedehikā said to her: 'Hey, Kāli!'

"'Yes, madam?'

"'Why did you get up later in the day?'

"'No reason, madam.'

"'No reason, you wicked slave, and yet you get up later in the day?' Angered & displeased, she grumbled.

Then the thought occurred to Kāli the slave: 'Anger is present in my lady without showing, and not absent. And it's just because I'm diligent, deft, & neat in my work that the anger present in my lady doesn't show. Why don't I test her some more?'

"So Kāli the slave got up even later in the day. Then Lady Vedehikā said to her: 'Hey, Kāli!'

"Yes, madam?"

"Why did you get up even later in the day?"

"No reason, madam."

"No reason, you wicked slave, and yet you get up even later in the day?" Angered & displeased, she grabbed hold of a rolling pin and gave her a whack over the head, cutting it open.

Then Kāli the slave, with blood streaming from her cut-open head, went and denounced her mistress to the neighbors: 'See, ladies, the gentle one's handiwork? See the even-tempered one's handiwork? See the calm one's handiwork? How could she, angered & displeased with her only slave for getting up after daybreak, grab hold of a rolling pin and give her a whack over the head, cutting it open?'

"After that this evil report about Lady Vedehikā circulated: 'Lady Vedehikā is vicious. Lady Vedehikā is foul-tempered. Lady Vedehikā is violent.'

"In the same way, monks, a monk may be ever so gentle, ever so even-tempered, ever so calm, as long as he is not touched by disagreeable aspects of speech. But it is only when disagreeable aspects of speech touch him that he can truly be known as gentle, even-tempered, & calm. I don't call a monk easy to admonish if he is easy to admonish and makes himself easy to admonish only by reason of robes, almsfood, lodging, & medicinal requisites for curing the sick. Why is that? Because if he doesn't get robes, almsfood, lodging, & medicinal requisites for curing the sick, then he isn't easy to admonish and doesn't make himself easy to admonish. But if a monk is easy to admonish and makes himself easy to admonish purely out of esteem for the Dhamma, respect for the Dhamma, reverence for the Dhamma, then I call him easy to admonish. Thus, monks, you should train yourselves: 'We will be easy to admonish and make ourselves easy to admonish purely out of esteem for the Dhamma, respect for the Dhamma, reverence for the Dhamma.' That's how you should train yourselves.

"Monks, there are these five aspects of speech by which others may address you: timely or untimely, true or false, affectionate or harsh, beneficial or unbeneficial, with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. Others may address you in a timely way or an untimely way. They may address you with

what is true or what is false. They may address you in an affectionate way or a harsh way. They may address you in a beneficial way or an unbeneficial way. They may address you with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. In any event, you should train yourselves: 'Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person's welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.' That's how you should train yourselves.

"Suppose that a man were to come along carrying a hoe & a basket, saying, 'I will make this great earth be without earth.' He would dig here & there, scatter soil here & there, spit here & there, urinate here & there, saying, 'Be without earth. Be without earth.' Now, what do you think—would he make this great earth be without earth?"

"No, lord. Why is that? Because this great earth is deep & enormous. It can't easily be made to be without earth. The man would reap only a share of weariness & disappointment."

"In the same way, monks, there are these five aspects of speech by which others may address you: timely or untimely, true or false, affectionate or harsh, beneficial or unbeneficial, with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. Others may address you in a timely way or an untimely way. They may address you with what is true or what is false. They may address you in an affectionate way or a harsh way. They may address you in a beneficial way or an unbeneficial way. They may address you with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. In any event, you should train yourselves: 'Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person's welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will equal to the great earth—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.' That's how you should train yourselves.

"Suppose that a man were to come along carrying lac, yellow orpiment, indigo, or crimson, saying, 'I will draw pictures in

space, I will make pictures appear.' Now, what do you think—would he draw pictures in space & make pictures appear?"

"No, lord. Why is that? Because space is formless & featureless. It's not easy to draw pictures there and to make them appear. The man would reap only a share of weariness & disappointment."

"In the same way, monks, there are these five aspects of speech by which others may address you: timely or untimely, true or false, affectionate or harsh, beneficial or unbeneficial, with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. Others may address you in a timely way or an untimely way. They may address you with what is true or what is false. They may address you in an affectionate way or a harsh way. They may address you in a beneficial way or an unbeneficial way. They may address you with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. In any event, you should train yourselves: 'Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person's welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will equal to space—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.' That's how you should train yourselves.

"Suppose that a man were to come along carrying a burning grass torch and saying, 'With this burning grass torch I will heat up the river Ganges and make it boil.' Now, what do you think—would he, with that burning grass torch, heat up the river Ganges and make it boil?"

"No, lord. Why is that? Because the river Ganges is deep & enormous. It's not easy to heat it up and make it boil with a burning grass torch. The man would reap only a share of weariness & disappointment."

"In the same way, monks, there are these five aspects of speech by which others may address you: timely or untimely, true or false, affectionate or harsh, beneficial or unbeneficial, with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. Others may address you in a timely way or an untimely way. They may address you with what is true or what is false. They may address you in an affectionate way or a harsh way. They may address you in a beneficial way or an unbeneficial way. They may address you with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. In any event, you should train yourselves: 'Our minds will be

unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person's welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will equal to the river Ganges—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.' That's how you should train yourselves.

"Suppose there were a catskin bag—beaten, well-beaten, beaten through & through, soft, silky, free of rustling & crackling—and a man were to come along carrying a stick or shard and saying, 'With this stick or shard I will take this catskin bag—beaten, well-beaten, beaten through & through, soft, silky, free of rustling & crackling—and I will make it rustle & crackle.' Now, what do you think—would he, with that stick or shard, take that catskin bag—beaten, well-beaten, beaten through & through, soft, silky, free of rustling & crackling—and make it rustle & crackle?"

"No, lord. Why is that? Because the catskin bag is beaten, well-beaten, beaten through & through, soft, silky, free of rustling & crackling. It's not easy to make it rustle & crackle with a stick or shard. The man would reap only a share of weariness & disappointment."

"In the same way, monks, there are these five aspects of speech by which others may address you: timely or untimely, true or false, affectionate or harsh, beneficial or unbeneficial, with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. Others may address you in a timely way or an untimely way. They may address you with what is true or what is false. They may address you in an affectionate way or a harsh way. They may address you in a beneficial way or an unbeneficial way. They may address you with a mind of good-will or with inner hate. In any event, you should train yourselves: 'Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic to that person's welfare, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading him with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with him, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will equal to a catskin bag—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.' That's how you should train yourselves.

“Monks, even if bandits were to carve you up savagely, limb by limb, with a two-handled saw, he among you who let his heart get angered even at that would not be doing my bidding. Even then you should train yourselves: ‘Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic, with a mind of good will, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading these people with an awareness imbued with good will and, beginning with them, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an awareness imbued with good will—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.

“Monks, if you attend constantly to this admonition on the simile of the saw, do you see any aspects of speech, slight or gross, that you could not endure?”

“No, lord.”

“Then attend constantly to this admonition on the simile of the saw. That will be for your long-term welfare & happiness.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

See also: SN I.71; SN VI.2; SN XX.4-5; SN XXXV.88; SN XLII.8; AN VII.60; Ud II.4; Thag XVI.1

24 *Ratha-vinita Sutta* Relay Chariots

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary. Then a number of monks from the [Blessed One's] native land, having completed the Rains Retreat in the native land, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side.

As they were sitting there, the Blessed One said to them, "Monks, whom in our native land do the native-land monks—his companions in the holy life—esteem in this way: 'Modest himself, he gives talks to the monks on modesty. Contented himself, he gives talks to the monks on contentment. Secluded himself, he gives talks to the monks on seclusion. Unentangled himself, he gives talks to the monks on non-entanglement. Having aroused persistence in himself, he gives talks to the monks on arousing persistence. Consummate in his own virtue, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in virtue. Consummate in his own concentration, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in concentration. Consummate in his own discernment, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in discernment. Consummate in his own release, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in release. Consummate in his own knowledge & vision of release, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in the knowledge & vision of release.¹ He is one who exhorts, informs, instructs, urges, rouses, & encourages his companions in the holy life.'"

"Lord, the monk named Puṇṇa Mantāniputta (Mantāni's son) is esteemed by the native-land monks—his companions in the holy life—in this way: 'Modest himself, he gives talks to the monks on modesty. Contented himself, he gives talks to the monks on contentment. Secluded himself, he gives talks to the monks on seclusion. Unentangled himself, he gives talks to the monks on non-entanglement. Having aroused persistence in himself, he gives talks to the monks on arousing persistence. Consummate in his own virtue, he gives talks to the monks on

becoming consummate in virtue. Consummate in his own concentration, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in concentration. Consummate in his own discernment, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in discernment. Consummate in his own release, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in release. Consummate in his own knowledge & vision of release, he gives talks to the monks on becoming consummate in the knowledge & vision of release. He is one who exhorts, informs, instructs, urges, rouses, & encourages his companions in the holy life.”

Now at that time Ven. Sāriputta was sitting not far from the Blessed One. The thought occurred to him: “It’s a gain, a great gain for Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta that his knowledgeable companions in the holy life speak his praise point by point in the presence of the Teacher, and that the Teacher seconds that praise. Maybe sometime or other I, too, will go to meet with Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta; maybe I’ll have some conversation with him.”

Then the Blessed One, having stayed at Rājagaha as long as he liked, set out wandering to Sāvatti. Wandering by stages, he arrived there and stayed in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta heard, “The Blessed One has arrived at Sāvatti and is staying near Sāvatti in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery.” Setting his lodgings in order and taking his robes & bowl, he set out wandering to Sāvatti. Wandering by stages, he went to where the Blessed One was staying in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. On arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One instructed, urged, roused, & encouraged him with a Dhamma talk. Then Ven. Puṇṇa—instructed, urged, roused, & encouraged with the Blessed One’s Dhamma talk; delighting & approving of the Blessed One’s words—got up from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One, circumambulated him, and went to the Grove of the Blind for the day’s abiding.

Then a certain monk went to Ven. Sāriputta and, on arrival, said to him: “Friend Sāriputta, the monk named Puṇṇa Mantāniputta whom you have so often praised—instructed, urged, roused, & encouraged with the Blessed One’s Dhamma talk; delighting & approving of the Blessed One’s words—has gotten up from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One, circumambulated him, and has gone to the Grove of the Blind for the day’s abiding.”

So Ven. Sāriputta quickly picked up a sitting cloth and followed right behind Ven. Puṇṇa, keeping his head in sight. Ven. Puṇṇa plunged into the Grove of the Blind and sat down in the shade of a tree for the day's abiding. Ven. Sāriputta also plunged into the Grove of the Blind and sat down in the shade of a tree for the day's abiding.

Then in the evening, Ven. Sāriputta arose from his seclusion and went to Ven. Puṇṇa. On arrival, he exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to Ven. Puṇṇa, "My friend, is the holy life lived under the Blessed One?"

"Yes, my friend."

"And is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of virtue?"²

"No, my friend."

"Then is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of mind [concentration]?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of view?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of the overcoming of perplexity?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of knowledge & vision of the way?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is the holy life lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of knowledge & vision?"

"No, my friend."

"When asked if the holy life is lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of virtue, you say, 'No, my friend.' When asked if the holy life is lived under the Blessed One for the sake of purity in terms of mind ... view ... the overcoming of perplexity ... knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path ... knowledge & vision of the way ... knowledge & vision, you say,

'No, my friend.' For the sake of what, then, my friend, is the holy life lived under the Blessed One?"

"The holy life is lived under the Blessed One, my friend, for the sake of total Unbinding through lack of clinging."³

"But is purity in terms of virtue total Unbinding through lack of clinging?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is purity in terms of mind ... view ... the overcoming of perplexity ... knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path ... knowledge & vision of the way ... knowledge & vision total Unbinding through lack of clinging?"

"No, my friend."

"Then is total Unbinding through lack of clinging something apart from these qualities?"

"No, my friend."

"When asked if purity in terms of virtue ... mind ... view ... the overcoming of perplexity ... knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path ... knowledge & vision of the way ... knowledge & vision is total Unbinding through lack of clinging, you say, 'No, my friend.' But when asked if total Unbinding through lack of clinging is something apart from these qualities, you say, 'No, my friend.' Now how, my friend, is the meaning of these statements to be understood?"

"If the Blessed One had described purity in terms of virtue as total Unbinding through lack of clinging, my friend, then he would have defined something still accompanied by clinging as total Unbinding through lack of clinging. If he had described purity in terms of mind ... view ... the overcoming of perplexity ... knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path ... knowledge & vision of the way ... knowledge & vision as total Unbinding through lack of clinging, then he would have defined something still accompanied by clinging as total Unbinding through lack of clinging. But if total Unbinding through lack of clinging were apart from these qualities, then an ordinary person would be totally unbound, inasmuch as an ordinary person is apart from these qualities.

"So, my friend, I will give you an analogy, for there are cases where it's through analogies that knowledgeable people can understand the meaning of what is being said. Suppose that while King Pasenadi Kosala was staying at Sāvattṭhi, some urgent business were to arise at Sāketa; and that between

Sāvatti and Sāketa seven relay chariots were made ready for him. Coming out the door of the inner palace in Sāvatti, he would get in the first relay chariot. By means of the first relay chariot he would reach the second relay chariot. Getting out of the first relay chariot he would get in the second relay chariot. By means of the second relay chariot he would reach the third ... by means of the third he would reach the fourth ... by means of the fourth, the fifth ... by means of the fifth, the sixth ... by means of the sixth he would reach the seventh relay chariot. Getting out of the sixth relay chariot he would get in the seventh relay chariot. By means of the seventh relay chariot he would finally arrive at the door of the inner palace at Sāketa. As he arrived there, his friends & companions, relatives & kin would ask him, 'Great king, did you come from Sāvatti to the door of the inner palace in Sāketa by means of this chariot?' Answering in what way, my friend, would King Pasenadi Kosala answer them correctly?"

"Answering in this way, my friend, he would answer them correctly: 'Just now, as I was staying at Sāvatti, some urgent business arose at Sāketa; and between Sāvatti and Sāketa seven relay chariots were made ready for me. Coming out the door of the inner palace in Sāvatti, I got in the first relay chariot. By means of the first relay chariot I reached the second relay chariot. Getting out of the first relay chariot I got in the second relay chariot. By means of the second relay chariot I reached the third ... by means of the third I reached the fourth ... by means of the fourth, the fifth ... by means of the fifth, the sixth ... by means of the sixth I reached the seventh relay chariot. Getting out of the sixth relay chariot I got in the seventh relay chariot. By means of the seventh relay chariot I finally arrived at the door of the inner palace at Sāketa.' Answering in this way, he would answer them correctly."

"In the same way, my friend, purity in terms of virtue is simply for the sake of purity in terms of mind. Purity in terms of mind is simply for the sake of purity in terms of view. Purity in terms of view is simply for the sake of purity in terms of the overcoming of perplexity. Purity in terms of the overcoming of perplexity is simply for the sake of purity in terms of knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path. Purity in terms of knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path is simply for the sake of purity in terms of knowledge & vision of the way. Purity in

terms of knowledge & vision of the way is simply for the sake of purity in terms of knowledge & vision. Purity in terms of knowledge & vision is simply for the sake of total Unbinding through lack of clinging. And it's for the sake of total Unbinding through lack of clinging that the holy life is lived under the Blessed One."

When this was said, Ven. Sāriputta said to Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta: "What is your name, friend, and how do your companions in the holy life know you?"

"My name is Puṇṇa, friend, and my companions in the holy life know me as Mantāniputta."

"How amazing, my friend, how astounding, that Ven. Puṇṇa Mantāniputta has answered point by point with profound, profound discernment in the manner of a learned disciple who has rightly understood the Teacher's message! It's a gain, a great gain, for any of his companions in the holy life who get to see him and visit with him. Even if they had to carry him around on a cushion placed on top of their heads in order to see him and visit with him, it would be a gain for them, a great gain. And the fact that I have gotten to see him and visit with him has been a gain, a great gain for me."

When this was said, Ven. Puṇṇa said to Ven. Sāriputta: "And what is your name, friend, and how do your companions in the holy life know you?"

"My name is Upatissa, friend, and my companions in the holy life know me as Sāriputta."

"What? I've been talking with the disciple who is like the Teacher himself without knowing that it is Ven. Sāriputta? Had I known it was Ven. Sāriputta, I wouldn't have answered at such length. How amazing, my friend, how astounding, that Ven. Sāriputta has questioned point by point with profound, profound discernment in the manner of a learned disciple who has rightly understood the Teacher's message! It's a gain, a great gain, for any of his companions in the holy life who get to see him and visit with him. Even if they had to carry him around on a cushion placed on top of their heads in order to see him and visit with him, it would be a gain for them, a great gain. And the fact that I have gotten to see him and visit with him has been a gain, a great gain for me."

In this way did both great beings rejoice in each other's good words.

See also: Sn IV.9

NOTES

1. See AN X.69

2. Ven. Sāriputta and Ven. Puṇṇa speak of this list of seven purities—purity in terms of virtue, mind, view, the overcoming of perplexity, knowledge & vision of what is & is not the path, knowledge & vision of the way, and knowledge & vision—as if it were a teaching familiar to both of them, and yet nowhere else is it mentioned as a Buddhist teaching in the discourses. The Aṭṭhaka Vagga (Sn IV), however, mentions various non-Buddhist sectarians who spoke of purity as the goal of their teaching and who variously defined that purity in terms of virtue, view, knowledge, & practice. Perhaps the seven types of purity listed in this discourse were originally non-Buddhist teachings that were adopted by the early Buddhist community and adapted to their own purpose for showing that these seven forms of purity functioned, not as a goal of practice, but as stages along the path to that goal. At any rate, this list of the seven purities formed the framework for Buddhaghosa's Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purity), the cornerstone of his Pali commentaries, in which the seven purities cover all three parts of the threefold training in virtue, concentration, & discernment.

3. *Anupāda-parinibbāna*. The Commentary gives two interpretations of this term, both of them equating *anupāda* with *anupādāna* (without *upādāna*). The first, taking *upādāna* as *clinging*, is total Unbinding through lack of clinging. This, it says, refers to the fact that total Unbinding follows on the fruit of arahantship, which is devoid of clinging. The other meaning, taking *upādāna* as *sustenance*, is total Unbinding with no sustenance. This, it says, refers to the fact that total Unbinding is independent of any condition. For an explanation of these meanings of the word *upādāna*, see *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*, chapter 3.

See also: Sn IV.4; Sn IV.9

36 *Mahā-Saccaka Sutta* The Longer Discourse to Saccaka (Excerpt)

[The Buddha is speaking to Saccaka Aggivessana]

.... "Before my Awakening, when I was still an unawakened Bodhisatta, the thought occurred to me: 'Household life is confining, a dusty path. Life gone forth is the open air. It isn't easy, living in a home, to practice the holy life totally perfect, totally pure, a polished shell. What if I, having shaved off my hair & beard and putting on the ochre robe, were to go forth from the household life into homelessness?'

"So at a later time, when I was still young, black-haired, endowed with the blessings of youth in the first stage of life, having shaved off my hair & beard—though my parents wished otherwise and were grieving with tears on their faces—I put on the ochre robe and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

"Having gone forth in search of what might be skillful, seeking the unexcelled state of sublime peace, I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and, on arrival, said to him: 'Friend Kālāma, I want to practice in this doctrine & discipline.'

"When this was said, he replied to me, 'You may stay here, my friend. This doctrine is such that a wise person can soon enter & dwell in his own teacher's knowledge, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge.'

"It was not long before I quickly learned the doctrine. As far as mere lip-reciting & repetition, I could speak the words of knowledge, the words of the elders, and I could affirm that I knew & saw—I, along with others.

"I thought: 'It isn't through mere conviction alone that Āḷāra Kālāma declares, "I have entered & dwell in this Dhamma, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge." Certainly he dwells knowing & seeing this Dhamma.' So I went to him and said, 'To what extent do you declare that you have entered & dwell in this Dhamma?' When this was said, he declared the dimension of nothingness.

"I thought: 'Not only does Āḷāra Kālāma have conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, & discernment. I, too, have conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, & discernment. What if I were to endeavor to realize for myself the Dhamma that Āḷāra Kālāma declares he has entered & dwells in, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge.' So it was not long before I quickly entered & dwelled in that Dhamma, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge. I went to him and said, 'Friend Kālāma, is this the extent to which you have entered & dwell in this Dhamma, having realized it for yourself through direct knowledge?'

"'Yes, my friend....'

"'This, friend, is the extent to which I, too, have entered & dwell in this Dhamma, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge.'

"'It is a gain for us, my friend, a great gain for us, that we have such a companion in the holy life. So the Dhamma I declare I have entered & dwell in, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge, is the Dhamma you declare you have entered & dwell in, having realized it for yourself through direct knowledge. And the Dhamma you declare you have entered & dwell in, having realized it for yourself through direct knowledge, is the Dhamma I declare I have entered & dwell in, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge. The Dhamma I know is the Dhamma you know; the Dhamma you know is the Dhamma I know. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come friend, let us now lead this community together.'

"In this way did Āḷāra Kālāma, my teacher, place me, his pupil, on the same level with himself and pay me great honor. But the thought occurred to me, 'This Dhamma leads not to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to stilling, to direct knowledge, to Awakening, nor to Unbinding, but only to reappearance in the dimension of nothingness.' So, dissatisfied with that Dhamma, I left.

"In search of what might be skillful, seeking the unexcelled state of sublime peace, I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and, on arrival, said to him: 'Friend Uddaka, I want to practice in this doctrine & discipline.'

"When this was said, he replied to me, 'You may stay here, my friend. This doctrine is such that a wise person can soon

enter & dwell in his own teacher's knowledge, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge.'

"It was not long before I quickly learned the doctrine. As far as mere lip-reciting & repetition, I could speak the words of knowledge, the words of the elders, and I could affirm that I knew & saw—I, along with others.

"I thought: 'It wasn't through mere conviction alone that Rāma declared, "I have entered & dwell in this Dhamma, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge." Certainly he dwelled knowing & seeing this Dhamma.' So I went to Uddaka and said, 'To what extent did Rāma declare that he had entered & dwelled in this Dhamma?' When this was said, Uddaka declared the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.

"I thought: 'Not only did Rāma have conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, & discernment. I, too, have conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, & discernment. What if I were to endeavor to realize for myself the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered & dwelled in, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge.' So it was not long before I quickly entered & dwelled in that Dhamma, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge. I went to Uddaka and said, 'Friend Uddaka, is this the extent to which Rāma entered & dwelled in this Dhamma, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge?'

"'Yes, my friend....'

"'This, friend, is the extent to which I, too, have entered & dwell in this Dhamma, having realized it for myself through direct knowledge.'

"'It is a gain for us, my friend, a great gain for us, that we have such a companion in the holy life. So the Dhamma Rāma declared he entered & dwelled in, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge, is the Dhamma you declare you have entered & dwell in, having realized it for yourself through direct knowledge. And the Dhamma you declare you have entered & dwell in, having realized it for yourself through direct knowledge, is the Dhamma Rāma declared he entered & dwelled in, having realized it for himself through direct knowledge. The Dhamma he knew is the Dhamma you know; the Dhamma you know is the Dhamma he knew. As he was, so are you; as you are, so was he. Come friend, lead this community.'

"In this way did Uddaka Rāmaputta, my companion in the holy life, place me in the position of teacher and pay me great honor. But the thought occurred to me, 'This Dhamma leads not to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to stilling, to direct knowledge, to Awakening, nor to Unbinding, but only to reappearance in the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.' So, dissatisfied with that Dhamma, I left.

"In search of what might be skillful, seeking the unexcelled state of sublime peace, I wandered by stages in the Magadhan country and came to the military town of Uruvelā. There I saw some delightful countryside, with an inspiring forest grove, a clear-flowing river with fine, delightful banks, and villages for alms-going on all sides. The thought occurred to me: 'How delightful is this countryside, with its inspiring forest grove, clear-flowing river with fine, delightful banks, and villages for alms-going on all sides. This is just right for the striving of a clansman intent on striving.' So I sat down right there, thinking, 'This is just right for striving.'

"Then these three similes—spontaneous, never before heard—appeared to me. Suppose there were a wet, sappy piece of timber lying in the water, and a man were to come along with an upper fire-stick, thinking, 'I'll light a fire. I'll produce heat.' Now what do you think? Would he be able to light a fire and produce heat by rubbing the upper fire-stick in the wet, sappy timber lying in the water?"

"No, Master Gotama. Why is that? Because the timber is wet & sappy, and besides it is lying in the water. Eventually the man would reap only his share of weariness & disappointment."

"So it is with any priest or contemplative who does not live withdrawn from sensuality in body & mind, and whose desire, infatuation, urge, thirst, & fever for sensuality is not relinquished & stilled within him: Whether or not he feels painful, racking, piercing feelings due to his striving [for Awakening], he is incapable of knowledge, vision, & unexcelled self-awakening. This was the first simile—spontaneous, never before heard—that appeared to me.

"Then a second simile—spontaneous, never before heard—appeared to me. Suppose there were a wet, sappy piece of timber lying on land far from water, and a man were to come along with an upper fire-stick, thinking, 'I'll light a fire. I'll produce heat.' Now what do you think? Would he be able to light a

fire and produce heat by rubbing the upper fire-stick in the wet, sappy timber lying on land far from water?"

"No, Master Gotama. Why is that? Because the timber is wet & sappy, even though it is lying on land far from water. Eventually the man would reap only his share of weariness & disappointment."

"So it is with any priest or contemplative who lives withdrawn from sensuality in body only, but whose desire, infatuation, urge, thirst, & fever for sensuality is not relinquished & stilled within him: Whether or not he feels painful, racking, piercing feelings due to his striving, he is incapable of knowledge, vision, & unexcelled self-awakening. This was the second simile—spontaneous, never before heard—that appeared to me.

"Then a third simile—spontaneous, never before heard—appeared to me. Suppose there were a dry, sapless piece of timber lying on land far from water, and a man were to come along with an upper fire-stick, thinking, 'I'll light a fire. I'll produce heat.' Now what do you think? Would he be able to light a fire and produce heat by rubbing the upper fire-stick in the dry, sapless timber lying on land?"

"Yes, Master Gotama. Why is that? Because the timber is dry & sapless, and besides it is lying on land far from water."

"So it is with any priest or contemplative who lives withdrawn from sensuality in body & mind, and whose desire, infatuation, urge, thirst, & fever for sensuality is relinquished & stilled within him: Whether or not he feels painful, racking, piercing feelings due to his striving, he is capable of knowledge, vision, & unexcelled self-awakening. This was the third simile—spontaneous, never before heard—that appeared to me.

"I thought: 'Suppose that I, clenching my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth, were to beat down, constrain, & crush my mind with my awareness.' So, clenching my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, & crushed by mind with my awareness. Just as a strong man, seizing a weaker man by the head or the throat or the shoulders, would beat him down, constrain, & crush him, in the same way I beat down, constrained, & crushed my mind with my awareness. As I did so, sweat poured from my armpits. And although tireless persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established, my body was aroused

& uncalm because of the painful exertion. But the painful feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

"I thought: 'Suppose I were to become absorbed in the trance of non-breathing.' So I stopped the in-breaths & out-breaths in my nose & mouth. As I did so, there was a loud roaring of winds coming out my earholes, just like the loud roar of winds coming out of a smith's bellows So I stopped the in-breaths & out-breaths in my nose & mouth & ears. As I did so, extreme forces sliced through my head, just as if a strong man were slicing my head open with a sharp sword Extreme pains arose in my head, just as if a strong man were tightening a turban made of tough leather straps around my head Extreme forces carved up my stomach cavity, just as if a butcher or his apprentice were to carve up the stomach cavity of an ox There was an extreme burning in my body, just as if two strong men, grabbing a weaker man by the arms, were to roast & broil him over a pit of hot embers. And although tireless persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established, my body was aroused & uncalm because of the painful exertion. But the painful feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

"Devas, on seeing me, said, 'Gotama the contemplative is dead.' Other devas said, 'He isn't dead, he's dying.' Others said, 'He's neither dead nor dying, he's an arahant, for this is the way arahants live.'

"I thought: 'Suppose I were to practice going altogether without food.' Then devas came to me and said, 'Dear sir, please don't practice going altogether without food. If you go altogether without food, we'll infuse divine nourishment in through your pores, and you will survive on that.' I thought, 'If I were to claim to be completely fasting while these devas are infusing divine nourishment in through my pores, I would be lying.' So I dismissed them, saying, 'Enough.'

"I thought: 'Suppose I were to take only a little food at a time, only a handful at a time of bean soup, lentil soup, vetch soup, or pea soup.' So I took only a little food at a time, only a handful at a time of bean soup, lentil soup, vetch soup, or pea soup. My body became extremely emaciated. Simply from my eating so little, my limbs became like the jointed segments of vine stems or bamboo stems My backside became like a camel's hoof My spine stood out like a string of beads My ribs jutted out like the jutting rafters of an old, run-down barn

.... The gleam of my eyes appeared to be sunk deep in my eye sockets like the gleam of water deep in a well My scalp shriveled & withered like a green bitter gourd, shriveled & withered in the heat & the wind The skin of my belly became so stuck to my spine that when I thought of touching my belly, I grabbed hold of my spine as well; and when I thought of touching my spine, I grabbed hold of the skin of my belly as well If I urinated or defecated, I fell over on my face right there Simply from my eating so little, if I tried to ease my body by rubbing my limbs with my hands, the hair—rotted at its roots—fell from my body as I rubbed, simply from eating so little.

“People on seeing me would say, ‘Gotama the contemplative is black. Other people would say, ‘Gotama the contemplative isn’t black, he’s brown.’ Others would say, ‘Gotama the contemplative is neither black nor brown, he’s golden-skinned. So much had the clear, bright color of my skin deteriorated, simply from eating so little.

“I thought: ‘Whatever priests or contemplatives in the past have felt painful, racking, piercing feelings due to their striving, this is the utmost. None have been greater than this. Whatever priests or contemplatives in the future will feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to their striving, this is the utmost. None will be greater than this. Whatever priests or contemplatives in the present are feeling painful, racking, piercing feelings due to their striving, this is the utmost. None is greater than this. But with this racking practice of austerities I haven’t attained any superior human state, any distinction in knowledge or vision worthy of the noble ones. Could there be another path to Awakening?’

“I thought: ‘I recall once, when my father the Sakyan was working, and I was sitting in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, then—quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities—I entered & remained in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. Could that be the path to Awakening?’ Then, following on that memory, came the realization: ‘That is the path to Awakening. I thought: ‘So why am I afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensuality, nothing to do with unskillful mental qualities?’ I thought: ‘I am no longer afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensuality, nothing to do with unskillful mental qualities, but that pleasure is not easy to achieve with a body so extremely

emaciated. Suppose I were to take some solid food: some rice & porridge.' So I took some solid food: some rice & porridge. Now five monks had been attending on me, thinking, 'If Gotama, our contemplative, achieves some higher state, he will tell us.' But when they saw me taking some solid food—some rice & porridge—they were disgusted and left me, thinking, 'Gotama the contemplative is living luxuriously. He has abandoned his exertion and is backsliding into abundance.'

"So when I had taken solid food and regained strength, then—quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, I entered & remained in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain. With the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, I entered & remained in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain. With the fading of rapture I remained in equanimity, mindful & alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. I entered & remained in the third jhāna, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain. With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—I entered & remained in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of recollecting my past lives. I recollected my manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two...five, ten...fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many eons of cosmic contraction, many eons of cosmic expansion, many eons of cosmic contraction & expansion: 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my

food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose here.' Thus I remembered my manifold past lives in their modes & details.

"This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of the passing away & reappearance of beings. I saw—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech, & mind, who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech & mind, who did not revile the noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.' Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—I saw beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

"This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations. I discerned, as it was actually present, that 'This is stress ... This is the origination of stress ... This is the cessation of stress ... This is the way leading

to the cessation of stress ... These are fermentations ... This is the origination of fermentations ... This is the cessation of fermentations ... This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the fermentation of sensuality, released from the fermentation of becoming, released from the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, 'Released.' I discerned that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain." ...

See also: MN 4; SN XXXVI.7; SN LII.10; AN III.39; AN IV.252

44 Cūla-Vedalla Sutta

The Shorter Set of Questions & Answers

The Buddha praised Dhammadinnā the nun as the foremost Dhamma teacher among his nun disciples. In this discourse she answers questions put to her by a layman—Visākha—who, according to the Commentary, was her former husband, a merchant of Rājagaha, and a non-returner.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary. Then Visākha the lay follower went to Dhammadinnā the nun and, on arrival, having bowed down to her, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to her, "'Self-identification, self-identification,' it is said, lady. Which self-identification is described by the Blessed One?"

"There are these five clinging-aggregates, friend Visākha: form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling as a clinging-aggregate, perception as a clinging-aggregate, fabrications as a clinging-aggregate, consciousness as a clinging-aggregate. These five clinging-aggregates are the self-identification described by the Blessed One."

Saying, "Yes, lady," Visākha the lay follower delighted & rejoiced in what Dhammadinnā the nun had said. Then he asked her a further question: "'The origination of self-identification, the origination of self-identification,' it is said, lady. Which origination of self-identification is described by the Blessed One?"

"The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now here & now there—i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming: This, friend Visākha, is the origination of self-identification described by the Blessed One."

"The cessation of self-identification, the cessation of self-identification,' it is said, lady. Which cessation of self-identification is described by the Blessed One?"

"The remainderless fading & cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, & letting go of that very craving: This, friend Visākha, is the cessation of self-identification described by the Blessed One."

"The way of practice leading to the cessation of self-identification, the way of practice leading to the cessation of self-identification,' it is said, lady. Which way of practice leading to the cessation of self-identification is described by the Blessed One?"

"Precisely this noble eightfold path—right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration: This, friend Visākha, is the way of practice leading to the cessation of self-identification described by the Blessed One."

"Is it the case, lady, that clinging is the same thing as the five clinging-aggregates or is it something separate?"

"Friend Visākha, neither is clinging the same thing as the five clinging-aggregates, nor is it something separate. Whatever desire & passion there is with regard to the five clinging-aggregates, that is the clinging there."

"But, lady, how does self-identification come about?"

"There is the case, friend Visākha, where an ordinary uninstructed person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for men of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—assumes form (the body) to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form.

"He assumes feeling to be the self....

"He assumes perception to be the self....

"He assumes (mental) fabrications to be the self....

"He assumes consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. This is how self-identification comes about."

"But, lady, how does self-identification not come about?"

"There is the case where a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—who has regard for noble ones, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma; who has regard for men of integrity, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma—does not assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form.

"He doesn't assume feeling to be the self....

"He doesn't assume perception to be the self....

"He doesn't assume fabrications to be the self...."

"He doesn't assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. This is how self-identification does not come about."

"Now, again, lady, what is the noble eightfold path?"

"This is the noble eightfold path, friend Visākha: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration."

"Is the noble eightfold path fabricated or unfabricated?"

"The noble eightfold path is fabricated."

"And are the three aggregates [of virtue, concentration, & discernment] included under the noble eightfold path, lady, or is the noble eightfold path included under the three aggregates?"

"The three aggregates are not included under the noble eightfold path, friend Visākha, but the noble eightfold path is included under the three aggregates. Right speech, right action, & right livelihood come under the aggregate of virtue. Right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration come under the aggregate of concentration. Right view & right resolve come under the aggregate of discernment."

