

## Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

### The Inquiring Teaching (Apannakasutta)

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 of Saala. The householders of Saala heard that the good recluse Gotama the son of the Sakyas, who had gone forth homeless was touring the kingdom of Kosala, with a large community of bhikkhus. That he had entered the brahmin village of Saala. Of that good Gotama fame had spread: 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. In this world of gods and men, together with its Maras, Brahmas, the community of recluses and brahmins, gods and men, he declares a teaching by himself known and realized. Which is good at the beginning, in the middle and at the end, full of meaning even in the letters and proclaiming the pure and complete holy life. It is good to see such noble ones. Then the brahmin householders of Saala approached the Blessed One, some worshipped the Blessed One, some exchanged friendly greetings, some clasped hands towards the Blessed One, some announced their clan and name, and some were silent. They all sat on a side. Then Blessed One asked them, ‘Householders, have you a favourite teacher, in whom you could gain some faith, gradually?’. ‘Venerable sir, we have no favourite teacher in whom we could gain faith gradually’. ‘Householders, you who have no teacher would you like to observe this inquiring teaching? (\* 1). Householders, if you observe this inquiring teaching it will be for your good for a long time. What is the inquiring teaching?’

‘Householders, there are certain recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare it. There are no results for gifts, offerings, or sacrifices. There are no results for good and bad actions. There is no this world, no other world, no mother, no father. There are no spontaneously arisen beings and there are no recluses and brahmins in this world, who come to the right path, have realized this world

and the other world and declare it. Householders, there are some other recluses and brahmins who have opposite views and declare. There are results for gifts, offerings, and sacrifices. There are results for good and bad actions. There is this and other world. There is mother, father. There are spontaneously arisen beings and recluses and brahmins in this world, come to the right path, have realized this world and the other world and declare it. Householders, do these two groups of recluses and brahmins bear completely opposite views and declare them?’ ‘They do venerable sir’.

‘Householders, those recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare there are no results for gifts, offerings, or sacrifices. There are no results for good and bad actions, there is no this world, no other world, no mother, no father. There are no spontaneously arisen beings recluses and brahmins in this world, who come to the right path, have realized this world and the other world and declare it (\* 2). We could expect this, they would abstain from these three things of merit such as good conduct by body, speech and mind, would observe these three things of demerit such as misconduct by body, speech and mind. What is the reason? These good recluses and brahmins do not see the dangers of demerit, the vile nature of defilements, the purity and the results of merit in giving up. There’s another world (\* 3). So their view there is no other world, becomes wrong view. Words that say, there is no other world, becomes wrong speech. The view, there is no other world, is completely opposite to what the noble ones say. The noble ones talk of another world. Their instructions, there is no other world, becomes wrong instructions, and the wrong teaching. Giving the wrong instructions, they praise themselves and disparage others. .By that they decrease in their virtues and accumulate various things of demerit, on account of wrong view. Such as wrong thoughts, wrong speech, giving instructions in the wrong teaching quite opposite to the noble one’s teaching, and praising themselves and disparaging others.

A wise man reflects, if there is no other world, these good persons will be well and good after death. If there is another world, after death they would go to decrease, to hell. Let us say there is no, other world, and the words of these good recluses and brahmins are true. Yet they are blamed by the wise, here and now, as un -virtuous ones bearing wrong view, and negative ideas. If there is the other world, these good persons will have unlucky throws on both sides. The wise will blame them here

and now, they will decrease in virtues and birth in hell after death. Thus if this pervading teaching is observed, it pervades both sides and neglects the side of demerit.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare, there are results for gifts, offerings, and sacrifices, there are results for good and bad actions, there is this and other world, there is mother and father. There are spontaneously arisen beings, recluses and brahmins in this world, who come to the right path, have realized this world and the other world and declare it We could expect this Giving up these demerits such as misconduct by body, speech and mind, they would be of right conduct by body, speech and mind. Why is that? These good recluses and brahmins see the danger of demerit, the impurity of defiling things, the results and the purity of giving up. If there is another world, their view there is another world, becomes right view. The thought ‘there is another world,’ becomes their right thoughts. The words ‘there is another world,’ are right words for them. They that say, ‘there is another world,’ come to the same view as the noble ones. They give the right instructions in the right Teaching. Thus they do not praise themselves or disparage others. Even from the beginning their evil virtues are dispelled Thus they develop much merit on account of right view, such as right speech, giving instructions in the teaching which is the same that the noble ones say and by that not praising themselves and not disparaging others..

