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Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta

The Discourse on the Lion-roar at Udumbarikā | D 25

Theme: The Dharma’s true purpose & the spiritual bases for interfaith dialogue

Translated by Piya Tan ©2012, rev 2016

1 Sutta highlights

1.1 TREE PARABLE. At the Udumbarikā wanderers’ park, the wanderer Nigrodha boasts that he could “knock the recluse Gotama over like an empty pot” with a single question. The Buddha answers his challenge in a most unexpected way—by going along with the wanderer Nigrodha’s train of thoughts—that ultimately points to “the heartwood” or pith of the teaching.

The Buddha employs a delightful set of similes in reference to the parts of a tree. The full sequence of the tree parable comprises:

- (1) the loose outer bark (*papaṭṭika*), ie crust or pieces of dry bark that flake off [§15.2]; this word also translates as “shoots, sprouts”;
- (2) the bark (*taca*) [§17.2], lit “skin”;
- (3) the sapwood (*pheggū*) [§18.3], ie the layer surrounding the pith, and
- (4) the heartwood (*sāra*) [§19.6] (lit “essence”), ie the core or pith.¹

In all the passages² these similes are found, the various parts are always contrasted with the pith (*sāra*).

1.2 HUMOUR AND MISSION. This sutta is a good example of early Buddhist humour. It is also an important document on the Buddhist tolerance of other faiths and as such serves as an excellent platform for interfaith dialogue. It also shows that the Buddha does not always teach to convert, but teaches because there are negative and bad states that bring about rebirth and suffering, and it is to free us from them that the Buddha teaches.

The boastful, almost puerile, wanderer Nigrodha makes an interesting contrast to the cynical brahmin **Lohicca**, who before meeting the Buddha holds the view that it is not worthwhile for an accomplished teacher to teach another because it would be tiresome and frustrating if the other party is incapable of understanding the teaching. However, after the Buddha’s admonition, he not only goes for refuge, but also gives up his wrong view.³

1.3 KEY WORDS

1.3.1 This sutta has been translated by T W Rhys Davids (1921) (D:RD) and by Maurice Walshe (1995) (D:W). It contains some challenging Pali words like *go,kāṇā* [§5], *ācariyaka* [§7.2], *adhi,jegucchā* [§7.2] and *tapa,jegucchā* [§7.2], which here have been translated according to their context and commentaries.

¹ “Heartwood,” *sāra*, ie, the core or essence of anything; the pith or the best of wood—a simile for spiritual power and attainment. See **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,12/1:111), SD 6.14. Here, the Buddha’s humour is evident in such a parable given in **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25,15-19/3:47-53), SD 1.4. In (**Saṅgha**) **Uposatha S** (A 4.190,1.2/2:182), SD 15.10b, *sāra* means “essence,” in the sense of being accomplished in moral virtue, etc (AA 3:168).

² See D 3:51; M 1:192 f; S 4:168; A 1:152, 2:10 = Pug 52; A 3:20; cf M 1:488 where a slightly more elaborate version—incl branches and leaves—is used by Vaccha,gotta.

³ See (**Sāla,vatikā**) **Lohicca S** (D 12/1:224-234), SD 34.8.

1.3.2 K P Jain, in his article, “The Jaina References in the Buddhist Literature” (1926), points out that the practices of “asceticism of abstinence” (*tapo,jigucchā*) [§8] are actually the rules of the Jain recluses (*muni*). If this were the case, Then, Nigrodha and the wandering ascetics (or at least Nigrodha) in the Udumbarikā wanderers’ park were actually Jain.

1.3.3 A clue to the proper meaning of *tapo,jigucchā* might be found in **the Mahā Viyūha Sutta** (Sn 4.13) in the ancient Aṭṭhaka Vagga of the Sutta Nipāta, where it is referred to in this interesting stanza:

<p><i>Tapūpanissāya jigucchitaṃ vā</i> <i>atha vā pi diṭṭhaṃ va sutaraṃ mutaraṃ vā</i> <i>uddhaṃ.sarā,suddhim⁴ anutthūṇanti</i> <i>avīta,tanḥāse bhavābhavesu</i></p>	<p>Dependent on <u>asceticism consisting of abstention</u>, or on what is seen or heard or otherwise sensed, they speak again and again of purity through flowing in samsara, with craving for existence after existence not gone away. (Sn 901)⁵</p>
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From line a, it is clear that *tapo,jigucchā* is a karmadharaya, a descriptive compound. British philologist **K R Norman** has pointed that PED is wrong in taking it as a tatpuruṣa (a dependent compound) meaning “detesting asceticism” or “disgust for asceticism” (sv *tapa*).⁶ Norman points out that *jigucchita* is actually a participle used as an action noun,⁷ meaning “abstinence, abstention, avoidance,” which I have followed here.

However, Norman, taking *tapo,jigucchā* as dvandva (a twin compound), comprising two separate terms, that is, “asceticism” (*tapa*) and “abstention, avoidance,” translates **Sn 901a** as “Dependent on asceticism, or abstemiousness” (Sn:N 901). This is of course possible, except that this is not attested by the Commentary.

1.3.4 My own understanding is that we can safely render *tapo,jigucchā* simply as a karmadharaya, as “asceticism consisting of abstention” or “the asceticism of abstinence.” This translation is well attested here in **the Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta** [§8.2], where a well known list of ascetic abstinences and self-mortification is listed.⁸ What other information on *tapo,jigucchā* can we cull from the Suttas and Commentaries?

1.3.5 *Tapo,jigucchā* is defined in **the Dīgha Commentary** as “efforts in the burning (*santāpa*) of the defilements” (*kilesa,santāpaka,viriya*) (DA 2:369).⁹ There is a wordplay on *santāpa* which means “burning”

⁴ Comy erroneously takes *uddhaṃsarā* as pl of adj (*akiriya,diṭṭhiyā vā uddhaṃsarā hutvā*, SnA 558,33). See CPD sv *uddhaṃ-sarā*, then under *-suddhi*.

⁵ Sn 901d = 776d; cf Sn 777).

⁶ Sn:N 2001: 369 n901. The usu sense of *jigucchita* (mfn, pp as an action n) (cf Skt *jugupsita*) is “disliked, detested” (Tha 621 Suṇīta the erstwhile road-sweeper describing how people “detested” him; VA 738,31), but here it has the sense of an action n, “avoidance, abstention” (Sn 901a; SnA 558,31); cf *jigucchitabba*, “to be abstained from, avoided” in the phrase “then, Rāhula, you should be concerned, ashamed, disgusted regarding that mental action” (*eva,rūpe te rāhula mano,kamme aṭṭiyitabbaṃ harāyitabbaṃ ~araṃ*) (M 61.17/1:419,28), SD 3.10.

⁷ Sn:N 2001 (id) and his n on Sn 331.

⁸ Abstinences & self-mortification: see also **Kassapa Sīha,nāda S** (D 8,14/1:165-167) SD 77.1, = **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25,8.2/3:41), SD 1.4 = **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,45/1:77 f), SD 49.1, = **Kandaraka S** (M 51,8/1:342 f), SD 32.9, = **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60,36/1:412), SD 35.5, = **Ghoṭa,mukha S** (M 94,10/2:161), SD 77.2, = **Acelaḥka Paṭipadā S** (A 3.151/1:295), SD 78.1, = **Atta,daṇḍa Sutta Nd** (Nm 15/416 f).

⁹ See also D 1:174, 3:40, 42 f, 48 f; A 2:200, 205 ff; DA 3:840.

and “torture, mortification.” In the **Mahā Sihanāda Sutta** (D 8), the Buddha declares that he is supreme in *tapo,jigucchā*—which **M Walshe** translates as “self-mortification and scrupulous austerity.”

This is clearly a synonym for self-mortification,¹⁰ and the **Vibhaṅga Subcommentary** (Mūla Tīkā) defines *dukkara,kiriya* as “mortifying practices such as the 5 fires, etc” (*pañcātapa,tappan’ādi,dukkara,-kiriya*).¹¹ As such, we can say that *tapo,jigucchā*, at least in some sutta contexts, can mean self-mortification, such as those performed by the ascetic Bodhisattva.¹²

2 The Buddha’s challenge to religion

2.1 THE 7 POINTS OF RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE. The Udumbarikā Sihanāda Sutta contains one of the most important statements on **Buddhist missiology**, that is, the 7 points of interfaith dialogue [§23], given towards the end of the Sutta, as follows:¹³

- (1) “Let whoever is your teacher (*ācariya*) remain as your teacher.”
- (2) “Let your training (*uddesa*) remain as your training.”
- (3) “Let your livelihood (*ājīva*) remain as your livelihood.”
- (4) “Let what you consider unwholesome (*akusala*) continue to be so considered.”
- (5) “Let what you consider wholesome (*kusala*) continue to be so considered.”
- (6) There are unabandoned unwholesome states that conduce to rebirth and future suffering.**
- (7) “By your own insight and realization, you will attain the fullness of wisdom.”**

Let me comment on each of these seven points [7.3] as I understand them to be so in the Buddha’s time, and in a manner applicable to our own times.

(1) We can keep to our religious discipleship or academic training; or, we need not give up our religion or academic training to practise the Buddha’s teachings. Even after some followers of other religions convert to Buddhism, the Buddha encourages them to continue to respect and even support their erstwhile teachers. The best known case is that of the householder Upāli of Nālandā, ex-chief supporter of the Jain leader, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta. The Buddha admonishes him, “Householder, long indeed has your family supported the Nirgranthas, and please consider that almsfood should still be given to them when they come.”¹⁴ This is a very early example of what we today call “professional courtesy.”

(2) We can continue keeping to training or rules we have been observing, or are used to, while we are practising the Buddha’s teachings. The Buddha is not interested in religious identities, or parallels, or similarities, especially where *language* (words, thoughts and expression) is the basis of such systems. There are moral and spiritual issues that seem to be beyond our comprehension or capacity to resolve: only spiritual liberation can transcend such worldly failures.

(3) We do not need to give up our occupation or means of supporting ourselves. We need some kind of suitable livelihood to support ourselves and others. The more conducive our livelihood is for spiritual development, the easier it is for us to understand the true purpose and efficacy of the Buddha

¹⁰ Ie *attā,kilamathānuyoga* (S 5:421) or *dukkara,kiriya* (CA 272, 335).

¹¹ VbhAṬ:Be 106.

¹² For refs, see n8 on “Abstinences & self-mortification” above.

¹³ For an interpretation in the context of *papañca*, see SD 19.1(7.3-7.4).

¹⁴ *Dīgha,rattaraṃ kho te gaha,pati nigaṇṭhānaṃ opāna,bhūtaṃ kulaṃ, yena nesaraṃ upagatānaṃ piṇḍakaṃ dātabaraṃ maññeyyāsī ti.* See **Upāli S** (M 56,17/1:379), SD 27.1.

