AN 8.9 — Nanda Sutta: About Nanda

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an08/an08.009.than.html

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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

"Monks, speaking rightly of Nanda, one could say, 'He is a son of a good family.' Speaking rightly of Nanda, one could say, 'He is strong.' Speaking rightly of Nanda, one could say, 'He is handsome.' Speaking rightly of Nanda, one could say, 'He is fiercely passionate.' If Nanda did not guard the doors of his senses, know moderation in eating, be devoted to wakefulness, and be endowed with mindfulness & alertness, how would he be able to follow the holy life, complete & pure?

"This is Nanda's guarding of the doors of his senses: If he should look to the east, he looks focusing his entire awareness, (thinking,) 'As I am looking thus to the east, greed & distress, evil unskillful qualities, will not flow out.' That's how he is alert there. If he should look to the west... the north... the south... above... below... to the intermediate directions, he looks focusing his entire awareness, (thinking,) 'As I am looking thus to the intermediate directions, greed & distress, evil unskillful qualities, will not flow out.' That's how he is alert there. This is Nanda's guarding of the doors of his senses.

"This is Nanda's knowledge of moderation in eating: Nanda takes his food reflecting appropriately, not playfully, nor for intoxication, nor for putting on bulk, nor for beautification, but simply for the survival & continuance of this body, for ending its afflictions, for the support of the holy life, (thinking,) 'I will destroy old feelings [of hunger]

& not create new feelings [from overeating]. Thus I will maintain myself, be blameless, & live in comfort.' This is Nanda's knowledge of moderation in eating.

"This is Nanda's devotion to wakefulness: There is the case where Nanda during the day, sitting & pacing back & forth, cleanses his mind of any qualities that would hold the mind in check. During the first watch of the night,[1] sitting & pacing back & forth, he cleanses his mind of any qualities that would hold the mind in check. During the second watch of the night,[2] reclining on his right side, he takes up the lion's posture, one foot placed on top of the other, mindful, alert, with his mind set on getting up.[3] During the last watch of the night,[4] sitting & pacing back & forth, he cleanses his mind of any qualities that would hold the mind in check. This is Nanda's devotion to wakefulness.

"This is Nanda's being in mindfulness & alertness: There is the case where feelings are known to Nanda as they arise, known as they persist, known as they subside. Perceptions are known as they arise, known as they persist, known as they subside. Thoughts are known as they arise, known as they persist, known as they subside. This is Nanda's being in mindfulness & alertness.

"Monks, if Nanda did not guard the doors of his senses, know moderation in eating, be devoted to wakefulness, and be endowed with mindfulness & alertness, how would he be able to follow the holy life, complete & pure?"

Notes

1.

First watch: dusk to 10 p.m.

2.

Second watch: 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

3.

I.e., either as soon as he awakens or at a particular time.

4.

Last watch: 2 a.m. to dawn.

See also: AN 4.37; Ud 3.2.