Snp 2.8 — Nava Sutta: A Boat

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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

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

Text

Translator's note: Although it is often lost in translation, this poem in the Pali has a clearly articulated over-all structure. The first seven verses — coming under the "because" (yasma) — state reasons, while the last verse, under the "so" (tasma), draws the conclusion: find a good teacher and practice the Dhamma.

Because: when you honor — as the devas, Indra — one from whom you might learn the Dhamma, he, learned, honored, confident in you, shows you the Dhamma. You, enlightened, heedful, befriending a teacher like that, practicing the Dhamma in line with the Dhamma, pondering, giving it priority, become knowledgeable, clear-minded, wise. But if you consort with a piddling fool who's envious, hasn't come to the goal, you'll go to death without having cleared up the Dhamma right here, with your doubts unresolved. Like a man gone down to a river — turbulent, flooding, swift-flowing — and swept away in the current: how can he help others across? Even so: he who hasn't cleared up the Dhamma, attended to the meaning of what the learned say, crossed over his doubts: how can he get others to comprehend? But as one who's embarked on a sturdy boat, with rudder & oars, would — mindful, skillful, knowing the needed techniques — carry many others across, even so an attainer-of-knowledge, learned, self-developed, unwavering can get other people to comprehend — if they're willing to listen, ready to learn. So: you should befriend a person of integrity — learned, intelligent. Practicing so as to know the

goal, when you've experienced the Dhamma, you get bliss.