Snp 1.7 — Sn 1:7 An Outcaste

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/KN/StNp/StNp1_7.html

Source revision: sha256:06db98f11dbe5b66e3b290b0f8bcaa44ec5f2fe3d1e1b74062fcf0baea044036

License: CC-BY-NC-4.0 — https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

License URL: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Copyright: Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017

License notice: Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported. To see a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. "Commercial" shall mean any sale, whether for commercial or non-profit purposes or entities. Questions about this book may be addressed to Metta Forest Monastery Valley Center, CA 92082-1409 U.S.A. Additional resources More Dhamma talks, books and translations by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu are available to download in digital audio and various ebook formats at dhammatalks.org. Printed copy A paperback copy of this book is available free of charge. To request one, write to: Book Request, Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082 USA.

Attribution: From Handful of Leaves, Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu; https://www.dhammatalks.org/Archive/Writings/Ebooks/SuttaPitaka_251113.epub. Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported. To see a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. "Commercial" shall mean any sale, whether for commercial or non-profit purposes or entities. Questions about this book may be addressed to Metta Forest Monastery Valley Center, CA 92082-1409 U.S.A. Additional resources More Dhamma talks, books and translations by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu are available to download in digital audio and various ebook formats at dhammatalks.org. Printed copy A paperback copy of this book is available free of charge. To request one, write to: Book Request, Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082 USA.

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

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

Text

1:7 An Outcaste

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then, in the early morning, after adjusting his lower robe and carrying his bowl & outer robe, he entered Sāvatthī for alms. Now at that time, in the house of the brahman Aggika Bhāradvāja, a (sacrificial) fire was burning and an offering was lifted up. Then the Blessed One, going through Sāvatthī on a methodical almsround,1 approached the house of Aggika Bhāradvāja. Aggika Bhāradvāja saw the Blessed One coming from afar and, on seeing him, said to him: "Stop right there, you little shaveling! Right there, you little contemplative! Right there, you little outcaste!"

When this was said, the Blessed One said to the brahman Aggika Bhāradvāja, "But do you know, brahman, what an outcaste is, or the actions that make one an outcaste?"

“No, in fact, Master Gotama, I don’t know what an outcaste is, or the actions that make one an outcaste. It would be good if Master Gotama taught me the Dhamma so that I would know what an outcaste is and the actions that make one an outcaste.”

“In that case, brahman, listen and pay close attention. I will speak.”

“As you say, master,” the brahman Aggika Bhāradvāja responded to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said:

Whatever man is angry, resentful,

evil, merciless,

deceitful, and defective in his views:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever here harms a living being

once-born or twice-born,2

who has no sympathy for a living being:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever destroys or besieges

villages or towns,

a notorious oppressor:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, from village or wilderness,

takes in a manner of theft

what others claim as ‘mine’:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, actually incurring a debt,

when pressed to pay, evades,

(saying,) ‘I’m in no debt to you’:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, desiring whatever-the-thing,

strikes a person going along a road,

to take whatever-the-thing:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whatever man, for his own sake,
the sake of another,
or the sake of wealth,
tells a lie when asked to bear witness:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever misbehaves
with the wives of relatives or friends,
by force or with their consent:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, though capable, doesn’t support
his mother or father
—old, their youth over & done:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever strikes
and reviles with his speech
mother or father,
sister or brother,
or mother-in-law:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, asked about what’s beneficial,
teaches what’s not
and gives counsel concealing some points:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, doing an evil deed,
wishes, ‘May I not be known,’
acting in hiding:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, having gone to another’s house,
being offered pure food,
doesn’t honor (the host) in return
when he comes (to one’s house):
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever deceives with a lie
a brahman, contemplative,
or other mendicant:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, when a brahman or contemplative
appears at mealtime,
reviles him with speech and doesn’t give:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’3

Whoever, wrapped in delusion,
speaks here what is untrue,
greedy for whatever-the-thing:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever exalts himself
and disparages others,4
debased by his own pride:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Angry, mean, evil in his desires,
miserly, dishonest,
devoid of shame & compunction:
He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever heaps verbal abuse
on an Awakened One

or his disciple,

wanderer or householder:

He should be known as ‘outcaste.’

Whoever, though not an arahant,

claims to be an arahant:

He is the thief in this world with its Brahmās.5

He is the vilest of outcastes.

These are said to be outcastes,

as I have proclaimed them to you.

Not by birth is one an outcaste,

not by birth a brahman.

By action one is an outcaste.

By action is one a brahman.6

Know, too, by this,

as I give an example:

Sopāka, the son of an outcaste,

was well-known as Mātaṅga:

He, Mātaṅga,

attained the highest prestige,

hard to gain.

They came into his service,

many noble warriors & brahmans.

Mounting the divine chariot,7

and the great, stainless road,

dispassioned for sensual passion,

he reached the world of the Brahmās.

His birth didn’t prevent him

from reaching the world of the Brahmās.

Though born into a family of scholars,

brahmans, with chants as their kinsmen,

are repeatedly seen with evil deeds:

blameworthy in the here-&-now,

with a bad destination in the afterlife.

Their birth doesn't prevent them

from blame & a bad destination.

Not by birth is one an outcaste,

not by birth a brahman.

By action one is an outcaste.

By action is one a brahman.

When this was said, the brahman Aggika Bhāradvāja said to the Blessed One: "Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, & to the Saṅgha of monks. May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge from this day forward, for life."

vv. 116–142

Notes

1. The practice of not bypassing any donors on one's almsround, one of the thirteen ascetic (dhutaṅga) practices. See Thag 16:7.

2. Birds and reptiles count as "twice-born" in that the laying of an egg is the first birth, and the emergence of the chick or baby reptile from the egg is the second.

3. This, of course, is a comment on what Aggika Bhāradvāja has just done.

4. See AN 4:28 and AN 5:159.

5. The Vibhaṅga to Pārājika 4 states that those who make false claims to superior human attainments—meaning the four jhānas and the noble attainments—are the greatest thieves in the world in that they consume the almsfood of the countryside by theft.

6. See Sn 3:9.

7. SnA: The divine chariot stands for the eight concentration attainments: the four jhānas and the four formless states.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: AN 5:175; AN 10:165; Dhp 129–140; Dhp 306–319;