Snp 4.8 — Sn 4:8 To Pasūra

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

4:8 To Pasūra

“‘Only here is there purity’

—that’s what they say—

‘No other doctrines are pure’

—so they say.

Insisting that what they depend on is good,

they are deeply entrenched

in idiosyncratic truths.1

Seeking controversy, they plunge into an assembly,
regarding one another as fools.
Relying on others' authority,
they speak in debate.
Desiring praise, they claim to be skilled.

Engaged in disputes in the midst of the assembly,
—anxious, desiring praise—
the one defeated is
chagrined.
Shaken with criticism, he seeks for an opening.

He whose doctrine is [judged as] demolished,
defeated, by those judging the issue:
He laments, he grieves—the inferior exponent.
'He beat me,' he mourns.

These disputes have arisen among contemplatives.
In them are
elation,
dejection.
Seeing this, one should abstain from disputes,
for they have no other goal
than the gaining of praise.

While he who is praised there
for expounding his doctrine
in the midst of the assembly,
laughs on that account & grows haughty,
attaining his heart's desire.

That haughtiness will be grounds for his damage,
for he'll speak in pride & conceit.

Seeing this, one should abstain from debates.

No purity is attained by them, say the skilled.

Like a strong man nourished on royal food,

you prowl about, roaring, searching out an opponent.

Wherever the battle is,

go there, strong man.

As before, there's none here.

Those who dispute, taking hold of a view,

saying, "This, and this only, is true,"

those you can talk to.

Here there is nothing—

no confrontation

at the birth of disputes.2

Whom would you gain as opponent, Pasūra,

among those who live above confrontation—

not pitting view against view—

who have nothing here grasped as supreme?

So here you come,

conjecturing,

your mind thinking up

viewpoints.

You're paired off with a pure one

and so cannot proceed."

vv. 824–834

Notes

1. Pacceka-sacca. The word pacceka can also mean singular, personal, or individual. AN 10:20 lists the following views as idiosyncratic truths. "The cosmos is eternal," "The cosmos is not eternal," "The cosmos is finite," "The cosmos is infinite," "The soul & the body are the same," "The soul is one thing & the body another," "After death a Tathāgata

exists," "After death a Tathāgata does not exist," "After death a Tathāgata both does & does not exist," "After death a Tathāgata neither does nor does not exist." These truths are distinct from noble truths, in that the word for "noble"—ariya—can also mean "universal."

2. See AN 10:93.

On the Buddha as a debater, see Skill in Questions, chapter 5.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 18; MN 36; MN 58; MN 101; SN 42:8; AN 2:36; AN 3:62; AN 3:68; AN 3:73