

DN 2

Dīgha Nikāya The Long Discourses

Sīlakkhandha Vagga
The Section on The Training in Virtue

Sāmaññaphala Sutta “Fruits Gained by Truly Living the Life of a Recluse”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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1. RĀJĀMACCAKATHĀ – “THE KING’S DISCUSSION WITH HIS MINISTERS”

This is what I personally heard.

Once, The Blessed One was staying at Jīvaka Komārabhacca’s Mango Grove, near Rājagaha, along with a large group of the Sangha, numbering more than twelve hundred and fifty Bhikkhus.

Now, this took place on the fifteenth-day Uposatha, during the full-moon night of the fourth month of Komudī, when King Ajātasattu of Magadha, the son of Queen Videhā, was sitting at his throne, while being surrounded by his royal ministers, on the upper terrace of his palace.

It was then, that King Ajātasattu who was in an elated and happy mood, exclaimed with delight –

“Ah, my dear sirs, how incredibly astounding this moonlit night is! Indeed, how exquisitely delightful is the moon tonight; so lovely in its tranquility and utterly ravishing in its striking glow, this moonlit night!

“Which makes us beg the question, as to who might truly be that excellent master brahmin, that best and genuine specimen of a religious recluse, by going to whom and paying homage at his

feet, it would perfectly complement this already glorious moonlit night, thereby making it truly complete by giving my heart the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need?”

1a. Then, on hearing these words from King Ajātasattu, the Ruler of Magadha, one of the ministers present quickly came forward by making the following suggestion:

“Your royal majesty, there is Pūraṇa Kassapa, who is the highly respected religious leader of a community that follows him unquestioningly as being the head of their order; their teacher whom they worship and venerate, as he guides and instructs them all in the community. He is truly well-known and famous; an illustrious genuine spiritual leader whom many of his people consider saintly and holy. Being already very advanced in years, long have been the years since he has gone forth. Many say he is nearing the end of his days, seeing that he is at the last phase of life.

“Therefore, it would be wonderful, if his royal majesty could go to visit him. For, certainly in seeing him and paying homage at his feet, the heart would finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

However, on hearing this statement, King Ajātasattu did not say a word, but remained quiet.

1b. Then, another one of the ministers present addressed King Ajātasattu, the Ruler of Magadha, by offering his own suggestion:

“Your royal majesty, there is Makkhali Gosāla, who is the highly respected religious leader of a community that follows him unquestioningly as the head of their order; their teacher whom they worship and venerate, as he guides and instructs them all in the community. He is truly well-known and famous; an illustrious genuine spiritual leader whom many of his people consider saintly and holy. Being already very advanced in years, long have been the years since he has gone forth. Many say he is nearing the end of his days, seeing that he is at the last phase of life.

“Hence, it would truly be wonderful, if his royal majesty could go to visit him. For, certainly in seeing him and paying homage at his feet, the heart would finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

But, on hearing this statement, King Ajātasattu again did not say a word, and remained quiet.

1c. Then, yet another one of the royal ministers addressed King Ajātasattu, the Ruler of Magadha, by offering his own suggestion:

“Your royal majesty, there is Ajita Kesakambali, who is the highly respected religious leader of a community that follows him unquestioningly as the head of their order; their teacher whom they worship and venerate, as he guides and instructs them all in the community. He is truly well-known and famous; an illustrious genuine spiritual leader whom many of his people consider

saintly and holy. Being already very advanced in years, long have been the years since he has gone forth. Many say he is nearing the end of his days, seeing that he is at the last phase of life. “Hence, it would truly be wonderful, if his royal majesty could go to visit him. For, certainly in seeing him and paying homage at his feet, the heart would finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

However, again on hearing this statement, King Ajātasattu remained quiet and did not say a word.

1d. Then, another one of the royal ministers addressed King Ajātasattu, the Ruler of Magadha, by offering his own suggestion:

“Sire, how about Pakudha Kaccāyana, who is the highly respected religious leader of a community that follows him unquestioningly, as the head of their order; their teacher whom they worship and venerate, as he guides and instructs them all in the community. He is truly well-known and famous; an illustrious genuine spiritual leader whom many of his people consider saintly and holy. Being already very advanced in years, long have been the years since he has gone forth. Many say he is nearing the end of his days, seeing that he is at the last phase of life.

“Hence, it would truly be wonderful, if his royal majesty could go to visit him. For, certainly in seeing him and paying homage at his feet, the heart would finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

But, in hearing this statement, King Ajātasattu still remained quiet, without saying a word.

1e. Then, another one of the royal ministers addressed King Ajātasattu, the Ruler of Magadha, by offering his own suggestion:

“My Lord King, how about Sañjaya Belatthiputta, who is the highly respected religious leader of a community that follows him unquestioningly, as the head of their order; their teacher whom they worship and venerate, as he guides and instructs them all in the community. He is truly well-known and famous; an illustrious genuine spiritual leader whom many of his people consider saintly and holy. Being already very advanced in years, long have been the years since he has gone forth. Many say he is nearing the end of his days, seeing that he is at the last phase of life.

“Hence, it would truly be wonderful, if his royal majesty could go to visit him. For, certainly in seeing him and paying homage at his feet, the heart would finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

But, in hearing this statement, King Ajātasattu again remained quiet, without saying a word.

If. Then, another one of the royal ministers addressed King Ajātasattu, the Ruler of Magadha, by offering his own suggestion:

“Sire, there is the great Jain Mahāvīra, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputto, who is also the highly respected religious leader of a community that follows him unquestioningly, as the head of their order; their teacher whom they worship and venerate, as he guides and instructs them all in the community. He is truly well-known and famous; an illustrious genuine spiritual leader whom many of his people consider saintly and holy. Being already very advanced in years, long have been the years since he has gone forth. Many say he is nearing the end of his days, seeing that he is at the last phase of life.

“Hence, it would truly be wonderful, if his royal majesty could go to visit him. For, certainly in seeing him and paying homage at his feet, the heart would finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

However, in hearing this statement too, King Ajātasattu still remained quiet, without saying a word.

2. KOMĀRABHACCAJĪVAKAKATHĀ – “SPEAKING WITH JĪVAKA KOMĀRABHACCA”

Meanwhile, as this conversation was taking place, as all the other royal ministers were trying to advise the King on which teacher he should approach and venerate, Jīvaka Komārabhacca was sitting there quietly among them, without saying a word.

Then, the King addressed Jīvaka by saying:

“My Dear Jīvaka, while everyone was speaking and making suggestions, why have you been silent all this time, Brother?”

At which point Jīvaka replied, by saying:

“Sire, The Blessed One, The Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha is Himself here, near us in Rājagaha, for He is currently staying at my mango grove, along with a large group of Sangha, numbering more than twelve hundred and fifty Bhikkhus.

“Moreover, Sire, it is already a wide-known fact, that The Blessed One indeed is an Arahant; The Perfectly Awakened One, Endowed with Sublime Knowledge and Supremely Pure Conduct, The Well-Gone, The Knower of worlds, The Incomparable Tamer of those to be tamed, The Teacher of Devas and humans, Enlightened and Blessed.

“Therefore, I highly encourage Your Majesty to go and approach The Blessed One!

“For, I do know for a fact, that He is the *only* Teacher, at whose feet the heart will finally experience the genuine peace for which it is so desperately in need.”

And the King exclaimed:

“Well then, my Dear Jīvaka, what are we waiting for? Have all the royal elephants be prepared, for we are going to see Master Gautama, your Teacher!”

“Yes, Lord!” replied Jīvaka, as he gave the command, and five hundred female elephants were made ready for their journey, as well as the royal bull elephant for the King to ride.

Then, he alerted the King by saying:

“Sire, all the elephants are ready and waiting for you, at your convenience.”

Then, King Ajātasattu arranged for his five hundred women to mount those five hundred female elephants, while he himself mounted the royal bull elephant. Then, with his accompanying royal ministers, his personal attendants and soldiers carrying lighted torches, they began their journey in full regalia, from the royal palace in Rājagaha to Jīvaka’s mango grove.

As they began approaching the mango grove, hearing the silence all around him, the king began to worry, and soon the sense of uncertainty suddenly turned into terror; stricken with fear, he began trembling with his hair standing on the back of his neck.

Thus, feeling vulnerable and struck by fear in being out in the forest outside the gates, at night, the king turned to Jīvaka and said:

“My dear Jīvaka, you are not playing a trick on me, are you? I hope this is not some kind of a ruse that you have schemed against me, to set up a snare and then deliver me in chains to my enemies!

“For, how could it be possible that this mango grove is currently occupied by a large group of Sangha that numbers more than twelve hundred and fifty Bhikkhus, if we cannot even hear a single cough, a sneeze, or even a soft whisper? There’s hardly any noise at all!”

“Do not be afraid, my lord! Do not worry, O Great King! For, I am not deceiving you, nor playing a trick or a ruse on you, nor am I to betray you, by snaring and delivering you to your enemies! Far from it, Sire!

“Have no fear, and just keep advancing as you are! Keep moving forward! There! Up ahead, you can almost see the burning oil lamps, lighting up the main circular hall where you will find them all seated!”

3. SĀMAÑÑAPHALAPUCCHĀ – “ASKING ABOUT THE FRUITS OF RECLUSESHIP”

Having already gone as far as possible by riding his royal elephant, King Ajātasattu descended and started to make his way towards the monastery by foot, with Jīvaka walking right by his side.

Then, the king asked Jīvaka:

“But, my dear Jīvaka, where will The Blessed One be seated? How would I recognize The Blessed One amidst all the other Bhikkhus?”

“Right there, Sire! That is The Blessed One, seated in the middle with His back against the central pillar, facing the eastern direction, in front of the Bhikkhu Sangha.”

Then, comforted by these words from Jīvaka, King Ajātasattu went and approached The Blessed One. As he did so, he paused and stood to one side while looking at all of the Bhikkhus sitting around him, surveying the company of Bhikkhus, who were seated in total silence, unmoving and still, just like the silence pervading the surface of an undisturbed placid lake.

Then, with delight surging through him, the king could not help but make a heartfelt utterance, while exclaiming:

“Ah may one day, my son, Prince Udāyi Bhadda, also be able to enjoy such peace as this noble Bhikkhu Sangha now clearly is enjoying!”

It was at that instant, that The Blessed One addressed King Ajātasattu, by asking:

“Great king, I see your heart move, pulling you in the direction of the one you love!”

“Indeed, Bhante! I adore and love my son, the young Prince Udāyi Bhadda!

“May he gain the necessary blessings to one day also be sitting in such peaceful and silent serenity, enjoying the same calm just like these Venerable Sirs of the Bhikkhu Sangha are currently experiencing!”

Then, King Ajātasattu paid homage by venerating The Blessed One, and then, to the Bhikkhu Sangha, with his hands in front of his heart in respectful anjalī. Afterwards, he sat to one side and began addressing The Blessed One, by saying:

“Bhante, there is a question that we would like to ask The Blessed One, regarding a certain matter. We have come in the hopes that The Blessed One would indulge us our request, by providing an answer for it, helping to clarify this issue for us by explaining its meanings.”

And The Blessed One replied by saying:

“Great king, ask whatever question that is in your heart, for which you have come seeking the answer!”

Then, King Ajātasattu proceeded by asking his question:

“Bhante, there are many kinds of professions and crafts, requiring specific skill sets which one must train in, apprentice, and dedicatedly hone in and perfect, until mastery is reached. Skills and such crafts as elephant riders, cavalry, charioteers, archers, standard bearers, camp marshals, supply chain soldiers, dignified royal princes, special forces, shield bearing soldiers, infantry, and slave soldiers.

“Also, professions that require years of practice and expertise, such as bread makers and bakers, chefs and cooks, carpenters and stone-masons, builders and jewelers, carvers, painters, bead and garland makers, fabric dyers, embroiders, basket weavers, potters, accountants and mathematicians, laundrymen, as well as all other crafts, for which a specific set of abilities is required.

“Now, aside from their obvious required skills and specific attributes that one must first possess, in order to become a master at them, each of these crafts and professions also brings with it its own set of outcomes, that are its unique and inevitable fruits, whereby one sees here and now, in this very life, the resultant benefits and the very merits of having engaged and practiced these respective professions and their skill-sets.

