

# 3

## Danta,bhūmi Sutta

The Discourse on the Taming Grounds | M 125

Theme: How the Buddha transforms others

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2014

### 1 The Sutta background

#### 1.1 THE SUTTA TITLE

**1.1.1 Meaning of *danta,bhūmi*.** The phrase *danta,bhūmi* in the Sutta title can be translated either as “the ground of the tamed” or “the grounds of (the) taming.” The former title is more grammatically correct but narrow, as it refers only to the condition of the “tamed” (*danta*), that is, the arhat [§30], the ideal individual, or to nirvana, the ideal goal of the training and of life itself, the ultimately safe place.<sup>1</sup>

However, the latter translation is more descriptive of the Sutta as a whole, as the stages of “taming” (*dama*),<sup>2</sup> or stages of those “to be tamed” or “the tamed” (*damma*).<sup>3</sup> This translation is helpful in at least two ways: (1) it reflects one of the Sutta themes—that of the gradual training, and (2) the fact that the Buddha is said to be the “peerless guide of persons to be tamed” (*anuttara purisa,damma,sārathī*).<sup>4</sup> In other words, we have the training that leads to our becoming a streamwinner, a once-returner, a non-returner or an arhat. Hence, we have settled for its translation as “the discourse on the taming grounds.”

**1.1.2 Parallel versions.** The Danta,bhūmi Sutta (M 125) has a Chinese parallel in the Madhyama Āgama.<sup>5</sup> A sutta quotation is found in Samatha,deva’s commentary on the Abhidharma,kośa,bhāṣyā, preserved in Tibetan.<sup>6</sup> A helpful comparative study of the Danta,bhūmi Sutta has been done by Analayo Bhikkhu (2011).

#### 1.2 THE SUTTA’S MAIN INTERLOCUTORS

##### 1.2.1 Prince Jaya,sena

1.2.1.1 Buddhaghosa says that **Jayasena** is a royal son of king Bimbi,sāra.<sup>7</sup> Jaya,sena, according to the Danta,bhūmi Sutta, visits the novice Acira,vata at his meditation cell in the Bamboo Grove, and asks him for Dharma teaching. When Aciravata reluctantly teaches him, he disagrees with the teaching and leaves. Aciravata reports the matter to the Buddha, who replies that a pleasure-loving person like Jayasena would not be able to appreciate the teaching of renunciation [§7].

1.2.1.2 Jayasena is further recorded as learning the Dharma from his uncle, the elder Bhūmija, as recorded in **the (Jaya,sena) Bhūmija Sutta** (M 126). Jayasena asks Bhūmija whether it is true that aspiring to the holy life is unfruitful. Bhūmija replies that when one lives the holy life wisely, it would be fruitful. In this case, Jayasena is recorded as being pleased with the teaching, and he makes an offering of his own dish of rice to Bhūmija.<sup>8</sup>

**1.2.2 Novice Acira,vata.** Aciravata is presented to us in **the Danta,bhūmi Sutta** (M 125) as a “novice” (*samaṇ’uddesa*) [§2], probably a term referring to an adult novice, that is, one who is a full 20 years

I am indebted to Aminah Borg-Luck (UK) for her invaluable comments on a draft of this annotated translation.

<sup>1</sup> S 3:84; Nc 475 (in continuation of Dh 323); DhA 4:6.

<sup>2</sup> Adj & n of *dameti*, “he trains,” D 1:53 (explained at It 15 & DA 1:160), 3:147, 229; M 3:269; S 1:4, 29, 168 = Sn 463; S 4:349; A 1:151, 2:152 f; Sn 189m 542, 655; Dh 9, 25, 159, 261.

<sup>3</sup> M 1:225 (of animals); A 2:112 (horses); It 80;

<sup>4</sup> D 1:62 (misspelt as *~dhamma*) = 2:93 = 3:5; M 2:38; A 2:112; Vv 17.13; VvA 86. For details of it as a virtue of the Buddha, see SD 15.7 (3.6).