"Now what is concentration, lady, what qualities are its themes, what qualities are its requisites, and what is its development?"

"Singleness of mind is concentration, friend Visākha; the four frames of reference are its themes; the four right exertions are its requisites; and any cultivation, development, & pursuit of these qualities is its development."

"Now, lady, what are fabrications?"

"These three fabrications, friend Visākha: bodily fabrications, verbal fabrications, & mental fabrications."

"But what are bodily-fabrications? What are verbal fabrications? What are mental fabrications?"

"In-&-out breaths are bodily fabrications. Directed thought & evaluation are verbal fabrications. Perceptions & feelings are mental fabrications."

"But why are in-&-out breaths bodily fabrications? Why are directed thought & evaluation verbal fabrications? Why are perceptions & feelings mental fabrications?"

"In-&-out breaths are bodily; these are things tied up with the body. That's why in-&-out breaths are bodily fabrications. Having first directed one's thoughts and made an evaluation,

one then breaks out into speech. That's why directed thought & evaluation are verbal fabrications. Perceptions & feelings are mental; these are things tied up with the mind. That's why perceptions & feelings are mental fabrications."

"Now, lady, how does the attainment of the cessation of perception & feeling come about?"

"The thought does not occur to a monk as he is attaining the cessation of perception & feeling that 'I am about to attain the cessation of perception & feeling' or that 'I am attaining the cessation of perception & feeling' or that 'I have attained the cessation of perception & feeling.' Instead, the way his mind has previously been developed leads him to that state."

"But when a monk is attaining the cessation of perception & feeling, which things cease first: bodily fabrications, verbal fabrications, or mental fabrications?"

"When a monk is attaining the cessation of perception & feeling, friend Visākha, verbal fabrications cease first, then bodily fabrications, then mental fabrications."¹

"Now, lady, how does emergence from the cessation of perception & feeling come about?"

"The thought doesn't occur to a monk as he is emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling that 'I am about to emerge from the cessation of perception & feeling' or that 'I am emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling' or that 'I have emerged from the cessation of perception & feeling.' Instead, the way his mind has previously been developed leads him to that state."

"But when a monk is emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling, which things arise first: bodily fabrications, verbal fabrications, or mental fabrications?"

"When a monk is emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling, friend Visākha, mental fabrications arise first, then bodily fabrications, then verbal fabrications."

"When a monk has emerged from the cessation of perception & feeling, lady, how many contacts make contact?"

"When a monk has emerged from the cessation of perception & feeling, friend Visākha, three contacts make contact: contact with emptiness, contact with the signless, & contact with the undirected."²

"When a monk has emerged from the cessation of perception & feeling, lady, to what does his mind lean, to what does it tend, to what does it incline?"

"When a monk has emerged from the cessation of perception & feeling, friend Visākha, his mind leans to seclusion, tends to seclusion, inclines to seclusion."³

"Now, lady, how many kinds of feeling are there?"

"These three kinds of feeling: pleasant feeling, painful feeling, & neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling."

"What is pleasant feeling? What is painful feeling? What is neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling?"

"Whatever is experienced physically or mentally as pleasant & gratifying is pleasant feeling. Whatever is experienced physically or mentally as painful & hurting is painful feeling. Whatever is experienced physically or mentally as neither gratifying nor hurting is neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling."

"In what way is pleasant feeling pleasant, lady, and in what way painful?"

"Pleasant feeling is pleasant in remaining, & painful in changing, friend Visākha. Painful feeling is painful in remaining & pleasant in changing. Neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling is pleasant in occurring together with knowledge, and painful in occurring without knowledge."

"What obsession gets obsessed with pleasant feeling? What obsession gets obsessed painful feeling? What obsession gets obsessed with neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling?"

"Passion-obsession gets obsessed with pleasant feeling. Resistance-obsession gets obsessed with painful feeling. Ignorance-obsession gets obsessed with neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling."

"Does passion-obsession get obsessed with all pleasant feeling? Does resistance-obsession get obsessed with all painful feeling? Does ignorance-obsession get obsessed with all neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling?"

"No...."

"But what is to be abandoned with regard to pleasant feeling? What is to be abandoned with regard to painful feeling? What is to be abandoned with regard to neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling?"

"Passion-obsession is to be abandoned with regard to pleasant feeling. Resistance-obsession is to be abandoned with regard to painful feeling. Ignorance-obsession is to be abandoned with regard to neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling."

"Is passion-obsession to be abandoned with regard to all pleasant feeling? Is resistance-obsession to be abandoned with

regard to all painful feeling? Is ignorance-obsession to be abandoned with regard to all neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling?"

"No There is the case where a monk—quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful qualities—enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With that he abandons passion. No passion-obsession gets obsessed there.⁴ There is the case where a monk considers, 'O when will I enter & remain in the dimension that those who are noble now enter & remain in?' And as he nurses this yearning for the unexcelled liberations, there arises within him sorrow based on that yearning. With that he abandons resistance. No resistance-obsession gets obsessed there.⁵ There is the case where a monk, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. With that he abandons ignorance. No ignorance-obsession gets obsessed there."⁶

"Now what, lady, lies on the other side of pleasant feeling?"

"Passion lies on the other side of pleasant feeling."

"And what lies on the other side of painful feeling?"

"Resistance lies on the other side of painful feeling."⁷

"What lies on the other side of neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling?"

"Ignorance lies on the other side of neither-pleasant-nor-painful feeling."

"What lies on the other side of ignorance?"

"Clear knowing lies on the other side of ignorance."

"What lies on the other side of clear knowing?"

"Release lies on the other side of clear knowing."

"What lies on the other side of release?"

"Unbinding lies on the other side of release."

"What lies on the other side of Unbinding?"

"You've gone too far, friend Visākha. You can't keep holding on up to the limit of questions. For the holy life plunges into Unbinding, culminates in Unbinding, has Unbinding as its final end. If you wish, go to the Blessed One and ask him the meaning of these things. Whatever he says, that's how you should remember it."

Then Visākha the lay follower, delighting & rejoicing in what Dhammānā the nun had said, bowed down to her and,

keeping her to his right, went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he told the Blessed One the full extent of the conversation he had had with Dhammadinnā the nun. When this was said, the Blessed One said to him, "Dhammadinnā the nun is wise, Visākha, a woman of great discernment. If you had asked me those things, I would have answered you in the same way she did. That is the meaning of those things. That is how you should remember it."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Visākha the lay follower delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTES

1. Verbal fabrication grows still on attaining the second jhāna; bodily fabrication grows still on attaining the fourth jhāna; mental fabrication grows still on attaining the cessation of perception & feeling.

2. Emptiness, the signless, & the undirected are names for a state of concentration that lies on the threshold of Unbinding. They differ only in how they are approached. According to the Commentary, they color one's first apprehension of Unbinding: a meditator who has been focusing on the theme of inconstancy will first apprehend Unbinding as signless; one who has been focusing on the theme of stress will first apprehend it as undirected; one who has been focusing on the theme of not-self will first apprehend it as emptiness.

3. According to the Commentary, "seclusion" here stands for Unbinding. On emerging from the cessation of perception & feeling, and having had contact with emptiness/the signless/the undirected, the mind inclines naturally to a direct experience of Unbinding.

4. In other words, once the pleasure of the first jhāna has been used as a basis for giving rise to the discernment that leads to arahantship, the mind has no further passion-obsession with pleasant feeling. (The Commentary says that this is true at attainment of non-returning, but this must be a mistake, as non-returners are still subject to passion for form and formless phenomena.)

5. Once this sorrow has been used as a basis for giving rise to the discernment that leads to non-returning, the mind has no further resistance-obsession with painful feeling.

6. Once this feeling of neither pleasure nor pain has been used as a basis for giving rise to the discernment that leads to arahantship, the mind has no further ignorance-obsession with feelings of neither pleasure nor pain.

7. This reading follows the Thai edition of the Pali Canon. The PTS edition gives the first two questions and answers of this exchange as follows:

“Now what, lady, lies on the other side of pleasant feeling?”

“Painful feeling lies on the other side of pleasant feeling.”

“And what lies on the other side of painful feeling?”

“Pleasant feeling lies on the other side of painful feeling.”

For some reason, the editors of neither edition seem to have been aware of the reading in the other edition.

See also: MN 148; SN XXII.121; SN XXXVI.6; SNXXXVI.11; AN V.200; AN VIII.63; AN VII.11; AN VII.12

45 *Cūla-Dhammasamādāna Sutta* The Shorter Discourse on Adopting Practices

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvattṭhi in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

"Monks, there are these four ways of taking on practices. Which four? There is the taking on of a practice that is pleasant in the present but yields pain in the future. There is the taking on of a practice that is painful in the present and yields pain in the future. There is the taking on of a practice that is painful in the present but yields pleasure in the future. There is the taking on of a practice that is pleasant in the present and yields pleasure in the future.

"Now, what is the taking on of a practice that is pleasant in the present but yields pain in the future? There are some priests & contemplatives who hold to a doctrine, a view like this: 'There is no harm in sensual pleasures.' Thus they meet with their downfall through sensual pleasures. They consort with women wanderers who wear their hair coiled in a topknot.

"The thought occurs to them: 'Now what future danger concerning sensuality do those [other] priests & contemplatives foresee that they have spoken of the relinquishment of sensuality and describe the full comprehension of sensuality? It's pleasant, the touch of this woman wanderer's soft, tender, downy arm.'

"Thus they meet with their downfall through sensuality. Then, having met with their downfall through sensuality, with the break-up of the body, after death, they go to a bad bourn, destitution, the realm of the hungry shades, hell. There they experience sharp, burning pains. They say: '*This* was the future danger concerning sensuality those priests & contemplatives foresaw that they spoke of the relinquishment of sensuality and described the full comprehension of sensuality. It's because of sensuality, as a result of sensuality, that we're now experiencing these sharp, burning pains.'

"Just as if a māluvā creeper pod were to burst open in the last month of the hot season, and a māluvā creeper seed were to fall at the foot of a sal-tree. The deity living in the tree would become frightened, apprehensive, & anxious. Her friends & companions, relatives & kin—garden deities, forest deities, tree deities, deities living in herbs, grass, & forest monarchs—would gather together to console her: 'Have no fear, have no fear. In all likelihood a peacock is sure to swallow this māluvā creeper seed, or a deer will eat it, or a brush fire will burn it up, or woodsmen will pick it up, or termites will carry it off, and anyway it probably isn't really a seed.'

"And then no peacock swallowed it, no deer ate it, no brush fire burned it up, no woodsmen picked it up, no termites carried it off, and it really *was* a seed. Watered by a rain-laden cloud, it sprouted in due course and curled its soft, tender, downy tendril around the sal-tree.

"The thought occurred to the deity living in the sal-tree: 'Now what future danger did my friends & companions, relatives & kin—garden deities, forest deities, tree deities, deities living in herbs, grass, & forest monarchs—foresee in that māluvā creeper seed that they gathered together to console me: "Have no fear, have no fear. In all likelihood a peacock is sure to swallow this māluvā creeper seed, or a deer will eat it, or a brush fire will burn it up, or woodsmen will pick it up, or termites will carry it off, and anyway it probably isn't really a seed." It's pleasant, the touch of this māluvā creeper's soft, tender, downy tendril.'

"Then the creeper, having enwrapped the sal-tree, having made a canopy over it, & cascading down around it, caused the massive limbs of the sal-tree to come crashing down. The thought occurred to the deity living in the tree: 'This was the future danger my friends...foresaw in that māluvā creeper seed, that they gathered together to console me.... It's because of that māluvā creeper seed that I'm now experiencing sharp, burning pains.'

"In the same way, monks, there are some priests & contemplatives who hold to a doctrine, a view like this: 'There is no harm in sensuality.' Thus they meet with their downfall through sensuality. They consort with women wanderers who wear their hair coiled in a topknot.

"The thought occurs to them: 'Now what future danger do those [other] priests & contemplatives foresee that they teach

the relinquishment & analysis of sensuality? It's pleasant, the touch of this woman wanderer's soft, tender, downy arm.'

Thus they meet with their downfall through sensuality. Then, having met with their downfall through sensuality, with the break-up of the body, after death, they go to a bad bourn, destitution, the realm of the hungry shades, hell. There they experience sharp, burning pains. They say: '*This* was the future danger concerning sensuality those priests & contemplatives foresaw that they spoke of the relinquishment of sensuality and described the full comprehension of sensuality. It's because of sensuality, as a result of sensuality, that we're now experiencing these sharp, burning pains.'

"This is called the taking on of a practice that is pleasant in the present but yields pain in the future.

"And what is the taking on of a practice that is painful in the present and yields pain in the future?

"There is the case where someone is a cloth-less¹ ascetic, rejecting conventions, licking his hands, not coming when asked, not staying when asked. He doesn't consent to food brought to him or food dedicated to him or to an invitation to a meal. He accepts nothing from the mouth of a pot or from the mouth of a bowl. He accepts nothing from across a stick, across a pestle, from two eating together, from a pregnant woman, from a nursing woman, from a woman lying with a man, from a food collection, from where a dog is waiting or flies are buzzing. He takes no fish or meat. He drinks no liquor, wine, or fermented drink. He limits himself to one house & one morsel a day, or two houses & two morsels ... seven houses & seven morsels. He lives on one saucerful a day, two ... seven saucerfuls a day. He takes food once a day, once every two days ... once every seven days, and so one up to a fortnight, devoted to regulating his intake of food. He is an eater of greens, millet, wild rice, hide-parings, moss, rice bran, rice-scum, sesame flour, grass, or cow dung. He lives on forest roots & berries. He feeds on fallen fruits. He wears hemp, canvas, shrouds, refuse rags, tree bark, antelope hide, strips of antelope hide, kusa-grass garments, bark garments, wood-shaving garments, head-hair garments, animal wool, owl's wings. He is a hair-&-beard puller, one devoted to the practice of pulling out his hair & beard. He is a stander, one who rejects seats. He is a hands-around-the-knees sitter, one devoted to the exertion of sitting with his hands around his knees. He is a

spike-mattresser, one who makes his bed on a bed of spikes. He is a third-time-in-the-evening bather, one who stays devoted to the practice of bathing in water. Thus in a variety of ways he stays devoted to the practice of tormenting & afflicting the body. With the break-up of the body, after death, he goes to a bad bourn, destitution, the realm of the hungry shades, hell.

"This is called the taking on of a practice that is painful in the present and yields pain in the future.

"And what is the taking on of a practice that is painful in the present but yields pleasure in the future? There is the case of a person who is normally strongly passionate by nature and frequently experiences pain & grief born of passion; a person who is normally strongly aversive by nature and frequently experiences pain & grief born of aversion; a person who is normally strongly deluded by nature and frequently experiences pain & grief born of delusion. Even though touched with pain & grief, crying with a tearful face, he lives the holy life that is utterly perfect, surpassingly pure. With the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the good bourn, the heavenly world. This is called the taking on of a practice that is painful in the present but yields pleasure in the future.

"And what is the taking on of a practice that is pleasant in the present and yields pleasure in the future? There is the case of a person who is not normally strongly passionate by nature and doesn't frequently experience pain & grief born of passion; who is not normally strongly aversive by nature and doesn't frequently experience pain & grief born of aversion; who is not normally strongly deluded by nature and doesn't frequently experience pain & grief born of delusion. Quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities, he enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful & fully aware, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—

he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. With the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the good bourn, the heavenly world. This is called the taking on of a practice that is pleasant in the present and yields pleasure in the future.

“And these are the four ways of taking on practices.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTE: 1. Acelaka: “One without cloth.” Often translated as “naked,” but as the description shows, such a person might wear garments made of something other than cloth.

See also: AN IV.115; AN VI.63

58 *Abhaya-rāja-kumāra Sutta* To Prince Abhaya

In this discourse, the Buddha shows the factors that go into deciding what is and is not worth saying. The main factors are three: whether or not a statement is true, whether or not it is beneficial, and whether or not it is pleasing to others. The Buddha himself would state only those things that are true and beneficial, and would have a sense of time for when pleasing and unpleasing things should be said. Notice that the possibility that a statement might be untrue yet beneficial is not even entertained.

This discourse also shows, in action, the Buddha's teaching on the four categories of questions and how they should be answered (see AN IV.42). The prince asks him two questions, and in both cases he responds first with a counter-question, before going on to give an analytical answer to the first question and a categorical answer to the second. Each counter-question serves a double function: to give the prince a familiar reference point for understanding the answer about to come, and also to give him a chance to speak of his own intelligence and good motives. This provides him with the opportunity to save face after being stymied in his desire to best the Buddha in argument. The Commentary notes that the prince had placed his infant son on his lap as a cheap debater's trick: if the Buddha had put him in an uncomfortable spot in the debate, the prince would have pinched his son, causing him to cry and thus effectively bringing the debate to a halt. The Buddha, however, uses the infant's presence to remove any sense of a debate and also to make an effective point. Taking Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta's image of a dangerous object stuck in the throat, he applies it to the infant, and then goes on to make the point that, unlike the Nigaṇṭhas—who were content to leave someone with a potentially lethal object in the throat—the Buddha's desire is to remove such objects, out of sympathy and compassion. In this way, he brings the prince over to his side, converting a potential opponent into a disciple.

Thus this discourse is not only about right speech, but also shows right speech in action.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary.

Then Prince Abhaya went to Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta and on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta said to him, "Come, now, prince. Refute the words of the contemplative Gotama, and this admirable report about you will spread afar: 'The words of the contemplative Gotama—so mighty, so powerful—were refuted by Prince Abhaya!'"

"But how, venerable sir, will I refute the words of the contemplative Gotama—so mighty, so powerful?"

"Come now, prince. Go to the contemplative Gotama and on arrival say this: 'Venerable sir, would the Tathāgata say words that are unendearing & disagreeable to others?' If the contemplative Gotama, thus asked, answers, 'The Tathāgata would say words that are unendearing & disagreeable to others,' then you should say, 'Then how is there any difference between you, venerable sir, and ordinary people? For even ordinary people say words that are unendearing & disagreeable to others.' But if the contemplative Gotama, thus asked, answers, 'The Tathāgata would not say words that are unendearing & disagreeable to others,' then you should say, 'Then how, venerable sir, did you say of Devadatta that "Devadatta is headed for destitution, Devadatta is headed for hell, Devadatta will boil for an eon, Devadatta is incurable"'? For Devadatta was upset & disgruntled at those words of yours.' When the contemplative Gotama is asked this two-pronged question by you, he won't be able to swallow it down or spit it up. Just as if a two-horned chestnut¹ were stuck in a man's throat: he would not be able to swallow it down or spit it up. In the same way, when the contemplative Gotama is asked this two-pronged question by you, he won't be able to swallow it down or spit it up."

Responding, "As you say, venerable sir," Prince Abhaya got up from his seat, bowed down to Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta, circumambulated him, and then went to the Blessed One. On arrival, he bowed down to the Blessed One and sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he glanced up at the sun and thought, "Today is not the time to refute the Blessed One's words. Tomorrow in my own home I will overturn the Blessed One's words." So he

said to the Blessed One, "May the Blessed One, together with three others, acquiesce to my offer of tomorrow's meal."

The Blessed One acquiesced with silence.

Then Prince Abhaya, understanding the Blessed One's acquiescence, got up from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One, circumambulated him, and left.

Then, after the night had passed, the Blessed One early in the morning put on his robes and, carrying his bowl and outer robe, went to Prince Abhaya's home. On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready. Prince Abhaya, with his own hand, served & satisfied the Blessed One with fine staple & non-staple foods. Then, when the Blessed One had eaten and had removed his hand from his bowl, Prince Abhaya took a lower seat and sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "Venerable sir, would the Tathāgata say words that are unendearing & disagreeable to others?"

"Prince, there is no categorical yes-or-no answer to that."

"Then right here, venerable sir, the Nigaṇṭhas are destroyed."

"But prince, why do you say, 'Then right here, venerable sir, the Nigaṇṭhas are destroyed'?"

"Just yesterday, venerable sir, I went to Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta and ... he said to me ... 'Come now, prince. Go to the contemplative Gotama and on arrival say this: "Venerable sir, would the Tathāgata say words that are unendearing & disagreeable to others?" Just as if a two-horned chestnut were stuck in a man's throat: he would not be able to swallow it down or spit it up. In the same way, when the contemplative Gotama is asked this two-pronged question by you, he won't be able to swallow it down or spit it up.'"

Now at that time a baby boy was lying face-up on the prince's lap. So the Blessed One said to the prince, "What do you think, prince: If this young boy, through your own negligence or that of the nurse, were to take a stick or a piece of gravel into its mouth, what would you do?"

"I would take it out, venerable sir. If I couldn't get it out right away, then holding its head in my left hand and crooking a finger of my right, I would take it out, even if it meant drawing blood. Why is that? Because I have sympathy for the young boy."

"In the same way, prince:

[1] In the case of words that the Tathāgata knows to be unfactual, untrue, unbeneficial (or: not connected with the goal), unendearing & disagreeable to others, he does not say them.

[2] In the case of words that the Tathāgata knows to be factual, true, unbeneficial, unendearing & disagreeable to others, he does not say them.

[3] In the case of words that the Tathāgata knows to be factual, true, beneficial, but unendearing & disagreeable to others, he has a sense of the proper time for saying them.

[4] In the case of words that the Tathāgata knows to be unfactual, untrue, unbeneficial, but endearing & agreeable to others, he does not say them.

[5] In the case of words that the Tathāgata knows to be factual, true, unbeneficial, but endearing & agreeable to others, he does not say them.

[6] In the case of words that the Tathāgata knows to be factual, true, beneficial, and endearing & agreeable to others, he has a sense of the proper time for saying them. Why is that? Because the Tathāgata has sympathy for living beings."

"Venerable sir, when wise nobles or priests, householders or contemplatives, having formulated questions, come to the Tathāgata and ask him, does this line of reasoning appear to his awareness beforehand—'If those who approach me ask this, I—thus asked—will answer in this way'—or does the Tathāgata come up with the answer on the spot?"

"In that case, prince, I will ask you a counter-question. Answer as you see fit. What do you think: are you skilled in the parts of a chariot?"

"Yes, venerable sir. I am skilled in the parts of a chariot."

"And what do you think: When people come & ask you, 'What is the name of this part of the chariot?' does this line of reasoning appear to your awareness beforehand—'If those who approach me ask this, I—thus asked—will answer in this way'—or do you come up with the answer on the spot?"

"Venerable sir, I am renowned for being skilled in the parts of a chariot. All the parts of a chariot are well-known to me. I come up with the answer on the spot."

"In the same way, prince, when wise nobles or priests, householders or contemplatives, having formulated questions, come to the Tathāgata and ask him, he comes up with the answer on the spot. Why is that? Because the property of the Dhamma is thoroughly penetrated by the Tathāgata. From his thorough penetration of the property of the Dhamma, he comes up with the answer on the spot."²

When this was said, Prince Abhaya said to the Blessed One: “Magnificent, venerable sir! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has the Blessed One—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life.”

NOTES

1. A two-horned chestnut is the nut of a tree (*Trapa bicornis*) that grows in south and southeast Asia. Its shell looks like the head of a water buffalo, with two nasty, curved “horns” on either side.

2. This statement is apparently related to the more abstract statement in AN IV.24, that what the Tathāgata knows is not “established” in him. In other words, he does not define himself or the awakened mind in terms of knowledge or views, even concerning the Dhamma, although the knowledge that led to his awakening is fully available for him to draw on at any time.

See also: SN XI.5; AN IV.42; AN IV.183; AN V.198; AN X.176; Sn III.3

61 Ambalatthikā-rāhulovāda Sutta Instructions to Rāhula at Mango Stone

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha, at the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Ground.

At that time Ven. Rāhula¹ was staying at the Mango Stone. Then the Blessed One, arising from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to where Ven. Rāhula was staying at the Mango Stone. Ven. Rāhula saw him coming from afar and, on seeing him, set out a seat & water for washing the feet. The Blessed One sat down on the seat set out and, having sat down, washed his feet. Ven. Rāhula, bowing down to the Blessed One, sat down to one side.

Then the Blessed One, having left a little bit of the remaining water in the water dipper, said to Ven. Rāhula, "Rāhula, do you see this little bit of remaining water left in the water dipper?"

"Yes sir."

"That's how little of a contemplative² there is in anyone who feels no shame at telling a deliberate lie."

Having tossed away the little bit of remaining water, the Blessed One said to Ven. Rāhula, "Rāhula, do you see how this little bit of remaining water is tossed away?"

"Yes, sir."

"Whatever there is of a contemplative in anyone who feels no shame at telling a deliberate lie is tossed away just like that."

Having turned the water dipper upside down, the Blessed One said to Ven. Rāhula, "Rāhula, do you see how this water dipper is turned upside down?"

"Yes, sir."

"Whatever there is of a contemplative in anyone who feels no shame at telling a deliberate lie is turned upside down just like that."

Having turned the water dipper right-side up, the Blessed One said to Ven. Rāhula, "Rāhula, do you see how empty & hollow this water dipper is?"

"Yes, sir."

"Whatever there is of a contemplative in anyone who feels no shame at telling a deliberate lie is empty & hollow just like that.

"Rāhula, it's like a royal elephant: immense, pedigreed, accustomed to battles, its tusks like chariot poles. Having gone into battle, it uses its forefeet & hindfeet, its forequarters & hindquarters, its head & ears & tusks & tail, but will simply hold back its trunk. The elephant trainer notices that and thinks, 'This royal elephant has not given up its life to the king.' But when the royal elephant... having gone into battle, uses its forefeet & hindfeet, its forequarters & hindquarters, its head & ears & tusks & tail & his trunk, the trainer notices that and thinks, 'This royal elephant has given up its life to the king. There is nothing it will not do.'

"The same holds true with anyone who feels no shame in telling a deliberate lie: There is no evil, I tell you, he will not do. Thus, Rāhula, you should train yourself, 'I will not tell a deliberate lie even in jest.'

"What do you think, Rāhula: What is a mirror for?"

"For reflection, sir."

"In the same way, Rāhula, bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts are to be done with repeated reflection.

"Whenever you want to perform a bodily act, you should reflect on it: 'This bodily act I want to perform—would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful bodily act, with painful consequences, painful results?' If, on reflection, you know that it would lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it would be an unskillful bodily act with painful consequences, painful results, then any bodily act of that sort is absolutely unfit for you to do. But if on reflection you know that it would not cause affliction ... it would be a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then any bodily act of that sort is fit for you to do.

"While you are performing a bodily act, you should reflect on it: 'This bodily act I am doing—is it leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful bodily act, with painful consequences, painful results?' If, on reflection, you know that it is leading to self-affliction, to affliction of others, or both ... you should give it up. But if on reflection you know that it is not ... you may continue with it.

"Having performed a bodily act, you should reflect on it If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction

of others, or to both; it was an unskillful bodily act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should confess it, reveal it, lay it open to the Teacher or to a knowledgeable companion in the holy life. Having confessed it ... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities.

"Whenever you want to perform a verbal act, you should reflect on it: 'This verbal act I want to perform—would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful verbal act, with painful consequences, painful results?' If, on reflection, you know that it would lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it would be an unskillful verbal act with painful consequences, painful results, then any verbal act of that sort is absolutely unfit for you to do. But if on reflection you know that it would not cause affliction ... it would be a skillful verbal action with happy consequences, happy results, then any verbal act of that sort is fit for you to do.

"While you are performing a verbal act, you should reflect on it: 'This verbal act I am doing—is it leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful verbal act, with painful consequences, painful results?' If, on reflection, you know that it is leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both... you should give it up. But if on reflection you know that it is not... you may continue with it.

"Having performed a verbal act, you should reflect on it If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful verbal act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should confess it, reveal it, lay it open to the Teacher or to a knowledgeable companion in the holy life. Having confessed it... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful verbal action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities.

"Whenever you want to perform a mental act, you should reflect on it: 'This mental act I want to perform—would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful mental act, with painful consequences, painful results?' If, on reflection, you know that it would lead to self-affliction, to the

affliction of others, or to both; it would be an unskillful mental act with painful consequences, painful results, then any mental act of that sort is absolutely unfit for you to do. But if on reflection you know that it would not cause affliction ... it would be a skillful mental action with happy consequences, happy results, then any mental act of that sort is fit for you to do.

"While you are performing a mental act, you should reflect on it: 'This mental act I am doing—is it leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful mental act, with painful consequences, painful results?' If, on reflection, you know that it is leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both ... you should give it up. But if on reflection you know that it is not ... you may continue with it.

"Having performed a mental act, you should reflect on it If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful mental act with painful consequences, painful results, then you should feel distressed, ashamed, & disgusted with it. Feeling distressed ... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction ... it was a skillful mental action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities.

"Rāhula, all those priests & contemplatives in the course of the past who purified their bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts, did it through repeated reflection on their bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts in just this way.

"All those priests & contemplatives in the course of the future who will purify their bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts, will do it through repeated reflection on their bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts in just this way.

"All those priests & contemplatives at present who purify their bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts, do it through repeated reflection on their bodily acts, verbal acts, & mental acts in just this way.

"Thus, Rāhula, you should train yourself: 'I will purify my bodily acts through repeated reflection. I will purify my verbal acts through repeated reflection. I will purify my mental acts through repeated reflection.' That's how you should train yourself."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Rāhula delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTES

1. Rāhula: the Buddha's son, who according to the Commentary was seven years old when this discourse was delivered to him.

2. *Sāmañña*. Throughout ancient cultures, the terminology of music was used to describe the moral quality of people and acts. Discordant intervals or poorly-tuned musical instruments were metaphors for evil; harmonious intervals and well-tuned instruments were metaphors for good. In Pali, the term *sama*—"even"—described an instrument tuned on-pitch. There is a famous passage where the Buddha reminds Soṇa Koḷivisa—who had been over-exerting himself in the practice—that a lute sounds appealing only if the strings are neither too taut nor too lax, but "evenly" tuned. This image would have a special resonance with the Buddha's teaching on the middle way. It also adds meaning to the term *samaṇa*—monk or contemplative—which the texts frequently mention as being derived from *sama*. The word *sāmañña*—"evenness," the quality of being in tune—also means the quality of being a contemplative: the true contemplative is always in tune with what is proper and good.

See also: MN 24; MN 95; AN III.66; AN IV.115; AN V.140; AN VII.80; AN VIII.53; Iti 25

63 *Cūla-Māluṅkyovada Sutta* The Shorter Instructions to Māluṅkya

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvattṭhi at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then, as Ven. Māluṅkyaputta was alone in seclusion, this train of thought arose in his awareness: "These positions that are undisclosed, set aside, discarded by the Blessed One—"The cosmos is eternal,' 'The cosmos is not eternal,' 'The cosmos is finite,' 'The cosmos is infinite,' 'The soul & the body are the same,' 'The soul is one thing and the body another,' 'After death a Tathāgata exists,' 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist,' 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist,' 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist'—I don't approve, I don't accept that the Blessed One has not disclosed them to me. I'll go ask the Blessed One about this matter. If he discloses to me that 'The cosmos is eternal,' that 'The cosmos is not eternal,' that 'The cosmos is finite,' that 'The cosmos is infinite,' that 'The soul & the body are the same,' that 'The soul is one thing and the body another,' that 'After death a Tathāgata exists,' that 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist,' that 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist,' or that 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' then I will live the holy life under him. If he does not disclose to me that 'The cosmos is eternal,' ... or that 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' then I will renounce the training and return to the lower life."

Then, when it was evening, Ven. Māluṅkyaputta arose from seclusion and went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "Lord, just now, as I was alone in seclusion, this train of thought arose in my awareness: 'These positions that are undisclosed, set aside, discarded by the Blessed One ... I don't approve, I don't accept that the Blessed One has not disclosed them to me. I'll go ask the Blessed One about this matter. If he discloses to me that "The cosmos is eternal," ... or that "After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist," then I will live the holy life under him. If

he does not disclose to me that "The cosmos is eternal," ... or that "After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist," then I will renounce the training and return to the lower life.'

"Lord, if the Blessed One knows that 'The cosmos is eternal,' then may he disclose to me that 'The cosmos is eternal.' If he knows that 'The cosmos is not eternal,' then may he disclose to me that 'The cosmos is not eternal.' But if he doesn't know or see whether the cosmos is eternal or not eternal, then, in one who is unknowing & unseeing, the straightforward thing is to admit, 'I don't know. I don't see.' If he doesn't know or see whether after death a Tathāgata exists ... does not exist ... both exists & does not exist ... neither exists nor does not exist,' then, in one who is unknowing & unseeing, the straightforward thing is to admit, 'I don't know. I don't see.'"

"Mālunkyaputta, did I ever say to you, 'Come, Mālunkyaputta, live the holy life under me, and I will disclose to you that 'The cosmos is eternal,' or 'The cosmos is not eternal,' or 'The cosmos is finite,' or 'The cosmos is infinite,' or 'The soul & the body are the same,' or 'The soul is one thing and the body another,' or 'After death a Tathāgata exists,' or 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist,' or 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist,' or 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist?'"

"No, lord."

"And did you ever say to me, 'Lord, I will live the holy life under the Blessed One and [in return] he will disclose to me that 'The cosmos is eternal,' or 'The cosmos is not eternal,' or 'The cosmos is finite,' or 'The cosmos is infinite,' or 'The soul & the body are the same,' or 'The soul is one thing and the body another,' or 'After death a Tathāgata exists,' or 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist,' or 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist,' or 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist?'"

"No, lord."

"Then that being the case, foolish man, who are you to be claiming grievances/making demands of anyone?"

"Mālunkyaputta, if anyone were to say, 'I won't live the holy life under the Blessed One as long as he does not disclose to me that "The cosmos is eternal," ... or that "After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,"' the man would die and those things would still remain undisclosed by the Tathāgata."

"It's just as if a man were wounded with an arrow thickly smeared with poison. His friends & companions, kinsmen & relatives would provide him with a surgeon, and the man would say, 'I won't have this arrow removed until I know whether the man who wounded me was a noble warrior, a priest, a merchant, or a worker.' He would say, 'I won't have this arrow removed until I know the given name & clan name of the man who wounded me ... until I know whether he was tall, medium, or short ... until I know whether he was dark, ruddy-brown, or golden-colored ... until I know his home village, town, or city ... until I know whether the bow with which I was wounded was a long bow or a crossbow ... until I know whether the bowstring with which I was wounded was fiber, bamboo threads, sinew, hemp, or bark ... until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded was wild or cultivated ... until I know whether the feathers of the shaft with which I was wounded were those of a vulture, a stork, a hawk, a peacock, or another bird ... until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded was bound with the sinew of an ox, a water buffalo, a langur, or a monkey.' He would say, 'I won't have this arrow removed until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded was that of a common arrow, a curved arrow, a barbed, a calf-toothed, or an oleander arrow.' The man would die and those things would still remain unknown to him.

"In the same way, if anyone were to say, 'I won't live the holy life under the Blessed One as long as he does not disclose to me that "The cosmos is eternal," ... or that "After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,"' the man would die and those things would still remain undisclosed by the Tathāgata.

"Māluṅkyaputta, it's not the case that when there is the view, 'The cosmos is eternal,' there is the living of the holy life. And it's not the case that when there is the view, 'The cosmos is not eternal,' there is the living of the holy life. When there is the view, 'The cosmos is eternal,' and when there is the view, 'The cosmos is not eternal,' there is still the birth, there is the aging, there is the death, there is the sorrow, lamentation, pain, despair, & distress whose destruction I make known right in the here & now.