“Thus, having gained the fruits of their labor that is the outcome of one’s dedicated efforts, individuals engaging in these various crafts and professions come to enjoy a life that is both happy and fulfilling, becoming self-reliant and supremely confident in whatever profession or craft they happen to be a master of, or a skilled apprentice.

“In this way, they are able to support their parents, their wives and children, their friends and relatives, whereby many people, in addition to themselves, reap the positive effects of their efforts and professional prowess. Having thus gained so many advantages in life because of the fruits of their professional skills, these individuals then open-handedly provide generous gifts to all recluses, religious practitioners, and brahmins.

“To this end, they secure for themselves a healthy store of merits that lead to a rebirth into the delightful heavenly realms, where they continue to reap the benefits and fruits of their efforts and actions, this time within the divine spheres of existence.

“Therefore, Bhante, my question deals with the issue of the fruits that are to be gained from living the life of a recluse.

“Thus, compared to the fruit of the labor a householder gains from the trade or profession one engages in, thereby earning one’s own livelihood, what are the fruits of the labor of a recluse who strives in living the Holy Life?

“Bhante, could you please help me understand by clarifying, as to what might be those directly visible fruits and outcomes gained from recluseship, those specific advantageous and uniquely beneficial outcomes that are observable, right here and now, in this very life, being the direct results of truly living the life of a recluse?”

And The Blessed One responded, by first asking this question:

“Great King, do you recall ever having asked this question while addressing other teachers, recluses or brahmins, before asking it here again today?”

“Yes, Bhante, I do recall having asked this question previously, before asking it here of The Blessed One today.”

“And if it is not an inconvenience to you, Great King, could you please reiterate as to what their individual replies were to your specific question?”

“Surely, Bhante!

“It is not an inconvenience at all, especially when it is The Blessed One Himself who is the One asking the question of us, in whose presence we are fortunate enough to be sitting, in person.”

“Well, in that case, Great King, speak as you please!”

3.1 PŪRAṆAKASSAPAVĀDA: PŪRAṆA KASSAPA’S PHILOSOPHY

“I remember, Bhante, this one time, when I approached Pūraṇa Kassapa, where after exchanging friendly and courteous greetings with him, I sat down and proceeded to ask him the very same question, and in the same manner, with which I just now asked here, namely, whether it was possible for him to point out or indicate to us the directly visible fruits that are to be undeniably gained from recluseship, by living and practicing the life of a recluse.

“However, when I finished asking my question, Pūraṇa Kassapa answered by saying:

‘Great King, whether someone commits an action or instigates others to commit an action or behave in a certain way, such as by hurting, torturing, decapitating and mutilating, inflicting pain and suffering onto another; oppressing, harassing, and intimidating others, whether by doing so himself or influencing others to do so, there would ultimately not be any evil committed, really by either oneself or the one who was instigated to do those acts.

‘Similarly, if one himself kills or causes and influences others to kill living beings by destroying life, stealing and breaking into others’ homes or taking what is not freely given to oneself, plundering the wealth of others by committing burglary, or trapping and robbing travelers on their journeys, seducing those who belong to others by engaging in wrong sexual behavior and

committing adultery; speaking falsehood and telling lies, whether one is doing all such acts by oneself or instigates others to do so, there truly is no evil committed, in any of these situations.

'In fact, Great King, if one were to strike down all of the living populations in the entire world by slicing through with a massive circular razor-sharp spinning blade, killing each and every one of those beings, still, no harm or evil would be taking place, hence there would not be any issue, and most certainly there would not be any consequences, at all, from all that destruction.

'And similarly, if one were to go to the southern bank of the River Ganges and start killing or instigating and encouraging others to do the same by killing, hurting, torturing, decapitating and mutilating, inflicting pain and suffering onto another; oppressing, harassing, and intimidating others, whether by doing so himself or by influencing others to do so, there would ultimately not be any evil committed.

'And, in just the same way, if one were to go to the northern bank of the River Ganges and instead, start giving gifts or make generous offerings or encourage others to do the same by making offerings as well, again, there would be no such thing as merits being accrued or the semblance of some fruits or outcomes of merit being produced as a consequence to those actions.

'So, whether it is giving generously, maintaining discipline, self-control or any kind of restraint, as well as speaking frankly by using honest and truthful speech, there absolutely is no merit or outcome of merit to look forward to, as some consequence or fruit to be gained by the one committing it.'

“This, therefore, Bhante, was the answer I received from Pūraṇa Kassapa to my question, which was simply asking whether there could be any directly visible fruits that are undeniably gained from recluship, through living and practicing the life of a recluse. And to my dismay, he instead went on to describe his own doctrine and philosophy of inaction, while pointing out the inefficacy and uselessness of action in producing any fruit or consequence.

“Bhante, it was just as if someone was asked a straightforward question, say, about a mango. But instead, the other replied by speaking about breadfruit, leaving out the mango entirely! Or when asked about a breadfruit, the one replying started talking about a mango!

“In just the same way, Bhante, in asking Pūraṇa Kassapa my question about any directly visible fruits or outcomes to living the life of a recluse, he turned and instead started babbling about his idiotic doctrine of fruitlessness and ineffective nature of all actions!

“It was then, Bhante, that I began to reflect by saying to myself:

'How in the world could I argue or make fun of someone claiming to be a recluse, residing here in this land, while being supported and benefitting enormously from living in my kingdom?'

“That was, Bhante, my unpleasant and strange encounter with Pūraṇa Kassapa, whose ideas about reality did not help me with my question, hence I had nothing to say in agreement to what

he proclaimed, nor anything to disagree with, as I realized it was pointless discussing anything further with such a fool. So, I arose from my seat and departed, for there was nothing more for us to discuss.

3.2 MAKKHALIGOSĀLAVĀDA: MAKKHALI GOSĀLA'S PHILOSOPHY

“Then, on another occasion, I went and approached Makkhali Gosāla. And after the friendly exchange of greetings, I sat down and again asked him the very same question, and in the same manner, as I did here: namely, whether it was possible for him to point out or indicate to us the directly visible fruits that are to be undeniably gained from recluseship, by living and practicing the life of a recluse.

“However, when I finished asking my question, Makkhali Gosāla started saying:

‘Great king, there is absolutely no reason or a cause that is responsible for defiling or corrupting the hearts of beings. Hence, beings are corrupted and defiled without there being any cause or reason for it. Similarly, there are no reasons or causes for the purification of beings either, for they are purified and uncorrupted without there being any causes or reasons for it.

‘Furthermore, there is no such thing as self-determined or intentional behavior, nor one that is influenced by another, whether in one’s thinking or behavior. There is no such thing as manly effort, personal fortitude, determination or some type of human willpower, at all.

‘Thus, all living beings are hopelessly existing, without any ability to act, or change their circumstances, lacking in determination, whether self-generated or instigated by others; they are all helpless, powerless, and empty of energy. All that they are and everything that they do is really living according to their predestined path; facing and undergoing whatever their existences present to them, irrespective of them, completely driven by what is already decided and destined; experiencing both pain and pleasure according to the dictates of their rebirths into the six planes of existence.

‘After all, there are one million, four hundred six thousand, and six hundred wombs total, for beings to gain rebirth through. There are five hundred and fifty-three types of kammās, including both full and half-full kammās. There are sixty-two various paths of practice, sixty-two minor eons, and sixty-two categories of beings, with the human being having eight separate stages in one’s life.

‘In addition, there are four thousand and nine hundred Ājivaka ascetics, four thousand nine hundred wandering homeless ascetics and recluses, and four thousand and nine hundred domains where Nāgas reside and call their home; there are two thousand faculties, and three thousand kinds of hells, and thirty-six states of nebulae in the space. Furthermore, there are seven kinds of percipient embryos, and seven non-percipient embryos; seven kinds of plant

growth, seven kinds of devas, seven kinds of human beings, seven kinds of demonic beings, seven great lakes, seven types of wind that move seven hundred streams, seven cliffs and mountaintops, with seven hundred deep valleys, seven kinds of dreams with seven hundred ways of interpreting them; eight million and four hundred thousand great eons. All these are waystations that living beings, whether foolish or wise, all must undergo and experience, prior to putting an end to suffering.

‘So, in the face of all these facts, there is not the option nor the possibility for anyone to declare to oneself:

“With this virtuous behavior or by undertaking this training rule of self-disciplining myself, while practicing with diligence and fervency, I will bring about the fruition of unripen Kammic results, and obliterate the fruits of whatever ripened kamma come to the surface and manifest in my life, or at least make them occur in small doses, by minimizing or reducing their devastating impact!”

‘No! Such a state of affairs is simply an impossibility!

“Therefore, whatever pleasure or pain that one may experience in life, is already decided – nothing more and nothing less. It is destined. Similarly, with the rounds that one has to go through in his rebirths, where there are a certain number cycles of rebirth that one has to make it through, no more and no less; without the possibility of being shortened or extended in any way; no chance of improving one’s state of being, nor in fact, to worsen it either! It’s all decided already.

‘So, it is very much like a ball of string that one tosses. It will come to a full stop once it is no longer rolling and unwinding, as the string reaches its maximum length. In the same way, whether foolish or wise, all living beings must undergo and experience all that is allotted to them, as they wander through samsara, until they finally experience the end of suffering, and not a moment sooner, or later. For, it is all decided and cannot be altered!’

“Here, therefore, Bhante, was the other reply to my question which I received, this time from Makkhali Gosāla, as I inquired whether there could be any directly visible fruits that are undeniably gained from recluseship; by living and practicing the life of a recluse. And to my dismay, he instead went on to describe his own doctrine of purification that supposedly occurs naturally, on its own, as a result of moving through the cycles of rebirth.

“Bhante, it was just as if someone was asked a straightforward question, say, about a mango. But instead, the other replied by speaking about breadfruit, leaving out the mango entirely! Or when asked about a breadfruit, the one replying started talking about a mango!

“In just the same way, Bhante, in asking Makkhali Gosāla my question about any directly visible fruits or outcomes to living the life of a recluse, he turned and instead started babbling about his idiotic doctrine of purification that supposedly occurs naturally, on its own, as a result of moving through the cycles of rebirth!

“It was then, Bhante, that I began to reflect by saying to myself –

‘How in the world could I argue or make fun of someone claiming to be a recluse, residing here in this land, while being supported and benefitting enormously from living in my kingdom?’

“And that, Bhante, was my rather unpleasant and strange encounter with Makkhali Gosāla, whose ideas about reality did not help me at all with my question. Hence, I had nothing to say in agreement to what he proclaimed, nor anything to disagree with, as I realized it was pointless to discuss anything further with such a fool. So, I arose from my seat and departed, for there was nothing more for us to discuss.

3.3 AJITAKESAKAMBALAVĀDA: AJITA KESAKAMBALI’S PHILOSOPHY

“On another occasion, Bhante, I went and approached Ajita Kesakambali. There too, after exchanging friendly greetings with him, I sat down and then asked him the very same question, and in the same manner, as I did here: namely, whether it was possible for him to point out or indicate to us the directly visible fruits that are to be undeniably gained from recluseship, by living and practicing the life of a recluse.

“However, when I finished asking my question, Ajita Kesakambali started saying –

‘Great King, there is absolutely no such thing as an action of giving or making an offering, really; no meaning to the giving of gifts, or in being open-handed with generosity towards others. There are no results and no fruits to be had or gained, as consequence to certain behavior over others, such as in doing good or evil actions. No results, whatsoever. Also, there is no such thing as “this world versus that world beyond,” because there is no afterlife, where one has to face the aftereffects of the actions they committed in the past. There is nothing special about parents either, hence, there really is no mother or father, for in truth, no one really takes birth.

‘Similarly, there are no such people as recluses, religious practitioners, and brahmins in this world either, who truly live the life of a recluse, practicing it thoroughly and thereby gaining the direct and personal understanding with which they can explain and show others also the proper path to live and practice.

‘All you need to know, is that a person is basically made up of the four primaries, and when the time comes and the body has broken down and dies, the fundamental constituent of earth in his body goes back to and merges with the external earth element surrounding his body. Similarly, the fundamental constituent of water in his body goes back to and merges with the external water element surrounding his body. Further, the fundamental constituent of fire in his body goes back to and merges with the external fire element surrounding his body. And lastly, the fundamental constituent of air in his body goes back to and merges with the external air element surrounding his body. Thus, his faculties all get dispersed and join with the surrounding space. Then, four

men come and carry his body to the funeral pyre, leaving behind them the set of continuous footprints that stretch all the way to the cremation ground. Once the bones have turned bleached white in the blazing fires, and then to gray ash, in that pile of dust is where all his actions and offerings to gods will end up and remain, for there is nowhere else for them to go or take one, really.

