

## Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

At Samagama (Saamagaamasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living with the Sakyas in their village Saamagaama. At that time Nigan.ta Naataputta had recently died at Paavaa. When he died the Nigan.tas had split and were quarrelling, fighting and attacking each other with the weapon in their mouths. They were saying things like these. 'You do not know this Teaching and Discipline, I know it. What do you know of it? You have fallen to the wrong method. I have fallen to the right method with reasons. You say the first things last, the last things first. Your dispute is not thought out, it is reversed and made up and should be rebuked. Go! dispute and find your way, if possible'. The dispensation of Nigan.ta Naataputta had gone to destruction. The lay disciples of Nigan.tanaataputta, who wore white clothes too were broken up, uninterested, hindered and without refuge as it happens in a Dispensation, not well taught, by one not rightfully enlightened.

The novice Cunda spent the rains in Paavaa, approached venerable Aananda in Saamagaama, worshipped and sat on a side and said to venerable Aananda. 'Venerable sir, Nigan.ta Naataputta died recently at Paavaa. After his death the Nigan.tas have split, are quarrelling, fighting, are attacking each other with the weapon in their mouths. They are saying things like these. 'You do not know this Teaching and Discipline, I know it. What do you know of it? You have fallen to the wrong method. I have fallen to the right method with reasons. You say the first things last, the last things first. Your dispute is not thought out, is reversed and made up and should be rebuked. Go! dispute and find your way, if possible. The dispensation of Nigan.ta Naataputta had gone to destruction. The lay disciples of Nigan.tanaataputta, who wore white clothes too were broken up, uninterested, hindered and without refuge as it happens in a Dispensation, not well taught, by one not rightfully enlightened'. When this was said, venerable Aananda said. 'Friend, Cunda, this has to be told to the Blessed One. Let us approach the Blessed One and inform about it to the Blessed One.'

Venerable C unda agreed and venerable Aananda and the novice Cunda approached the Blessed One, worshipped, sat on a side and venerable Aananda said to the Blessed One.' Venerable sir, the novice Cunda says, that Nigan.ta Naataputta has died recently at Paavaa. After his death the Nigan.tas have split, are quarrelling, fighting, are attacking each other with the weapon in their mouths. They are saying things like these. 'You do not know this Teaching and Discipline, I know it. What do you know of it? You have fallen to the wrong method. I have fallen to the right method, with reasons. You say the first things last, the last things first. Your dispute is not thought out, is reversed and made up and should be rebuked. Go! dispute and find your way, if possible. The dispensation of Nigan.ta Naataputta had gone to destruction. The lay disciples of Nigan.tanaataputta, who wore white clothes too were broken up, uninterested, hindered and without refuge as it happens in a Dispensation, not well taught, by one not rightfully enlightened. Venerable sir, it occurs to me at the demise of the Blessed One, may there be no dispute, for the good and welfare of many.'

'Aananda, do you see any instance in this Teaching, by me realized and proclaimed where two bhikkhus could dispute, such as in the four establishments of mindfulness, the four right endeavours, the four psychic powers, the five mental faculties, the five powers, the seven enlightenment factors and the eightfold path?' 'Venerable sir, in this Teaching realized and proclaimed by the Blessed One I do not see an instance where two bhikkhus could dispute, such as in the four establishments of mindfulness, the four right endeavours, the four psychic powers, the five mental faculties, the five powers, the seven enlightenment factors and the eightfold path.

Yet those persons who live as though obedient to the Blessed One now, will arouse a dispute on account of the hard livelihood because of the higher code of rules, it will be not for the well being of many and the well being of gods and men.' Aananda, a dispute on the harsh livelihood or the higher code of rules is negligible, if the community has a dispute about the path and method, it will be for the unpleasantness of many, and the unpleasantness of gods and men.