"It's not the case that when there is the view, 'The cosmos is finite,' there is the living of the holy life. And it's not the case that when there is the view, 'The cosmos is infinite,' there is the

living of the holy life. When there is the view, 'The cosmos is finite,' and when there is the view, 'The cosmos is infinite,' there is still the birth, there is the aging, there is the death, there is the sorrow, lamentation, pain, despair, & distress whose destruction I make known right in the here & now.

"It's not the case that when there is the view, 'The soul & the body are the same,' there is the living of the holy life. And it's not the case that when there is the view, 'The soul is one thing and the body another,' there is the living of the holy life. When there is the view, 'The soul & the body are the same,' and when there is the view, 'The soul is one thing and the body another,' there is still the birth, there is the aging, there is the death, there is the sorrow, lamentation, pain, despair, & distress whose destruction I make known right in the here & now.

"It's not the case that when there is the view, 'After death a Tathāgata exists,' there is the living of the holy life. And it's not the case that when there is the view, 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist,' there is the living of the holy life. And it's not the case that when there is the view, 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist,' there is the living of the holy life. And it's not the case that when there is the view, 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist' there is the living of the holy life. When there is the view, 'After death a Tathāgata exists' ... 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist' ... 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist' ... 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' there is still the birth, there is the aging, there is the death, there is the sorrow, lamentation, pain, despair, & distress whose destruction I make known right in the here & now.

"So, Mālunkyaputta, remember what is undisclosed by me as undisclosed, and what is disclosed by me as disclosed. And what is undisclosed by me? 'The cosmos is eternal,' is undisclosed by me. 'The cosmos is not eternal,' is undisclosed by me. 'The cosmos is finite' ... 'The cosmos is infinite' ... 'The soul & the body are the same' ... 'The soul is one thing and the body another' ... 'After death a Tathāgata exists' ... 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist' ... 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist' ... 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist,' is undisclosed by me.

"And why are they undisclosed by me? Because they are not connected with the goal, are not fundamental to the holy life.

They do not lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation, calming, direct knowledge, self-awakening, Unbinding. That's why they are undisclosed by me.

"And what is disclosed by me? 'This is stress,' is disclosed by me. 'This is the origination of stress,' is disclosed by me. 'This is the cessation of stress,' is disclosed by me. 'This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress,' is disclosed by me. And why are they disclosed by me? Because they are connected with the goal, are fundamental to the holy life. They lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation, calming, direct knowledge, self-awakening, Unbinding. That's why they are disclosed by me.

"So, Māluṅkyaputta, remember what is undisclosed by me as undisclosed, and what is disclosed by me as disclosed."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Māluṅkyaputta delighted in the Blessed One's words.

See also: SN XII.35; SN XXII.85-86; AN X.93; AN X.96; Sn IV.9

72 *Aggi-vacchagotta Sutta* To Vacchagotta on Fire

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Sāvatti, at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's park. Then the wanderer Vacchagotta went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he asked the Blessed One: "How is it, Master Gotama, does Master Gotama hold the view: 'The cosmos is eternal: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'The cosmos is not eternal: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'The cosmos is finite: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'The cosmos is infinite: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'The soul & the body are the same: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'The soul is one thing and the body another: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'After death a Tathāgata exists: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless'?"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'After death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless?'"

"... no ..."

"Then does Master Gotama hold the view: 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless?'"

"... no ..."

"How is it, Master Gotama, when Master Gotama is asked if he holds the view 'the cosmos is eternal...' 'after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist: only this is true, anything otherwise is worthless,' he says '... no ...' in each case. Seeing what drawback, then, is Master Gotama thus entirely dissociated from each of these ten positions?"

"Vaccha, the position that 'the cosmos is eternal' is a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. It is accompanied by suffering, distress, despair, & fever, and it does not lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation; to calm, direct knowledge, full awakening, Unbinding.

"The position that 'the cosmos is not eternal' ...

"... 'the cosmos is finite' ...

"... 'the cosmos is infinite' ...

"... 'the soul & the body are the same' ...

"... 'the soul is one thing and the body another' ...

"... 'after death a Tathāgata exists' ...

"... 'after death a Tathāgata does not exist' ...

"... 'after death a Tathāgata both exists & does not exist' ...

"... 'after death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist' ... does not lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation; to calm, direct knowledge, full awakening, Unbinding."

"Does Master Gotama have any position at all?"

"A 'position,' Vaccha, is something a Tathāgata has done away with. What a Tathāgata sees is this: 'Such is form, such its origin, such its disappearance; such is feeling, such its origin, such its disappearance; such is perception...such are mental fabrications...such is consciousness, such its origin, such its disappearance.' Because of this, I say, a Tathāgata—with the ending, fading out, cessation, renunciation, & relinquishment of all constructions, all excogitations, all I-making & mine-making & obsessions with conceit—is, through lack of clinging/sustenance, released."

"But, Master Gotama, the monk whose mind is thus released: Where does he reappear?"

"Reappear, Vaccha, doesn't apply."

"In that case, Master Gotama, he does not reappear."

"Does not reappear, Vaccha, doesn't apply."

"...both does & does not reappear."

"...doesn't apply."

"...neither does nor does not reappear."

"...doesn't apply."

"How is it, Master Gotama, when Master Gotama is asked if the monk reappears ... does not reappear ... both does & does not reappear ... neither does nor does not reappear, he says, '... doesn't apply' in each case. At this point, Master Gotama, I am befuddled; at this point, confused. The modicum of clarity coming to me from your earlier conversation is now obscured."

"Of course you're befuddled, Vaccha. Of course you're confused. Deep, Vaccha, is this phenomenon, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. For those with other views, other practices, other satisfactions, other aims, other teachers, it is difficult to know. That being the case, I will now put some questions to you. Answer as you see fit. How do you construe this, Vaccha: If a fire were burning in front of you, would you know that, 'This fire is burning in front of me'?"

"...yes..."

"And suppose someone were to ask you, Vaccha, 'This fire burning in front of you, dependent on what is it burning?' Thus asked, how would you reply?"

"...I would reply, 'This fire burning in front of me is burning dependent on grass & timber as its sustenance.'"

"If the fire burning in front of you were to go out, would you know that, 'This fire burning in front of me has gone out'?"

"...yes..."

"And suppose someone were to ask you, 'This fire that has gone out in front of you, in which direction from here has it gone? East? West? North? Or south?' Thus asked, how would you reply?"

"That doesn't apply, Master Gotama. Any fire burning dependent on a sustenance of grass & timber, being un nourished—from having consumed that sustenance and not being offered any other—is classified simply as 'out' (unbound)."

“Even so, Vaccha, any form by which one describing the Tathāgata would describe him: That the Tathāgata has abandoned, its root destroyed, like an uprooted palm tree, deprived of the conditions of existence, not destined for future arising. Freed from the classification of form, Vaccha, the Tathāgata is deep, boundless, hard to fathom, like the sea. ‘Reappears’ doesn’t apply. ‘Does not reappear’ doesn’t apply. ‘Both does & does not reappear’ doesn’t apply. ‘Neither reappears nor does not reappear’ doesn’t apply.

“Any feeling.... Any perception.... Any mental fabrication....

“Any consciousness by which one describing the Tathāgata would describe him: That the Tathāgata has abandoned, its root destroyed, like an uprooted palm tree, deprived of the conditions of existence, not destined for future arising. Freed from the classification of consciousness, Vaccha, the Tathāgata is deep, boundless, hard to fathom, like the sea. ‘Reappears’ doesn’t apply. ‘Does not reappear’ doesn’t apply. ‘Both does & does not reappear’ doesn’t apply. ‘Neither reappears nor does not reappear’ doesn’t apply.”

When this was said, the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Blessed One: “Master Gotama, it is as if there were a great sal-tree not far from a village or town: From inconstancy, its branches and leaves would wear away, its bark would wear away, its sapwood would wear away, so that on a later occasion—divested of branches, leaves, bark, & sapwood—it would stand as pure heartwood. In the same way, Master Gotama’s words are divested of branches, leaves, bark, & sapwood, and stand as pure heartwood.

“Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life.”

See also: DN 15; SN VI.15; SN XXII.36; SN XXII.85-86; AN IV.24; AN X.81; AN X.93; Ud VIII.10; Iti 63; Iti 112; Sn IV.1; Sn V.6; Thig V.10

75 *Māgandiya Sutta* To *Māgandiya* (Excerpt)

In this passage, the Buddha discusses the nature of true pleasure and true health with a wanderer belonging to a hedonist sect.

.... “*Māgandiya*, suppose that there was a leper covered with sores and infections, devoured by worms, picking the scabs off the openings of his wounds with his nails, cauterizing his body over a pit of glowing embers. His friends, companions, & relatives would take him to a doctor. The doctor would concoct medicine for him, and thanks to the medicine he would be cured of his leprosy: well & happy, free, master of himself, going wherever he liked. Then suppose two strong men, having seized hold of him by both arms, were to drag him to a pit of glowing embers. What do you think? Wouldn’t he twist his body this way & that?”

“Yes, Master Gotama. Why is that? The fire is painful to the touch, very hot & scorching.”

“Now what do you think, *Māgandiya*? Is the fire painful to the touch, very hot & scorching, only now, or was it also that way before?”

“Both now & before is it painful to the touch, very hot & scorching, Master Gotama. It’s just that when the man was a leper covered with sores and infections, devoured by worms, picking the scabs off the openings of his wounds with his nails, his faculties were impaired, which was why, even though the fire was actually painful to the touch, he had the skewed perception of ‘pleasant.’”

“In the same way, *Māgandiya*, sensuality in the past was painful to the touch, very hot & scorching; sensuality in the future will be painful to the touch, very hot & scorching; sensuality at present is painful to the touch, very hot & scorching; but when beings are not free from passion for sensuality—devoured by sensual craving, burning with sensual fever—their faculties are impaired, which is why, even though sensuality is actually painful to the touch, they have the skewed perception of ‘pleasant.’”

"Now suppose that there was a leper covered with sores & infections, devoured by worms, picking the scabs off the openings of his wounds with his nails, cauterizing his body over a pit of glowing embers. The more he cauterized his body over the pit of glowing embers, the more disgusting, foul-smelling, & putrid the openings of his wounds would become, and yet he would feel a modicum of enjoyment & satisfaction because of the itchiness of his wounds. In the same way, beings not free from passion for sensuality—devoured by sensual craving, burning with sensual fever—indulge in sensuality. The more they indulge in sensuality, the more their sensual craving increases and the more they burn with sensual fever, and yet they feel a modicum of enjoyment & satisfaction dependent on the five strings of sensuality.

"Now what do you think, Māgandiya? Have you ever seen or heard of a king or king's minister—enjoying himself, provided & endowed with the five strings of sensuality, without abandoning sensual craving, without removing sensual fever—who has dwelt or will dwell or is dwelling free from thirst, his mind inwardly at peace?"

"No, Master Gotama."

"Very good, Māgandiya. Neither have I ever seen or heard of a king or king's minister—enjoying himself, provided & endowed with the five strings of sensuality, without abandoning sensual craving, without removing sensual fever—who has dwelt or will dwell or is dwelling free from thirst, his mind inwardly at peace. But whatever priests or contemplatives who have dwelt or will dwell or are dwelling free from thirst, their minds inwardly at peace, all have done so having realized—as it actually is present—the origination & disappearance, the allure, the danger, & the escape from sensuality, having abandoned sensual craving and removed sensual fever."

Then at that moment the Blessed One exclaimed,

"Freedom from disease: the foremost good fortune.

Unbinding: the foremost ease.

The eightfold: the foremost of paths

going to the

Deathless,

Secure.'

When this was said, Māgandiya the wanderer said to the Blessed One, "It's amazing, Master Gotama. It's astounding, how this, too, is well-stated by Master Gotama: 'Freedom from disease: the foremost good fortune. Unbinding: the foremost ease.' We have also heard this said by earlier wanderers in the lineage of our teachers: 'Freedom from disease: the foremost good fortune. Unbinding: the foremost ease.' This agrees with that."

"But as for what you have heard said by earlier wanderers in the lineage of your teachers, Māgandiya—'Freedom from disease: the foremost good fortune. Unbinding: the foremost ease'—which freedom from disease is that, which Unbinding?"

When this was said, Māgandiya the wanderer rubbed his own limbs with his hand. "This is that freedom from disease, Master Gotama," he said. "This is that Unbinding. For I am now free from disease, happy, and nothing afflicts me."

"Māgandiya, it's just as if there were a man blind from birth who couldn't see black objects ... white ... blue ... yellow ... red ... or pink objects; who couldn't see even or uneven places, the stars, the sun, or the moon. He would hear a man with good eyesight saying, 'How wonderful, good sirs, is a white cloth—beautiful, spotless, & clean.' He would go in search of something white. Then another man would fool him with a grimy, oil-stained rag: 'Here, my good man, is a white cloth—beautiful, spotless, & clean.' The blind man would take it and put it on. Having put it on, gratified, he would exclaim words of gratification, 'How wonderful, good sirs, is a white cloth—beautiful, spotless, & clean.' Now what do you think, Māgandiya? When that man blind from birth took the grimy, oil-stained rag and put it on; and, having put it on, gratified, exclaimed words of gratification, 'How wonderful, good sirs, is a white cloth—beautiful, spotless, & clean': Did he do so knowing & seeing, or out of faith in the man with good eyesight?"

"Of course he did it not knowing & not seeing, Master Gotama, but out of faith in the man with good eyesight."

"In the same way, Māgandiya, the wanderers of other sects are blind & eyeless. Without knowing freedom from disease, without seeing Unbinding, they still speak this verse:

'Freedom from disease:	the foremost good fortune.
Unbinding:	the foremost ease.'

This verse was stated by earlier worthy ones, fully self-awakened:

Freedom from disease:	the foremost good fortune.
Unbinding:	the foremost ease.
The eightfold:	the foremost of paths
	going to the
	Deathless,
	Secure.'

"But now it has gradually become a verse of ordinary people.

"This body, Māgandiya, is a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction. And yet you say, with reference to this body, which is a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction: 'This is that freedom from disease, Master Gotama. This is that Unbinding,' for you don't have the noble vision with which you would know freedom from disease and see Unbinding."

"I'm convinced, Master Gotama, that you can teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I would know freedom from disease, that I would see Unbinding."

"Māgandiya, it's just as if there were a man blind from birth who couldn't see black objects ... white ... blue ... yellow ... red ... the sun or the moon. His friends, companions, & relatives would take him to a doctor. The doctor would concoct medicine for him, but in spite of the medicine his eyesight would not appear or grow clear. What do you think, Māgandiya? Would that doctor have nothing but his share of weariness & disappointment?"

"Yes, Master Gotama."

"In the same way, Māgandiya, if I were to teach you the Dhamma—'This is that freedom from disease; this is that Unbinding'—and you on your part did not know freedom from disease or see Unbinding, that would be wearisome for me; that would be troublesome for me."

"I'm convinced, Master Gotama, that you can teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I would know freedom from disease, that I would see Unbinding."

"Māgandiya, it's just as if there were a man blind from birth who couldn't see black objects ... white ... blue ... yellow ... red ... the sun or the moon. Now suppose that a certain man were to take a grimy, oil-stained rag and fool him, saying, 'Here, my good man, is a white cloth—beautiful, spotless, & clean.' The blind man would take it and put it on.

"Then his friends, companions, & relatives would take him to a doctor. The doctor would concoct medicine for him: purges from above & purges from below, ointments & counter-ointments and treatments through the nose. And thanks to the medicine his eyesight would appear & grow clear. Then together with the arising of his eyesight, he would abandon whatever passion & delight he felt for that grimy, oil-stained rag. And he would regard that man as an enemy & no friend at all, and think that he deserved to be killed. 'My gosh, how long have I been fooled, cheated, & deceived by that man & his grimy, oil-stained rag!—"Here, my good man, is a white cloth—beautiful, spotless, & clean."'

"In the same way, Māgandiya, if I were to teach you the Dhamma—"This is that freedom from Disease; this is that Unbinding"—and you on your part were to know that freedom from Disease and see that Unbinding, then together with the arising of your eyesight you would abandon whatever passion & delight you felt with regard for the five clinging-aggregates. And it would occur to you, 'My gosh, how long have I been fooled, cheated, & deceived by this mind! For in clinging, it was just form that I was clinging to ... it was just feeling ... just perception ... just fabrications ... just consciousness that I was clinging to. With my clinging as a requisite condition, there arises becoming ... birth ... aging & death ... sorrow, lamentation, pains, distresses, & despairs. And thus is the origin of this entire mass of stress.'"

"I'm convinced, Master Gotama, that you can teach me the Dhamma in such a way that I might rise up from this seat cured of my blindness."

"In that case, Māgandiya, associate with men of integrity. When you associate with men of integrity, you will hear the true Dhamma. When you hear the true Dhamma, you will practice the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma. When you practice the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, you will know & see for yourself: 'These things are diseases, cancers, arrows. And here is where diseases, cancers, & arrows cease without trace. With the cessation of my clinging comes the cessation of becoming. With the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth. With the cessation of birth then aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of suffering & stress.'"

When this was said, Māgandiya the wanderer said, "Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the community of monks. Let me obtain the going forth in Master Gotama's presence, let me obtain admission."

"Anyone, Māgandiya, who has previously belonged to another sect and who desires the going forth & admission in this doctrine & discipline, must first undergo probation for four months. If, at the end of four months, the monks feel so moved, they give him the going forth & admit him to the monk's state. But I know distinctions among individuals in this matter."

"Master Gotama, if anyone who has previously belonged to another sect and desires the going forth & admission in this doctrine & discipline must first undergo probation for four months; and if, at the end of four months, the monks feel so moved, they give him the going forth & admit him to the monk's state; then I am willing to undergo probation for four years. If, at the end of four years, the monks feel so moved, let them give me the going forth & admit me to the monk's state."

Then Māgandiya the wanderer received the going forth & the admission in the Blessed One's presence. And not long after his admission—dwelling alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute—he in no long time reached & remained in the supreme goal of the holy life, for which clansmen rightly go forth from home into homelessness, knowing & realizing it for himself in the here & now. He knew: "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world." And thus Ven. Māgandiya became another one of the Arahants.

See also: SN XXII.1

82 *Raṭṭhapāla Sutta* About *Raṭṭhapāla* (Excerpt)

.... Then King Koravya said to his gamekeeper: "Clean up the Migācira pleasure garden. I am going there to see the beautiful grounds."

"As you say, your majesty," the gamekeeper responded to the king. As he was cleaning up Migācira he saw Ven. Raṭṭhapāla sitting in the shade of a certain tree for the day's abiding. On seeing him, he went to the king and said, "Migācira has been cleaned up for you, your majesty. And the clansman Raṭṭhapāla—the son of the leading clan in this Thullakoṭṭhita, of whom you have often spoken highly—is there, sitting in the shade of a certain tree for the day's abiding."

"In that case, my dear gamekeeper, never mind about the pleasure garden for today. I am now going to pay my respects to that Master Raṭṭhapāla."

Then, saying, "Give away all the staple and non-staple foods that have been prepared," King Koravya had auspicious vehicles harnessed. Mounting an auspicious vehicle he set out from Thullakoṭṭhita accompanied by other auspicious vehicles in full royal pomp to see Ven. Raṭṭhapāla. Going as far by vehicle as the ground would permit, he dismounted and went to Ven. Raṭṭhapāla, accompanied by many eminent members of his court. On arrival, he exchanged courteous greetings with Ven. Raṭṭhapāla. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he stood to one side. As he was standing there, he said to Ven. Raṭṭhapāla, "May Master Raṭṭhapāla sit here on the elephant rug."

"Never mind, great king. You sit there. I am sitting on my own seat."

So King Koravya sat down on the seat prepared. As he was sitting there, he said to Ven. Raṭṭhapāla, "There are cases where, having suffered these four kinds of loss, men shave off their hair & beard, put on the ochre robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness. Which four? Loss through aging, loss through illness, loss of wealth, & loss of relatives But Master

Raṭṭhapāla has suffered none of these. What did he know or see or hear that Master Raṭṭhapāla went forth from the home life into homelessness?"

"Great king, there are four Dhamma summaries stated by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. Having known & seen & heard them, I went forth from the home life into homelessness. Which four?"

"The world¹ is swept away. It does not endure': This is the first Dhamma summary stated by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. Having known & seen & heard it, I went forth from the home life into homelessness.

"The world is without shelter, without protector': This is the second Dhamma summary

"The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind': This is the third Dhamma summary

"The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving': This is the fourth Dhamma summary

"These, great king, are the four Dhamma summaries stated by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. Having known & seen & heard them, I went forth from the home life into homelessness."

"Master Raṭṭhapāla, you say, 'The world is swept away. It does not endure.' Now how is the meaning of this statement to be understood?"

"What do you think, great king: When you were twenty or twenty-five years old—an expert elephant rider, an expert horseman, an expert charioteer, an expert archer, an expert swordsman—were you strong in arm & strong in thigh, fit, & seasoned in warfare?"

"Yes, Master Raṭṭhapāla, when I was twenty or twenty-five years old ... I was strong in arm & strong in thigh, fit, & seasoned in warfare. It was as if I had supernormal power. I do not see anyone who was my equal in strength."

"And what do you think, great king: Are you even now as strong in arm & strong in thigh, as fit, & as seasoned in warfare?"

"Not at all, Master Raṭṭhapāla. I'm now a feeble old man, aged, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life, 80 years old. Sometimes, thinking, 'I will place my foot here,' I place it somewhere else."

"It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: 'The

world is swept away. It does not endure.' Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness."

"It's amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: 'The world is swept away. It does not endure.' For the world really is swept away, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It does not endure.

"Now, in this royal court there are elephant troops & cavalry & chariot troops & infantry that will serve to defend us from dangers. And yet you say, 'The world is without shelter, without protector.' How is the meaning of this statement to be understood?"

"What do you think, great king: Do you have any recurring illness?"

"Yes, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I have a recurring wind-illness.² Sometimes my friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen, stand around me saying, 'This time King Koravya will die. This time King Koravya will die.'"

"And what do you think, great king: Can you say to your friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen, 'My friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen are commanded: all of you who are present, share out this pain so that I may feel less pain'? Or do you have to feel that pain all alone?"

"Oh, no, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I can't say to my friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen, 'All of you who are present, share out this pain so that I may feel less pain.' I have to feel that pain all alone."

"It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: 'The world is without shelter, without protector.' Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness."

"It's amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: 'The world is without shelter, without protector.' For the world really is without shelter, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It is without protector.

"Now, in this royal court there is a great deal of gold & silver stashed away underground & in attic vaults. And yet you say, 'The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.' How is the meaning of this statement to be understood?"

"What do you think, great king? As you now enjoy yourself endowed & replete with the five strings of sensuality, can you

say, 'Even in the afterlife I will enjoy myself in the same way, endowed & replete with the very same five strings of sensuality'? Or will this wealth fall to others, while you pass on in accordance with your kamma?"

"Oh, no, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I can't say, 'Even in the afterlife I will enjoy myself in the same way, endowed & replete with the very same five strings of sensuality.' This wealth will fall to others, while I pass on in accordance with my kamma."

"It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: 'The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.' Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness."

"It's amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: 'The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.' For the world really is without ownership, Master Raṭṭhapāla. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind."

"Now, Master Raṭṭhapāla, you say, 'The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving.' How is the meaning of this statement to be understood?"

"What do you think, great king: Do you now rule over the prosperous country of Kuru?"

"That is so, Master Raṭṭhapāla. I rule over the prosperous country of Kuru."

"What do you think, great king: Suppose a trustworthy, reliable man of yours were to come to you from the east. On arrival he would say to you, 'May it please your majesty to know, I have come from the east. There I saw a great country, powerful & prosperous, populous & crowded with people. Plenty are the elephant troops there, plenty the cavalry troops, chariot troops, & infantry troops. Plenty is the ivory-work there, plenty the gold & silver, both worked & unworked. Plenty are the women for the taking. It is possible, with the forces you now have, to conquer it. Conquer it, great king!' What would you do?"

"Having conquered it, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I would rule over it."

"Now what do you think, great king? Suppose a trustworthy, reliable man of yours were to come to you from the west ... the north ... the south ... the other side of the ocean. On arrival he would say to you, 'May it please your majesty to know, I have

come from the other side of the ocean. There I saw a great country, powerful & prosperous, populous & crowded with people. Plenty are the elephant troops there, plenty the cavalry troops, chariot troops, & infantry troops. Plenty is the ivory-work there, plenty the gold & silver, both worked & unworked. Plenty are the women for the taking. It is possible, with the forces you now have, to conquer it. Conquer it, great king! What would you do?"

"Having conquered it, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I would rule over it, too."

"It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: 'The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving.' Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness."

"It's amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: 'The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving.' For the world really is insufficient, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's insatiable, a slave to craving."

That is what Ven. Raṭṭhapāla said. Having said that, he further said this:

I see in the world
 people with wealth
 who, from delusion,
 don't make a gift
 of the treasure they've gained.
 Greedy, they stash it away,
 hoping for even more
 sensual pleasures.

A king who, by force,
 has conquered the world
 and rules over the earth
 to the edge of the sea,
 dissatisfied with the ocean's near shore,
 longs for the ocean's
 far shore as well.

Kings & others
 —plenty of people—
 go to death with craving
 unabated. Unsated
 they leave the body behind,

having not had enough
of the world's sensual pleasures.

One's relatives weep
& pull out their hair.
'Oh woe, our loved one is dead,' they cry.
Carrying him off,
wrapped in a piece of cloth,
they place him
 on a pyre,
 then set him on fire.

So he burns, poked with sticks,
in just one piece of cloth,
leaving all his possessions behind.
They are no shelters for one who has died—
 no relatives,
 friends,
 or companions.

His heirs take over his wealth,
while the being goes on,
in line with his kamma.
No wealth at all
follows the dead one—
 not children, wives,
 dominion, or riches.

Long life
can't be gotten with wealth,
nor aging
warded off with treasure.
The wise say this life
is next to nothing—
 impermanent,
 subject to change.

The rich & the poor
touch the touch of Death.
The foolish & wise
are touched by it, too.
But while fools lie as if slain by their folly,
the wise don't tremble
when touched by the touch.

Thus the discernment by which
 you reach mastery,
 is better than wealth—
 for those who haven't reached mastery
 go from existence to existence,
 out of delusion,
 doing bad deeds.

You go to a womb
 & to the next world,
 falling into wandering on
 —one thing
 after another—
 while those of weak discernment,
 trusting in you,
 also go to a womb
 & to the next world.

Just as an evil thief
 caught at the break-in
 is destroyed
 by his own act,
 so evil people
 —after dying, in the next world—
 are destroyed
 by their own acts.

Sensual pleasures—
 variegated,
 enticing,
 sweet—
 in various ways disturb the mind.
 Seeing the drawbacks in sensual objects:
 that's why, O king, I went forth.

Just like fruits, people fall
 —young & old—
 at the break-up of the body.
 Knowing this, O king,
 I went forth.
 The contemplative life is better
 for sure.

NOTES

1. For the meaning of the word "world" in this discourse, see SN XXXV.82.

2. In ancient Indian medicine, a variety of illnesses—such as indigestion, sharp pains running through the body, etc.—were said to be caused by an imbalance of the wind-property (*vāyo-dhātu*) in the body.

See also: SN III.25; SN IV.20; AN III.39; Ud II.10; Sn III.8; Sn IV.6; Sn IV.7; Thag VI.13

87 *Piyajātika Sutta* From One Who Is Dear

Many discourses depict King Pasenadi Kosala as a Buddhist. This discourse relates how—through the astuteness of Queen Mallikā—he first became favorably disposed toward the Buddha.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvātthi at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Now at that time a certain householder's dear & beloved little son, his only child, had died. Because of his death, the father had no desire to work or to eat. He kept going to the cemetery and crying out, "Where have you gone, my only little child? Where have you gone, my only little child?"

Then he went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there the Blessed One said to him, "Householder, your faculties are not those of one who is steady in his own mind. There is an aberration in your faculties."

"Lord, how could there not be an aberration in my faculties? My dear & beloved little son, my only child, has died. Because of his death, I have no desire to work or to eat. I keep going to the cemetery and crying out, 'Where have you gone, my only little child? Where have you gone, my only little child?'"

"That's the way it is, householder. That's the way it is—for sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear."

"But lord, who would ever think that sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear? Happiness & joy are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear." So the householder, not delighting in the Blessed One's words, rejecting the Blessed One's words, got up from his seat and left.

Now at that time a large number of gamblers were playing dice not far from the Blessed One. So the householder went to them and, on arrival, said to them, "Just now, venerable sirs, I

went to Gotama the contemplative and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As I was sitting there, Gotama the contemplative said to me, 'Householder, your faculties are not those of one who is steady in his own mind. There is an aberration in your faculties.'

"When this was said, I said to him, 'Lord, how could there not be an aberration in my faculties? My dear & beloved little son, my only child, has died. Because of his death, I have no desire to work or to eat. I keep going to the cemetery and crying out, "Where have you gone, my only little child? Where have you gone, my only little child?"'

"That's the way it is, householder. That's the way it is—for sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.'

"But, lord, who would ever think that sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear? Happiness & joy are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.' So, not delighting in the words of Gotama the contemplative, rejecting them, I got up from my seat and left."

"That's the way it is, householder [said the gamblers]. That's the way it is. Happiness & joy are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear."

So the householder left, thinking, "I agree with the gamblers."

Eventually, word of this conversation made its way into the king's inner chambers. Then King Pasenadi Kosala addressed Queen Mallikā, "Mallikā, your contemplative, Gotama, has said this: 'Sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.'"

"If that was said by the Blessed One, great king, then that's the way it is."

"No matter what Gotama the contemplative says, Mallikā endorses it: 'If that was said by the Blessed One, great king, then that's the way it is.' Just as, no matter what his teacher says, a pupil endorses it: 'That's the way it is, teacher. That's the way it is.' In the same way, no matter what Gotama the contemplative says, Mallikā endorses it: 'If that was said by the Blessed One, great king, then that's the way it is.' Go away, Mallikā! Out of my sight!"

Then Queen Mallikā called for the brahman Nālijaṅgha: "Come, brahman. Go to the Blessed One and, on arrival, showing reverence with your head to his feet in my name, ask

whether he is free from illness & affliction, is carefree, strong, & living in comfort, saying: 'Queen Mallikā, lord, shows reverence with her head to your feet and asks whether you are free from illness & affliction, are carefree, strong, & living in comfort.' And then say: 'Lord, did the Blessed One say that sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear?' Whatever the Blessed One says, remember it well and tell it to me. For Tathāgatas do not speak what is untrue."

"Yes, madam," the brahman Nālijaṅgha responded to Queen Mallikā. Going to the Blessed One, on arrival he exchanged courteous greetings with the Blessed One. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "Master Gotama, Queen Mallikā shows reverence with her head to your feet and asks whether you are free from illness & affliction, are carefree, strong, & living in comfort. And she says further: 'Lord, did the Blessed One say that sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear?'"

"That's the way it is, brahman. That's the way it is. Sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear. And it's through this line of reasoning that it may be understood how sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.

"Once in this same Sāvatti there was a woman whose mother died. Owing to her mother's death she went mad, out of her mind, and wandering from street to street, crossroads to crossroads, would say, 'Have you seen my mother? Have you seen my mother?' It's through this line of reasoning that it may be understood how sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.

"Once in this same Sāvatti there was a woman whose father died ... whose brother died ... whose sister died ... whose son died ... whose daughter died ... whose husband died. Owing to his death she went mad, out of her mind, and wandering from street to street, crossroads to crossroads, would say, 'Have you seen my husband? Have you seen my husband?' It's through this line of reasoning that it may be understood how

sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.

"Once in this same Sāvatti there was a man whose mother died. Owing to her death he went mad, out of his mind, and wandering from street to street, crossroads to crossroads, would say, 'Have you seen my mother? Have you seen my mother?' It's through this line of reasoning that it may be understood how sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.

"Once in this same Sāvatti there was a man whose father died ... whose brother died ... whose sister died ... whose son died ... whose daughter died ... whose wife died. Owing to her death he went mad, out of his mind, and wandering from street to street, crossroads to crossroads, would say, 'Have you seen my wife? Have you seen my wife?' It's through this line of reasoning that it may be understood how sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.

"Once in this same Sāvatti there was a wife who went to her relatives' home. Her relatives, having separated her from her husband, wanted to give her to another against her will. So she said to her husband, 'These relatives of mine, having separated us, want to give me to another against my will,' whereupon he cut her in two and slashed himself open, thinking, 'Dead we will be together.' It's through this line of reasoning that it may be understood how sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear."

Then the brahman Nālijaṅgha, delighting in & approving of the Blessed One's words, got up from his seat and went to Queen Mallikā. On arrival, he told her all that had been said in his conversation with the Blessed One.

Then Queen Mallikā went to King Pasenadi Kosala and on arrival said to him, "What do you think, great king: Is Princess Vajiri dear to you?"

"Yes, Mallikā, Princess Vajiri is dear to me."

"And what do you think: would sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair arise in you from any change & aberration in Princess Vajiri?"

"Mallikā, any change & aberration in Princess Vajiri would mean an aberration of my very life. How could sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair not arise in me?"

"Great king, it was in connection with this that the Blessed One—the One who knows, the One who sees, worthy, & rightly self-awakened—said, 'Sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.'

"Now what do you think, great king: Is the noble Queen Vāsabhā dear to you? Is [your son] General Viḍūḍabha dear to you? Am I dear to you?"

"Yes, Mallikā, you are dear to me."

"And what do you think: would sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair arise in you from any change & aberration in me?"

"Mallikā, any change & aberration in you would mean an aberration of my very life. How could sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair not arise in me?"

"Great king, it was in connection with this that the Blessed One—the One who knows, the One who sees, worthy, & rightly self-awakened—said, 'Sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.'

"Now what do you think, great king: Are [your subjects] the Kāsis & Kosalans dear to you?"

"Yes, Mallikā, the Kāsis & Kosalans are dear to me. It is through the might of the Kāsis & Kosalans that we use Kāsi sandalwood and wear garlands, scents, & ointments."

"And what do you think: would sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair arise in you from any change & aberration in the Kāsis & Kosalans?"

"Mallikā, any change & aberration in the Kāsis & Kosalans would mean an aberration of my very life. How could sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair not arise in me?"

"Great king, it was in connection with this that the Blessed One—the One who knows, the One who sees, worthy, & rightly self-awakened—said, 'Sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are born from one who is dear, come springing from one who is dear.'"

"It's amazing, Mallikā. It's astounding: how deeply the Blessed One sees, having pierced through, as it were, with discernment. Come Mallikā: Give me the ablution water." Then

King Pasenadi Kosala, rising from his seat and arranging his upper robe over one shoulder, paid homage in the direction of the Blessed One with his hands palm-to-palm in front of his heart, and exclaimed three times:

*“Homage to the Blessed One, worthy & rightly self-awakened!
Homage to the Blessed One, worthy & rightly self-awakened!
Homage to the Blessed One, worthy & rightly self-awakened!”*

See also: DN 21; SN III.1, 4-7, 14-15, 17, 19-20, 23-25; SN IV.8; SN XLII.11; AN IV.200; AN V.49; Ud II.7; Ud V.1; Ud VIII.8; Sn I.3; Sn IV.11; Thig III.5; Thig VI.1

95 *Caṅki Sutta* With *Caṅki* (Excerpt)

.... Now at that time the Blessed One was sitting & exchanging courtesies & conversation with some very senior brahmans. It so happened that a brahman student named Kāpadika¹ was seated in the assembly: young, shaven-headed, sixteen years old, a master of the Three Vedas with their vocabularies, liturgy, phonology, & etymologies, and the histories as a fifth; skilled in philology & grammar, well-versed in cosmology & the marks of a great man. While the very senior brahmans were conversing with the Blessed One, he kept breaking in & interrupting their talk. So the Blessed One scolded him, "Venerable Bhāradvāja, don't break in & interrupt while the very senior brahmans are conversing. Wait until they are finished talking."