‘So, this whole thing that people keep talking about, claiming that there is an afterlife, and that one must be careful with one’s life and do what is good, for there are results and fruits to one’s actions, is just a doctrine of idiots, and anyone who repeats it or tries to convince others of it, is passing on the same idiotic views that are just nonsense, and not much else!’

‘That is, because, once the body breaks down and dies, it really does not matter whether one was wise or a block-headed fool, since they will both be annihilated, fully destroyed and obliterated. For, no one ever goes on existing after death, in any form or shape, anywhere at all. That’s because there is absolutely nothing after death!’

“So, there again, Bhante, as you see, was yet another reply I received, this time from Ajita Kesakambali, while trying to find out as to whether there could be any directly visible fruits that are undeniably gained from recluseship; by living and practicing the life of a recluse. And to my dismay, he instead went on to describe his own doctrine of total annihilation that occurs at one’s death.

“Bhante, it was just as if someone was asked a straightforward question, say, about a mango. But instead, the other replied by speaking about breadfruit, leaving out the mango entirely! Or when asked about a breadfruit, the one replying started talking about a mango!

“In just the same way, Bhante, in asking Ajita Kesakambali my question about any directly visible fruits or outcomes to living the life of a recluse, he turned and instead started babbling about his idiotic doctrine of total annihilation that occurs at one’s death!

“It was then, Bhante, that I began to reflect by saying to myself –

‘How in the world could I argue or make fun of someone claiming to be a recluse, residing here in this land, while being supported and benefitting enormously from living in my kingdom?’

“And that, Bhante, was my rather unpleasant and strange encounter with Ajita Kesakambali, whose ideas about reality did not help me at all with my question. Hence, I had nothing to say in agreement to what he proclaimed, nor anything to disagree with, as I realized it was pointless to discuss anything further with such a fool. So, I arose from my seat and departed, for there was nothing more for us to discuss.

3.4 PAKUDHAKACCĀYANAVĀDA: PAKUDHA KACCĀYANA’S PHILOSOPHY

“Still, yet on a different occasion, Bhante, I went and approached Pakudha Kaccāyana, where after exchanging friendly greetings, I then sat down and asked him the very same question, and in the same manner, as I did here: namely, whether it was possible for him to point out or indicate to us the directly visible fruits that are to be undeniably gained from recluseship; through living and practicing the life of a recluse.

“However, when I finished asking my question, Pakudha Kaccāyana began saying –

‘Great King, there are seven bodies that are not produced by anything or anyone. They are not made, they are uncreated, hence not having a creator in the first place to fashion them. They are barren and lifeless; solid as a rocky mountain, standing firm as a steady and tall city pillar.

‘Now, these seven do not change, do not become something else, nor obstruct or get in the way of the others, hence they do not cause each other any pain or pleasure, nor both pain and pleasure together.

‘And what are these seven?

‘These are: the body of earth, the body of water, the body of fire, the body of air; in addition to pleasure, pain, and the soul as the seventh body. Therefore, all these seven do not change, do not become something else, nor obstruct or get in the way of the others, hence they do not cause each other any pain or pleasure, nor both pain and pleasure together.

‘And there, you cannot find anyone who kills or causes others to kill either; no one who learns or studies anything, nor anyone who teaches or instructs; where you cannot find anyone who understands or knows, nor anyone who teaches others to understand or know.

‘Also, if you were to sever or cut off someone’s head with a sharp blade, you still would not be depriving them of their life, for the blade would simply pass through the spaces that exist between these seven bodies.’

“And this, Bhante, was the reply given to me by Pakudha Kaccāyana, in response to my question, as to whether there could be any directly visible fruits that are undeniably gained from recluseship; by living and practicing the life of a recluse. And to my surprise, he spoke about things that had nothing to do with my question, as he kept rambling on and talking incoherently, in a completely disjointed and irrational manner.

“Bhante, it was just as if someone was asked a straightforward question, say, about a mango. But instead, the other replied by speaking about breadfruit, leaving out the mango entirely! Or when asked about a breadfruit, the one replying started talking about a mango!

“In just the same way, Bhante, in asking Pakudha Kaccāyana my question about any directly visible fruits or outcomes to living the life of a recluse, he turned and instead started rambling on and talking incoherently, in a completely disjointed and irrational manner.

“It was then, Bhante, that I began to reflect by saying to myself –

‘How in the world could I argue or make fun of someone claiming to be a recluse, residing here in this land, while being supported and benefitting enormously from living in my kingdom?’

“And that, Bhante, was my rather unpleasant and strange encounter with Pakudha Kaccāyana, whose ideas about reality did not help me at all with my question. Hence, I had nothing to say in agreement to what he proclaimed, nor anything to disagree with, as I realized it was pointless to discuss anything further with such a fool. So, I arose from my seat and departed, for there was nothing more for us to discuss.

3.5 NIGAṆṬHANĀṬAPUTTAVĀDA: THE JAIN LEADER, NIGAṆṬHA NĀṬAPUTTA’S TEACHING

“And then, Bhante, on another occasion, I went and approached Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta of the Jains. Once the friendly greetings were exchanged, then I sat down to one side, and began asking the very same question, and in the same manner, as I did here: namely, whether it was possible for him to point out or indicate to us the directly visible fruits that are to be undeniably gained from recluseship; by living and practicing the life of a recluse.

“However, when I finished asking my question, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta began saying –

‘Great King, here I would like you to consider a naked Jain ascetic, fully constrained in all four ways. And how, Great King, is he fully constrained in all four ways?’

‘Here, a Nigaṇṭha Jain ascetic practices restrictions in regard to water, while becoming endowed with restraining himself from all that is evil, which he thereby avoids completely, by side-stepping all manner of evil altogether, and as a result, he becomes fully cleansed. Hence, Great King, such a Jain ascetic who is fully constrained in all four ways becomes known as the one without any knots.’

‘So, this knotless Nigaṇṭha ascetic is himself self-perfected, through his self-control, fully stable and under control.’

“This was how my encounter unfolded, Bhante, and that was the reply I received from Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta for my original question, as to whether there could be any directly visible fruits that are undeniably gained from recluseship; by living and practicing the life of a recluse. And, there

too, the so-called answer that was provided had absolutely nothing to do with my question, as he kept rambling on and talking about his doctrine of constraining oneself in the four ways.

“Bhante, it was just as if someone was asked a straightforward question, say, about a mango. But instead, the other replied by speaking about breadfruit, leaving out the mango entirely! Or when asked about a breadfruit, the one replying started talking about a mango!

“In just the same way, Bhante, in asking Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta my question about any directly visible fruits or outcomes to living the life of a recluse, he turned and instead started babbling about his idiotic doctrine of constraining oneself in the four ways!

“It was then, Bhante, that I began to reflect, by saying to myself –

‘How in the world could I argue or make fun of someone claiming to be a recluse, residing here in this land, while being supported and benefitting enormously from living in my kingdom?’

“And that, Bhante, was my rather unpleasant and strange encounter with Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, whose ideas about reality did not help me at all with my question. Hence, I had nothing to say in agreement to what he proclaimed, nor anything to disagree with, as I realized it was pointless to discuss anything further with such a fool. So, I arose from my seat and departed, for there was nothing more for us to discuss.

3.6 SAÑCAYABELAṬṬHAPUTTA VĀDA: SAÑJAYA BELAṬṬHAPUTTA’S TEACHING

“Furthermore, Bhante, on yet another time, I went and approached Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta, where, after having exchanged greetings and courtesies with him, I sat down and proceeded to ask him the very same question, and in the same manner, as I did here: namely, whether it was possible for him to point out or indicate to us the directly visible fruits that are to be undeniably gained from recluseship; through living and practicing the life of a recluse.

“However, when I finished asking my question, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta began saying –

‘Great King –

1. *‘If you were to ask me whether there is another world somewhere, I would then say “yes”, and agree with you.*
2. *‘Or whether there isn’t another world somewhere, I would then say “yes”, and agree with you.*
3. *‘Or whether there is or there isn’t another world somewhere, I would then say “yes”, and agree with you.*

4. *'Or whether there neither is nor isn't another world somewhere, I would then say "yes", and agree with you.*
5. *'Or whether there are beings that are spontaneously born, I would then say "yes", and agree with you.*
6. *'Or whether there are no such beings that are spontaneously born, to which again I would say "yes", and agree with you.*
7. *'Or whether there both are and are not beings that are spontaneously born, to which I would again say "yes", and agree with you.*
8. *'Or whether there neither are nor there aren't any beings that are spontaneously born, to which I would again say "yes", and agree with you.*
9. *'And if you ask me whether there are indeed fruits or results, as consequences of good and evil actions, I would agree with you and say "yes."*
10. *'Or whether there are no fruits or results, as consequences of good and evil actions, to which I would again say "yes", and agree with you.*
11. *'Or whether there both are and are not any fruits or results, as consequences of good and evil actions, and there too, I will agree with you and say, "yes."*
12. *'Or whether there neither are nor there aren't any fruits or results, as consequences of good and evil action, to which I will again agree with you and say, "yes" too.*
13. *'And if you ask me as to whether The Tathāgata exists somewhere after His death, then I would agree with you and say, "yes."*
14. *'Or when you ask, whether The Tathāgata does not exist after His death, then I will agree with you and say "yes."*
15. *'Or whether The Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after His death, then I will agree with you.*
16. *'Or when you ask whether The Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after His death, then I will again agree with you and say "yes" to you.*

'However, Great King, in providing to you my answers, you must know that I do not put it like this, nor do I claim it to be that way either, and I definitely do not say that it is a combination of both, or lay it out in a way, where it is none of those things either. However, in putting it thus, it does not mean that I am claiming it to be some other way, or that it could somehow, in fact, neither be this nor that, either!'

“And thus was the so-called reply I received from Sañjaya Belatthaputta, in response to my original question, as to whether there could be any directly visible fruits that are undeniably gained from recluseship; by living and practicing the life of a recluse. And to my surprise, he avoided answering in a clear-cut manner and instead kept ‘flip-flopping’ endlessly about things that had nothing to do with my question, while talking incoherently, and making no sense at all.

“Bhante, it was just as if someone was asked a straightforward question, say, about a mango. But instead, the other replied by speaking about breadfruit, leaving out the mango entirely! Or when asked about a breadfruit, the one replying started talking about a mango!

“In just the same way, Bhante, in asking Sañjaya Belatthaputta my question about any directly visible fruits or outcomes to living the life of a recluse, he kept ‘flip-flopping’ endlessly about

things that had nothing to do with my question, while talking incoherently, and making no sense at all!

“It was then, Bhante, that I began to reflect, by saying to myself –

‘How in the world could I argue or make fun of someone claiming to be a recluse, residing here in this land, while being supported and benefitting enormously from living in my kingdom?’

“And that, Bhante, was my rather unpleasant and strange encounter with Sañjaya Belaṭṭhaputta, whose ideas about reality did not help me at all with my question. Hence, I had nothing to say in agreement to what he proclaimed, nor anything to disagree with, as I realized it was pointless to discuss anything further with such a fool. So, I arose from my seat and departed, for there was nothing more for us to discuss.

4. SĀMAÑÑAPHALA – “THE FRUITS OF RECLUSHESHIP”

4.1 PAṬHAMA SANDITṬHIKA SĀMAÑÑAPHALA:

The First Immediately Visible Fruit of Reclusheship

“So, here again, Bhante, I would like to ask my question, but this time, of The Blessed One Himself.

“Bhante, there are many kinds of professions and crafts, requiring specific skill sets which one must train in, apprentice, and dedicatedly focus on and perfect, until mastery is reached. Skills and such crafts as elephant riders, cavalry, charioteers, archers, standard bearers, camp marshals, supply chain soldiers, dignified royal princes, special forces, shield bearing soldiers, infantry, and slave soldiers.

“Also, professions that require years of practice and expertise, such as bread makers and bakers, chefs and cooks, carpenters and stone-masons, builders and jewelers, carvers, painters, bead and garland makers, fabric dyers, embroiders, basket weavers, potters, accountants and mathematicians, laundrymen, as well as all other crafts, for which a specific set of abilities is required.

