AN 5.179 — Gihi Sutta: The Householder

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

Then Anathapindika the householder, surrounded by about 500 lay followers, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. So the Blessed One said to Ven. Sariputta: "Sariputta, when you know of a householder clothed in white, that he is restrained in terms of the five training rules and that he obtains at will, without difficulty, without hardship, four pleasant mental abidings in the here & now, then if he wants he may state about himself: 'Hell is ended; animal wombs are ended; the state of the hungry shades is ended; states of deprivation, destitution, the bad bourns are ended! I am a stream-winner, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening!'

"Now, in terms of which five training rules is he restrained?

"There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from illicit sex, abstains from lying, abstains from distilled & fermented drinks that cause heedlessness.

"These are the five training rules in terms of which he is restrained.

"And which four pleasant mental abidings in the here & now does he obtain at will, without difficulty, without hardship?

"There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones is endowed with verified confidence in the Awakened One: 'Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in knowledge & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the world, unexcelled as a trainer for those people fit to be tamed, the Teacher of divine & human beings, awakened, blessed.' This is the first pleasant mental abiding in the here & now that he has attained, for the purification of the mind that is impure, for the cleansing of the mind that is unclean.

"Furthermore, he is endowed with verified confidence in the Dhamma: 'The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One, to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be realized by the wise for themselves.' This is the second pleasant mental abiding in the here & now that he has attained, for the purification of the mind that is impure, for the cleansing of the mind that is unclean.

"Furthermore, he is endowed with verified confidence in the Sangha: 'The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well... who have practiced straight-forwardly... who have practiced methodically... who have practiced masterfully — in other words, the four pairs, the eight individuals [1] — they are the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world.' This is the third pleasant mental abiding in the here & now that he has attained, for the purification of the mind that is impure, for the cleansing of the mind that is unclean.

"Furthermore, he is endowed with virtues that are appealing to the noble ones: untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, leading to concentration. This is the fourth pleasant mental abiding in the here & now that he has attained, for the purification of the mind that is impure, for the cleansing of the mind that is unclean.

"These are the four pleasant mental abidings in the here & now that he obtains at will, without difficulty, without hardship.

"Sariputta, when you know of a householder clothed in white, that he is restrained in terms of the five training rules and that he obtains at will, without difficulty, without hardship, four pleasant mental abidings in the here & now, then if he wants he may state about himself: 'Hell is ended; animal wombs are ended; the state of the hungry shades is ended; states of deprivation, destitution, the bad bourns are ended! I am a stream-winner, steadfast, never again destined for states of woe, headed for self-awakening!'

Seeing the danger in hells, the wise would shun evils, would shun them, taking on the noble Dhamma. You shouldn't kill living beings existing, striving; shouldn't grasp what isn't given. Content with your own wife, don't delight in the wives of others. You shouldn't drink drinks, distilled, fermented, that confuse the mind. Recollect the self-awakened one. Think

often of the Dhamma. Develop a mind useful, devoid of ill will, for the sake of the heavenly world. When hoping for merit, provide gifts first to those peaceful ones, ideal, to whom what is offered, given, becomes abundant [in fruit]. I will tell you of those peaceful ones, Sariputta. Listen to me. In a herd of cattle, whether black, white, ruddy, brown, dappled, uniform, or pigeon gray: if a bull is born — tame, enduring, consummate in strength, & swift — people yoke him to burdens, regardless of his color. In the same way, wherever one is born among human beings — noble warriors, brahmans, merchants, workers, outcastes, or scavengers — if one is tame, with good practices, righteous, consummate in virtue, a speaker of truth, with conscience at heart, one who's abandoned birth & death, completed the holy life put down the burden, done the task fermentation-free, gone beyond all dhammas, through lack of clinging unbound: offerings to this spotless field bear an abundance of fruit. But fools, unknowing, dull, uninformed, give gifts outside and don't come near the good. While those who do come near the good — regarded as enlightened, wise — whose trust in the One Well-gone has taken root, is established & firm: they go to the world of the devas or are reborn here in good family. Step by step they reach Unbinding : they who are wise."

Note

1.

The four pairs are (1) the person on the path to stream-entry, the person experiencing the fruit of stream-entry; (2) the person on the path to once-returning, the person experiencing the fruit of once-returning; (3) the person on the path to non-returning, the person experiencing the fruit of non-returning; (4) the person on the path to arahantship, the person experiencing the fruit of arahantship. The eight individuals are the eight types forming these four pairs.

See also: AN 3.57; AN 10.92; "Into the Stream" (Study Guide).