When this was said, the brahman Caṅki said to the Blessed One, "Master Gotama, don't scold the brahman student Kāpadika. He is a clansman, learned, wise, with good delivery. He is capable of taking part in this discussion with Master Gotama."

Then the thought occurred to the Blessed One, "Yes, this brahman student Kāpadika must be accomplished in the texts of the Three Vedas, inasmuch as the brahmans honor him so."

Then the thought occurred to Kāpadika, "When Gotama the contemplative meets my gaze with his, I will ask him a question."

And so the Blessed One, encompassing Kāpadika's awareness with his awareness, met his gaze. Kāpadika thought, "Gotama the contemplative has turned to me. Suppose I ask him a question." So he said to the Blessed One, "Master Gotama, with regard to the ancient hymns of the brahmans—passed down through oral transmission & included in their canon—the brahmans have come to the definite conclusion that "Only this is true; anything else is worthless." What does Master Gotama have to say to this?"

"Tell me, Bhāradvāja, is there among the brahmins even one brahmin who says, 'This I know; this I see; only this is true; anything else is worthless?'"

"No, Master Gotama."

"And has there been among the brahmins even one teacher or teacher's teacher back through seven generations who said, 'This I know; this I see; only this is true; anything else is worthless?'"

"No, Master Gotama."

"And among the brahmin seers of the past, the creators of the hymns, the composers of the hymns—those ancient hymns, sung, repeated, & collected, which brahmins at present still sing, still chant, repeating what was said, repeating what was spoken—i.e., Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa & Bhagu: was there even one of these who said, 'This we know; this we see; only this is true; anything else is worthless?'"

"No, Master Gotama."

"So then, Bhāradvāja, it seems that there isn't among the brahmins even one brahmin who says, 'This I know; this I see; only this is true; anything else is worthless.' And there hasn't been among the brahmins even one teacher or teacher's teacher back through seven generations who said, 'This I know; this I see; only this is true; anything else is worthless.' And there hasn't been among the brahmin seers of the past, the creators of the hymns, the composers of the hymns ... even one who said, 'This we know; this we see; only this is true; anything else is worthless.' Suppose there were a row of blind men, each holding on to the one in front of him: the first one doesn't see, the middle one doesn't see, the last one doesn't see. In the same way, the statement of the brahmins turns out to be a row of blind men, as it were: the first one doesn't see, the middle one doesn't see, the last one doesn't see. So what do you think, Bhāradvāja: this being the case, doesn't the conviction of the brahmins turn out to be groundless?"

"It's not only out of conviction, Master Gotama, that the brahmins honor this. They also honor it as unbroken tradition."

"Bhāradvāja, first you went by conviction. Now you speak of unbroken tradition. There are five things that can turn out in two ways in the here-&-now. Which five? Conviction, liking, unbroken tradition, reasoning by analogy, & an agreement through pondering views. These are the five things that can

turn out in two ways in the here-&-now. Now some things are firmly held in conviction and yet vain, empty, & false. Some things are not firmly held in conviction, and yet they are genuine, factual, & unmistakable. Some things are well-liked ... truly an unbroken tradition ... well-reasoned ... Some things are well-pondered and yet vain, empty, & false. Some things are not well-pondered, and yet they are genuine, factual, & unmistakable. In these cases it isn't proper for a knowledgeable person who safeguards the truth to come to a definite conclusion, 'Only this is true; anything else is worthless.'

"But to what extent, Master Gotama, is there the safeguarding of the truth? To what extent does one safeguard the truth? We ask Master Gotama about the safeguarding of the truth."

"If a person has conviction, his statement, 'This is my conviction,' safeguards the truth. But he doesn't yet come to the definite conclusion that 'Only this is true; anything else is worthless.' To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is the safeguarding of the truth. To this extent one safeguards the truth. I describe this as the safeguarding of the truth. But it is not yet an awakening to the truth.

"If a person likes something ... holds an unbroken tradition ... has something reasoned through analogy ... has something he agrees to, having pondered views, his statement, 'This is what I agree to, having pondered views,' safeguards the truth. But he doesn't yet come to the definite conclusion that 'Only this is true; anything else is worthless.' To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is the safeguarding of the truth. To this extent one safeguards the truth. I describe this as the safeguarding of the truth. But it is not yet an awakening to the truth."

"Yes, Master Gotama, to this extent there is the safeguarding of the truth. To this extent one safeguards the truth. We regard this as the safeguarding of the truth. But to what extent is there an awakening to the truth? To what extent does one awaken to the truth? We ask Master Gotama about awakening to the truth."

"There is the case, Bhāradvāja, where a monk lives in dependence on a certain village or town. Then a householder or householder's son goes to him and observes him with regard to three mental qualities—qualities based on greed, qualities based on aversion, qualities based on delusion: 'Are there in this venerable one any such qualities based on greed that, with his mind overcome by these qualities, he might say, "I know," while not

knowing, or say, "I see," while not seeing; or that he might urge another to act in a way that was for his/her long-term harm & pain?' As he observes him, he comes to know, 'There are in this venerable one no such qualities based on greed His bodily behavior & verbal behavior are those of one not greedy. And the Dhamma he teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. This Dhamma can't easily be taught by a person who's greedy.

"When, on observing that the monk is purified with regard to qualities based on greed, he next observes him with regard to qualities based on aversion: 'Are there in this venerable one any such qualities based on aversion that, with his mind overcome by these qualities, he might say, "I know," while not knowing, or say, "I see," while not seeing; or that he might urge another to act in a way that was for his/her long-term harm & pain?' As he observes him, he comes to know, 'There are in this venerable one no such qualities based on aversion His bodily behavior & verbal behavior are those of one not aversive. And the Dhamma he teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. This Dhamma can't easily be taught by a person who's aversive.

"When, on observing that the monk is purified with regard to qualities based on aversion, he next observes him with regard to qualities based on delusion: 'Are there in this venerable one any such qualities based on delusion that, with his mind overcome by these qualities, he might say, "I know," while not knowing, or say, "I see," while not seeing; or that he might urge another to act in a way that was for his/her long-term harm & pain?' As he observes him, he comes to know, 'There are in this venerable one no such qualities based on delusion His bodily behavior & verbal behavior are those of one not deluded. And the Dhamma he teaches is deep, hard to see, hard to realize, tranquil, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to-be-experienced by the wise. This Dhamma can't easily be taught by a person who's deluded.

"When, on observing that the monk is purified with regard to qualities based on delusion, he places conviction in him. With the arising of conviction, he visits him & grows close to him. Growing close to him, he lends ear. Lending ear, he hears the

Dhamma. Hearing the Dhamma, he remembers it. Remembering it, he penetrates the meaning of those dhammas. Penetrating the meaning, he comes to an agreement through pondering those dhammas. There being an agreement through pondering those dhammas, desire arises. With the arising of desire, he becomes willing. Willing, he contemplates (lit: "weighs," "compares"). Contemplating, he makes an exertion. Exerting himself, he both realizes the ultimate meaning of the truth with his body and sees by penetrating it with discernment.

"To this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is an awakening to the truth. To this extent one awakens to the truth. I describe this as an awakening to the truth. But it is not yet the final attainment of the truth."

"Yes, Master Gotama, to this extent there is an awakening to the truth. To this extent one awakens to the truth. We regard this as an awakening to the truth. But to what extent is there the final attainment of the truth? To what extent does one finally attain the truth? We ask Master Gotama about the final attainment of the truth."

"The cultivation, development, & pursuit of those very same qualities: to this extent, Bhāradvāja, there is the final attainment of the truth. To this extent one finally attains the truth. I describe this as the final attainment of the truth."

"Yes, Master Gotama, to this extent there is the final attainment of the truth. To this extent one finally attains the truth. We regard this as the final attainment of the truth. But what quality is most helpful for the final attainment of the truth? We ask Master Gotama about the quality most helpful for the final attainment of the truth."

"Exertion is most helpful for the final attainment of the truth, Bhāradvāja. If one didn't make an exertion, one wouldn't finally attain the truth. Because one makes an exertion, one finally attains the truth. Therefore, exertion is most helpful for the final attainment of the truth."

"But what quality is most helpful for exertion? We ask Master Gotama about the quality most helpful for exertion."

"Contemplating is most helpful for exertion, Bhāradvāja. If one didn't contemplate, one wouldn't make an exertion. Because one contemplates, one makes an exertion. Therefore, contemplating is most helpful for exertion."

"But what quality is most helpful for contemplating? ..."

"Being willing....If one weren't willing, one wouldn't contemplate"

"But what quality is most helpful for being willing? ..."

"Desire....If desire didn't arise, one wouldn't be willing"

"But what quality is most helpful for desire? ..."

"Coming to an agreement through pondering dhammas
If one didn't come to an agreement through pondering dhammas, desire wouldn't arise"

"But what quality is most helpful for coming to an agreement through pondering dhammas? ..."

"Penetrating the meaning If one didn't penetrate the meaning, one wouldn't come to an agreement through pondering dhammas"

"But what quality is most helpful for penetrating the meaning?"

"Remembering the Dhamma If one didn't remember the Dhamma, one wouldn't penetrate the meaning"

"But what quality is most helpful for remembering the Dhamma? ... "

"Hearing the Dhamma If one didn't hear the Dhamma, one wouldn't remember the Dhamma"

"But what quality is most helpful for hearing the Dhamma? ... "

"Lending ear If one didn't lend ear, one wouldn't hear the Dhamma"

"But what quality is most helpful for lending ear? ... "

"Growing close If one didn't grow close, one wouldn't lend ear"

"But what quality is most helpful for growing close? ... "

"Visiting If one didn't visit, one wouldn't grow close"

"But what quality is most helpful for visiting? We ask Master Gotama about the quality most helpful for visiting."

"Conviction is most helpful for visiting, Bhāradvāja. If conviction [in a person] didn't arise, one wouldn't visit [that person]. Because conviction arises, one visits. Therefore, conviction is most helpful for visiting."

"We have asked Master Gotama about safeguarding the truth, and Master Gotama has answered about safeguarding the truth. We like that & agree with that², and so we are gratified. We have asked Master Gotama about awakening to the truth, and Master Gotama has answered about awakening to the truth. We like that & agree with that, and so we are gratified. We

have asked Master Gotama about finally attaining the truth, and Master Gotama has answered about finally attaining the truth. We like that & agree with that, and so we are gratified. We have asked Master Gotama about the quality most helpful for finally attaining the truth, and Master Gotama has answered about the quality most helpful for finally attaining the truth. We like that & agree with that, and so we are gratified. Whatever we have asked Master Gotama, Master Gotama has answered it. We like that & agree with that, and so we are gratified.

"We used to think, 'Who are these bald-headed 'contemplatives,' these menial, dark offspring of [Brahmā] the Kinsman's feet?³ Who are they to know the Dhamma?' But now Master Gotama has inspired within us a contemplative-love for contemplatives, a contemplative-confidence in contemplatives, a contemplative-respect for contemplatives. Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, & to the community of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge from this day forward, for life."

NOTES

1. Alternative readings: *Kāpaṭhika*, *Kāpaṭhaka*.

2. Notice that Kāpadika is careful to safeguard the truth in the way he expresses his approval for the Buddha's teachings.

3. The brahmins regarded Brahmā as their original ancestor, and so called him their "Kinsman." The Commentary notes that they regarded themselves as born from his mouth, while other castes were born from lower parts of his body, down to contemplatives (*samaṇa*), who they said were born from his feet.

See also: MN 61; MN 110; SN XII.22; AN III.66; AN IV.102; AN IV.192; AN IX.1; AN X.24

105 Sunakkhatta Sutta To Sunakkhatta

This discourse gives guidance on how to judge whether another person's claim to enlightenment might be true or false. It ends with a warning: Anyone who claims enlightenment as license for unrestrained behavior is like someone who (1) has undergone surgery but does not follow doctor's orders for healing the wound; (2) knowingly drinks a cup of poison; (3) extends his hand or finger to a deadly poisonous snake.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Vesāli in the Great Forest, at the Peaked Pavilion. Now at that time a large number of monks had declared final gnosis in the Blessed One's presence: "We discern that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world.'"

Sunakkhatta the Licchavin heard that "A large number of monks, it seems, have declared final gnosis in the Blessed One's presence: 'We discern that "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world.'"" Then Sunakkhatta the Licchavin went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "I have heard, lord, that a large number of monks have declared final gnosis in the Blessed One's presence: 'We discern that "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world.'"" Now, have they rightly declared final gnosis, or is it the case that some of them have declared final gnosis out of over-estimation?"

"Sunakkhatta, of the monks who have declared final gnosis in my presence ... it is the case that some have rightly declared final gnosis, whereas others have declared final gnosis out of over-estimation. As for those who have rightly declared final gnosis, that is their truth. As for those who have declared final gnosis out of over-estimation, the thought occurs to the Tathāgata, 'I will teach them the Dhamma.' But there are cases

when the thought has occurred to the Tathāgata, 'I will teach them the Dhamma,' yet there are worthless men who come to him having formulated question after question, so that his thought, 'I will teach them the Dhamma,' changes into something else."

"Now is the time, O Blessed One. Now is the time, O One Well-Gone, for the Blessed One to teach the Dhamma. Having heard the Blessed One, the monks will remember it."

"Then in that case, Sunakkhatta, listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," Sunakkhatta the Licchavin responded to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said: "Sunakkhatta, there are these five strings of sensuality. Which five? Forms cognizable via the eye—agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Sounds cognizable via the ear ... Aromas cognizable via the nose ... Flavors cognizable via the tongue ... Tactile sensations cognizable the body—agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. These are the five strings of sensuality.

"Now there's the possible case where a certain person is intent on the baits of the world. When a person is intent on the baits of the world, that sort of talk interests him, his thinking & evaluating follow along those lines, he feels at home with that sort of person, and his mind gets along with that sort of person. But when talk concerning the imperturbable [the fourth jhāna and the dimensions of the infinitude of space & the infinitude of consciousness] is going on, he does not listen, does not lend ear, and does not exert his mind to know. He does not get along with that sort of person; his mind does not feel at home with him.

"Suppose that there were a man who had left his home village or town a long time ago. And he were to meet with a man who had left the village or town only a short time ago. He would ask if the people in the village or town were secure, well-fed, & free of disease, and the second man would tell him if they were secure, well-fed, & free of disease. Now, what do you think, Sunakkhatta. Would the first man listen to the second man, lend ear, and exert his mind to know? Would he get along with the second man; would his mind feel at home with him?"

"Yes, lord."

"In the same way, it is possible that there is the case where a certain person is intent on the baits of the world. When a person

is intent on the baits of the world, that sort of talk interests him, his thinking & evaluating follow along those lines, he feels at home with that sort of person, and his mind gets along with that sort of person. But when talk concerning the imperturbable [the fourth jhāna and the dimensions of the infinitude of space and the infinitude of consciousness] is going on, he does not listen, does not lend ear, and does not exert his mind to know. He does not get along with that sort of person; his mind does not feel at home with him. This is how it can be known that 'This person is intent on the baits of the world.'

"Now, there's the possible case where a certain person is intent on the imperturbable. When a person is intent on the imperturbable, that sort of talk interests him, his thinking & evaluating follow along those lines, he feels at home with that sort of person, and his mind gets along with that sort of person. But when talk concerning the baits of the world is going on, he does not listen, does not lend ear, and does not exert his mind to know. He does not get along with that sort of person; his mind does not feel at home with him.

"Just as a yellow leaf released from its stem is incapable of ever again becoming green, in the same way, when a person is intent on the imperturbable, he is released from the fetter of the baits of the world. This is how it can be known that 'This person, disjoined from the fetter of the baits of the world, is intent on the imperturbable.'

"Now, there's the possible case where a certain person is intent on the dimension of nothingness. When a person is intent on the dimension of nothingness, that sort of talk interests him, his thinking & evaluating follow along those lines, he feels at home with that sort of person, and his mind gets along with that sort of person. But when talk concerning the imperturbable is going on, he does not listen, does not lend ear, and does not exert his mind to know. He does not get along with that sort of person; his mind does not feel at home with him.

"Just as a thick rock broken in two cannot be put back together again, in the same way, when a person is intent on the dimension of nothingness, he has broken the fetter of the imperturbable. This is how it can be known that 'This person, disjoined from the fetter of the imperturbable, is intent on the dimension of nothingness.'

"Now, there's the possible case where a certain person is intent on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. When a person is intent on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, that sort of talk interests him, his thinking & evaluating follow along those lines, he feels at home with that sort of person, and his mind gets along with that sort of person. But when talk concerning the dimension of nothingness is going on, he does not listen, does not lend ear, and does not exert his mind to know. He does not get along with that sort of person; his mind does not feel at home with him.

"Sunakkhatta, suppose that a person, having eaten some delicious food, were to vomit it up. What do you think—would he have any desire for that food?"

"No, lord. Why is that? Because he would consider that food to be disgusting."

"In the same way, when a person is intent on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, he has vomited up the fetter of the dimension of nothingness. This is how it can be known that 'This person, disjoined from the fetter of the dimension of nothingness, is intent on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.'

"Now, there's the possible case where a certain person is rightly intent on Unbinding. When a person is rightly intent on Unbinding, that sort of talk interests him, his thinking & evaluating follow along those lines, he feels at home with that sort of person, and his mind gets along with that sort of person. But when talk concerning the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception is going on, he does not listen, does not lend ear, and does not exert his mind to know. He does not get along with that sort of person; his mind does not feel at home with him.

"Just as a palm tree with its top cut off is incapable of further growth, in the same way, when a person is rightly intent on Unbinding, he has destroyed the fetter of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, has destroyed it by the root, like an uprooted palm tree deprived of the conditions of existence, not destined for future arising. This is how it can be known that 'This person, disjoined from the fetter of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, is intent on Unbinding.'

"Now, there's the possible case where a certain monk thinks, 'Craving is said by the Contemplative [the Buddha] to be an arrow. The poison of ignorance spreads its toxin through desire,

passion, & ill will. I have abandoned the arrow. I have expelled the poison of ignorance. I am rightly intent on Unbinding.' Because this is not true of him, he might pursue those things that are unsuitable for a person rightly intent on Unbinding. He might pursue unsuitable forms & sights with the eye. He might pursue unsuitable sounds with the ear ... unsuitable aromas with the nose ... unsuitable flavors with the tongue ... unsuitable tactile sensations with the body. He might pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect. When he pursues unsuitable forms & sights with the eye ... pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect, lust invades the mind. With his mind invaded by lust, he incurs death or death-like suffering.

"Suppose that a man were wounded with an arrow thickly smeared with poison. His friends & companions, kinsmen & relatives would provide him with a surgeon. The surgeon would cut around the opening of the wound with a knife and then would probe for the arrow with a probe. He then would pull out the arrow and extract the poison, leaving a residue behind. Knowing that a residue was left behind, he would say, 'My good man, your arrow has been pulled out. The poison has been extracted, with a residue left behind, but it is not enough to do you harm. Eat suitable food. Don't eat unsuitable food, or else the wound will fester. Wash the wound frequently, smear it with an ointment frequently, so that blood & pus don't fill the opening of the wound. Don't walk around in the wind & sun, or else dust & dirt may contaminate the opening of the wound. Keep looking after the wound, my good man, and work for its healing.'

"The thought would occur to the man: 'My arrow has been pulled out. The poison has been extracted, with a residue left behind, but it is not enough to do me harm.' He would eat unsuitable food, so the wound would fester. He wouldn't wash the wound or smear it with an ointment frequently, so blood & pus would fill the opening of the wound. He would walk around in the wind & sun, so dust & dirt would contaminate the opening of the wound. He wouldn't keep looking after the wound or work for its healing. Now, both because of these unsuitable actions of his and because of the residue of the dirty poison left behind, the wound would swell. With the swelling of the wound he would incur death or death-like suffering.

"In the same way, there's the possible case where a certain monk thinks, 'Craving is said by the Contemplative to be an

arrow. The poison of ignorance spreads its toxin through desire, passion, & ill will. I have abandoned the arrow. I have expelled the poison of ignorance. I am rightly intent on Unbinding.' Because this is not true of him, he might pursue those things that are unsuitable for a person rightly intent on Unbinding. He might pursue unsuitable forms & sights with the eye. He might pursue unsuitable sounds with the ear ... unsuitable aromas with the nose ... unsuitable flavors with the tongue ... unsuitable tactile sensations with the body. He might pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect. When he pursues unsuitable forms & sights with the eye ... pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect, lust invades the mind. With his mind invaded by lust, he incurs death or death-like suffering. For this is death in the discipline of the noble ones: when one renounces the training and returns to the lower life. And this is death-like suffering: when one commits a defiled offense.

"Now, there's the possible case where a certain monk thinks, 'Craving is said by the Contemplative to be an arrow. The poison of ignorance spreads its toxin through desire, passion, & ill will. I have abandoned the arrow. I have expelled the poison of ignorance. I am rightly intent on Unbinding.' Because he is rightly intent on Unbinding, he wouldn't pursue those things that are unsuitable for a person rightly intent on Unbinding. He wouldn't pursue unsuitable forms & sights with the eye. He wouldn't pursue unsuitable sounds with the ear ... unsuitable aromas with the nose ... unsuitable flavors with the tongue ... unsuitable tactile sensations with the body. He wouldn't pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect. When he doesn't pursue unsuitable forms & sights with the eye ... doesn't pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect, lust doesn't invade the mind. With his mind not invaded by lust, he doesn't incur death or death-like suffering.

"Suppose that a man were wounded with an arrow thickly smeared with poison. His friends & companions, kinsmen & relatives would provide him with a surgeon. The surgeon would cut around the opening of the wound with a knife and then would probe for the arrow with a probe. He then would pull out the arrow and extract the poison, leaving no residue behind. Knowing that no residue was left behind, he would say, 'My good man, your arrow has been pulled out. The poison has been extracted, with no residue left behind, so it's not enough to do

you harm. Eat suitable food. Don't eat unsuitable food, or else the wound will fester. Wash the wound frequently, smear it with an ointment frequently, so that blood & pus don't fill the opening of the wound. Don't walk around in the wind & sun, or else dust & dirt may contaminate the opening of the wound. Keep looking after the wound, my good man, and work for its healing.'

"The thought would occur to the man: 'My arrow has been pulled out. The poison has been extracted with no residue left behind, so it's not enough to do me harm.' He would eat suitable food, so the wound wouldn't fester. He would wash the wound and smear it with an ointment frequently, so blood & pus wouldn't fill the opening of the wound. He would not walk around in the wind & sun, so dust & dirt wouldn't contaminate the opening of the wound. He would keep looking after the wound and would work for its healing. Now, both because of these suitable actions of his and because of there being no residue of the poison left behind, the wound would heal. With the healing of the wound and its being covered with skin, he wouldn't incur death or death-like suffering.

"In the same way, there's the possible case where a certain monk thinks, 'Craving is said by the Contemplative to be an arrow. The poison of ignorance spreads its toxin through desire, passion, & ill will. I have abandoned the arrow. I have expelled the poison of ignorance. I am rightly intent on Unbinding.' Because he is rightly intent on Unbinding, he wouldn't pursue those things that are unsuitable for a person rightly intent on Unbinding. He wouldn't pursue unsuitable forms & sights with the eye. He wouldn't pursue unsuitable sounds with the ear ... unsuitable aromas with the nose ... unsuitable flavors with the tongue ... unsuitable tactile sensations with the body. He wouldn't pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect. When he doesn't pursue unsuitable forms & sights with the eye ... doesn't pursue unsuitable ideas with the intellect, then lust doesn't invade the mind. With his mind not invaded by lust, he doesn't incur death or death-like suffering.

"I have given this simile to convey a meaning. The meaning is this: the wound stands for the six internal media; the poison, for ignorance; the arrow, for craving; the probe, for mindfulness; the knife, for noble discernment; the surgeon, for the Tathāgata, worthy & rightly self-awakened.

"Now, when a monk—maintaining restraint over the six spheres of contact, knowing that 'Acquisition is the root of stress'—is free from acquisition, released in the total ending of acquisition, it's not possible that, with regard to acquisition, he would stir his body or arouse his mind.

"Suppose there were a beverage in a bronze cup—consummate in its color, smell, & flavor—but mixed with poison. And suppose a man were to come along, wanting to live, not wanting to die, desiring pleasure, & abhorring pain. What do you think, Sunakkhatta—would he drink the beverage in the bronze cup knowing that 'Having drunk this, I will incur death or death-like suffering'?"

"No, lord."

"In the same way, when a monk—maintaining restraint over the six spheres of contact, knowing that 'Acquisition is the root of stress'—is free from acquisition, released in the total ending of acquisition, it's not possible that, with regard to acquisition, he would stir his body or arouse his mind.

"Suppose there were a deadly poisonous viper, and a man were to come along, wanting to live, not wanting to die, desiring pleasure, & abhorring pain. What do you think, Sunakkhatta—would he give his hand or finger to the snake knowing that 'Having been bitten by this, I will incur death or death-like suffering'?"

"No, lord."

"In the same way, when a monk—maintaining restraint over the six spheres of contact, knowing that 'Acquisition is the root of stress'—is free from acquisition, released in the total ending of acquisition, it's not possible that, with regard to acquisition, he would stir his body or arouse his mind."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Sunakkhatta the Licchavin delighted in the Blessed One's words.

See also: AN VI.55; AN IX.7; AN X.24

106 *Āneñja-sappāya Sutta* Conducive to the Imperturbable

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in the Kuru country. Now there is a town of the Kurus called Kammāsadhamma. There the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "Monks, sensuality is inconstant, hollow, vain, deceptive. It is illusory, the babble of fools. Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come: both are Māra's realm, Māra's domain, Māra's bait, Māra's range. They lead to these evil, unskillful mental states: greed, ill will, & contentiousness. They arise for the obstruction of a disciple of the noble ones here in training.

"In that case, the disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come: both are Māra's realm, Māra's domain, Māra's bait, Māra's range. They lead to these evil, unskillful mental states: greed, ill will, & contentiousness. They arise for the obstruction of a disciple of the noble ones here in training. What if I—overpowering the world [of the five senses] and having determined my mind—were to dwell with an awareness abundant & enlarged? Having done so, these evil, unskillful mental states—greed, ill will, & contentiousness—would not come into being. With their abandoning, my mind would become unlimited, immeasurable, & well developed.' Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the imperturbable¹ now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the imperturbable. This is declared to be the first practice conducive to the imperturbable.

"Then again, the disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come: whatever is form, every form, is the four great elements or a form derived from the four great elements.' Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the imperturbable now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the imperturbable. This is declared to be the second practice conducive to the imperturbable.

"Then again, the disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come; forms here & now; forms in lives to come; form-perceptions here & now; form-perceptions in lives to come: both are inconstant. Whatever is inconstant is not worth relishing, is not worth welcoming, is not worth remaining fastened to.'" Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the imperturbable now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the imperturbable. This is declared to be the third practice conducive to the imperturbable.

"Then again, the disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come; forms here & now; forms in lives to come; form-perceptions here & now; form-perceptions in lives to come; perceptions of the imperturbable: all are perceptions. Where they cease without remainder: that is peaceful, that is exquisite, i.e., the dimension of nothingness.' Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the dimension of nothingness now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the dimension of nothingness. This is declared to be the first practice conducive to the dimension of nothingness.

"Then again, the disciple of the noble ones, having gone into the wilderness, to the root of a tree, or into an empty dwelling,

considers this: 'This is empty of self or of anything pertaining to self.' Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the dimension of nothingness now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the dimension of nothingness. This is declared to be the second practice conducive to the dimension of nothingness.

"Then again, the disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'I am not anyone's anything anywhere; nor is anything of mine in anyone anywhere.' Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the dimension of nothingness now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the dimension of nothingness. This is declared to be the third practice conducive to the dimension of nothingness.

"Then again, the disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come; forms here & now; forms in lives to come; form-perceptions here & now; form-perceptions in lives to come; perceptions of the imperceptible; perceptions of the dimension of nothingness: all are perceptions. Where they cease without remainder: that is peaceful, that is exquisite, i.e., the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.' Practicing & frequently abiding in this way, his mind acquires confidence in that dimension. There being full confidence, he either attains the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception now or else is committed to discernment. With the break-up of the body, after death, it's possible that this leading-on consciousness of his will go to the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. This is declared to be the practice conducive to the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.

When this was said, Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One: "There is the case, lord, where a monk, having practiced in this way—'It should not be, it should not occur to me; it will not be, it will not occur to me. What is, what has come to be, that I abandon'—obtains equanimity. Now, would this monk be totally unbound, or not?"

"A certain such monk might, Ānanda, and another might not."

"What is the cause, what is the reason, whereby one might and another might not?"

"There is the case, Ānanda, where a monk, having practiced in this way—(thinking) 'It should not be, it should not occur to me; it will not be, it will not occur to me. What is, what has come to be, that I abandon'—obtains equanimity. He relishes that equanimity, welcomes it, remains fastened to it. As he relishes that equanimity, welcomes it, remains fastened to it, his consciousness is dependent on it, is sustained by it (clings to it). With clinging/sustenance, Ānanda, a monk is not totally unbound."

"Being sustained, where is that monk sustained?"

"The dimension of neither perception nor non-perception."

"Then, indeed, being sustained, he is sustained by the supreme sustenance."

"Being sustained, Ānanda, he *is* sustained by the supreme sustenance; for this—the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception—is the supreme sustenance. There is [however] the case where a monk, having practiced in this way—'It should not be, it should not occur to me; it will not be, it will not occur to me. What is, what has come to be, that I abandon'—obtains equanimity. He does not relish that equanimity, does not welcome it, does not remain fastened to it. As does not relish that equanimity, does not welcome it, does not remain fastened to it, his consciousness is not dependent on it, is not sustained by it (does not cling to it). Without clinging/sustenance, Ānanda, a monk is totally unbound."

"It's amazing, lord. It's astounding. For truly, the Blessed One has declared to us the way to cross over the flood by going from one support to the next. But what is the noble liberation?"

"There is the case, Ānanda, where a disciple of the noble ones considers this: 'Sensuality here & now, sensuality in lives to come; sensual perceptions here & now; sensual perceptions in lives to come; forms here & now; forms in lives to come; form-perceptions here & now; form-perceptions in lives to come; perceptions of the imperturbable; perceptions of the dimension of nothingness; perceptions of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception: that is an identity, to the extent that there is an identity. This is deathless: the liberation of the mind through lack of clinging/sustenance.'

"Now, Ānanda, I have taught the practice conducive to the imperturbable. I have taught the practice conducive to the

dimension of nothingness. I have taught the practice conducive to the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. I have taught the way to cross over the flood by going from one support to the next, the noble liberation. Whatever a teacher should do—seeking the welfare of his disciples, out of sympathy for them—that have I done for you. Over there are the roots of trees; over there, empty dwellings. Practice jhāna, Ānanda. Don't be heedless. Don't later fall into regret. This is our message to you all."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ānanda delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTE: 1. The "imperturbable" usually denotes the four formless attainments. In this context, though, it means the fourth jhāna and the first two formless attainments based on it: the dimension of the infinitude of space and the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness.

See also: MN 121; MN 140; SN XXII.55; Sn V.14

108 Gopaka Moggallāna Sutta Moggallāna the Guardsman

This discourse presents a picture of life in the early Buddhist community shortly after the Buddha's passing away. On the one hand, it shows the relationship between the monastic community and the political powers that be: the monks are polite and courteous to political functionaries, but the existence of this discourse shows that they had no qualms about depicting those functionaries as a little dense. On the other hand, it shows that early Buddhist practice had no room for many practices that later developed in Buddhist traditions, such as appointed lineage holders, elected ecclesiastical heads, or the use of mental defilements as a basis for concentration practice.

I have heard that on one occasion Ven. Ānanda was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary, not long after the Blessed One's total Unbinding.

Now at that time King Ajātasattu Vedehiputta of Magadha, suspicious of King Pajjota, was having Rājagaha fortified.

Then in the early morning, Ven. Ānanda, having put on his robes and carrying his bowl and outer robe, went into Rājagaha for alms. The thought occurred to him, "It's too early to go for alms in Rājagaha. What if I were to go to the brahman Moggallāna the Guardsman at his construction site?" So he went to Moggallāna the Guardsman at his construction site. Moggallāna the Guardsman saw him coming from afar, and on seeing him said to him, "Come, Master Ānanda. Welcome, Master Ānanda. It has been a long time since Master Ānanda has found the time to come here. Sit down, Master Ānanda. Here is a seat made ready for you."

So Ven. Ānanda sat down on the seat made ready. Moggallāna the Guardsman, taking a lower seat, sat to one side.

As he was sitting there, he said to Ven. Ānanda: "Master Ānanda, is there any one monk endowed in each & every way with the qualities with which Master Gotama—worthy & rightly self-awakened—was endowed?"

"No, brahman, there isn't any one monk endowed in each & every way with the qualities with which the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—was endowed. For the Blessed One was the arouser of the unarisen path, the begetter of the unbegotten path, the expounder of the unexpounded path, the knower of the path, the expert with regard to the path, adept at the path. And now his disciples follow the path and become endowed with it after him."

And then Ven. Ānanda's discussion with Moggallāna the Guardsman was interrupted in mid-course, for the brahman Vassakāra, the Magadhan administrator, on an inspection tour of the construction sites in Rājagaha, went to Ven. Ānanda at Moggallāna the Guardsman's construction site. On arrival, he exchanged courteous greetings with Ven. Ānanda. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to Ven. Ānanda, "Just now, for what discussion were you sitting together when you were interrupted in mid-course?"

"Just now, brahman, Moggallāna the Guardsman said to me, 'Master Ānanda, is there any one monk endowed in each & every way with the qualities with which Master Gotama—worthy & rightly self-awakened—was endowed?' And when this was said, I said to him, 'No, brahman, there isn't any one monk endowed in each & every way with the qualities with which the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—was endowed. For the Blessed One was the arouser of the unarisen path, the begetter of the unbegotten path, the expounder of the unexpounded path, the knower of the path, the expert with regard to the path, adept at the path. And now his disciples follow the path and become endowed with it after him.' This was my discussion with the brahman Moggallāna the Guardsman that was interrupted in mid-course when you arrived."

"Master Ānanda, is there any one monk appointed by Master Gotama [with the words], 'He will be your arbitrator after I am gone,' to whom you now turn?"

"No, brahman. There isn't any one monk appointed by the Blessed One—the one who knows, the one who sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened—[with the words] 'He will be your arbitrator after I am gone,' to whom we now turn."

"Then is there any one monk authorized by the Saṅgha and appointed by a large body of elder monks [with the words], 'He

will be our arbitrator after the Blessed One is gone,' to whom you now turn?"

"No, brahman. There isn't any one monk authorized by the Saṅgha and appointed by a large body of elder monks [with the words] 'He will be our arbitrator after the Blessed One is gone,' to whom we now turn."

"Being thus without an arbitrator, Master Ānanda, what is the reason for your concord?"

"It's not the case, brahman, that we're without an arbitrator. We have an arbitrator. The Dhamma is our arbitrator."

