

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

At Kannakattala (Kannakatthala Sutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in the Ka.n.nakatthala deer park in Uju~n~naaya. At that time, king Pasenadi of Kosala had come to Uju~n~naaya for some purpose. Then the king called a certain man, and said. ‘Come good man, approach, and worship the Blessed One, for my sake and ask whether he has few ailments, no troubles and a light living. Also tell, king Pasenadi of Kosala will come to see the Blessed One after the mid-day meal.’ This man agreed, approached, worshipped the Blessed One, and sat on a side. Then he said, ‘Venerable sir, king Pasenadi of Kosala worships, with his head at the feet of the Blessed One, and inquires whether the Blessed One is with few ailments, without troubles and has a light living. Today king Pasenadi of Kosala will come to see the Blessed One after the mid-day meal.’

The two sisters Soma and Sakulaa heard that the king would go to see the Blessed One after his mid-day meal, and they approached him at the time he was taking his meal. They said to the king, ‘Great king, if that is so, worship the feet of the Blessed One for the sake of Soma and Sakula and inquire whether the Blessed One is with few ailments, without troubles and has a light living.’

Then king Pasenadi of Kosala, after the meal was over approached the Blessed One, worshipped, sat on a side and said to the Blessed One. ‘Venerable sir, my sisters Soma and Sakulaa too worship the Blessed One with their heads at your feet and asks whether the Blessed One is with few ailments, without trouble and has a light living?’

‘Great king, hasn’t the sisters Soma and Sakula any other messenger?’

‘Venerable sir, my sisters Soma and Sakula heard that I was approaching you, after my mid-day meal. They approached me when I was partaking the mid-day meal and said. Great king if you

approach the Blessed One, worship the feet of the Blessed One for the sake of Soma and Sakula and inquire whether the Blessed One is with few ailments, without troubles and has a light living.'

'Great king, may the sisters Soma and Sakula be with pleasantness (* 1).'

Then king Pasenadi of Kosala said. 'Venerable sir, I heard that the recluse Gotama said this. There is no possibility that a recluse or Brahmin could acknowledge, knowledge and vision of everything without leaving out anything. Venerable sir, those who say, the recluse Gotama said, there is no possibility that a recluse or Brahmin could have knowledge and vision of everything without leaving out anything. How far are they saying the words of the Blessed One, and not insulting the Blessed One falsely. How much of it is according the Teaching and are they saying the words of the Blessed One?'

'Great king, those who say, the recluse Gotama said, there is no possibility that a recluse or Brahmin could acknowledge, knowledge and vision of everything, without leaving out anything, are not saying my words. They insult me falsely.'

King Pasenadi of Kosala spoke to the general Waduudabha. 'General, who was it that brought these words to the inner chambers of the palace?'

'Great king, it was Sanjaya Aakaasagotta.'

Then king Pasenadi of Kosala called a certain man and said. 'Good man, call the Brahmin Sanjaya Aakaasagotta in my words, tell him the king wants you.' He agreed, approached the Brahmin Sanjaya Aakaasagotta and said. 'Sir, king Pasenadi of Kosala wants you.'

Meanwhile king Pasenadi of Kosala said to the Blessed One. ‘Venerable sir, has the Blessed One said something else on account of this? Which people may have not understood correctly? How does the Blessed One recall saying something pertaining to this?’

‘Great king I remember saying something like this. There is no possibility that a recluse or Brahmin, could know and see everything at one and the same time.’

‘Venerable sir, you have said with reasons. There is no possibility that a recluse or Brahmin, could know and see everything at one and the same time. Venerable sir, there are four castes. They are warrior, Brahmin, one of the common grade and slaves. ‘Great king of these four castes, two are thought to be superior, that is the warrior and Brahmin castes, in the matter of revering, paying attention, clasping hands as respect, and to associate with respect.

‘Venerable, sir, I do not question, about the here and now, it is here after I question. Venerable sir, of these four castes of warriors, Brahmins, the common man and the slaves is there any difference?’

‘Great king there are these five attributes for exertion. What are the five? The bhikkhu places faith in the enlightenment of the Blessed One. The Blessed One is perfect, rightfully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knows the worlds, (* 2) is the incomparable tamer of those to be tamed, Teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. He is one with few ailments, a good digestive system not too cold nor too hot. Not crafty and fraudulent, shows his real self to the Teacher, to the wise or co-associates in the holy life. Abides with aroused effort, for dispelling demerit and becomes firm and strenuously yoked to accumulate merit. Becomes wise, endowed with the noble one’s wisdom, to penetrate and see the rising and falling, for the rightful destruction of unpleasantness. (* 3) Great king, these are the five attributes for exertion. If these four castes of warriors, Brahmins, of ordinary people and slaves, are endowed with these five attributes of exertion, it will be for their good and welfare for a long time.’

‘Venerable sir, when these four castes of warriors, Brahmins, ordinary people and slaves are endowed with these five attributes of exertion, will there be a difference among them?’

‘Great king, I will tell you the difference in their exerting. There are two elephants, or horses or bulls to be trained, of them one trained and tamed, the other untrained and untamed. Of them which one would be trained tamed and come to the category of the trained, is it the trained tamed one or the untrained untamed one?’

‘Venerable sir, the trained, tamed one will be trained and tamed, and will come to the category of the trained.’

‘Great king in the same manner, whatever could be attained by one with faith, few ailments, without craftiness and fraudulence, with aroused effort and wisdom, that could be attained by one without faith, many ailments, crafty, fraudulent, lazy, without effort and not wise is not a possibility.’

