

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The Trainer, for Enlightenment (Sekhasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living with the Sakyas, in Nigrodha's monastery in Kapilavatthu. During that time the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu had built a new assembly hall, and before anyone dwelt in it, the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu wanted the Blessed One to live in it. So they approached the Blessed One, worshipped, sat on a side and said: Venerable sir, we have built a new assembly hall and before any, recluse, brahmin of any human being dwells there, we want the Blessed One to dwell there. Venerable sir, dwell in it first and the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu will dwell in it afterwards, and it will be for their good and well being for a long time. The Blessed One accepted in silence. When the Sakyas knew that the Blessed One had accepted, they got up, worshipped and circumambulated the Blessed One and went to the assembly hall. They covered the complete floor with carpets, prepared seats, placed pots of water and lighted oil lamps and approached the Blessed One, worshipped, stood on a side and informed: Venerable sir, the floor is covered with carpets, seats are prepared, pots of water are placed, and lamps are lighted. It is time for the Blessed One to do what is fitting. The Blessed One putting on robes and taking bowl and robes, together with the Community of bhikkhus, approached the assembly hall, the Blessed One washed his feet and entered the assembly hall and sat on the prepared seat against the middle post facing the east. The bhikkhus, washed their feet, entered the hall and sat against the wall in the west facing the east. Then the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu leading the rest of the crowd, washed their feet entered the hall and sat against the wall in the east facing the west. The Blessed One then addressed the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu deep into the night advised, incited, and made their hearts light. When the night was far spent, the Blessed One addressed Aananda: Aananda, preach the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu the method of training, of a trainer.(1) My back is aching and like to stretch myself. Then the Blessed One folded the robe in four and laying it stretched on it turning to the right, keeping one foot over the other and making the lion's posture, attending to the perception of waking.

Then venerable Aananda, addressed Mahaanaama the Sakya. Mahaanaama, the noble disciple should become virtuous, protecting his doors of mental contact, should know the right amount to partake food, should be yoked to wakefulness, and should be endowed with these seven good things. Of the four jhaanas and the higher abidings, which are pleasant here and now, he should be a gainer for nothing, a quick gainer and a gainer without difficulty. Mahaanaama, how does the noble disciple become endowed with virtues? The noble disciple should abide by the higher code of rules. Become virtuous, should see fear in the slightest fault. Mahaanaama, how does the noble disciple protect the doors of mental contact?. Mahaanaama the noble disciple seeing a form with the eye will not take the sign or the details. To him abiding with the mental faculty of the eye not protected, evil demerit of covetousness and displeasure may arise. To its control he falls. Hearing a sound with the ear, Cognising a smell with the nose, Cognising a taste with the tongue, Cognising a touch with the body, Cognising an idea with the mind will not take the sign or the details. To him abiding with the mental faculty of the mind not protected, evil demerit of covetousness and displeasure may arise. To its control he falls. Mahaanaama, the noble disciple protects the doors of mental contact thus. Mahaanaama, how does the noble disciple partake food reflecting? The noble disciple partakes food, reflecting. It's not for play, intoxication, or to look beautiful. It's for the upkeep of this body, not to enjoy soups, to maintain the body to lead the holy life. I will put an end to earlier feelings, will not arouse new feelings, so that I may have a pleasant abiding. Mahaanaama, the noble disciple knows the right amount to partake food thus. Mahaanaama, how is the bhikkhu wakeful? The noble disciple, during the day, sits in the chankamana, cleaning the mind of obstructing things. During the first watch of the night cleaning the mind of obstructing things. During the middle watch of the night goes to sleep, with the perception of waking, turning to the right and making the lion's posture, keeping one foot over the other. Then in the last watch of the night sits in the chankamana cleaning the mind of obstructing things. Mahaanaama thus the noble disciple is yoked to wakefulness. Mahaanaama, what are the seven good things the noble disciple is endowed with? The noble disciple establishes faith in the enlightenment of the Thus Gone One. That blessed one is perfect, rightfully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knower of worlds, incomparable tamer of those to be tamed, Teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. The noble disciple becomes shameful, of misbehaviour by body, speech and mind, fearing a fall for demerit and becoming remorseful of such misbehaviour. Becomes learned and bears that Teaching, which is