“Now, aside from their obvious required skills and specific attributes that one must first possess in order to become a master at them, each of these crafts and professions also brings with it its own set of outcomes, that are its unique and inevitable fruits, whereby one sees here and now, in this very life, the resultant benefits and the very merits of having engaged and practiced these respective professions and their skill-sets.

“Thus, having gained the fruits of their labor that is the outcome of one’s dedicated efforts, individuals engaging in these various crafts and professions come to enjoy a life that is both happy and fulfilling, becoming self-reliant and supremely confident in whatever profession or craft they happen to be a master of, or a skilled apprentice.

“In this way, they are able to support their parents, their wives and children, their friends and relatives, whereby many people, in addition to themselves, reap the positive effects of their efforts and professional prowess. Having thus gained so many advantages in life because of the fruits of their professional skills, these individuals then open-handedly provide generous gifts to all recluses, religious practitioners, and brahmins.

“To this end, they secure for themselves a healthy store of merits that lead to a rebirth into the delightful heavenly realms, where they continue to reap the benefits and fruits of their efforts and actions, this time within the divine spheres of existence.

“Therefore, Bhante, my question deals with the issue of the fruits that are to be gained from living the life of a recluse.

“Thus, compared to the fruit of the labor a householder gains from the trade or profession one engages in, thereby earning one’s own livelihood, what are the fruits of the labor of a recluse who strives in living the Holy Life?

“Bhante, could you please help me understand by clarifying, as to what might be those directly visible fruits and outcomes gained from recluship, those specific advantageous and uniquely beneficial outcomes that are observable, right here and now, in this very life, being the direct results of truly living the life of a recluse?”

And The Blessed One replied, by saying –

“Of course, Great King!

“But first, answer me this, as best as you can.

“What do you think, Great King?

“Let us suppose you have a slave, someone who works for you and is dedicated to rising up before you and retiring for the day long after you; someone who does whatever you want or desire for them to do; always at your beckoned call, seeking ways to bring you pleasure, and always on the lookout to create the occasions for you to be and feel satisfied. Hence, they ceaselessly strive to insure you are pleased by their behavior towards you and for you, always attentive to your every need, while they maintain constant respect and honor in addressing you. Now, such a person might start reflecting one day:

‘It is truly amazing! It is so wonderful and quite astounding, how the good and wholesome actions one commits bring one such incredible and amazing fruits! After all, here we have King Ajātasattu, who, just like me, happens to be a human being, yet behold the glory and majesty that

King Ajātasattu enjoys! He is truly and fully provided with all that his five senses could possibly want or need, to gratify themselves with, as though he were a Deva, in fact!

‘Meanwhile, I happen to be just a slave that he owns, under his employment and service, where I must rise up early every morning, long before he has opened his eyes, and retire by going to sleep after a long day, again, much later than he has already fallen asleep. As his slave and servant, I do whatever he wants or desires for me to do; always at his beckoned call, as I seek ways to bring him pleasure; always on the lookout to create the occasions for him to be and feel satisfied. Hence, I ceaselessly strive to ensure that he is pleased with my behavior towards him and for him; always attentive to his every need, while I maintain constant respect and honor in addressing him, as my lord and king.

‘But I also wish to engage in doing what is wholesome and good, just like he must have done in his past, to deserve all that he now enjoys!

‘So, why don’t I just shave off my head and beard, and by putting on the maroon robes, go forth from home life into homelessness?’

“And, so he does, where after some time has passed, he shaves off his head and beard and putting on the maroon robes, he goes forth from home life into homelessness.

“In this manner, having already gone forth, he spends his days and nights practicing diligently, living while behaving fully restrained in his bodily, verbal, and mental actions; abiding content without asking for much, and satisfied with whatever little food or shelter he receives, but always eager in spending his time practicing in seclusion.

“Now, let us assume that one day, your men approach and report to you how that previous slave servant who was at your service, having now shaved his head and beard and gone forth, lives and practices diligently; behaving fully restrained in his bodily, verbal, and mental actions; abiding content without asking for much, and satisfied with whatever little food or shelter he receives, but always eager in spending his time practicing in seclusion.

“Would you then, Great King, turn to them and say:

‘Go, men, and bring me back that servant! Put him again in the service of the King, by returning him to his previous post of being a slave, my servant, so that he once more rises up before me, and retires and goes to sleep long after me; and does whatever I want or desire for him to do; always at my beckoned call; bringing me pleasure, and always on the lookout to create the occasions for me to be and feel satisfied; hence, he should again ceaselessly strive to insure I am pleased by his behavior towards me and for me; being always attentive to my every need, while maintaining constant respect and honor in addressing me?’

“Absolutely not, Bhante. For how could I?

“In fact, we would do quite the opposite, Blessed Lord! We would surely be the one who pays homage to *him* with our hands in anjalī; rising up from our seat out of respect for him and invite

him to take a higher seat; we would be offering him his requisites of robes to wear, alms food for him to eat; offering him shelter and medicine for his health! Plus, we would be gladly extending to him our royal protection, ensuring his safety in the kingdom, as well as providing acceptable and appropriate royal patronage for his support and security!”

“Now, what do you think, Great King?

“Given what you just considered and stated in such a matter, would you then reckon that this would be a beneficial outcome that is observable right here and now, in this very life, being directly the result of truly living the life of a recluse?”

“That would certainly be a visible fruit, Blessed Lord! A veritable fruit of living the life of a recluse, indeed!

“Herein, Great King, is therefore the first of many fruits which I just declared to you; a true and undeniable benefit and outcome, gained by living the life of a recluse; the first immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable, right here and now.”

4.2 DUTIYA SANDITṬHIKA SĀMAÑÑAPHALA:

The Second Immediately Visible Fruit of Recluseship

“And is it possible to point out for us, Bhante, another directly visible fruit or outcome that may be gained from recluseship; another specific advantageous and uniquely beneficial outcome that is observable right here and now, in this very life, being directly the result of truly living the life of a recluse?”

And The Blessed One replied, by saying –

“It surely is possible, Great King!

“But first, let me ask you this, and you may answer in whatever manner you might like.

“What do you think, Great King?

“Let us suppose you have a farmer, a householder, who works diligently while paying his taxes to the court, and thus keeps supporting the royal treasure. Then, one day, he has this thought occurring to him:

‘It is truly amazing! It’s so wonderful and astounding, how the good and wholesome actions one commits bring one such incredible and amazing fruits! After all, here we have King Ajātasattu, who, just like me, happens to be a human being, yet behold the glory and majesty that King Ajātasattu enjoys! He is truly and fully provided with all that his five senses could possibly want or need, to gratify themselves with, as though he were a Deva, in fact!’

‘Meanwhile, I happen to be just a farmer, a mere householder, who works diligently while paying his taxes to the court, and thus keeps supporting the royal treasure.

‘Well, I too wish to commit actions that are both wholesome and good, just like he has done in his past, to deserve all that he now enjoys!’

‘So, why don’t I just shave off my head and beard, and by putting on the maroon robes, go forth from home life into homelessness?’

“And so, he does, where after some time has passed, he gives up whatever possessions he may have accumulated, whether large or small; walking away from his family and friends, whether they are a small circle or a large one. Thus, he shaves off his head and beard, and by putting on the maroon robes, he goes forth from home life into homelessness.

“In this manner, having already gone forth, he spends his days and nights practicing diligently, living while behaving fully restrained in his bodily, verbal, and mental actions; abiding content without asking for much, and satisfied with whatever little food or shelter he receives, but always eager in spending his time practicing in seclusion.

“Now, let us assume that one day, your men approach and report to you how one of your subjects, a farmer who was a householder, and who used to work diligently and paid his taxes to the court, and thus supported the royal treasure, now has shaved his head and beard and gone forth, and is living and practicing diligently as a recluse; behaving fully restrained in his bodily, verbal, and mental actions; abiding content without asking for much, and satisfied with whatever little food or shelter he receives, but always eager in spending his time practicing in seclusion.

“Now, Great King, would you turn to your men and tell them:

‘Go, men, and bring me back that farmer, that householder who worked diligently while paying his taxes to the court, who thus kept supporting the royal treasure?’

“Absolutely not, Bhante. For how could I?

“In fact, we would do quite the opposite, Blessed Lord! We would surely be the one who pays homage to *him* with our hands in anjalī; rising up from our seat out of respect for him and invite him to take a higher seat; we would be offering him his requisites of robes to wear, alms food for him to eat; offering him shelter and medicine for his health! Plus, we would be gladly extending to him our royal protection, ensuring his safety in the kingdom, as well as providing acceptable and appropriate royal patronage for his support and security!”

“And what would you think about this, Great King?

“Would you then consider this to also be a beneficial outcome that is observable right here and now, in this very life, being directly the result of truly living the life of a recluse?”

“Truly, Bhante! That also would surely be a visible fruit, Blessed Lord! A genuine outcome of living the life of a recluse, indeed!

“Here for you, then, Great King, is the second of many fruits which I just declared to you; a true and undeniable benefit and outcome, gained by living the life of recluse; the second immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.”

4.3 PAṆĪTATARA SĀMAÑÑAPHALA:

Many More Excellent Fruits of Recluseship

“And, is it possible to point out for us, Bhante, a directly visible fruit or outcome that is gained from recluseship that is far more advantageous than the previous two already mentioned, one that is even a more uniquely beneficial outcome that is observable right here and now, in this very life, being directly the result of truly living the life of a recluse?”

And The Blessed One replied, by saying:

“It surely is possible, Great King!

“Now, listen carefully and closely pay attention to what I shall say.”

“Yes, Bhante,” King Ajātasattu replied.

And The Blessed One continued instructing while speaking:

“Here, Great King, a Tathāgata finally appears in the world, The Arahant, The Perfectly Self-Awakened Buddha, endowed with Sublime Knowledge and Supremely Pure Conduct, The Well-Gone, The Knower of Worlds, The Incomparable Tamer of those to be tamed, The Teacher of gods and humans, The Enlightened and Blessed.

“Having already realized Himself with His direct higher understanding of the true nature of existence, just as it really is in this world full of Devas, Māras, Brahmas, along with its recluses, brahmins, and religious practitioners, The Tathāgata then teaches The Dhamma that is beautiful in its beginning, beautiful at its middle, and beautiful in its end, The Dhamma that is full of meaning, balanced in Its expression and phrasing. Thus, He declares and reveals to all beings the completeness and purity of the Holy Life.

“Now, a householder or his son, on hearing and listening to That Dhamma being taught by The Blessed One, or one of His Disciples, gains much faith and trust in It.

“Having become thus deeply inspired by It, and gladdened in his heart by That Dhamma, that householder or his son starts considering:

‘Household life is troublesome and problematic; it is full of impurities, whereas going forth into homelessness is wide open with many possibilities.

‘It is not easy to lead the Holy Life that is complete and pure to its fullness, while living the household life.

‘What if I shave my head and beard, and put on the monastic robes and just go forth?’

“So, in due course, he gives up a small or a large amount of wealth, giving up a small or a large circle of friends and relatives, as he shaves his head and beard, puts on the monastic robes, and goes forth in The Tathāgata’s Dispensation, by leaving behind his household life and thus going into homelessness; that is, with the freedom of his choice, and the very strong faith he feels in his heart for The Dhamma that The Tathāgata teaches.

“Once having gone forth, that householder strives by living ethically, while restrained in accordance to the Discipline Code of the Pātimokkha, conducting himself in right behavior, as he sees danger in the slightest fault.

“Thus, he lives virtuously while adhering to the code of discipline and becomes more and more anchored in living with sense-restraint, virtuously living with mindfulness and full awareness, while feeling a strong presence of contentment in his heart, throughout.

SĪLA – CULTIVATION OF VIRTUOUS BEHAVIOR

1. CŪḶA SĪLA: SHORTER SECTION ON VIRTUOUS BEHAVIOR

“And how, Great King, does such a Bhikkhu grow and become fully developed in virtue?

1.1 “Here, Great King, having already gone forth, he trains himself in the monastic precepts, while abandoning the destruction of living beings, as he gives up the tendency to harm; throwing away his weapons; being caring and considerate; with aroused compassion, he abides with compassion for all living beings.

“This is one aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

1.2 “By giving up taking what is not freely given, he only accepts what is given. By giving up the common and unholy life, he leads a celibate holy life while abstaining from the low practice of sexual intercourse.

