

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The Discourse Given at Saalaa (Saaleyyakasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was touring the kingdom of Kosala with a large community of bhikkhus and entered the brahmin village Saalaa. The householders of Saalaa heard that the good recluse Gotama the son of the Sakyas, who had gone forth as a homeless was touring the kingdom of Kosala, with a large community of bhikkhus, has entered the brahmin village of Saalaa. Such fame had spread of that good Gotama. That blessed One is perfect, rightfully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knower of worlds, the incomparable tamer of those to be tamed, Teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. To this world of gods and men, together with its Maaras, Brahmaas, the community of recluses and brahmins and gods and men, he declares a teaching by himself known and realised. It is good at the beginning, in the middle and at the end. It is full of meaning even in the letters proclaiming the pure and complete, holy life. It is good to see such noble ones. Then the brahmin householders of Saalaa approached the Blessed One. Some worshipped the Blessed One, some exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One, some clasped hands towards the Blessed One, some announced their clan and name and some were silent. Then they all sat on aside. Then those brahmin householders said thus to the Blessed One: Good Gotama, why do some beings after death go to loss, to hell and why do some beings go to increase and are born in heaven? O! householders, owing to misbehaving and not living according to the Teaching some go to loss, to hell and others conducting themselves well and living according to the Teaching go to increase and are born in heaven. We do not understand this short exposition of good Gotama. Good if this short exposition be explained to us. The Blessed One said, then householders listen and attend carefully I will explain.

O! householders, threefold is wrong conduct by body, fourfold is wrong conduct by words, and threefold is wrong conduct by mind. Householders, what is the threefold wrong conduct by body?.

Here, a certain one destroys living things. Is cruel, with bloody hands. Is engaged in destroying living things without compassion. In village or forest takes others' possessions stealthily. Misbehaves in sexuality, misbehaving with those protected by father, mother, mother and father, brother, sister, relations, with those with a husband, becoming liable to punishment, or even those garlanded and made to promise. Householders this is the threefold wrong conduct by body. Householders, what is the fourfold wrong conduct by words. Here, householders, a certain one tells lies. In an assembly, in a gathering, amidst relations, in the guild, or in the presence of the royal family, called upon to stand witness and when asked to tell what he knows. Not knowing would say I know and knowing would say I do not know. Not seeing would say I saw and seeing would say, I did not see. Thus for one's benefit, for another's benefit, or for some small gain would tell lies with awareness. Would slander, hearing here would tell it elsewhere to make a split here and hearing elsewhere would tell it here to make a split there. Thus would disunite the united, fond of disuniting would talk words to disunite. Would talk roughly, saying insolent words that are sharp and cursing. Words bordering on anger and not conducive to concentration. Would talk frivolous, untimely, untruthful words, not in keeping with the Teaching and the discipline. Words that could not be treasured. Householders, this is the fourfold verbal wrong conduct. Householders, what is the threefold wrong conduct in mind? Here, householders, one covets (*1) others' possessions, thinks may they be mine. Is angry with a defiled mind, thinks may they come to destruction and may they not exist. Is with wrong perverted view, such as there are no results for a gift and sacrifice, there are no results for pure and impure actions. There is no this world, other world, no mother, no father, no spontaneously arisen beings. There are no recluses and brahmins who have come to the right path and by themselves realising declare this world and the other world. Householders, this is the threefold mental misbehaviour. Householders, on account of this wrong conduct and not living according to the Teaching, a certain one after death is born in loss and go to hell (*2).

O! householders, right conduct by body is threefold, by words is fourfold and by mind is threefold. Householders, what is the threefold right bodily conduct? Here, a certain one abstains from destroying living things, throwing away stick and weapon ashamed abides compassionate to all living things In the village or forest does not take what is not given. Does not take others' possessions stealthily. Does not misbehave in sexuality by misbehaving with those protected by father, mother,