Dharma. Often enough, the light of the Buddha's truth is so penetrating that we see through our own lifestyles, and know what to do about it, to take that next step up the spiral path to spiritual liberation.

(4) We need not change our opinions regarding what is good. Whatever notion of good that we may have, understandably reflects our own understanding of self and the world. As we reflect on the profound teachings of the Buddha, that understanding matures into greater insight into true reality.

(5) We need not change our opinions regarding what is bad. Our understanding of what is unwholesome or bad is often based on past pains and present conditioning. When we begin to see the universality of such pains and lack as the Buddha has experienced them, we begin to connect to a larger reality, so that our pains flower into compassion and our confusion becomes wisdom.

Religion, education, profession, philosophies and morals—what the above five are all about—are all secondary to spiritual development. We can have all these five things at their best, but we may still lack spiritual wisdom and liberation. Indeed, these are the very things that could be holding us back from being better than what we are right now. How often these self-approved systems are actually the result of comparing ourselves with others, and defining happiness as *having* things (wealth, status, power, pleasure), instead of truly *being* happy.

(6) **There are unabandoned unwholesome states that conduce to rebirth and future suffering.** In other words, there is still a missing piece in our life's puzzle, a vital piece that often eludes us as we are distracted by the religion of words, wealth, status, power, and pleasure. How often we are goaded on mostly by the fear of loss, the promise of power, the comfort of other-love, or the dependence on pleasure. All that we have really achieved is only a sense of a very private limited self-fulfillment.

Even after having gained all this, we may find the costs are very high and we are still utterly hollow. We wish for some inner stillness, but find ourselves again and again caught up by the storm around us. Sometimes we think we have found something strong and meaningful to hold on to, but the force of the storm is too strong, and we get sucked into the maddening maelstrom again. This seems to be endless.

(7) **“By your own insight and realization, you will attain the fullness of wisdom.”** We will not realize our true goodness, especially when we are always seeking the limelight, the bright lights, of the perceived success of others. Like moths, we mistake the candle for the sun, but the candle still burns and kills. But like Prometheus¹⁵ being punished from bringing fire to the world, we are burned again and again by the flame, moment after moment, life after life. It is all so boringly familiar. Yet, we think: this seems to be a great achievement!

In the dazzling lights of worldly success, we see our shadows darkly cast on the ground. Our shadows are darkest when the lights are brightest. But these are the light of others, and the shadows are false, they are not really us. When we look within, we truly see that the brightest light is right there, ready to shine out from our hearts when the hindrances are removed. This light casts no shadow, but reveals only true reality.

On a higher level, the Buddha is declaring that he is not teaching a new religion, but a universal spirituality that underlies any religious teaching worth its salt. It does not matter what religion we follow, or that we have no religion at all, we will in due course be confronted with true realities of life pointing to the fact there is something seriously missing in our lives despite everything. We can choose to ignore this vision, or rationalize it away with what we know or do not know, or find someone to interpret it, handing over our remote control to him.

Or, we can take up the Buddha's challenge, and look within ourselves for inner peace and light. For, the Buddha declares,

¹⁵ See **The Buddha as a myth**, SD 36.2 (8.1).

If you practise accordingly, these defiled states will be abandoned, the states that purify will increase, and by your direct knowledge, you will realize, here and now, the bountiful perfection of wisdom. [§23]

2.2 THE BUDDHA'S LION-ROAR

2.2.1 The Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta (D 25) is special in that it is a discourse on the Buddha's own lion-roar (*siha,nāda*). The Majjhima Commentary says that a lion-roar is a statement of supremacy and fearlessness, one that cannot be debunked. Two other related discourses that refer to the lion and his roar, in connection with the Buddha's teaching, are **the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta** (A 4.33) and **the (Dasaka) Sīha,nāda Sutta** (A 10.21).¹⁶

2.2.2 The (Kassapa) Mahā Sīha,nāda Sutta (D 8) defines it thus: "The ascetic Gotama roars his lion-roar in company and confidently, they question and he answers, he wins them over with his answers, they find it pleasing and are satisfied with what they have heard, they show that they are satisfied, they practise for the sake of realizing true reality, and they are satisfied with the practice."¹⁷

2.2.3 The Buddha specifically defines the "lion-roar" as the declaration that the 4 types of saints are found only in his Teaching.¹⁸ The most elaborate lion-roars are those given by the Buddha himself in reply to the naked ascetic Kassapa's question on asceticism (D 8) and in reply to Sunakkhatta's accusation that he lacked spiritual powers (M 12).

2.2.4 Other disciples have also made lion-roars: Mahā Kassapa on his ascetic forest practice, as recorded in **the Mahā Gosiṅga Sutta** (M 32)¹⁹ and Sāriputta on his faith in the Buddha (D 16).²⁰ In the late **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta**, a lion-roar is made by the sage-king, admonishing his son, the new king to be a "noble wheel-turner," that is, not just a king, but a just king.²¹

2.2.5 The monk who is foremost amongst lion-roarers is **Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja**, due to his readiness to answer the questions of any doubting monks.²² On his attaining arhathood, knowing that whatever a disciple needs to attain has been attained by him, he roars his lion-roar before the Buddha himself, "Let those who have any doubt in the path and fruition [the stages of sainthood] question me!" (ApA 300)²³

2.3 TEACHING THE UNCONVERTED

2.3.1 Although we know the Buddha to be the greatest of spiritual teachers who is able to point out the right path to his audience, it is not always that they take that vital step. Among the discourses that record the Buddha himself teaching those who remain unconverted include the following:

¹⁶ Respectively A 4.33/2:33 f = S 22.78/3:84-86 (SD 42.10) & A 10.21/5:32-36 (SD 81.2).

¹⁷ D 8,22/1:175 (SD 73.12).

¹⁸ D 16,5.27/2:152; M 11.2/1:64 f.

¹⁹ M 32,7/1:214; see also S 16.5/2:202.

²⁰ D 16,1.16-17/2:81-83 (SD 9).

²¹ D 26,5/3:61 (SD 36.10).

²² A 1:23; AA 1:197 f; ApA 300; ThaA 2:3 f. See **Piṇḍola Bhāra,dvāja**, SD 27.6a(1.2).

²³ On this preeminence, A 1:23; SA 2:393; AA 1:199; ThaA 2:4; UA 252; J 4:263.

Soṇa,daṇḍa Sutta	the status-conscious brahmin Soṇa,daṇḍa	D 4,26/1:125 f	SD 30.5
Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta	the foolish Nigrodha and his followers	D 25,24/3:57	SD 1.4
Mūla,pariyāya Sutta	the arrogant brahmin monks	M 1,194/1:6	SD 11.8
Kakacūpama Sutta	the lustful monk Moḷiya Phaggunā	M 21,7.4/1:124	SD 38.1
Alagaddūpama Sutta	the lustful monk Ariṭṭha	M 22,27/1:132	SD 3.13
Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta	the deluded monk Sāti	M 38,5.3/1:258	SD 7.10
(Gaha,pati) Potaliya Sutta	the false renunciant Potaliya; wanderer	M 54,26/1:368	SD 43.8
Kaḷāra Sutta	Moḷiya Phaggunā leaves the order	S 12.32/2:50	SD 83.6

2.3.2 An example of a case where a disciple of the Buddha teaches the Dharma, but his intended audience remains unconverted is found in:

(Cheta) Kassapa,gotta Sutta Kassapa,gotta fails to convert a hunter S 9.3/1:198 f SD 47.22

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Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta

The Discourse on the Lion-roar at Udumbarikā

D 25

[36] 1 Thus have I heard.

Sandhāna

1.2 ²⁴At one time the Blessed One was staying on the Vulture’s Peak near Rājagaha. At that time, the wanderer Nigrodha was staying at the Udumbarikā wanderers’ park²⁵ with a large company of some 3,000 wanderers.

1.3 At dawn, the houselord **Sandhāna**²⁶ came to Rājagaha to see the Blessed One. Then, he thought: “It is not the proper time to see the Blessed One since he is still in retreat. It is also not the proper time to see the monks worthy of esteem,²⁷ since these esteemed monks, too, are still in retreat. Perhaps I should go to the Udumbarikā wanderers’ park and call on the wanderer Nigrodha.” And he went there.

²⁴ §§1-3 parallel **Samaṇa,maṇḍikā S** (M 78,1-3/2:22 f), SD 18.9.

²⁵ *Udumbarikā paribbājak’ārāma*. This park belongs to queen Udumbarikā who has dedicated it to the wanderers. Nearby is the peacocks’ feeding-ground (*mora,nivāpa*) beside the Sumāgadhā lotus lake (DA 3:835), both of which are part of the Bamboo Grove (*Velu,vana*). On other wanderers’ parks, see **Kuṇḍaliya S** (S 46.6), SD 35.3 (1.1).

²⁶ According to Buddhaghosa (DA 3:832), **Sandhāna**, a layman non-returner, was the leader of 500 laymen. The Aṅguttara lists him amongst the foremost lay disciples who have six qualities: faith in the Buddha, faith in the Dharma, faith in the Sangha, noble virtue, noble knowledge, noble release. (A 3:451; cf Divy 546)

²⁷ “Worthy of esteem” and “esteemed,” *mano,bhāvanīyā* or *-bhāvanīyā*, often used in apposition with *bhikkhū* (D 2:140; M 2:23, 3:36, 3:261; S 3:1, 5:369, 371; A 3:317-322, 5:185, 189; Vv 34.13/49; Miln 129); used of the Buddha, *mano,bhāvanīyam buddham*, at **Sovaṇṇa,kattarika Ap** (Ap 427.1/2:389). SA comments that “those great elders such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna are called ‘worthy of esteem because the mind grows in wholesome qualities whenever they are seen’ (SA 2:249 f). See DA 3:832; MA 3:17, 266. **Bodhi** notes that “the expression is a gerundive

The wanderers

2 Now at that time the wanderer Nigrodha was sitting with a large crowd of wanderers, all talking loudly, shouting, making loud noises, and indulging in various **low talk**,²⁸ that is to say, talk about kings, robbers, [37] ministers of state; about armies, dangers, and wars; about food and drink; about clothing, beds [furniture], garlands, and scents; about relatives; about vehicles; about villages, towns, cities, the countryside; about women and heroes; gossips of the street and at the well; tales of the dead; tales of diversity [philosophical discussions of the past and future], talk about the creation of the world and of the sea, and talk about rebirth in this or that existence [talk about gain and loss].²⁹

3 Then, the wanderer Nigrodha saw the houselord Sandhāna approaching from a distance, and he called his own company of followers to order, saying:

“Good sirs, be quiet please! Don’t make a noise, good sirs! The houselord Sandhāna, a disciple of the recluse Gotama, is approaching. He is one of those white-dressed lay disciples³⁰ of the recluse Gotama in Rājagaha. And these good folks are fond of quiet; they are taught to be quiet and speak in praise of quiet.³¹ If he sees that this company is quiet, he will most likely want to come and visit us.”