“This too, is one aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

1.3 “By giving up telling lies, he speaks only what is truth and becomes trustworthy in the world. By giving up slandering, he does not go and tell over there, what he has heard over here, to create schism between people. Similarly, he does not tell here, what he had heard over there, in

order to create schism between people. Thus, he speaks in order to join the disjointed and the separated, while strengthening the wholesome bonds between people. Fond of unity, he talks words that lead to unity.

“This is yet another aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

1.4 “By giving up rough words, he speaks politely and with a pleasant, sweet voice, with words that go straight to the heart. His words are accepted by all the masses. By giving up frivolous speech and idle chatter, he speaks at the right time. Speaking only what is truth and meaningful, he speaks only The Dhamma and The Discipline, and at the right time, using appropriate words, and succinctly, with such words that are worth being recorded and repeated, due to their beneficial nature.

“This too, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

1.5 “Furthermore, such a Bhikkhu refrains from destroying seeds, fruit trees, and vegetable plants. While refraining from taking food at night-time, he only takes one meal a day. He refrains from dancing, listening to music and musical entertainments. He refrains from decorating himself with flowers, scents, or fragrant ointments. He gives up high and stately beds. He refrains from accepting gold, silver and money. He does not accept raw grains, raw meat, women, girls, slaves – whether men or women, goats and sheep, roosters and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares. He does not accept fields or lands. He abstains from carrying messages between people, from buying and selling, or dealing in matters unfairly, such as measures and weights. He does not take bribes, nor cheats or engages in any insincere act. He does not cut, kill or bind, and he does not collect even a single morsel of food violently, and in voracious, barbaric ways.

“This, Great King, is therefore how a Bhikkhu grows and develops in his virtuous behavior.

2. MAJJHIMA SĪLA: MIDDLE SECTION ON VIRTUOUS BEHAVIOR

2.1 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful that trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, abuse seeds and plant-life, such as those that have been started from roots, by cutting, grafting, budding, from stems and seeds, acting in such a destructive, blind and self-serving manner, the Bhikkhu, however, completely abstains from such a damaging lifestyle.

“This also is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.2 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful that trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, go on greedily hoarding and storing food, when others struggle to survive, yet they keep hoarding and storing up edible food, various types of drinks, robes, vehicles for transport, bedding, oils and fragrant incense, drying and storing up meat, so that they could enjoy consuming them later, in the future; and so while these individuals choose to live in such a greedy, blind and self-serving manner, the Bhikkhu,

however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such a damaging lifestyle entirely.

“This also is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.3 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful that trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, forget their role as religious practitioners who are supposed to be living the Holy Life, and instead spend their time entertaining themselves by watching various kinds of shows, such as dancing, singing, concerts and musical events, choruses and other oral recitations, drumming and playing on cymbals, hand-clapping, moving picture shows, circus performances, elephants performing or fighting, horses performing or fighting, buffaloes, roosters, goats, rams, quails, and also human beings performing or fighting with each other; as well as attending carnivals, wrestling and boxing matches, battle re-enactments, military demonstrations and shows of troops being in action, or doing their drills; and so, while others engage in such activities that are wasteful of precious time, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from them entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.4 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful that trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, forget their role as religious practitioners who are supposed to be living the Holy Life, and instead become heedless while spending their time playing various kinds of games, such as 8- and 10-row chess, checkers, hopscotch, dice games, stick throwing games, drawing pictures through tracing of the palms, doing summersaults, gymnastics, acrobatics, playing with toy pipes, cars, and other vehicles, running and chasing one another, playing with toy ploughs, toy windmills, toy measures, toy chariots, building and playing with toy weapons like bows and arrows, as well as guessing games such as charades, guessing letters written in the air, riddles for amusements, guessing each other’s thoughts, mimicking and pretending to be deformed or handicapped to amuse themselves or others; and so while others engage in such activities that are wasteful of precious time, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from it entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.5 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, abuse that trust as they go and seek a lavish and luxurious lifestyle, such as fancy and opulent furnishings and accommodations for themselves, ornate and expensive chairs, thrones, extravagant seats; over-sized couches, using animal hides as their rugs and throws; covers and drapes with long tassels and laces, multi colored pillows, pillows made of cotton, of fine embroidery, pillows and covers made of wool, coverlets and pillowcases embroidered with precious gems, gold, fine materials, or animal figures; hides from all sorts of animals, such as elephants, lions, tigers, antelope, deer; beds, couches and seats with awnings, or having stuffed quilts, or red fluffy cushions for the head and feet; and so while others engage in such a lavish lifestyle that is so wasteful, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from it entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.6 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, abuse that trust by enjoying, seeking out or demanding that they use fine unguents, fragrances, precious oils and ghee, along with various fine rubbing powders for their body and massaging oils to treat themselves to, as well as perfumed water to bathe in, and different types of cosmetic products to beautify themselves with or look younger, such as by using mirrors, garlands, creams, mascara, bracelets, head-bands and other head gear, turbans, ornamented water containers, swords, fancy sun shades and fans, walking sticks, yak-tail whisks, robes with long fringes and tassels; and so, while others seek to live in such absurd ways, having a lavish lifestyle that is so wasteful, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from it entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.7 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, abuse that trust by engaging in frivolous talk and idle chatter, that is unbefitting to those who say they are living the Holy Life, yet who engage in useless talk and gossip about kings and rulers, ministers of state, their armies and military prowess, the dangers or threats they present, battles and wars, as well as talking about food and drink, clothing, types of furniture, engaging in all types of street talk, or chatting about robbers and thieves; discussing such trivial topics as chariots, vehicles, villages or towns, major cities and their populations, differences among them; talking around the watering hole, about heroes and women, or those who have died, discussing philosophical points about the past or the future that lead nowhere; talking about the ‘creation’ of the world and the oceans, or whether they truly exist or not, in addition to talking about winning and losing; and so while others seek to live in such absurd ways, engaging in useless and frivolous discussions that are so wasteful, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from them entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.8 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless, are adamantly passionate about debating and winning in arguments more than striving to live the Holy Life, as they go on claiming:

‘You definitely do not understand this doctrine and discipline! I, on the other hand, thoroughly understand this doctrine and discipline!’ At best, your understanding of it is quite pathetic, whereas my understanding of it goes deep! Plus, you are practicing it all wrong, unlike me, who knows how to practice! You are not consistent either, whereas I am very consistent! Also, what should have been said first, you spoke at the very last, meanwhile what should have been spoken last, you said first! Anyhow, whatever you thought you were defending or claiming, has been already defeated and debunked! So, might as well just admit you’re done for and vanquished! Go and work on your theories, and perhaps you could salvage some of it! You are caught and have no way out of this argument with me!’

And so, while others waste living the Holy Life by such damaging, absurd, and useless activities, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from them entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.9 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless of their true position as supposed religious practitioners, start engaging in taking messages back and forth; serving as go-betweens between kings and rulers, ministers and other heads of state, warrior princes and other nobles, brahmins, merchants, and other householders and their youths, meanwhile running errands for them and doing their bidding, while being directed thus: ‘*Come here! Go there! Take this there! Bring that over here!*’ etc.; and so, while others waste living the Holy Life in such foolish and damaging ways, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from them entirely.

“This also, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

2.10 “Now, Great King, while other recluses and brahmins, who live through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, being inconsiderate and careless of their true position as supposed religious practitioners, keep up pretenses as they deceitfully take advantage of their position, by flattering others, and those from whom they anticipate some benefit or gain; insinuating and hinting at things to gain some benefit while trying to hide their evil tracks; pressuring supporters against their will to do things for them, thereby abusing their role as well as the trust such supporters or students have towards them; pushing others whether through force, intimidation and especially coercion, to make offerings, following the strategy of ‘*you scratch my back, and I will scratch yours*’, in addition to lying about their practice and spiritual attainments; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life through deception and false pretense in order to gain some benefit or influence over others, the Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from them entirely.

“This also, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3. MAHĀ SĪLA: GREATER SECTION ON VIRTUOUS BEHAVIOR

3.1 “There are recluses and brahmins, who live but while being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites, which they receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them. Thus, instead of striving to live and practice The Holy Life, they seek out ways to enhance their livelihood, by engaging in wrong means. This they do, by making predictions, divinations and engaging in all forms of fortune telling, psychic readings, casting spells; reciting, giving or providing special protective charms, amulets, and the like; and thus they engage in reading signs and omens, reading tea leaves, marks or lines on limbs as in palmistry and other bodily features; interpreting cosmic events, constellations, movements of celestial objects; interpreting dreams; reading and interpreting various scratch marks on pieces of bones; offering fire or water blessings, oblations with a ladle, whisks, with ivory or horns, or oblations and blessings through rice grains, ghee, and various types of oils;

furthermore, they engage in making sacrifices by chanting mantras, doing blood sacrifices, making predictions about the person by looking at the shape of their fingertips; causing scars, whether to oneself or onto others by means of breaking or burning the skin, as well as applying tattoos as some kind of protection against harm; engaging in geomancy, so as to determine the best location and position for a new structure, such as a garden or building; foretelling as to who will be the next ruler or important political figure; comforting or pushing away demons, doing exorcism; snake charming, treating poisons from various animals, insects, and rodents; interpreting the footprints of scorpions, snakes, and other animals; making predictions by interpreting the calls of animals, bird sounds, and forecasting the date of a person's death; making charms or reciting them to ward off and protect against arrows and other projectiles; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This also, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3.2 “There are recluses and brahmins, who live but while being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites, which they receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them. Thus, they seek out more ways to obtain their livelihood and through wrong means, such as by making predictions and forecasting various things, as in identifying the power of gems and crystals, in terms of which among them brings more good luck or fortune; similarly, helping in the selection of garments, staffs, swords and other weapons; helping in the selection of the best among the women one is to marry, as well as getting involved with the selection of boys and girls, male and female slaves for one's retinue or household; helping choose the best animals for someone, as in selecting the best elephants, horses, buffaloes, cows, oxen, goats, rams, deer, chickens, quail, rabbits, tortoises, and other animals; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This too, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3.3 “There are recluses and brahmins, who live but while being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites, which they receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them. Thus, they greedily seek out ways to obtain their livelihood and through wrong means, such as by making predictions and foretelling future events, as in who the next ruler of the domain would be to lead the people, while predicting their future actions and strategies; how those in power will behave or which direction they would take in the event of wars, or how they would be attacking, advancing or retreating and in which direction; how the attacking rulers would triumph or how they would be defeated, etc.; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This also, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3.4 “There are recluses and brahmins, who live but while being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites, which they receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them. Thus, instead of striving to live and practice The Holy Life, they go and seek out ways to obtain their livelihood through the wrong means, such as by prognosticating and forecasting various natural or weather events, as in when the next solar or lunar eclipse is going to take place, or other transitions having to do with the sun or the moon, or both combined; making predictions about celestial phenomena and what those things mean; also, explaining when the next meteor showers will take place; or the darkening of the sky; when or why some clouds or thunderstorms would be happening or not; when or why earthquakes would be taking place; forecasting the position of the sun or the moon; their shape, color or impact on other phenomena, etc.; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This also, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3.5 “There are recluses and brahmins, who live but while being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites, which they receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them. And thus, instead of striving to live and practice The Holy Life, they seek out ways to increase the support they already receive, by engaging in wrong livelihood, such as by foretelling and making predictions, as in forecasting when the next abundant rainfall would take place, or whether there will be a drought; predicting whether there will be famine or drought; whether wars or dangers are on their way to be faced by the public; whether there will be disease and hardship; also, engaging in accounting work or measuring and calculating things; or composing chants or poetry, as a way of making a living or gaining profits; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This also, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3.6 “There are recluses and brahmins, who live but while being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites, which they already receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them. And so, they seek out ways to increase the provision they might further get, thus, they go on engaging in wrong livelihood. This they do by forecasting the various major events in people’s lives, as in calculating what date, time, or place would be most auspicious for significant activities for individuals and their families, such as designating the best time for wedding or marriage ceremonies, or divorces, or for purchasing property, or for borrowing money or investing in financial endeavors; similarly, making charms or protective amulets or writing, engraving, tattooing special spells to make one attractive or desirable, or immune to dangers, as well as prosperous and successful; or helping couples be parents by helping the woman get pregnant, or protecting pregnant women from having miscarriages, or inducing abortion; chanting or reciting or writing spells on individuals’ body parts to bring about a certain desirable effect, as in cases of paralysis, blindness, stuttering or inability to speak, or making the person lose control over their limbs, making them incapacitated,

or one to go blind, mute, or deaf; also, playing the role of an oracle, providing answers to questions while looking into a body of water, a mirror, a young boy's or girl's finger nails or inducing the children to become mediums to give him the answers he seeks; becoming a medium himself by going into a trance, invoking spirits; or worshipping some Deva or Mahā Brahmā to get good fortune for himself or others; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This too, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

3.7 “There are recluses and brahmins, being inconsiderate and careless of their role and significance, given the support of food and requisites they already receive through the generosity of the faithful who trust in them, still go on seeking ways to increase their resources by engaging in wrong livelihood. Thus, they dabble in low and vile practices such as concocting various protective chants or substances, writings, potions, etc., to induce certain desired outcomes, whether to promote healing for someone or to harm them, or even to kill them; they engage in showing people how to bless or protect a house from unwanted energies; how to overcome impotence or enhance virility; engaging in the consecration of sites prior to construction; showing people how to conduct ceremonial bathing, or how to ritualistically wash the mouth; conducting fire rituals; engaging in the preparation of medicinal potions, as in diuretics, laxatives, purgatives, etc., or preparing eye or ear drops, or various treatments with oils to be taken internally through the mouth, the eyes, ears, or nose, or applied topically, or the application of balms and other mixtures, topically or by rubbing them onto the joints, limbs, or the skin; and so while others seek to live the Holy Life by wasting it as they engage in wrong livelihood and such useless ways, the genuine and practicing Bhikkhu, however, utterly and completely refuses to do so, abstaining from such inferior and debased practices entirely.