good at the beginning, in the middle and end, explaining the complete and pure holy life. Learns the Teaching by word order, the essential, and experiences the Teaching. Arouses effort to dispel demerit and accumulate merit. Becomes firm in the search for merit thoroughly yoked to it.(2) Becomes mindful in the very minute things done long ago, recalling them at will. Becomes wise, endowed with the wisdom of the noble ones about the rising and falling of the five holding masses for the rightful destruction of unpleasantness. Mahaanaama, the noble disciple is endowed with these seven good things. Mahaanaama, how does the noble disciple become a gainer for nothing, a quick gainer, a gainer without difficulty of the four jhaanas and the higher abidings. Mahaanaama, the noble disciple secluded from sensual desires, and thoughts of demerit, with thoughts and discursive thoughts and with joy and pleasantness born of seclusion abides in the first jhaana...in the second jhaana,...in the third jhaana,...in the fourth jhaana. Mahaanaama, thus the noble disciple becomes a gainer for nothing, a quick gainer, a gainer without difficulty of the four jhaanaa the higher abidings of the mind.

Mahaanaama, when the noble disciple is endowed with these virtues. Is protected in his the mental faculties. Knows the amount, to partake food. Is yoked to wakefulness. Is endowed with these seven good things, and becomes a quick gainer without difficulty, of the four jhaanas and the higher abidings of the mind. It is said, that the trainer has fallen to the method of training and is ready, for enlightenment, to come to the end of the yoke. Like an egg, that is ready to hatch. Mahaanaama, when the hen had sat on the eggs for eight, ten or twelve days and when they are well warmed, and developed, it would occur to the hen O! When will this chicken safely come out breaking the shell with their beaks or the nails of their feet. In the same manner, when the noble disciple, endowed with these virtues, protected in the mental faculties, knew the amount to partake food, yoked to wakefulness, endowed with these seven good things, became a quick gainer without difficulty, of the four jhaanas and the higher abidings of the mind, it is said, the trainer has fallen to the method of training and is ready, for enlightenment, to come to the end of the yoke. Mahaanaana, the noble disciple having come to this purity of mind through equanimity recollects the manifold previous births such as one birth, two births, ---with all modes and all details recollects the various previous births. That to him is the first knowledge, as the chicken that come out of the egg-shell. Mahaanaama, this noble disciple having come to this purity of mind through equanimity with the heavenly eye

purified above human, sees beings disappearing and appearing in un exalted and exalted states, beautiful and ugly in good and bad states... sees beings according their actions. This is the second knowledge, as it would come to the chicken, that come out of the egg-shell. Mahaanaama, this noble disciple having come to this purity through equanimity, the mind released, and released through wisdom abides released here and now. This to him is the third knowledge, as it would come to the chicken, that come out of the egg-shell.

Mahaanaama, when the noble disciple is endowed with virtues, that's his good conduct. When controlled in the mental faculties, that is his good conduct. When he knows the right amount to partake food, that is his good conduct. When he is yoked to wakefulness, that is his good conduct, when the noble disciple is endowed with these seven good things, that becomes his good conduct. Mahaanaama, when the noble disciple is a quick gainer for nothing, of the four jhaanas, and the higher abidings of the mind, that's his good conduct. Mahaanaama, when the noble disciple recollects the various previous births, that to him is knowledge. With the purified heavenly eye when he sees beings disappearing and appearing, in good and bad states, that to him is knowledge. Mahaanaama, when the noble disciple, destroys desires and abides with the mind released and released through wisdom, that to him is knowledge. To this, is said the noble disciple is endowed with knowledge. Thus the noble disciple is endowed with knowledge and conduct.

Brahma Sanankumaara said this verse about it.

The warrior is the chief among those born into clans

The one endowed with knowledge and conduct is the chief among gods and men

Mahaanaama, these words of Brahmaa Sanankumaara are good words, full of meaning.

They are accepted by the Blessed One.

Then the Blessed One got up and addressed venerable Aananda: Aananda, you explained clearly the training of a trainer for enlightenment

Venerable Aananda knew that the Blessed One approves my words

The Sakyas of Kapilavatthu delighted in the words of venerable Aananda,

Notes:

1. The method of training of a trainer, ‘sekho pa.tipadaa’ A sekha is one who has entered the stream of the Teaching, ie. He has attained at least the first stage of sainthood. ‘sotaapatti magga’
2. With aroused effort for the dispelling of demerit and the accumulation of merit becomes firm in the search for merit thoroughly yoked to it. ‘thaamavaa dalhaparakkamo anikkhittadhuro kusalesu dhammesu’ This is to make effort until one realises extinction.

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