When this was said, the wanderers fell silent.

4 Then, the houselord Sandhāna approached the wanderer Nigrodha and exchanged courtesies and then sat down at one side. Having sat down at one side, the houselord Sandhāna said to the wanderer Nigrodha:

“Good sir, the way those wanderers outside the faith conduct themselves when they assemble is one thing: they make such a great noise [38] and *indulge in various low talk ... [as in §3] ...*

The Blessed One’s way is different—he resorts to a dwelling in the forest, in the jungle, free from noise, with little sound, alone with the winds,³² away from humans, conducive for seclusion.”

Nigrodha’s challenge

5 Then, the wanderer Nigrodha replied:

“Well now, houselord, do you know with whom the recluse Gotama talks? Whom does he converse with? From whom does he find his clarity of wisdom? The recluse Gotama is destroyed by the solitary

meaning literally ‘who should be brought to mind,’ ie who are worthy of esteem” (S:B 1043 n2). **Sadda, nīti** (Dhātu,-mālā), however, gives both meanings of *mano, bhāvanīya*: (1) one who is worthy of being greeted and asked after his health; (2) one who develops his mind (Sadd:Be 330).

²⁸ *Tiracchāna, kathā*, lit “animal talk.” As animals mostly walk parallel to the earth, so this kind of talk does not lead on upwards. This section is *mutatis mutandis* as at **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9.3/1:178 f). Cf **Lohicca S** (D 1:228). For a fuller list, called “the moralities” (*sīla*), see **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1.43-62/1:4-12), SD 25.2 & Intro (3), & **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.43-63/ 1:63-70), SD 8.10 & Intro (3). For details on *tiracchāna, kathā*, see SD 10.16 (3.4.2). See DEB: *tiracchāna, kathā*.

²⁹ *Iti, bhavābhāva, kathā* may be rendered as “being and non-being” or as “profit and loss”: see n at **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1) ad loc, SD 25.2.

³⁰ Lay disciple, *sāvaka gīhi*, lit householder disciple.

³¹ *Appa, sadda, kāmā kho pan’ete āyasmanto, appa, sadda, vinīta appa, saddassa vaṇṇa, vādino*: **Udumbarika Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,3/3:37, 6/3:39 sg); **Sandaka S** (M 76,4/1:514), **Mahā Sakul’udāyi S** (M 77.4/2:2 sg), **Samaṇa Muṇḍika S** (M 78,3/2:23), **Cūḷa Sakul’udāyi S** (M 79,4/2:30 sg); **Kiṃ Diṭṭhika S** (A 10.93,2/5:185), **Vajjiya Māhita S** (A 10.94,2/5:190). Only M 67 first reading has *ete*, while the others omit it (or use *te*).

³² Alone with the winds, *vijana, vatāni*; D:W has “far from the madding crowd.” Cf D:RD 3:35 n1.

life. He is awkward in an assembly. He is no good at conversation. Just as a one-eyed cow,³³ walking in circles, keeps to the fringes (of a field), the recluse Gotama is only occupied with the fringes of things.

Indeed, houselord, if the recluse Gotama were to come to this assembly, we will baffle him with a single question, we will knock him over like an empty pot!"

The Buddha arrives

6 Now, the Blessed One, with his divine ear faculty, purified and superhuman [reaching beyond the normal human range], heard this exchange between the houselord Sandhāna and the wanderer Nigrodha.

And, descending from the Vulture's Peak, he came to the bank of the Sumāgadhā³⁴ beside the Peacocks' feeding ground and [39] walked up and down there in the open.

6.2 Then, the wanderer Nigrodha saw him and called his company to order, saying:

"Good sirs, be quiet please! Don't make a noise, good sirs!³⁵ The recluse Gotama is walking up and down in the open on the Sumāgadhā bank. He is fond of quiet, and speaks in praise of quiet. If he sees that this company is quiet, he will surely want to come and visit us. If he does so, we will put this question to him:

6.3 'Bhante, **how does the Blessed One train his disciples**, and through which disciples of the Blessed One having so trained that they gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life?'"³⁶ [S7.4]

When this was said, the wanderers fell silent.

7 Then, the Blessed One approached the wanderer Nigrodha, who then said:

"Please come, venerable Blessed One! Welcome, venerable Blessed One!³⁷ It's been a long time since the venerable Blessed One has found the occasion to come here.³⁸ Let the venerable Blessed One take a seat. Here's one prepared."

7.2 The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat, and the wanderer Nigrodha taking a low seat, sat down at one side. Having sat down, the Blessed One said to him:³⁹

³³ *Go, kāṇhā*; cf *go, kaṇṇa*, "a large species of deer, J 5:406" (PED). D:W has "bison." D:RD and here follow the Comy. Cf *go, maṇḍala va parinesī* ("led around in a circle like a cow"): see Tha 1143 @ SD 20.9.

³⁴ A lotus lake near Rājagaha. Beside it is the peacocks' feeding-ground (*mora, nivāpa*), and within visible walking distance, the wanderers' park (*paribbājak'ārāma*) in Queen Udumbarikā's park. See **Loka, cintā S** (S 56.41), SD 77.11.

³⁵ We see a similar response from the wanderer Sakul'udāyi in **Mahā Sakul'udāyi S** (M 77,5), SD 49.5.

³⁶ *Ko nāma so bhante bhagavato dhammo, yena bhagavā sāvake vineti, yena bhagavatā sāvakā vinitā assāsa-p-*
pattā paṭijānanti ajjhāsayam ādi, brahma, cariyān'ti? Here, in *assāsa, patta*, **assāssa** means "self-confidence" or simply "confidence," as at **Assāssa S** (S 38.5) where it refers to a saint of the path (*sekha*), short of the arhat (S 38.5-
/4:254,29); or "consolation," as at **Param'assāssa S** (S 38.6), where the "supreme consolation" (*param'assāssa*) refers to the arhat (S 38.6/4:254 f).

³⁷ On wanderers addressing the Buddha as "venerable Blessed One," see SD 49.5 (2.1.1).

³⁸ "Please come, ... to come here," *etu kho bhante bhagavā svagataṃ bhante bhagavato, cirassam kho marisā imam pariyaṃ akāsi yad idam idh'āgamanāya*, using the 3rd imp sg *etu* ("Let...come!") as a polite formality (D 25.7a/3:39). The passage is stock: **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,5/1:179), SD 7.14; **Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,6.2/3:39), SD 1.4 (with additional remark); **Tevijja Vaccha, gotta S** (M 73,4.4), SD 53.3; **Mahā Sakul'udāyi S** (M 77,5/2:2), SD 49.5; **Gopaka Moggallāna S** (M 108,4/3:7), SD 33.5. In the phrase, **pariyaṃ akasi**, "made it an occasion." In the phrase, **pariyaṃ akasi**, "made it an occasion," Comy glosses **pariyaṃ** as *vāra* ("occasion, opportunity") (UA 115). This is stock: **D 1:90** (DA 2:369), 179 (see D:RD 1:245 n2), **2:270**, **3:2**, 39; **M 1:252** (MA 2:300 f), 326, 481, **2:2**, **30**, **3:7**; **S 1:142**; **A 3:332** (AA 3:363), **4:76**; **U 13** (UA 115); **J 3:359**. In **Brahma Nimantanika S** (M 49), Baka Brahmā says: *ehi kho marisā, sāgataṃ marisā, cirassam kho marisā imam pariyaṃ akāsi yadidam idh'āgamanāya*.

“Nigrodha, what is the talk you are having, sitting together here? And what is the conversation that is left unfinished?”⁴⁰

7.3 The wanderer Nigrodha replied:

“Bhante, we saw the Blessed One walking up and down exercising his legs⁴¹ by the Sumāgadhā Bank at the Peacock’s Feeding Ground, [40] and we thought:

7.4 ‘If the recluse Gotama were to come here we could ask him this question:

“Bhante, how does the Blessed One train his disciples, and through which disciples of the Blessed One having so trained that they gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life?” [§§6.3; 19.8]

This, bhante, is our conversation that is unfinished when the Blessed One arrived.”

The Buddha’s counter-question

7.5 “Nigrodha, it is hard for one, holding a different view, keeping different priority, having a different personal preference [under a different influence], keeping to a different practice, following a different teaching,⁴² to understand the doctrine that I teach my disciples (regarding their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life).⁴³

7.6 Come on, then, Nigrodha, ask me about your own teachings, about what you regard as abstinence [about the highest abstinence],⁴⁴ thus:⁴⁵

‘And how, bhante,⁴⁶ is the practice of ascetic abstinence⁴⁷ fulfilled, and how is it not fulfilled?’”

When this was said, a great commotion arose amongst the wanderers.⁴⁸

“It is wonderful, it is marvelous how great the powers and virtues of the recluse Gotama in holding back his own doctrine and in inviting others to discuss theirs!”

8 Silencing them, the wanderer Nigrodha said:

³⁹ This episode of the Buddha interrupting an “unfinished conversation” (*antarā,kathā vipakatā*) is stock, eg, D 1.1.4/1:2; D 2.7a/3:39 f; M 119.2/3:89, U 2.2/11.

⁴⁰ *Kāya nu’ttha, bho ānanda, etarahi kathāya sannisinnā, kā ca pana vo antarā,kathā vipakatā ti?* This is stock, where the person interrupting is usu the Buddha, eg, D 1,1.4/1:2; M 108,6/3:8 (the brahmin Vassa,kāra), 119,2/-3:89, U 2.2/11; J 4/1:120

⁴¹ “Walking up and down exercising his legs,” *jaighā,vihāraṃ anucaṅkamaṇaṃ anuvicaramāno*, lit “wandering to and fro on foot and walking up and down” (K R Norman, *Group of Discourses II*, 1992:63).

⁴² “Holding a differing view ... following different teachings,” *añña,diṭṭhikena añña,khantikena añña,rucikena añña,ñātr’āyogena aññatr’ācariyakena*. This is stock: **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,24/1:187 x2); **Pāṭhika S** (D 24,2.21/3:35 x2); **Aggi Vaccha,gotta S** (M 72,18/1:487); **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25,7/3:40); **Vekhanassa S** (M 80,14/2:43). D:W has “holding different views, being of different inclinations and subject to different influences, following a different teacher,” apparently missing *aññatr’āyogena*.

⁴³ Cf Soṇa,daṇḍa’s fear that the Buddha might ask him something beyond his ken: **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4,11/1:119), SD 30.5.

⁴⁴ *Adhi,jegucche*, lit “regarding what is loathsome” following CPD & DP. To reflect the context more closely, it is here rendered as “regarding abstinence.” D:W has “about your extreme austerity,” foll Comy: *uttamaṃ jegucchaṃ*, “highest loathsomeness” or “supreme abstinence” (DA 2:369). See D:RD 3:37 n1.

