

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The Simile of the Deer Feeder (Nivaapasutta)

I heard thus:

At one time the Blessed One lived in the monastery offered by Anaathapindika in Jeta's grove in Saavatthi. From there the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus: "Bhikkhus, the deer feeder does not feed the wild animals thinking may the wild animals eat this food, be beautiful, live long and may they feed on this food for a long time. Yet the deer feeder feeds the wild animals thinking may the wild animals encroaching for food be intoxicated, eat this food be swooned and be negligent and be subjected to the wicked actions in this encroachment.

The first set of wild animals, encroached the deer feeder's encroachment, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent, and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the first set of wild animals were not released from the power of the deer feeder.

The second set of wild animals together thought thus; The first set of wild animals, encroached the deer feeder's encroachment, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent, and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the first set of wild animals were not released from the powers of the deer feeder. What if we abstained from all fearful fodder, entered a forest dwelling. So they abstained from all fearful fodder, entered a forest dwelling and abode. In the last month of the Summer when grass and water decreased, their bodies emaciated much, power and effort decreased, Then they went back to the deer feeder ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the second set of wild animals were not released from the power of the deer feeder.

The third set of wild animals together thought thus: The first set of wild animals, encroached the deer feeder's encroachment, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent, and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the first set of wild animals were not released from the power of the deer feeder.

The second set of wild animals together thought thus; The first set of wild animals, encroached the deer feeder's encroachment, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent, and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the first set of wild animals were not released from the powers of the deer feeder. What if we abstained from all fearful fodder, entered a forest dwelling. So they abstained from all fearful fodder, entered a forest dwelling and abode. In the last month of the Summer when grass and water decreased, their bodies emaciated much, power and effort decreased , Then they went back to the deer feeder, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the second set of wild animals too were not released from the power of the deer feeder.

Why shouldn't we make a settlement in the encroachment of the deer feeder and eat the fodder not swooned, not intoxicated, not negligent and not become subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. So they made a settlement in the encroachment of the deer feeder and ate the fodder not swooned, not intoxicated and not negligent and did not become subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder in that same encroachment.

Then it occurred to the deer feeder and his followers: This third set of wild animals are crafty, trained deceivers are proficient devils, we do not know their comings and goings. What if we surround the enclosure on all sides with sticks. Indeed we will see the settlement of the third set of wild animals and get at them. Then they surrounded the enclosure on all sides with sticks and the deer feeder and his followers saw the settlement of the wild animals and got at them. Thus the third set of wild animals too were not released from the power of the deer feeder.

The fourth set of wild animals together thought thus: The first set of wild animals, encroached the deer feeder's encroachment, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent, and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the first set of wild animals were not released from the power of the deer feeder. The second set of wild animals together thought thus; The first set of wild animals, encroached the deer feeder's encroachment, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent, and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the first set of wild animals were not released from the power of the deer feeder. What if we abstained from all fearful fodder, entered a forest dwelling. So they abstained from all fearful fodder, entered a forest dwelling and abode. In the last month of the Summer when grass and water decreased, their bodies emaciated much, power and effort decreased, Then they went back to the deer feeder, ate the fodder swooned, became intoxicated and negligent and became subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. Thus the second set of wild animals too were not released from the power of the deer feeder. The third set of wild animals thought Why shouldn't we make a settlement in the encroachment of the deer feeder and eat the fodder not swooned, not intoxicated, not negligent and not become subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder, in that same encroachment. So they made a settlement in the encroachment of the deer feeder and ate the fodder not swooned, not intoxicated and not negligent and did not become subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder in that same encroachment. Then it occurred to the deer feeder and his followers: This third set of wild animals are crafty, trained deceivers are proficient devils, we do not know their comings and goings. What if we surround the enclosure on all sides with sticks. Indeed we will see the settlement of the third set of wild animals and get at them. Then they surrounded the enclosure on all sides with sticks and the deer feeder and his followers saw the settlement of the wild animals and got at them. Thus the third set of wild animals too were not released from the power of the deer feeder.

