

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

To the Brahmin Sangaarava (Sangaaravasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was touring Kosala with a large Community of bhikkhus. At that time the Brahmin woman Dhaana~njaani lived in Candaalakappa, with faith in the Blessed One, the Teaching and the Community of bhikkhus. Then the Brahmin woman Dhaana~njaani falling on the ground, uttered this solemn utterance thrice. 'I worship that Blessed One, perfect and rightfully enlightened.' At that time a young man named Sangaarava lived in Candaalakappa learned in the three Vedas, the phonology and etymology of words and the marks of a Great Man. The young man Sangaarava heard the Brahmin woman Dhaana~njaani say these words and said. 'The Brahmin woman Dhaana~njaani is low and should be despised, that she ignores the Brahmins and speaks much of the shaveling monks.'

'Good one with a bright face, you do not know the virtues and wisdom of that Blessed One, if you knew the virtues and wisdom of the Blessed One you would not think of scolding and depreciating him.'

'Then good one when the recluse Gotama comes to Candaalakappa let me know about it.'

'Yes, I will, good one.' said the Brahmin woman Dhaana~njaani to Sangaarava, the young Brahmin.

The Blessed One touring across Kosala entered Candaalakappa, and lived in the mango orchard of the Brahmin Todeyya. The Brahmin woman Dhaana~njaani heard that the Blessed One had arrived in Candaalakappa and was abiding in the mango orchard of the Brahmin Todeyya. She approached

the young man Sangaarava and told him. ‘Good one, the Blessed One has arrived in Candaalakappa and is abiding in the mango orchard of the Brahmin Todeyya. It is time for you to do what you wish.’

The Brahmin Sangaarava said. ‘Yes, I will go.’ Approached the Blessed One, exchanged friendly greetings, sat on a side and said. ‘Good Gotama, there are recluses and Brahmins who acknowledge they have attained knowledge and reached the fundamentals here and now. Of these recluses and brahmins, who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals here and now, what has good Gotama to say?’

‘Bhaaradvaaja, of these recluses and Brahmins, who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals, I declare a differentia. There are certain recluses and Brahmins who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals through hearsay. Like the Brahmins, who have learnt the three Vedas. There are certain recluses and Brahmins who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals through faith only. Like when done by logical thinking and discrimination. There are certain recluses and Brahmins who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals through knowing things not heard before, and by oneself realising them. Bhaaradvaaja, I belong to the category of recluses and Brahmins who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals through knowing things not heard before and by myself realising them. Bhaaradvaaja, you should know how I belong to the category of recluses and Brahmins, who acknowledge the attainment of knowledge and reaching the fundamentals through knowing things not heard before, realising them by myself in this manner.

Bhaaradvaaja, before my enlightenment, when I was not enlightened, yet a seeker of enlightenment, it occurred to me: The household life is full of troubles and defilements. It is not possible to lead the completely pure holy life living in a household. What if I shaved head and beard, donned yellow clothes and went forth. Even in the prime of youth, with black hair, against the wish of mother and father, when they were crying with tearing eyes, I shaved head and beard, donned yellow robes leaving the household became homeless. Becoming a seeker of good and a seeker of the

incomparable peaceful state approached Aalāra Kālaama and said: ‘Venerable one, I want to lead the holy life in this dispensation.’ ‘Come friend, the wise before long realize this teaching and abide like the teacher. Bhaaraadvāja, I quickly learned that Teaching to acknowledge I know and see by uttering and reciting as the elders did. Then it occurred to me merely with this faith Aalāra Kālaama would not acknowledge, I know and realized this Teaching. Indeed he abides knowing and seeing this teaching. Then I approached Aalāra Kālaama and asked him. Venerable one, how do you abide knowing and realizing this teaching? Aalāra Kālaama declared the sphere of nothingness. Then it occurred to me, it is not only Aalāra Kālaama who has faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. I will arouse effort to realize this Teaching realized by him. Before long I realized that Teaching. Then I approached Aalāra Kālaama and asked: Venerable one, is it this much, the teaching you have realized. Friend, it is this much only, the teaching that I have realized, declare and abide in. Then I said, I too have realized this much and abide in it. Venerable one, it is rare gain for us to meet co-associates like you in the holy life. That the Teaching I have realized, you too have realized. So that, whatever Teaching, I know, that, you too know. Now the two of us are on equal grounds. Let us together guide this following. Bhaaraadvāja, it was in this manner that my teacher Aalāra Kālaama, gave me equal status. Then it occurred to me: This teaching does not lead to giving up, detachment, cessation, appeasement, knowledge enlightenment and extinction. It leads up to the sphere of nothingness only. Not satisfied I turned away from it.