⁴⁵ *līgha tvaṃ maṃ, nigrodha, sake ācariyake adhijegucche pañhaṃ puccha*.

⁴⁶ *Bhante*, found in all MSS, but omitted by both D:RD and D:W.

⁴⁷ “The practice of ascetic abstinence,” *tapo,jigucchā*, see Intro (1.3).

⁴⁸ The assembly is amazed probably because the Buddha has proposed to discuss a topic that is at the heart of their training or system.

“Bhante, we live by the doctrine of asceticism of abstinence, by the essence of asceticism of abstinence, by keeping to asceticism of abstinence. Such being the case, what constitutes their fulfillment or non-fulfillment?”

The Buddha’s reply

THE EXTENDED SELF-MORTIFICATION PERICOPE:⁴⁹ THE WANDERERS’ ABSTINENCES

8.2 “Here, Nigrodha, a (self-mortifying) ascetic⁵⁰ is one who goes about naked, of loose habits (flouting conventions),⁵¹ licking his hands,⁵² not coming when invited, not stopping when invited. [41] He does not accept food brought to him nor food specially prepared for him nor a meal invitation. accepting nothing from a pot, from a bowl, from across a threshold, among the firewood, from among the rice-pounders, from two eating together, from a pregnant woman,⁵³ from a woman giving suck, from a woman gone to a man,⁵⁴ from a food-distribution centre, from where a dog is waiting, from where flies are swarming, accepting neither fish nor meat, drinking no wine nor beer nor cereal brew.⁵⁵

⁴⁹ This extended self-mortification pericope [§§8.2-6] is mutatis mutandis at **Kassapa Sīha,nāda S** (D 8,14/1:165-167 @ SD 77.1) = **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25,8.2/3:41 @ SD 1.4). The “extension” is a set of 6 additional observances [§8.5], not found in the otherwise identical “medium self-mortification pericope” found in **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,45/1:77 f), SD 49.1 = **Kandaraka S** (M 51,8/1:342 f), SD 32.9 = **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60,36/1:412), SD 35.5, with 6 additional observances = **Ghoṭa,mukha S** (M 94,10/2:161), SD 77.2 = **Acelaka Paṭipadā S 1** (A 3.151/1:295), SD 78.-13 = **Atta,daṇḍa Sutta Nd** (Nm 15/416 f).

⁵⁰ Ascetic (*tapassī*), ie, one who practises *tapa*, religious austerities or self-mortification. Here, prob a Jain ascetic is meant. See prec n.

⁵¹ *Mutt’ācāro*.

⁵² *Hatthāpalekhano*. Cf Sekh 52 (V 4:98) which proscribes hand-licking; D 1:166, 3:40; M 1:77, 238, 307; A 1:295; Pug 55.

⁵³ “From a pregnant woman ... gone to a man” (*gabbhinī pāyamanā puris’antara,gatā*), which is stock (M 1:77 = A 1:295; M 1:238, 307, 342 = 2:162 = Pug 55; A 2:206). On the last, see foll n.

⁵⁴ “A woman gone to a man,” *puris’antara,gata*, ie a woman having sex with a man. Comys gloss ~ as *rati antarāyo hotī ti na gaṇhati*, “so that he does not face danger on account of lust” (DA 2:355; AM 2:44; AA 2:384; NmA 2:430; PugA 231), ie in interrupting the act; cf *pumaṃ gata*, “gone to a man” (J 5:154). This is contextual: for, Old Comy glosses more generally it as “married” (*gihi,gata*, “gone to a householder,” V 4:322,10), and other Comys, simply as an “adult woman” (*itthi*) (DA 1:79 = *itthi*, “woman,” as opp *kumārikā*, “girl”; MA 2:209).

⁵⁵ *Na suraṃ, na merayaṃ, na thus’odakaṃ pivati*. “Rice-wine,” *thus’odaka* (Skt *tuṣodaka*, “rice chaff”) “sour rice- or barley-gruel” (SED, sv *tuṣāmbu*). Comys: “a drink called *Sovīraka* made from (the husk of) all kinds of grain” (*sabba,sassa,sambhārehi kataṃ sovīrakaṃ*, DA 2:355 = NmA 431 = PugA 232; *sabba,sassa,sambhārehi kataṃ loṇa,sovīrakaṃ*, MA 2:44); *sabba,sassa,sambhārehi kata,sovīrakaṃ*, AA 2:385: all add that *thusodaka* is a strong drink and as such blamable (*ettha ca surā,pānam eva sāvajjāṃ*). On “salted *Sovīraka* (sour gruel)” (*loṇa,sovīraka*); see Vinaya, where it is mentioned as a cure for stomach wind, and allowed as a beverage if mixed with water (Mv 6.16.3/V 1:210); mentioned in a list of drinks given to monks (Vv 177/2.2.6/23). **Suśruta Saṃhita** describes preparation of *tuṣodaka* as a medicine (SuśSaṃ 44, 40cd-44ab). It is said to be sour gruel prepared with unhusked cereals; in SuśSaṃ it refers to “fermented liquors of barley with husks” used as a purgative (G J Meulenbeld (tr), *Mādhvanidāna*, Leiden, 1974:408 f). When boiled with pulse and barley, it becomes an acetous fermentation called *tuṣāmbu*. D:RD 3:38, “gruel”; M:ÑB 1:104 “rice gruel.” See D:RD 1:229 n2, D:W n196. My tr is contextual which suggests some kind of fermented drink.

THE WANDERERS' PRACTICES

8.3 He keeps himself to one house, to one morsel (when collecting alms) ... to two houses, to two morsels ... to seven houses, to seven morsels.

He lives on one small serving (of food), or two ... or seven small servings a day.⁵⁶

He takes food once a day; once every two days ... once every seven days. Thus, even up to a fortnight, he dwells pursuing the practice of taking of food at such regular intervals.

8.3 ⁵⁷He is an eater of greens [a vegetarian] or of millet or of wild rice or of hide-parings or of water-lettuce⁵⁸ or of rice-bran or of rice-remnants,⁵⁹ or of sesamum flour, or of grass, or of cow-dung.

He lives on forest roots and fruits, a windfall-eater.

He clothes himself in hemp; in hemp-mixed cloth; in shrouds;⁶⁰ in refuse rags; in *tiriṭa*-tree⁶¹ bark; in antelope hide; in strips of antelope hide; in kusa-grass fabric; in bark fabric; in wood-shaving fabric; in a human-hair cloak; in bristle-blanket;⁶² in owl's wings.

8.4 He pulls out (his) hair and beard, [42] and is devoted to this practice.

He stands continuously, rejecting seats.

He squats continuously, and is devoted to such a posture.

He uses a bed of spikes, making it his bed.

8.5 ⁶³He makes a plank his bed.

He makes the hard stony ground his bed.

He lies on one side covered only in dirt and mud.

He lies in the open on whatever groundsheet there is.

He lives on dirt, devoting himself to eating dirt [dirty food].

He does not drink (cold water), devoting himself to not drinking (cold water).⁶⁴

⁵⁶ "Small serving," *datti*. Comy says that a *datti* is a small bowlful from which they leave out the main food (MA 2:45).

⁵⁷ These 6 lines, up to "owl's wings," are spoken of as forms of "solitude" of outside sectarian wanderers in **Pavi-veka S** (A 3.92,1.3-4), SD 44.2.

⁵⁸ "Water-lettuce," *haṭṭa*, a kind of water-plant, *Pistia stratiotes* (PED) of the Arales order.

⁵⁹ "Rice-remnants," *ācāma*, "the moisture of boiled rice, rice-scum, rice-water (without condiments, a mean un-savoury food—hence, prob interpreted as the burnt crust sticking to the pot" (CPD): DA 356,15 = MA 2:45,12 = AA 2:355,17 = PugA 232,25; ie "burnt rice remnants in a pot," or "kerak nasi" in Malay.

⁶⁰ *Chava,dussa*, cloth of coverlet woven from cat-tail grass (cf CPD), Comy here says that it refers to discarded cloth made of *eraka*, taken from corpses and made into garments (**Chava,dussānīti mata,sarīrato chaḍḍita,vatthāni, eraka,tiṇ'ādīni vā ganthetvā kata,nivāsanāni**, AA 2:354). **Eraka** (Skt; Marathi) is *Typha* grass (PED; CPD), prob *Typha elephantina*, also called bulrush, cat-tail grass, or Indian reed mace, one of the most universal of perennial grasses, which grows in wetlands and watersides. In ancient India, it was often woven together as rough clothing or mats. See J A Parrotta, *Healing Plants of Peninsular India*, NY: CABI Publishing, 2001; Malten 2003, See Daniel F Austin, "Sacred connections with cat-tail," *Ethnobotany Journal* 5, 2007:273-303:

<http://www.ethnobotanyjournal.org/vol5/i1547-3465-05-273.pdf>

⁶¹ *Tiriṭa* (ts; BHS *tiriṭī*), which PED & BHS identify as *Symplocos racemosa* (V 1:306 ~ka; D 1:166 = A 1:295; M 1:343; Pug 51). Its Indian names are the lodh tree lodhra, tilva, or shavara; also śrimala ("propitious") or tilak (because it is used to make the *tilaka* or forehead mark). Its bark has medicinal usages. *Iranian Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, Supplement 2 2004:44.

⁶² *Vāla* specifically refers to the horse's tail or the hair at the end of the tail. Here, it refers to any kind of animal hair.

⁶³ *Phalaka,seyyam pi kappeti, thaṇḍila,seyyam pi kappeti, eka,passayiko pi hoti rajo,jalla,dharo, abbhokāsiko pi hoti yathā,santhatiko, vekaṭiko pi hoti vikaṭa,bhojanānuyogam-anuyutto, apānak opi hoti apānakattam-anuyutto*. These 6 self-mortifying practices listed here, until "devoting himself to not drinking (cold water)," are found only in the *Dīgha Nikāya* pericopes, not listed elsewhere (such as the *Majjhima* stock passage).

8.6 He dwells devoted to (the ritual of) bathing in water thrice a day, the third one in the evening.⁶⁵

8.7 —What do you think, Nigrodha, is the practice of ascetic abstinence fulfilled or not?”

“Indeed, bhante, it is fulfilled.”

“But, Nigrodha, this practice of ascetic abstinence has various imperfections, I say!”

The imperfections of the practice of ascetic abstinence

9 “In what way, bhante, does the Blessed One say that it has various **imperfections?**”

(1) “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. As a result, he delights in it, thinking that he has won his goal (when he has not).

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and *delights* in thinking that he has won his goal (when he has not)—this, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(2) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. In so doing, he elevates himself and disparages others.

