

AN 7.50

Methuna Sutta
“On Sexual Lust”
Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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At one time, the brahmin Jāṇussoṇi approached The Blessed One, and after exchanging friendly greetings, sat to one side and said:

“Master Gautama, do you declare that you are leading a celibate life?”

“Brahmin, if it would ever be correctly stated about anyone as: *‘This recluse is one who lives the utterly pure celibate life, consistently unblemished, uninterrupted, flawless, stainless, without any defects or any breaks,’* then, it is precisely about me that one would be declaring those words. This, brahmin, because I live the utterly pure celibate life, consistently unblemished, flawless, stainless, and without any defects or any breaks.

“But, Master Gautama, what might be those blemishes, interruptions, flaws, stains, defects or breaks that come to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life?”

1. “Here, brahmin, there might be a recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for he secretly becomes intimate with a woman, loves touching them and being touched by them, as he becomes intoxicated by their rubbing, massaging, bathing, and being anointed with oils by women. Utterly enjoying such erotically charged experiences, that kind of recluse looks for opportunities to reexperience them, as he finds much pleasure, amusement, and satisfaction from such erotically charged interactions.

Brahmin, this is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

2. “Further, brahmin, there might be another recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for although he does not secretly become intimate with a woman, nor consents to touching them or being touched by them, nor consents to their rubbing, massaging, bathing, or being anointed with oils by women, nevertheless, he *does* enjoy flirting and mucking about with women, joking around, teasing and playing with them, and gains much pleasure, amusement, and satisfaction from such erotically charged interactions.

Brahmin, this also is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

3. “Further, brahmin, there might be another recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for although he does not secretly become intimate with a woman, nor consents to touching them or being touched by them, nor consents to their rubbing, massaging, bathing, or being anointed with oils by women, and although he may not flirt nor muck about with women, nor joke around, tease or play with them, nevertheless, he enjoys gazing straight into their eyes, and gains much pleasure and satisfaction from such erotically charged interactions.

Brahmin, this also is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

4. “Further, brahmin, there might be another recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for although he does not secretly become intimate with a woman, nor consents to touching them or being touched by them, nor consents to their rubbing, massaging, bathing, or being anointed with oils by women, and although he may not flirt nor muck about with women, nor joke around, tease or play with them, nor gaze into their eyes, but nevertheless, he delights in listening to a woman’s voice coming from behind walls, verandas, secretly listening in on the conversations of women, their laughter, singing, or even weeping, as he gains much pleasure and satisfaction from such experiences.

Brahmin, this also is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

5. “Further, brahmin, there might be another recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for although he does not secretly become intimate with a woman, nor consents to touching them or being touched by them, nor consents to their rubbing, massaging, bathing, or being anointed with oils by women, and although he may not flirt nor muck about with women, nor joke around, tease or play with them, nor gaze into their eyes, and even though he does not listen to a woman’s voice coming from behind walls, nor secretly listens in on the conversations of women, their laughter, their singing, or even weeping, but, nevertheless, he enjoys recollecting their voice and laughter, as he gains much pleasure and satisfaction from such experiences.

Brahmin, this also is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

6. “Further, brahmin, there might be another recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for although he does not secretly become intimate with a woman, nor consents to touching them or being touched by them, nor consents to their rubbing, massaging, bathing, or being anointed with oils by women, and although he may not flirt nor

muck about with women, nor joke around, tease or play with them, nor gaze into their eyes, and even though he does not listen to a woman's voice coming from behind walls, nor secretly listens in on the conversations of women, their laughter, their singing, or even weeping, nor dwells on his recollections of their voice and laughter, yet, every time he looks upon a householder or a householder's son, he is full of envy, seeing such laypeople being surrounded by and enjoying the five chords of sensual pleasures.

Brahmin, this also is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

7. "Further, brahmin, there might be another recluse or brahmin claiming to be living a celibate life, but in fact, he is not truly living it, for although he does not secretly become intimate with a woman, nor consents to touching them or being touched by them, nor consents to their rubbing, massaging, bathing, or being anointed with oils by women, and although he may not flirt nor muck about with women, nor joke around, tease or play with them, nor gaze into their eyes, and even though he does not listen to a woman's voice coming from behind walls, nor secretly listens in on the conversations of women, their laughter, their singing, or even weeping, nor dwells on his recollections of their voice and laughter, nor does he enviously look upon a householder or a householder's son, seeing them surrounded by and enjoying the five chords of sensual pleasures, *nevertheless*, he lives the spiritual life aspiring for a rebirth into the heavenly Deva realms, where he hopes to one day be experiencing those pleasures, as he thinks to himself: '*By living this life with virtue, observing the rules, and engaging in monastic austerities, may I attain a rebirth in a heavenly realm, by becoming a Deva.*'

Brahmin, this also is a blemish, an interruption, a flaw, a stain, a defect, and a break that comes to impede upon living a truly consistent celibate life.

Therefore, brahmin, I declare that such a recluse would be living an impure celibate life, fettered by the enjoyment of sexual lust, still caught in its clutches, and *not* freed from the cycles of rebirth, ageing and death, grieving, wailing, distress, torment, depression, and anguish.

"Brahmin, so long as one or more of these seven fetters of seeking sexual gratification were not fully relinquished and abandoned in me, I did not declare to the world my rightful attainment of The Supreme Awakening, with both its gods and humans, its Māra, Brahmās, along with its populations of both recluses and brahmins.

"But it was *only after* these seven fetters of seeking sexual gratification were fully relinquished and abandoned in me, that I *declared* to the world my rightful attainment of The Supreme Awakening, with both its gods and humans, its Māra, Brahmās, along with its populations of both recluses and brahmins.

And it was at that point, where the Knowledge and Vision arose in me, and I knew it in my heart, for certain: "My Heart's Release is Unshakeable! This is my very last birth. There is no more rebirth for me, anywhere, anymore!"

When this was said, the brahmin Jāṇussoṇi delightedly exclaimed to The Blessed One:

“It is excellent, Blessed One! It is marvelous, Blessed One! The Blessed Lord has clarified the Dhamma for me in many ways, as though he were to turn upright what had been turned upside-down, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyesight to see. Bhante, I go to The Blessed One for refuge and to the Dhamma and to the Sangha of Bhikkhus. From this day forward, may The Blessed One remember me as a lay disciple who has taken refuge in him, until the end of life.”

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