<sup>5</sup> The parallel is MĀ 198 @ T1.757a-759a, which agrees with M 125 on location and title (調御地經 *Tiào yù dì jīng*). A tr of MĀ 198, together with extracts from Analayo 2011:717-722, can be found in Analayo 2006.

<sup>6</sup> Abhk:S at D (4094) mngon pa, nyu 40b3-41b1 or Q (5595) thu 79a5-80a7, which corresponds to M 125/3:135,-20-136,19; cf also Abhk 6:70 in Pradhan 1967: 384,22, paralleling M 125/3:136,15, with its Chinese counterparts in T1558 @ T29.133a5 and T1559 @ T29.284b2.

<sup>7</sup> *Bimbi,sārassa putto orasako*, MA 3:197.

<sup>8</sup> M 126,1-6/3:138 f @ SD 95.3.

or older.<sup>9</sup> This conjecture is supported by the fact (1) that Aciravata lives, probably alone, in a forest cell in a secluded part of the Bamboo Grove, outside Rāja,gaha, in an area used by monks in their solitary practice, striving for awakening (MA 2:97) [§2]; and (2) that prince Jayasena insists that Aciravata teaches him the Dharma [§§3-4].

The Danta,bhūmi Sutta records how prince Jayasena approaches Aciravata at his forest cell, and asks him if it is true that a diligent practitioner would attain mental stillness [§3]. However, when Jayasena requests Aciravata to teach him Dharma, Aciravata is reluctant to do so. Upon Jayasena’s insistence, Aciravata complies. True enough, Jayasena rejects his teaching and leaves.

Aciravata then consults the Buddha on the incident, and he responds with the teachings of the Danta,-bhūmi Sutta [2.2]. Both Jayasena and the Buddha addresses Aciravata as “Aggi,vessana” [1.2.3], showing that he is of brahmin birth [1.2.3]. Apparently, we only know of Aciravata from the Danta,bhūmi Sutta.

**1.2.3 Aggi,vessana** was an ancient brahmin clan (P *gotta*; Skt *gotra*), the Āgni,veśyāyana (descendants of Agni,veśa, an ancient rishi, in post-Buddha times regarded as one of the earliest authors of Āyurveda or traditional Indian medicine), and the kshatriyas so styled who adopted the name from their brahmin purohitas (DPPN). Those addressed by the Buddha as **Aggivessana** include the following:

Saccaka Nigaṇṭha,putta	<b>Cūla Saccaka Sutta</b>	M 35,9/1:229 f, 30/237 f	SD 26.5
The wanderer Dīgha,nakha	<b>Dīgha,nakha Sutta</b>	M 74/1:497-501 passim	SD 16.1
The novice Acira,vata	<b>Danta,bhūmi Sutta</b>	M 125/3:128-137 passim	SD 46.3

The novice Aciravata, as we have noted [1.2.2], is so referred to both by prince Jayasena [§2.3 etc] and the Buddha [§7 etc]. A gandharva (celestial minstrel) is also named Aggi,vessa (A 4.187/2:180 f).<sup>10</sup>

## 2 Sutta analysis

### 2.1 SUTTA THEMES

**2.1.1 Two key themes.** The Danta,bhūmi Sutta, the “discourse on the taming grounds,” compares the gradual training of a monk to the gradual taming and training of a wild elephant, transforming it into a royal elephant. The allusions significantly point to at least two important themes in early Buddhism.

2.1.1.1 Firstly, the gradual path or the progressive growth leading to sainthood and awakening, as shown, for example, in **the Pahārada Sutta** (A 8.19)<sup>11</sup> and **the Mahā,vagga** of the Vinaya, where it is said,

Pahārāda, just as the great ocean slopes gradually, slides gradually, inclines gradually, not abruptly like a precipice,

so, too, Pahārāda, in this Dharma-Vinaya, the training is gradual, the task is gradual, the way is gradual—there is no sudden penetration of final knowledge at all.<sup>12</sup>

(Cv 9.1.3 = V 2:237 f @ SD 59.2c)

This theme is clearly illustrated by the parable of the hill view [§9].