Nigrodha, that he is an ascetic who practises austerity, who *elevates* himself and disparages others—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(3) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. In so doing, Nigrodha, he becomes intoxicated with conceit, infatuated and heedless.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is intoxicated with *conceit*, [43] infatuated and heedless—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

10 (4) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame. On account of such gains, honours and fame, he rejoices, thinking he has won his goal.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him *gains, honours and fame*, as a result of which he thinks he has won his goal—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(5) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him *gains, honours and fame*. On account of such gains, honours and fame, he elevates himself and disparages others.

Nigrodha, that he is an ascetic practising austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame, and on account of such gains, honours and fame, he *elevates* himself and disparages others—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(6) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame. On account of such gains, honours and fame, he is intoxicated with conceit, infatuated and heedless.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame, and on account of such gains, honours and fame, he is *intoxicated* with conceit, infatuated and heedless—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

⁶⁴ *Apānaka*, lit “non-drinker.” I follow Walshe in the amplification. This practice probably refers to those who (like the Jain monks) do not drink cold water because of living beings in it. (D:W n200).

⁶⁵ Apparently to wash away his sins as related in (**Suddhika**) **Saṅgārava S** (S 7.21/1:183), SD 79.3. This whole passage [S8.2] is at **Apānaka S** (M 60), where this last sentence is replaced by “This is called the person who torments himself and is intent on tormenting himself.” (M 60.36/1:412), SD 35.5

(7) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and he divides his food into two portions, thinking: ‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ And what does not suit him he readily rejects, while what suits him he eats with relish,⁶⁶ unaware of the danger, knowing no way out.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and he *divides his food into two portions*, thinking: ‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ And what does not suit him he readily rejects, while what suits him he eats with relish, unaware of the danger, knowing no way out—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic. [44]

(8) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity for the sake of gains, honours and fame, thinking: ‘Kings, ministers, nobles [kshatriyas], brahmin housemasters,⁶⁷ religious teachers will honour me!’

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, thinking: ‘Kings, ministers, nobles, brahmin housemasters, religious teachers will *honour* me!’—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

11 (9) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic disparages some recluse or brahmin, saying:

‘See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems, joints, cuttings, and seeds⁶⁸—with that bunch of lightnings, that jaw full of razor-teeth of his,⁶⁹ and they call *him* an ascetic!’

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *disparages* some recluse or brahmin, saying:

‘See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems, joints, cuttings, and seeds—with that bunch of lightnings, that jawful of razor-teeth, of his, and they call *him* an ascetic!’—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(10) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic sees another recluse or brahmin being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, and he thinks:

‘They are patronizing that fellow named so-and-so, living in abundance, being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!’

Thus, envy and jealousy would arise in him because of those houselords.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic sees another recluse or brahmin being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, and he thinks:

⁶⁶ Read *ajjhopanno* (see CPD), “being addicted to, being enthralled by,” (to enjoy doing something) with relish. PTS has *ajjhāpanna*, “with guilt,” guiltily.

⁶⁷ “Housemasters,” *brāhmaṇa, gahapatike* (M 50,12/1:334,12 etc; M 60,2/1:400,30; A 3.14/1:110,1, 8.86/4:340,-26; U 7.9/78,8; It 4.1.8/111,13; J 1:83, 12/1:152, 52/1:267; PvA 22), as a rule, a karmadharaya (descriptive cpd), not a dvandva (as taken by Dhammapāla, UA 377 f & PED; see UA:M 998 n258 & Vv:M 671), invariably a collective term, never an individual, ie, heads of the landed community in a brahmin village (*brāhmaṇa, gāma*) or fiefs (*brahma, deya*) as a whole. Also in phrasal combination of *khattiya, brāhmaṇa, gaha, patika* (D 25,10/3:44,4, 13/3:46,33, 26,5/3:61,8; A 2.4,7/1:66,8), where in the last—*Kāma, rāga Vivāda S* (A 2.4,7)—we have *gaha, patika* (“housemaster”) by itself, who, strictly speaking, are “*brahmin* housemasters” (see SD 84.9). This classification is based on land-ownership (ie their economic function), who nonetheless still identified with the larger priestly class. As such, individually, they (such as *Kūṭa, danta, Caṅkī*, etc) are still referred to simply as *brāhmaṇa*. The word *gaha, patika*, “housemaster,” is glossed as “a houselord who is the elder of only a single house” (*gehasa pati eka, geha, matte jeṭṭhako*, DA 1:171; Nc 342; PvA 39), but they are all addressed as “houselords” (*gaha, patayo*), eg *Apaṇṇaka S* (M 60,3+4/1:401), SD 35.5. Cf *gaha, pati*, “houselord”: see SD 38.6 (2.1). See Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, 1987:72 f.

⁶⁸ Cf *Brahmajāla S* where the Buddha states that he does not destroy plants propagated from any of these five (D 1.1.11).

⁶⁹ “With that bunch of lightnings ... of his,” *asani, cakkaraṃ danta, kūṭaraṃ*.

‘They are patronizing that fellow named so-and-so, living in abundance, being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!’

Thus envy and jealousy would arise in him because of those houselords—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(11) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is one who sits before the people in public.⁷⁰

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *one who sits before the people in public*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(12) Furthermore, an ascetic goes about ostentatiously [showing off]⁷¹ among the families, as if to say: ‘Look at this asceticism of mine! Look at this asceticism of mine!’

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *goes about ostentatiously among the families*, as if to say: ‘Look at this asceticism of mine! Look at this asceticism of mine!’—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic. [45]

(13) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic resorts to underhanded conduct. On being asked: ‘Do you approve of this?’, when he does not approve, he says, ‘I do’, or when he does approve, he says, ‘I do not’. In this way, he becomes a conscious liar.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic resorts to underhanded conduct, on being asked: ‘Do you approve of this?’, when he does not approve, he says, ‘I do,’ or when he does approve, he says, ‘I do not’; in this way, he becomes a conscious liar—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

12 (14) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic, when the Tathāgata or a Tathāgata’s disciple presents the Dharma in a way that deserves his assent, withholds his assent.

Nigrodha, an ascetic, when the Tathāgata or a Tathāgata’s disciple presents the Dharma in a way that deserves his assent, *withholds his assent*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(15) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is angry and resentful.⁷²

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *angry and resentful*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(16) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is mean and spiteful.⁷³

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *mean and spiteful*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(17) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is envious and selfish.⁷⁴

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is envious and selfish—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(18) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is crafty and deceitful.⁷⁵

⁷⁰ “Who sits facing the people in view of everyone” (*āpāthaka, nisādi*). Comy explains that he sits in full view of others, where he executes the bat-rite (*vagguli, vata*), hanging himself upside down, like a bat (cf J 1:493, 3:235, 4:299); practising the fivefold fires (*pañc’ātāpa*) (he sits in the midst of 4 blazing fires with the sun as the fifth fire); stands on one leg; or worships the sun (DA 3:838).

⁷¹ There are difficulties with *adassayamāno* (which D:RD renders as “furtively”). The Sub-Comy, according to D:W, explains its meaning as *ādassamāno* (“showing off”). I follow D:W here.

⁷² *Kodhano hoti upanāhī*. A list of opposing qualities appears in §15. Qualities (15-22) recur in **Vivāda, mūla S** (A 6.36,30), except for (19), and (20-21) are conflated (qv). Cf this list of mental defilements [§12] to the 16 listed in **Vatthūpama S** (M 7,3), SD 28.12, and **Salekkhana S** (M 8,12), SD 51.8. See SD 51.8 (Table 3.2).

⁷³ *Makkhī hoti paḷāsī*.

⁷⁴ *Issuki hoti maccharī*.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *crafty and deceitful*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(19) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is obstinate and arrogant.⁷⁶

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *obstinate and arrogant*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(20) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic has bad desires and is under their sway.⁷⁷

Nigrodha, that an ascetic has *bad desires* and is under their sway—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(21) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic holds wrong views and given to extreme opinions.⁷⁸

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *holds wrong views* and given to extreme opinions—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(22) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic stuck to his own views, tenaciously holding on to them, unable to let them go.⁷⁹

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *stuck to his own views*, tenaciously holding on to them, unable to let them go—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

12.2 —What do you think, Nigrodha: are these things imperfections in the practice of ascetic abstinence or not?”

“There is that possibility, bhante. A certain ascetic might here have all these imperfections, but so does any other!”⁸⁰

The purified ascetic

13 (1) Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. While he is doing so, he does not delight in not winning his goal.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, but does not delight **[46]** in *not* winning his goal—to that extent he is purified.

(2) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. In so doing, he does not elevate himself and does not disparage others.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, but does *not* elevate himself and does not disparage others—to that extent he is purified.

(3) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, but is not intoxicated with conceit, nor infatuated, nor heedless.

⁷⁵ *Saṭho hoti māyāvī.*

⁷⁶ *Thaddho hoti atimānī.*

⁷⁷ *Pāp’iccho hori pāpakānaṃ icchānaṃ vasaṃ gato*, Cf **Vivāda, mūla S** (A 6.36), which here has “one with bad wishes, with wrong views” (*pāp’iccho hoti micchā, diṭṭhi*) (A 6.36,30), SD 47.14. See foll qualities.

⁷⁸ *Micchā, diṭṭhiko hoti anta-g, gāhikāya diṭṭhiyā samannāgato*. **Vivāda, mūla S** (A 6.36) seems to conflate this quality with the prec (qv), SD 47.14.

⁷⁹ *Sandiṭṭhi, parāmāsī hoti ādhāna, gāhī duppaṭinissaggī.*

⁸⁰ *Thānaṃ kho pan’etaṃ bhante vijjati, yaṃ idh’ekacco tapassa sabbeh’eva imehi upakkileshi samannāgatā assa, ko pana vādo aññatar-aññatarenāti.*

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, but is *not* intoxicated with conceit, nor infatuated, nor heedless—to that extent he is purified.

(4) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame, but on account of such gains, honours and fame, he delights not, knowing that he has not won his goal.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame, but on account of such gains, honours and fame, he delights *not*, knowing that he has not won his goal—to that extent he is purified.

(5) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame. On account of such gains, honours and fame, he neither praises himself nor disparages others.

Nigrodha, that he is an ascetic practises austerity, which this brings him gains, honours and fame, but on account of such gains, honours and fame, he *neither* praises himself *nor* disparages others—to that extent he is purified.

(6) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame. On account of such gains, honours and fame, he is neither intoxicated with conceit nor infatuated, nor heedless.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and this brings him gains, honours and fame, but on account of such gains, honours and fame, he is *not* intoxicated with conceit, *nor* infatuated, *nor* heedless—to that extent he is purified.

