

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

To Kandaraka the Ascetic (Kandarakasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in Champa on the bank of the pond Gaggaraa, with a large Community of bhikkhus. Pessa, the elephant rider's son and the ascetic Kandaraka approached the Blessed One. Pessa the elephant rider's son worshipped the Blessed One and sat on a side, and Kandaraka the ascetic exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One and stood on a side. He observed the large silent Community of bhikkhus and said to the Blessed One. Good Gotama, it is surprising and wonderful, this training of the Community of bhikkhus. Did rightfully enlightened ones in the past train their Community of bhikkhus, in this same manner? Would perfect rightfully enlightened ones in the future train their Community of bhikkhus, in this same manner? Yes, Kandaraka, the perfect rightfully enlightened ones in the past trained the Community of bhikkhus, in this same manner. The Perfect rightfully enlightened ones in the future will train the Community of bhikkhus in this same manner. Kandaraka, in this Community of bhikkhus, there are ones who are perfect, with desires destroyed, the holy life lived and what should be done, done. There are trainers in this Community of bhikkhus, become clever and appeased through virtues and the mind well established in the fourfold ways of establishing mindfulness. What four: Abiding mindful and aware, to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world by reflecting the body in the body. Abiding mindful and aware, to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, by reflecting feelings in feelings. Abiding mindful and aware, to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, by reflecting the mental qualities in the mind, and abiding mindful and aware, to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, by reflecting thoughts in the Teaching.

When this was said, Pessa, the elephant rider's son said. Venerable sir, it is wonderful, how wisely the Blessed One has shown the four establishments of mindfulness for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of grief, and lament, and for dispelling unpleasantness and displeasure for attaining knowledge and realising extinction. Venerable sir, as a lay disciple wearing white clothes, from time to time I abide, in the four ways of establishing mindfulness. I abide mindful and aware, to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, by reflecting the body in the body. Abide mindful and aware, to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, reflecting feelings in feelings. Abide

mindful and aware to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, reflecting the mental states in the mind. Abide, mindful and aware to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world, reflecting the Teaching. Venerable sir, it is wonderful, you who live in the grip of humans, tolerating their blemishes, and craftinesses, know what is good for humans and what is bad for humans. Venerable, sir, the human grip is strong, as for the animals they live at ease..Venerable sir, I know the various ways in which the elephant is usually trained in Champa, correcting all its craftinesses, fraudulent ways and deceitful ways. As for us in body we behave as servants, messengers, workmen or anything else, by words we are something else, and in mind we are not that. Venerable sir, it is wonderful, you who live in the grip of humans, tolerating their blemishes, and craftinesses, know what is good for humans and what is bad for humans. Venerable, sir, the human grip is strong, as for the animals they live at ease. Yes, Pessa, the human grip is strong, and the animals live at ease. Pessa, there are four persons evident in the world. What are the four? Pessa, a certain person torments himself, yoked to tormenting himself. A certain person torments others yoked to tormenting others. A certain person torments himself and others yoked to tormenting all. A certain person does not torment himself, or others and is not yoked to tormenting either Not tormenting himself, or others, is here and now extinguished, cooled, and abides in pleasantness, become one like Brahma. Pessa, of these four persons who is more pleasing to you?.

Venerable sir the person who torments his self, yoked to it, does not please me. The person who torments others yoked to it, does not please me. The person who torments his self and others yoked to tormenting his self and others does not please me. The person who does not torment his self, or others, is not yoked to tormenting either is here and now extinguished, cooled, and abides in pleasantness, become one like Brahma (*3). This person pleases me. Pessa, why do these three persons not please you?. Venerable sir, this person who torments his self, yoked to it, torments his self that desires pleasantness and loathes unpleasantness. Therefore this person does not please me. This person that torments others yoked to it, torments others desiring pleasantness and loathing unpleasantness. Therefore this person does not please me. This person, that torments his self and others yoked to tormenting his self and others, torments himself and others that desire pleasantness and loathe unpleasantness. Therefore he does not please me. This person who does not torment his self or others is not yoked to tormenting his self or others is here and now extinguished, cooled, and abides in pleasantness, become one like Brahma. This is the person who pleases me. Venerable sir,

we have to go now, we have a lot of work to do. Pessa, do what you think is fit. Then the elephant rider's son Pessa pleased and delighted with the words of the Blessed One got up from his seat, worshipped and circumambulated the Blessed One and went away.

Soon after the elephant rider's son had left. The Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus: Bhikkhus, if the elephant rider's son had waited some more time until I explained these four persons, he would have amassed, much knowledge. O! Blessed One, this is the time to explain these four persons. The bhikkhus, hearing it from the Blessed One would bear it in mind. Bhikkhus, listen carefully, I will tell.