Then it occurred to the fourth set of wild animals, what if we make our settlement in the encroachment so that the deer feeder and his followers do not know our comings and goings * and eat the fodder not swooned, not intoxicated, not negligent and not become subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder in that same encroachment. So they made their settlement in the encroachment, so that the deer feeder and his followers do not know their comings and goings and eating the fodder

not swooned, not intoxicated and not negligent and not becoming subjects to the wishes of the deer feeder in the encroachment.

Then it occurred to the deer feeder and his followers, this fourth set of wild animals are crafty and trained deceivers are proficient devils, we do not know their comings and goings. What if we surround the enclosure on all sides with sticks. Indeed we will see the settlement of the fourth set of wild animals and get at them. Then they surrounded the enclosure on all sides with sticks and the deer feeder and followers did not see the settlement of the wild animals and did not get at them. Then it occurred to the deer feeder and his followers: If we hurt the fourth set of wild animals, others will be hurt, and that will hurt others. What if we take care of the fourth set of wild animals. So the deer feeder and his followers took care of the fourth set of wild animals. Thus the fourth set of wild animals were released from the power of the deer feeder..

This is a comparison to explain the meaning, this is its meaning. Fodder is a synonym for the five strands of sensual pleasures. The deer feeder is a synonym for Maara the evil one. The Followers of the deer feeder is a synonym for Maara's following. Wild animals is a synonym for recluses and brahmins.

The first set of recluses and brahmins encroaching partook of the worldly matter of Maara, swooned and became intoxicated and negligent came under the power of Maara and worldly matter. like the first set of wild animals, I say this first set of recluses and brahmins are comparable to them.

The second set of recluses and brahmins together thought thus: The first set of recluses and brahmins encroaching partook of the worldly matter of Maara, swooned and became intoxicated and negligent came under the power of Maara and worldly matter, this first set of recluses and brahmins were not released from the power of Maara. What if we abstained from all fearful worldly matter and abode in a forest dwelling. They abstained from all fearful worldly matter and abode in a forest dwelling. There they ate vegetables, millets, raw rice, Dadulla rice, water plants, husked rice powder, rice

foam, sesame flour, grass, cowdung, roots and fruits and picked fruits. In the last month of Summer when grass and water dried, their bodies emaciated and power and effort decreasing they returned to partake of the worldly matter of Maara. They partaking food swooned became intoxicated and negligent and came under the power of Maara and worldly matter.. Thus the second set of recluses and brahmins were not released from the power of Maara like the second set of wild animals, I say, this second set of recluses and brahmins. are comparable to them.

The third set of recluses of brahmins together thought thus: The first set of recluses and brahmins encroaching partook of the worldly matter of Maara, swooned and became intoxicated and negligent were under the power of Maara and worldly matter, this first set of recluses and brahmins were not released from the power of Maara. What if we abstained from all fearful worldly matter and abode in a forest dwelling. They abstained from all fearful worldly matter and abode in a forest dwelling. There they ate vegetables, millets, raw rice, Dadulla rice, water plants, husked rice powder, rice foam, sesame flour, grass, cowdung, roots and fruits and picked fruits. In the last month of Summer when grass and water dried, their bodies emaciated and power and effort decreasing returned to partake of the worldly matter of Maara. They partaking food swooned became intoxicated and negligent and came under the power of Maara and worldly matter.. Thus the second set of recluses and brahmins were not released from the power of Maara

Then it occurred to them what if we make our settlement in Maara's worldly matter, and partake of that worldly matter not swooned, and not intoxicated and not negligent and be not subjects of Maara and his worldly matter. They made their settlement in Maara's worldly matter, partook of the worldly matter not swooned and not intoxicated and not becoming negligent did not become the subjects of Maara and worldly matter. Yet they had such views such as: Is the world eternal or not eternal. Is it limited or not limited. Is the soul the body, or is the soul one and the body something different. Is the Thus Gone One after death, or isn't the Thus Gone One after death. Is it the Thus Gone One is and is not after death. Is it the Thus Gone One, neither is nor is not after death. Thus bhikkhus, this third set of bhikkhus were not released from the power of Maara. like the third set of wild animals I say, this third set of recluses and brahmins, are comparable to them.

