AN 3.66 — Salha Sutta: To Salha

English translation by Ñanamoli Thera.

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Text

Thus I heard. On one occasion the venerable Nandaka was living at Savatthi in the Eastern Monastery, Migara's Mother's Palace. Then Migara's grandson, Salha, and Pekhuniya's grandson, Rohana, went to the venerable Nandaka, and after salutation they sat down at one side. When they had done so the venerable Nandaka said to Migara's grandson Salha:

"Come, Salha, do not be satisfied with hearsay or with tradition or with legendary lore or with what has come down in scriptures or with conjecture or with logical inference or with weighing evidence or with a liking for a view after pondering it or with someone else's ability or with the thought 'The monk is our teacher.' When you know in yourself 'These things are unprofitable, liable to censure, condemned by the wise, being adopted and put into effect, they lead to harm and suffering,' then you should abandon them. What do you think? Is there greed?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Covetousness is the meaning of that, I say. Through greed a covetous man kills breathing things, takes what is not given, commits adultery, and utters falsehood, and he gets another to do likewise. Will that be long for his harm and suffering?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "What do you think, is there

hate?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Ill-will is the meaning of that, I say. Through hate a malevolent man kills breathing things... Will that be long for his harm and suffering?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "What do you think? Is there delusion?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Ignorance is the meaning of that, I say. Through ignorance a deluded man kills breathing things... Will that be long for his harm and suffering?" — "Yes, venerable sir."

"What do you think? Are these things profitable or unprofitable?" — "Unprofitable, venerable sir." — "Reprehensible or blameless?" — "Reprehensible, venerable sir." — "Condemned or commended by the wise?" — "Condemned by the wise, venerable sir." — "Being adopted and put into effect, do they lead to harm and suffering, or do they not, or how does it appear to you in this case?" — "Being adopted and put into effect, venerable sir, they lead to harm and suffering. So it appears in this case." — "Now that was the reason why I told you 'Come Salha, do not be satisfied with hearsay... When you know in yourself "These things are unprofitable," then you should abandon them.'

"Come Salha, do not be satisfied with hearsay... or with the thought, 'The monk is our teacher.' When you know in yourself: 'These things are profitable, blameless, commended by the wise, being adopted and put into effect they lead to welfare and happiness,' then you should practice them and abide in them. What do you think? Is there non-greed?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Uncovetousness is the meaning of that, I say. Through non-greed an uncovetous man does not kill breathing things or take what is not given or commit adultery or utter falsehood, and he gets another to do likewise. Will that be long for his welfare and happiness?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "What do you think? Is there non-hate?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "Non ill-will is the meaning of that, I say. Through non ill-will an unmalevolent man does not kill breathing things... Will that be long for his welfare and happiness?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "What do you think? Is there non-delusion?" — "Yes, venerable sir." — "True knowledge is the meaning of that, I say. Through non-delusion a man with true knowledge does not kill breathing things... Will that be long for his welfare and happiness?" — "Yes, venerable sir."

"What do you think? Are these things profitable or unprofitable?" — "Profitable, venerable sir." — "Reprehensible or blameless?" — "Blameless, venerable sir." — "Condemned or commended by the wise?" — "Commended by the wise, venerable sir." — "Being adopted and put into effect, do they lead to welfare and happiness, or do they not, or how does it appear to you in this case?" — "Being adopted and put into effect, venerable sir, they lead to welfare and happiness. So it appears to us in this case." — "Now that was the reason why I told you 'Come Salha, do not be satisfied with hearsay... when you know in yourself "These things are profitable..." then you should practice them and abide in them.'

"Now a disciple who is ennobled [by reaching the Noble Path], who has rid himself in this way of covetousness and ill-will and is undeluded, abides with his heart imbued with loving-kindness extending over one quarter, likewise the second quarter, likewise the third quarter, likewise the fourth quarter, and so above, below, around, and everywhere, and to all as to himself; he abides with his heart abundant, exalted, measureless in loving-kindness without hostility or ill-will extending over the all-encompassing world. He abides with his heart imbued with compassion... gladness... equanimity extending over the

all-encompassing world. Now he understands this state of contemplation in this way: 'There is this [state of Divine Abiding in he who has entered the Stream]. There is what has been abandoned [which is the amount of greed, hate and delusion exhausted by the stream-entry Path]. There is a superior goal [which is arahantship]. And there is an ultimate escape from this whole field of perception.'

"When he knows and sees in this way, his heart is liberated from the taint of sensual desire, from the taint of being, and from the taint of ignorance. When liberated [by reaching the arahant Path], there comes thereafter the knowledge that it is liberated. He knows that birth is ended, that the Divine Life has been lived out, that what had to be done is done, and that there is no more of this to come. He understands thus: 'Formerly there was greed which was bad, and now there is none, which is good. Formerly there was hate, which was bad, and now there is none, which is good. Formerly there was delusion, which was bad, and now there is none, which is good.' So here and now in this very life he is parched no more [by the fever of craving's thirst], his fires of greed, hate and delusion are extinguished and cooled out; experiencing bliss, he abides [for the remainder of his last life-span] divinely pure in himself."