Here, householders a wise man reflects thus: If there was another world, these good persons after death will go to increase will be born in heaven. Perhaps there was no other world and the words of these good recluses and brahmins would not be true. Yet they are here and now praised by the wise: These are virtuous persons, with the right view, they think there are results for actions. If there was another world, these persons are lucky both ways. Here and now they are praised by the wise, and after death, will increase will be born in heaven. Thus those who abide by this pervading teaching, pervades both sides and keeps away from demerit.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare it. The doer and the subject, the destroyer and the destroyed, the tormentor and one tormented, the griever and the one that causes it, the one frightened and the monster, the killer, the taker of the not given, the one who

cuts limbs, the plunderer, the prison keeper, the one waiting in ambush, the one going to others' wives, the one telling lies, does no demerit. If one was to roll a wheel with blades fixed to the rim, up to the southern bank of the Ganges, killing all beings and making it, a mass of flesh, the destroyer does not accumulate demerit, on account of it. If one goes up to the northern bank of the Ganges giving gifts and making others to give gifts, making sacrifices and making others to sacrifice, there is no merit accumulated on account of it.

Then householders, there are recluses and brahmins who hold a completely opposite view to this and declare it The doer and the subject, the destroyer and the destroyed, the tormentor and his subject, the griever and the one causing it, the frightened and the monster, the killer, the taker of the not given, the one who cuts limbs, the plunderer, the prison keeper, the one waiting in ambush, the one going to others' wives, the deceiver, does demerit. If one was to roll a wheel with blades fixed to the rim, up to the southern bank of the Ganges, killing all beings and making it, a mass of flesh, the destroyer accumulates demerit, on account of it. If one goes up to the northern bank of the Ganges giving gifts and making others to give gifts, making sacrifices and making others to sacrifice, there's merit accumulated on account of it. Householders, do these two groups of recluses have completely opposite views?' 'Yes, venerable sir, they have.'

'Householders, there are recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare it. The doer and the subject neither do demerit. The destroyer and the destroyed, the tormentor and his subject, the griever and the giver of grief, the frightened and the monster, neither of them do demerit. The killer, the taker of the not given, the one who cuts limbs, the plunderer, the prison keeper, the one waiting in ambush, the one going to others' wives, the deceiver, they do no demerit. If one was to roll a wheel with blades fixed to the rim, up to the southern bank of the Ganges, killing all beings and making it, a mass of flesh, the destroyer does not accumulate demerit, on account of it. If one goes up to the northern bank of the Ganges giving gifts and making others to give gifts, making sacrifices and making others to sacrifice, there is no merit accumulated on account of it. We could expect this, from them. They would refrain from the three merits, of good conduct by body, speech and mind. Would. Observe the three demerits of misconduct by body, speech and mind.. What is the reason?

These good recluses and brahmins do not see the dangers of demerit, the vile nature of defilements, the purity and the results of merit in giving up. There are results for actions, their view, 'there are no results for actions', becomes to them wrong view. Words that say 'there are no results for actions,' becomes to them wrong speech. This view is completely opposite to what the noble ones say, the noble ones talk of the results of actions. The instructions, 'there are no results for actions,' that comes to be giving instructions in the wrong Teaching. The giver of wrong instructions praises his, self and disparages others. Thus he loses whatever virtues he was endowed with and he accumulates various things of demerit on account of wrong view, such as wrong thoughts, wrong speech, giving instructions in the wrong Teaching quite opposite to the noble one's teaching, and praising himself and disparaging others. Thus he accumulates much demerit on account of wrong view.

