

## Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

### The Simile of the Ant Hill (Vammikasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living in the monastery offered by Anaathapindika in Jeta's grove in Saavatthi.. At that time venerable Kumaarakassapa lived in the Dark forest. When the night was waning a certain deity illuminated the whole of the Dark forest and approached venerable Kumaarakassapa stood on a side, and said, Bhikkhu, this ant hill smokes in the night and blazes in the day. The brahmin said

Wise one, take a tool and dig. When digging with the tool he saw an obstacle; Good one, an obstacle. The brahmin said remove the obstacle wise one, and dig with the tool.. Digging with the tool he saw a swollen dead body. Good one a swollen dead body. The brahmin said, wise one remove the swollen dead body and dig with the tool.. Digging with the tool he saw a forked path. Good one a forked path. The brahmin said, remove the forked path and dig with the tool. Good one a casket. The brahmin said, wise one remove the casket and dig with the tool. Digging with the tool he saw a tortoise. Good one, a tortoise. The brahmin said remove the tortoise and dig with the tool .Digging with the tool he saw a slaughter house. Good one a slaughter house. The brahmin said, wise one remove the slaughter house and dig with the tool. Digging with the tool he saw a tendon of flesh. Good one a tendon of flesh. The brahmin said, wise one remove the tendon of flesh and dig with the tool. Digging with the tool, he saw a snake. Good one a snake. The brahmin said, wise one, stop do not hurt the snake, worship the snake. Bhikkhu, approach the Blessed One and ask this question and as he explains it bear it in mind. In this world of gods and men, together with its Maaras, Brahmaas and the community of recluses and brahmins I do not see anyone who could answer this question and convince the mind except the Thus Gone One, a disciple of the Thus Gone One or one who has heard it .Saying that the deity vanished from there.. .

Venerable Kumaarakassapa at the end of that night approached the Blessed One, worshipped and sat on a side. Sitting venerable Kumaarakassapa said thus to the Blessed One. Venerable sir, last night, a certain deity illuminated the whole of Dark the forest and approached me and stood on a side, and said, Bhikkhu, this ant hill smokes in the night and blazes in the day. The brahmin said Wise one, take a tool and dig. When digging with the tool he saw an obstacle; Good one, an obstacle. The brahmin said remove the obstacle wise one, and dig with the tool.. Digging with the tool he saw a swollen dead body. Good one a swollen dead body. The brahmin said, wise one remove the swollen dead body and dig with the tool.. Digging with the tool he saw a forked path. Good one a forked path. The brahmin said, remove the forked path and dig with the tool. Good one a casket. The brahmin said, wise one remove the casket and dig with the tool. Digging with the tool he saw a tortoise. Good one a tortoise. The brahmin said , wise one remove the tortoise and dig with the tool Digging with the tool he saw a slaughter house. Good one a slaughter house. The brahmin said, wise one remove the slaughter house and dig with the tool. Digging with the tool he saw a tendon of flesh. Good one a tendon of flesh. The brahmin said, wise one remove the tendon of flesh and dig with the tool. Digging with the tool, he saw a snake. Good one a snake. The brahmin said, wise one, stop do not hurt the snake, worship the snake. Bhikkhu, approach the Blessed One and ask this question and as he explains it bear it in mind. In this world of gods and men, together with its Maaras, Brahmaas and the community of recluses and brahmins I do not see anyone who could answer this question and convince the mind except the Thus Gone One, a disciple of the Thus Gone One or one who has heard it .Saying that the deity vanished from there.

Venerable sir, what is an ant hill, what is to smoke in the night. What is to blaze in the day. Who is the brahmin and who is the wise one, what is the tool, what is to dig, what is an obstacle, what is a swollen dead body, what is the forked path, what is a casket, what is a tortoise, what is a slaughter house, what is a tendon of flesh, and who is the snake..

Bhikkhu, ant hill is a synonym for this four elemental body brought forth by mother and father, supported on rice and bread and subject to impermanence, brushing, breaking and destruction. Whatever work done during the day, is thought and discursively thought in the night,

this is to smoke during the night. What is thought and discursively thought during the night is put into action through body, words and mind during the day, that is to blaze in the day Brahmin is a synonym for the Thus Gone One, worthy and rightfully enlightened. The wise one is a synonym for the trainer. The tool is a synonym for the noble one's wisdom.

Dig is a synonym for aroused effort. Obstacle is a synonym for ignorance. Remove the obstacle is dispel ignorance Its meaning is wise one take a tool and dig. Bhikkhu, a swollen dead body is a synonym for anger and restlessness. Take the tool dig and remove the swollen dead body is dispel anger and restlessness. A forked path is a synonym for doubts. Take the tool , dig and remove the forked path is its meaning. The casket is a synonym for the five hindrances;; sensual interest, aversion, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubts. Dispel the five hindrances is. wise one take a tool dig and remove the casket is its meaning.. Tortoise is a synonym for the five holding masses. Such as the holding mass of matter, the holding mass of feelings, the holding mass of perceptions, the holding mass of determinations, and the holding mass of consciousness. Remove the tortoise is give up the five holding masses. Wise one take a tool, dig and remove the tortoise is its meaning. .Slaughter house is a synonym for the five strands of sensual pleasures. Such as pleasing agreeable forms arousing fondness cognizable by eye consciousness. Pleasing agreeable sounds arousing fondness cognizable by ear consciousness. Pleasing agreeable smells arousing fondness cognizable by nose consciousness. Pleasing agreeable tastes arousing fondness cognizable by tongue consciousness and pleasing agreeable touches arousing fondness cognizable by body consciousness. Remove the slaughter house is dispel the five strands of sensual desires. Wise one take the tool dig and remove the slaughter house is its meaning. A tendon of flesh is a synonym for interest and greed. Wise one take the tool and dig is its meaning. The snake is a synonym for the bhikkhu with desires destroyed. Wait! Do not hurt the snake, worship the snake, is its meaning.

The Blssed One said thus and venerable Kumaarakassapa delighted in the words of the Blessed One.