Bhikkhus, who torments his self, yoked to tormenting his self? A certain one goes without clothes, licks the hands without manners. Does not accept or extend an invitation. Does not accept what is brought, or specially prepared. Does not enjoy an invitation. Does not accept from the rim of, a pot, a cooking vessel or when a goat is about the place. Does not accept across a stick or a broom. Does not accept from two people partaking food, a woman bearing child, a woman giving suck, a woman gone with a man, a defiled woman, or from where she is supported. Does not accept from a place where flies abound. Does not accept fish, meat, intoxicating drinks and brewed drinks. Is support in one house, on one morsel, in two houses on two morsels, or in seven houses on seven morsels. Or is supported on what is given by one woman, two women, or seven women. Or is supported on what is brought by one man, two men, or seven men. Is yoked to this method of partaking food for half a month. Eats vegetables and millets, raw rice, Dadulla rice, water plants, husked rice powder, rice foam, flour of oil seeds, grass, cowdung, forest roots and fruits, or is supported on what falls on the way. Wears hemp clothes, coarse clothes, miserable garments, rag clothes, bark clothes, skin clothes, strips of skin, grass clothes, bark clothes, clothes made of planks and of hair, tails and the wings of owls. Is yoked to pulling out hairs of head and beard. Is yoked to standing, rejecting seats Is yoked to sitting or lying on a bed of thorns. Is yoked to descending into water, up to three times by night fall. Thus he practises various kinds of torment for the body. Bhikkhus, this person torments himself yoked to it.(*2).

Bhikkhus, which person torments others yoked to it? Bhikkhus, here a certain person is a killer of pigs, goats, birds, a hunter of wild animals, a fisherman, a robber, a highway robber, one who keeps a prison, or engaged in any other vicious activity. This person torments others yoked to tormenting others.

Bhikkhus, who torments his self and others, yoked to it? A certain king or the head anointed king of warrior, or brahmin or householder clan, builds a new assembly hall. Shaving head and beard, and putting on a rough garment, he smears his body with ghee and oil. Pricking the horn of a deer on his back, enters the assembly hall, with the queen consort and the brahmin adviser. Within the enclosure, on some greenery he lies down. From a certain young cow, milk is drawn from one nipple to support the king, from the second to support the queen, from the third to support the adviser with the milk from the fourth nipple the sacrificial cake is cooked. With the remaining milk the calf is fed. Then he orders, the people kill so many bulls for the sacrifice, so many cows, so many goats, so many sheep. He orders cut so many trees for the sacrificial post, and clear so much space for the sacrifice. The slaves, servants, and messengers are frightened with a stick and made to do the necessary work. Bhikkhus, this one torments himself, and others yoked to it.

Bhikkhus, who does not torment his self or torment others, unyoked? Bhikkhus, the Thus Gone One is born in the world, perfect, rightfully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knower of the worlds, incomparable tamer of those to be tamed, teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. He proclaims to this world of gods and men, together with its Maaras, Brahmaas, the community of recluses, brahmins, gods and men, that Teaching, good at the beginning, in the middle and the end, full of meaning even in the letters declaring the complete and pure holy life. A householder, or the son of a householder or one born into some clan hears the Teaching and gains faith in the Thus Gone, he reflects. The household life is full of difficulties. It is a path of defilements. Going forth homeless, is like open space. Living in a household it is not easy to lead a holy life complete and pure without being defiled. Shaving head and beard, putting on yellow clothes, why shouldn't I go forth homeless? At some suitable time he gives up a little wealth or a large mass of wealth, either leaving behind a small circle of friends, or a large circle of friends shaving head and beard and donning yellow clothes, goes forth as a homeless.

Gone forth he becomes a trainer in the life of a bhikkhu. He gives up hurting living things, throwing away stick and weapon ashamed he abides arousing compassion for all beings. Abstaining from taking what is not given, desires the given, making his mind pure, without theft he abides. Abstains from low sexual intercourse leads the holy life. Abstaining from telling lies becomes reliable and trustworthy and abides without a dispute with the world. Gives up slandering. Hearing it here does not say it elsewhere, to split these. Hearing elsewhere does not say it here to split those, Thus he

unites the split, promotes unity. Fond of unity talks words to unite. Gives up rough talk, saying pleasing words that go straight to the heart of all. Abstains from frivolous talk saying appropriate, truthful and meaningful words, in accordance with the Teaching and Discipline, words that could be treasured.

Abstains from destroying seed groups and vegetable groups. Partaking one meal a day, abstains from food at night and at untimely hours. Abstains from dance, singing, music, decorations, flowers and scents, ointments and adornments. Abstains from high and stately beds. Abstains from accepting gold and silver, uncooked rice and uncooked flesh,. Abstains from accepting women and girls, slaves, men or women. Abstains from accepting goats and cows, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares.

Abstains from accepting fields and wealth, and doing the work of a messenger. Abstains from buying and selling and unfair ways of weighing and measuring. Abstains from cutting severing, destroying and highway robbery, and wrong ways of gaining food.