Aananda, these six are the causes for a dispute. What are the six? When the bhikkhu becomes angry and bears a grudge, he becomes unruly even towards the Teacher, rebels against the Teaching and becomes unruly, rebels against the Community and becomes unruly, does not live complete in the training. Thus he arouses a dispute in the Community, for the unpleasantness of many and the unpleasantness of gods and men. Aananda, if you see this cause for a dispute internally or externally, you should make effort for the dispelling of that cause for a dispute, and for its non arising again.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu is merciless with hypocrisy ...re... jealous and selfish,..re... crafty and fraudulent,...re... is with evil desires and wrong view,...re.. holding fast to worldly matters and not giving up easily. When the bhikkhu holds fast to worldly matters and does not give up easily, he becomes unruly even towards the Teacher, rebels against the Teaching and becomes unruly, rebels against the Community and becomes unruly, does not live complete in the training. Thus he arouses a dispute in the Community, for the unpleasantness of many and the unpleasantness of gods and men. Aananda, if you see this cause for a dispute internally or externally, you should make effort for the dispelling of that cause for a dispute, and for its non arising again. This is dispelling the evil causes of disputes, for their non arising in the future. Aananda, these are the six causes for disputes.

Aananda, there are four administrations What are the four? The questions of disputes, questions of censure, questions of misconduct and questions of duties. Aananda, there are seven ways to settle all these disputes. Proceedings done in the presence of the accused, appealing to the conscience of the accused, acquittal on grounds of restored sanity, agreement by a promise, acquittal by a majority vote of the chapter, acquittal for evil desires and covering up the whole thing without going to details.

Aananda how are the proceedings done in the presence of the accused? The bhikkhu disputes, this is the Teaching and this is not the Teaching, this is the Discipline and this is not the Discipline. Then all the bhikkhus unite and get together and examine it according to the Teaching and should approve and settle it. Thus the proceedings are done in the presence of the accused.

Ananda, how is the acquittal by a majority vote of the chapter? It is not possible to settle this in that same monastery, should go to a place where there is a larger number of bhikkhus. Then all the bhikkhus unite and get together and examine it according to the Teaching and should approve and settle it. To settle that dispute the accused should be acquitted by a majority vote of the chapter. In this manner too it is settled.

Aananda, how is the appealing to the conscience? The bhikkhus blame the bhikkhu of a grave offence, which merits expulsion or something similar. They ask does the venerable one recall committing this grave offence, that merits expulsion or something similar. He says, venerable sirs I do not recall committing this grave offence, that merits expulsion or something similar. Aananda, it is in this manner, that his conscience should be disciplined. In this manner too a dispute is settled disciplining the conscience.

Aananda, how is the acquittal on grounds of restored sanity? The bhikkhus blame the bhikkhu of a grave offence, which merits expulsion or something similar. They ask does the venerable one recall committing this grave offence, that merits expulsion or something similar. He says, venerable sirs I do not recall committing this grave offence, that merits expulsion or something similar. Then he should be well bound by explaining, come on venerable one recall whether you have done a grave offence or something similar. Then he would say, friends, I had a mental aberration, my mind went off and I did many things that should not have been done by a true recluse. I said a lot of piercing things that should not have been said. These I did out of delusion and do not remember them. Aananda, he should be acquitted on grounds of restored sanity. This is the acquittal on grounds of restored sanity, thus too disputes are settled.

Aananda, how is an agreement by a promise? A bhikkhu accused or not accused of an offence, recalls and declares it. He should approach an elderly bhikkhu, arrange his robe on one shoulder, worship his feet, settle on his feet lowering himself and say. 'Venerable sir, I have done an offence and confess it.' Then the elder bhikkhu would ask. 'Do you see it?' 'I see it.' 'Have you come to future

restraint?' 'I have come to future restraint.' Aananda, this is agreement by a promise, thus too a dispute is settled.

