Snp 4.14 — Tuvataka Sutta: Quickly

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

"I ask the kinsman of the Sun, the great seer, about seclusion & the state of peace. Seeing in what way is a monk unbound, clinging to nothing in the world?" "He should put an entire stop to the root of objectification-classifications: 'I am the thinker.'[1] He should train, always mindful, to subdue any craving inside him. Whatever truth he may know, within or without, he shouldn't get entrenched in connection with it, for that isn't called Unbinding by the good. He shouldn't, because of it, think himself better, lower, or equal. Touched by contact in various ways, he shouldn't keep conjuring self. Stilled right within, a monk shouldn't seek peace from another from anything else. For one stilled right within, there's nothing embraced, so how rejected?[2] As in the middle of the sea it is still, with no waves upwelling, so the monk — unperturbed, still — should not swell himself anywhere." "He whose eyes are open has described the Dhamma he's witnessed, subduing danger. Now tell us, sir, the practice: the code of discipline & concentration." "One shouldn't be careless with his eyes, should close his ears to village-talk, shouldn't hunger for flavors, or view anything in the world as mine. When touched by contact he shouldn't lament, shouldn't covet anywhere any states of becoming, or tremble at terrors. When gaining food & drink, staples & cloth, he should not make a hoard. Nor should he be upset when receiving no gains. Absorbed, not foot-loose, he should refrain from restlessness, shouldn't be heedless, should live in a noise-less abode.

Not making much of sleep, ardent, given to wakefulness, he should abandon sloth, deception, laughter, sports, fornication, & all that goes with it; should not practice charms, interpret physical marks, dreams, the stars, animal cries; should not be devoted to practicing medicine or inducing fertility. A monk shouldn't tremble at blame or grow haughty with praise; should thrust aside selfishness, greed, divisive speech, anger; shouldn't buy or sell or revile anyone anywhere; shouldn't linger in villages, or flatter people in hopes of gains. A monk shouldn't boast or speak with ulterior motive, shouldn't train in insolence or speak quarrelsome words; shouldn't engage in deception or knowingly cheat; shouldn't despise others for their life, discernment, precepts, or practices. Provoked with many words from contemplatives or ordinary people, he shouldn't respond harshly, for those who retaliate aren't calm. Knowing this teaching, a monk inquiring should always train in it mindfully. Knowing Unbinding as peace, he shouldn't be heedless of Gotama's message — for he, the Conqueror unconquered, witnessed the Dhamma, not by hearsay, but directly, himself. So, heedful, you should always train in line with that Blessed One's message," the Blessed One said.

Notes

1.

On objectification-classifications and their role in leading to conflict, see Sn 4.11 and the introduction to MN 18. The perception, "I am the thinker" lies at the root of these classifications in that it reads into the immediate present a set of distinctions — I/not-I; being/not-being; thinker/thought; identity/non-identity — that then can proliferate into mental and physical conflict. The conceit inherent in this perception thus forms a fetter on the mind. To become unbound, one must learn to examine these distinctions — which we all take for granted — to see that they are simply assumptions that are not inherent in experience, and that we would be better off to be able to drop them.

2.

This reading follows the version of the verse given in the Thai edition of Nd.I, as well as an alternative reading given as a footnote to the Sri Lankan edition of Sn 4.14: n'atthi atta,m kuto niratta,m vaa. The Burmese and Sri Lankan editions of this verse read, n'atthi attaa kuto nirattaa vaa: "There is no self, so how what's opposed to self?" The Thai edition reads, n'atthi attaa kuto niratta,m vaa: "There is no self, so how what's rejected?" This last reading makes no sense; the Burmese and Sri Lankan readings depend on the notion that nirattaa is an actual word, although it appears nowhere in the Canon except in two other verses of the Atthaka Vagga, where it appears as a possible alternative to niratta (Sn 4.3 and Sn 4.10). Because the Buddha in SN 44.10 refuses to take the position that there is no self, all of the readings of this verse that say n'atthi attaa would appear to be wrong. Thus I have adopted the reading given here.

See also: DN 2; AN 4.37.