Snp 4.8 — Pasūra Sutta — Discourse to Pasūra, the Debater

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.
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Text

Snp. 4.8

Pasūra Sutta

“Discourse to Pasūra, the Debater”

824. “‘Purity is to be found only here,’ they claim, while denying the possibility for it to be present in ways of thought other than their own. Being stuck in their views and without budging from what they think to be ‘truth,’ each rigidly holds the firm position how, ‘wisdom cannot exist anywhere else, except in their own tradition.’

825. “Desiring to engage in debates, they keep throwing themselves into the crowd, so to prove others to be no more than fools. With their conniving ways, they cause much contention through their disputing, as a way to be seen as experts, in order to satisfy their constant thirst for praise.

826. “Joining different assemblies, they seek out opportunities for debate, craving the excitement of winning in disputes, but while also fearing the possibility of losing and, therefore, being blamed. And when their arguments are indeed refuted, they first get embarrassed with their heads drooping, but are quick to turn on the other and attack with anger, with agitated and confused minds.

827. “When cross-questioned in a debate about their teachings, and when faults are found proving their shortcomings; coming out as the losers, they become depressed while lamenting and sighing the words: ‘I have been beaten! Now I am lost!’

828. “Seeing how with other sects, people flock to attend debates that take place, you can witness the excitement in those claiming victory, for having won the debate, along with the sense of dejection and defeat, seen in those who have lost. Therefore, realizing that no good can come out of such praise, do not engage in disputes and give up debating altogether, as it will only serve your ignorance.

829. “For when praised by the crowd for winning in such debates, the sense of gratification overwhelms the person meanwhile ignorance flares up, clouding the heart, as they start laughing in the middle of the crowd, for having achieved success in their aim, to defeat the other.

830. “It is for this reason that overconfidence itself, which now floods his mind, becomes the very cause for his downfall and destruction, as he behaves conceitedly with a heart full of blind arrogance. On witnessing this clearly, the wise declare that no purity can be gained from such endeavors, and therefore, teach how you should avoid disputes, altogether.

831. “Much like the warrior who, after having satiated himself at the king’s feast with rich food, comes out energized and roaring, in search of an opponent to defeat, so too, Sūra, I see you have returned here, again looking for a

challenger to fight against, when still, there is none to be found.

832. “If you encounter someone who is fixated on a view, where they fervently try dragging you into a debate to prove the supposed supremacy of their view, saying, ‘this only is the truth,’ then, just tell them you are ‘not there to dispute,’ and don’t be pulled into a debate, for debates give rise to enemies.

833. “However, for those of us who have walked away from the crowd, living secluded, there is neither contention nor views or doctrines being pitted against each other. So, do you see Pasūra, who it is you have come to battle with?

“For even the Best among the wise has nothing left for Him to uphold, and nothing grasped, that needs defending.

834. “Yet you are here, having carried with you all kinds of speculative ideas and views in your head, to start a debate. But, instead, you have come only to encounter an assembly of purified ones; those who are no longer entangled in a net of views, for the wise see the futility of what you seek, hence, there is no way for you to proceed.”