"When asked, 'Master Ānanda, is there any one monk appointed by Master Gotama [with the words], 'He will be your arbitrator after I am gone,' to whom you now turn?' you said, 'No, brahman. There isn't any one monk appointed by the Blessed One ... to whom we now turn.'

"When asked, 'Then is there any one monk authorized by the Saṅgha ... to whom you now turn?' you said, 'No, brahman. There isn't any one monk authorized by the Saṅgha ... to whom we now turn.'

"When asked, 'Being thus without an arbitrator, Master Ānanda, what is the reason for your concord?' you said, 'It's not the case, brahman, that we're without an arbitrator. We have an arbitrator. The Dhamma is our arbitrator.' Now how is the meaning of what you have said to be understood?"

"Brahman, there is a training rule laid down by the Blessed One—the one who knows, the one who sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened—a Pāṭimokkha that has been codified. On the uposatha day, all of us who live dependent on a single township gather together in one place. Having gathered together, we invite the one to whom it falls [to recite the Pāṭimokkha]. If, while he is reciting, a monk remembers an offense or transgression, we deal with him in accordance with the Dhamma, in accordance with what has been instructed. *We're* not the ones who deal with that venerable one. Rather, the Dhamma is what deals with us."

"Is there, Master Ānanda, any one monk you now honor, respect, revere, & venerate, on whom—honoring & respecting—you live in dependence?"

"Yes, brahman, there is a monk we now honor, respect, revere, & venerate, on whom—honoring & respecting—we live in dependence."

"When asked, 'Master Ānanda, is there any one monk appointed by Master Gotama [with the words], "He will be your arbitrator after I am gone," to whom you now turn?' you said, 'No, brahman. There isn't any one monk appointed by the Blessed One ... to whom we now turn.'

"When asked, 'Then is there any one monk authorized by the Saṅgha ... to whom you now turn?' you said, 'No, brahman. There isn't any one monk authorized by the Saṅgha ... to whom we now turn.'

"When asked, 'Is there, Master Ānanda, any one monk you now honor, respect, revere, & venerate, on whom—honoring & respecting—you live in dependence?' you said, 'Yes, brahman, there is a monk we now honor, respect, revere, & venerate, on whom—honoring & respecting—we live in dependence.' Now how is the meaning of what you have said to be understood?"

"Brahman, there are ten inspiring qualities expounded by the Blessed One—the one who knows, the one who sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. In whomever among us those ten qualities are found, we now honor, respect, revere, & venerate him; honoring & respecting him, we live in dependence on him. Which ten?"

[1] "There is the case where a monk is virtuous. He dwells restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in his behavior & sphere of activity. He trains himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

[2] "He has heard much, has retained what he has heard, has stored what he has heard. Whatever teachings are admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end, that—in their meaning & expression—proclaim the holy life entirely perfect & pure: those he has listened to often, retained, discussed, accumulated, examined with his mind, and well-penetrated in terms of his views.

[3] "He is content with robes, alms food, lodgings, & medicinal requisites for curing the sick.

[4] "He attains—whenever he wants, without strain, without difficulty—the four jhānas that are heightened mental states, pleasant abidings in the here-&-now.

[5] "He experiences manifold supranormal powers. Having been one he becomes many; having been many he becomes one. He appears. He vanishes. He goes unimpeded through walls, ramparts, & mountains as if through space. He dives in & out of

the earth as if it were water. He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. Sitting crosslegged he flies through the air like a winged bird. With his hand he touches & strokes even the sun & moon, so mighty & powerful. He exercises influence with his body even as far as the Brahma worlds.

[6] "He hears—by means of the divine ear-element, purified & surpassing the human—both kinds of sounds: divine & human, whether near or far.

[7] "He knows the awareness of other beings, other individuals, having encompassed it with his own awareness. He discerns a mind with passion as a mind with passion, and a mind without passion as a mind without passion. He discerns a mind with aversion as a mind with aversion, and a mind without aversion as a mind without aversion. He discerns a mind with delusion as a mind with delusion, and a mind without delusion as a mind without delusion. He discerns a restricted mind as a restricted mind, and a scattered mind as a scattered mind. He discerns an enlarged mind as an enlarged mind, and an unenlarged mind as an unenlarged mind. He discerns an excelled mind [one that is not at the most excellent level] as an excelled mind, and an unexcelled mind as an unexcelled mind. He discerns a concentrated mind as a concentrated mind, and an unconcentrated mind as an unconcentrated mind. He discerns a released mind as a released mind, and an unreleased mind as an unreleased mind.

[8] "He recollects his manifold past lives (lit: previous homes), i.e., one birth, two births, three births, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, one hundred, one thousand, one hundred thousand, many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion, many aeons of cosmic contraction & expansion, [recollecting], 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.' Thus he remembers his manifold past lives in their modes & details.

[9] "He sees—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing away and re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful &

ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech, & mind, who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile the noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.' Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—he sees beings passing away and re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

[10] "Through the ending of the mental fermentations, he remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release & discernment-release,¹ having known & realized them for himself right in the here & now.

"These, brahman, are the ten inspiring qualities expounded by the Blessed One—the one who knows, the one who sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. In whomever among us these ten qualities are found, we now honor, respect, revere, & venerate him; honoring & respecting him, we live in dependence on him."

When this was said, the brahman Vassakāra, the Magadhan administrator, turned to General Upananda and said, "What do you think, general? Do these venerable ones honor what should be honored, respect what should be respected, revere what should be revered, venerate what should be venerated? Of course they honor what should be honored, respect what should be respected, revere what should be revered, venerate what should be venerated. For if they did not honor, respect, revere, or venerate a person like this, then what sort of person would they honor, respect, revere, & venerate; on what sort of person, honor & respecting, would they live in dependence?"

Then the brahman Vassakāra, the Magadhan administrator, said to Ven. Ānanda, "But where are you staying now, Master Ānanda?"

"I am now staying at the Bamboo Grove, brahman."

"I trust, Master Ānanda, that the Bamboo Grove is delightful, quiet, free of noise, with an air of isolation, remote from human beings, & appropriate for retreat."

"Certainly, brahman, the Bamboo Grove is delightful, quiet, free of noise, with an air of isolation, remote from human beings, & appropriate for retreat because of guardians & protectors like yourself."

"Certainly, Master Ānanda, the Bamboo Grove is delightful, quiet, free of noise, with an air of isolation, remote from human beings, & appropriate for retreat because of venerable ones who are endowed with mental absorption (jhāna), who make mental absorption their habit. You venerable ones are both endowed with mental absorption & make mental absorption your habit.

"Once, Ven. Ānanda, Master Gotama was staying near Vesāli in the Peaked Roofed Pavilion in the Great Wood. I went to him at the Peaked Roofed Pavilion in the Great Wood, and there he spoke in a variety of ways on mental absorption. Master Gotama was both endowed with mental absorption & made mental absorption his habit. In fact, he praised mental absorption of every sort."

"It wasn't the case, brahman, that the Blessed One praised mental absorption of every sort, nor did he criticize mental absorption of every sort. And what sort of mental absorption did he not praise? There is the case where a certain person dwells with his awareness overcome by sensual passion, seized with sensual passion. He does not discern the escape, as it actually is present, from sensual passion once it has arisen. Making that sensual passion the focal point, he absorbs himself with it, besorbs, resorbs, & supersorbs himself with it.

"He dwells with his awareness overcome by ill will

"He dwells with his awareness overcome by sloth & drowsiness

"He dwells with his awareness overcome by restlessness & anxiety

"He dwells with his awareness overcome by uncertainty, seized with uncertainty. He does not discern the escape, as it actually is present, from uncertainty once it has arisen. Making that uncertainty the focal point, he absorbs himself with it, besorbs, resorbs, & supersorbs himself with it. This is the sort of mental absorption that the Blessed One did not praise.

"And what sort of mental absorption did he praise? There is the case where a monk—quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures,

withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities—enters & remains in the first *jhāna*: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second *jhāna*: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful & fully aware, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters & remains in the third *jhāna*, of which the Noble Ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.’ With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth *jhāna*: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is the sort of mental absorption that the Blessed One praised.

“It would seem, Ven. Ānanda, that Master Gotama criticized the mental absorption that deserves criticism, and praised that which deserves praise.

“Well, now, Master Ānanda, I must be going. Many are my duties, many the things I must do.”

“Then do, brahman, what you think it is now time to do.”

So the brahman Vassakāra, the Magadhan administrator, delighting & rejoicing in what Ven. Ānanda had said, got up from his seat & left.

Then, not long after he had left, Moggallāna the Guardsman said to Ven. Ānanda, “Master Ānanda, you still haven’t answered what I asked you.”

“Didn’t I just tell you, brahman? There isn’t any one monk endowed in each & every way with the qualities with which the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—was endowed. For the Blessed One was the arouser of the unarisen path, the begetter of the unbegotten path, the expounder of the unexpounded path, the knower of the path, the expert with regard to the path, adept at the path. And now his disciples follow the path and become endowed with it after him.”

NOTE: 1. On awareness-release and discernment-release, see AN II.30 and AN IX.44. Discernment-release is always transcendent; awareness-release, only when fermentation-free.

See also: SN XXII.90; AN VI.12; AN VII.21

109 Mahā-Puṇṇama Sutta

The Great Full-moon Night Discourse

This sutta provides a thorough discussion of issues related to the five aggregates. Toward the end of the discussion, a monk thinks that he has found a loophole in the teaching. The way the Buddha handles this incident shows the proper use of the teachings on the aggregates: not as a metaphysical theory, but as a tool for questioning clinging and so gaining release.

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvattṭhi in the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migāra's mother. And on that occasion—the uposatha of the fifteenth, the night of a very full moon—he was sitting out in the open with the community of monks.

Then a certain monk, rising from his seat, arranging his robe over one shoulder, and placing his hands palm-to-palm over the heart, said to the Blessed One: "Venerable sir, there is an area where, if the Blessed One would give me leave, I would like the answer to a question."

"Very well, then, monk. Sit back down in your seat and ask whatever you want."

Responding to the Blessed One, "Yes, lord," the monk sat back down in his seat and said to the Blessed One, "Aren't these the five clinging-aggregates, i.e., form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness as a clinging-aggregate?"

"Monk, these are the five clinging-aggregates, i.e., form as a clinging-aggregate, feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness as a clinging-aggregate."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk delighted & approved of the Blessed One's words and then asked him a further question: "But in what, lord, are these five clinging-aggregates rooted?"

"Monk, these five clinging-aggregates are rooted in desire."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "Is clinging the same thing as the five clinging-aggregates, or is clinging separate from the five clinging-aggregates?"

"Monk, clinging is neither the same thing as the five clinging-aggregates, nor is it separate from the five clinging-aggregates. Just that whatever passion & delight is there, that's the clinging there."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "Might there be diversity in the desire & passion for the five clinging-aggregates?"

"There might, monk. There is the case where the thought occurs to someone, 'May I be one with such a form in the future. May I be one with such a feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... such a consciousness in the future. This is how there would be diversity in the desire & passion for the five clinging-aggregates.'"

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "To what extent does the designation 'aggregate' apply to the aggregates?"

"Monk, whatever form is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: that is called the aggregate of form. Whatever feeling is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: that is called the aggregate of feeling. Whatever perception is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: that is called the aggregate of perception. Whatever fabrications are past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: those are called the aggregate of fabrication. Whatever consciousness is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: that is called the aggregate of consciousness.¹ This is the extent to which the term 'aggregate' applies to the aggregates."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "Lord, what is the cause, what the condition, for the delineation² of the aggregate of form? What is the cause, what the condition, for the delineation of the aggregate of feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness?"

"Monk, the four great existents (earth, water, fire, & wind) are the cause, the four great existents the condition, for the delineation of the aggregate of form. Contact is the cause, contact the condition, for the delineation of the aggregate of feeling. Contact is the cause, contact the condition, for the delineation of

the aggregate of perception. Contact is the cause, contact the condition, for the delineation of the aggregate of fabrications. Name-&-form is the cause, name-&-form the condition, for the delineation of the aggregate of consciousness."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "Lord, how does self-identity view come about?"

"There is the case, monk, where an ordinary uninstructed person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for men of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—assumes form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form.

"He assumes feeling to be the self, or the self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in the self, or the self as in feeling. He assumes perception to be the self, or the self as possessing perception, or perception as in the self, or the self as in perception. He assumes fabrications to be the self, or the self as possessing fabrications, or fabrications as in the self, or the self as in fabrications. He assumes consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness.

"This, monk, is how self-identity view comes about."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "Lord, how does self-identity view no longer come about?"

"There is the case, monk, where a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—who has regard for noble ones, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma; who has regard for men of integrity, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma—does not assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He does not assume feeling to be the self.... does not assume perception to be the self does not assume fabrications to be the self.... He does not assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness.

"This, monk, is how self-identity view no longer comes about."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "What, lord, is the allure of form? What is its drawback? What is the escape from it? What is the allure of feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness? What is its drawback? What is the escape from it?"

"Monk, whatever pleasure & joy arises dependent on form: that is the allure of form. The fact that form is inconstant, stressful, subject to change: that is the drawback of form. The subduing of desire & passion, the abandoning of desire & passion for form: that is the escape from form.

"Whatever pleasure & joy arises dependent on feeling: that is the allure of feeling

"Whatever pleasure & joy arises dependent on perception: that is the allure of perception

"Whatever pleasure & joy arises dependent on fabrications: that is the allure of fabrications

"Whatever pleasure & joy arises dependent on consciousness: that is the allure of consciousness. The fact that consciousness is inconstant, stressful, subject to change: that is the drawback of consciousness. The subduing of desire & passion, the abandoning of desire & passion for consciousness: that is the escape from consciousness."

Saying, "Very good, lord," the monk ... asked him a further question: "Knowing in what way, seeing in what way, is there—with regard to this body endowed with consciousness, and with regard to all external signs—no longer any I-making, or my-making, or obsession with conceit?"

"Monk, one sees any form whatsoever—past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near—every form, as it actually is with right discernment: 'This is not mine. This is not my self. This is not what I am.'

"One sees any feeling whatsoever ... any perception whatsoever ... any fabrications whatsoever ...

"One sees any consciousness whatsoever—past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near—every consciousness—as it actually is with right discernment: 'This is not mine. This is not my self. This is not what I am.'"

"Monk, knowing in this way, seeing in this way is there—with regard to this body endowed with consciousness, and with regard to all external signs—no longer any I-making, or my-making, or obsession with conceit."

Now at that moment this line of thinking appeared in the awareness of a certain monk: "So—form is not-self, feeling is not-self, perception is not-self, fabrications are not-self, consciousness

is not-self. Then what self will be touched by the actions done by what is not-self?"

Then the Blessed One, realizing with his awareness the line of thinking in that monk's awareness, addressed the monks: "It's possible that a senseless person—immersed in ignorance, overcome with craving—might think that he could outsmart the Teacher's message in this way: 'So—form is not-self, feeling is not-self, perception is not-self, fabrications are not-self, consciousness is not-self. Then what self will be touched by the actions done by what is not-self?' Now, monks, haven't I trained you in counter-questioning with regard to this & that topic here & there? What do you think—Is form constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, lord." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, lord." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"... Is feeling constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, lord." ...

"... Is perception constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, lord." ...

"... Are fabrications constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, lord." ...

"What do you think, monks—Is consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, lord." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, lord." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, lord."

"Thus, monks, any form whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: every form is to be seen as it actually is with right discernment as: 'This is not mine. This is not my self. This is not what I am.'

"Any feeling whatsoever

"Any perception whatsoever

"Any fabrications whatsoever

"Any consciousness whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; blatant or subtle; common or sublime; far or near: every consciousness is to be seen as it actually is with right discernment as: 'This is not mine. This is not my self. This is not what I am.'

“Seeing thus, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with form, disenchanted with feeling, disenchanted with perception, disenchanted with fabrications, disenchanted with consciousness. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is fully released. With full release, there is the knowledge, ‘Fully released.’ He discerns that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words. And while this explanation was being given, the minds of sixty monks, through no clinging (not being sustained), were fully released from fermentations.

NOTES

1. One form of consciousness apparently does not come under the aggregate of consciousness. This is termed *viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ*—consciousness without a surface, or consciousness without feature. MN 49 says specifically that this consciousness does not partake of the “allness of the all,” the “all” being conterminous with the five aggregates. The standard definition of the aggregate of consciousness states that this aggregate includes all consciousness, “past, present, or future ... near or far.” However, because *viññāṇaṃ anidassanaṃ* stands outside of space and time it would not be covered by these terms. Similarly, where SN XXII.97 says that no consciousness is eternal, “eternal” is a concept that applies only within the dimension of time, and thus would not apply to this form of consciousness.

2. Delineation (*paññāpana*) literally means, “making discernible.” This apparently refers to the intentional aspect of perception, which takes the objective side of experience and fabricates it into discernible objects. In the case of the aggregates, the four great existents, contact, and name-&-form provide the objective basis for discerning them, while the process of fabrication takes the raw material provided by the objective basis and turns it into discernible instances of the aggregates. This process is described in slightly different terms in SN XXII.79.

See also: SN V.10; SN XII.35; SN XII.46; SN XII.64; SN XXII.1-2; SN XXII.36; SN XXII.48; SN XXII.54; SN XXII.57; SN XXII.95; SN XXIII.2; SN XLIV.10

110 Cūḷa-Puṇṇama Sutta
 The Shorter Full-moon Night
 Discourse

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvattṭhi in the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migāra's mother. And on that occasion—the uposatha of the fifteenth, the night of a very full moon—he was sitting out in the open with the community of monks. Then, having surveyed the silent community of monks, he addressed them: "Monks, could a person of no integrity know of a person of no integrity: 'This is a person of no integrity'?"

"No, lord."

"Good, monks. It's impossible, there's no way, that a person of no integrity would know of a person of no integrity: 'This is a person of no integrity.'

"Could a person of no integrity know of a person of integrity: 'This is a person of integrity'?"

"No, lord."

"Good, monks. It's impossible, there's no way, that a person of no integrity would know of a person of integrity: 'This is a person of integrity.'

"A person of no integrity is endowed with qualities of no integrity; he is a person of no integrity in his friendship, in the way he wills, the way he gives advice, the way he speaks, the way he acts, the views he holds, & the way he gives a gift.

"And how is a person of no integrity endowed with qualities of no integrity? There is the case where a person of no integrity is lacking in conviction, lacking in conscience, lacking in concern [for the results of unskillful actions]; he is unlearned, lazy, of muddled mindfulness, & poor discernment. This is how a person of no integrity is endowed with qualities of no integrity."

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in his friendship? There is the case where a person of no integrity has, as his friends & companions, those priests & contemplatives who are lacking in conviction, lacking in conscience, lacking in

concern, unlearned, lazy, of muddled mindfulness, & poor discernment. This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in his friendship.

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in the way he wills? There is the case where a person of no integrity wills for his own affliction, or for the affliction of others, or for the affliction of both. This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in the way he wills.

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in the way he gives advice? There is the case where a person of no integrity gives advice for his own affliction, or for the affliction of others, or for the affliction of both. This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in the way he gives advice.

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in the way he speaks? There is the case where a person of no integrity is one who tells lies, engages in divisive tale-bearing, engages in harsh speech, engages in idle chatter. This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in the way he speaks.

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in the way he acts? There is the case where a person of no integrity is one who takes life, steals, engages in illicit sex. This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in the way he acts.

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in the views he holds? There is the case where a person of no integrity is one who holds a view like this: 'There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed. There is no fruit or result of good or bad actions. There is no this world, no next world, no mother, no father, no spontaneously reborn beings; no priests or contemplatives who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves.' This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in the views he holds.

"And how is a person of no integrity a person of no integrity in the way he gives a gift? There is the case where a person of no integrity gives a gift inattentively, not with his own hand, disrespectfully, as if throwing it away, with the view that nothing will come of it. This is how a person of no integrity is a person of no integrity in the way he gives a gift.

"This person of no integrity—thus endowed with qualities of no integrity; a person of no integrity in his friendship, in the

way he wills, the way he gives advice, the way he speaks, the way he acts, the views he holds, & the way he gives a gift—the break-up of the body, after death, reappears in the destination of people of no integrity. And what is the destination of people of no integrity? Hell or the animal womb.

"Now, monks, could a person of integrity know of a person of no integrity: 'This is a person of no integrity'?"

"Yes, lord."

"Good, monks. It is possible that a person of integrity would know of a person of no integrity: 'This is a person of no integrity.'

"Could a person of integrity know of a person of integrity: 'This is a person of integrity'?"

"Yes, lord."

"Good, monks. It is possible that a person of integrity would know of a person of integrity: 'This is a person of integrity.'

"A person of integrity is endowed with qualities of integrity; he is a person of integrity in his friendship, in the way he wills, the way he gives advice, the way he speaks, the way he acts, the views he holds, & the way he gives a gift.

"And how is a person of integrity endowed with qualities of integrity? There is the case where a person of integrity is endowed with conviction, conscience, concern; he is learned, with aroused persistence, unmuddled mindfulness, & good discernment. This is how a person of integrity is endowed with qualities of integrity."

"And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in his friendship? There is the case where a person of integrity has, as his friends & companions, those priests & contemplatives who are endowed with conviction, conscience, concern; who are learned, with aroused persistence, unmuddled mindfulness, & good discernment. This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in his friendship.

"And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in the way he wills? There is the case where a person of integrity wills neither for his own affliction, nor for the affliction of others, nor for the affliction of both. This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in the way he wills.

"And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in the way he gives advice? There is the case where a person of integrity gives advice neither for his own affliction, nor for the affliction of others, nor for the affliction of both. This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in the way he gives advice.

“And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in the way he speaks? There is the case where a person of integrity is one who refrains from lies, refrains from divisive tale-bearing, refrains from harsh speech, refrains from idle chatter. This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in the way he speaks.

“And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in the way he acts? There is the case where a person of integrity is one who refrains from taking life, refrains from stealing, refrains from illicit sex. This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in the way he acts.

“And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in the views he holds? There is the case where a person of integrity is one who holds a view like this: ‘There is what is given, what is offered, what is sacrificed. There are fruits & results of good & bad actions. There is this world & the next world. There is mother & father. There are spontaneously reborn beings; there are priests & contemplatives who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves.’ This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in the views he holds.

“And how is a person of integrity a person of integrity in the way he gives a gift? There is the case where a person of integrity gives a gift attentively, with his own hand, respectfully, not as if throwing it away, with the view that something will come of it. This is how a person of integrity is a person of integrity in the way he gives a gift.

“This person of integrity—thus endowed with qualities of integrity; a person of integrity in his friendship, in the way he wills, the way he gives advice, the way he speaks, the way he acts, the views he holds, & the way he gives a gift—on the break-up of the body, after death, reappears in the destination of people of integrity. And what is the destination of people of integrity? Greatness among devas or among human beings.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

See also: AN II.31-32; AN IV.73; AN IV.192

117 *Mahā-Cattārisaka Sutta* The Great Forty

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Sāvatti, in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said, "Monks, I will teach you noble right concentration with its supports and requisite conditions. Listen, and pay close attention. I will speak."

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said: "Now what, monks, is noble right concentration with its supports & requisite conditions? Any singleness of mind equipped with these seven factors—right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, & right mindfulness—is called noble right concentration with its supports & requisite conditions.

"[1] Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? One discerns wrong view as wrong view, and right view as right view. This is one's right view. And what is wrong view? 'There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed. There is no fruit or result of good or bad actions. There is no this world, no next world, no mother, no father, no spontaneously reborn beings; no priests or contemplatives who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves.' This is wrong view.

"And what is right view? Right view, I tell you, is of two sorts: There is right view with fermentations, siding with merit, resulting in the acquisitions [of becoming]; and there is noble right view, without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"And what is the right view that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions? 'There is what is given, what is offered, what is sacrificed. There are fruits & results of good & bad actions. There is this world & the next world. There is mother & father. There are spontaneously reborn beings; there

are priests & contemplatives who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves.' This is the right view that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions.

"And what is the right view that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path? The discernment, the faculty of discernment, the strength of discernment, analysis of qualities as a factor for awakening, the path factor of right view in one developing the noble path whose mind is noble, whose mind is free from fermentations, who is fully possessed of the noble path. This is the right view that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"One tries to abandon wrong view & to enter into right view: This is one's right effort. One is mindful to abandon wrong view & to enter & remain in right view: This is one's right mindfulness. Thus these three qualities—right view, right effort, & right mindfulness—run & circle around right view.

"[2] Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? One discerns wrong resolve as wrong resolve, and right resolve as right resolve. And what is wrong resolve? Being resolved on sensuality, on ill will, on harmfulness. This is wrong resolve.

"And what is right resolve? Right resolve, I tell you, is of two sorts: There is right resolve with fermentations, siding with merit, resulting in the acquisitions [of becoming]; and there is noble right resolve, without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"And what is the right resolve that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions? Being resolved on renunciation, on freedom from ill will, on harmlessness. This is the right resolve that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions.

"And what is the right resolve that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path? The thinking, directed thinking, resolve, mental absorption, mental fixity, focused awareness, & verbal fabrications in one developing the noble path whose mind is noble, whose mind is without fermentations, who is fully possessed of the noble path. This is the right resolve that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"One tries to abandon wrong resolve & to enter into right resolve: This is one's right effort. One is mindful to abandon

wrong resolve & to enter & remain in right resolve: This is one's right mindfulness. Thus these three qualities—right view, right effort, & right mindfulness—run & circle around right resolve.

"[3] Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? One discerns wrong speech as wrong speech, and right speech as right speech. And what is wrong speech? Lying, divisive tale-bearing, abusive speech, & idle chatter. This is wrong speech.

"And what is right speech? Right speech, I tell you, is of two sorts: There is right speech with fermentations, siding with merit, resulting in the acquisitions [of becoming]; and there is noble right speech, without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"And what is the right speech that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions? Abstaining from lying, from divisive tale-bearing, from abusive speech, & from idle chatter. This is the right speech that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions.

"And what is the right speech that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path? The abstaining, desisting, abstinence, avoidance of the four forms of verbal misconduct in one developing the noble path whose mind is noble, whose mind is without fermentations, who is fully possessed of the noble path. This is the right speech that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"One tries to abandon wrong speech & to enter into right speech: This is one's right effort. One is mindful to abandon wrong speech & to enter & remain in right speech: This is one's right mindfulness. Thus these three qualities—right view, right effort, & right mindfulness—run & circle around right speech.

"[4] Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? One discerns wrong action as wrong action, and right action as right action. And what is wrong action? Killing, taking what is not given, illicit sex. This is wrong action.

"And what is right action? Right action, I tell you, is of two sorts: There is right action with fermentations, siding with merit, resulting in the acquisitions [of becoming]; and there is noble right action, without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

"And what is the right action that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions? Abstaining from killing, from

taking what is not given, & from illicit sex.¹ This is the right action that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions.

“And what is the right action that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path? The abstaining, desisting, abstinence, avoidance of the three forms of bodily misconduct in one developing the noble path whose mind is noble, whose mind is without fermentations, who is fully possessed of the noble path. This is the right action that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

“One tries to abandon wrong action & to enter into right action: This is one’s right effort. One is mindful to abandon wrong action & to enter & remain in right action: This is one’s right mindfulness. Thus these three qualities—right view, right effort, & right mindfulness—run & circle around right action.

“[5] Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? One discerns wrong livelihood as wrong livelihood, and right livelihood as right livelihood. And what is wrong livelihood? Scheming, persuading, hinting, belittling, & pursuing gain with gain. This is wrong livelihood.

“And what is right livelihood? Right livelihood, I tell you, is of two sorts: There is right livelihood with fermentations, siding with merit, resulting in the acquisitions [of becoming]; and there is noble right livelihood, without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

“And what is the right livelihood that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones abandons wrong livelihood and maintains his life with right livelihood. This is the right livelihood that has fermentations, sides with merit, & results in acquisitions.

“And what is the right livelihood that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path? The abstaining, desisting, abstinence, avoidance of wrong livelihood in one developing the noble path whose mind is noble, whose mind is without fermentations, who is fully possessed of the noble path. This is the right livelihood that is without fermentations, transcendent, a factor of the path.

“One tries to abandon wrong livelihood & to enter into right livelihood: This is one’s right effort. One is mindful to abandon wrong livelihood & to enter & remain in right livelihood: This is one’s right mindfulness. Thus these three qualities—right view, right effort, & right mindfulness—run & circle around right livelihood.

"Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? In one of right view, right resolve comes into being. In one of right resolve, right speech comes into being. In one of right speech, right action.... In one of right action, right livelihood.... In one of right livelihood, right effort.... In one of right effort, right mindfulness.... In one of right mindfulness, right concentration.... In one of right concentration, right knowledge.... In one of right knowledge, right release comes into being. Thus the learner is endowed with eight factors, and the Arahant with ten.

"Of those, right view is the forerunner. And how is right view the forerunner? In one of right view, wrong view is abolished. The many evil, unskillful qualities that come into play with wrong view as their condition are also abolished, while the many skillful qualities that have right view as their condition go to the culmination of their development. In one of right resolve, wrong resolve is abolished In one of right speech, wrong speech is abolished In one of right action, wrong action is abolished In one of right livelihood, wrong livelihood is abolished In one of right effort, wrong effort is abolished In one of right mindfulness, wrong mindfulness is abolished ... In one of right concentration, wrong concentration is abolished In one of right knowledge, wrong knowledge is abolished In one of right release, wrong release is abolished. The many evil, unskillful qualities that come into play with wrong release as their condition are also abolished, while the many skillful qualities that have right release as their condition go to the culmination of their development.

"Thus, monks, there are twenty factors siding with skillfulness, and twenty with unskillfulness.

"This Dhamma discourse on the Great Forty has been set rolling and cannot be stopped by any contemplative or priest or deva or Māra and Brahmā or anyone at all in the world.

"If any priest or contemplative might think that this Great Forty Dhamma discourse should be censured & rejected, there are ten legitimate implications of his statement that would form grounds for censuring him here & now. If he censures right view, then he would honor any priests and contemplatives who are of wrong view; he would praise them. If he censures right resolve ... right speech ... right action ... right livelihood ... right effort ... right mindfulness ... right concentration ... right knowledge If

he censures right release, then he would honor any priests and contemplatives who are of wrong release; he would praise them. If any priest or contemplative might think that this Great Forty Dhamma discourse should be censured & rejected, there are these ten legitimate implications of his statement that would form grounds for censuring him here & now.

“Even Vassa & Bhañña—those teachers from Okkala who were proponents of no-causality, no-action, & no-existence—would not think that this Dhamma discourse on the Great Forty should be censured & rejected. Why is that? For fear of criticism, opposition, & reproach.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTE: 1. SN XLV.8 defines right action as abstaining from killing, abstaining from taking what is not given, & abstaining from unchastity.

See also: SN XII.15; SN XLV.1; SN XLV.8; AN V.25; AN V.28

118 *Ānāpānasati Sutta* Mindfulness of Breathing

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Sāvatti in the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migāra's mother, together with many well-known elder disciples—Ven. Sāriputta, Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, Ven. Mahā Kassapa, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana, Ven. Mahā Koṭṭhita, Ven. Mahā Kappina, Ven. Mahā Cunda, Ven. Revata, Ven. Ānanda, and other well-known elder disciples. On that occasion the elder monks were teaching & instructing. Some elder monks were teaching & instructing ten monks, some were teaching & instructing twenty monks, some were teaching & instructing thirty monks, some were teaching & instructing forty monks. The new monks, being taught & instructed by the elder monks, were discerning grand, successive distinctions.

Now on that occasion—the uposatha day of the fifteenth, the full-moon night of the Pavāraṇā ceremony—the Blessed One was seated in the open air surrounded by the community of monks. Surveying the silent community of monks, he addressed them:

“Monks, I am content with this practice. I am content at heart with this practice. So arouse even more intense persistence for the attaining of the as-yet-unattained, the reaching of the as-yet-unreached, the realization of the as-yet-unrealized. I will remain right here at Sāvatti [for another month] through the ‘White Water-lily’ Month, the fourth month of the rains.”

The monks in the countryside heard, “The Blessed One, they say, will remain right there at Sāvatti through the White Water-lily Month, the fourth month of the rains.” So they left for Sāvatti to see the Blessed One.

Then the elder monks taught & instructed even more intensely. Some elder monks were teaching & instructing ten monks, some were teaching & instructing twenty monks, some were teaching & instructing thirty monks, some were teaching & instructing forty monks. The new monks, being taught & instructed by the elder monks, were discerning grand, successive distinctions.

Now on that occasion—the uposatha day of the fifteenth, the full-moon night of the White Water-lily Month, the fourth month of the rains—the Blessed One was seated in the open air surrounded by the community of monks. Surveying the silent community of monks, he addressed them:

“Monks, this assembly is free from idle chatter, devoid of idle chatter, and is established on pure heartwood: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. The sort of assembly that is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, an incomparable field of merit for the world: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. The sort of assembly to which a small gift, when given, becomes great, and a great gift greater: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly. The sort of assembly that it is rare to see in the world: such is this community of monks, such is this assembly—the sort of assembly that it would be worth traveling for leagues, taking along provisions, in order to see.

“In this community of monks there are monks who are arahants, whose mental effluents are ended, who have reached fulfillment, done the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, totally destroyed the fetter of becoming, and who are released through right gnosis: such are the monks in this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of the first set of five fetters, are due to be reborn [in the Pure Abodes], there to be totally unbound, never again to return from that world: such are the monks in this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three fetters, and with the attenuation of passion, aversion, & delusion, are once-returners, who—on returning only one more time to this world—will make an ending to stress: such are the monks in this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who, with the total ending of [the first] three fetters, are stream-winners, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening: such are the monks in this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who remain devoted to the development of the four frames of reference ... the four right exertions ... the four bases of power ... the five faculties ... the five strengths ... the seven factors for awakening ... the noble eightfold path:¹ such are the monks in this community of monks.

“In this community of monks there are monks who remain devoted to the development of good will ... compassion ... appreciation ... equanimity ... [the perception of the] foulness [of

the body] ... the perception of inconstancy: such are the monks in this community of monks.

"In this community of monks there are monks who remain devoted to mindfulness of in-&-out breathing.

"Mindfulness of in-&-out breathing, when developed & pursued, is of great fruit, of great benefit. Mindfulness of in-&-out breathing, when developed & pursued, brings the four frames of reference to their culmination. The four frames of reference, when developed & pursued, bring the seven factors for awakening to their culmination. The seven factors for awakening, when developed & pursued, bring clear knowing & release to their culmination.

Mindfulness of In-&-Out Breathing

"Now how is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing developed & pursued so as to be of great fruit, or great benefit?

"There is the case where a monk, having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building, sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect, and setting mindfulness to the fore.² Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"[1] Breathing in long, he discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, he discerns that he is breathing out long. [2] Or breathing in short, he discerns that he is breathing in short; or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short. [3] He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to the entire body,³ and to breathe out sensitive to the entire body. [4] He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication,⁴ and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication.

"[5] He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to rapture, and to breathe out sensitive to rapture. [6] He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to pleasure, and to breathe out sensitive to pleasure. [7] He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to mental fabrication,⁵ and to breathe out sensitive to mental fabrication. [8] He trains himself to breathe in calming mental fabrication, and to breathe out calming mental fabrication.

