

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

A shorter Discourse to Sakuludaayi (Cuulasakuludaayisutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living in the squirrel's sanctuary in the bamboo grove. At that time the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi was living in the monastery of the wandering ascetics in the Mora sanctuary with a large gathering of wandering ascetics. Then the Blessed One putting on robes in the morning taking bowl and robes entered Rajagaha for alms. Then it occurred to the Blessed One, it is too early to go for alms in Rajagaha, what if I approach the monastery of the wandering ascetics and approach the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi. Then the Blessed One approached the wandering ascetics' monastery in the Mora sanctuary. At that time, the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi was seated with a large gathering of wandering ascetics making much noise engaged in various kinds of childish talk, about kings, robbers, chief ministers, the army, fears, fights, eatables, drinks, dress, beds, flowers, scents, relations, conveyances, villages, hamlets, towns, states, women, heros, gossip at the corner of the street, at the well, about those dead and gone, various other talk about the origin of the world and ocean, of things that happened and did not happen. The wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi saw the Blessed One coming in the distance and silenced the gathering. 'Good sirs, make less noise, do not make such a noise. The recluse Gotama is coming. These venerable ones make little noise, and thinking this gathering makes little noise may have thought to approach.' Then those wandering ascetics became silent.

Then the Blessed One approached the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi, and the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi said to the Blessed One 'Good Gotama, come! It is after a long time that good Gotama thought of coming. Sit good Gotama, the seat is ready.'

The Blessed One, sat on the prepared seat, and the wandering ascetic too sat on a side taking a low seat. The Blessed One, said. ‘With what talk were you seated here and what was the topic of conversation?’

‘Venerable sir, let that topic be with which we were seated now, a talk from the Blessed One is rare and this talk could be heard afterwards. Venerable sir, when I do not attend to this gathering, they engage in various childish talk. When I approach them they sit looking at my mouth, to hear what I have to say. Whatever the recluse Udayi says, we will listen to that. When the Blessed One approached, I and this gathering look at the Blessed One’s mouth, whatever the Blessed One says, we will listen to that.’

‘Then Udayi, tell me what I have to teach you’.

‘Venerable sir, a long time ago, this happened. I asked a question about the very beginning, from a recluse, of those acknowledging, knowledge and vision constantly and continually established in them, while walking, standing, lying or when awake. I asked a question about the beginning. When I asked the question, he asked me another question changed the topic and showed anger, aversion and displeasure. Venerable sir, then it occurred to me it is from the Blessed One this question should be asked, it is he who is clever in answering this question’.

‘Udaayi, who is this recluse, that acknowledges knowledge and vision constantly and continually established, while walking, standing, lying or when awake? When asked a question about the beginning, asked another question, changed the topic and showed anger, aversion and displeasure?’

‘Venerable sir, it’s Niganthanaataputta.’.

‘Udayi, it’s from me, who recollect, one birth, two births, --- recollect the manifold previous births with all modes and details, that this question about the beginning should have been asked. I could have convinced your mind answering a question about the beginning. Udayi, with the purified heavenly eye beyond human, I see beings disappearing and appearing in unexalted and exalted states, beautiful and ugly, in good and bad states--- I know beings according to their actions. The question about the beginning should have been asked from me. I could have convinced your mind answering that question. Yet Udayi, let alone the beginning and let alone the end, I will teach you, when this is, this comes to be: when this, arise this arises. When this is not present, this is not, and when this cease, this ceases.’

‘Venerable sir, I do not understand even my own self, it is not possible for me to recollect the manifold previous births with all modes and details, such as one birth, two births, ----with all modes and details, as the Blessed One does. Venerable sir, now I do not even see a mud sprite, how could I see with a purified heavenly eye beyond human, beings disappearing and appearing in unexalted and exalted states--- and know beings according to their actions, as the Blessed One knows. Yet the Blessed One said let alone the beginning and let alone the end, I will give the Teaching – When this is, this comes to be, when this arise, this arises. When this is not present, this is not, and when this, cease this ceases. It is for my great pleasure, yet I do not understand.it. Venerable sir, could my teacher be convinced, answering his question?.