‘Venerable sir, the Blessed One said with reasons ‘Venerable sir, when these four castes of warriors, Brahmins, ordinary people and slaves are endowed with these five attributes of exertion, will there be a difference among them here?’

‘Great king, I do not see any difference in the release or the released. Like one man would light a fire with dry branches leaves and twigs. Another would light with dry Sal wood, another with dry mango wood and yet another with dry wood apple sticks. Great king in these fires lighted with different kinds of wood, do you see any difference in the flame, colour or the lustre?’

‘No, venerable sir.’

‘Great king in the same manner, in that fire created by effort, and born out of exertion, I do not see any difference in the release or the released.

‘Venerable sir, the Blessed One speaks with reasons. Venerable sir, are there gods?’

‘Great king, why do you ask? Venerable sir, are there gods?’

‘Venerable sir, are there gods, who would return here, or gods who would not return here?’

‘Great king, those gods with a troubled mind return here and the others without a troubled mind do not return here.’

Then the general Widuudabha asked the Blessed One. ‘Venerable sir, do the gods with an untroubled mind chase out or banish the gods with a troubled mind?’

‘It occurred to venerable Aananda, general Widuudabha is the son of king Pasenadi of Kosala, and I’m the son of the Blessed One. The son should speak to the son. Then venerable Aananda spoke to the general Widuudabha. ‘General, I will question you on this, answer as it pleases you. Within the kingdom of king Pasenadi of Kosala, where he wields power, could he chase out or banish recluses, Brahmins, pure or impure ones, those leading the holy life or those not leading the holy life?’

‘Within the kingdom of king Pasenadi of Kosala, where he wields power, it is possible for him to chase out or banish recluses, Brahmins, pure or impure ones, those leading the holy life or those not leading the holy life.’

‘General, have you heard of the gods of the thirty three?’

‘I have heard of the gods of the retinue of thirty three, and also this king Pasenadi of Kosala has heard of the gods of the retinue of thirty three.’

‘General could king of Kosala chase out or banish gods of the thirty three from there?’

‘Even gaining a sight of those gods is not possible to king Pasenadi of Kosala. How could he chase out or banish them from there?’

‘General in the same manner, the troubled gods who come here, do not even see the untroubled gods who do not come here, so how could they chase them out or banish them from there?’

King Pasenadi of Kosala asked the Blessed One. ‘Venerable sir, what is the name of this bhikkhu?’

‘Great king his name is Aananda.’

‘Indeed, good Aananda has pleasant ways, speaks with reasons. Venerable sir, is there Brahmaa?’

‘Great king, why do you ask? ‘Is there Brahmaa?’

‘Are there Brahmaa who return here and those that do not return here?’

‘Great king the troubled Brahmaas return here and those not troubled do not return here.’

Then a certain man said to king Pasenadi of Kosala. ‘Great king, the Brahmin Sanjaya Aakaasagotta has come.’ King Pasenadi of Kosala said to the Brahmin Sanjaya Aakaasagotta. ‘Brahmin who brought these words to the inner chambers of the palace.’

‘Great king, the general Widuudabha did so.’

General Widuudabha said. ‘Great king it is the Brahmin Sanjaya Aakaasagotta.’

Then a certain man said to king Pasenadi of Kosala. ‘Great king it is time to go.’ Then king Pasenadi of Kosala said to the Blessed One. ‘I asked the Blessed One, about the knowledge and vision of all. The Blessed One explained it to me. I like the reply and I’m satisfied. I asked the Blessed One about the purity of the four castes. The Blessed One explained it to me. I like the reply and I’m satisfied. I asked the Blessed One about the superior gods. The Blessed One explained it to me. I like the reply and I’m satisfied. I asked the Blessed One, about the Great Brahmaas. The Blessed One explained it to me. I like the reply and I’m satisfied. Whatever questions I asked, the Blessed One explained them, now I’m happy and satisfied. Venerable sir, now we go. There is much work to do.’

‘Great king if you think it is fit, do so.’

‘Then king Pasenadi of Kosala got up from his seat, worshipped, circumambulated the Blessed One and went away.’

Notes

1. May the sisters Soma and Sakula be with pleasantness.’ sukhiniyo hontu Mahaaraaja Soma ca bhaagini Sakulaaca bhagini’ When the Blessed One says sukhiniyo, he means may they be healthy, this is not bodily health, which cannot be obtained. What can be gained is the mental health. That is

the mind free from greed, hate and delusion. Pleasantness is the mind free from greed, hate and delusion.

2. Knows the worlds.'lokaviduu' The world to any person is the data collected through six spheres of mental contact. That collected data is different from one person to the other, according to the additions made of greed, non-greed, hate, non-hate, delusion and non-delusion. So each person differs from the other. The Blessed One declared this fact and so he is lokaviduu.

3. Becomes wise endowed with the noble one's wisdom to penetrate and see the rising and falling for the rightful destruction of unpleasantness. 'Pa~n~nvaa hoti udayatthagaaminiyaa pa~n~naaya samannaagato ariyaaya nibbedhikaaya sammaadukkhakkhaya gaaminiyaa.' To attain enlightenment one has to penetrate and see the rising and falling nature of the five holding masses. The five holding masses are the holding masses of matter, feelings, perceptions, determinations and consciousness. It is through these five that one holds on to a self and a view. So we have to see wisely that they are impermanent. We have to see that whatever is impermanent is not pleasant-'dukkha' and whatever is impermanent and unpleasant should not be taken as mine. It is in this manner we push away 'sakkayadi,t,thi' the view about a self. In plain words it is thoughts about a self.

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