AN 3.75 — Nivesaka Sutta (Encouragement)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

75. Nivesaka Sutta (Encouragement) At one time, the Venerable Ānanda approached The Blessed One, and after paying homage to The Teacher, he sat down to one side.

Then, The Blessed One said:

“Ānanda, those for whom you have Universal Compassion, and who think they should listen to you and heed your words, whether they happen to be your friends, fellow companions, relatives, or family members, in your eagerness to help these individuals, Ānanda, you must endeavor to encourage, inspire, settle, and establish them in these three ways.

Now, what are these three?

“First, they must be encouraged, inspired, settled, and established in the unwavering confidence in The Buddha. Thus, you should help them to understand that –

‘The Blessed One is an Arahant, Perfectly Awakened, endowed with Sublime Knowledge and Supremely Pure Conduct; He is The Well-Gone, The Knower of worlds, The Incomparable Tamer of those to be tamed, The Teacher of Devas and humans, The Enlightened and Blessed.’

Secondly, they must be encouraged, inspired, settled, and established in unwavering confidence in The Dhamma, thus –

‘The Dhamma of The Blessed One is well expounded; it is directly visible here and now; immediately effective; inviting one to come and investigate for oneself; taking one straight forward, undeterred; to be understood and personally realized by the wise; each for oneself.’

Thirdly, they must be encouraged, inspired, settled, and established in unwavering confidence in the Saṅgha, thus:

‘The Saṅgha of the Disciples of The Blessed One are practicing well the Good Path, which is the Threefold Training of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā (virtuous living, mental cultivation, and development of wisdom); the Disciples of The Blessed One are practicing the Straight Path of the Threefold Training, which is the Middle Path; the Disciples of The Blessed One are practicing wisely to realize Nibbāna, in a methodical way; the Disciples of The Blessed One are practicing the Dhamma in harmony; Such are the Four Pairs of Eight Great Beings, comprised of the Eight Noble Disciples of The Blessed One; the ones to be honored and respected, deserving of hospitality, worthy of offerings; to be venerated with reverential salutation with one’s palms pressed together at the heart, for they are indeed the Incomparable Field of merit for the world.’

“Now, Ānanda, there might come a time when some changes may occur in the characteristics of the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and air. But, Ānanda, there cannot come a time when some kind of a change or alteration may occur within the heart of the Noble Disciple, in his unwavering confidence in The Buddha!

“Therefore, Ānanda, there is no possibility for a Noble Disciple who possesses such unwavering confidence in The Buddha, to somehow be born in hell, or in the animal world, or in the company of ghosts. This is simply impossible to ever occur.

“Similarly, Ānanda, there might come a time when some changes may occur in the characteristics of the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and air. But, Ānanda, there cannot come a time when some kind of a change or alteration may occur within the heart of the Noble Disciple in his unwavering confidence in The Dhamma!

“Therefore Ānanda, there is no possibility for a Noble Disciple who possesses such unwavering confidence in The Dhamma, to somehow be born in hell, or in the animal world, or in the company of ghosts. This is simply impossible to ever occur.

“Also, Ānanda, there might come a time when some changes may occur in the characteristics of the four great elements of earth, water, fire, and air. But, Ānanda, there cannot come a time when some kind of a change or alteration may occur within the heart of the Noble Disciple in his unwavering confidence in the Saṅgha!

“Therefore, Ānanda, there is no possibility that a Noble Disciple who possesses such unwavering confidence in the Saṅgha, to somehow be born in hell, or in the animal world, or in the company of ghosts. This simply is impossible to ever occur.

“Therefore, Ānanda, those for whom you have Universal Compassion and who think they should listen to you and heed your words, whether they happen to be your friends, fellow companions, relatives, or family members, in your eagerness to help these individuals, Ānanda, you must endeavor to encourage, inspire, settle, and establish them in these three ways.”