mother and father, brother, sister, relations, with those with a husband becoming liable to punishment, or even those garlanded and made to promise. Householders this is the threefold right conduct by body. Householders, what is the fourfold right conduct by words? Here, householders, a certain one does not tell lies. In an assembly, a gathering, amidst relations, in the guild, or in the presence of the royal family, called upon to stand witness when asked to tell what he knows, not knowing would say, I do not know. Knowing would say I know. Not seeing would say I did not see, seeing would say, I saw. Thus for his benefit, or another's or for some small gain would not tell lies with awareness. Would not slander, hearing here would not tell it elsewhere to make a split here. Hearing elsewhere would not tell it here to make a split there. Thus does not disunite the united, fond of uniting talks words to unite. Does not talk roughly. Says polite loving words going straight to the heart. Words pleasing to the populace at large. Does not talk frivolously. Says words that are timely, truthful and in accordance with the Teaching and discipline. Words that could be treasured. Householders, this is the fourfold right conduct in words. Householders, what is the threefold right conduct in mind? . Here, householders, one does not covet others' possessions. Does not think may they be mine. Is not angry, is not with a defiled mind. Thinks may these beings be well and happy. Is with right view not perverted Thinks there are results for a gift and sacrifice. There are results for pure and impure actions. There is this world, the other world, mother, father. There are spontaneously arisen beings, in the world. There are recluses and brahmins who have come to the right path and by themselves realising declare this world and the other world. Householders, this is the threefold right mental conduct. O! householders, on account of this right conduct and living according to the Teaching, after death, a certain one is born in increase in heaven*3).

Householders, if someone living in right conduct, according to the Teaching, were to wish, may I be born with the warrior householders after death, there is a possibility that he will be born with the warrior householders, after death. What is the reason: It happens to him living in right conduct, according to the Teaching. --may I be born with the brahmin householders after death,--with the householder stock after death, there is a possibility, that he will be born with the householder stock after death. .Householders, if someone living in right conduct, according to the Teaching, were to wish, may I be born with the retinue of the protecting gods – with the retinue of the gods of the thirty three,--with the Yaama gods,--with the gods of happiness, --with the gods attached to creating, --

with the gods attached to creating others, with gods holding brahma bodies, -- with the gods of lustre,--with gods of limited lustre,--with gods of limitless lustre,--with the radiant gods,-- with the gods of pleasantness,--with the gods of limited pleasantness,-- with the gods of limitless pleasantness,--with the gods full of happiness,--with the gods wielding power in space,--with the gods of non-destruction, --with the dissatisfied gods,--with the gods with insight,--with the gods of the highest heaven,--with the retinue of gods, in the sphere of space, in the sphere of consciousness, in the sphere of neither -perception -nor -non -perception, after death, there is a possibility, that they will be born, with the retinue of the gods in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non- perception. What is the reason. It happens to those living in right conduct, according to the Teaching. If someone living in right conduct according to the Teaching were to wish, may I destroying desires, the mind released and released through wisdom, here and now realise and abide, there is a possibility that he should destroying desires, the mind released and released through wisdom, here and now will realise and abide. What is the reason: It happens to those living in right conduct

When this was said, the brahmin householders of Saalaa said thus to the Blessed One. Now we understand venerable sir, It is as though good Gotama has reinstated something over turned. Made manifest something that was covered. As though the path was told to those who had lost their way, As though an oil lamp was lighted for those who have sight to see forms. Thus in many ways the Teaching is explained. Now we take refuge in good Gotama, in the Teaching and the Community. We are disciples who have taken refuge from good Gotama, from today until life lasts. .

Notes.

1. To covet-‘abhijjhaalu hoti’ This is something done with the mind. It’s to think greedily of other’s possessions. It is one of the ten demerits.

2. On account of this wrong conduct and not living according to the Teaching, a certain one after death is born in loss and go to hell ‘eva.m adhammacariyaa visamacariyaa hetu kho gahapatayo

evamidhekacce satta kaayassa bedhaa para.m maranaa apaaya.m duggati.m vinipaata.m niraya.m uppajjanti' The Blessed One here does not mention that all those who follow the wrong conduct and do not live according the Teaching, after death, go to loss and hell. So there is an interrogation. We should make a thorough inquiry into this. 3. On account of this right conduct and living according to the Teaching, a certain one after death is born in increase in heaven.'eva.m dhammacariyaa samacariyaa hetu kho gahapatayo evamidhekacce satta kaayassa bedhaa para.m maranaa sugati.m sagga.m loka.m uppajjanti' Again the Blessed One here does not mention, that all those who follow the right conduct and live according to the Teaching, after death are born in increase, in heaven. The mere following up of these ten actions of merit –'dasakusalakammaa'do not lead one to heaven, there should be some convincement about one's actions. So the Blessed One in this Sutta explains that the doer of those actions should have some aspiration for something higher than what one is now established in. There should be the nature of building one's character in all fields, constantly.

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