Then a wise man reflects thus. If there are no results for actions, these good persons will be well and good after death. If there be results for actions, after death they would go to decrease, to hell. Let us say there are no results for actions and the words of these good recluses and brahmins become true. Yet they are blamed by the wise, here and now, as unvirtuous ones bearing the wrong view, there are no results for actions. If there are results for actions, these good persons will have unlucky throws on both ways. They will be blamed by the wise here and now, and will have a decrease and birth in hell after death. Thus if this pervading teaching is observed, it pervades both sides and neglects the side of demerit.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins who hold this view and declare it. The doer and the subject, the destroyer and the destroyed, the tormentor and the subject, the griever and the one that causes it, the frightened and the monster, do demerit. The killer, the taker of the not given, the one who cuts limbs, the plunderer, the prison keeper, the one waiting in ambush, the one going to others' wives, and the deceiver, does demerit. If one was to roll a wheel with blades fixed to the rim, up to the southern bank of the Ganges, killing all beings and making it, a mass of flesh, the destroyer accumulates demerit, on account of it. If one goes up to the northern bank of the Ganges giving gifts and making others to give gifts, making sacrifices and making others to sacrifice, there is merit accumulated on account of it. We could expect this from them. They would give up these demerits

such as misconduct by body, speech and mind, would abide in the three merits of right conduct by body, speech and mind. Why is that? These good recluses and brahmins see the danger of demerit, the impurity of defiling things, the results and the purity of giving up. If there are results for actions, their view 'there are results for actions' becomes right view, for them. . When they think, 'there are results for actions, that becomes right thoughts for them. When they talk that 'there are results for actions', that becomes right words for them. The view, there are results for actions, is the same as the view of the noble ones, and the instructions they give is the right Teaching. On account of that they do not praise themselves or disparage others. Thus from the beginning their evil virtues were dispelled, and they accumulate much merit on account of right view, such as right speech, giving instructions in the teaching which is the same that the noble ones say and by that not praising themselves nor disparaging others..

Then a wise man reflects. If there are results for actions, these good persons will go to increase will be born in heaven, after death..Let us say there are no results for actions, and the words of these good recluses and brahmins are not true. Yet they are praised by the wise, here and now, as virtuous, as ones with the right view of actions.If there are results for actions, these good persons will have lucky throws on both ways. The wise will praise them here and now, they will come to increase and birth in heaven after death. Thus if this pervading teaching is observed, it pervades both sides and neglects the side of demerit.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins of this view and declaring it. Beings are impure for no cause or reason, for the purity of beings there is no cause or reason. Beings are purified for no reason. There is no strength, no effort, no manly power, no manly courage, all beings, all living things, all born are led to maturity and are born in the higher six and experience pleasantness and unpleasantness (\* 4) without any reason. Then householders, there are recluses and brahmins with the view completely opposite to this and declaring it. Beings are impure with a cause and reason, for the purity of beings there is a cause and reason. beings are purified for some reason. There's strength, effort, manly power, manly courage, all beings, all living things, all born are not led to maturity and are born in the higher six and experience pleasantness and unpleasantness.

‘Householders, do these two groups of recluses and brahmins hold views, completely opposite to each other?’ ‘They do venerable sir’.

Then householders, there are recluses and brahmins of this view and declaring it. For the impurity of beings there is no cause or reason, for the purity of beings there is no cause or reason. There is no strength, no effort, no manly power, no manly courage. All beings, living things, all born are led to maturity, and are born in the higher six and experience pleasantness and unpleasantness (\*). We should expect this from them. They would not observe these three things of merit such as good conduct by body, speech and mind. Would observe these three things of demerit such as misconduct by body, speech and mind. What is the reason? These good recluses and brahmins do not see the danger of demerit, the vile nature of defilements, the purity and the results of merit in giving up. When there is a cause they have the view there is no cause. That becomes wrong view, words that say there is no cause or reason, becomes wrong speech. When there is a cause they said, there is no cause. This view is completely opposite to what the noble ones say, the noble ones talk of a cause. When there is a cause, they instructed there is no cause. That becomes giving instructions in the wrong Teaching. Giving wrong instructions he praises his self and disparages others. Thus he loses whatever virtues he was endowed with. He accumulates various things of demerit on account of wrong view, such as wrong thoughts, wrong speech, giving instructions in the wrong Teaching quite opposite to the noble one’s teaching, and praising themselves and disparaging others. Thus he accumulates much demerit on account of wrong view.