Becoming a seeker of good, and in search of the incomparable peaceful state I approached Uddaka Raamaṭṭha and said. Venerable one, I want to lead the holy life in this dispensation. Come friend, wise ones, before long realize this teaching and abide like the teacher. Bhaaraadvāja, I quickly learned that teaching to acknowledge, I know and see to utter and recite as the elders did. Then it occurred to me. Merely with this faith, Uddaka Raamaṭṭha would not acknowledge I know and have realized this Teaching. Indeed he abides knowing and seeing this Teaching. Then I approached Uddaka Raamaṭṭha and asked him. Venerable one, how do you know and realize this teaching? Uddaka Raamaṭṭha declared the sphere of neither perception-nor non-perception. Bhaaraadvāja, then it occurred to me. It is not only Uddaka Raamaṭṭha who has faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. What

if I put forth effort to realize this. Before long I realized that teaching. Then I approached Uddaka Raamaputta and asked him. Venerable one, is it this much, the Teaching, you have realized? Friend, it is this Teaching that I have realized, declare and abide. Then I said, I too have realized this much and abide in it. Venerable one, it is rare gain for us to meet co-associates like you in the holy life. The teaching I have realized, you too have realized.. So that Teaching I know, you too know. Now the two of us are on equal grounds. Come friend, you guide this following. Thus Uddaka Raamaputta my co-associate put me in the place of his teacher. Then it occurred to me. This Teaching does not lead to giving up, detachment, cessation, appeasement, knowledge enlightenment and extinction. It leads up to the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception only. Not satisfied I turned away from it.

Becoming a seeker of good and in search of the incomparable peaceful state came to the village Senaani in Uruwela. There I saw a pleasant piece of land, with a forest, a flowing river with white banks and in the vicinity a village to pasture. Then it occurred to me: Indeed this stretch of land is pleasant, there is a forest, a flowing river and in the vicinity is a village to pasture. Then I sat thinking this is the ideal place to make effort for a clansman. Bhaaradvja, three comparisons occurred to me never heard before. Just as a man would come with an over cover to a wet, sappy log of wood put in the water saying, I will make fire out of this. Bhaaradvaja, would he be able to make fire rubbing on that wet sappy log of wood? No, good Gotama.. What is the reason?. That wet, sappy log of wood put in the water when rubbed with the over cover, will not produce fire. That man will reap only fatigue. In the same way, when recluses or brahmins, abide not even bodily secluded from sensuality the sensual interest, sensual need, sensual stupor, sensual thirst, sensual burning not well turned out internally. They experience sharp rough unpleasant feelings and it is not possible that they should realize knowledge and vision and noble enlightenment...Even if these good recluses and brahmins do not feel sharp rough unpleasant feelings it is not possible that they should realize knowledge and vision and noble enlightenment. This is the first comparison that came to me not heard before. Bhaaradvaja, then another comparison came to me never heard before. A man would come with an over cover to a sappy log of wood put on dry land, far away from water saying I will make fire out of this. Bhaaradvaja, would he be able to make fire rubbing that sappy log of wood put on dry land far away from water? Good Gotama, that sappy log of wood, however far it may be from

water, rubbed with the over cover would not produce fire. That man will reap only fatigue. In the same way, recluses and brahmins that abide not even bodily secluded from sensuality that sensual interest, sensual need, sensual stupor, sensual thirst, sensual burning not well turned out internally, experience sharp rough unpleasant feelings. It is not possible that they should realize knowledge and vision and noble enlightenment. Even if these good recluses and brahmins do not feel sharp rough unpleasant feelings, it is not possible that they should realize knowledge and vision and noble enlightenment This is the second comparison that came to me not heard before.

