

Dīgha Nikāya - The Long Discourses

About Subha; Morality, Concentration, Wisdom (Subha Sutta)

1.1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. Once the Venerable Ānanda was staying at was staying at Sāvattthi, in Jeta's groves, in Anāthapiṇḍika's park, shortly after the Lord's final passing. And at that time the youth Subha, Todeyya's son, was staying at Sāvattthi on some business.

1.2 And Subha said to a certain young man: 'Go, my lad, to where the ascetic Ānanda is, ask him in my name if he is in good health, free from fatigue, strong, vigorous and dwelling in comfort, and say: "It would be good if the reverend Ānanda would, out of compassion, visit the dwelling of Subha the son of Todeyya."'

1.3. 'Very good, Sir', replied the young man. Then he went to the Venerable Ānanda, exchanged courtesies with him, and sat down to one side. Then he delivered the message.

1.4. The venerable Ānanda replied: 'It is not the right time, young man. Today I have taken some medicine. Perhaps it will b4e possible to come tomorrow when the time and the occasion are suitable.' And the young man rose, returned to Subha and reported what had passed between him and the Venerable Ānanda, adding: 'My mission has been thus far accomplished, that the Reverend Ānanda will probably take the opportunity to come tomorrow.'

1.5. And indeed, as that night was ending, the Venerable Ānanda dressed in the early morning, took his robe and bowl and, accompanied by the Venerable Cetaka, came to Subha's dwelling, and sat down on the prepared seat. Then Subha approached the Venerable Ānanda, exchanged courtesies with him, and sat down to one side. Then he said: 'The Reverend Ānanda was for a long time the Reverend Gotama's personal attendant, dwelling in his presence and near him. You, Reverend Ānanda, would know what things the Reverend Gotama praised, and with which he aroused, exhorted and established people. Which, Reverend Ānanda, were those things?

1.6. 'Subha, there were three divisions of things which the Lord praised, and with which he aroused, exhorted and established people. Which three? The division of Ariyan morality, the division of Ariyan concentration, and the division of Ariyan wisdom. These were the three divisions of things which the Lord praised...'

‘Well, Reverend Ānanda, what is the division of Ariyan morality which the Reverend Gotama praised...?’

1.7-29. ‘Young sir, a Tathagata arises in the world, an Arahant, fully-enlightened Buddha, endowed with wisdom and conduct, Well-Farer, Knower of the worlds, incomparable Trainer of men to be tamed, Teacher of gods and humans, enlightened and blessed. He, having realized it by his own super-knowledge, proclaims this world with its devas, māras and Brahmās, its princes and people. He preaches the Dhamma which is lovely in its beginning, lovely in its middle, lovely in its ending, in the spirit and in the letter, and displays the fully-perfected and purified holy life. A disciple goes forth and practices the moralities, etc. (Sutta 2, verses 41/63). Thus a monk is perfected in morality.

1.30. ‘That is the division of Ariyan morality which the Lord praised...But something more remains to be done’. ‘It is wonderful, Reverend Ānanda, it is marvelous!! This division of Ariyan morality is perfectly fulfilled, not left incomplete. And I do not see this division of Ariyan morality fulfilled thus anywhere among the ascetics and Brahmins of other schools. And if any of them were to have found this perfection in themselves, they would have been so delighted that they would have said: “We’ve done enough! The goal of our asceticism has been reached! There’s nothing more to be done!” And yet the Reverend Ānanda declares that there is more to be done!’

[End of first recitation-section]

2.1. ‘Reverend Ānanda, what is the division of Ariyan concentration which the Reverend Gotama praised...?’

2.2-18. ‘And how is a monk a guardian of the sense-doors? He guards the sense-doors and attains the four jhānas (Sutta 2, verses 64-82). This comes to him through concentration.

2.19. ‘That is the division of Ariyan concentration which the Lord praised... But something more remains to be done.’ ‘It is wonderful, Reverend Ānanda, it is marvelous!! This division of Ariyan concentration is perfectly fulfilled, not left incomplete. And I do not see this division of Ariyan concentration fulfilled thus anywhere among the ascetics and Brahmins of other schools. And if any of them were to have found this perfection in themselves, they would have been so delighted that they would have said: “We’ve done enough! The goal of our asceticism has been reached!

There's nothing more to be done!" And yet the Reverend Ānanda declares that there is more to be done!'

2.20. 'Reverend Ānanda, which is the division of Ariyan wisdom which the Reverend Gotama praised?'

2.21-22. 'And so, with mind concentrated he attains various insights (Sutta 2, verses 83-84). That is known to him by wisdom.

2.23-36. 'He realizes the Four Noble Truths, the path and the cessation of the corruptions (Sutta 2, verses 85-97). And he knows: "...There is nothing further here."

2.37. 'That is the division of Ariyan wisdom which the Lord praised, with which he aroused, exhorted and established people. Beyond that there is nothing to be done.'

'It is wonderful Reverend Ānanda, it is marvelous! This division of Ariyan wisdom is perfectly fulfilled, not left incomplete. And I do not see this division of Ariyan wisdom fulfilled thus anywhere among the ascetics and Brahmins of other schools. And there is nothing further to be done! Excellent, Reverend Ānanda, excellent! It is as if someone were to set up what had been knocked down, or to point out the way to one who had got lost, or to bring an oil-lamp in to a dark place, so that those with eyes could see what was there. Just so the Reverend Ānanda has expounded the Dhamma in various ways.'

'Reverend Ānanda, I go for refuge to the Lord Gotama, the Dhamma and the Sangha. May the Reverend Ānanda accept me as a lay-follower who has taken refuge from this day forth as long as life shall last!'

Dīgha Nikāya 10

Division One – The Moralities

Translated by Maurice Walshe

Contributed by Alonso Martinez

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