‘Udayi, what is your teacher’s view?’

‘Venerable sir, my teacher’s view is, this is the most excellent appearance’..‘Udayi, your teacher’s view, this is the most excellent appearance, how is that most excellent appearance?’

‘Venerable sir, there is no other appearance more noble and exalted than this most excellent appearance.’

‘Udayi, how is this appearance, which has no other appearance more noble and exalted than that?’

‘Venerable sir, when there is no other appearance more noble and exalted than that, that is the most excellent appearance.’

‘Udayi, does it extend lengthwise?’

‘Venerable sir, as there is no other appearance more noble and exalted than that, it is said to be the highest appearance, and it cannot be pointed out.’

‘Udayi, it is something, like this..There is a man who says, I desire and love the most beautiful woman in this state: Then he is asked. Good man, the most beautiful woman you desire, is she of warrior clan, brahmin clan, householder clan or from an out caste clan? When asked, he would say No. Then he is asked. Good man, the most beautiful woman you desire and love, do you know, of what clan she is? Do you know whether she is tall, short or medium? Do you know whether she is dark, fair or brown? Do you know in which village, hamlet or town she lives? When asked he says, No. Then he is told, good man, do you desire and love someone whom you do not know and have not seen? Then he would say. Yes. What do you think Udayi. Doesn’t this talk turn out to be stupid talk?’

‘Venerable sir, when that is so, that man’s talk turns out to be stupid talk

In the same manner Udayi, you say, venerable sir, when there is no other appearance more noble and exalted than that, that is the most excellent appearance, and that appearance you do not point out.’

‘Venerable sir, it is like a lapis gem of good birth, with eight facets, well completed and when placed in the orange coloured blanket, shines, emits heat and illuminates. The self would be of that appearance, healthy after, death.’

‘Udayi, what do you think, of these two, the lapis gem of good birth, with eight facets, well completed and placed in the orange coloured blanket, and the worms and fire flies in the darkness of the night, which give the more excellent appearance in shining, emitting heat and illuminating?’

‘Venerable sir, of these two appearances the more excellent appearance would be the worms and fire flies, for the darkness of the night.’

‘Udayi, of these two, the worms and fire flies for the darkness of the night and a lighted oil lamp, which gives the more excellent appearance in shining, emitting heat and illuminating?’

‘Venerable sir, of these two appearances, the more excellent appearance would be the lighted oil lamp, to emit heat and to illuminate.’

‘Udayi, of these two, the lighted oil lamp for the darkness of the night, and a large mass of fire, for the darkness of the night, which gives the more excellent appearance in shining, emitting heat and illuminating?’

‘Venerable sir, of these two appearances, the more excellent appearance would be a large mass of fire for the darkness.’

‘Udayi, of these two, a large mass of fire for the darkness, and the morning star, in the last watch of the night, when the sky is clear, which gives the more excellent appearance in shining, emitting heat and illuminating?’

‘Venerable sir, of these appearances, the more excellent appearance would be the morning star in the last watch of the night, when the sky is clear.’

‘Udayi, of these two, the morning star in the last watch of the night, when the sky is clear, and the full moon at mid night when the sky is clear without clouds, which gives the more excellent appearance in shining, emitting heat and illuminating?’

‘Venerable sir, of these two appearances, the more excellent appearance would be the full moon at mid night when the sky is clear without clouds.’

‘Udayi, of these two, the full moon at mid night when the sky is clear without clouds and the sun in the sky at mid day in Summer, which gives the more excellent appearance in shining, emitting heat and illuminating?’

‘Venerable sir, of these two appearances, the more excellent would be the sun in the sky at mid day in Summer time.’