(7) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity, but does not divide his food into two portions, thinking: ‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ so that what does not suit him, he does not reject, while what suits him he does not eat with relish;⁸¹ he is aware of the danger, knowing the way out.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, but does *not* divide his food into two portions, thinking: ‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ so that what does not suit him, he does not reject, while what suits him he does not eat with relish; he is aware of the danger, knowing the way out—to that extent he is purified.

(8) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity not for the sake of gains, honours and fame, thinking: ‘Kings, ministers, nobles, brahmin housemasters, religious teachers will honour me.’

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity *not* for the sake of gains, honours and fame, thinking: ‘Kings, ministers, nobles, brahmin housemasters, religious teachers will honour me’—to that extent he is purified.

14 (9) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic does not disparage some recluse or brahmin, saying: ‘See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems, joints, cuttings, and seeds—with that bunch of lightnings, that jaw full of razor-teeth, of his, and they call him an ascetic!’

Nigrodha, that an ascetic does *not* disparage some recluse or brahmin, saying: **[47]** ‘See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems,

⁸¹ Read *ajjhopanno* (see CPD), “being addicted to, being enthralled by,” (to enjoy doing something) with relish. PTS has *ajjhāpanna*, “with guilt,” guiltily.

joints, cuttings, and seeds—with that bunch of lightnings, that jaw full of razor-teeth, of his, and they call *him* an ascetic!’—to that extent he is purified.

(10) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic sees another recluse or brahmin being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but does not think: ‘They are patronizing that fellow named so-and-so, living in abundance, being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!’ Thus, envy and jealousy do not arise in him because of those householders.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic sees another recluse or brahmin being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but does *not* think: ‘They are patronizing that fellow named so-and-so, living in abundance, being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!’ Thus, envy and jealousy do not arise in him because of those householders—to that extent, he is purified.

(11) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is not one who sits before the people in public.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic is *not* one who sits before the people in public—to that extent, he is purified.

(12) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic does not go about ostentatiously among the families, as if to say: ‘Look at this asceticism of mine! Look at this asceticism of mine!’

Nigrodha, that an ascetic does *not* go about ostentatiously among the families, as if to say: ‘Look at this asceticism of mine! Look at this asceticism of mine!’—to that extent, he is purified.

(13) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic does not resort to underhanded conduct. On being asked: ‘Do you approve of this?’, when he does not approve, he says, ‘I do not approve,’ or when he does approve, he says, ‘I do approve.’ In this way, he does not tell a deliberate lie.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic does *not* resort to underhanded conduct, on being asked: ‘Do you approve of this?’, when he does not approve, he says, ‘I do not approve,’ or when he does approve, he says, ‘I do approve.’ In this way, he does *not* tell a deliberate lie—to that extent, he is purified.

15 (14) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic, when the Tathāgata or a Tathāgata’s disciple presents the Dharma exposition in a way that deserves his assent, *gives his assent*—to that extent, he is purified.⁸²

(15) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is neither angry nor resentful.⁸³

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither angry nor resentful*—to that extent, he is purified.

(16) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is neither mean nor spiteful.⁸⁴

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither mean nor spiteful*—to that extent, he is purified.

(17) An ascetic is neither envious nor jealous.⁸⁵

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither envious nor jealous*—to that extent, he is purified.

⁸² This section lists the opposite (positive) qualities of those at §12 & nn.

⁸³ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī akodhano hoti anupanāhī*. See prec n.

⁸⁴ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī amakkhī hoti apalāsī*.

⁸⁵ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī anissukī hoti amaccharī*.

(18) An ascetic is neither crafty nor deceitful.⁸⁶

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither crafty nor deceitful*—to that extent, he is purified.

(19) An ascetic is neither obstinate nor [48] arrogant.⁸⁷

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither obstinate nor arrogant*—to that extent, he is purified.

(20) An ascetic neither has bad desires nor is he under their sway.⁸⁸

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *neither has bad desires nor is he under their sway*—to that extent, he is purified.

(21) An ascetic neither holds wrong views nor is he given to extreme opinions.⁸⁹

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *neither holds wrong views nor is he given to extreme opinions*—to that extent, he is purified.

(22) An ascetic is neither stuck in self-view, nor firmly holds on to it, but easily lets it go.⁹⁰

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither stuck in self-view, nor firmly holds on to it, but easily lets it go*—to that extent, he is purified.

15.2 What do you think, Nigrodha: is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified by these things or not?”

“Certainly it is, bhante, it reaches its peak here, *penetrating the heartwood*.”

The heartwood parable

15.3 “No, Nigrodha, it does not reach its peak there, penetrating the heartwood. It has only reached the loose outer bark!”⁹¹

16 “Well then, bhante, how does the practice of ascetic abstinence reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood? It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One were to cause my practice of ascetic abstinence to reach its peak, **penetrating the heartwood!**”

Refrain: The 4 restraints (1)

16.2 “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints.⁹² And what are the 4 restraints?

Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic:

(1) does not harm a living being, nor cause any to be harmed, nor does he approve of such harming; **[49]**

(2) he does not take the not-given, nor cause any to be taken, nor does he approve of such taking;

⁸⁶ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī asatho hoti amāyāvī.*

⁸⁷ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī athaddho hoti anātimānī.*

⁸⁸ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī pāp’iccho hoti pāpikānaṃ icchānaṃ vasaṃ gato.*

⁸⁹ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī na micchā.ditthiko hoti Ananta-g,gāhikāya ditthiyā samannāgato.*

⁹⁰ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī asanditthi,parāmāsī hoti anādhāna,qāhī suppaṭinissaggā.* This line parallels that of defilement (44) [§12 etc].

⁹¹ “The loose outer bark,” *papaṭika*, ie pieces of dry bark that flake off. Cf §§17.2, 18.3, 19.3. This imagery forms part of a series of similes in reference to the parts of a tree: see Intro. See **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18.12/1:111) and **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118,8/3:80) for other applications of the heartwood (*sāra*) simile.

⁹² *Catu,yāma,samvara*, D 1:57, 3:48; S 1:66; M 1:377; Vism 416. This is the practice of the Jain recluse (*muni*). See Prasad 1926:704 f.

(3) he does not tell a lie, nor cause any lie to be told, nor approve of such lying;
 (4) he does not desire for sense-pleasure,⁹³ nor cause others to do so, nor approve of such desire.
 In this way, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints. And through this restraint, through making this his austerity, he moves upwards [spiritually] and does not fall back into lower things.

Refrain: The 5 hindrances (1)⁹⁴

16.3 Then, he resorts to a solitary lodging, a forest, foot of a tree, a mountain gully, a mountain cave, a charnel ground, a jungle thicket, the open air, a heap of straw.

Then, on returning from the alms-round, having eaten,
 he sits down cross-legged and holding his body erect, establishes mindfulness before him.

(1) Abandoning covetousness⁹⁵ for the world, he dwells with a mind free from such covetousness, and his mind is purified of covetousness.

(2) Abandoning ill-will and hatred, he dwells with a mind free from them, compassionate to all living beings, his mind is purified of ill-will.

(3) Abandoning sloth and torpor, he dwells with a mind purified of them, and perceiving light, mindful and fully comprehending, his mind is purified of sloth and torpor.

(4) Abandoning restlessness and guilt, he dwells with a mind purified of them, with mind pacified, his mind is purified of restlessness and guilt.

(5) Abandoning doubt, he dwells having overcome doubt, without uncertainty regarding the wholesome, his mind is purified of doubt.

Refrain: The 4 immeasurables (1)⁹⁶

17 (1) THE CULTIVATION OF LOVINGKINDNESS. Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,⁹⁷

he dwells with a heart of **lovingkindness**, suffusing one quarter;

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,

he dwells suffusing all the world with lovingkindness

that is vast, **[50]** grown great [exalted],⁹⁸ immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.⁹⁹

(2) THE CULTIVATION OF COMPASSION. Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

⁹³ *Na bhāvitam āsamsati*. A difficult reading that Comy explains as “he does not crave for sense-pleasures” which D:RD follows. Cf Walshe: D:W n766.

⁹⁴ For details, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.68-74/2:71-73) & **Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55/5:121-126). Both employ colourful parables.

⁹⁵ “Covetousness,” *abhijjhā* = *kāma-c, chanda*, which is the more usual term (A 3:62; Vbh 378). Alt tr “longing.”

⁹⁶ For a description of the immeasurable or divine abodes with parables, see **Tevijja S** (D 13.76-79/1:251), SD 1.8. On the divine abodes with the elements, see **Vuṭṭha Vass’āvāsa S** (A 9.11.4/4:375 f), SD 28.21. On how the divine abodes limit karma, see **Brahma,vihāra S** (A 10.206/5:299), SD 2.10.

⁹⁷ *So ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalī, karaṇe*.

⁹⁸ The mind “grown great” (*maha-g, gatā*) or exalted perception refers to the mind in dhyana, ie in the form sphere (*rūpāvacara*). See **Catuttha Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.4), SD 24.14 (4).

⁹⁹ The recurrence of these last two phrases—“without hate, without ill will”—attests to the fact that lovingkindness is the basis for all the other three abodes, ie, they are actually a refinement of lovingkindness applied on deeper and broader levels.

he dwells with a heart of **compassion**, suffusing one quarter,
 so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
 thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
 he dwells suffusing all the world with compassion
 that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

(3) THE CULTIVATION OF GLADNESS. Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

he dwells with a heart of **gladness**, suffusing one quarter,
 so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
 thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
 he dwells suffusing all the world with gladness
 that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

(4) THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY. Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

he dwells with a heart of **equanimity**, suffusing one quarter,
 so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
 thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
 he dwells suffusing all the world with equanimity
 that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

17.2 What do you think, Nigrodha—Is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified by these things or not?”

“Certainly it is, bhante, it reaches its peak here, penetrating the heartwood.”

“No, Nigrodha, it does not reach its peak there, penetrating the heartwood. It has only reached the bark!”¹⁰⁰

18 “Well then, bhante, how does the practice of ascetic abstinence reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood? It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One were to cause my practice of ascetic abstinence to attain to its peak, penetrating the heartwood!”

Refrain: The 4 restraints (2)

18.2 “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic who observes the 4 restraints. And what are the 4 restraints? Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| (1) does not harm a living being, nor cause any to be harmed, | nor does he approve of such harming; |
| (2) he does not take the not-given, nor cause any to be taken, | nor does he approve of such taking; |
| (3) he does not tell a lie, nor cause any lie to be told, | nor approve of such lying; |
| (4) he does not desire sense-pleasure ¹⁰¹ nor cause others to do so, | nor approve of such desire. |

In this way, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints. And through this restraint, through making this his austerity, he moves upwards [spiritually] and does not fall back into lower things.

Refrain: The 5 hindrances (2)

¹⁰⁰ “The bark,” *taca* [cf §15.2]. See **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,12) and **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118,8) for other applications of the heartwood (*sāra*) simile.