Satisfied, covering the body with robes, and feeding the belly with morsel food, goes with all the belongings wherever he goes. Like the birds small and large that go with the weight of their wings. Likewise satisfied covering the body with robes and feeding the belly with morsels goes with all the belongings wherever he goes. Endowed with this mass of virtues, he experiences the pleasure of blamelessness internally.

Seeing a form with the eye, does not take the sign or the elements .To one abiding with the mental faculty of the eye uncontrolled, demerit of covetousness and displeasure may trickle. He abides protecting the mental faculty of the eye. Hearing a sound with the ear, Cognizing a smell with the nose, tasting, cognizing touches with the body, Cognizing an idea with the mind, does not take the sign or the elements. To him abiding with the mental faculty of the mind not controlled, demerit of covetousness and displeasure may trickle. He abides protecting the mental faculty of the mind. Endowed with the noble ones' control of the mental faculties, he experiences the untouched pleasure of the mental faculties. Going forward or returning he is aware. Looking on, or looking aside is aware. Bending or stretching is aware. Bearing the bowl and three robes is aware. Tasting, drinking, eating and enjoying is aware. Going, standing, sitting, lying, if awake, and keeping silence he is aware.

Endowed, with the mass of virtues, the control of the mental faculties, right mindfulness of the noble ones, he abides in a secluded dwelling, such as a forest, the root of a tree, a mountain grotto a cave, a charnel ground, a jungle forest, an open space, or a heap of straw. After the meal and returning from the alms round, he sits legs crossed, the body placed straight and mindfulness established in front.

Dispelling covetousness for the world he abides freeing the mind. Dispelling anger he abides with a mind free of anger, compassionate to all born. Dispelling sloth and torpor he abides, aware of a perception of light, mindful of cleaning sloth and torpor. Dispelling restlessness and worry he abides with a mind internally appeased, cleaning the mind of restlessness and worry. Abides with doubts dispelled of merit that should be, and should not be done.

The bhikkhu dispelling the five hindrances of the mind, and wisely making the minor defilements weak, secludes the mind from sensual thoughts and demerit. With thoughts and thought processes and with joy and pleasantness, born of seclusion he abides in the first jhaana.

Again the bhikkhu overcoming thoughts and thought processes, the mind internally appeased, in a single point, with joy and pleasantness born of concentration abides in the second jhaana.

Again, the bhikkhu with equanimity to joy and detachment and aware of experiencing pleasantness, with the body too (*1), abides in the third jhaana. The noble ones say this is abiding in pleasantness, mindful of equanimity.

Again, the bhikkhu dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness and earlier having dispelled pleasure and displeasure, mindfulness purified with equanimity abides in the fourth jhaana.

When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for the knowledge of previous births. Recollects the manifold previous births, one birth, two births, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births, innumerable forward cycles of births, innumerable backward cycles of births, innumerable forward and backward cycles of births. There I was born of such name, clan, disposition, supports, experiencing such pleasant and unpleasant feelings, with such a life span. Disappearing from there was born there with such name, clan, disposition, supports, experiencing such pleasant and unpleasant feelings, with such a life span. Disappearing from there, is born here. Thus with all modes and all details manifold previous births are recollected.

When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for knowledge of the disappearing and appearing of beings. With the heavenly eye purified beyond human, sees beings disappearing and appearing un-exalted and exalted, beautiful and ugly, arising in good and bad states according to the results of actions. These good beings misbehaving by body, speech and mind, blaming noble ones, with the wrong view of actions, after death are born in loss, in decrease, in hell. As for these good beings, well behaved in body speech and mind not blaming noble ones, with the right view of actions after death are born in heaven. Thus, with the heavenly eye purified beyond human sees beings disappearing and appearing.

When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for the destruction of desires. He knows this is unpleasant, this its arising, this its cessation, and this, the path to the cessation of unpleasantness as it really is. Knows these are desires, this, their rising, this, their cessation and this, the path to their cessation as it really is. His mind that knows and sees thus, is released from sensual desires, from desires 'to be' and from ignorant desires. When released, he knows, I'm released, birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done. There's nothing more to wish.

Bhikkhus, this person, not tormenting his self or others is unyoked, is here and now appeased, extinguished, cooled, and abides pleasantly like Brahma. (*3)

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

Notes.

1. Aware of experiencing pleasantness with the body too. 'kaayenaca sukha.m phassati' This is the pleasure enjoyed by one not touched by the six doors of mental contact.
2. This person torments his self yoked to tormenting. He thinks by tormenting himself he fulfils a vow, and thinks it is merit. Where as he is born in loss on account of his wrong view
3. He abides like Brahma.'brahma bhuuto' The one who has attained extinction has a mind which is much better than the mind of Brahma.To be like Brahmaa, we have to develop the four divine abidings. They are loving kindness, compassion, intrinsic joy and equanimity.