The fourth set of recluses of brahmins together thought thus: The first set of recluses and brahmins encroaching partook of the worldly matter of Maara, swooned and became intoxicated and negligent came under the power of Maara and worldly matter, this first set of recluses and brahmins were not released from the power of Maara. What if we abstained from all fearful worldly matter and abode in a forest dwelling. They abstained from all fearful worldly matter and abode in a forest dwelling. There they ate vegetables, millets, raw rice, Dadulla rice, water plants, husked rice powder, rice foam, sesame flour, grass, cowdung, roots and fruits and picked fruits. In the last month of Summer when grass and water dried, their bodies emaciated and power and effort decreasing returned to partake of the worldly matter of Maara. There they partaking food swooned became intoxicated and negligent and came under the power of Maara and worldly matter.. Thus the second set of recluses and brahmins were not released from the power of Maara

Then it occurred to them what if we make our settlement in Maara's worldly matter, and partake of that worldly matter not swooned, and not intoxicated and not negligent and be not subjects of Maara and his worldly matter. They made their settlement in the encroachment of Maara's worldly matter, partook of the worldly matter not swooned and not intoxicated and not becoming negligent did not become the subjects of Maara and worldly matter. Yet they had such views such as: Is the world eternal or not eternal. Is it limited or not limited. Is the soul, the body, or is the soul one and the body something different. Is the Thus Gone One after death, or isn't the Thus Gone One after death. Is it the Thus Gone One is and is not after death. Is it the Thus Gone One neither is, nor is not after death. Thus bhikkhus, this third set of bhikkhus were not released from the power of Maara. What if we make our settlement not accessible to death and his followers, in this same encroachment of death and this worldly matter, and partake this worldly matter not swooned, not intoxicated and not becoming negligent, we would not become the subjects of Maara in this same encroachment. They made their settlement not accessible to death and his followers, and settling in that same encroachment of death and this worldly matter partook of this worldly matter not swooned, not intoxicated and not becoming negligent, did not become the subjects of Maara in this same encroachment. Bhikkhus, in this manner the fourth set of recluses and brahmins were released from

the power of Maara, like. the fourth set of wild animals, I say, this fourth set of recluses and brahmins are comparable to them..

Bhikkhus, what is inaccessible to Maara and the followings of Maara. Here, bhikkhus, the bhikkhu secluded from sensual thoughts and demeritorious thoughts with thoughts and thought processes and with joy and pleasantness born of seclusion, attained to abides in the first jhaana. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu overcoming thoughts and thought processes, the mind internally appeased and brought to one point, without thoughts and discursive thoughts, with joy and pleasantness born of concentration attained to abides in the second jhaana. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one has gone beyond the sight of death the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu with joy and with equanimity to detachment abides mindful and aware, experiences pleasantness too with the body, to this the noble ones say: mindfully abiding in pleasantness with equanimity. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one, has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu, giving up pleasantness, and unpleasantness, and earlier overcoming pleasure and displeasure, without unpleasantness and pleasantness and mindfulness purified with equanimity attained to abides in the fourth jhaana. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one has gone beyond the sight of death the evil one. Again the bhikkhu overcoming all perceptions of matter and overcoming perceptions of anger, not attending to various perceptions, with space is boundless attains to abides in the sphere of space. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one, has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu overcoming all perceptions of space with consciousness is boundless attains to abides in the sphere of consciousness. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one, has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu overcoming all the sphere of consciousness, with there is nothing attains to abides in the sphere of no-thingness. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one, has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu, overcoming all the sphere of no-thingness, attains to abides in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one, has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one. Again, the bhikkhu overcoming all the sphere of neither-

perception-nor-non-perception, attains to the cessation of perceptions and feelings and abides. Seeing it with wisdom too, desires get destroyed. To this is said, that death is blindfolded, having destroyed the feetless one, has gone beyond the sight of death, the evil one.

The Blessed One said thus, and those bhikkhus delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

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