MN 11 — Cula-sihanada Sutta: The Shorter Discourse on the Lion's Roar

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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; source ellipsis or repetition-omission statement retained. Canonical repetitions were not reconstructed.

Text

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Savatthi in Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's Park. There he addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Bhikkhus." — "Venerable sir," they replied. The Blessed One said this:

2. "Bhikkhus, only here is there a recluse, only here a second recluse, only here a third recluse, only here a fourth recluse. The doctrines of others are devoid [64] of recluses: that is how you should rightly roar your lion's roar.[1]

3. "It is possible, bhikkhus, that wanderers of other sects might ask: 'But on the strength of what (argument) or with the support of what (authority) do the venerable ones say thus?' Wanderers of other sects who ask thus may be answered in this way: 'Friends, four things have been declared to us by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished

and fully enlightened; on seeing these in ourselves we say thus: "Only here is there a recluse, only here a second recluse, only here a third recluse, only here a fourth recluse. The doctrines of others are devoid of recluses." What are the four? We have confidence in the Teacher, we have confidence in the Dhamma, we have fulfilled the precepts, and our companions in the Dhamma are dear and agreeable to us whether they are layfolk or those gone forth. These are the four things declared to us by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened, on seeing which in ourselves we say as we do.'

4. "It is possible, bhikkhus, that wanderers of other sects might say thus: 'Friends, we too have confidence in the Teacher, that is, in our Teacher; we too have confidence in the Dhamma, that is, in our Dhamma; we too have fulfilled the precepts, that is, our precepts; our companions in the Dhamma are dear and agreeable to us too whether they are layfolk or those gone forth. What is the distinction here, friends, what is the variance, what is the difference between you and us?'

5. "Wanderers of other sects who ask thus may be answered in this way: 'How then, friends, is the goal one or many?' Answering rightly, the wanderers of other sects would answer thus: 'Friends, the goal is one, not many.'[2] — 'But, friends, is that goal for one affected by lust or free from lust?' Answering rightly, the wanderers of other sects would answer thus: 'Friends, that goal is for one free from lust, not for one affected by lust.' — 'But, friends, is that goal for one affected by hate or free from hate?' Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one free from hate, not for one affected by hate.' — 'But, friends, is that goal for one affected by delusion or free from delusion?' Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one free from delusion, not for one affected by delusion.' — 'But, friends, is that goal for one affected by craving or free from craving?' [65] Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one free from craving, not for one affected by craving.' — 'But, friends, is that goal for one affected by clinging or free from clinging?' Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one free from clinging, not for one affected by clinging.' — 'But, friends, is that goal for one who has vision or for one without vision?' Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one with vision, not for one without vision.' — 'But, friends, is that goal for one who favors and opposes, or for one who does not favor and oppose?' Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one who does not favor and oppose, not for one who favors and opposes.'[3] — 'But, friends is that goal for one who delights in and enjoys proliferation, or for one who does not delight in and enjoy proliferation?' Answering rightly, they would answer: 'Friends, that goal is for one who does not delight in and enjoy proliferation, not for one who delights in and enjoys proliferation.'[4]

6. "Bhikkhus, there are these two views: the view of being and the view of non-being. Any recluses or brahmans who rely on the view of being, adopt the view of being, accept the view of being, are opposed to the view of non-being. Any recluses or brahmans who rely on the view of non-being, adopt the view of non-being, accept the view of non-being, are opposed to the view of being.[5]

7. "Any recluses or brahmans who do not understand as they actually are the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the danger and the escape[6] in the case of these two views are affected by lust, affected by hate, affected by delusion, affected by craving, affected by clinging, without vision, given to favoring and opposing, and they delight in and enjoy proliferation. They are not freed from birth, aging and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair; they are not freed from suffering, I say.

8. "Any recluses or brahmans who understand as they actually are the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the danger and the escape in the case of these two views are without lust, without hate, without delusion, without craving, without clinging, with vision, not given to favoring and opposing, and they do not delight in and enjoy proliferation. They are freed from birth, aging and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair; they are freed from suffering, I say. [66]

9. "Bhikkhus, there are these four kinds of clinging. What four? Clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and observances, and clinging to a doctrine of self.

10. "Though certain recluses and brahmans claim to propound the full understanding of all kinds of clinging, they do not completely describe the full understanding of all kinds of clinging.[7] They describe the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures without describing the full understanding of clinging to views, clinging to rules and observances, and clinging to a doctrine of self. Why is that? Those good recluses and brahmans do not understand these three instances of clinging as they actually are. Therefore, though they claim to propound the full understanding of all kinds of clinging, they describe only the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures without describing the full understanding of clinging to views, clinging to rules and observances, and clinging to a doctrine of self.

11. "Though certain recluses and brahmans claim to propound the full understanding of all kinds of clinging... they describe the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures and clinging to views without describing the full understanding of clinging to rules and observances and clinging to a doctrine of self. Why is that? They do not understand two instances... therefore they describe only the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures and clinging to views without describing the full understanding of clinging to rules and observances and clinging to a doctrine of self.

12. "Though certain recluses and brahmans claim to propound the full understanding of all kinds of clinging... they describe the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, and clinging to rules and observances without describing the full understanding of clinging to a doctrine of self. They do not understand one instance... therefore they describe only the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, and clinging to rules and observances without describing the full understanding of clinging to a doctrine of self.[8]

13. "Bhikkhus, in such a Dhamma and Discipline as that it is plain that confidence in the Teacher is not rightly directed, that confidence in the Dhamma is not rightly directed, that

fulfillment of the precepts is not rightly directed, and that the affection among companions in the Dhamma is not rightly directed. Why is that? Because that is how it is when the Dhamma and Discipline is [67] badly proclaimed and badly expounded, unemancipating, unconducive to peace, expounded by one who is not fully enlightened.

14. "Bhikkhus, when a Tathagata, accomplished and fully enlightened, claims to propound the full understanding of all kinds of clinging, he completely describes the full understanding of all kinds of clinging: he describes the full understanding of clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to views, clinging to rules and observances, and clinging to a doctrine of self.[9]

15. "Bhikkhus, in such a Dhamma and Discipline as that it is plain that confidence in the Teacher is rightly directed, that confidence in the Dhamma is rightly directed, that fulfillment of the precepts is rightly directed, and that the affection among companions in the Dhamma is rightly directed. Why is that? Because that is how it is when the Dhamma and Discipline is well proclaimed and well expounded, emancipating, conducive to peace, expounded by one who is fully enlightened.

16. "Now these four kinds of clinging have what as their source, what as their origin, from what are they born and produced? These four kinds of clinging have craving as their source, craving as their origin, they are born and produced from craving.[10] Craving has what as its source...? Craving has feeling as its source... Feeling has what as its source...? Feeling has contact as its source... Contact has what as its source...? Contact has the sixfold base as its source... The sixfold base has what as its source...? The sixfold base has mentality-materiality as its source... Mentality-materiality has what as its source...? Mentality-materiality has consciousness as its source... Consciousness has what as its source...? Consciousness has formations as its source... Formations have what as their source...? Formations have ignorance as their source, ignorance as their origin; they are born and produced from ignorance.

17. "Bhikkhus, when ignorance is abandoned and true knowledge has arisen in a bhikkhu, then with the fading away of ignorance and the arising of true knowledge he no longer clings to sensual pleasures, no longer clings to views, no longer clings to rules and observances, no longer clings to a doctrine of self.[11] When he does not cling, he is not agitated. When he is not agitated, he personally attains Nibbana. He understands: 'Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.'"[12] [68]

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

Notes

The numbers enclosed in square brackets in the above text are page numbers of the Pali Text Society edition of the Pali text.

1.

Comy. explains "lion's roar" (sihanada) as meaning a supreme roar (setthanada), a fearless roar (abhitanada), and a roar which cannot be confuted (appatinada). It adds: The roar about the existence of these four types of recluse only here is the supreme roar. The absence of any fear on account of others when one advances such a claim makes it a fearless roar. As none of the rival teachers can rise up and say, "These recluses also exist in our Dispensation," it is a roar which cannot be confuted.

2.

Comy.: Even though the adherents of other sects all declare arahantship — understood in a general sense as spiritual perfection — to be the goal, they point to other attainments as the goal in accordance with their views. Thus the brahmans declare the Brahma-world to be the goal, the great ascetics declare the gods of Streaming Radiance, the wanderers the gods of Refulgent Glory, and the Ajivakas the non-percipient state, which they posit to be "infinite mind" (anantamanasa).

3.

"Favoring and opposing" (anurodha-pativirodha): reacting with attraction through lust and with aversion through hatred.

4.

Proliferation (papañca), according to Comy., generally means mental activity governed by craving, conceit and views, but here only craving and views are intended.

5.

The adoption of one view entailing opposition to the other links up with the earlier statement that the goal is for one who does not favor and oppose.

6.

Comy. mentions eight conditions which serve as the origin (samudaya) of these views: the five aggregates, ignorance, contact, perception, thought, unwise attention, bad friends, and the voice of another. Their disappearance (atthangama) is the path of stream-entry, which eradicates all wrong views. Their gratification (assada) may be understood as the satisfaction of psychological need to which the view caters, specifically the nurturing of craving for being by the eternalist view and of craving for non-being by the annihilationist view. Their danger (adinava) is the continued bondage they entail, by obstructing the acceptance of right view, which leads to liberation. And the escape from them (nissarana) is Nibbana.

7.

Comy. glosses full understanding (pariñña) here as overcoming (samatikkama), with reference to the commentarial notion of pahanapariñña, "full understanding as abandonment."

8.

This passage clearly indicates that the critical differentiating factor of the Buddha's Dhamma is its "full understanding of clinging to a doctrine of self." This means, in effect, that the Buddha alone is able to show how to overcome all views of self by developing penetration into the truth of non-self (anatta).

9.

Comy.: The Buddha teaches how clinging to sense pleasures is abandoned by the path of arahantship, while the other three types of clinging are eliminated by the path of stream-entry. The path of stream-entry eliminates the other three clingings because these three are all forms of wrong view, and all wrong views are overcome at that stage. Although the statement that clinging to sense pleasures is abandoned by the path of arahantship may sound strange, in view of the fact that sensual desire is already eliminated by the non-returner, the Tika (subcommentary) to the sutta explains that in the present context the word kama, sense pleasure, should be understood to comprise all forms of greed, and the subtler types of greed are only eliminated with the attainment of arahantship.

10.

This passage is explained in order to show how clinging is to be abandoned. Clinging is traced back, via the chain of dependent arising, to its root-cause in ignorance, and then the destruction of ignorance is shown to be the means to eradicate clinging.

11.

The Pali idiom, n'eva kamupadanam upadiyati, would have to be rendered literally as "he does not cling to the clinging to sense pleasures," which may obscure the sense more than it illuminates it. The word upadana in Pali is the object of its own verb form, while "clinging" in English is not. The easiest solution is to translate directly in accordance with the sense rather than to try to reproduce the idiom in translation.

12.

This is the stock canonical declaration of arahantship.