Bhaardvaaja, a third comparison came to me never heard before. Just as a man would come with an over cover to a dry sapless log of wood, thrown far away from water, saying I will make fire out of this. Bhaaraadvaaja, would he be able to make fire rubbing that dry sapless log of wood, thrown far away from water? Yes, good Gotama. What is the reason? That dry sapless log of wood, thrown far away from water, rubbed with the over cover would produce fire. In the same way, recluses and brahmins that abide bodily secluded from sensuality that sensual interest, sensual need, sensual stupor, sensual thirst, sensual burning well turned out internally, experience sharp rough unpleasant feelings. Yet it is possible that they should realize knowledge and vision and noble enlightenment...Even if these good recluses and brahmins do not feel sharp rough unpleasant feelings it is possible that they should realize knowledge and vision and noble enlightenment. This is the third comparison that came to me not heard before.

Bhaaradvaaja, it occurred to me, what if I pressed the upper jaw on the lower jaw, with the tongue pressing on the palate pushed out, expelled and burnt up thoughts in my mind. Then even while sweat was dripping from my armpits, I pressed the upper jaw on the lower jaw, with the tongue pressing on the palate pushed out, expelled and burnt up thoughts in my mind. Like a strong man taking hold of a weaker one would press him and worry him. In the same manner I pressed the upper jaw on the lower jaw, with the tongue pressing on the palate pushed out, expelled and burnt up thoughts in my mind, while sweat was dripping from my arm pits. My effort was aroused repeatedly, unconfused mindfulness established, the body was not appeased owing to the difficult exertion.

Bhaaradvaaja, then it occurred to me, what if I practiced stopping the in-breaths and the out-breaths, entering through the nose and mouth. When I practiced stopping in-breaths and out-breaths entering through the nose and mouth, air entering through the ear lobes made much noise. It was like the sound that came from the bellows of the smithy. In the same manner when I stopped in-breaths and out breaths, entering through the nose and mouth, air entering through the ear lobes made much noise. My effort was aroused repeatedly, my mindfulness was established, the body was not appeased owing to the difficult exertion.

Bhaaradvaaja, then it occurred to me what if I practiced stopping the in-breaths and the out-breaths further. I stopped the air, entering through the nose and mouth and ear lobes. When I practiced stopping in-breaths and out-breaths entering through the nose, mouth and the ear lobes, a lot of air disturbed my top.. Like a strong man was carving my top with a sharp blade. In the same manner when I stopped in-breaths and out breaths, entering through the nose and mouth, and ear lobes, a lot of air disturbed my top. My effort was aroused repeatedly, my mindfulness was established, the body was not appeased owing to the difficult exertion.

Bhaaradvaaja, then it occurred to me what if I practiced stopping the in-breaths and the out-breaths still more. I stopped the air, entering through the nose, mouth and ear lobes, further.. When I practiced stopping in-breaths and out-breaths entering through the nose, mouth and the ear lobes further, I felt a lot of pain in the head... Like a strong man giving a head wrap with a strong turban. In the same manner when I stopped in-breaths and out breaths, entering through the nose, mouth, and ear lobes further, I felt a lot of pain in the head. My effort was aroused repeatedly, unconfused mindfulness established, the body was not appeased owing to the difficult exertion.

Bhaaradvaaja, then it occurred to me what if I practiced stopping the in-breaths and the out-breaths, for a longer time. I stopped the air, entering through the nose, mouth and ear lobes, for a longer time. When I practiced stopping in-breaths and out-breaths entering through the nose, mouth and the ear lobes for a longer time, I felt a lot of pain in the stomach. As though a clever butcher or his apprentice was carving the stomach with a butcher's knife. In the same manner when I stopped in-breaths and

out breaths, entering through the nose and mouth, and ear lobes for a longer time I felt a lot of pain in the stomach. My effort was aroused repeatedly, unconfused mindfulness established. My body was not appeased owing to the difficult exertion.