"[9] He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to the mind, and to breathe out sensitive to the mind. [10] He trains himself to breathe in satisfying the mind, and to breathe out satisfying the mind. [11] He trains himself to breathe in steadying the mind, and to breathe out steadying the mind. [12] He trains himself to breathe in releasing the mind, and to breathe out releasing the mind.⁶

“[13] He trains himself to breathe in focusing on inconstancy, and to breathe out focusing on inconstancy. [14] He trains himself to breathe in focusing on dispassion [*literally*, fading], and to breathe out focusing on dispassion. [15] He trains himself to breathe in focusing on cessation, and to breathe out focusing on cessation. [16] He trains himself to breathe in focusing on relinquishment, and to breathe out focusing on relinquishment.

“This is how mindfulness of breathing is developed & pursued so as to be of great fruit, of great benefit.

The Four Frames of Reference

“And how is mindfulness of breathing develop & pursued so as to bring the four frames of reference to their culmination?

“[1] On whatever occasion a monk breathing in long discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, discerns that he is breathing out long; or breathing in short, discerns that he is breathing in short; or breathing out short, discerns that he is breathing out short; trains himself to breathe in...&... out sensitive to the entire body; trains himself to breathe in...&...out calming bodily fabrication: On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *body* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—the in-&-out breath—is classed as a body among bodies, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[2] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself to breathe in...&...out sensitive to rapture; trains himself to breathe in...&...out sensitive to pleasure; trains himself to breathe in...&...out sensitive to mental fabrication; trains himself to breathe in...&...out calming mental fabrication: On that occasion the monk remains focused on *feelings* in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—close attention to in-&-out breaths—is classed as a feeling among feelings,⁷ which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on feelings in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[3] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself to breathe in...&...out sensitive to the mind; trains himself to breathe in...&...out satisfying the mind; trains himself to breathe in...&...out steadying the mind; trains himself to breathe in...&...out releasing

the mind: On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *mind* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I don't say that there is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing in one of confused mindfulness and no alertness, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the mind in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"[4] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself to breathe in...&...out focusing on inconstancy; trains himself to breathe in...&...out focusing on dispassion; trains himself to breathe in...&...out focusing on cessation; trains himself to breathe in...&...out focusing on relinquishment: On that occasion the monk remains focused on *mental qualities* in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He who sees clearly with discernment the abandoning of greed & distress is one who oversees with equanimity, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world.

"This is how mindfulness of in-&-out breathing is developed & pursued so as to bring the four frames of reference to their culmination.

The Seven Factors for Awakening

"And how are the four frames of reference developed & pursued so as to bring the seven factors for awakening to their culmination?

"[1] On whatever occasion the monk remains focused on the *body* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world, on that occasion his mindfulness is steady & without lapse. When his mindfulness is steady & without lapse, then *mindfulness* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

"[2] Remaining mindful in this way, he examines, analyzes, & comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment. When he remains mindful in this way, examining, analyzing, & coming to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, then *analysis of qualities* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

"[3] In one who examines, analyzes, & comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, unflagging persistence

is aroused. When unflagging persistence is aroused in one who examines, analyzes, & comes to a comprehension of that quality with discernment, then *persistence* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

"[4] In one whose persistence is aroused, a rapture not-of-the-flesh arises. When a rapture not-of-the-flesh arises in one whose persistence is aroused, then *rapture* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

"[5] For one who is enraptured, the body grows calm and the mind grows calm. When the body & mind of an enraptured monk grow calm, then *serenity* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

"[6] For one who is at ease—his body calmed—the mind becomes concentrated. When the mind of one at ease—his body calmed—becomes concentrated, then *concentration* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

"[7] He oversees the mind thus concentrated with equanimity. When he oversees the mind thus concentrated with equanimity, *equanimity* as a factor for awakening becomes aroused. He develops it, and for him it goes to the culmination of its development.

[Similarly with the other three frames of reference: feelings, mind, & mental qualities.]

"This is how the four frames of reference are developed & pursued so as to bring the seven factors for awakening to their culmination.

Clear Knowing & Release

"And how are the seven factors for awakening developed & pursued so as to bring clear knowing & release to their culmination? There is the case where a monk develops *mindfulness* as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion ... dispassion ... cessation, resulting in relinquishment. He develops *analysis of qualities* as a factor for awakening ... *persistence* as a factor for awakening ... *rapture* as a factor for awakening ... *serenity* as a factor for awakening... *concentration* as a factor for awakening ... *equanimity* as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion ... dispassion ... cessation, resulting in relinquishment.

“This is how the seven factors for awakening are developed & pursued so as to bring clear knowing & release to their culmination.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTES

1. These sets of qualities are termed the Wings to Awakening (*bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*). DN 16 reports that toward the end of his life, the Buddha recommended these qualities as the essence of his teaching. See *The Wings to Awakening* for more details.

2. To the fore (*parimukham*): The Abhidhamma takes an etymological approach to this term, defining it as around (*pari-*) the mouth (*mukham*). In the Vinaya, however, it is used in a context (Cv.V.27.4) where it undoubtedly means the front of the chest. There is also the possibility that the term could be used idiomatically as “to the front,” which is how I have translated it here.

3. The commentaries insist that “body” here means the breath, but this is unlikely in this context, for the next step—without further explanation—refers to the breath as “bodily fabrication.” If the Buddha were using two different terms to refer to the breath in such close proximity, he would have been careful to signal that he was redefining his terms (as he does below, when explaining that the first four steps in breath meditation correspond to the practice of focusing on the body in and of itself as a frame of reference). The step of breathing in and out sensitive to the entire body relates to the many similes in the suttas depicting *jhāna* as a state of whole-body awareness (see MN 119).

4. “In-&-out breaths are bodily; these are things tied up with the body. That’s why in-&-out breaths are bodily fabrications.”—MN 44.

5. “Perceptions & feelings are mental; these are things tied up with the mind. That’s why perceptions & feelings are mental fabrications.”—MN 44.

6. AN IX.34 shows how the mind, step by step, is temporarily released from burdensome mental states of greater and greater refinement as it advances through the stages of *jhāna*.

7. As this shows, a meditator focusing on feelings in themselves as a frame of reference should not abandon the breath as the basis for his/her concentration.

See also: AN III.103; AN V.96-98

119 *Kāyagatā-sati Sutta* Mindfulness Immersed in the Body

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Sāvattthi at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Now at that time a large number of monks, after the meal, on returning from their alms round, had gathered at the meeting hall when this discussion arose: "Isn't it amazing, friends! Isn't it astounding!—the extent to which mindfulness immersed in the body, when developed & pursued, is said by the Blessed One who knows, who sees—the worthy one, rightly self-awakened—to be of great fruit & great benefit." And this discussion came to no conclusion.

Then the Blessed One, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to the meeting hall and, on arrival, sat down on a seat made ready. As he was sitting there, he addressed the monks: "For what topic are you gathered together here? And what was the discussion that came to no conclusion?"

"Just now, lord, after the meal, on returning from our alms round, we gathered at the meeting hall when this discussion arose: 'Isn't it amazing, friends! Isn't it astounding!—the extent to which mindfulness immersed in the body, when developed & pursued, is said by the Blessed One who knows, who sees—the worthy one, rightly self-awakened—to be of great fruit & great benefit.' This was the discussion that had come to no conclusion when the Blessed One arrived."

[The Blessed One said:] "And how is mindfulness immersed in the body developed, how is it pursued, so as to be of great fruit & great benefit?"

"There is the case where a monk—having gone to the wilderness, to the shade of a tree, or to an empty building—sits down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect and setting mindfulness to the fore. Always mindful, he breathes in; mindful he breathes out.

"Breathing in long, he discerns that he is breathing in long; or breathing out long, he discerns that he is breathing out long. Or breathing in short, he discerns that he is breathing in short;

or breathing out short, he discerns that he is breathing out short. He trains himself to breathe in sensitive to the entire body and to breathe out sensitive to the entire body. He trains himself to breathe in calming bodily fabrication (the breath) and to breathe out calming bodily fabrication. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

“Furthermore, when walking, the monk discerns that he is walking. When standing, he discerns that he is standing. When sitting, he discerns that he is sitting. When lying down, he discerns that he is lying down. Or however his body is disposed, that is how he discerns it. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

“Furthermore, when going forward & returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward & looking away...when bending & extending his limbs...when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe & his bowl...when eating, drinking, chewing, & savoring...when urinating & defecating...when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, & remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

“Furthermore, the monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: ‘In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.’ Just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain—wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice—and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, ‘This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney

beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice'; in the same way, the monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: 'In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.' And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

"Furthermore, the monk contemplates this very body—however it stands, however it is disposed—in terms of properties: 'In this body there is the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, & the wind property.' Just as a skilled butcher or his apprentice, having killed a cow, would sit at a crossroads cutting it up into pieces, the monk contemplates this very body—however it stands, however it is disposed—in terms of properties: 'In this body there is the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, & the wind property.' And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

"Furthermore, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground—one day, two days, three days dead—bloated, livid, & festering, he applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate'...

"Or again, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground, picked at by crows, vultures, & hawks, by dogs, hyenas, & various other creatures...a skeleton smeared with flesh & blood, connected with tendons...a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, connected with tendons...a skeleton without flesh or blood, connected with tendons...bones detached from their tendons, scattered in all directions—here a hand bone, there a foot bone, here a shin bone, there a thigh bone, here a hip bone, there a back bone, here a rib, there a chest bone, here a shoulder bone, there a neck bone, here a jaw bone, there a

tooth, here a skull...the bones whitened, somewhat like the color of shells...piled up, more than a year old...decomposed into a powder: He applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.'

"And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

The Four Jhānas

"Furthermore, quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities, he enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. He permeates & pervades, suffuses & fills this very body with the rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal. Just as if a skilled bathman or bathman's apprentice would pour bath powder into a brass basin and knead it together, sprinkling it again & again with water, so that his ball of bath powder—saturated, moisture-laden, permeated within & without—would nevertheless not drip; even so, the monk permeates ... this very body with the rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

"Then, with the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. He permeates & pervades, suffuses & fills this very body with the rapture & pleasure born of composure. Just like a lake with spring-water welling up from within, having no inflow from the east, west, north, or south, and with the skies supplying abundant showers time & again, so that the cool fount of water welling up from within the lake would permeate & pervade, suffuse & fill it with cool waters, there being no part of the lake unpervaded by the cool waters; even so, the monk permeates ... this very body with

the rapture & pleasure born of composure. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by rapture & pleasure born of composure. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

"Then, with the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful & alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' He permeates & pervades, suffuses & fills this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. Just as in a lotus pond, some of the lotuses, born & growing in the water, stay immersed in the water and flourish without standing up out of the water, so that they are permeated & pervaded, suffused & filled with cool water from their roots to their tips, and nothing of those lotuses would be unpervaded with cool water; even so, the monk permeates ... this very body with the pleasure divested of rapture. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded with pleasure divested of rapture. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

"Then, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain. He sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. Just as if a man were sitting covered from head to foot with a white cloth so that there would be no part of his body to which the white cloth did not extend; even so, the monk sits, permeating the body with a pure, bright awareness. There is nothing of his entire body unpervaded by pure, bright awareness. And as he remains thus heedful, ardent, & resolute, any memories & resolves related to the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning his mind gathers & settles inwardly, grows unified & centered. This is how a monk develops mindfulness immersed in the body.

Fullness of Mind

"Monks, whoever develops & pursues mindfulness immersed in the body encompasses whatever skillful qualities are on the side of clear knowing. Just as whoever pervades the great ocean with his awareness encompasses whatever rivulets flow down into the ocean, in the same way, whoever develops & pursues mindfulness immersed in the body encompasses whatever skillful qualities are on the side of clear knowing.

"In whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is not developed, not pursued, Māra gains entry, Māra gains a foothold.

"Suppose that a man were to throw a heavy stone ball into a pile of wet clay. What do you think, monks—would the heavy stone ball gain entry into the pile of wet clay?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"In the same way, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is not developed, not pursued, Māra gains entry, Māra gains a foothold.

"Now, suppose that there were a dry, sapless piece of timber, and a man were to come along with an upper fire-stick, thinking, 'I'll light a fire. I'll produce heat.' What do you think—would he be able to light a fire and produce heat by rubbing the upper fire-stick in the dry, sapless piece of timber?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"In the same way, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is not developed, not pursued, Māra gains entry, Māra gains a foothold.

"Now, suppose that there were an empty, hollow water-pot set on a stand, and a man were to come along carrying a load of water. What do you think—would he get a place to put his water?"

"Yes, venerable sir."

"In the same way, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is not developed, not pursued, Māra gains entry, Māra gains a foothold.

"Now, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is developed, is pursued, Māra gains no entry, Māra gains no foothold. Suppose that a man were to throw a ball of string against a door panel made entirely of heartwood. What do you think—would that light ball of string gain entry into that door panel made entirely of heartwood?"

"No, venerable sir."

"In the same way, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is developed, is pursued, Māra gains no entry, Māra gains no foothold.

"Now, suppose that there were a wet, sappy piece of timber, and a man were to come along with an upper fire-stick, thinking, 'I'll light a fire. I'll produce heat.' What do you think—would he be able to light a fire and produce heat by rubbing the upper fire-stick in the wet, sappy piece of timber?"

"No, venerable sir."

"In the same way, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is developed, is pursued, Māra gains no entry, Māra gains no foothold.

"Now, suppose that there were a water-pot set on a stand, full of water up to the brim so that crows could drink out of it, and a man were to come along carrying a load of water. What do you think—would he get a place to put his water?"

"No, lord."

"In the same way, in whomever mindfulness immersed in the body is developed, is pursued, Māra gains no entry, Māra gains no foothold.

An Opening to the Higher Knowledges

"When anyone has developed & pursued mindfulness immersed in the body, then whichever of the six higher knowledges he turns his mind to know & realize, he can witness them for himself whenever there is an opening.

"Suppose that there were a water jar, set on a stand, brimful of water so that a crow could drink from it. If a strong man were to tip it in any way at all, would water spill out?"

"Yes, lord."

"In the same way, when anyone has developed & pursued mindfulness immersed in the body, then whichever of the six higher knowledges he turns his mind to know & realize, he can witness them for himself whenever there is an opening.

"Suppose there were a rectangular water tank—set on level ground, bounded by dikes—brimful of water so that a crow could drink from it. If a strong man were to loosen the dikes anywhere at all, would water spill out?"

"Yes, lord."

"In the same way, when anyone has developed & pursued mindfulness immersed in the body, then whichever of the six

higher knowledges he turns his mind to know & realize, he can witness them for himself whenever there is an opening.

“Suppose there were a chariot on level ground at four crossroads, harnessed to thoroughbreds, waiting with whips lying ready, so that a skilled driver, a trainer of tamable horses, might mount and—taking the reins with his left hand and the whip with his right—drive out & back, to whatever place & by whichever road he liked; in the same way, when anyone has developed & pursued mindfulness immersed in the body, then whichever of the six higher knowledges he turns his mind to know & realize, he can witness them for himself whenever there is an opening.

Ten Benefits

“Monks, for one in whom mindfulness immersed in the body is cultivated, developed, pursued, handed the reins, taken as a basis, steadied, consolidated, & well-undertaken, ten benefits can be expected. Which ten?

“[1] He conquers displeasure & delight, and displeasure does not conquer him. He remains victorious over any displeasure that has arisen.

“[2] He conquers fear & dread, and fear & dread do not conquer him. He remains victorious over any fear & dread that have arisen.

“[3] He is resistant to cold, heat, hunger, thirst, the touch of gadflies & mosquitoes, wind & sun & creeping things; to abusive, hurtful language; he is the sort that can endure bodily feelings that, when they arise, are painful, sharp, stabbing, fierce, distasteful, disagreeable, deadly.

“[4] He can attain at will, without trouble or difficulty, the four jhānas—heightened mental states providing a pleasant abiding in the here & now.

“[5] He wields manifold supranormal powers. Having been one he becomes many; having been many he becomes one. He appears. He vanishes. He goes unimpeded through walls, ramparts, & mountains as if through space. He dives in & out of the earth as if it were water. He walks on water without sinking as if it were dry land. Sitting crosslegged he flies through the air like a winged bird. With his hand he touches & strokes even the sun & moon, so mighty & powerful. He exercises influence with his body even as far as the Brahma worlds.

"[6] He hears—by means of the divine ear-element, purified & surpassing the human—both kinds of sounds: divine & human, whether near or far.

"[7] He knows the awareness of other beings, other individuals, having encompassed it with his own awareness. He discerns a mind with passion as a mind with passion, and a mind without passion as a mind without passion. He discerns a mind with aversion as a mind with aversion, and a mind without aversion as a mind without aversion. He discerns a mind with delusion as a mind with delusion, and a mind without delusion as a mind without delusion. He discerns a restricted mind as a restricted mind, and a scattered mind as a scattered mind. He discerns an enlarged mind as an enlarged mind, and an unenlarged mind as an unenlarged mind. He discerns an excelled mind [one that is not at the most excellent level] as an excelled mind, and an unexcelled mind as an unexcelled mind. He discerns a concentrated mind as a concentrated mind, and an unconcentrated mind as an unconcentrated mind. He discerns a released mind as a released mind, and an unreleased mind as an unreleased mind.

"[8] He recollects his manifold past lives (lit: previous homes), i.e., one birth, two births, three births, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, one hundred, one thousand, one hundred thousand, many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion, many aeons of cosmic contraction & expansion, [recollecting], 'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose here.' Thus he remembers his manifold past lives in their modes & details.

"[9] He sees—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: 'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech, & mind, who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in

the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile the noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.’ Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—he sees beings passing away & re-appearing, and he discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

“[10] Through the ending of the fermentations, he remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known and realized them for himself right in the here & now.

“Monks, for one in whom mindfulness immersed in the body is cultivated, developed, pursued, handed the reins, taken as a basis, steadied, consolidated, & well-undertaken, these ten benefits can be expected.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

See also: SN XXXV.206; SN XLVII.20; AN IV.159; AN IV.184; AN VII.48; Sn I.11; Sn V.16; Thag I.104; Thag II.16; Thag V.1; Thag X.5; Thig V.4; Thig XIV

121 *Cūḷa-Suññata Sutta* The Shorter Discourse on Emptiness

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Sāvattṭhi in the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migāra's mother. Then in the evening, Ven. Ānanda, coming out of seclusion, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One: "On one occasion, when the Blessed One was staying among the Sakyans in a Sakyian town named Nagaraka, there—face to face with the Blessed One—I heard this, face to face I learned this: 'I now remain fully in a dwelling of emptiness.' Did I hear that correctly, learn it correctly, attend to it correctly, remember it correctly?"

[The Buddha:] "Yes, Ānanda, you heard that correctly, learned it correctly, attended to it correctly, remembered it correctly. Now, as well as before, I remain fully in a dwelling of emptiness. Just as this palace of Migāra's mother is empty of elephants, cattle, & mares, empty of gold & silver, empty of assemblies of women & men, and there is only this non-emptiness—the singleness based on the community of monks; even so, Ānanda, a monk—not attending to the perception (mental note) of village, not attending to the perception of human being—attends to the singleness based on the perception of wilderness. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its perception of wilderness.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of village are not present. Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of human being are not present. There is only this modicum of disturbance: the singleness based on the perception of wilderness.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty of the perception of village. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of human being. There is only this non-emptiness: the singleness based on the perception of wilderness.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as

present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

The Perception of Earth

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of human being, not attending to the perception of wilderness—attends to the singleness based on the perception of earth. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its perception of earth. Just as a bull's hide is stretched free from wrinkles with a hundred stakes, even so—without attending to all the ridges & hollows, the river ravines, the tracts of stumps & thorns, the craggy irregularities of this earth—he attends to the singleness based on the perception of earth. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its perception of earth.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of human being are not present. Whatever disturbances would exist based on the perception of wilderness are not present. There is only this modicum of disturbance: the singleness based on the perception of earth.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty of the perception of human being. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of wilderness. There is only this non-emptiness: the singleness based on the perception of earth.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

The Infinitude of Space

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of wilderness, not attending to the perception of earth—attends to the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of wilderness are not present. Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of earth are not present. There is only this modicum of disturbance: the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception

is empty of the perception of wilderness. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of earth. There is only this non-emptiness: the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

The Infinitude of Consciousness

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of earth, not attending to the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space—attends to the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of earth are not present. Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space are not present. There is only this modicum of disturbance: the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty of the perception of earth. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space. There is only this non-emptiness: the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

Nothingness

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space, not attending to the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness—attends to the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of nothingness. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its perception of the dimension of nothingness.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space are not present. Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness

are not present. There is only this modicum of disturbance: the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of nothingness.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. There is only this non-emptiness: the singleness based on the perception of the dimension of nothingness.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

Neither Perception nor Non-perception

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, not attending to the perception of the dimension of nothingness—attends to the singleness based on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness are not present. Whatever disturbances that would exist based on the perception of the dimension of nothingness are not present. There is only this modicum of disturbance: the singleness based on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of nothingness. There is only this non-emptiness: the singleness based on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

Theme-less Concentration

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of the dimension of nothingness, not attending to the perception of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception—attends to the singleness based on the theme-less concentration of

awareness. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its theme-less concentration of awareness.

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances would exist based on the perception of the dimension of nothingness are not present. Whatever disturbances would exist based on the perception of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, are not present. And there is only this modicum of disturbance: that connected with the six sensory spheres, dependent on this very body with life as its condition.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of nothingness. This mode of perception is empty of the perception of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. There is only this non-emptiness: that connected with the six sensory spheres, dependent on this very body with life as its condition.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, & pure.

Release

"Further, Ānanda, the monk—not attending to the perception of the dimension of nothingness, not attending to the perception of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception—attends to the singleness based on the theme-less concentration of awareness. His mind takes pleasure, finds satisfaction, settles, & indulges in its theme-less concentration of awareness.

"He discerns that 'This theme-less concentration of awareness is fabricated & mentally fashioned.' And he discerns that 'Whatever is fabricated & mentally fashioned is inconstant & subject to cessation.' For him—thus knowing, thus seeing—the mind is released from the fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there is the knowledge, 'Released.' He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"He discerns that 'Whatever disturbances would exist based on the fermentation of sensuality...the fermentation of becoming...the fermentation of ignorance, are not present. And there is only this modicum of disturbance: that connected with the six sensory spheres, dependent on this very body with life as its condition.' He discerns that 'This mode of perception is empty

of the fermentation of sensuality...becoming...ignorance. And there is just this non-emptiness: that connected with the six sensory spheres, dependent on this very body with life as its condition.' Thus he regards it as empty of whatever is not there. Whatever remains, he discerns as present: 'There is this.' And so this, his entry into emptiness, accords with actuality, is undistorted in meaning, pure—superior & unsurpassed.

"Ānanda, whatever contemplatives and priests who in the past entered & remained in an emptiness that was pure, superior, & unsurpassed, they all entered & remained in this very same emptiness that is pure, superior, & unsurpassed. Whatever contemplatives and priests who in the future will enter & remain in an emptiness that will be pure, superior, & unsurpassed, they all will enter & remain in this very same emptiness that is pure, superior, & unsurpassed. Whatever contemplatives and priests who at present enter & remain in an emptiness that is pure, superior, & unsurpassed, they all enter & remain in this very same emptiness that is pure, superior, & unsurpassed.

"Therefore, Ānanda, you should train yourselves: 'We will enter & remain in the emptiness that is pure, superior, & unsurpassed.'"

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ānanda delighted in the Blessed One's words.

See also: DN 22; MN 61; MN 106; MN 140; SN V.10; SN XII.15; SN XXXV.85; Ud I.10; Sn V.15

126 *Bhūmija Sutta* To Bhūmija

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary.

Then, early in the morning, Ven. Bhūmija put on his robes and, carrying his bowl & outer robe, went to Prince Jayasena's residence.¹ On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready. Prince Jayasena went to Ven. Bhūmija and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to Ven. Bhūmija, "Master Bhūmija, there are some priests & contemplatives who espouse this teaching, espouse this view: 'If one follows the holy life, even when having made a wish [for results], one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life even when having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results.'² With regard to that, what does Master Bhūmija's teacher say, what is his view, what does he declare?"

"I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, prince, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way: 'If one follows the holy life inappropriately, even when having made a wish [for results], one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life inappropriately, even when having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. [But] if one follows the holy life appropriately, even when having made a wish, one is capable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life appropriately, even when having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is

capable of obtaining results.' I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way."

"If that is what Master Bhūmija's teacher says, if that is his view, if that is what he declares, then yes, Master Bhūmija's teacher stands, as it were, having struck all of those many priests & contemplatives down by the head."

Prince Jayasena then served Ven. Bhūmija from his own dish of milk rice.

Then Ven. Bhūmija, after his meal, returning from his alms round, went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "Just now, lord, early in the morning, I put on my robes and, carrying my bowl & outer robe, went to Prince Jayasena's residence. On arrival, I sat down on a seat made ready. Then Prince Jayasena went to me and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with me. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to me, 'Master Bhūmija, there are some priest & contemplatives who espouse this teaching, espouse this view: "If one follows the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results." With regard to that, what does Master Bhūmija's teacher say, what is his view, what does he declare?'

"When this was said, I replied to Prince Jayasena, 'I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, prince, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way: "If one follows the holy life inappropriately, even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. [But] if one follows the holy life appropriately, even when having made a wish ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is capable of obtaining results." I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, I haven't

received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way.'

"If that is what Master Bhūmija's teacher says, if that is his view, if that is what he declares, then yes, Master Bhūmija's teacher stands, as it were, having struck all of those many priests & contemplatives down by the head.'

"Answering in this way when thus asked, lord, am I speaking in line with what the Blessed One has said, am I not misrepresenting the Blessed One with what is unfactual, am I answering in line with the Dhamma so that no one whose thinking is in line with the Dhamma will have grounds for criticizing me?"

"Certainly, Bhūmija, in answering in this way when thus asked, you are speaking in line with what I have said, you are not misrepresenting me with what is unfactual, and you are answering in line with the Dhamma so that no one whose thinking is in line with the Dhamma will have grounds for criticizing you. For any priests or contemplatives endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results], they are incapable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of oil, looking for oil, wandering in search of oil, would pile gravel in a tub and press it, sprinkling it again & again with water. If he were to pile gravel in a tub and press it, sprinkling it again & again with water even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having

made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of milk, looking for milk, wandering in search of milk, would twist the horn of a newly-calved cow. If he were to twist the horn of a newly-calved cow even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of butter, looking for butter, wandering in search of butter, would sprinkle water on water in a crock and twirl it with a churn-stick. If he were to sprinkle water on water in a crock and twirl it with a churn-stick even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of fire, looking for fire, wandering in search of fire, would take a fire stick and rub it into a wet, sappy piece of wood. If he were to take a fire stick and rub it into

a wet, sappy piece of wood even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"But as for any priests or contemplatives endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of oil, looking for oil, wandering in search of oil, would pile sesame seeds in a tub and press them, sprinkling them again & again with water. If he were to pile sesame seeds in a tub and press them, sprinkling them again & again with water, even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of milk, looking for milk, wandering in search of milk, would pull the teat of a newly-calved cow. If he were to pull the teat of a newly-calved cow even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of butter, looking for butter, wandering in search of butter, would sprinkle water on curds in a crock and twirl them with a churn-stick.³ If he were to sprinkle water on curds in a crock and twirl them with a churn-stick even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of fire, looking for fire, wandering in search of fire, would take a fire stick and rub it into a dry, sapless piece of wood. If he were to take a fire stick and rub it into a dry, sapless piece of wood even when having made a wish [for results] ... having made no wish ... both having made a wish and having made no wish ... neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any priests or contemplatives endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish [for results], they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“Bhūmija, if these four similes had occurred to you in the presence of Prince Jayasena, he would have naturally felt confidence in you and—feeling confidence—would have shown his confidence in you.”

“But, lord, how could these four similes have occurred to me in the presence of Prince Jayasena, as they are natural to the Blessed One and have never before been heard from him?”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Bhūmija delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTES

1. According to the Commentary, Ven. Bhūmija was Prince Jayasena’s uncle.

2. These priests & contemplatives are probably the proponents of non-action, annihilation, and non-relatedness as presented in DN 2.

3. To this day, this is the way butter is obtained in rural north India. The churn-stick is a small stick that has attached to its end blocks of wood resembling an orange with alternate sections removed. This is twirled in the curds. The water sprinkled on the curds dilutes the buttermilk, which helps separate it from the milk fat left on the blocks of the churn-stick.

See also: MN 117; SN XXII.101; SN XLII.6; SN XLV.8; AN V.43; Thig XII

131 *Bhaddekaratta Sutta* An Auspicious Day

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti, at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "Monks, I will teach you the summary & exposition of one who has had an auspicious day.¹ Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said:

You shouldn't chase after the past
or place expectations on the future.

What is past
is left behind.

The future
is as yet unreached.

Whatever quality is present
you clearly see right there,
right there.

Not taken in,
unshaken,
that's how you develop the heart.

Ardently doing
what should be done today,
for—who knows?— tomorrow
death.

There is no bargaining
with Mortality & his mighty horde.

Whoever lives thus ardently,
relentlessly
both day & night,
has truly had an auspicious day:
so says the Peaceful Sage.

"And how, monks, does one chase after the past? One gets carried away with the delight of 'In the past I had such a form (body)' ... 'In the past I had such a feeling' ... 'In the past I had such a perception' ... 'In the past I had such a thought-fabrication' ... 'In the past I had such a consciousness.' This is called chasing after the past.

"And how does one not chase after the past? One does not get carried away with the delight of 'In the past I had such a form (body)' ... 'In the past I had such a feeling' ... 'In the past I had such a perception' ... 'In the past I had such a thought-fabrication' ... 'In the past I had such a consciousness.' This is called not chasing after the past.

"And how does one place expectations on the future? One gets carried away with the delight of 'In the future I might have such a form (body)' ... 'In the future I might have such a feeling' ... 'In the future I might have such a perception' ... 'In the future I might have such a thought-fabrication' ... 'In the future I might have such a consciousness.' This is called placing expectations on the future.

"And how does one not place expectations on the future? One does not get carried away with the delight of 'In the future I might have such a form (body)' ... 'In the future I might have such a feeling' ... 'In the future I might have such a perception' ... 'In the future I might have such a thought-fabrication' ... 'In the future I might have such a consciousness.' This is called not placing expectations on the future.

"And how is one taken in with regard to present qualities? There is the case where an ordinary uninstructed person who has not seen the noble ones, is not versed in the teachings of the noble ones, is not trained in the teachings of the noble ones, sees form as self, or self as possessing form, or form as in self, or self as in form.

"He/she sees feeling as self, or self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in self, or self as in feeling.

"He/she sees perception as self, or self as possessing perception, or perception as in self, or self as in perception.

"He/she sees thought-fabrications as self, or self as possessing thought-fabrications, or thought-fabrications as in self, or self as in thought-fabrications.

"He/she sees consciousness as self, or self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in self, or self as in consciousness. This is called being taken in with regard to present qualities.

"And how is one not taken in with regard to present qualities? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones who has seen the noble ones, is versed in the teachings of the noble ones, is well-trained in the teachings of the noble ones, does not see form as self, or self as possessing form, or form as in self, or self as in form.

"He/she does not see feeling as self, or self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in self, or self as in feeling.

"He/she does not see perception as self, or self as possessing perception, or perception as in self, or self as in perception.

"He/she does not see thought-fabrications as self, or self as possessing thought-fabrications, or thought-fabrications as in self, or self as in thought-fabrications.

"He/she does not see consciousness as self, or self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in self, or self as in consciousness. This is called not being taken in with regard to present qualities.

You shouldn't chase after the past
or place expectations on the future.

What is past
is left behind.

The future
is as yet unreached.

Whatever quality is present
you clearly see right there,
right there.

Not taken in,
unshaken,
that's how you develop the heart.

Ardently doing
what should be done today,
for—who knows?— tomorrow
death.

There is no bargaining
with Mortality & his mighty horde.

Whoever lives thus ardently,
relentlessly
both day & night,
has truly had an auspicious day:
so says the Peaceful Sage.

“Monks, I will teach you the summary & exposition of one who has had an auspicious day.’ Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTE: 1. The Pali literally says, “an auspicious night,” but this should be interpreted in light of the custom—common in cultures that follow the lunar calendar—of calling a 24-hour period of day-and-night a “night.”

See also: SN XXI.10; AN VI.19-20; Ud I.10

135 Cūḷa-Kammavibhaṅga Sutta The Shorter Analysis of Action

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then Subha the student, Todeyya's son, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One: "Master Gotama, what is the reason, what is the cause, why baseness & excellence are seen among human beings, among the human race? For short-lived & long-lived people are to be seen, sickly & healthy, ugly & beautiful, uninfluential & influential, poor & rich, low-born & high-born, stupid & discerning people are to be seen. So what is the reason, what is the cause, why baseness & excellence are seen among human beings, among the human race?"

"Student, beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions, born of their actions, related through their actions, and have their actions as their arbitrator. Action is what differentiates beings in terms of baseness & excellence."

"I don't understand the detailed meaning of Master Gotama's statement spoken in brief without explaining the detailed meaning. It would be good if Master Gotama taught me the Dhamma so that I might understand the detailed meaning of his brief statement."

"In that case, student, listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, Master Gotama," Subha the student responded.

The Blessed One said: "There is the case, student, where a woman or man is a killer of living beings, brutal, bloody-handed, given to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, hell. If, on the break-up of the body, after death—instead of reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, hell—he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is short-lived

wherever reborn. This is the way leading to a short life: to be a killer of living beings, brutal, bloody-handed, given to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings.

"But then there is the case where a woman or man, having abandoned the killing of living beings, abstains from killing living beings, and dwells with the rod laid down, the knife laid down, scrupulous, merciful, & sympathetic for the welfare of all living beings. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination, in the heavenly world. If, on the break-up of the body, after death—instead of reappearing in a good destination, in the heavenly world—he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is long-lived wherever reborn. This is the way leading to a long life: to have abandoned the killing of living beings, to abstain from killing living beings, to dwell with one's rod laid down, one's knife laid down, scrupulous, merciful, & sympathetic for the welfare of all living beings.

"There is the case where a woman or man is one who harms beings with his/her fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is sickly wherever reborn. This is the way leading to sickness: to be one who harms beings with one's fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives.

"But then there is the case where a woman or man is not one who harms beings with his/her fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is healthy wherever reborn. This is the way leading to health: not to be one who harms beings with one's fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives.

"There is the case, where a woman or man is ill-tempered & easily upset; even when lightly criticized, he/she grows offended, provoked, malicious, & resentful; shows annoyance, aversion, & bitterness. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is ugly wherever reborn. This is the way leading to ugliness: to be ill-tempered & easily upset;

even when lightly criticized, to grow offended, provoked, malicious, & resentful; to show annoyance, aversion, & bitterness.

"But then there is the case where a woman or man is not ill-tempered or easily upset; even when heavily criticized, he/she doesn't grow offended, provoked, malicious, or resentful; doesn't show annoyance, aversion, or bitterness. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination...If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is beautiful wherever reborn. This is the way leading to beauty: not to be ill-tempered or easily upset; even when heavily criticized, not to be offended, provoked, malicious, or resentful; nor to show annoyance, aversion, & bitterness.

"There is the case where a woman or man is envious. He/she envies, begrudges, & broods about others' gains, honor, respect, reverence, salutations, & veneration. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she gains no prominence wherever reborn. This is the way leading to no prominence: to be envious, to envy, begrudge, & brood about others' gains, honor, respect, reverence, salutations, & veneration.

"But then there is the case where a woman or man is not envious. He/she does not envy, begrudge, or brood about others' gains, honor, respect, reverence, salutations, or veneration. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination If instead he/she comes to the human state, he/she is prominent wherever reborn. This is the way leading to prominence: not to be envious; not to envy, begrudge, or brood about others' gains, honor, respect, reverence, salutations, or veneration.