A wise man reflects thus. If there is no cause, these good persons will be well and good after death. If there be a cause, after death they would go to decrease, to hell. Let us say, there is no cause, then the words of these good recluses and brahmins become true. Yet they are blamed by the wise, here and now, as unvirtuous ones with the wrong view, there is no cause. If there is a cause, these good persons will have unlucky throws on both ways. The wise will blame them here and now, after death, a decrease and birth in hell. Thus if this pervading teaching is observed, it pervades both sides and neglects the side of demerit.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins with the view, for the impurity of beings there is a cause and reason, for the purity of beings there is a cause and reason. There is strength, effort, manly power and courage. All beings, all living things, all born are not led to maturity by accident and are born in the higher six and experience pleasantness and unpleasantness, on account of a reason. We could expect this, from them. They would give up these demerits such as misconduct by body, speech and mind and would abide in the three merits of right conduct by body, speech and mind. Why is that? These good recluses and brahmins see the danger of demerit, the impurity of defiling things, the results and the purity of giving up. If there is a cause The view, there is a cause, becomes right view. The thoughts there is a cause, become right thoughts. Their words about a cause, become right words. The view there is a cause, is the view of the noble ones, and the given instructions become instructions in the right Teaching. On account of that they do not praise themselves or disparage others. Thus even earlier their evil virtues were given up and they develop much merit on account of right view, such as right speech, giving instructions in the teaching which is the same that the noble ones say and by it not praising themselves and not disparaging others..

Then a wise man reflects. If there is a cause, these good persons will go to increase will be born in heaven after death. Let us say there is no cause, and the words of these good recluses and brahmins are not true. They are praised by the wise, here and now, as virtuous ones, with right view, as ones with the right view of cause and effect. If there is a cause these good persons will have lucky throws on both ways. Praise from the wise here and now, an increase and birth in heaven after death. Thus if this pervading teaching is observed, it pervades both sides and neglects the side of demerit.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare it. There aren't completely immaterial states. There are other recluses and brahmins who are completely opposite to this view and declare. There are completely immaterial states. Householders, do they have completely opposite views?' 'Yes venerable sir, they have.' 'Then a wise man reflects. Those recluses and brahmins who hold the view and declare, there aren't completely immaterial states would say. I have not seen this. Those recluses and brahmins who say there are completely immaterial states would say. I know this. I who do not see or do not know, should not take a



superficial view of it. Saying, this only is the truth, all else is not the truth. To think in this manner is not suitable for one like me. If the words of those recluses and brahmins who said there are no completely immaterial states are true. My birth among material gods of mental nature could not be shown. (\* 5) If the words of those recluses and brahmins who said there are completely immaterial states was true, my birth among immaterial perceptive gods could not be shown (\* 6) For material reasons, there's taking sticks, weapons, disputes, fights, taking sides and slandering, going on. These are not evident in completely immaterial states. So wisely reflecting we could detach from matter, and fall to the path of cessation.

Householders, there are recluses and brahmins who have this view and declare There isn't the complete cessation of being. There are other recluses and brahmins who are completely opposite to this view and declare. There is complete cessation of being. Householders, do they have completely opposite views? Venerable sir, they have. A wise man reflects. There are recluses and brahmins who hold the view and declare, there isn't complete cessation of being. They would say. I have not experienced that. Those recluses and brahmins who say there is complete cessation of being, would say. I have experienced it. I do not see or know this, so I should not look at it from a superficial angle. Saying, this only is the truth, all else is not the truth. To think in this manner is not suitable for one like me. If the words of those recluses and brahmins who said there is no complete cessation of being is true. My birth among immaterial gods of perceptive nature could not be shown. If the words of those recluses and brahmins who said there is complete cessation of being is true, there is a possibility that I should cease 'to be' here and now. (\* 7)The view of those recluses and brahmins who say there is no complete cessation of being is close upon greed, is fixed to the yoke, is with interest, is close upon appropriation, is close to holding. The view of those recluses and brahmins who say there is a complete cessation of being is close upon non-greed, unfixed from the yoke, without interest, far from appropriation and far from holding. He has fallen to the method of ceasing from being, detaching from being, giving up being, by reflecting.

