AN 4.185 — Truths of the Brahmins

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an4.185/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Numbered Discourses 4.185

19. Brahmins

Truths of the Brahmins

Once the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha, on the Vulture's Peak Mountain.

Now at that time several very well-known wanderers were residing in their monastery on the bank of the Serpentine River. They included Annabhāra, Varadhara, Sakuludāyī, and other very well-known wanderers.

Then in the late afternoon, the Buddha came out of retreat and went to the monastery for the wanderers on the bank of the Serpentine River.

Now at that time this discussion came up while those wanderers of other religions were sitting together, "The truths of the brahmins are like this; the truths of the brahmins are like that."

Then the Buddha went up to those wanderers, sat down on the seat spread out, and said to them, "Wanderers, what were you sitting talking about just now? What conversation was left unfinished?"

"Well, worthy Gotama, this discussion came up among us while we were sitting together: 'The truths of the brahmins are like this; the truths of the brahmins are like that.'"

"Wanderers, I declare these four truths of the brahmins, having realized them with my own insight. What four?

Take a brahmin who says: 'No sentient beings should be killed.' In speaking like this, a brahmin speaks the truth, not lies. But they don't think of themselves as an 'ascetic' or 'brahmin' because of that. Nor do they think 'I'm better' or 'I'm equal' or 'I'm worse'. Rather, they simply practice out of kindness and sympathy for living creatures, having had insight into the truth of that.

Take another brahmin who says: 'All sensual pleasures are impermanent, suffering, and perishable.' Saying this, a brahmin speaks the truth, not lies. But they don't think of themselves as an 'ascetic' or 'brahmin' because of that. Nor do they think 'I'm better' or 'I'm equal' or 'I'm worse'. Rather, they simply practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding sensual pleasures, having had insight into the truth of that.

Take another brahmin who says: ‘All states of existence are impermanent, suffering, and perishable.’ … They simply practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding future lives, having had insight into the truth of that.

Take another brahmin who says: ‘I don’t belong to anyone anywhere. And nothing belongs to me anywhere.’ In speaking like this, a brahmin speaks the truth, not lies. But they don’t think of themselves as an ‘ascetic’ or ‘brahmin’ because of that. Nor do they think ‘I’m better’ or ‘I’m equal’ or ‘I’m worse’. Rather, they simply practice the path of nothingness, having had insight into the truth of that.

These are the four truths of the brahmins that I declare, having realized them with my own insight.”