‘Udayi, the excellence of many of these gods surpasses the excellence of the moon and sun, I know them, yet I would not tell whose appearance is more noble and more excellent than the other’s appearance. Yet, you say, this appearance, which is inferior even to the appearance of the worms and fire flies, is the most noble and excellent appearance. That too you would not point out.’

‘Venerable sir, forgive me, Well Gone One forgive me!’

‘Udayi, why do you say, forgive me, venerable sir, and forgive me Well Gone One?’

‘Venerable sir, this is the view of my teacher: This is the most excellent appearance, there is no other appearance more excellent than this, and I being cross questioned, asked for reasons and made to discuss it, find it essenceless, empty and gone wrong.’

‘Udayi, is there a world of only pleasantness? Is there a course of actions to realise that world of only pleasantness?’

‘Venerable sir, my teacher’s view is, there is a world of only pleasantness and there is a course of actions to realise it.’

‘Udayi, what is that course of actions to realise, that world of only pleasantness?’

‘Venerable sir, a certain one, giving up destroying life, abstains from it, giving up, taking what is not given, abstains from it. Giving up misbehaviour in sexuality, abstains from it. Giving up telling lies, abstains from it. Observes a certain austerity and refrains from it. This is that course of actions for the realisation of the world of only pleasantness.’

‘Udayi, at such times, you give up destroying life and abstain from it, do you experience only pleasant feelings, or pleasant and unpleasant feelings?’

‘Venerable sir, pleasant and unpleasant feelings.’

‘Udayi, at such times, you give up taking what is not given and abstain from it, do you experience, only pleasant feelings, or pleasant and unpleasant feelings?’

‘Venerable sir, pleasant and unpleasant feelings.’.

‘Udayi, at such times, you abstain from misbehaviour in sexuality and give it up, do you experience only pleasant feelings or pleasant and unpleasant feelings?’

‘Venerable sir, pleasant and unpleasant feelings.’.

‘Udayi, at such times, you abstain from telling lies and give it up, do you feel only pleasant feelings, or pleasant and unpleasant feelings?’

‘Venerable sir, pleasant and unpleasant feelings.’.

‘Udayi, at such times, you observe and abide by a certain austerity do you feel only pleasant feelings, or pleasant and unpleasant feelings?’

‘Venerable sir, pleasant and unpleasant feelings.’

‘Udayi, what do you think, following a course of actions full of pleasant and unpleasant feelings could you realise a world of only pleasant feelings?’

‘Venerable sir, forgive me, Well Gone One forgive me!’

‘Udayi, why do you say, forgive me, venerable sir, and forgive me Well Gone One?’

‘Venerable sir, this is the view of my teacher: There is a course of actions following which a world of only pleasant feelings could be realised, and I being cross questioned, asked for reasons and made to discuss it, find it essenceless, empty and gone wrong.’

‘Venerable sir, is there a world of only pleasant feelings, and is there a course of actions to realise it?’

‘Udayi, there is a world of only pleasant feelings and there is a course of actions to realise it.’

‘Venerable sir, what is that course of actions to realise the world of only pleasant feelings?’

‘Here, Udayi, the bhikkhu secluded from sensual desires and thoughts of demerit abides in the first jhana: Overcoming thoughts and thought processes and the mind in one point internally appeased, without thoughts and thought processes abides in the second jhana. Again with equanimity to joy and detachment, feeling pleasant with the body too, abides in the third jhana. To this the noble ones say abiding in pleasantness with equanimity. Udayi, this is the course of actions, for realising the world of only pleasant feelings.’

‘Venerable sir, isn’t there another course of actions, for realising the world of pleasant feelings, is this the only course of action?’

‘Udayi, this is not the only course of actions, for realising the world of pleasant feelings only. There are other courses of action, for realising the world of pleasant feelings only.’

When this was said, Udayi’s gathering of wandering ascetics, became noisy. They said, it is only this much we know to realise. Then the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi silenced his gathering and said to the Blessed One. ‘Venerable sir, how is this world of only pleasant feelings realised?’

