Snp 2.14 — Sn 2:14 Dhammika

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

2:14 Dhammika

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then Dhammika the lay follower, together with 500 other lay followers, approached the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he addressed the Blessed One in verses:

"I ask you, Gotama, Deeply Discerning:

How-acting does one become a good disciple—

either one gone from home into homelessness,

or a lay follower with a home?

For you discern the destination & future course
of the world along with its devas
—there is no one equal to you
in seeing the subtle goal;
for they call you foremost, awakened.

Understanding all knowledge
the whole Dhamma,1
you proclaim it to beings with sympathetic mind.
Your roof opened up,2 All-around Eye,3
you, stainless, illumine the whole world.

He came to your presence—
Erāvaṇa, the nāga king,4
having heard, 'Conqueror.'
Having consulted with you, having heard,
he understood and, satisfied,
(thought,) 'Good.'

And King Vessavaṇa Kuvera5
came, inquiring about the Dhamma.
To him, too, you spoke when asked.
And he too, having heard, was satisfied.

And these sectarians, debaters by habit,
whether Ājīvakas or Nigaṇṭhas,
don't overtake you in terms of discernment,
as a person standing
doesn't catch up
with one going quickly.

And these brahmans, debaters by habit,
any elderly brahmans,

and any others who consider themselves debaters,
all depend on you for the meaning.

For this Dhamma is subtle & blissful.
This, Blessed One, well set-forth by you:
We all want to hear it.
Tell it to us, Excellent Awakened, when asked.

All these monks are sitting together—
and the lay followers, right there—to hear.
Let them listen to the Dhamma
awakened to by one who is stainless,
as the devas listen to Vasavant's6 well-spoken word."

The Buddha:
"Listen to me, monks. I will let you hear
the Dhamma of polishing away. Live by it,7 all of you.
May those who are thoughtful, seeing the purpose,
partake of the duties proper for one gone forth.

A monk should surely not wander
at the wrong time.
He should go for alms in the village
at the right time.
For attachments get attached to one going
at the wrong time.
That's why they don't wander at the wrong time,
the awakened.

Sights, sounds, tastes,
smells, & tactile sensations
intoxicate beings.
Subduing desire for these things,

one should, at the right time, enter for alms.

Having received alms in proper season,
a monk, returning alone, should sit down in solitude.
Pondering what's inside, his mind-state collected,
he should not let his heart wander outside.

If he should converse with a disciple,
a monk, or anyone else,
he should utter the exquisite Dhamma,
and not divisive speech or disparagement of others.

For some retaliate against arguments.
We don't praise those of limited discernment.
Attachments get attached on account of this & that,
for they send their minds far away from there.

Having heard the Dhamma taught by the One Well-Gone,
the disciple of foremost discernment, having considered it,
should resort to almsfood, a dwelling, a place to sit & lie down,
and water for washing dust from his robe.

So a monk should stay unsmeared by these things—
almsfood, a dwelling, a place to sit & lie down,
and water for washing dust from his robe—
like a water-drop on a lotus.

As for the householder protocol,
I will tell you how-acting
one becomes a good disciple,
since the entire monk-practice
can't be managed by those wealthy in property.

Laying aside violence toward all living creatures,
both the firm & unfirm in the world,

one should not kill a living being, nor have it killed,
nor condone killing by others.

Then the disciple should avoid
consciously (taking) what's not given,
—anything, anywhere—
should not have it taken
nor condone its taking.
He should avoid all (taking of) what's not given.

The observant person should avoid uncelibate behavior
like a pit of glowing embers.
But if he's incapable of celibate behavior,
he should not transgress with the wife of another.

When gone to an audience hall or assembly,
or one-on-one, he should not tell a lie,
nor have it told, nor condone its being told.
He should avoid every untruth.

Any householder who approves of this Dhamma
should not take intoxicating drink,
nor have others drink it, nor condone its being drunk,
knowing that it ends in madness.

For from intoxication, fools do evil things
and get others, heedless, to do them.
One should avoid this opening to demerit—
madness, delusion—appealing to fools.

One should not kill a living being,
take what's not given, tell a lie, nor be a drinker.
One should abstain from uncelibate behavior—
sexual intercourse—should not eat at night,

a meal at the wrong time,
should not wear a garland or use scents,
should sleep on a bed, on the ground, or on a mat,
For this, they say, is the eightfold uposatha,
proclaimed by the Awakened One
who has gone to the end of suffering & stress.

Then, having kept, well-accomplished,
the eightfold uposatha
on the fourteenth, fifteenth, & eighth
of the fortnight,8
and on special days of the fortnight,
with clear & confident mind,
the observant person
at dawn after the uposatha,
confident, rejoicing,
should share food & drink, as is proper,
with the Saṅgha of monks.

One should righteously support mother & father,
should engage in righteous9 trade,
One heedful in this householder protocol
goes to the devas called
Self-radiant."

vv. 376–404

Notes

1. "All… the whole": two meanings of the lamp-word, sabba.

2. See Sn 2:13, note 3.

3. See Sn 2:12, note 2.

4. According to SnA, Erāvaṇa was one of the devas dwelling in the heaven of the Thirty-three. An elephant in a previous life, he enjoyed taking on the form of a gigantic magical elephant (one of the meanings of “nāga”), displaying many powers, for the entertainment of the other devas in that heaven.

5. One of the four Great Kings, ruling over the yakkhas. See DN 20 and DN 32. Neither Erāvaṇa’s nor Kuvera’s visit to the Buddha is mentioned elsewhere in the Canon, although SnA insists that Kuvera’s took place soon after the events reported in AN 7:53, in which he conversed with the lay woman, Nandamātā.

6. An epithet of Sakka, king of the devas in the heaven of the Thirty-three.

7. Reading carātha with the Thai edition. The PTS and Sinhalese edition have dharātha, remember.

8. The fourteen- or fifteen-day lunar cycle. The fourteenth/fifteenth days correspond to the days of the new and full moon. The eighth day, to the half-moon.

9. Dhammika, a reference to the interlocutor’s name.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 66; MN 70; AN 3:71; AN 10:46