¹⁰¹ *Na bhāvitam āsaṃsati*. A difficult reading that Comy explains as “he does not crave for sense-pleasures” which D:RD follows. Cf Walshe: D:W n766.

18.3 Then, he resorts to a solitary lodging, a forest, foot of a tree, a mountain gully, a mountain cave, a charnel ground, a jungle thicket, the open air, a heap of straw.

Then, on returning from the alms-round, having eaten,

he sits down cross-legged and holding his body erect, establishes mindfulness before him.

(1) *Abandoning covetousness¹⁰² for the world, he dwells with a mind free from such covetousness, and his mind is purified of covetousness.*

(2) *Abandoning ill-will and hatred, he dwells with a mind free from them, compassionate to all living beings, his mind is purified of ill-will.*

(3) *Abandoning sloth and torpor, he dwells with a mind purified of them, and perceiving light, mindful and fully comprehending, his mind is purified of sloth and torpor.*

(4) *Abandoning restlessness and guilt, he dwells with a mind purified of them, with mind pacified, his mind is purified of restlessness and guilt.*

(5) *Abandoning doubt, he dwells having overcome doubt, without uncertainty regarding the wholesome, his mind is purified of doubt.*

Refrain: The 4 immeasurables attained (2)

(1) THE CULTIVATION OF LOVINGKINDNESS

18.4 Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,¹⁰³

*he dwells with a heart of **lovingkindness**, suffusing one quarter;*

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,

he dwells suffusing all the world with lovingkindness

that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

(2) THE CULTIVATION OF COMPASSION

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

*he dwells with a heart of **compassion**, suffusing one quarter,*

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,

he dwells suffusing all the world with compassion

that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

(3) THE CULTIVATION OF GLADNESS

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

*he dwells with a heart of **gladness**, suffusing one quarter,*

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,

he dwells suffusing all the world with gladness

that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

¹⁰² "Covetousness," *abhijjhā* = *kāma*-, *chanda*, which is the more usual term (A 3:62; Vbh 378). Alt tr "longing."

¹⁰³ *So ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbālī, karaṇe.*

(4) THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

*he dwells with a heart of equanimity, suffusing one quarter,
so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
he dwells suffusing all the world with equanimity
that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.*

Recollection of past lives: the sapwood¹⁰⁴

18.5 Thus, he recalls **his manifold past existence**, that is to say,
one birth, two, three, four, five births,
ten births, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty births,
one hundred births, one thousand births, one hundred thousand births, thus:

‘There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of joy and pain, such the end of my life.

Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of joy and pain, such my life-span.

Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.’¹⁰⁵ [51]

Thus he recalls his manifold past existence in their modes and their details.¹⁰⁶

18.6 What do you think, Nigrodha—is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified by these things or not?”

“Certainly it is, bhante, it attains its peak here, penetrating the heartwood.”

“No, Nigrodha, it does not attain its peak there, penetrating to the heartwood. It has only reached the sapwood!”¹⁰⁷

19 “Well then, bhante, how does the practice of ascetic abstinence reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood? It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One were to cause my practice of ascetic abstinence to reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood!”

Refrain: The 4 restraints (3)

19.2 “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic who observes the 4 restraints. And what are the 4 restraints? Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic

- (1) does not harm a living being, nor cause any to be harmed, nor does he approve of such harming;
- (2) he does not take the not-given, nor cause any to be taken, nor does he approve of such taking;
- (3) he does not tell a lie, nor cause any lie to be told, nor approve of such lying;
- (4) he does not desire for sense-pleasure,¹⁰⁸ nor cause others to do so, nor approve of such desire.

¹⁰⁴ Note that here, the Buddha mentions only the first of the 3 superknowledges (*te, vijjā*), omitting the recollection of the other beings’ rebirths according to karma and the destruction of the influxes: see D 3:281; M 1:34; A 1:255, 258, 3:17, 280, 4:421 & SID: te, vijjā.

¹⁰⁵ This para as in **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28,15.1/3:108 f). For details, see Vism 13.13-71/411-423.

¹⁰⁶ As in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,93/1:81).

¹⁰⁷ “The sapwood,” *pheggu*, ie the fibre surrounding the pith [cf §15.2]. Cf M 29. See also **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18,12/1:111) and **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118,8) for other applications of the heartwood (*sāra*) simile.

¹⁰⁸ *Na bhāvitam āsaṃsati*. A difficult reading that Comy explains as “he does not crave for sense-pleasures” which D:RD follows. Cf Walshe: D:W n766.

In this way, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints. And through this restraint, through making this his austerity, he moves upward [spiritually] and does not fall back into lower things.

Refrain: The 5 hindrances (3)

19.3 Then, he resorts to a solitary lodging, a forest, foot of a tree, a mountain gully, a mountain cave, a charnel ground, a jungle thicket, the open air, a heap of straw.

Then, on returning from the alms-round, having eaten,

he sits down cross-legged and holding his body erect, establishes mindfulness before him.

(1) Abandoning covetousness for the world, he dwells with a mind free from such covetousness, and his mind is purified of covetousness.

(2) Abandoning ill-will and hatred, he dwells with a mind free from them, compassionate to all living beings, his mind is purified of ill-will.

(3) Abandoning sloth and torpor, he dwells with a mind purified of them, and perceiving light, mindful and fully comprehending, his mind is purified of sloth and torpor.

(4) Abandoning restlessness and guilt, he dwells with a mind purified of them, with mind pacified, his mind is purified of restlessness and guilt.

(5) Abandoning doubt, he dwells having overcome doubt, without uncertainty regarding the wholesome, his mind is purified of doubt.

Refrain: The 4 immeasurables (3)

(1) THE CULTIVATION OF LOVINGKINDNESS

19.4 Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,¹⁰⁹

he dwells with a heart of **lovingkindness**, suffusing one quarter;

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,

he dwells suffusing all the world with lovingkindness

that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

(2) THE CULTIVATION OF COMPASSION

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

he dwells with a heart of **compassion**, suffusing one quarter,

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,

he dwells suffusing all the world with compassion

that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.

(3) THE CULTIVATION OF GLADNESS

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

he dwells with a heart of **gladness**, suffusing one quarter,

so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;

¹⁰⁹ So ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalī, karaṇe.

*thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
he dwells suffusing all the world with gladness
that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.*

(4) THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,

*he dwells with a heart of **equanimity**, suffusing one quarter,
so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
he dwells suffusing all the world with equanimity
that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will.*

CULTIVATING THE DIVINE EYE

19.5 Thus, he [52] recalls various past lives with their conditions and details. And then, by means of **the divine eye** [clairvoyance],¹¹⁰ purified and surpassing the human, he sees beings passing away and re-
arising, and he knows how they are inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, in the heavens, in the suffering states, faring according to their karma.

The heartwood

19.6 What do you think, Nigrodha—is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified by these things or not?”

“Certainly it is, bhante, it attains its peak here, penetrating the heartwood.”

“Yes, indeed it is, Nigrodha, that austerity is so purified as to reach its peak here, penetrating to the heartwood [the pith]. It has reached **the heartwood**.¹¹¹

19.7 Now, Nigrodha, you asked:

‘*Bhante, how does the Blessed One train his disciples, and through which disciples of the Blessed One having so trained that they gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life?*’ [§7.4] —

19.8 Nigrodha, I train my disciples in **something higher and finer**—it is through this that they gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life.”¹¹²

19.9 When this was said, a great commotion arose amongst the wanderers:

“We and our teaching are ruined! We know of nothing higher or more far-reaching!” [53]

¹¹⁰ *Dibba, cakkhu*, clairvoyance, not to be confused with the Dharma-eye (*dhamma, cakkhu*) (see n in §104). On the relationship of this knowledge to the 62 grounds for wrong views, see **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1), SD 25.3(76.3). See prec n.

¹¹¹ “Heartwood,” *sāra*, or “pith,” ie, the core or essence of anything; the pith or the best of wood—a simile for spiritual strength and attainment. Here, the Buddha’s humour is evident in such a simile given in the latter (D 25,.15-19/3:47-53), SD 1.4. See **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18,12/1:111), SD 6.14. In (**Saṅgha**) **Uposatha S** (A 4.190,.1b/-2:182), SD 15.10b, *sāra* means “essence,” in the sense of accomplished in moral virtue, etc (AA 3:168). Cf §15.2. See §18.3 n.

¹¹² *Iti kho taṃ nigrodha ṭhānaṃ uttaritaraṃ ca paṇītataraṃ ca yenâharṃ mayā sāvakaṃ vinemi, yena mayā sāvakaṃ viniṭā assāsa, pattā paṭijānanti ajjhāsayam ādi, brahma, cariyān’ti.*

Sandhāna's retort

20 And when the houselord Sandhāna realized that these wanderers outside the faith were actually heeding the Blessed One's word, giving ear to it, directing their minds towards direct knowledge, he said to Nigrodha:

"Venerable Nigrodha, you had said to me:

'Well now, houselord, do you know with whom the recluse Gotama talks? ... [as in §5] ... if the recluse Gotama were to come to this assembly, we would baffle him with a single question, we would knock him over like an empty pot!'

So now that the Blessed One has come here, why don't you baffle him with a single question and knock him over like an empty pot?"

20.2 And at these words, the wanderer Nigrodha sat silent, dismayed, his shoulders drooping, face down [hanging his head], glum, unable to speak [at a loss for words].¹¹³

The Buddha's admonition

21 Seeing that the wanderer Nigrodha was silent, dismayed, his shoulders drooping, hanging his head, glum, unable to speak [at a loss for words],¹¹⁴ the Blessed One said:

"Is it true, Nigrodha, that you said those words?" **[54]**

"Bhante, it is true that I said those words—foolishly, mistakenly, unskillfully."

21.2 "What do you think, Nigrodha—have you heard it said by wanderers who were old, venerable, teachers and the teachers of teachers, that those who in the past were arhats, fully self-awakened buddhas, used to talk, when they gather, by shouting, screaming, making a great noise, and indulging in low talk ... [as in §2] ... like you with your teaching?

21.3 Or did they not say rather that those Blessed Ones resort to dwelling in the forest, in the jungle, free from noise, with little sound, alone with the winds, away from humans, conducive for seclusion, just as I do now?"

21.4 "Bhante, I have heard it said that those who were arhats, fully self-awakened buddhas, did not indulge in loud talk nor low talk ... but resorted to dwelling in the forest ... just as the Blessed One does now."

21.5 "Nigrodha, you are an intelligent man of mature years. Has it never occurred to you that, 'Having awakened himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma of awakening; having tamed [disciplined] himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma for taming oneself; having calmed himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma leading to calm; having crossed beyond (suffering) himself, **[55]** the Blessed One teaches the Dharma for crossing beyond (to nirvana); having attained nirvana himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma for the sake of nirvana?'"¹¹⁵

¹¹³ *Tuṅhī, bhūto maṅku, bhūto patta-k, khandho adho, mukho pajjhāyanto appaṭibhāno nisīdi.* See foll n.

