SN 11.3 — Dhajagga Sutta: Banner Protection

English translation by Piyadassi Thera.

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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

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was living near Savatthi at Jetavana at the monastery of Anathapindika. Then he addressed the monks saying, "O monks." — "Venerable Sir," said the monks by way of reply to the Blessed One. Thereupon he spoke as follows:

"Monks, I shall relate a former incident. There arose a battle between the Devas (gods) and Asuras. Then Sakka, the Lord of the devas, addressed the devas of the Tavatimsa heaven thus:

"'Happy ones, if the devas who have gone to the battle should experience fear or terror or suffer from hair standing on end, let them behold the crest of my own banner. If you do so, any fear, terror or hair standing on end arising in you will pass away.

"'If you fail to look up to the crest of my banner, look at the crest of the banner of Pajapati, King of gods. If you do so, any fear, terror or hair standing on end arising in you will pass away.

"'If you fail to look up to the crest of Pajapati, King of the gods, look at the crest of the banner of Varuna, King of the gods. If you do so, any fear, terror or hair standing on end arising in you will pass away.'

"Monks, any fear, terror or hair standing on end arising in them who look at the crest of the banner of Sakka... The Lord of the gods, of Pajapati... of Varuna... of Isana, the King of the gods, any fear terror or hair standing on end, may pass away, or may not pass away. What is the reason for this?

"Sakka, the Lord of gods, O monks, is not free from lust, not free from hate, not free from delusion, and is therefore liable to fear, terror, fright, and flight. I also say unto you O monks — if any fear, terror or hair standing on end should arise in you when you have gone to the forest or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty house (lonely place), then think only of me thus:

"'Such Indeed is the Blessed One, arahant (Consummate One), supremely enlightened, endowed with knowledge and virtue, welcome being, knower of worlds, the peerless trainer of persons, teacher of gods and men, the Buddha, the Blessed One.' Monks, if you think of me, any fear, terror, or standing of hair on end, that may arise in you, will pass away.

"If you fail to think of me, then think of the Dhamma (the Doctrine) thus: 'Well expounded is the Dhamma by the Blessed One, a Dhamma to be realized by oneself and gives immediate results, a Dhamma which invites investigation and leads up to Nibbana, a Dhamma to be understood by the wise each for himself.' Monks, if you think of the Dhamma, any fear, terror or hair standing on end, that may arise in you, will pass away.

"If you fail to think of the Dhamma, then think of the Sangha (the Order) thus: 'Of good conduct is the Order of Disciples of the Blessed One, of upright conduct is the Order of Disciples of the Blessed One, of wise conduct is the Order of Disciples of the Blessed One, of dutiful conduct is the Order of Disciples of the Blessed One. This Order of Disciples of the Blessed One — namely those four pairs of persons,[1] the eight kinds of individuals[2] — is worthy of offerings, is worthy of hospitality, is worthy of gifts, is worthy of reverential salutations, is an incomparable field of merit for the world.' Monks, if you think of the Sangha, any fear, terror or hair standing on end, that may arise in you, will pass away. What is the reason for this? The Tathagata, O monks, who is arahant, supremely enlightened, is free from lust, free from hate, is free from delusion, and is not liable to fear, terror, fright or flight."

So said the Blessed One. Having thus spoken, the teacher, the "Welcome Being" (Sugata), further said:

i. Whether in forest or at foot of tree, Or in some secluded spot, O monks, Do call to mind that Buddha Supreme; Then will there be no fear to you at all. ii. If you think not of the Buddha, O monks, That Lord of the world and Chief of men, Then do think, O monks, of that Dhamma; So well preached and leading to Nibbana. iii. If you think not of the Dhamma, O monks Well preached and leading to Nibbana; Then do think, O monks, of that Sangha, That wonderful field of merit to all. iv. To those recalling the Buddha supreme, To those recalling the Dhamma sublime, And to those recalling the Sangha, No fear, no terror will make them quiver.

Notes

1.

The four pairs of persons constitute the four kinds of aryan disciples who have attained the four paths and four fruits of sanctity (magga and phala), namely: sotapatti, "stream-entry"; sakadagami, "once-return"; anagami, "non-return"; and arahattha, arahantship, the fourth and the last stage at which all fetters are severed and taints rooted out.

2.

The above four pairs become eight when the Paths and Fruits are regarded separately.