"There is the case where a woman or man is not a giver of food, drink, cloth, sandals, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, or lighting to priests or contemplatives. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation If instead he/she comes to the human state, he/she is poor wherever reborn. This is the way leading to poverty: not to be a giver of food, drink, cloth, sandals, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, or lighting to priests or contemplatives.

"But then there is the case where a woman or man is a giver of food, drink, cloth, sandals, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, & lighting to priests & contemplatives. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination...If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is wealthy wherever reborn. This is the way leading to great wealth: to be a giver of food, drink, cloth, sandals, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, & lighting to priests & contemplatives.

"There is the case where a woman or man is obstinate & arrogant. He/she does not pay homage to those who deserve homage, rise up for those for whom one should rise up, give a seat to those to whom one should give a seat, make way for those for whom one should make way, worship those who should be worshipped, respect those who should be respected, revere those who should be revered, or honor those who should be honored. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is low-born wherever reborn. This is the way leading to a low birth: to be obstinate & arrogant, not to pay homage to those who deserve homage, nor rise up for... nor give a seat to... nor make way for... nor worship... nor respect... nor revere... nor honor those who should be honored.

"But then there is the case where a woman or man is not obstinate or arrogant; he/she pays homage to those who deserve homage, rises up ... gives a seat ... makes way ... worships ... respects ... reveres ... honors those who should be honored. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is high-born wherever reborn. This is the way leading to a high birth: not to be obstinate or arrogant; to pay homage to those who deserve homage, to rise up ... give a seat ... make way ... worship ... respect ... revere ... honor those who should be honored.

"There is the case where a woman or man when visiting a priest or contemplative, does not ask: 'What is skillful, venerable sir? What is unskillful? What is blameworthy? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What, having been done by me, will be for my long-term harm & suffering? Or what, having been done by me,

will be for my long-term welfare & happiness?' Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in the plane of deprivation If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she will be stupid wherever reborn. This is the way leading to stupidity: when visiting a priest or contemplative, not to ask: 'What is skillful? ... Or what, having been done by me, will be for my long-term welfare & happiness?'

"But then there is the case where a woman or man when visiting a priest or contemplative, asks: 'What is skillful, venerable sir? What is unskillful? What is blameworthy? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What, having been done by me, will be for my long-term harm & suffering? Or what, having been done by me, will be for my long-term welfare & happiness?' Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination.... If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is discerning wherever reborn. This is the way leading to discernment: when visiting a priest or contemplative, to ask: 'What is skillful?...Or what, having been done by me, will be for my long-term welfare & happiness?'

"So, student, the way leading to short life makes people short-lived, the way leading to long life makes people long-lived. The way leading to sickness makes people sickly, the way leading to health makes people healthy. The way leading to ugliness makes people ugly, the way leading to beauty makes people beautiful. The way leading to lack of influence makes people uninfluential, the way leading to influence makes people influential. The way leading to poverty makes people poor, the way leading to wealth makes people wealthy. The way leading to low birth makes people low-born, the way leading to high birth makes people highborn. The way leading to stupidity makes people stupid, the way leading to discernment makes people discerning.

"Beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions, born of their actions, related through their actions, and have their actions as their arbitrator. Action is what differentiates beings in terms of baseness & excellence."

When this was said, Subha the student, Todeyya's son, said to the Blessed One: "Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to

reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Community of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life.”

See also: SN XII.46; SN XLII.6; SN XLII.8; SN XLII.13; AN III.101; AN IV.85; AN IV.237; AN V.57; AN VI.63; AN VIII.39; AN VIII.39-40; AN VIII.54; AN X.176

138 Uddesa-vibhaṅga Sutta

An Analysis of the Statement

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvattthi in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks replied.

The Blessed One said: "Monks, I will teach you a statement & its analysis. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said this: "A monk should investigate in such a way that, his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned, he would from lack of clinging/sustenance be unagitated. When—his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned—from lack of clinging/ sustenance he would be unagitated, there is no seed for the conditions of future birth, aging, death, or stress."

That is what the Blessed One said. Having said it, the One Well-gone got up from his seat and went into his dwelling.

Then, not long after the Blessed One had left, this thought occurred to the monks: "This brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he went into his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., 'A monk should investigate in such a way that, his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned, he would from lack of clinging/sustenance be unagitated. When—his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned—from lack of clinging/ sustenance he would be unagitated, there is no seed for the conditions of future birth, aging, death, or stress': now who might analyze the unanalyzed detailed meaning of this brief statement?" Then the thought occurred to them, "Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana is praised by the Teacher and esteemed by his knowledgeable companions in the holy life. He is capable of analyzing the unanalyzed detailed meaning of this brief statement. Suppose we were to go to him and, on arrival, question him about this matter."

So the monks went to Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana and, on arrival exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, they sat to one side. As they were standing there, they [told him what had happened, and added,] "Analyze the meaning, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana!"

[He replied:] "Friends, it's as if a man needing heartwood, looking for heartwood, wandering in search of heartwood—passing over the root & trunk of a standing tree possessing heartwood—were to imagine that heartwood should be sought among its branches & leaves. So it is with you, who—having bypassed the Blessed One when you were face to face with him, the Teacher—imagine that I should be asked about this matter. For knowing, the Blessed One knows; seeing, he sees. He is the Eye, he is Knowledge, he is Dhamma, he is Brahmā. He is the speaker, the proclaimer, the elucidator of meaning, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma, the Tathāgata. That was the time when you should have questioned him about this matter. However he answered, that was how you should have remembered it."

"Yes, friend Kaccāyana: knowing, the Blessed One knows; seeing, he sees. He is the Eye, he is Knowledge, he is Dhamma, he is Brahmā. He is the speaker, the proclaimer, the elucidator of meaning, the giver of the Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma, the Tathāgata. That was the time when we should have questioned him about this matter. However he answered, that was how we should have remembered it. But you are praised by the Teacher and esteemed by your knowledgeable companions in the holy life. You are capable of analyzing the unanalyzed detailed meaning of this brief statement. Analyze the meaning, Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana!"

"In that case, friends, listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, friend," the monks responded.

Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana said this: "Concerning the brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he entered his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., 'A monk should investigate in such a way that, his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned, he would from lack of clinging/sustenance be unagitated. When—his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned—from lack of clinging/ sustenance he would be unagitated, there is no seed for the conditions of future birth, aging, death, or stress—I understand the detailed meaning to be this:

"How is consciousness said to be scattered & diffused? There is the case where, having seen a form with the eye, consciousness follows the drift of (lit.: 'flows after') the theme of the form, is tied to the attraction of the theme of the form, is chained to the attraction of the theme of the form, is fettered & joined to the attraction of the theme of the form: Consciousness is said to be externally scattered & diffused.

"There is the case where, having heard a sound with the ear ... having smelled an aroma with the nose ... having tasted a flavor with the tongue ... having felt a tactile sensation with the body ... having cognized an idea with the intellect, consciousness follows the drift of the theme of the idea, is tied to the attraction of the theme of the idea, is chained to the attraction of the theme of the idea, is fettered & joined to the attraction of the theme of the idea: Consciousness is said to be externally scattered & diffused.

"And how is consciousness said not to be externally scattered & diffused? ? There is the case where, having seen a form with the eye, consciousness does not follow the drift of the theme of the form, is not tied to ... chained to ... fettered, or joined to the attraction of the theme of the form: Consciousness is said not to be externally scattered & diffused.

"There is the case where, having heard a sound with the ear ... having smelled an aroma with the nose ... having tasted a flavor with the tongue ... having felt a tactile sensation with the body ... having cognized an idea with the intellect, consciousness does not follow the drift of the theme of the idea, is not tied to ... chained to ... fettered, or joined to the attraction of the theme of the idea: Consciousness is said not to be externally scattered & diffused.

"And how is the mind said to be internally positioned? There is the case where a monk, quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. His consciousness follows the drift of the rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal, is tied to...chained...fettered, & joined to the attraction of the rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal. Or further, with the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. His consciousness follows the drift of the rapture & pleasure born of composure, is tied to...chained...fettered, & joined

to the attraction of the rapture & pleasure born of composure. Or further, with the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful & fully aware, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' His consciousness follows the drift of the equanimity & pleasure, is tied to...chained...fettered, & joined to the attraction of the equanimity & pleasure. Or further, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. His consciousness follows the drift of the neither pleasure nor pain, is tied to...chained to...fettered, & joined to the attraction of the neither pleasure nor pain: The mind is said to be internally positioned.

"And how is the mind said not to be internally positioned? There is the case where a monk, quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful (mental) qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. His consciousness does not follow the drift of the rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal, is not tied to...chained to...fettered, or joined to the attraction of the rapture & pleasure born of withdrawal. Or further, with the stilling of directed thought & evaluation, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. His consciousness does not follow the drift of the rapture & pleasure born of composure, is not tied to ... chained ... fettered, or joined to the attraction of the rapture & pleasure born of composure. Or further, with the fading of rapture, he remains in equanimity, mindful & fully aware, and physically sensitive of pleasure. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.' His consciousness does not follow the drift of the equanimity & pleasure, is not tied to ... chained ... fettered, or joined to the attraction of the equanimity & pleasure. Or further, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. His consciousness does not follow the drift of the neither pleasure nor pain, is not tied to...chained to...fettered, or

joined to the attraction of the neither pleasure nor pain: The mind is said to be not internally positioned.

“And how is agitation caused by clinging/sustenance? There is the case where an ordinary uninstructed person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for men of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—assumes form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. His form changes & is unstable. Because of the change & instability of form, his consciousness alters in accordance with the change in form. With the agitation born from the alteration in accordance with the change in form and coming from the co-arising of (unskillful mental) qualities, his mind stays consumed. And because of the consumption of awareness, he feels fearful, threatened, & solicitous.

“He assumes feeling to be the self

“He assumes perception to be the self

“He assumes (mental) fabrications to be the self

“He assumes consciousness to be the self, of the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. His consciousness changes & is unstable. Because of the change & instability of consciousness, his consciousness alters in accordance with the change in consciousness. With the agitation born from the alteration in accordance with the change in consciousness and coming from the co-arising of (unskillful mental) qualities, his mind stays consumed. And because of the consumption of awareness, he feels fearful, threatened, & solicitous.

“This, friends, is how agitation is caused by clinging/sustenance.

“And how is non-agitation caused by lack of clinging/ sustenance? There is the case where an instructed disciple of the noble ones—who has regard for noble ones, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma; who has regard for men of integrity, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma—doesn’t assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. His form changes & is unstable, but his consciousness doesn’t—because of the change & instability of form—alter in accordance with the change in form. His mind is not consumed with any agitation born from an alteration in accordance with the change in form or coming from the co-arising of (unskillful mental) qualities. And because his awareness is not consumed, he feels neither fearful, threatened, nor solicitous.

“He doesn’t assume feeling to be the self....

"He doesn't assume perception to be the self....

"He doesn't assume fabrications to be the self....

"He doesn't assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. His consciousness changes & is unstable, but his consciousness doesn't—because of the change & instability of consciousness—alter in accordance with the change in consciousness. His mind is not consumed with any agitation born from an alteration in accordance with the change in consciousness or coming from the co-arising of (unskillful mental) qualities. And because his awareness is not consumed, he feels neither fearful, threatened, nor solicitous.

"This, friends, is how non-agitation is caused by lack of clinging/sustenance.

"So, concerning the brief statement the Blessed One made, after which he entered his dwelling without analyzing the detailed meaning—i.e., 'A monk should investigate in such a way that, his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned, he would from lack of clinging/sustenance be unagitated. When—his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally positioned—from lack of clinging/ sustenance he would be unagitated, there is no seed for the conditions of future birth, aging, death, or stress'—this is how I understand the detailed meaning. Now, if you wish, having gone to the Blessed One, question him about this matter. However he answers is how you should remember it."

Then the monks, delighting in & approving of Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana's words, rose from their seats and went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to him, they sat to one side. As they were sitting there, they [told him what had happened after he had gone into his dwelling, and ended by saying,] "Then Ven. Mahā Kaccāyana analyzed the meaning using these words, these statements, these phrases."

"Mahā Kaccāyana is wise, monks. He is a person of great discernment. If you had asked me about this matter, I too would have answered in the same way he did. That is the meaning of this statement. That is how you should remember it."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

See also: AN IV.192; AN VII.64; AN VIII.54; Ud VI.2

140 Dhātu-vibhaṅga Sutta

An Analysis of the Properties

I have heard that on one occasion, as the Blessed One was wandering among the Magadhans, he entered Rājagaha, went to the potter Bhaggava, and on arrival said to him, "If it is no inconvenience for you, Bhaggava, I will stay for one night in your shed."

"It's no inconvenience for me, lord, but there is a wanderer who has already taken up residence there. If he gives his permission, you may stay there as you like."

Now at that time a clansman named Pukkusāti had left home and gone forth into homelessness through faith, out of dedication to the Blessed One. He was the one who had already taken up residence in the potter's shed. So the Blessed One approached Ven. Pukkusāti and said to him, "If it is no inconvenience for you, monk, I will stay one night in the shed."

"The shed is roomy, my friend. Stay as you like."

So the Blessed One, entering the potter's shed and, setting out a spread of grass to one side, sat down folding his legs crosswise, holding his body erect, and setting mindfulness to the fore. He spent most of the night sitting [in meditation]. Ven. Pukkusāti also spent most of the night sitting [in meditation]. The thought occurred to the Blessed One, "How inspiring is the way this clansman behaves! What if I were to question him?" So he said to Ven. Pukkusāti, "Out of dedication to whom, monk, have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Of whose Dhamma do you approve?"

"There is, my friend, the contemplative Gotama, a son of the Sakyans, gone forth from a Sakyan clan. Now, this excellent report about the honorable Gotama has been spread about: 'Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in knowledge & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the worlds, unexcelled as a trainer for those people fit to be tamed, the Teacher of divine & human beings, awakened, blessed.' I have gone forth out of dedication to that Blessed One. That Blessed One is my teacher. It is of that Blessed One's Dhamma that I approve."

"But where, monk, is that Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—staying now?"

"There is, my friend, a city in the northern lands named Sāvatti. That is where the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—is staying now."

"Have you ever seen that Blessed One before? On seeing him, would you recognize him?"

"No, my friend, I have never seen the Blessed One before, nor on seeing him would I recognize him."

Then the thought occurred to the Blessed One: "It is out of dedication to me that this clansman has gone forth. What if I were to teach him the Dhamma?" So he said to Ven. Pukkusāti, "I will teach you the Dhamma, monk. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, friend," replied Ven. Pukkusāti.

The Blessed One said: "A person has six properties, six media of sensory contact, eighteen considerations, & four determinations. He has been stilled where the currents of construing do not flow. And when the currents of construing do not flow, he is said to be a sage at peace. One should not be negligent of discernment, should guard the truth, be devoted to relinquishment, and train only for calm. This is the summary of the analysis of the six properties.

"'A person has six properties.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? These are the six properties: the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, the wind property, the space property, the consciousness property. 'A person has six properties.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

"'A person has six media of sensory contact.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? These are the six media of sensory contact: the eye as a medium of sensory contact, the ear...the nose...the tongue...the body...the intellect as a medium of sensory contact. 'A person has six media of sensory contact.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

"'A person has eighteen considerations.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? These are the eighteen considerations: On seeing a form with the eye, one considers a form that can act as a basis for joy, a form that can act as a basis for sadness, or a form that can act as a basis for equanimity. On hearing a sound with the ear.... On smelling an aroma with the nose.... On tasting a flavor with the tongue.... On feeling a tactile sensation

with the body... On cognizing an idea with the intellect, one considers an idea that can act as a basis for joy, an idea that can act as a basis for sadness, or an idea that can act as a basis for equanimity. Thus there are six considerations conducive to joy, six conducive to sadness, & six conducive to equanimity. 'A person has eighteen considerations.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

"A person has four determinations.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? These are the four determinations: the determination for discernment, the determination for truth, the determination for relinquishment, the determination for calm. 'A person has four determinations.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

"One should not be negligent of discernment, should guard the truth, be devoted to relinquishment, and train only for calm.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? And how is one not negligent of discernment? These are the six properties: the earth property, the liquid property, the fire property, the wind property, the space property, the consciousness property.

"And what is the earth property? The earth property can be either internal or external. What is the internal earth property? Anything internal, within oneself, that's hard, solid, & sustained [by craving]: head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, feces, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's hard, solid, and sustained: This is called the internal earth property. Now both the internal earth property & the external earth property are simply earth property. And that should be seen as it actually is present with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it actually is present with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the earth property and makes the earth property fade from the mind.

"And what is the liquid property? The liquid property may be either internal or external. What is the internal liquid property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's liquid, watery, & sustained: bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, oil, saliva, mucus, oil-of-the-joints, urine, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's liquid, watery, & sustained: This is called the internal liquid property. Now both the internal liquid

property & the external liquid property are simply liquid property. And that should be seen as it actually is present with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it actually is present with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the liquid property and makes the liquid property fade from the mind.

"And what is the fire property? The fire property may be either internal or external. What is the internal fire property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's fire, fiery, & sustained: that by which [the body] is warmed, aged, & consumed with fever; and that by which what is eaten, drunk, chewed, & savored gets properly digested; or anything else internal, within oneself, that's fire, fiery, & sustained: This is called the internal fire property. Now both the internal fire property & the external fire property are simply fire property. And that should be seen as it actually is present with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it actually is present with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the fire property and makes the fire property fade from the mind.

"And what is the wind property? The wind property may be either internal or external. What is the internal wind property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's wind, windy, & sustained: up-going winds, down-going winds, winds in the stomach, winds in the intestines, winds that course through the body, in-and-out breathing, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's wind, windy, & sustained: This is called the internal wind property. Now both the internal wind property & the external wind property are simply wind property. And that should be seen as it actually is present with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it actually is present with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the wind property and makes the wind property fade from the mind.

"And what is the space property? The space property may be either internal or external. What is the internal space property? Anything internal, belonging to oneself, that's space, spatial, & sustained: the holes of the ears, the nostrils, the mouth, the [passage] whereby what is eaten, drunk, consumed, & tasted gets swallowed, and where it collects, and whereby it is excreted from below, or anything else internal, within oneself, that's space, spatial, & sustained: This is called the internal

space property. Now both the internal space property & the external space property are simply space property. And that should be seen as it actually is present with right discernment: 'This is not mine, this is not me, this is not my self.' When one sees it thus as it actually is present with right discernment, one becomes disenchanted with the space property and makes the space property fade from the mind.

"There remains only consciousness: pure & bright. What does one cognize with that consciousness? One cognizes 'pleasure.' One cognizes 'pain.' One cognizes 'neither pleasure nor pain.' In dependence on a sensory contact that is to be felt as pleasure, there arises a feeling of pleasure. When sensing a feeling of pleasure, one discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling of pleasure.' One discerns that 'With the cessation of that very sensory contact that is to be felt as pleasure, the concomitant feeling—the feeling of pleasure that has arisen in dependence on the sensory contact that is to be felt as pleasure—ceases, is stilled.' In dependence on a sensory contact that is to be felt as pain.... In dependence on a sensory contact that is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain, there arises a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain. When sensing a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain.' One discerns that 'With the cessation of that very sensory contact that is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain, the concomitant feeling—the feeling of neither pleasure nor pain that has arisen in dependence on the sensory contact that is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain—ceases, is stilled.'

"Just as when, from the friction & conjunction of two fire sticks, heat is born and fire appears, and from the separation & disjunction of those very same fire sticks, the concomitant heat ceases, is stilled; in the same way, in dependence on a sensory contact that is to be felt as pleasure, there arises a feeling of pleasure.... In dependence on a sensory contact that is to be felt as pain.... In dependence on a sensory contact that is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain, there arises a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain.... One discerns that 'With the cessation of that very sensory contact that is to be felt as neither pleasure nor pain, the concomitant feeling ... ceases, is stilled.'

"There remains only equanimity: pure & bright, pliant, malleable, & luminous. Just as if a skilled goldsmith or goldsmith's apprentice were to prepare a furnace, heat up a crucible, and,

taking gold with a pair of tongs, place it in the crucible: He would blow on it time & again, sprinkle water on it time & again, examine it time & again, so that the gold would become refined, well-refined, thoroughly refined, flawless, free from dross, pliant, malleable, & luminous. Then whatever sort of ornament he had in mind—whether a belt, an earring, a necklace, or a gold chain—it would serve his purpose. In the same way, there remains only equanimity: pure & bright, pliant, malleable, & luminous. One discerns that 'If I were to direct equanimity as pure & bright as this toward the dimension of the infinitude of space, I would develop the mind along those lines, and thus this equanimity of mine—thus supported, thus sustained—would last for a long time. One discerns that 'If I were to direct equanimity as pure and bright as this toward the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, I would develop the mind along those lines, and thus this equanimity of mine—thus supported, thus sustained—would last for a long time.'

"One discerns that 'If I were to direct equanimity as pure & bright as this toward the dimension of the infinitude of space and to develop the mind along those lines, that would be fabricated. One discerns that 'If I were to direct equanimity as pure and bright as this toward the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness ... the dimension of nothingness ... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception and to develop the mind along those lines, that would be fabricated.' One neither fabricates nor mentally fashions for the sake of becoming or un-becoming. This being the case, one is not sustained by anything in the world (doesn't cling to anything in the world). Unsustained, one is not agitated. Unagitated, one is totally unbound right within. One discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

"Sensing a feeling of pleasure, one discerns that it is fleeting, not grasped at, not relished. Sensing a feeling of pain.... Sensing a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one discerns that it is fleeting, not grasped at, not relished. Sensing a feeling of pleasure, one senses it disjoined from it. Sensing a feeling of pain.... Sensing a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one senses it disjoined from it. When sensing a feeling limited to the body, one discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to the body.' When

sensing a feeling limited to life, one discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to life.' One discerns that 'With the break-up of the body, after the termination of life, all that is sensed,¹ not being relished, will grow cold right here.'

"Just as an oil lamp burns in dependence on oil & wick; and from the termination of the oil & wick—and from not being provided any other sustenance—it goes out unnourished; even so, when sensing a feeling limited to the body, one discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to the body.' When sensing a feeling limited to life, one discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to life.' One discerns that 'With the break-up of the body, after the termination of life, all that is sensed, not being relished, will grow cold right here.'

"Thus a monk so endowed is endowed with the highest determination for discernment, for this—the knowledge of the passing away of all suffering & stress—is the highest noble discernment.

"His release, being founded on truth, does not fluctuate, for whatever is deceptive is false; Unbinding—the undeceptive—is true. Thus a monk so endowed is endowed with the highest determination for truth, for this—Unbinding, the undeceptive—is the highest noble truth.

"Whereas formerly he foolishly had taken on mental acquisitions and brought them to completion, he has now abandoned them, their root destroyed, like an uprooted palm tree, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. Thus a monk so endowed is endowed with the highest determination for relinquishment, for this—the renunciation of all mental acquisitions—is the highest noble relinquishment.

"Whereas formerly he foolishly had greed—as well as desire & infatuation—he has now abandoned them, their root destroyed like an uprooted palm tree, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. Whereas formerly he foolishly had malice—as well as ill-will & hatred—he has now abandoned them.... Whereas formerly he foolishly had ignorance—as well as delusion & confusion—he has now abandoned them, their root destroyed like an uprooted palm tree, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. Thus a monk so endowed is endowed with the highest determination for calm, for this—the calming of passions, aversions, & delusions—is the highest noble calm. 'One should not be negligent of discernment, should guard the truth,

be devoted to relinquishment, and train only for calm.' Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

"'He has been stilled where the currents of construing do not flow. And when the currents of construing do not flow, he is said to be a sage at peace.' Thus it was said. With reference to what was it said? 'I am' is a construing. 'I am this' is a construing. 'I shall be' is a construing. 'I shall not be'...'I shall be possessed of form'...'I shall not be possessed of form'...'I shall be percipient'...'I shall not be percipient'...' I shall be neither percipient nor non-percipient' is a construing. Construing is a disease, construing is a cancer, construing is an arrow. By going beyond all construing, he is called a sage at peace.

"Furthermore, a sage at peace is not born, does not age, does not die, is unagitated, and is free from longing. He has nothing whereby he would be born. Not being born, will he age? Not aging, will he die? Not dying, will he be agitated? Not being agitated, for what will he long? It was in reference to this that it was said, 'He has been stilled where the currents of construing do not flow. And when the currents of construing do not flow, he is said to be a sage at peace.' Now, monk, you should remember this, my brief analysis of the six properties."

Then the thought occurred to Ven. Pukkusāti: "Surely, the Teacher has come to me! Surely, the One Well-gone has come to me! Surely, the Rightly Self-awakened One has come to me!" Getting up from his seat, arranging his upper robe over one shoulder, and bowing down with his head at the Blessed One's feet, he said, "A transgression has overcome me, lord, in that I was so foolish, so muddle-headed, and so unskilled as to assume that it was proper to address the Blessed One as 'friend.' May the Blessed One please accept this confession of my transgression as such, so that I may restrain myself in the future."

"Yes, monk, a transgression overcame you in that you were so foolish, so muddle-headed, and so unskilled as to assume that it was proper to address me as 'friend.' But because you see your transgression as such and make amends in accordance with the Dhamma, we accept your confession. For it is a cause of growth in the Dhamma & discipline of the noble ones when, seeing a transgression as such, one makes amends in accordance with the Dhamma and exercises restraint in the future."

"Lord, may I receive full acceptance (ordination as a monk) from the Blessed One?"

“And are your robes & bowl complete?”

“No, lord, my robes & bowl are not complete.”

“Tathāgatas do not give full acceptance to one whose robes & bowl are incomplete.”

Then Ven. Pukkusāti, delighting & rejoicing in the Blessed One’s words, got up from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One and, keeping him on his right, left in search of robes and a bowl. And while he was searching for robes & a bowl, a run-away cow killed him.

Then a large number of monks approached the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As they were sitting there, they said to the Blessed One, “Lord, the clansman Pukkusāti, whom the Blessed One instructed with a brief instruction, has died. What is his destination? What is his future state?”

“Monks, the clansman Pukkusāti was wise. He practiced the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma and did not pester me with issues related to the Dhamma. With the destruction of the first five fetters, he has arisen spontaneously [in the Pure Abodes], there to be totally unbound, never again to return from that world.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTE: 1. For the meaning of “all,” here, see SN XXXV.23. See also DN 11, note 1.

See also: MN 106; SN XXXV.207; SN XXXVI.7

146 *Nandakovāda Sutta* Nandaka's Exhortation

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti, at Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then Mahāpajāpati Gotami, together with about 500 other nuns, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, stood to one side. As she was standing there she said to him, "Exhort the nuns, lord. Instruct the nuns, lord. Give the nuns a talk on Dhamma."

Now at that time the elder monks were taking turns in exhorting the nuns, but Ven. Nandaka didn't want to exhort the nuns when his turn came. So the Blessed One addressed Ven. Ānanda: "Ānanda, whose turn is it to exhort the nuns today?"

"Lord, everyone has taken his turn¹ in exhorting the nuns, except for Ven. Nandaka, here, who doesn't want to exhort the nuns when his turn comes."

Then the Blessed One addressed Ven. Nandaka: "Exhort the nuns, Nandaka. Instruct the nuns, Nandaka. Give the nuns a talk on Dhamma, brahman."

"As you say, lord," Ven. Nandaka replied. Then, early in the morning, having put on his robes and carrying his bowl & outer robe, he went into Rājagaha for alms. After his meal, on returning from his alms round, he went with a companion to Rājaka Park. The nuns saw him coming from afar and, on seeing him, arranged a seat and set out water for his feet. Ven. Nandaka sat down on the arranged seat and washed his feet. The nuns bowed down to him and sat to one side.

As they were sitting there, Ven. Nandaka said to them: "This will be a question-response talk, sisters. Where you understand, you should say, 'We understand.' Where you don't, you should say, 'We don't understand.' Where you are doubtful or perplexed, you should question me in response: 'How is this, venerable sir? What is the meaning of this?'"

"Venerable sir, we are gratified & delighted that you invite us in this way."

"So then, sisters, what do you think: Is the eye constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, venerable sir." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, venerable sir."

"... Is the ear constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Is the nose constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Is the tongue constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Is the body constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"What do you think, sisters: Is the intellect constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, venerable sir." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because we have already seen it well as it actually is, with right discernment, that these six internal media are inconstant."

"Good, good, sisters. That's how it is for a disciple of the noble ones who has seen it as it actually is with right discernment.

"Now what do you think, sisters: Are forms constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, venerable sir." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, venerable sir."

"... Are sounds constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Are aromas constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Are flavors constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Are tactile sensations constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"What do you think, sisters: Are ideas constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, venerable sir." "And

is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because we have already seen it well as it actually is, with right discernment, that these six external media are also inconstant."

"Good, good, sisters. That's how it is for a disciple of the noble ones who has seen it as it actually is with right discernment.

"Now what do you think, sisters: Is eye-consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, venerable sir." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, venerable sir."

"... Is ear-consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Is nose-consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Is tongue-consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"... Is body-consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir."

"What do you think, sisters: Is intellect-consciousness constant or inconstant?" "Inconstant, venerable sir." "And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?" "Stressful, venerable sir." "And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: 'This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am'?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because we have already seen it well as it actually is, with right discernment, that these six consciousness-groups, too, are inconstant."

"Good, good, sisters. That's how it is for a disciple of the noble ones who has seen it as it actually is with right discernment.

"Just as when the oil in a burning oil lamp is inconstant & subject to change, its wick is inconstant & subject to change, its flame is inconstant & subject to change, its light is inconstant & subject to change. If someone were to say, 'The oil in that burning oil lamp is inconstant & subject to change, its wick is inconstant & subject to change, its flame is inconstant & subject to change, but as for its light, that is constant, everlasting, eternal, & not subject to change': would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because the oil in that burning oil lamp is inconstant & subject to change, its wick is inconstant & subject to change, its flame is inconstant & subject to change, so how much more should its light be inconstant & subject to change."

"In the same way, sisters, if someone were to say, 'My six internal media are inconstant, but what I experience based on the six internal media—pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain—that is constant, everlasting, eternal, & not subject to change': would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because each feeling arises dependent on its corresponding condition. With the cessation of its corresponding condition, it ceases."

"Good, good, sisters. That's how it is for a disciple of the noble ones who has seen it as it actually is with right discernment.

"Just as when the root of a great, standing tree—possessed of heartwood—is inconstant & subject to change, its trunk is inconstant & subject to change, its branches & foliage are inconstant & subject to change, its shadow is inconstant & subject to change. If someone were to say, 'The root of that great, standing tree—possessed of heartwood—is inconstant & subject to change, its trunk is inconstant & subject to change, its branches & foliage are inconstant & subject to change, but as for its shadow, that is constant, everlasting, eternal, & not subject to change': would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because the root of that great, standing tree—possessed of heartwood—is inconstant & subject to change, its trunk is inconstant & subject to change, its branches & foliage are inconstant & subject to change, so how much more should its shadow be inconstant & subject to change."

"In the same way, sisters, if someone were to say, 'My six external media are inconstant, but what I experience based on the six internal media—pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain—that is constant, everlasting, eternal, & not subject to change': would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because each feeling arises dependent on its corresponding condition. With the cessation of its corresponding condition, it ceases."

"Good, good, sisters. That's how it is for a disciple of the noble ones who has seen it as it actually is with right discernment.

"Just as if a skilled butcher or butcher's apprentice, having killed a cow, were to carve it up with a sharp carving knife so that—without damaging the substance of the inner flesh, without damaging the substance of the outer hide—he would cut, sever, & detach only the skin muscles, connective tissues, & attachments in between. Having cut, severed, & detached the outer skin, and then covering the cow again with that very skin, if he were to say that the cow was joined to the skin just as it had been: would he be speaking rightly?"

"No, venerable sir. Why is that? Because if the skilled butcher or butcher's apprentice, having killed a cow, were to carve it up with a sharp carving knife so that—without damaging the substance of the inner flesh, without damaging the substance of the outer hide—he would cut, sever, & detach only the skin muscles, connective tissues, & attachments in between; and ... having covered the cow again with that very skin, then no matter how much he might say that the cow was joined to the skin just as it had been, the cow would still be disjoined from the skin."

"This simile, sisters, I have given to convey a message. The message is this: The substance of the inner flesh stands for the six internal media; the substance of the outer hide, for the six external media. The skin muscles, connective tissues, & attachments in between stand for passion & delight. And the sharp knife stands for noble discernment—the noble discernment that cuts, severs, & detaches the defilements, fetters, & bonds in between.

"Sisters, there are these seven factors for awakening² through whose development & pursuit a monk enters & remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release & discernment-release,³ having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now. Which seven? There is the case where a monk develops *mindfulness* as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion, dependent on dispassion, dependent on cessation, resulting in relinquishment. He develops *analysis of qualities* as a factor for awakening ... *persistence* as a factor for awakening ... *rapture* as a factor for awakening ... *serenity* as a factor for awakening ... *concentration* as a factor for awakening ... *equanimity* as a factor for awakening dependent on seclusion, dependent on dispassion, dependent on cessation, resulting in relinquishment. These are the seven factors for awakening through whose development & pursuit a monk enters & remains in the fermentation-free awareness-release & discernment-

release, having directly known & realized them for himself right in the here & now."

Then, having exhorted the nuns with this exhortation, Ven. Nandaka dismissed them, saying, "Go, sisters. The time has come." The nuns, delighting in and approving of Ven. Nandaka's exhortation, got up from their seats, bowed down to him, circumambulated him—keeping him to the right—and went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, they stood to one side. As they were standing there, the Blessed One said to them, "Go, nuns. The time has come." So the nuns, having bowed down to the Blessed One, circumambulated him—keeping him to the right—and departed.

Then not long after the nuns' departure the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks, just as on the uposatha day of the fourteenth, people at large are not doubtful or perplexed as to whether the moon is lacking or full, for it is clearly lacking;⁴ in the same way, even though the nuns are gratified with Nandaka's Dhamma-teaching, their resolves have not yet been fulfilled." So he addressed Ven. Nandaka: "In that case, Nandaka, exhort the nuns again tomorrow with the exact same exhortation."

"As you say, lord," Ven. Nandaka replied. Then, after the night had passed, early in the morning, having put on his robes and carrying his bowl & outer robe, he went into Rajagaha for alms [as before, up to:]

Then not long after the nuns' departure the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks, just as on the uposatha day of the fifteenth, people at large are not doubtful or perplexed as to whether the moon is lacking or full, for it is clearly full; in the same way, the nuns are gratified with Nandaka's Dhamma-teaching, and their resolves have been fulfilled. Of these 500 nuns, the most backward is a stream-winner, not destined for the planes of deprivation, headed to self-awakening for sure."

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

NOTES

1. This phrase is not in the PTS edition.

2. The commentary explains that Ven. Nandaka introduces the topic of the seven factors of awakening here to indicate where the nuns have more work to do in their practice. From

the questions and answers, it is obvious that they have developed the second factor of awakening—analysis of qualities (or dhammas)—which is the factor associated with insight and discernment. However, for their resolves to be fulfilled, they need to focus on developing the factors associated with tranquility and concentration.

3. On awareness-release and discernment-release, see AN II.30 and AN IX.44. Discernment-release is always transcendent; awareness-release, only when fermentation-free.

4. Apparently, in the Buddha's time, the 29-day lunar month was divided so that the half ending in the new moon uposatha had fourteen days, and the half ending in the full moon uposatha, fifteen days. How they compensated for the fact that the lunar month is not exactly 29 days is not known.