“This too, Great King, is an aspect of his growth and development in virtue.

“So, you see, Great King, when the Bhikkhu is well-developed and matured in his virtue, by living with responsibility as per the wholesome principles of The Dhamma Itself, then no danger could befall him, because he has protected himself from all sides with his restraint, through intentionally living a virtuous life.

“In this manner, just like a head-anointed Khattiya warrior king who, having defeated all his enemies from all sides of his kingdom, fears no enemies, nor finds any danger to be threatening him from any of the regions within his dominion, similarly, Great King, when the Bhikkhu is well-developed and matured in his virtue, by living with responsibility as per the wholesome principles of The Dhamma Itself, then no danger could befall him, because he has protected himself from all sides, with his restraint through intentionally living a virtuous life.

“Now, because of possessing this full range of living with purity, being thus endowed with this virtuous behavior of the Noble Ones, such a genuine and practicing Bhikkhu lives happily, experiencing within him the unmistakable sense of blameless joy.

“Thus, Great King, such a Bhikkhu is declared to be well-developed and matured in his virtue, for living with responsibility as per the wholesome principles of The Dhamma Itself.

SAMĀDHI – MENTAL CULTIVATION (BHĀVANĀ)

1. INDRIYA SAMVARA: RESTRAINT OF THE SENSE DOORS

“And how, Great King, does such a Bhikkhu grow and become fully developed through his mental cultivation, by sense restraint?

“Here, Great King, on seeing a form with the eye, such a Bhikkhu does not allow himself to be taken by or absorbed into its features and details. For, he knows quite well that if he were to abide with an otherwise uncontrolled eye faculty, unwholesome states would start to leak in, whereby he might very well fall victim to longing, covetousness, and dejection that would dominate his thoughts. Thus, he guards and practices restraint of the eye faculty.

“Similarly, on hearing a sound with the ear, the Bhikkhu does not allow himself to be taken by or absorbed into its features and details. For, he knows quite well that if he were to abide with an otherwise uncontrolled ear faculty, unwholesome states would start to leak in, whereby he might very well fall victim to longing, covetousness, and dejection that would dominate his thoughts. Thus, he guards and practices restraint of the ear faculty.

“Similarly, on smelling an odor with the nose, the Bhikkhu does not allow himself to be taken by or absorbed into its features and details. For, he knows quite well that if he were to abide with an otherwise uncontrolled nose faculty, unwholesome states would start to leak in, whereby he might very well fall victim to longing, covetousness, and dejection that would dominate his thoughts. Thus, he guards and practices restraint of the nose faculty.

“Similarly, on tasting a flavor with the tongue, the Bhikkhu does not allow himself to be taken by or absorbed into its features and details. For, he knows quite well that if he were to abide with an otherwise uncontrolled tongue faculty, unwholesome states would start to leak in, whereby he might very well fall victim to longing, covetousness, and dejection that would dominate his thoughts. Thus, he guards and practices restraint of the tongue faculty.

“Similarly, on touching a tactile object with the body, the Bhikkhu does not allow himself to be taken by or absorbed into its features and details. For, he knows quite well that if he were to abide with an otherwise uncontrolled body faculty, unwholesome states would start to leak in, whereby he might very well fall victim to longing, covetousness, and dejection that would dominate his thoughts. Thus, he guards and practices restraint of the body faculty.

“Similarly, on knowing a thought with the mind, the Bhikkhu does not allow himself to be taken by or absorbed into its features and details. For, he knows quite well that if he were to abide with an otherwise uncontrolled mind faculty, unwholesome states would start to leak in, whereby he

might very well fall victim to longing, covetousness, and dejection that would dominate his thoughts. Thus, he guards and practices restraint of the mind faculty.

“By possessing complete restraint over his mental faculties, such a Bhikkhu is not perturbed when touched by a displeasing negative experience.

“Therefore, being thus endowed with this level of restraint over his sense doors, he lives happily, experiencing within him the unmistakable sense of blameless joy.

2. SATI SAMPAJAÑÑĀ: MAINTAINING MINDFULNESS & FULL AWARENESS

“And how, Great King, does the Bhikkhu live by maintaining mindfulness and full awareness?

“Whether approaching or going away, in looking forward, backward, and about, he remains mindful, clearly comprehending the experience of it, with full awareness. Also, when bending and stretching his limbs, or in wearing his outer robes or taking the bowl with him, he remains mindful, clearly comprehending the experience of it, with full awareness. When eating his meal, drinking, and tasting, he remains mindful, moving and behaving with full awareness, clearly comprehending the whole experience. Similarly, when urinating and defecating, he remains mindful, moving and behaving with full awareness, clearly comprehending the entire experience, whether he is walking, standing, sitting, or lying down to rest, or while waking up, speaking, or being silent.

“This, Great King, is how such a Bhikkhu lives by maintaining mindfulness and full awareness.

3. SANTOSA: ESTABLISHING CONTENTMENT

“And how, Great King, does such a Bhikkhu live with contentment wherever and whatever situation he may find himself in?

“Here, Great King, wherever he may be, living fully contented and satisfied with the robes for his body and the morsels of food he obtains for his stomach, the Bhikkhu goes with all that he has. Thus, much like a bird that flies freely with only the feathers on its back, in the same way, contented and satisfied with the robes for the body and morsels of food for the stomach, wherever he goes, the Bhikkhu goes with all his things.

“In this manner, Great King, such a Bhikkhu lives with contentment wherever he goes and whatever situation he may find himself in.

4. NĪVARAṆA PAHĀNA: WORKING WITH & ABANDONING THE HINDRANCES

“Now, being endowed with this virtuous behavior of the Noble Ones through complete restraint over his mental faculties, along with mindfulness and clear comprehension, with full awareness, that are distinctive of the Noble Ones, the Bhikkhu looks for and then abides in a secluded dwelling: a forest, the root of a tree, a mountain grotto, a cemetery, a jungle, an open space or a heap of straw.

“Then, having found himself a quiet area to practice in the forest, or by the visible roots of trees, or in an empty room, by folding his legs in a comfortable position and keeping the body straight, he establishes mindfulness in front of him.

“Thus, the Bhikkhu trains and lives by actively dropping passion, lust, and greed from his heart, as he purifies it from the stains of coveting. He trains and lives by actively dropping anger from his heart, as he purifies it from the stains of hatred. He trains and lives by actively dropping delusion from his heart, as he purifies it from the stains of delusion.

“He develops compassion towards all living beings, as he purifies his heart from any hatred or ill-will. With mindfulness and clearly comprehending his experience, he actively pushes through both drowsiness and procrastination, as he abides with the perception of light, cleansing his mind from drowsiness and procrastination. He thus calmly stabilizes the agitated mind, while carefully moving beyond both restlessness and worry, as he abides with a heart that is now internally appeased and contented. Finally, by actively removing skeptical doubt, he lives while putting an end to all doubts and perplexity he once had about the wholesome behaviors that should be developed and the unwholesome behaviors that should be abandoned.

5. SIMILES FOR THE OBSTACLES/HINDRANCES

1. “Now, Great King, imagine there was a man who goes and takes out a loan, borrowing money with the intention to invest in his business. As a result, his business does become successful and he prospers and earns much more than he did before, whereby he pays off all his debts. With his financial status now stable and lucrative, he is able to have a wife and start a family.

“Then, this man begins reflecting:

‘Previously, I was miserable and worried ceaselessly about my financial status. But then, I went and took out a loan by borrowing money which I invested into my business. Now, seeing that I have prospered and gained so much wealth from this venture, I have already repaid all my debts and gave back whatever money I borrowed from others, to the point that I can finally get married, now that I have enough funds to maintain a wife and have a family of my own!’

“As result of this, the man becomes quite happy and relieved, experiencing much joy.

2. “Furthermore, Great King, let us suppose that this man becomes sick and has to face much physical pain, and he can no longer function as before, due to his illness. Then, as time passes, he gets better and fully recovers from his ailments, whereby he regains all his physical energy and is able to use his healthy body, yet again.

“Then, this man begins reflecting:

‘Previously, I fell terribly sick and had to face much physical pain, where I could no longer function as I used to. But now I have fully recovered, and I can enjoy eating my meals yet again, having regained all my strength!’

“As a result of this, the man becomes quite happy and relieved, experiencing much joy.

3. “Furthermore, Great King, let us suppose that this man was taken to prison, where he is kept bound up and in shackles. However, after some time, he is released, whereby he regains his freedom, yet again, feeling safe and no longer in fear or captivity.

“Then, this man begins reflecting:

‘Previously, I was taken to prison, where I was kept bound up and in shackles. But now, I have regained my freedom, and I feel safe again, no longer in fear or captivity!’

“As a result of this, the man becomes quite happy and relieved, experiencing much joy.

4. “Furthermore, Great King, let us suppose that this man was taken as a slave; no longer a free man, instead he lives being seen as nothing more than another’s property, completely subject to their will. But, after some time, he is released from slavery, whereby he gains back his cherished freedom and is no longer a slave, nor living or being seen as someone else’s property; no longer subject to another’s will.

“Then, this man begins reflecting:

‘Previously, I was taken as a slave, where I no longer was a free man, but instead, I lived while being seen as nothing more than another’s property, completely subject to their will. But now, I have gained back my freedom, and no longer am a slave, nor am I being seen as someone else’s property, no longer subject to others’ will!’

“As result of this, the man becomes quite happy and relieved, experiencing much joy.

5. “Also, Great King, let us suppose that a merchant was traveling on a journey in a caravan, carrying with him large amounts of gold coins and various other valuable goods, while having to cross a wide and desolate stretch of wilderness for some extended period of time. Then, once having crossed through it, as he emerges out from that wide and desolate stretch of wilderness area, he is finally relieved and relaxed, whereby his worries leave him, seeing that he has returned back to civilization, where he feels the comfort of safety, without having lost his wealth or his valuable goods.

“Then, this merchant begins reflecting:

‘Earlier, while I was crossing that wide and desolate stretch of wilderness area with all my wealth and various other valuable goods, I was worried and in fear of danger. But now, having already crossed it, I have emerged from the wilderness! I’m finally relieved and relaxed, because I no longer have any worries, seeing that I’ve returned back to civilization, hence I feel safe again, not having lost my wealth or my valuable goods!’

“As result of this, the man becomes quite happy and relieved, experiencing much joy.

“Now, in the same manner, Great King, so long as these five obstacles are still not abandoned and relinquished in him, that Bhikkhu will continue to look upon them as being no less than a debt or loan that he has to pay; a terrible sickness he must overcome; a prison sentence he has to struggle through; a slavery he must endure and break free from; and an arduously dangerous journey through a desolate stretch of wilderness that he must cross and push himself through!