‘Here, Udayi, the bhikkhu dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness, purifying mindfulness with equanimity, without pleasantness and unpleasantness, earlier having overcome pleasure and displeasure and mindfulness purified with equanimity abides in the fourth jhana; Whoever gods be born in the world of only pleasantness, with them he talks and discusses things. Udayi, this is the realising of the world of pleasantness only.’

‘Venerable, sir, is it for the realisation of this world of only pleasantness that the bhikkhus lead the holy life in the dispensation of the Blessed One?’

‘No, Udayi, it is not for the realisation of this world of only pleasantness, that the bhikkhus lead the holy life in my dispensation. There is something more noble and excellent than this to realise on account of which bhikkhus lead the holy life in my dispensation.’

‘Venerable sir, what is that thing more noble and excellent than this on account of which the bhikkhus lead the holy life in the dispensation of the Blessed One.’

‘Here, Udayi, the Thus Gone One is born in the world, perfect, rightfully enlightened, with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knowing the worlds the 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 Maras, Brahmas, the community of recluses, brahmins, gods and men, that Teaching good at the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end, full of meaning even in the letters declaring the complete and pure holy life.----re--- He having dispelled the five hindrances and making less the finer defilements of the mind secludes the mind from sensual desires and thoughts of demerit--- attains to the first jhana. Udayi, this is something noble and excellent than the earlier on account of which the bhikkhus lead the holy life in my dispensation. Again, overcoming thoughts and thought processes and the mind in one point internally appeased ---abides in the second jhana---abides in the third jhana—abides in the fourth jhana Udayi, this too is something more noble

and excellent than the earlier on account of which the bhikkhus lead the holy life in my dispensation... When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, is 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 of such name, clan, disposition, supports, feeling the pleasant and unpleasant feelings, in such a life span. Disappearing from there was born there with such name, clan, disposition, supports, feeling the pleasant and unpleasant feelings, in such a life span, disappearing from there, is born here. Thus with all modes and all details manifold previous births are recollected. Udayi, this too is more noble and excellent than that on account of which the bhikkhus lead the holy life in my dispensation. 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 purified heavenly eye beyond human, he sees beings disappearing and appearing unexalted and exalted, beautiful and ugly, arising in good and bad states according to their 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 he sees beings disappearing and appearing. . Udayi, this too is more noble and excellent than that on account of which the bhikkhus lead the holy life in my dispensation.. When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, is malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for the destruction of desires. Knows, this is unpleasant, this is the arising of unpleasantness, this is the cessation of unpleasantness, and this is the path to the cessation of unpleasantness as it really is. Knows these are desires, this is the arising of desires, this is the cessation of desires and this is the path to the cessation of desires as it really is. The mind, which knows and sees thus, is released from sensual desires, is released from desires 'to be' and released from ignorant desires. When released, he knows, I'm released, birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done, he knows, there is nothing more to wish. Udayi, this too is a thing more noble and excellent than the other on account of which the bhikkhus lead the holy life in my Dispensation.'

When this was said, the wandering ascetic Sakuludaayi said to the Blessed One. Venerable sir, now I understand. It is as though something over turned is reinstalled. Something covered is made manifest. As though the path was told to someone who has lost his way. As though an oil lamp is lighted for the darkness, so that those who have sight could see forms. In various ways the Teaching is explained by the Blessed One. Now I take refuge in the Blessed One, in the Teaching and the Community of bhikkhus. May I gain the going forth and the higher ordination.'

When this was said the wandering ascetic Sakuludayi's following said. 'Good Udaayi do not lead the holy life in the dispensation of the recluse Gotama. Good Udaayi, you are a teacher, do not become a pupil. It's like being a cladron and then becoming a spoon in it. So good Udayi do not lead the holy life in the dispensation of the recluse Gotama.' Thus the wandering ascetic Sakuludayi's following prevented him from leading the holy life in the dispensation of the Blessed One.

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