2.1.1.2 Secondly, the Sutta defines the purpose of the Buddhist life, that is, the attaining of sainthood, especially of arhathood [§30]. Here we see the theme of renunciation (*nekkhamma*) of two important levels, that is, on the worldly or conventional level and the Dharma or spiritual level.

On a worldly level, renunciation is the “going-forth” (*pabbajjā*)<sup>13</sup> from the lay or household life to that of the life of a renunciant. Traditionally, this is the monastic life-style of celibacy and simplicity (in-

<sup>9</sup> *Samaṇ’uddesa* (D 1:151; M 3:128; S 5:161; A 2:78, 3:343; BHS *śramaṇoddeśa*, Divy 160). Defined as “novice” (*sāmaṇera*) at V 4:139+140. While the term *samaṇera*, also tr as “novice,” refers to one under 20 years, *samaṇ’uddesa* (lit “one marked as a recluse, samaṇa) prob refers to a novice who is at least 20 years, the age at which one is eligible to be ordained as a monk (*bhikkhu*) (Mv 1.49 @ V 1:77 f; Pāc 65 @ V 4:130,15 ff; Mv 1.76.1 @ V 1:93).

<sup>10</sup> On Aggi,vessana, see also SD 26.5 (1.2).

<sup>11</sup> A 8.19,2 + SD 45.18 (2.1).

<sup>12</sup> *Anupubba,sikkhā anupubba,kiriyā anupubba,paṭipadā na āyatakeneva aññā,paṭivedho*. Comy: There is no penetrating into arhathood all at once (*ādīto va*) like a frog’s hopping, without first duly (*paṭipāṭiyā*) fulfilling moral virtue, mental concentration and wisdom (AA 4:111). See **Kīṭā,giri S** (M 70,22/1:479), SD 11.1.

cluding complete abstention from the use of money or any economic activity). The purpose of the monastic life is that of awakening in this life itself, that is, at least, the attaining of streamwinning, if not arhat-hood.

On a Dharma or spiritual level, **renunciation** refers to the actual dynamics of Buddhist practice or Dharma training, especially the proper practice of meditation. The door to spiritual liberation is opened by the key of wisdom, which is obtained through the gradual stilling and freeing of the mind. This mental training is effected through mindfulness and meditation.<sup>14</sup>

Mindfulness here refers to the constant reflection on the true nature of reality, that is, as being impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self, that is, the 3 universal characteristics.<sup>15</sup> The best approach to such a practice is to constantly and properly reflect on *impermanence*, the first characteristic. This practice is guaranteed to bring us streamwinning in this life itself.<sup>16</sup> With the diminishing of the 3 unwholesome roots, we will attain once-return.<sup>17</sup> This path to awakening is that of the lay practitioner, but also applies to monastics who are unable to meditate effectively.

A higher training is that of meditation leading to dhyana, so that we are able to transcend sense-pleasures. This can only be effectively done through overcoming the 5 mental hindrances,<sup>18</sup> and then attaining the dhyanas. As dhyana-attainers, we are able to reach a state where our mind is profoundly calm and clear. Emerging from such a state, we would be able to see true reality more fully, so that we will go on to attain non-return or even arhat-hood.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.1.2 Parables

2.1.2.0 The Danta,bhūmi Sutta has **3 parables**—that of the pairs of tamable animals [§8]; that of the hill view [§9] and that of the domestication of a wild elephant [§12]—each highlighting a key theme of the Sutta [2.1]. The Sutta records the Buddha as telling Aciravata that, if he had used the first two parables [§11], Jayasena would have responded more positively to his teaching.

Aciravata replies that he has never heard these parables before, so that he was unable to use them. This exchange is not found in the Chinese version. The Buddha then elaborates on the third parable, detailing how a wild elephant is caught, tamed and transformed into a royal mount [§12].

