Ud 1.9 — Jaṭila Sutta: Ascetics

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 have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Gayā at Gayā Head. And on that occasion, many ascetics — on the cold winter nights of the "Between-the-Eights,"[1] when the snow was falling in Gayā — jumped up in the water, jumped down in the water, did a jumping-up-&-down in the water, poured (water over themselves), and performed the fire sacrifice, (thinking,) "Through this there is purity."

The Blessed One saw those many ascetics — on the cold winter nights of the "Between-the-Eights," when the snow was falling in Gayā — jumping up in the water, jumping down in the water, doing a jumping-up-&-down in the water, pouring (water over themselves), and performing the fire sacrifice, (thinking,) "Through this there is purity."

Then, on realizing the significance of that, the Blessed One on that occasion exclaimed:

Not by water is one clean, though many people are bathing here. Whoever has truth & rectitude: He's a clean one; he, a brahman.[2]

Note

1.

The "Eights" are the waning half-moon days (each on the eighth day of the waning cycle) after three of the full moons in the cold season. These are the dates of brahmanical ceremonies for making merit for the dead. The period between the first and last of these dates — the "Between-the-Eights" — is regarded in northern India as the coldest part of the year. See AN 3.34.

2.

The last half of this verse is identical with the last half of Dhp 393.