See also: SN XXXV.101; SN XXXVI.7; SN XLVI.51; AN IV.94

148 *Chachakka Sutta* The Six Sextets

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded to him.

"Monks, I will teach you the Dhamma admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end; I will expound the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely complete, surpassingly pure—in other words, the six sextets. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "The six internal media should be known. The six external media should be known. The six classes of consciousness should be known. The six classes of contact should be known. The six classes of feeling should be known. The six classes of craving should be known.

"'The six internal media should be known.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? The eye-medium, the ear-medium, the nose-medium, the tongue-medium, the body-medium, the intellect-medium. 'The six internal media should be known.' Thus it was said. And in reference to this was it said. This is the first sextet.

"'The six external media should be known.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? The form-medium, the sound-medium, the aroma-medium, the flavor-medium, the tactile sensation-medium, the idea-medium. 'The six external media should be known.' Thus it was said. And in reference to this was it said. This is the second sextet.

"'The six classes of consciousness should be known.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? Dependent on the eye & forms there arises consciousness at the eye. Dependent on the ear & sounds there arises consciousness at the ear. Dependent on the nose & aromas there arises consciousness at the nose. Dependent on the tongue & flavors there arises consciousness at

the tongue. Dependent on the body & tactile sensations there arises consciousness at the body. Dependent on the intellect & ideas there arises consciousness at the intellect. 'The six classes of consciousness should be known.' Thus it was said. And in reference to this was it said. This is the third sextet.

""The six classes of contact should be known.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? Dependent on the eye & forms there arises consciousness at the eye. The meeting of the three is contact. Dependent on the ear & sounds there arises consciousness at the ear. The meeting of the three is contact. Dependent on the nose & aromas there arises consciousness at the nose. The meeting of the three is contact. Dependent on the tongue & flavors there arises consciousness at the tongue. The meeting of the three is contact. Dependent on the body & tactile sensations there arises consciousness at the body. The meeting of the three is contact. Dependent on the intellect & ideas there arises consciousness at the intellect. The meeting of the three is contact. 'The six classes of contact should be known.' Thus it was said. And in reference to this was it said. This is the fourth sextet.

""The six classes of feeling should be known.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? Dependent on the eye & forms there arises consciousness at the eye. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. Dependent on the ear & sounds there arises consciousness at the ear. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. Dependent on the nose & aromas there arises consciousness at the nose. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. Dependent on the tongue & flavors there arises consciousness at the tongue. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. Dependent on the body & tactile sensations there arises consciousness at the body. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. Dependent on the intellect & ideas there arises consciousness at the intellect. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. 'The six classes of feeling should be known.' Thus it was said. And in reference to this was it said. This is the fifth sextet.

""The six classes of craving should be known.' Thus it was said. In reference to what was it said? Dependent on the eye & forms there arises consciousness at the eye. The meeting of the

three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. With feeling as a requisite condition there is craving. Dependent on the ear & sounds there arises consciousness at the ear. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. With feeling as a requisite condition there is craving. Dependent on the nose & aromas there arises consciousness at the nose. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. With feeling as a requisite condition there is craving. Dependent on the tongue & flavors there arises consciousness at the tongue. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. With feeling as a requisite condition there is craving. Dependent on the body & tactile sensations there arises consciousness at the body. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. With feeling as a requisite condition there is craving. Dependent on the intellect & ideas there arises consciousness at the intellect. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition there is feeling. With feeling as a requisite condition there is craving. 'The six classes of craving should be known.' Thus it was said. And in reference to this was it said. This is the sixth sextet.

"If anyone were to say, 'The eye is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable. The arising & falling away of the eye are discerned. And when its arising & falling away are discerned, it would follow that 'My self arises & falls away.' That's why it wouldn't be tenable if anyone were to say, 'The eye is the self.' So the eye is not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Forms are the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the eye is not-self and forms are not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Consciousness at the eye is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the eye is not-self, forms are not-self, consciousness at the eye is not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Contact at the eye is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the eye is not-self, forms are not-self, consciousness at the eye is not-self, contact at the eye is not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Feeling is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the eye is not-self, forms are not-self, consciousness at the eye is not-self, contact at the eye is not-self, feeling is not self. If anyone were to say, 'Craving is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable. The arising & falling away of craving are discerned. And when its arising & falling away are discerned, it would follow that 'My

self arises & falls away.' That's why it wouldn't be tenable if anyone were to say, 'Craving is the self.' Thus the eye is not-self, forms are not-self, consciousness at the eye is not-self, contact at the eye is not-self, feeling is not self, craving is not-self.

"If anyone were to say, 'The ear is the self' 'The nose is the self' 'The tongue is the self' 'The body is the self'

"If anyone were to say, 'The intellect is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable. The arising & falling away of the intellect are discerned. And when its arising & falling away are discerned, it would follow that 'My self arises & falls away.' That's why it wouldn't be tenable if anyone were to say, 'The intellect is the self.' So the intellect is not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Ideas are the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the intellect is not-self and ideas are not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Consciousness at the intellect is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the intellect is not-self, ideas are not-self, consciousness at the intellect is not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Contact at the intellect is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the intellect is not-self, ideas are not-self, consciousness at the intellect is not-self, contact at the intellect is not-self. If anyone were to say, 'Feeling is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable Thus the intellect is not-self, ideas are not-self, consciousness at the intellect is not-self, contact at the intellect is not-self, feeling is not self. If anyone were to say, 'Craving is the self,' that wouldn't be tenable. The arising & falling away of craving are discerned. And when its arising & falling away are discerned, it would follow that 'My self arises & falls away.' That's why it wouldn't be tenable if anyone were to say, 'Craving is the self.' Thus the intellect is not-self, ideas are not-self, consciousness at the intellect is not-self, contact at the intellect is not-self, feeling is not self, craving is not-self.

"This, monks, is the path of practice leading to self-identification. One assumes about the eye that 'This is me, this is my self, this is what I am.' One assumes about forms One assumes about consciousness at the eye One assumes about contact at the eye One assumes about feeling One assumes about craving that 'This is me, this is my self, this is what I am.'

"One assumes about the ear

"One assumes about the nose

"One assumes about the tongue

"One assumes about the body

"One assumes about the intellect that 'This is me, this is my self, this is what I am.' One assumes about ideas One assumes

about consciousness at the intellect One assumes about contact at the intellect One assumes about feeling One assumes about craving that 'This is me, this is my self, this is what I am.'

"Now, this is the path of practice leading to the cessation of self-identification. One assumes about the eye that 'This is not me, this is not my self, this is not what I am.' One assumes about forms One assumes about consciousness at the eye One assumes about contact at the eye One assumes about feeling One assumes about craving that 'This is not me, this is not my self, this is not what I am.'

"One assumes about the ear

"One assumes about the nose

"One assumes about the tongue

"One assumes about the body

"One assumes about the intellect that 'This is not me, this is not my self, this is not what I am.' One assumes about ideas One assumes about consciousness at the intellect One assumes about contact at the intellect One assumes about feeling One assumes about craving that 'This is not me, this is not my self, this is not what I am.'

"Dependent on the eye & forms there arises consciousness at the eye. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there arises what is felt either as pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain. If, when touched by a feeling of pleasure, one relishes it, welcomes it, or remains fastened to it, then one's passion-obsession gets obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of pain, one sorrows, grieves, & laments, beats one's breast, becomes distraught, then one's resistance-obsession gets obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one doesn't discern, as it actually is present, the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, or escape from that feeling, then one's ignorance-obsession gets obsessed. That a person—without abandoning passion-obsession with regard to a feeling of pleasure, without abolishing resistance-obsession with regard to a feeling of pain, without uprooting ignorance-obsession with regard to a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, without abandoning ignorance and giving rise to clear knowing—would put an end to suffering & stress in the here & now: such a thing isn't possible.

"Dependent on the ear & sounds

"Dependent on the nose & aromas

"Dependent on the tongue & flavors

"Dependent on the body & tactile sensations

“Dependent on the intellect & ideas there arises consciousness at the intellect. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there arises what is felt either as pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain. If, when touched by a feeling of pleasure, one relishes it, welcomes it, or remains fastened to it, then one’s passion-obsession gets obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of pain, one sorrows, grieves, & laments, beats one’s breast, becomes distraught, then one’s resistance-obsession gets obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one doesn’t discern, as it actually is present, the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, or escape from that feeling, then one’s ignorance-obsession gets obsessed. That a person—without abandoning passion-obsession with regard to a feeling of pleasure, without abolishing resistance-obsession with regard to a feeling of pain, without uprooting ignorance-obsession with regard to a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, without abandoning ignorance and giving rise to clear knowing—would put an end to suffering & stress in the here & now: such a thing isn’t possible.

“Dependent on the eye & forms there arises consciousness at the eye. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there arises what is felt either as pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain. If, when touched by a feeling of pleasure, one doesn’t relish it, welcome it, or remain fastened to it, then one’s passion-obsession doesn’t get obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of pain, one doesn’t sorrow, grieve, or lament, beat one’s breast or become distraught, then one’s resistance-obsession doesn’t get obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one discerns, as it actually is present, the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, & escape from that feeling, then one’s ignorance-obsession doesn’t get obsessed. That a person—through abandoning passion-obsession with regard to a feeling of pleasure, through abolishing resistance-obsession with regard to a feeling of pain, through uprooting ignorance-obsession with regard to a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, through abandoning ignorance and giving rise to clear knowing—would put an end to suffering & stress in the here & now: such a thing is possible.

“Dependent on the ear & sounds

“Dependent on the nose & aromas

“Dependent on the tongue & flavors

“Dependent on the body & tactile sensations

“Dependent on the intellect & ideas there arises consciousness at the intellect. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as a requisite condition, there arises what is felt either as pleasure, pain, or neither pleasure nor pain. If, when touched by a feeling of pleasure, one doesn’t relish it, welcome it, or remain fastened to it, then one’s passion-obsession doesn’t get obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of pain, one doesn’t sorrow, grieve, or lament, beat one’s breast or become distraught, then one’s resistance-obsession doesn’t get obsessed. If, when touched by a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, one discerns, as it actually is present, the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, & escape from that feeling, then one’s ignorance-obsession doesn’t get obsessed. That a person—through abandoning passion-obsession with regard to a feeling of pleasure, through abolishing resistance-obsession with regard to a feeling of pain, through uprooting ignorance-obsession with regard to a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain, through abandoning ignorance and giving rise to clear knowing—would put an end to suffering & stress in the here & now: such a thing is possible.

“Seeing thus, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with the eye, disenchanted with forms, disenchanted with consciousness at the eye, disenchanted with contact at the eye, disenchanted with feeling, disenchanted with craving.

“He grows disenchanted with the ear...

“He grows disenchanted with the nose...

“He grows disenchanted with the tongue...

“He grows disenchanted with the body...

“He grows disenchanted with the intellect, disenchanted with ideas, disenchanted with consciousness at the intellect, disenchanted with contact at the intellect, disenchanted with feeling, disenchanted with craving. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is fully released. With full release, there is the knowledge, ‘Fully released.’ He discerns that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted at his words. And while this explanation was being given, the hearts of 60 monks, through not clinging (not being sustained), were fully released from fermentations.

See also: MN 44; SN XXII.56; SN XXXV.23; SN XXXV.191

149 Mahā-Saḷāyatanika Sutta

The Great Six Sense-Media Discourse

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatti in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Monastery. There he addressed the monks: "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded to him.

"Monks, I will teach you the great six sense-media [discourse]. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "Not knowing, not seeing the eye as it actually is present; not knowing, not seeing forms ... consciousness at the eye ... contact at the eye as they actually are present; not knowing, not seeing whatever arises conditioned through contact at the eye—experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—as it actually is present, one is infatuated with the eye ... forms ... consciousness at the eye ... contact at the eye ... whatever arises conditioned by contact at the eye and is experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain.

"For him—infatuated, attached, confused, not remaining focused on their drawbacks—the five clinging-aggregates head toward future accumulation. The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now this & now that—grows within him. His bodily disturbances & mental disturbances grow. His bodily torments & mental torments grow. His bodily distresses & mental distresses grow. He is sensitive both to bodily stress & mental stress.

"Not knowing, not seeing the ear Not knowing, not seeing the nose Not knowing, not seeing the tongue Not knowing, not seeing the body

"Not knowing, not seeing the intellect as it actually is present; not knowing, not seeing ideas ... consciousness at the intellect ... contact at the intellect as they actually are present; not knowing, not seeing whatever arises conditioned through intellect-contact—experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—as it actually is present, one is infatuated with the intellect ... ideas ...

consciousness at the intellect ... contact at the intellect ... whatever arises conditioned by contact at the intellect and is experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain.

"For him—infatuated, attached, confused, not remaining focused on their drawbacks—the five clinging-aggregates head toward future accumulation. The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now this & now that—grows within him. His bodily disturbances & mental disturbances grow. His bodily torments & mental torments grow. His bodily distresses & mental distresses grow. He is sensitive both to bodily stress & mental stress.

"However, knowing & seeing the eye as it actually is present, knowing & seeing forms ... consciousness at the eye ... contact at the eye as they actually are present, knowing & seeing whatever arises conditioned through contact at the eye—experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—as it actually is present, one is not infatuated with the eye ... forms ... consciousness at the eye ... contact at the eye ... whatever arises conditioned by contact at the eye and is experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain.

"For him—uninfatuated, unattached, unconfused, remaining focused on their drawbacks—the five clinging-aggregates head toward future diminution. The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now this & now that—is abandoned by him. His bodily disturbances & mental disturbances are abandoned. His bodily torments & mental torments are abandoned. His bodily distresses & mental distresses are abandoned. He is sensitive both to ease of body & ease of awareness.

"Any view belonging to one who has come to be like this is his right view. Any resolve, his right resolve. Any effort, his right effort. Any mindfulness, his right mindfulness. Any concentration, his right concentration: just as earlier his actions, speech, & livelihood were already well-purified. Thus for him, having thus developed the noble eightfold path, the four frames of reference go to the culmination of their development. The four right exertions ... the four bases of power ... the five faculties ... the five strengths ... the seven factors for awakening go to the culmination of their development.¹ [And] for him these two qualities occur in tandem: tranquility & insight.

"He comprehends through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be comprehended through direct knowledge,

abandons through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be abandoned through direct knowledge, develops through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be developed through direct knowledge, and realizes through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be realized through direct knowledge.

"And what qualities are to be comprehended through direct knowledge? 'The five clinging-aggregates,' should be the reply. Which five? Form as a clinging-aggregate ... feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness as a clinging-aggregate. These are the qualities that are to be comprehended through direct knowledge.

"And what qualities are to be abandoned through direct knowledge? Ignorance & craving for becoming: these are the qualities that are to be abandoned through direct knowledge.

"And what qualities are to be developed through direct knowledge? Tranquility & insight: these are the qualities that are to be developed through direct knowledge.

"And what qualities are to be realized through direct knowledge? Clear knowing & release: these are the qualities that are to be realized through direct knowledge.

"Knowing & seeing the ear...Knowing & seeing the nose... Knowing & seeing the tongue...Knowing & seeing the body...

"Knowing & seeing the intellect as it actually is present, knowing & seeing ideas ... consciousness at the intellect ... contact at the intellect as they actually are present, knowing & seeing whatever arises conditioned through contact at the intellect—experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—as it actually is present, one is not infatuated with the intellect ... ideas ... consciousness at the intellect ... contact at the intellect ... whatever arises conditioned by contact at the intellect and is experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain.

"For him—uninfatuated, unattached, unconfused, remaining focused on their drawbacks—the five clinging-aggregates head toward future diminution. The craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now this & now that—is abandoned by him. His bodily disturbances & mental disturbances are abandoned. His bodily torments & mental torments are abandoned. His bodily distresses & mental distresses are abandoned. He is sensitive both to ease of body & ease of awareness.

"Any view belonging to one who has come to be like this is his right view. Any resolve, his right resolve. Any effort, his right effort. Any mindfulness, his right mindfulness. Any concentration,

his right concentration: just as earlier his actions, speech, & livelihood were already well-purified. Thus for him, having thus developed the noble eightfold path, the four frames of reference go to the culmination of their development. The four right exertions ... the four bases of power ... the five faculties ... the five strengths ... the seven factors for awakening go to the culmination of their development. [And] for him these two qualities occur in tandem: tranquility & insight.

“He comprehends through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be comprehended through direct knowledge, abandons through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be abandoned through direct knowledge, develops through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be developed through direct knowledge, and realizes through direct knowledge whatever qualities are to be realized through direct knowledge.

“And what qualities are to be comprehended through direct knowledge? ‘The five clinging-aggregates,’ should be the reply. Which five? Form as a clinging-aggregate ... feeling ... perception ... fabrications ... consciousness as a clinging-aggregate. These are the qualities that are to be comprehended through direct knowledge.

“And what qualities are to be abandoned through direct knowledge? Ignorance & craving for becoming: these are the qualities that are to be abandoned through direct knowledge.

“And what qualities are to be developed through direct knowledge? Tranquility & insight: these are the qualities that are to be developed through direct knowledge.

“And what qualities are to be realized through direct knowledge? Clear knowing & release: these are the qualities that are to be realized through direct knowledge.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

NOTE: 1. The four frames of reference, the four right exertions, the four bases of power, the five faculties, the five strengths, the seven factors for awakening, and the noble eightfold path are termed the Wings to Awakening (*bodhi-pakkhiya-dhamma*). DN 16 reports that toward the end of his life, the Buddha recommended these qualities as the essence of his teaching. See *The Wings to Awakening* for more details.

See also: SN XXXV.204; AN II.29; AN IV.94; AN IV.170

152 *Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta*

The Development of the Faculties

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying among the Kajjaṅgalas in the Bamboo Grove. Then the young brahman Uttara, a student of Pārāsiri (Pārāsivi) went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, exchanged friendly greetings & courtesies. After this exchange of courteous greetings he sat to one side.

As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him: "Uttara, does the brahman Pārāsiri teach his followers the development of the faculties?"

"Yes, master Gotama, he does."

"And how does he teach his followers the development of the faculties?"

"There is the case where one does not see forms with the eye, or hear sounds with the ear [in a trance of non-perception]. That's how the brahman Pārāsiri teaches his followers the development of the faculties."

"That being the case, Uttara, then a blind person will have developed faculties, and a deaf person will have developed faculties, according to the words of the brahman Pārāsiri. For a blind person does not see forms with the eye, and a deaf person does not hear sounds with the ear."

When this was said, the young brahman Uttara sat silent & abashed, his shoulders slumped, his head down, brooding, at a loss for words. The Blessed One—noticing that Uttara was sitting silent & abashed, his shoulders slumped, his head down, brooding, at a loss for words—said to Ven. Ānanda, "Ānanda, the development of the faculties that the brahman Pārāsiri teaches his followers is one thing, but the unexcelled development of the faculties in the discipline of a noble one is something else entirely."

"Now is the time, O Blessed One. Now is the time, O One Well-Gone, for the Blessed One to teach the unexcelled development of the faculties in the discipline of the noble one. Having heard the Blessed One, the monks will remember it."

"In that case, Ānanda, listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," Ven. Ānanda responded to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said: "Now how, Ānanda, in the discipline of a noble one is there the unexcelled development of the faculties? There is the case where, when seeing a form with the eye, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He discerns that 'This agreeable thing has arisen in me, this disagreeable thing ... this agreeable & disagreeable thing has arisen in me. And that is compounded, gross, dependently co-arisen. But this is peaceful, this is exquisite, i.e., equanimity.' With that, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. Just as a man with good eyes, having closed them, might open them; or having opened them, might close them, that is how quickly, how rapidly, how easily, no matter what it refers to, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. In the discipline of a noble one, this is called the unexcelled development of the faculties with regard to forms cognizable by the eye.

"Furthermore, when hearing a sound with the ear, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He discerns that 'This agreeable thing has arisen in me, this disagreeable thing...this agreeable & disagreeable thing has arisen in me. And that is compounded, gross, dependently co-arisen. But this is peaceful, this is exquisite, i.e., equanimity.' With that, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. Just as a strong man might easily snap his fingers, that is how quickly, how rapidly, how easily, no matter what it refers to, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. In the discipline of a noble one, this is called the unexcelled development of the faculties with regard to sounds cognizable by the ear.

"Furthermore, when smelling an aroma with the nose, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He discerns that 'This agreeable thing has arisen in me, this disagreeable thing ... this agreeable & disagreeable thing has arisen in me. And that is compounded, gross, dependently co-arisen. But this is peaceful, this is exquisite, i.e.,

equanimity.' With that, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. Just as drops of water roll off a gently sloping lotus leaf & do not remain there, that is how quickly, how rapidly, how easily, no matter what it refers to, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. In the discipline of a noble one, this is called the unexcelled development of the faculties with regard to aromas cognizable by the nose.

"Furthermore, when tasting a flavor with the tongue, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He discerns that 'This agreeable thing has arisen in me, this disagreeable thing ... this agreeable & disagreeable thing has arisen in me. And that is compounded, gross, dependently co-arisen. But this is peaceful, this is exquisite, i.e., equanimity.' With that, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. Just as a strong man might easily spit out a ball of saliva gathered on the tip of his tongue, that is how quickly, how rapidly, how easily, no matter what it refers to, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. In the discipline of a noble one, this is called the unexcelled development of the faculties with regard to flavors cognizable by the tongue.

"Furthermore, when touching a tactile sensation with the body, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He discerns that 'This agreeable thing has arisen in me, this disagreeable thing ... this agreeable & disagreeable thing has arisen in me. And that is compounded, gross, dependently co-arisen. But this is peaceful, this is exquisite, i.e., equanimity.' With that, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. Just as a strong man might easily extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, that is how quickly, how rapidly, how easily, no matter what it refers to, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. In the discipline of a noble one, this is called the unexcelled development of the faculties with regard to tactile sensations cognizable by the body.

"Furthermore, when cognizing an idea with the intellect, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He discerns that 'This agreeable thing has arisen in me, this disagreeable thing ... this agreeable & disagreeable thing has arisen in me. And that is compounded, gross, dependently co-arisen. But this is peaceful, this is exquisite, i.e., equanimity. With that, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. Just as a strong man might let two or three drops of water fall onto an iron pan heated all day: Slow would be the falling of the drops of water, but they quickly would vanish & disappear. That is how quickly, how rapidly, how easily, no matter what it refers to, the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing ceases, and equanimity takes its stance. In the discipline of a noble one, this is called the unexcelled development of the faculties with regard to ideas cognizable by the intellect.

"And how is one a person in training, someone following the way? There is the case where, when seeing a form with the eye, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He feels horrified, humiliated, & disgusted with the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing.

"When hearing a sound with the ear When smelling an aroma with the nose When tasting a flavor with the tongue When touching a tactile sensation with the body When cognizing an idea with the intellect, there arises in him what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. He feels horrified, humiliated, & disgusted with the arisen agreeable thing ... disagreeable thing ... agreeable & disagreeable thing.

"This is how one is a person in training, someone following the way.

"And how is one a noble one with developed faculties? There is the case where, when seeing a form with the eye, there arises in a monk what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. If he wants, he remains percipient of loathsomeness in the presence of what is not loathsome. If he wants, he remains percipient of unloathsomeness in the presence of what is loathsome. If he wants, he remains percipient of loathsomeness in the presence of what is not loathsome & what is. If he wants, he remains percipient of unloathsomeness in the

presence of what is loathsome & what is not. If he wants—in the presence of what is loathsome & what is not—cutting himself off from both, he remains equanimous, alert, & mindful.

“When hearing a sound with the ear When smelling an aroma with the nose When tasting a flavor with the tongue When touching a tactile sensation with the body When cognizing an idea with the intellect, there arises in him what is agreeable, what is disagreeable, what is agreeable & disagreeable. If he wants, he remains percipient of loathsomeness in the presence of what is not loathsome. If he wants, he remains percipient of unloathsomeness in the presence of what is loathsome. If he wants, he remains percipient of loathsomeness in the presence of what is not loathsome & what is. If he wants, he remains percipient of unloathsomeness in the presence of what is loathsome & what is not. If he wants—in the presence of what is loathsome & what is not—cutting himself off from both, he remains equanimous, alert, & mindful.

“This is how one is a noble one with developed faculties.

“So, Ānanda, I have taught the unexcelled development of the faculties in the discipline of a noble one. I have taught how one is a person in training, someone following the way. I have taught how one is a noble one with developed faculties. Whatever a teacher should do—seeking the welfare of his disciples, out of sympathy for them—that have I done for you. Over there are the roots of trees; over there, empty dwellings. Practice jhāna, Ānanda. Don’t be heedless. Don’t later fall into regret. This is our message to you all.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ānanda delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

See also: AN VI.55; Ud III.4; Ud IV.4

Glossary

Pali-English

Abhidhamma: (1) In the discourses of the Pali Canon, this term simply means “higher Dhamma,” and a systematic attempt to define the Buddha’s teachings and understand their interrelationships. (2) A later collection of treatises collating lists of categories drawn from the teachings in the discourses, added to the Canon several centuries after the Buddha’s life.

Arahant: A “worthy one” or “pure one;” a person whose mind is free of defilement and thus is not destined for further rebirth. A title for the Buddha and the highest level of his noble disciples.

Āsava: Fermentation; effluent. Four qualities—sensuality, views, becoming, and ignorance—that “flow out” of the mind and create the flood of the round of death and rebirth.

Asura: A member of a race of beings who, like the Titans in Greek mythology, battled the devas for sovereignty in heaven and lost.

Bodhisatta: “A being (striving) for Awakening;” the term used to describe the Buddha before he actually became Buddha, from his first aspiration to Buddhahood until the time of his full Awakening. Sanskrit form: Bodhisattva.

Brahman: In common usage, a brahman is a member of the priestly caste, which claimed to be the highest caste in India, based on birth. In a specifically Buddhist usage, “brahman” can also mean an arahant, conveying the point that excellence is based, not on birth or race, but on the qualities attained in the mind.

Brahmā: An inhabitant of the heavenly realms of form or formlessness.

Deva: Literally, “shining one.” An inhabitant of the heavenly realms.

Dhamma: (1) Event; action; (2) a phenomenon in and of itself; (3) mental quality; (4) doctrine, teaching; (5) *nibbāna* (although there are passages describing *nibbāna* as the abandoning of all dhammas). Sanskrit form: Dharma.

Jhāna: Mental absorption. A state of strong concentration focused on a single sensation or mental notion. This term is derived from the verb *jhāyati*, which means to burn with a steady, still flame.

Kamma: Intentional act. Sanskrit form: Karma.

Māra: The personification of temptation and all forces, within and without, that create obstacles to release from *samsāra*.

Nāga: A magical serpent, technically classed as a common animal, but possessing many of the powers of a deva, including the ability to take on human shape.

Nibbāna: Literally, the “unbinding” of the mind from passion, aversion, and delusion, and from the entire round of death and rebirth. As this term also denotes the extinguishing of a fire, it carries connotations of stilling, cooling, and peace. “Total *nibbāna*” in some contexts denotes the experience of Awakening; in others, the final passing away of an arahant. Sanskrit form: Nirvāṇa.

Paṭicca-samuppāda: Dependent co-arising; dependent origination. A map showing the way ignorance and craving interact with the aggregates (*khandha*) and sense media (*āyatana*) to bring about stress and suffering. As the interactions are complex, there are several different versions of *paṭicca samuppāda* given in the suttas. In the most common one, the map starts with ignorance. In another common one (given here in DN 15), the map starts with the interrelation between name (*nāma*) and form (*rūpa*) on the one hand, and sensory consciousness on the other.

Paṭimokkha: Basic code of monastic discipline, composed of 227 rules for monks and 310 for nuns.

Pavāranā: Invitation; a monastic ceremony marking the end of the rains retreat on the full moon in October. During the ceremony,

each monk invites his fellow monks to accuse him of any offenses they may have suspected him of having committed.

Samaṇa: Contemplative. Literally, a person who abandons the conventional obligations of social life in order to find a way of life more "in tune" (*sama*) with the ways of nature.

Samsāra: Transmigration; the process of wandering through repeated states of becoming, with their attendant death and rebirth.

Samvega: A sense of dismay over the meaninglessness and futility of life as it is ordinarily lived, combined with a strong sense of urgency in looking for a way out.

Sangha: On the conventional (*sammati*) level, this term denotes the communities of Buddhist monks and nuns. On the ideal (*ariya*) level, it denotes those followers of the Buddha, lay or ordained, who have attained at least stream-entry.

Tādin: "Such," an adjective to describe one who has attained the goal. It indicates that the person's state is indefinable but not subject to change or influences of any sort.

Tathāgata: Literally, "one who has become authentic (*tathā-āgata*)," an epithet used in ancient India for a person who has attained the highest religious goal. In Buddhism, it usually denotes the Buddha, although occasionally it also denotes any of his arahant disciples.

Uposatha: Observance day, coinciding with the full moon, new moon, and half moons. Lay Buddhists often observe the eight precepts on this day. Monks recite the Pāṭimokkha on the full moon and new moon uposathas.

Vinaya: The monastic discipline, whose rules and traditions comprise six volumes in printed text.

Yakkha: Spirit; a lower level of deva—sometimes friendly to human beings, sometimes not—often dwelling in trees or other wild places.

English-Pali

Although I have tried to be as consistent as possible in rendering Pali terms into English, there are a few cases where a single English term will not do justice to all the meanings of a Pali term. Although the rule of one English equivalent per one Pali word makes for consistency, any truly bilingual person will know that such a rule can create ludicrous distortions in translation. Thus, while I have not consciously used one English term to translate two different Pali terms, there are cases where I have found it necessary to render single Pali terms with two or more English terms, depending on context. *Citta* in some cases is rendered as mind, in others as intent. Similarly, *loka* is rendered either as cosmos or world, *manas* as intellect or heart, *āyatana* as medium or dimension, *upādāna* as clinging or sustenance, and *dhamma* as phenomenon, quality, or principle.

Also, for some of the Pali terms playing a central role in the teaching, I have chosen equivalents that do not follow general usage. In the following list I have marked these equivalents with asterisks. Explanations for these choices are provided at the end of the list.

- acquisition — *upadhi*
- aggregate — *khandha*
- alertness — *sampajañña*
- appropriate attention — *yoniso manasikāra*
- Awakening — *bodhi*
- awareness — *cetas*
- awareness-release — *cetovimutti*
- becoming — *bhava*
- clear knowing — *vijjā*
- clinging — *upādāna*
- complication — *papañca*
- compounded — *saṅkhata*
- concern — *ottappa*
- conscience — *hiri*

- contemplative — *samaṇa*
 conviction — *saddhā*
 cosmos — *loka*
 craving — *taṇhā*
 dependent co-arising — *paṭicca samuppāda*
 desire — *chanda*
 dimension — *āyatana*
 directed thought — *vitakka*
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 emptiness — *suññatā*
 enlightened one* — *dhira*
 evaluation — *vicāra*
 fabricated — *saṅkhata*
 fabrication — *saṅkhāra*
 fermentation* — *āsava*
 fetter — *saṅyojana*
 frame of reference — *satipaṭṭhāna*
 gnosis — *añña*
 good will — *mettā*
 heart — *manas*
 identity — *sakkāya*
 inconstant* — *anicca*
 insight — *vipassanā*
 intellect — *manas*
 intent — *citta*
 intention — *cetanā*
 medium — *āyatana*
 mind — *citta*
 not-self — *anattā*
 obsession* — *anusaya*
 origination — *samudaya*
 perception — *saññā*
 persistence — *virīya*

phenomenon	— <i>dhamma</i>
property	— <i>dhātu</i>
quality	— <i>dhamma</i>
release	— <i>vimutti</i>
resolve	— <i>saṅkappa</i>
self-awakening	— <i>sambodhi</i>
self-identification	— <i>sakkāya</i>
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stream-entry	— <i>sotāpatti</i>
stress*	— <i>dukkha</i>
sustenance	— <i>upādāna</i>
theme	— <i>nimitta</i>
tranquility	— <i>samatha</i>
transcendent	— <i>lokuttara</i>
Unbinding*	— <i>nibbāna</i>
Unfabricated	— <i>asaṅkhata</i>
world	— <i>loka</i>

Acquisition: *Upadhi* literally means “belongings,” “baggage,” “paraphernalia.” In the suttas, it means the mental baggage that the mind carries around. The Cūḷaniddesa, a late canonical work, lists ten types of upadhi: craving, views, defilement, action, misconduct, nutriment (physical and mental), irritation, the four physical properties sustained in the body (earth, water, wind, and fire), the six external *sensa media*, and the six forms of corresponding sensory consciousness. The state without upadhi or acquisitions is Unbinding.

Aggregate: Any of the five types of phenomena that serve as objects of clinging and as bases for a sense of self: form, feeling, perception, mental fabrications, and consciousness.

Becoming: The processes of giving rise, within the mind, to states of being that allow for physical or mental birth on any of three levels: the level of sensuality, the level of form, and the level of formlessness.

Enlightened one: Throughout these volumes I have rendered *buddha* as “Awakened,” and *dhira* as “enlightened.” As Jan Gonda

points out in his book, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, the word *dhira* was used in Vedic and Buddhist poetry to mean a person who has the heightened powers of mental vision needed to perceive the “light” of the underlying principles of the cosmos, together with the expertise to implement those principles in the affairs of life and to reveal them to others. A person enlightened in this sense may also be awakened in the formal Buddhist sense, but is not necessarily so.

Fabrication: *Saṅkhāra* literally means “putting together,” and carries connotations of jerry-rigged artificiality. It is applied to physical and to mental processes, as well as to the products of those processes. Various English words have been suggested as renderings for *saṅkhāra*, such as “formation,” “determination,” “force,” and “constructive activity.” However, “fabrication,” in both of its senses, as the process of fabrication and the fabricated things that result, seems the best equivalent for capturing the connotations as well as the denotations of the term.

Inconstant: The usual rendering for *anicca* is “impermanent.” However, the antonym of the term, *nicca*, carries connotations of constancy and reliability; and as *anicca* is used to emphasize the point that conditioned phenomena are unreliable as a basis for true happiness, this seems a useful rendering for conveying this point.

Obsession: *Anusaya* is usually translated as “underlying tendency” or “latent tendency.” These translations are based on the etymology of the term, which literally means, “to lie down with.” However, in actual usage, the related verb (*anuseti*) means to be obsessed with something, for one’s thoughts to return and “lie down with it” (or, in our idiom, to “dwell on it”) over and over again.

Stress: The Pali term *dukkha*, which is traditionally translated in the commentaries as, “that which is hard to bear,” is notorious for having no truly adequate equivalent in English, but stress—in its basic sense as a strain on body or mind—seems as close as English can get. In the Canon, *dukkha* applies both to physical and to mental phenomena, ranging from the intense stress of acute anguish or pain to the innate burdensomeness of even the most subtle mental or physical fabrications.

Unbinding: Because *nibbāna* is used to denote not only the Buddhist goal, but also the extinguishing of a fire, it is usually rendered as “extinguishing” or, even worse, “extinction.” However, a close look at ancient Indian views of the workings of fire (see *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*) shows that people of the Buddha’s time felt that a fire, in going out, did not go out of existence but was simply freed from its agitation and attachment to its fuel. Thus, when applied to the Buddhist goal, the primary connotation of *nibbāna* is one of release and liberation. According to the commentaries, the literal meaning of the word *nibbāna* is “unbinding,” and as this is a rare case where the literal and contextual meanings of a term coincide, this seems to be the ideal English equivalent.

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