2.1.2.1 THE PAIRS OF TAMABLE ANIMALS. The first parable [§8] is a reminder that just as **tamable animals** can and should be trained, even so humans who have the capacity for training should be properly trained.<sup>20</sup> In this case, Dharma training or **the 3 trainings**, is meant. First, there is moral training, that of the restraint of the body and speech; second, there is mental training, that of the disciplining of the mind so that it becomes calm and clear, and helpful in the cultivation of insight; and thirdly, wisdom training, that is, seeing into the true nature of things.<sup>21</sup>

This is, in brief, **the gradual path**. In other words, spiritual training is a progressive effort in the identifying of our negative tendencies, the cultivating of wholesome qualities, and the purifying of the mind (Dh 183). The progressive nature of such a training is illustrated in the parable of the elephant training [2.1.2.3].

2.1.2.2 THE HILL VIEW. The novice Aciravata is unable to convince prince Jayasena with his Dharma teaching [§5]. When he consults the Buddha about the situation [§6], he explains that the Dharma training

<sup>13</sup> On the various forms of going-forth (*pabbajjā*), see *Pabbajjā, a very short history*, SD 45.16.

<sup>14</sup> See eg Piya Tan, Reflection “Be Buddhist, not a Buddhist” (R342), 2014: [Download](#).

<sup>15</sup> On the 3 characteristics, see *Atam,mayatā*, SD 19.13 (1); *Dhamma Niyāma S* (A 3.134), SD 26.8.

<sup>16</sup> See (*Anicca*) *Cakkhu S* (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

<sup>17</sup> On the once-returned, see SD 15.10a (1.3).

<sup>18</sup> See *Nīvaraṇa*, SD 32.1.

<sup>19</sup> On the attaining of non-return or of arhat-hood, see SD 45.18 (2.5).

<sup>20</sup> §8 compares 2 tamed elephants, 2 tamed horses, and 2 tamed oxen with 2 untamed elephants, 2 untamed horses, and 2 untamed oxen. The Chin version, MĀ 198 @ T1.757b13, instead mentions 4 tamable beings, ie, an elephant, a horse, an ox, and a man. Out of these four, it then contrasts 2 untamed beings with 2 tamed beings. A similar pattern is found in MĀ 212 @ T1.794a29, which also has men in addition to the elephants, horses, and oxen mentioned in M 90/2:129,4. See Analayo 2011:522 n388.

<sup>21</sup> On the 3 trainings, see *Sīla samādhi paññā*, SD 21.6.

is about renunciation—the giving up of attachment to sensual pleasures—but Jayasena is caught up with sensual pleasures. So he is unable to see the Dharma.

**The parable of the hill view** [§9] illustrates how the person at the foot of the hill is unable to see the panorama from the hill-top. Only after his friend comes down from the hill-top and takes him up the hill, is he able to see the panorama on the other side of the hill. A person on one side of a hill is unable to see the other side. He has to go up to the hill-top and look at the other side for himself. This illustrates a person (such as prince Jayasena) who is still caught up with sense-pleasures and is, as such, unable to see beyond his senses. He needs to rise above the limits of his senses, and to taste the liberating bliss of the dhyanas.

Furthermore, the hill in the parable, like the great ocean [2.1.1], illustrates the progressive growth or gradual way of Dharma training. Here, the Buddha is instructing Aciravata on how he should instruct Jayasena, making use of the gradual instruction (*ānupubbī,kathā*).<sup>22</sup> Here, Aciravata should begin with basic teachings suitable for Jayasena’s mentality, that is, on moral virtue (teachings on generosity, moral virtue, the heavens, the dangers of sensual pleasures and the advantages of renunciation). When he rejoices in the teaching, indicating that his mind is ready, only then he should be taught the deeper teachings concerning the mind and wisdom.