Householders, there are four persons evident in the world. What four: There is a person who torments his self yoked to tormenting. There is a person who torments others yoked to tormenting. There is a

person who torments his self and others yoked to tormenting. There is a person who neither torments his self or others, is unyoked. He is here and now appeased, cooled and abides in pleasantness like Brahma. Householders, who torments his self yoked to tormenting? A certain person goes without clothes, licks the hands without manners as in the Karandakasuttam. --- Thus he abides yoked to giving various kinds of torture to the body, tormenting his self yoked to tormenting. Householders, which one tortures others yoked to it? A certain person kills pigs and sheep and is yoked to giving various kinds of torture to living things. This person torments others yoked to tormenting. Householders, which one torments his self and others yoked to tormenting? Householders, a certain person is a king or a head anointed warrior—frightening others makes them work with tears in their eyes. This one, torments his self and others yoked to it. Householders, which one does not torment his self or others and is unyoked? Is here and now appeased, cooled and abides in pleasantness like Brahma?. Householders, the Thus Gone One is born in the world, perfect and rightfully enlightened,--- dispelling the five hindrances and making the minor defilements weak, he secludes the mind from sensual desires and thoughts of demerith. With thoughts and thought processes, and with joy and pleasantness born of seclusion abides in the first jhaana—the second jhaana—third jhaana,--- fourth jhaana,-- When the mind is concentrated, pure without blemish free of minor defilements workable and malleable and is steady, he directs the mind to know previous births. Reflects innumerable previous births. --When the mind is concentrated, pure without blemish free from minor defilements, workable malleable and steady, he directs the mind to know the disappearing and appearing of beings. With the heavenly eye purified beyond human he sees beings disappear and appear not exalted and exalted, beautiful and ugly, good and bad. Knows beings according their actions. When the mind is concentrated, pure, without blemish free from minor defilements, workable malleable and steady directs the mind for the destruction of desires. He knows as it really is, this is unpleasant---- knows the path to the cessation of desires as it really is. When he knows and sees thus, his mind is released from sensual desires released from the desires ‘to be’ and released from the ignorant desires. When released knows I’m released..I have destroyed birth. The holy life is lived, what should be done is done, there is nothing more to wish. Householders, this one does not torment himself or others, is unyoked. Is here and now appeased, cooled and abides in pleasantness like Brahma.’

When this was said the brahmin householders of Sala said thus to the Blessed One. . ‘Good Gotama, now we understand. It is like something over turned is reinstalled. Like something covered is made manifest. As though the path is told to someone who had lost his way. It is as though an oil lamp is lighted for the darkness for those who have sight to see forms. In various ways good Gotama has explained the Teaching. Now we take refuge in Good Gotama, in the Teaching and the Community of bhikkhus. May we be remembered as lay disciples who have taken refuge from today until life lasts.’.

Notes:

1. The inquiring Teaching.’apa.n.naka’ This means to reflect the matter thoroughly and to choose the correct course of actions.
2. There are no spontaneously arisen beings, recluses and brahmins.’ Natthi satta opapaatika natthi loke samanabrahmana sammaggata sammaapa.tipanna ye imanca loka.m para.mca loka.m saya.m abhi~n~naa sajjhikatvaa pavedenti ‘ These are the beings who have realised the Teaching spontaneously. That is the four paths and four fruits. ‘maggaphala’ They are the eight Great Beings.
3. There is another world.’loka’ Another world is the next birth.A world is a being who experiences the world through his six spheres of mental contact. So another world is another birth.
4. All born are led to maturity and are born in the higher six and experiences pleasantness and unpleasantness.’sabbe bhutta sabbe jivaa avasaa abalaa aviriya niiyaati sanghatibhava pari~n~nataa chassevaabhijaatisu sukhadukha.m pa.tisanvedenti‘ This means that the one born matures later and experiencing contacts through six doors of mental contact, feel pleasant and unpleasant feelings.

5. My birth among material gods of mental nature could not be shown.'natthi sabbaso aaruppaati sace tesa.m bhavata.m samana.brahmanaana.m sacca.m vacana.m .thaanametam vijjati ye te devaa ruupino manomayaa apa.n.nakamme tatrappatti bhavissati ' These are the mental beings that enjoy the five strands of sensual pleasures. The heaven of the thirtythree gods is one of them.

6.Birth smong the immaterial perceptive gods could not be shown. These gods do not enjoy the five strands of sensual pleasures. They are perceptive gods, like those who have developed the four divine abidings.

7. There is a possibility that I should cease to be here and now'.thaanameta.m vijjati ya.m di.t.thevadhamme parinibbaayissaami' To be is to be wishing, imagining,and thinking of sensualthings, of material things and immaterial things..When this stops it is called cessation and extinction.

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