SN 4.1 — SN 4:1 Ascetic Actions | Tapokamma Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

Ascetic Actions

Tapokamma Sutta (SN 4:1)

I have heard that on one occasion, when the Blessed One was newly self-awakened, he was dwelling near Uruvelā on the bank of the Nerañjarā River, at the root of the Goatherd's Banyan Tree.

Then, when the Blessed One was alone in seclusion, this train of thought arose in his awareness, “Released am I from that practice of extreme austerities! How good that I’m released from that useless practice of extreme austerities! How good that I’m released, that I have attained awakening!”

Then Māra the Evil One, having known with his awareness the train of thought in the Blessed One's awareness, went to the Blessed One and addressed him in verse:

“Straying from the ascetic actions

by which young brahmans are purified,

impure, you suppose you’re pure.

You’ve missed the path to purity.”

Then, having understood that “This is Mara the Evil One,” the Blessed One replied to him in verses:

“Having known it to be useless,

any further1 austerity,

each bringing nothing,

like oars & rudder on dry land:

Developing virtue, concentration, & discernment,

the path to awakening,

I’ve attained the foremost purity.

But you, End-maker, are struck down.”

Then Mara the Evil One—sad & dejected at realizing, “The Blessed One knows me, the One Well-Gone knows me”—vanished right there.

Note

1. Reading aparaṁ with the Thai edition. The Burmese and Sri Lankan editions read amaraṁ, deathless.