¹¹⁴ *Tuṅhī, bhūtaṃ maṅku, bhūtaṃ patta-k, khandhaṃ adho, mukhaṃ pajjhāyantaṃ appaṭibhānaṃ viditvā,* D 3:53,26 = M 1:132,34 = 234,4 = 258,31 = 2:154,27 = 3:298,23 ≈ A 3:57,13 (*dukkhīṃ dummanāṃ patta-k, khandhaṃ +*). *Tuṅhī, bhūto +*, M 1:132,30 (= Comy: *kiñci paṭibhānaṃ apassanto chinna, paṭibhāṇo*, lit "not seeing any wit, wit uprooted," ie at one's wit's ends, at a loss) = 234,2 (= Comy: *uttaraṃ apassanto*, "not seeing a refutation [not knowing how to answer]") = 258,29 = 2:154,25 = 3:187,18 = 208,22 = M 3:298,21 = S 1:124,12 = A 1:186,29 ≈ A 3:57,11 (*dukkhī dummano patta-k, khandho +*) ≈ D 3:53,22 (see prec n). **3 pl** *nisidiṃsu tuṅhī, bhūtā +*, V 3:162,4 = 2:78,24 ≈ D 3:57,13 = A 5:188,18. See **Satta Vassa S** (A 4.24,13 n), SD 36.5.

¹¹⁵ *Buddho so bhagavā bodhāya dhammaṃ deseti; danto so bhagavā damathāya dhammaṃ deseti; santo so bhagavā samathāya dhammaṃ deseti; tiṅṇo so bhagavā taranāya dhammaṃ deseti; parinibbuto so bhagavā pari-*

Nigrodha's apology

22 When this was said, the wanderer Nigrodha said to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, I have transgressed—just as one foolish, as one confused, as one unskilful—that I spoke thus of the Blessed One!

Bhante, may the Blessed One accept my transgression as a transgression, so that I may henceforth show restraint.”¹¹⁶

“Indeed, Nigrodha, you have transgressed—just as one foolish, as one confused, as one unskilful—that you spoke thus of me.

But, Nigrodha, since you see your transgression as a transgression and make amends in accordance with the Dharma, we¹¹⁷ accept it.

For, Nigrodha, it is progress in the discipline of the noble ones when, seeing a transgression as a transgression, one makes amends in accordance with the Dharma and shows restraint henceforth.

The Buddha's challenge

22.2 Now, Nigrodha, I tell you this:

Let an intelligent person, honest, trustworthy, upright,¹¹⁸ come to me, and I will instruct him, I will teach him the Dharma.¹¹⁹

If he then practises what he is taught to attain for himself here and now
that supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family go forth
from the household life into the homeless state,
will take him 7 years.¹²⁰

nibbānāya dhammaṃ desetī ti. Also at **Cūḷa Saccaka S** (D 35.26/3:235). This passage and its Chinese Āgama parallel (T1 = 1.49a26-28 & T11= 1.226a4-7) have been cited as the locus classicus of the Bodhisattva vows, such as that found in the early Mahāyāna work, **Ugra Paripṛcchā**: “The unrescued I will rescue. The unliberated I will liberate. The uncomforted I will comfort. Those who have not yet reached parinirvana I will cause to attain parinirvana.” (UgraP:N §2C)—also found in **Avadāna Śataka**, **Aṣṭa,sahaśrikā Prajñā,pāramitā** (Chin tr Lokakṣema & Chih Ch'ien), **Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra** (Lotus Sutra) (Chin tr Dharmarakṣa & Kumārajīva), and **Karuṇā,puṇḍarīka Sūtra** (with a variant 3rd vow. A differing version of the vow is found in **Dīpaṅkara Jātaka**, **Mahāvastu**, **Aṣṭa,sahaśrikā Prajñā,-pāramitā** (in the extant Skt and in Kumārajīva's Chin tr), **Pañca,viṃśati,sahaśrikā Prajñā,pāramitā** (Chin trs of Mokṣala, Kumārajīva, & Xuanzhang) and some Skt MSS of **Lotus Sutra**, thus: “Having crossed over, I will rescue (others). Liberated, I will liberate (others), Comforted, I will comfort (others). Having attained parinirvana, I will cause (others) to attain parinirvana.” See KAGAWA Takao, “Shi guzeigan no genryū” [The origins of the four universal vows], *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 30,1 1989:294-302; & UgraP:N 147-151.

¹¹⁶ *Tassa me bhante bhagavā accayaṃ accayato paṭiggaṇhātu āyatim saṃvarāyā ti.* Cf Ajātasattu's confession in **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.99 f/1:87) + SD 8.10 (6) on confession.

¹¹⁷ “We forgive,” *paṭiggaṇhāma*, lit “we accept”; here the 1st pl is not the royal pronoun, but the Buddha, on behalf of the Sangha, forgives the transgression.

¹¹⁸ “Honest, trustworthy, upright,” *asaṭho amāyāvī uju,jātiko* (= M 2:44/80.16), lit “not treacherous, not deceitful, straightforward.” M:ÑB has “honest and sincere, a man of rectitude” (M:ÑB 664)

¹¹⁹ These 2 lines: *Etu viññū puriso asaṭho amāyāvī uju,jātiko aham anusāsāmi, ahaṃ dhammaṃ desemi.* This second line and the foll line [§16.4: see foll n], also spoken by the Buddha to the 5 monks at **V 1:9,15-17**, where instead of “recluseship” (*sāmañña*), the ref is to the true purpose of renunciation (as in the stock passage).

¹²⁰ *Etu viññū puriso asaṭho amāyāvī uju,jātiko, aham anusāsāmi ahaṃ dhammaṃ desemi. Yathā'nusiṭṭhaṃ tathā paṭipajjamaṇo—yass'atthāya kula,puttā samma-d-eva agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajanti, tad anuttaraṃ—brahma,cariya,pariyosānaṃ diṭṭh'eva dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissati satta,vassāni.* These

Let alone 7 years, Nigrodha.

If he then practises what he is taught to attain for himself here and now that supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family go forth from the household life into the homeless state, will take him 6 years.
... 5 years, ... 4 years, ... 3 years, ... 2 years, ... 1 year.

Let alone 1 year, Nigrodha.

If he then practises what he is taught to attain for himself here and now supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family go forth from the household life into the homeless state, will take him 7 months. [56]
... 4 months, ... 3 months, ... 2 months, ... 1 month, ... half a month.

Let alone half a month, Nigrodha,

If he then practises what he is taught to attain for himself here and now that supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family go forth from the household life into the homeless state, will take him only 7 days.

The true purpose of the Buddha Dharma

23 Nigrodha, you may think,

‘The recluse Gotama says this out of desire to win disciples.’

But you should not think so. Let whoever is your teacher remain as your teacher.

Nigrodha, you may think,

‘The recluse Gotama says this out of desire to make us fall from our rules.’ [57]

But you should not think so. Let your rules remain as your rules.

Nigrodha, you may think,

‘The recluse Gotama says this out of desire to make us fall from our livelihood.’

But you should not think so. Let your livelihood remain as your livelihood.

Nigrodha, you may think,

‘The recluse Gotama says this with the desire to establish us in unwholesome things along with teachings considered unwholesome.’

But you should not think so. Let what you consider unwholesome continue to be so considered.

Nigrodha, you may think,

The recluse Gotama says this with the desire to separate us from the wholesome things along with teachings considered wholesome.’

But you should not think so. Let what you consider wholesome continue to be so considered.

—I do not speak for any of these reasons.

23.2 There are, Nigrodha, **unwholesome things** that have not been abandoned, defiled, conducive to rebirth, fearful, productive of painful results in the future, associated with birth, decay and death. It is for the abandonment of these things that I teach Dharma.¹²¹

last 4 lines on the Buddha’s “prediction” of realization are also found in **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,22) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,46), SD 13, & also Analayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The direct path to realization*, 2003:250-257.

¹²¹ *Santi ca kho Nigrodha, akusalā dhammā appahīṇā saṅkilesikā ponobhavikā sadarā dukkha, vipākā āyatim jāti, jarā, maraṇiyā, yesāhaṃ pahānāya dhammaṃ desemi yathā paṭipannānaṃ vo saṅkilesikā dhammā pahīyisanti.* On the urgency of avoiding bad, doing good, see **Kesa,puttiya S** (A 3.65,10-12), SD 35.4a.

If you practise accordingly, **these defiled states will be abandoned**, *the states that purify will increase, and by your direct knowledge, you will realize, here and now, the bounty of the accomplishment of wisdom.*¹²²

Māra the Bad One

24 When this was said, the wanderers sat silent, dismayed, their shoulders drooping, hanging their heads, downcast, at a loss for words, so possessed were their minds by Māra [the bad one].¹²³

24.2 Then, the Blessed One said:

“Every one of these hollow men¹²⁴ is possessed by the Bad One, so that not even one of them thinks: ‘Let us now follow the holy life proclaimed by the recluse Gotama, that we may know it—for what do seven days matter?’”

24.3 Then, the Blessed One, having uttered the lion-roar¹²⁵ in the Udumbarikā Wanderer’s Park, rose up into the air and returned to the Vultures’ Peak. And the houselord Sandhāna, too, returned to Rāja,gaha.¹²⁶

— evaṃ —

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¹²² *Yathā,paṭipannānaṃ vo saṅkilesikā dhammā pahīyissanti, vodānīyā dhammā abhivaḍḍhissanti, paññā,pāri-pūriṃ vepullattaṃ ca diṭṭh’eva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissathā ti.* On the significance of this whole passage, see SD 19.1 (7.3).

¹²³ Like Ānanda in **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,3.4/2:103). In both cases, it is obvious that “**Māra**” refers to a distracted mind that is unable to comprehend the significance of the Buddha’s invitation. If it were really Māra the deity, the Buddha could have easily exposed him. It is interesting to see here that Māra is always dealt with the person himself, and not “exorcised” by another. This further points to the fact that Māra is the distracted mind.

¹²⁴ *Mogha, purisa*, lit “empty person.” I’ve followed a safe well-tested translation here. However, while *mogha* evokes a sense of serious spiritual lack, “misguided” connotes more of psychosocial errancy. Cf T S Eliot’s “Hollow Men” (where “empty men” is also mentioned) which fully brings out the meaning here but lacks emotional connection for those unfamiliar with the poem.

¹²⁵ “Lion-roar,” *sīha,nāda*. See (2.2).

¹²⁶ Comy says that although the Buddha’s word was unsuccessful at that time, they would benefit the wanderers in the future (DA 3:844). See (2.3).