2.1.2.3 THE ELEPHANT TRAINING. This parable [§12] compares **the trapping and domestication** of a wild elephant to **the monasticization of a renunciant**.<sup>23</sup> We can easily relate the stages of elephant training to the training of a monastic. However, not all the parable elements have counterparts in the Dharma sections., as will be evident below:

#### **The elephant’s training**

- (1) The forester mounts the royal elephant, enters the elephant forest. [§12.1]
- (2) Upon seeing the wild elephant, he binds him by the neck to the royal elephant. [§12.2]
- (3) The royal elephant leads the wild elephant out into the open. [§12.3]
- (4) The tamer brings him near a village, so that he feels natural being amongst the humans. [§12.4]
- (5) The tamer sinks a post into the ground, ties the elephant to it. [§12.5]

#### **The progress of a true disciple**

- (1) The forester is the Buddha while the royal elephant is the Dharma; the forest is the world at large. The forester’s entering the forest is the Buddha’s arising in the world for our benefit.<sup>24</sup> [§13]
- (2) The binding here is hearing the Dharma that inspires the listener towards the aspiration to renounce the world. [§14.1]
- (3) The aspirant renounces the world, leaving behind the “narrowness” of household life.<sup>25</sup> [§14.2]
- (4) The renunciant learns to give up worldly thinking and habits<sup>26</sup> by understanding and keeping to the Pātimokkha, and related trainings.<sup>27</sup> [§§15-19]
- (5) The ground here is faith in the Buddha, the post and is faith in the true Dharma, and the rope is faith in the

<sup>22</sup> On *ānupubbī,kathā*, see SD 21.6 esp (1) & SD 46.1 (4.1).

<sup>23</sup> A minor difference is that in §12, the king gives detailed instructions to the elephant forester on how he should catch a wild elephant and the tamer on how to tame the elephant. However, in MĀ 198 @ T1.757c14+20, the king merely tells the elephant tamer to catch an elephant and to tame it, without giving any details of how it should be done. For another elephant-training parable, see (**Rāja**) **Nāga S** (A 4.114), SD 46.8. For Arrian’s description of the ancient Indian method of catching wild elephants, see McCrindle 1877: 213-216.

<sup>24</sup> Both the Sutta and its Chinese parallel agree in parallel between the disciple aspiring to go forth to when the forest elephant is caught and brought out of the forest into the open. See eg (**Ānanda**) **Subha S** (D 10,1.7) n, SD 40a.13: the renunciant pericope.

<sup>25</sup> See esp **Sambādh’okāsa S** (A 6.26), SD 15.6; also **Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya S** (M 38,32.1), SD 7.10; (**Gaha,-pati**) **Potaliya S** (M 54,25), SD 43.8: giving up of all business.

<sup>26</sup> See the 4 parables in **Cātuma S** (M 67,16-19), SD 34.7; (**Paribbājaka**) **Māgandiya S** (M 75,9-12), SD 31.5; also **Kakacūpama S** (M 21,6.1), SD 38.1.

<sup>27</sup> See eg **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,42), SD 8.10.

- noble sangha. He goes into solitary retreat<sup>28</sup> [§§20-21], overcomes the hindrances [§22], and practises the 4 satipatthanas [§23].
- (6) The tamer addresses the elephant with pleasant words. [§12.6] (6) The Buddha and arhats further teach the true Dharma to the renunciant who listens attentively. The “pleasant words” here refers durther meditation instructions being taught to renunciant. *Sutta is silent*.<sup>29</sup>
- (7) The elephant is given grass, fodder and water. “Now this royal elephant will live!” [§12.7] (7) The renunciant understands the nature of the 4 supports and right livelihood,<sup>30</sup> and lives mindfully without exploiting or corrupting the laity.<sup>31</sup> *Sutta is silent*.
- (8) The elephant is given various instructions, “Take it up, sir! Put it down, sir!” [§12.8] “Go forward, sir! Go backwards, sir!” [§12.9]. “Stand up, sir! Sit down, sir!” [§12.10]. (8) The renunciant is further coached in the Dharma-Vinaya, and meditation. He practises diligently so that his meditation is thought-free [§24], and attains the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana [4].
- (9) The elephant is taught the “imperturbable” posture, where he remains stationary and composed despite being taunted in various ways [§12.11], such as weapon=3-s and loud noises. [§12.12] (9) Here “imperturbable” (*āneñja*) [§12.11] has 2 important senses: the first is that the renunciant is morally rooted and unshakable;<sup>32</sup> secondly, he masters the dhyanas [§§24-26]. He directs his mind to the super-knowledges (*abhiññā*) [§§27-28]. (He may continue to practise to attain the formless attainments, too.)<sup>33</sup>
- (10) The elephant is free from deceitfulness and faults, and is now worthy of the king, and reckoned as a royal emblem. [§12.14] (10) This refers to the renunciant’s attainment of arhat-hood. [§§29-30]