“And when he does indeed let go and abandon these five obstacles or hindrances to his mental cultivation, then he regards them as successfully paying back a heavy loan; gaining of one’s health; release from prison; attaining freedom from slavery; and finally tasting the safety of refuge.

“Then, on witnessing how those five hindrances have been abandoned within him, a soothing sense of restful gladness arises and spreads in his heart. When he is thus restfully glad and relaxed in peaceful delight, spiritual joy manifests. When his mind is flooding with spiritual joy, his body then becomes truly relaxed and tranquil; whereby it vibrates subtly with joy itself, experiencing happiness and delight everywhere. And with the Citta feeling such comfort, the mind becomes composed and under control, as it drops into deep stability that is *samādhī*.

6. JHĀNĀ: THE JHĀNAS

Paṭhama Jhāna: The First Jhāna

“Here, Great King, while living secluded and removed from sensual desires and unwholesome thoughts, the Bhikkhu enters upon and remains in the first *jhāna*, which is accompanied by thinking and pondering, along with joy and pleasure that arise from such seclusion.

“Further, whatever lingering sensual desires he may have had or perceived in the past, at this point, however, they simply drop away and cease, with only joy and that state of refined happiness remaining in him. Thus, he becomes fully percipient of the factual and unmistakable spiritual joy, as well as the refined pleasure and happiness, which come forth from secluding and training himself in this manner.

“So, Great King,” continued explaining The Blessed One, “here you have another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; one that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.”

Dutiya Jhāna: The Second Jhāna

“Next, Great King, through the disappearance of both thinking and pondering, he enters upon and remains in the second *jhāna*, which has self-confidence and singleness of mind that take place in the absence of thinking and pondering, with joy and pleasure that are the result of his deepening *samādhi*, his collectedness of mind.

“Now, his earlier perception of spiritual joy and the refined state of pleasure that arose from seclusion ends and ceases, at which point, however, he becomes percipient of an even finer and subtler level of joy and pleasure, that is now the result of his deepening *samādhi*. Thus, he becomes fully percipient of an even finer state of unmistakable spiritual joy, with pleasure and happiness, but which come forth from his collectedness of mind, as he continues to train himself in this manner.

“Here again, Great King, you have another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; one that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.”

Tatiya Jhāna: The Third Jhāna

“Next, Great King, with the detachment from and the fading away of joy itself, the Bhikkhu remains in the comfort of equanimity, while being mindful and fully aware, with pristine clarity, experiencing pleasure and happiness within the body, as he enters upon and remains in the third *jhāna*, about which the Noble Ones declare:

*‘It is such a one indeed, who is serenely mindful,
Abiding in happiness, with an ever-present sense of equanimity.’*

“Now, here too, Great King, his perception of the refined spiritual joy and state of pleasure that arose from his deepening *samādhi* also ends and ceases, but now he becomes percipient of the unmistakable state of equanimity. Thus, he becomes fully percipient of the unmistakably present state of equanimity, as he continues to train himself in this manner.

“Here again, Great King, you have another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the earliest outcomes mentioned; one that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.”

Catuttha Jhāna: The Fourth Jhāna

“Afterwards, by giving up both pleasure and pain, and having already gone beyond joy and anguish, he remains in the continuous state of purifying mindfulness, with an ever-present sense of equanimity, as he enters upon and abides in the fourth *jhāna*, while experiencing neither pleasure nor pain, having now gone beyond both of them.

“Here too, Great King, his earlier perception of equanimity in its preliminary stage and grosser aspect also ceases, while, at the same time, he becomes percipient of an even more stable and balanced state of equanimity, a state where he is no longer touched by either pleasure or pain. Thus, he becomes fully percipient of the undeniable and directly experienced state of deeply balanced equanimity, as he continues to train himself in this manner.

“Here again, Great King, you have another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; one that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.”

7. AṬṬHAÑĀṆA: THE EIGHT SPLENDID KNOWLEDGES

a. Vipassanā Ñāṇa: Knowledge with Penetrative Insight

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections; flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then directs it towards the attainment and experiencing of knowledge and vision.

“Then, he is able to personally know, through direct understanding, how –

‘This body of mine is made up of material form, put together by the four primary elements, that found their material origin thanks to a father and a mother, and are sustained by rice and porridge.

‘And, because it is impermanent by nature, this body of mine is and will always be susceptible to being scraped, scratched, broken; subject to pressure, heat and cold, to rubbing and touching, and ultimately, to being destroyed and dispersed.

‘Moreover, this is the consciousness that is supporting it, whereby the body still exists, right here and now, and to which it is tied and bound.’

“Imagine, Great King, there was a most brilliant emerald; one that is of a superbly flawless quality, naturally beautiful, faceted on all eight sides, finely polished to perfection; unblemished, translucent, and possessing all the excellent qualities of a precious gem.

“Now, imagine how the radiance and liveliness of its natural colors become accentuated the moment someone strings it through a fine thread that is blue in color, or yellow, or red, white, or cinnamon. Then, a man with very good eyesight, would take it in his hand, and after carefully examining, would comment by saying:

‘Ah, this happens to be a most brilliant emerald; one that is of a superbly flawless quality, naturally beautiful, faceted on all eight sides, finely polished to perfection; unblemished, translucent, and possessing all the excellent qualities of a precious gem, which has a blue, yellow, red, white, or cinnamon color string running through it.’

“Now, Great King, in just the same way, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, and having reached the state of imperturbability, he then directs it towards the attainment and experiencing of knowledge and vision.

“In this manner, he is then able to personally know, through direct understanding, how –

‘This body of mine is made up of material form, put together by the four primary elements, that found their material origin thanks to a father and a mother, and are sustained by rice and porridge.

‘And, because it is impermanent by nature, this body of mine is and will always be susceptible to being scraped, scratched, broken; subject to pressure, heat and cold; to rubbing and touching, and ultimately, to being destroyed and dispersed.

‘Moreover, this is the consciousness that is supporting it, whereby the body still exists, right here and now, and to which it is tied and bound.’

“Here again, Great King, you see another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the earlier outcomes mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.

b. Manomayiddhi Ñāṇa: Creating the Mind-Made Body

“Furthermore, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind is thus collected in the stability of *samādhī*, he then reflects with his heart, which is purified, without any blemishes, remaining malleable and in an imperturbable state, while aiming it with focus at the creation of a mind-made body. Thus, as though pulling out from his heart, he extrudes and brings forth a fully-fashioned copy of his own body.

“Thus, out of the body he inhabits, he creates another one, a mentally fashioned one, that is fully mind-made, yet a body that is complete, with all its limbs intact and fully functioning mental and emotional faculties.

“Imagine, Great King, how a man, on pulling out a reed from its very sheath, begins reflecting –

‘This is the reed itself, and that is the sheath from where I pulled it. I know and see how they are not one and the same thing; after all, the reed is that which was extruded and pulled out from within the sheath itself.’

“Or imagine another person, Great King, who on drawing out his sword from its scabbard, begins to reflect –

‘This is the sword itself, and that is the scabbard from where I drew it out. I know and see how they are not one and the same thing; after all, the sword is that which was extruded and pulled out from within the scabbard itself.’

“Or imagine someone else, Great King, who grabs a snake and pulls it out of its old skin. Then he begins reflecting –

‘This is the snake itself, and that is the old skin from which I pulled out the snake. I know and see how they are not one and the same thing; after all, the snake is that which was extruded and pulled out from within its old skin.’

“So, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind is thus collected in the stability of *samādhi*, he then reflects with his heart which is purified, without any blemishes, remaining malleable and in an imperturbable state, while aiming it with focus at the creation of a mind-made body. Thus, as though pulling out from his heart, he extrudes and brings forth a fully-fashioned copy of his own body.

“Hence, out of the body he inhabits, he creates another one, a mentally fashioned one, that is fully mind-made, yet a body that is complete, with all its limbs intact and fully functioning mental and emotional faculties.

“Here again, Great King, you see another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the earlier outcomes mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.

c. Iddhividha Ñāṇa: Ability to Wield the Various Psychic Powers

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, while aiming it with focus and activating his psychic powers, he wields a plethora of psychic abilities, that include –

“While being one, he becomes many, and then reverts back to being one again; he moves without any obstructions through rocks and walls and other fortifications as if walking through space; he dives into the earth and comes out of it as though it were water; he walks on water without

disturbing it, walking on it as if it were solid ground; he sits comfortably and flies through the air like birds of all sizes do, without any difficulty; he reaches and touches the moon and the sun, despite their mighty size and magnitude. Thus, with the psychic powers he wields, he is able to carry his body even as far as the Brahma realms, without any difficulty.

“Great King, imagine an experienced potter or his top apprentice, who takes a lump of fine quality and malleable clay, and then starts molding it into whatever kind of pottery or shape he would want.

“Or, Great King, imagine someone talented at carving ivory pieces, or his number one apprentice, who takes any kind of ivory and then begins shaping and carving it into whatever design he wants.

“Or, Great King, imagine an expert goldsmith or his experienced apprentice, who takes a piece of gold and then fashions it into any kind of shape or design he may desire to.

“Now, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then directs it towards activating his psychic powers as he wields a plethora of psychic abilities, that include:

“While being one, he becomes many, and then reverts back to being one again; he moves without any obstructions through rocks and walls and other fortifications as if walking through space; he dives into the earth and comes out of it as though it were water; he walks on water without disturbing it, as if it were solid ground; he sits comfortably and flies through the air like birds of all sizes do, without any difficulty; he reaches and touches the moon and the sun, despite their mighty size and magnitude. Thus, with the psychic powers he wields, he is able to carry his body even as far as the Brahma realms, without any difficulty.

“This also, Great King, is another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluship that is observable right here and now.

d. Dibbasota Ñāṇa: Knowledge of Various Psychic Powers

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, while aiming it with focus, he activates his Divine-Ear Element.

“To this end, while possessing the Divine Ear, far surpassing that of the human in its strength and purity, he starts hearing the sounds of both heavenly and human beings, whether far or near.

“Great King, imagine a man traveling on the main road, while witnessing the world around himself, who begins to hear the sounds of various drums, whether big or small, such as dhols, tablas, conches, udukkus, damarus, khols, nakkaras, or cymbals. He would then discern clearly and identify these various drums from the distinct sound each of them makes.

“Now, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he is able to aim it with focus, and thus activate his Divine-Ear Element.

“To this end, while possessing the Divine Ear, far surpassing that of the human in its strength and purity, he starts hearing the sounds of both heavenly and human beings, whether far or near.

“This also, Great King, is yet another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluship that is observable right here and now.

e. Cetopariya Ñāṇa: Knowledge of The Hearts and Minds of Others

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then aims it towards knowing the hearts and minds of other beings.

“To this end, he directly comes to know a heart that is full of lust as it truly is; clearly seeing it drenched in lust. Similarly, he directly comes to know a heart that is full of hatred as it truly is; clearly seeing it as it truly is, drenched in hatred. Similarly, he directly comes to know a heart that is full of delusion as it truly is; clearly seeing it as it truly is, drenched in delusion.

Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is collapsing, or one that is sluggish, drowsy, and caving in, or driven to procrastination, as well as clearly seeing if the heart is distracted and pulled this way and that, being scattered and unstable, in the presence of restlessness or worry. Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is in an exalted or lofty state as a result of meditative practice, and a heart that is still not yet developed to experience such sublime and lofty states.

Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is in a mundane and surpassable state, clearly distinguishing it from a heart that is, in fact, unsurpassable. Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is in a concentrated and stable state, clearly distinguishing it from a heart that is, in fact, unconcentrated and unstable. And he directly comes to know a heart that is liberated and indeed released, while clearly distinguishing it from a heart that is unliberated and still unreleased.

“Great King, imagine a young man or a woman who places a lot of focus on being and looking attractive, who while putting on ornaments and jewelry, carefully examines their reflection through a flawless mirror or a bowl of clear water.

“Now, in the presence of a blemish on his or her face, such a person would immediately notice it, and see that there is the undeniable fact of a blemish on his or her face. And when seeing that there are no blemishes, that individual would again clearly discern that there is, in fact, no blemish to be found at all.

“Now, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then aims it towards knowing the hearts and minds of other beings.

“Thus, he directly comes to know a heart that is full of lust as it truly is; clearly seeing it drenched in lust. Similarly, he directly comes to know a heart that is full of hatred as it truly is; clearly seeing it as it truly is, drenched in hatred. Similarly, he directly comes to know a heart that is full of delusion as it truly is; clearly seeing it as it truly is, drenched in delusion.

Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is collapsing, or one that is sluggish, drowsy, and caving in, or driven to procrastination, as well as clearly seeing if the heart is distracted and pulled this way and that, being scattered and unstable, in the presence of restlessness or worry. Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is in an exalted or lofty state as a result of meditative practice, and a heart that is still not yet developed to experience such sublime and lofty states.

Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is in a mundane and surpassable state, clearly distinguishing it from a heart that is, in fact, unsurpassable. Also, he directly comes to know a heart that is in a concentrated and stable state, clearly distinguishing it from a heart that is, in fact, unconcentrated and unstable. And he directly comes to know a heart that is liberated and indeed released, while clearly distinguishing it from a heart that is unliberated and still unreleased.

“This also, Great King, is yet another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.

f. Pubbenivāsābussati Ñāṇa: Knowledge of The Recollection of Past Lives

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then aims it towards recollecting and knowing the past lives and existences of himself and other beings.

“Thus, he recollects the manifold past lives he has lived in all their details and features, that is, one birth, two births, three births, four births, five births, ten births, twenty births, thirty, forty,

fifty births, a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births, many eons of world expansions, many eons of world contractions, many eons of world expansions and contractions, recalling them all in this manner:

‘There I was so named, of such a family, with such an appearance; such was my food and sustenance, such were my experiences of pleasure and pain, such was my life-span; and after passing away from there, I was reborn elsewhere; and there too I was so named, of such a family, with such an appearance; such was my food and sustenance, such were my experiences of pleasure and pain, and such was my life-span; and passing away from there, I was reborn here.’

“In this manner, Great King, the Bhikkhu recalls his numerous previous lives and existences, in addition to their specific details and features.

“Great King, imagine there was someone who decides to travel from his own village and goes to another one, and later, after departing from that village too, he travels to yet another village, and once he finishes his touring, he finally returns to his native village.

“Now, Great King, this man would start reflecting:

‘Earlier, I was in my own village, but then I left as I traveled to the other village. While I was over there, I was standing there, then sat like that in such and such a place, talked and conversed with others in this way, while keeping quiet elsewhere, in that way. Later, when I left that village, I went to the other one, where I sat on such a seat, stood in such a place, while communicated with those around me in this or that manner, and remained silent on such occasions. It was only after that when I decided to return to my native village.’

“Now, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then directs it towards recollecting and knowing the past lives and existences of himself and other beings.

“Thus, he recollects the manifold past lives he has lived in all their details and features, that is, one birth, two births, three births, four births, five births, ten births, twenty births, thirty, forty, fifty births, a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births, many eons of world expansions, many eons of world contractions, many eons of world expansions and contractions, recalling them all in this manner:

‘There I was so named, of such a family, with such an appearance; such was my food and sustenance, such were my experiences of pleasure and pain, such was my life-span; and after passing away from there, I was reborn elsewhere; and there too I was so named, of such a family, with such an appearance; such was my food and sustenance, such were my experiences of pleasure and pain, and such was my life-span; and passing away from there, I was reborn here.’

“This also, Great King, is yet another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.

g. Dibbacakkhu Ñāṇa: Knowledge of The Passing Away & Reappearance of Beings

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then aims it towards knowing the death and rebirth of beings into the various realms.

“To this end, with the Divine Eye which is pure and far superior compared to those of humans and other beings, he applies the psychic power of knowing the destination of beings, as they die and reappear into the different realms of existence. Thus, he sees clearly all types of beings dying at the end of life, whether being reborn into exalted or miserable states, beautiful or ugly, fortunate, or unfortunate; witnessing this by directly seeing, and therefore, understanding clearly how beings pass on to different states according to their actions, where he knows that:

‘Beings who behaved badly through their bodily actions, their speech, and their mental actions, being disrespectful towards the Noble Ones, while grasping onto their wrong views, and on account of their wrong views in action, with the breakup of the body, after death, they are now reborn in a state of misery, utter deprivation, in a bad destination, in evil states, and in the hells; but these worthy beings who behaved virtuously through their bodily actions, their speech, and their mental actions, being respectful towards the Noble Ones, being right in their views, and on account of their right views in action, with the breakup of the body, after death, they are now reborn in a state of happiness, in a good destination, even in the heavenly world.’

“Thus, with the Divine Eye which is far superior to those of human beings and other animals, the Bhikkhu clearly sees beings dying at the end of their life and how they are reborn into either exalted or miserable states, beautiful or ugly, fortunate or unfortunate, witnessing this by directly seeing, and therefore, understanding clearly how beings pass on to different states according to their actions.

“Great King, imagine that right where there is a major crossroad of four paths meeting, there was a mansion built in the central square. Then someone with excellent eyesight climbs up to the highest level of that mansion and begins looking at the people moving about in this and that direction, all in full view to his clear and unobstructed vision.

“Now, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then directs it towards knowing the death and rebirth of beings into the various realms.

“To this end, with the Divine Eye which is pure and far superior compared to those of humans and other beings, he applies the psychic power of knowing the destination of beings, as they die and reappear into the different realms of existence. Thus, he sees clearly all types of beings dying at the end of life, whether being reborn into exalted or miserable states, beautiful or ugly, fortunate, or unfortunate; witnessing this by directly seeing, and therefore, understanding clearly how beings pass on to different states according to their actions, where he knows that:

‘Beings who behaved badly through their bodily actions, their speech, and their mental actions, being disrespectful towards the Noble Ones, while grasping onto their wrong views, and on account of their wrong views in action, with the breakup of the body, after death, they are now reborn in a state of misery, utter deprivation, in a bad destination, in evil states, and in the hells; but these worthy beings who behaved virtuously through their bodily actions, their speech, and their mental actions, being respectful towards the Noble Ones, being right in their views, and on account of their right views in action, with the breakup of the body, after death, they are now reborn in a state of happiness, in a good destination, even in the heavenly world.’

“Thus, with the Divine Eye which is far superior to those of human beings and other animals, the Bhikkhu clearly sees beings dying at the end of their life and how they are reborn into either exalted or miserable states, beautiful or ugly, fortunate or unfortunate, witnessing this by directly seeing, and therefore, understanding clearly how beings pass on to different states according to their actions.

“This also, Great King, is yet another fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.

h. Āsavakkhaya Ñāṇa: Knowledge of The Destruction of The Heart’s Contaminants

“Now, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes thus collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then aims it towards the knowledge of the destruction of the heart’s contaminants.

“Thus, he comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is suffering.’*

He comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is the origin and arising of suffering!’*

He comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is the very cessation of suffering!’*

He comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is the Path itself that leads to the ending of suffering!’*

“Furthermore, he comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘These are the āsavas: the heart’s contaminants!’*

He comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is the origin and arising of the āsavas: the heart’s contaminants!’*

He comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is the very cessation of the āsavas: the heart’s contaminants!’*

And he comes to directly know and unmistakably see: *‘This is the Path that leads to the ending of the āsavas: the heart’s contaminants!’*

“Thus, by seeing and understanding the truth of this, the Bhikkhu is then fully released from the contaminant of sensuality. Similarly, he is fully released from the contaminant of becoming. And he is fully released from the contaminant of ignorance.

“And by knowing viscerally, for himself and beyond the shadow of a doubt, he comes to the very unmistakable and unprecedented realization: *‘It is now finally released, indeed!’*

“Thus, he attains to the Noble End of the Holy Life, as he finally understands it for himself, in this very birth, in the here and now, knowing it for sure, with direct understanding, that:

*‘Birth is now finally destroyed.
The Holy Life has been fully lived, with its Goal achieved.
There is no more coming back to any state of existing.’*

“Imagine, Great King, there was a pool of water in a secluded place, that was pristine and clear, utterly pure and with perfect visibility all the way down to its bottom. Then, someone with excellent eyesight standing at its edge on dry land, looks down into the water, being able to clearly see the different shells, pebbles and rocks of various colors, as well as schools of fish swimming and comfortably living and frolicking in it.

“Now, that man would start thinking to himself:

‘This lovely pool in this secluded place, is so pristine and clear; utterly pure and with perfect visibility all the way down to its bottom, whereby while I stand at its edge and on dry land, looking down into it, I can clearly see the different shells, pebbles and rocks of various colors, as well as schools of fish swimming and comfortably living and frolicking in it.’

“Now, in just the same manner, Great King, when the Bhikkhu’s mind becomes fully collected and stable, well concentrated, bright in its purity, stainless, malleable and wieldy, absent of any imperfections, flawless, unshakable by having reached the state of imperturbability, he then directs it towards the knowledge of the destruction of the heart’s contaminants. To this end, given the work he has already done, his heart is fully released.

“Now, this also, Great King, is a fruit that brings far more undeniable benefits than the outcomes already mentioned; a superior fruit that is gained by living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now.

“In fact, Great King, there is no higher fruit than this, that could ever be attained or gained from living and practicing the life of a recluse, truly magnificent and the highest fruit that is gained by

living the life of a recluse; an immediately visible fruit of recluseship that is observable right here and now!”

5. AJĀTASATTUUPĀSAKATTAPAṬIVEDANĀ – “KING AJĀTASATTU DECLARES HIMSELF AN UPĀSAKA”

“Then, on having carefully listened to what The Blessed One just said, King Ajātasattu exclaimed by uttering these words:

“It is marvelous! It truly is wonderful! Master Gautama has clarified The Dhamma 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. May The Blessed One accept me as his lay disciple, who has taken refuge in Him from today until the end of life.

“Blessed Lord, I have made a terrible mistake! A gigantic fault, that was utterly foolish and inhumane, committing an entirely wrong and evil action, by any standard! So terribly foolish of me, that for the sake of gaining full control over the kingdom, I have killed my own father! Someone, who was truly the ideal ruler, a kind and loving father, and a wise king, who lived and practiced according to The Dhamma!

“Please, O Blessed Lord, kindly accept my heartfelt apology! Please forgive me for this terrible crime that I committed, Bhante! I was short-sighted, rash, gullible, and completely driven by self-interest! I shall no longer behave in such a manner in the future, this I promise to You, Blessed Lord!”

And The Blessed One replied, by saying:

“Truly, Great King, you did indeed make a terrible mistake! A gigantic fault, that was utterly foolish and inhumane, by committing a completely wrong and evil action, by any standard! And it surely was terribly foolish of you, where for the sake of gaining full control over the kingdom, you killed your own father; someone who was truly the ideal ruler; a kind and loving father, and a wise king, who lived and practiced according to The Dhamma.

“However, given that you accepted responsibility for your evil action, which is the appropriate thing for you to do now, and furthermore, you are able to see the severity of your mistake and the harm you have caused, and thus now realize your mistake and are remorseful, never to engage in such behavior ever again, through restraint, your apology is therefore accepted.

“After all, when a wrongdoer realizes his mistake and seeks to move beyond it, by becoming transformed entirely because of it, and genuinely promising and working to never repeat it, then that certainly leads to growth, not just for himself, but for this entire Dispensation.

“This because, it is through restraint that one develops and deepens one’s understanding, while achieving success in This Training of The Noble Ones.”

Then, hearing these words spoken to him by The Blessed One, King Ajātasattu replied by saying:

“And now, Bhante, we must take leave of You, for we have many responsibilities to attend to.”

“In that case, feel free to do whatever you must do, Great King.”

Thus, King Ajātasattu, on having listened delightedly to the words spoken to him, agreeing to and approving of whatever The Blessed One had said, arose from his seat and with his hands in anjalī, paid homage again to The Teacher, as he respectfully circumambulated The Blessed One, by keeping Him to his right side, before setting off back to his royal court.

Right after King Ajātasattu of Magadha departed, The Blessed One addressed the Bhikkhus around Him, by speaking these words:

“Bhikkhus, truly sad is the situation for the King, for he is indeed ruined, having so severely injured himself by destroying such a great opportunity!

“This, because had he not killed his own father, who was truly the ideal ruler, a kind and loving father, and a wise king who lived and practiced according to The Dhamma, then the very Eye of Dhamma would have arisen in him immediately, right where he was seating in front of us, before he would have got up to leave!”

This is what The Blessed One said, meanwhile the Bhikkhus were delighted in witnessing and listening to The Blessed One’s words, remaining fully contented.

(Here ends the Sāmaññaphala Sutta)



Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu