

Majjhima Nikāya
The Middle Length Discourses

Lomasakaṅgiya Bhaddekaratta Sutta
“Lomasakaṅgiya & ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude*’”

Translated by Candana Bhikkhu

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I have personally heard this.

At one time, The Blessed One was living at the monastery offered to Him by the lay supporter Anāthapiṇḍika, in Jeta’s Park, in the city of Sāvathī.

It was during that time, that the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya was living at the Nigrodha Monastery in the Sākya Royal City of Kapilavatthu.

Then, in the second watch of the night, the glorious Deva by the name of Candana, appeared as he completely illuminated the Nigrodha Monastery, dispersing the entire darkness of the night with his brilliance, and began approaching the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya, as he came and stood to one side and addressed the Venerable by saying:

“Bhikkhu, do you recall the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude*’ and its detailed explanation?”

“No, Friend, I neither recall the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude*,’ nor its detailed explanation.”

And the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya in turn asked the radiant Deva:

“But, how about you Friend, do *you* recall it?”

The Deva replied:

“Bhikkhu, I must say that unfortunately, I also neither recall the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude*,’ nor its detailed explanation.”

The Deva continued by asking further:

“Then, Bhikkhu, how about just the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude?*’ Don’t you remember any part of it?”

The Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya responded by saying:

“No, Friend, I must say I do not recall any of the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude.*’ And he continued by asking the glorious Deva:

“But, Friend, can’t you recall any of the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude?*’”

At this, the Deva replied by saying:

“Yes, Bhikkhu, I believe I *can* recall just the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude.*’”

“And what do the verses say or declare, Friend?” asked the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya.

And the radiant Deva said:

“I remember one time, Bhikkhu, while The Blessed One was visiting the Tāvātimsā Devas of the Thirty-Three, He sat on the Red Marble Stone under the root of the Great Pāricchattaka Tree.

“It was then that The Blessed One began reciting the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude,*’ after which He expounded on them, giving a detailed explanation to those Thirty-Three Devas of Tāvātimsā, gathered to listen to The Blessed One, as He instructed them by saying:

***‘Do not resuscitate the past, nor tie yourself to hopes or be anxious
About what may lie in the future.
For, the past is over and done with, while the future has not yet arrived.
However, those things that keep arising in the present,
He goes on discerning them all with penetrating insight, while they occur.
The one who is indeed unagitated, unwavering in his resolve,
He maintains the course of wisdom, steadfast.
Today is the time for the Work to be done,
Tomorrow? It may very well be too late, as Death might already be here.
For no bargain can be struck with Death and its mighty armies.
But, for him who lives working untiringly both day and night,
It is he, whom The Tranquil Sage has called:
‘The Ideal Lover of Solitude.’***

“This, Bhikkhu, is how I recall the verses of ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude.*’

“Now, Bhikkhus, you must memorize these verses, and recall them often, as well as learn their detailed meaning and explanation. You must closely keep these verses in your heart wherever you are, and whatever you may do! This, because ‘*The Ideal Lover of Solitude*’ is absolutely essential to truly living and understanding the very foundation of the Holy Life!”

Now, these were the words uttered by Candana, the glorious Deva, who disappeared after speaking these words.

Then, immediately after this visitation, the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya put his dwelling place in order, and by the early morning, he left his kuti while taking his alms bowl and outer robe with him, as he set off on his journey towards Sāvatti, to see The Blessed One.

Travelling by stages, the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya finally reached Sāvatti, as he went to The Blessed One and worshipped Him by offering his respects, and then sat to one side. Then, he reported to The Blessed One his encounter with the glorious Deva, while adding:

“Bhante, could you please teach me the verses of *‘The Ideal Lover of Solitude,’* as well as its detailed meaning by explaining them to me?”

And The Blessed One said to the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya:

“But Bhikkhu, did you recognize or know who that Deva was?”

“No, Bhante, I did not recognize, nor do I know that Deva.”

“That Deva’s name, Bhikkhu, is Candana.

“Remember this, Bhikkhu, Candana the Deva pays wise and careful attention, applying himself correctly with diligence, as he wholeheartedly dedicates himself to The Dhamma, by paying full attention and then putting all his energy into his practice according to The Dhamma, as he has attentively listened to and learned it.

“Now, Bhikkhu, you must also listen carefully to what I shall say, and pay close attention, for I will teach you the verses and give you the detailed explanation of *‘The Ideal Lover of Solitude.’*”

“Yes, Bhante!” replied the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya.

And The Blessed One continued speaking:

***‘Do not resuscitate the past, nor tie yourself to hopes or be anxious
About what may lie in the future.
For, the past is over and done with, while the future has not yet arrived.
However, those things that keep arising in the present,
He goes on discerning them all with penetrating insight, while they occur.
The one who is indeed unagitated, unwavering in his resolve,
He maintains the course of wisdom, steadfast.
Today is the time for the Work to be done,
Tomorrow? It may very well be too late, as Death might already be here.
For no bargain can be struck with Death and its mighty armies.
But, for him who lives working untiringly both day and night,
It is he, whom The Tranquil Sage has called:
‘The Ideal Lover of Solitude.’***

1. “And how do you ‘resuscitate the past?’”

“By reflecting with delight and passion on how in the past, the eyes made contact with pleasing and enjoyable visible objects and sights, and as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such sights, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you resuscitate the past.

“By reflecting with delight and passion on how in the past, the ears made contact with pleasing and enjoyable sounds, and as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such sounds, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you resuscitate the past.

“By reflecting with delight and passion on how in the past, the nose made contact with pleasing and enjoyable scents and fragrances, and as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such smells, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you resuscitate the past.

“By reflecting with delight and passion on how in the past, the tongue made contact with pleasing and enjoyable flavors and tastes, and as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such flavors, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you resuscitate the past.

“By reflecting with delight and passion on how in the past, the body made contact with pleasing and enjoyable touches and tactile experiences, and as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such tactile experiences, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you resuscitate the past.

“By reflecting with delight and passion on how in the past, the mind made contact with pleasing and enjoyable thoughts, ideas, and other mental states, and as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such mental states, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you resuscitate the past.

“Therefore, Bhikkhu, it is in this way that one ‘resuscitates the past.’”

2. “And how do you ‘*not* resuscitate the past?’”

“By *not* reflecting with delight nor passion on how in the past, the eyes made contact with pleasing or enjoyable visible objects and sights, and as a result, consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such sights, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you do *not* resuscitate the past.

“By *not* reflecting with delight nor passion on how in the past, the ears made contact with pleasing or enjoyable sounds, and as a result, consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such sounds, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you do *not* resuscitate the past.

“By *not* reflecting with delight nor passion on how in the past, the nose made contact with pleasing or enjoyable smells and fragrances, and as a result, consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such smells, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you do *not* resuscitate the past.

“By *not* reflecting with delight nor passion on how in the past, the tongue made contact with pleasing or enjoyable flavors and tastes, and as a result, consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such flavors, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you do *not* resuscitate the past.

“By *not* reflecting with delight nor passion on how in the past, the body made contact with pleasing or enjoyable touches and tactile experiences, and as a result, consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such tactile experiences, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you do *not* resuscitate the past.

“By *not* reflecting with delight nor passion on how in the past, the mind made contact with pleasing or enjoyable thoughts, ideas, and other mental states, and as a result, consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such mental states, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the reoccurrence of such pleasurable experiences from the past. In this manner, you do *not* resuscitate the past.

“It is in this manner, Bhikkhu, that one does ‘*not* resuscitate the past.’

3. “And how do you ‘tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future?’

“By hoping with delight and passion for the eyes to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable visible objects and sights in the future, as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such sights, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By hoping with delight and passion for the ears to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable sounds in the future, as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such sounds, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By hoping with delight and passion for the nose to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable smells and fragrances in the future, as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such smells, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By hoping with delight and passion for the tongue to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable flavors and tastes in the future, as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such flavors, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By hoping with delight and passion for the body to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable touches and tactile experiences in the future, as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such tactile perceptions, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By hoping with delight and passion for the mind to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable thoughts, ideas, and other mental states in the future, as a result, there arises consciousness that is bound up with delight and passion for such mental states, which traps one in the nostalgia and longing for pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“Therefore, Bhikkhu, it is in this way that one ‘ties oneself to hopes or becomes anxious about what may lie in the future.’

4. “And how do you *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future?”

“By *not* hoping with delight or passion for the eyes to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable visible objects and sights in the future, as a result, the consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such sights, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you do *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By *not* hoping with delight or passion for the ears to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable sounds in the future, as a result, the consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such sounds, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you do *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By *not* hoping with delight or passion for the nose to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable scents and fragrances in the future, as a result, the consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such smells, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you do *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By *not* hoping with delight or passion for the tongue to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable flavors and tastes in the future, as a result, the consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such flavors, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you do *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By *not* hoping with delight or passion for the body to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable touches and tactile experiences in the future, as a result, the consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such tactile experiences, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you do *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“By *not* hoping with delight or passion for the mind to make contact with pleasing or enjoyable thoughts, ideas, and other mental states in the future, as a result, the consciousness does *not* arise that would otherwise be bound up with delight or passion for such mental states, and thus, one does *not* get trapped in the nostalgia or longing for the pleasurable experiences to reoccur in the future. In this manner, you do *not* tie yourself to hopes or be anxious about what may lie in the future.

“Therefore, Bhikkhu, it is in this way that one does *not* tie oneself to hopes or become anxious about what may lie in the future.

5. “And how, Bhikkhu, do you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present?

“Bhikkhu, when the eyes and visible objects arise together in the present, *if* there is delight and passion for pleasing or enjoyable visible objects and sights, then the consciousness that follows, becomes bound up by delight and passion, taking pleasure in what is being seen, becoming engrossed in it. In this manner, you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present.

“And when the ears and sounds arise together in the present, *if* there is delight and passion for pleasing or enjoyable sounds, then the consciousness that follows, becomes bound up by delight and passion, taking pleasure in what is being heard, becoming engrossed in it. In this manner, you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present.

“And when the nose and fragrances arise together in the present, *if* there is delight and passion for pleasing or enjoyable smells, then the consciousness that follows, becomes bound up by delight and passion, taking pleasure in what is being smelled, becoming engrossed in it. In this manner, you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present.

“And when the tongue and flavors arise together in the present, *if* there is delight and passion for pleasing flavors, then the consciousness that follows, becomes bound up by delight and passion, taking pleasure in what is being tasted, becoming engrossed in it. In this manner, you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present.

“And when the body and touches arise together in the present, *if* there is delight and passion for pleasing or enjoyable tactile experiences, then the consciousness that follows, becomes bound up

by delight and passion, taking pleasure in what is being touched, becoming engrossed in it. In this manner, you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present.

“And when the mind and thoughts, or mental states arise together in the present, *if* there is delight and passion for pleasing or enjoyable mental states, then the consciousness that follows, becomes bound up by delight and passion, taking pleasure in what is being mentally experienced, becoming engrossed in it. In this manner, you falter and get pulled into whatever arises in the present.

“It is in this manner, Bhikkhu, that one falters and gets pulled into whatever arises in the present.

6. “And how, Bhikkhu, do you *not* falter, as you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present?

“Bhikkhu, when the eyes and visible objects arise together in the present, if there is *neither* delight *nor* passion for pleasing or enjoyable visible objects and sights, then the consciousness that follows, is free, *neither* bound up by delight nor by passion, therefore *not* taking pleasure in what is being seen, nor becoming engrossed by it or pulled into it. In this manner, you do *not* falter; instead, you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“And when the ears and sounds arise together in the present, if there is *neither* delight *nor* passion for pleasing or enjoyable sounds, then the consciousness that follows, is free; *neither* bound up by delight nor by passion, therefore *not* taking pleasure in what is being heard, nor becoming engrossed by it or pulled into it. In this manner, you do *not* falter; instead, you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“And when the nose and fragrances arise together in the present, if there is *neither* delight *nor* passion for pleasing or enjoyable smells, then the consciousness that follows, is free; *neither* bound up by delight nor by passion, therefore *not* taking pleasure in what is being smelled, nor becoming engrossed by it or pulled into it. In this manner, you do *not* falter; instead, you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“And when the tongue and flavors arise together in the present, if there is *neither* delight *nor* passion for pleasing or enjoyable flavors, then the consciousness that follows, is free; *neither* bound up by delight nor by passion, therefore *not* taking pleasure in what is being tasted, nor becoming engrossed by it or pulled into it. In this manner, you do *not* falter; instead, you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“And when the body and touches arise together in the present, if there is *neither* delight *nor* passion for pleasing or enjoyable tactile experiences, then the consciousness that follows, is free; *neither* bound up by delight nor by passion, therefore *not* taking pleasure in what is being touched, nor becoming engrossed by it or pulled into it. In this manner, you do *not* falter; instead,

you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“And when the mind and thoughts, or mental states arise together in the present, if there is *neither* delight *nor* passion for pleasing or enjoyable mental states, then the consciousness that follows, is free; *neither* bound up by delight nor by passion, therefore *not* taking pleasure in what is being mentally experienced or cognized, nor becoming engrossed by it or pulled into it. In this manner, you do *not* falter; instead, you remain immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“It is in this manner, Bhikkhu, that one does not falter, as one remains immovable, steadfast, and discerning with insight; maintaining the course of wisdom with whatever arises in the present.

“Therefore, Bhikkhu:

*‘Do not resuscitate the past, nor tie yourself to hopes or be anxious
About what may lie in the future.
For, the past is over and done with, while the future has not yet arrived.
However, those things that keep arising in the present,
He goes on discerning them all with penetrating insight, while they occur.
The one who is indeed unagitated, unwavering in his resolve,
He maintains the course of wisdom, steadfast.
Today is the time for the Work to be done,
Tomorrow? It may very well be too late, as Death might already be here.
For no bargain can be struck with Death and its mighty armies.
But, for him who lives working untiringly both day and night,
It is he, whom The Tranquil Sage has called:
‘The Ideal Lover of Solitude.’*

This is what The Blessed One said.

The Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya’s heart was utterly gladdened and filled with much joy and delight, as he carefully listened to the instruction given to him by The Great Teacher Himself.

Sādhū

Sādhū

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