Snp 4.16 — Sāriputta Sutta — Sāriputta

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.
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Text

Snp. 4.16

Sāriputta Sutta

“Sāriputta”

955. “Never before have I seen or heard from anyone, of a teacher such as You! One, who having come from Tusita, the heavenly realm of the Happy Devas, would speak such delightfully sweet words to us, and in such a beautiful manner,” exclaimed the Venerable Sāriputta.

956. “Throughout the cosmos, with its countless Devas, The One with the Wisdom Eye shines forth more brightly than the highest of gods, dispelling the blackest of darkness, the One who attained to the Highest, all on His own.

957. “O! Lord, Independent and Singularly Free, Genuine Pillar of Truth, The Awakened One Himself, I have come here on behalf of those of us, who are still bound up, not yet freed, bearing with me a question to ask, here in Your Presence.

958. “When a Bhikkhu, having become disgusted by companionships, resorts to solitary places, such as sitting at the roots of trees, in a charnel ground, in a mountain cave, or a ravine, or sleeping on various types of terrains, be they high or low,

959. “How many are the fear-causing dangers he may encounter, as he resides alone in such desolate and solitary places; terrors which he is supposed to be unstirred by, while living in those quiet abodes?

960. “How many are the risks and challenges for him to consider and overcome, when going off to practice in an uninhabited and remote part of the jungle, or anywhere in the world, where the Bhikkhu may go to live, as he seeks out the Deathless?

961. “How should be his demeanor while speaking? What manner of activities would be allowed for him to engage in? What sort of places should he be going off to and staying in?

What virtuous behavior or conduct should be expected of such a Bhikkhu who is resolute in his goal?

962. “What is the specific training for him to undergo, whereby in dedicating himself to it, the Bhikkhu can become integrated, collected, sharply alert and mindful, so that he can recognize and thus remove his heart’s defilements, just like the goldsmith pulling out the impurities from the gold he melts?”

963. And The Blessed One replied, by saying:

“As it relates to this Dhamma, Sāriputta, when a Bhikkhu becomes disgusted by companionships, and resorts to solitary places to seek out the Deathless, desiring Awakening, I will explain to you what I know from personal experience, as I answer your questions, Sāriputta.

964. “There are five dangers that the wise and resolutely mindful Bhikkhu should not fear. These are gadflies, mosquitoes, snakes and other creeping things, human contacts, and four-legged animals.

965. “Similarly, the mindful Bhikkhu should not be afraid of those practitioners belonging to other religious sects, even if one witnesses them threatening him personally or imposing danger on his life. Additionally, he should fearlessly withstand any and all kinds of challenges and risks he may encounter on his path, while always seeking the wholesome outcome.

966. “And when struck by various illnesses and pains of hunger, as well as exposure to extreme cold and heat, he must endure them all, even if one continues to be touched by all these and other afflictions. The Bhikkhu, having decided to walk away from the safety of his home life, should energetically persevere in his resolve, and continue striving to overcome them all.

967. “He must not steal, nor speak what is untrue, and when he makes contact with various beings, whether mighty or small, strong or weak, his touch must be saturated with loving kindness. And when his heart becomes muddled or if he detects any agitation in the mind, he must quickly dispel them, for these are none other than the allies of Māra, the evil one.

968. “Not falling under the power of anger or conceit, instead, he stands firm as he confidently goes after these two by digging them out from their very roots. Furthermore, by

avoiding to get ambushed in the net of likes and dislikes, he sets himself free from both the pleasurable and the painful.

969. “In his efforts, he venerates wisdom above all else, wrapped in joy as he experiences the goodness that living this Holy Life keeps generating in him. In that manner, he expels from his heart whatever agitation or uncertainty those troubles have been causing him.

And by overpowering the gloomy dissatisfaction that results from living all alone, in a remote jungle, he also overpowers the four types of sorrowful fixations:

970. “‘Would I find some food for me to eat today? Where must I go to find something to eat? I can not get any sleep! Oh, will I even find a good place to sleep tonight?’ The Noble Disciple in Training, wandering alone and without a home, must carefully reflect on these four sorrowful fixations, and fully eradicate them all.

971. “Obtaining food and robes at the appropriate time, he knows the meaning of moderation, so to become contented with the purpose of what is being received. By practicing restraint in regards to all things, he must guard his senses, as he walks through the village, not speaking back harshly, even if he were provoked.

972. “With his eyes lowered down, not fond of traveling here and there, dedicated to meditation, he remains well awake everywhere he goes. Dwelling in equanimity, and serenely present, he applies himself with effort, as he carefully eliminates, one-by-one, the causes for remorse and worry from his heart.

973. “And if he is scolded or reproved, then he mindfully must continue staying soft in his heart towards his companions in the Holy Life. The speech he uses must remain skillful and appropriate to the occasion, for he must always be aware not to utter a word or gossip, which might bring him blame from the wise.

974. “Furthermore, there are five kinds of contaminations found in the world, for which the mindful practitioner must constantly train and dedicate himself, to fully remove and cleanse out from his heart. He must endure and overpower the lust he has for visible forms, sounds he hears, flavors he tastes, smells, and physical touches he experiences.

975. “Therefore, the Bhikkhu who removes the longing and desire he has for these things, through maintaining his mindfulness constantly, liberates his heart from all contaminants. He experiences freedom, as he spends his time ceaselessly engaged in examining this Dhamma that is Beautiful. In doing so, while being collected within himself, he banishes all darkness, once and for all.”

This is what The Blessed One said.