Aananda, how is the settlement with evil desires? The bhikkhus blame the bhikkhu of a grave offence, which merits expulsion or something similar. They ask does the venerable one recall committing this grave offence, that merits expulsion or something similar. He says, venerable sirs I do not recall committing this grave offence, that merits expulsion or something similar. Then he should be well bound by explaining, come on venerable one recall whether you have done a grave offence or something similar. Then he would say. 'Friends I know of a small offence, for which I did not feel. If I had committed a grave offence or something similar, why shouldn't I recall it?' 'Then he is told, you have done a small offence, not feeling have not declared and acknowledged it. Come on! recall whether you have done a grave offence or something similar.' Then he would say. 'Friends, I remember doing a grave offence, which merits expulsion or something similar.' Aananda, thus his evil desires should be settled, and the dispute is settled'

'Aananda, how is it settled by covering up with grass?' Aananda, the bhikkhus abide quarrelling, fighting and saying many things, that should not be uttered by true recluses. Then all the bhikkhus should get together unitedly. A learned bhikkhu on one side should get up, arrange the robe on one shoulder, clasping hands should inform the Community. 'Listen to me venerable sirs, when we were quarrelling and fighting, many things that should not be uttered by true recluses have been uttered, by you and me too. We have done an offence. For the good of the Community, you all and me too, may the discussion of the lay people and the offence be covered up in the presence of the Community. Then a bhikkhu on the other side should get up, arrange the robe on one shoulder, clasping hands should inform the Community. 'Listen to me venerable sirs, when we were quarrelling and fighting, many things that should not be uttered by a true recluse have been uttered, by you and me too. We have done an offence. For the good of the Community, you all and me too, may the discussion of the lay people and the offence be covered up in the presence of the Community. Aananda, this is covering up with grass, and a dispute is settled by covering up with grass.

Aananda, there are six things that promote unity, gladness and friendship, and dispel disputes. What are the six? Aananda, the bhikkhu should be established in bodily actions of loving kindness (\*1) towards co-associates in the holy life openly and secretly. The bhikkhu should be established in verbal actions of loving kindness (\*2) towards co-associates in the holy life openly and secretly. The bhikkhu should be established in mental actions of loving kindness (\*3) towards co-associates in the holy life openly and secretly. Again the bhikkhu shares equally all rightful gains so far as the morsels put in the bowl, with the virtuous co-associates in the holy life. Again the bhikkhu becomes equal in all virtues that are not spotted, fissured, free of blemish, and praised by the wise as conducive to concentration, with the co-associates in the holy life. Again the bhikkhu shares the noble view that rightfully destroys unpleasantness (\*4), of one who logically thinks about it, with the co-associates in the holy life openly and secretly. Aananda, these six things promote unity, gladness and friendship and dispel disputes. Aananda, do you see a single word which is not acceptable among these words?'

'Venerable sir, I do not see.'

'Therefore Aananda, be accomplished in these six things that promote unity, gladness and friendship and dispels disputes, it will be for your welfare for a long time.'

The Blessed One said thus and venerable Aananda delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

## Notes

1. Should be established in bodily actions of loving kindness ' metta.m kaayakamma.m paccupa.t.thita.m hoti' The doors at which all actions start is the six doors of mental contact. So whatever actions start through seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting through touch and the mind, should be with thoughts of loving kindness.

2. Should be established in verbal actions of loving kindness. 'metta.m vaciikamma.m paccupa.t.thita.m hoti.' Verbal actions start with thinking and pondering, With all data that come through the six doors of mental contact, there goes on thinking and pondering, before any words leak out. Such then these thoughts should be thoughts of loving kindness.

3. Should be established in mental actions of loving kindness. 'metta.m manokamma.m paccupa.t.thita.m hoti.' Mental actions are feelings and perceptions. When the aforesaid bodily and verbal actions are those of loving kindness, automatically the mental actions of feelings and perceptions become those of loving kindness.

4. The noble view that rightfully destroys unpleasantness, of one who logically thinks about it.' yaaya.m di.t.thi ariyaa niiyaanikaa niiyaati takkarassa sammaa dukkhakkhaayaati' The noble view that rightfully destroys the unpleasantness of one who logically thinks about it, is the right view which carries one to the entry of the stream of the Teaching. This in Pali is 'sotapattimagga' , the first stage of sainthood of a Buddhist.

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