Bhaaradvaaja, then it occurred to me, it is not easy to attain that pleasantness with this emaciated body, what if I take some coarse food some cooked rice and bread. At that time the fivefold bhikkhus attended on me, thinking whatever noble thing the recluse Gotama attains he will inform us. When I partook coarse food such as cooked rice and bread, they went away thinking the recluse Gotama has given up exerting and has returned to abundance.

Partaking coarse food and gaining strength, secluded from sensual thoughts and thoughts of demerit with thoughts and discursive thoughts and with joy and pleasantness born of seclusion I attained to the first jhaana. Overcoming thoughts and discursive thoughts, with the mind internally appeased, and brought to a single point, without thoughts and discursive thoughts and with joy and pleasantness born of concentration I attained to the second jhaana. With equanimity to joy and detachment abode mindful and aware, and with the body experienced pleasantness and attained to the third jhaana. To this abiding the noble ones said, abiding mindfully in pleasantness. Dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness, and earlier having dispelled pleasure and displeasure, without unpleasantness and pleasantness and mindfulness purified with equanimity, I attained to the fourth jhaana.

When the mind was concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, malleable workable not disturbed, I directed the mind for the knowledge of previous births. I recollected 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, experiencing such pleasant and unpleasant feelings and 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 I recollected. the manifold previous births. Bhaaradvaaja, this is the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night, ignorance dispelled, knowledge arose, as it happens to those abiding diligent for dispelling.

When the mind was concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements malleable workable not disturbed, I directed my mind for the knowledge of the disappearing and appearing of beings. With the heavenly eye purified beyond human, I saw beings disappearing and appearing un-exalted 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, I saw beings disappearing and appearing. Bhaaradvaaja, this is the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance dispelled, knowledge arose, as it happens to those abiding diligent for dispelling.

When the mind was concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, was malleable workable not disturbed, I directed the mind for the destruction of desires.. Knew this is unpleasant, knew this is arising of unpleasantness, knew this is cessation of unpleasantness and knew this is the path to the cessation of unpleasantness as it really is.: Knew these are desires, knew the arising of desires, knew the cessation of desires and knew the path to the cessation of desires as it really is. I, knew and saw them and the mind was released, from sensual desires, from desires 'to be', and from ignorant desires. When released knowledge arose, I'm released, birth is destroyed, what should be done is done.. The holy life is lived to the end. I knew, there is nothing more to wish. Bhaaradvaaja, this is the third knowledge, I attained in the last watch of the night. Ignorance dispelled, knowledge arose, as it happens to those abiding diligent for dispelling.

Then the Brahmin Sangaarava said. 'The great efforts of good Gotama have become profitable. They are the efforts of a Great Man, as it happens to the perfect rightfully enlightened one. Good Gotama, are there gods?'

‘Bhaaradvaaja, it should be known with reasons, whether there are gods.

‘Good Gotama, when asked, are there gods, it was said, it should be known with reasons, whether there are gods. Are not these words useless lies?’

‘Bhaaradvaaja, when asked are there gods, whether told there are gods, or told it should be known with reasons, a wise man should conclude that there are gods.

‘Why did good Gotama not declare this to me earlier?’

‘Bhaaradvaaja, it is taken for granted, that there are gods in the world.’

Then the young man Sangaarava said. ‘Good Gotama, now I understand. It is like something overturned is reinstalled. Something covered is made manifest. It’s as though the path was told to someone who has lost his way. It is as though a lamp is lighted for the darkness, for those who have sight to see forms. Good Gotama has explained the Teaching in various ways. Now I take refuge in good Gotama, in the Teaching and the Community of bhikkhus. May I be remembered as a lay disciple from today until life lasts.’

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