## 2.2 SUTTA SUMMARY AND HIGHLIGHTS

### 2.2.1 Acira,vata and Jaya,sena

2.2.1.1 The Sutta opens with prince Jayasena approaching the novice Aciravata, dwelling in the forest, about how diligence can bring about mental oneness [§§1-4], but Jayasena neither understands nor accepts Aciravata’s teaching [§§5-6.1]. On this account, Aciravata reports the matter to the Buddha [§6.2-6.4].<sup>34</sup>

The Buddha replies that it is impossible for someone like prince Jayasena, living a life of sensual indulgence, to be able to understand or accept what can only be realized through giving up craving and clinging to sensual pleasures [§7]. Using a parable, the Buddha contrasts tamed pairs of animals with their untamed counterparts [§8].<sup>35</sup> The second parable, illustrating the same point, shows a man who brings his

<sup>28</sup> See **Paviveka S** (A 3.92), SD 44.2.

<sup>29</sup> The “pleasant words” here points to the idea of the Dharma being taught in the right way for the given person at a given time, it is taught in a way that the trainee can receive and understand it (which, indeed, seems to be the very purpose of the scenes with Jayasena) in accordance with the principles of right speech, especially timeliness and kindness). I thank Aminah Borg-Luck for suggesting this point.

<sup>30</sup> Although the Sutta does not mention right livelihood, it is implied: see eg **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2): “He comes to be accomplished in wholesome bodily and verbal deeds, his livelihood is purified, and he is possessed of moral virtue.” (D 2,66), SD 8 & SD 37.8 (4.0.2). See also **Right livelihood**, SD 37.8 esp (4.3.3).

<sup>31</sup> See the moon parable in **Candūpama S** (S 16.3,15-16/2:199), SD 38.2.

<sup>32</sup> It is possible that the “imperturbable” here simply refers to the 4 form dhyanas [§§24-26]. On the imperturbable (*āneñja*), see SD 11.4 (3.1). See foll n.

<sup>33</sup> On the formless attainments (*arūpa,samāpatti*), see **Paṭhama Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.1) @ SD 24.11 (5).

<sup>34</sup> Both the Pali and the Chinese Āgama version agree on this narrative.

<sup>35</sup> M 125/3:130,2 contrasts 2 tamed elephants, 2 tamed horses, and 2 tamed oxen with 2 untamed elephants, 2 untamed horses, and 2 untamed oxen. MĀ 198 @ T1.757b13 instead mentions 4 tamable beings, ie, an elephant, a horse, an ox, and a man. Out of these four, it then contrasts 2 untamed beings with 2 tamed beings. A similar pattern

friend to the hill-top to show him the panorama of the other side of the hill, which the friend has doubted before that<sup>36</sup> [§§9-10].

2.2.1.2 The Buddha tells Aciravata that if he had used these two parables [§§8-10] in his teaching, Jayasena would have responded more positively [2.1.2]. When Aciravata pleads ignorance of these parables, the Buddha goes on to elaborate on the parable of elephant training [§12]. This is followed by the well known “fruits of recluseship” (*sāmañña,phala*) pericope [§§13-30], comprising the 3 trainings [2.1.2.1], that is, moral training [§§13-19] mental training [§§20-26], wisdom training [§§27-29], and arhathood [§30].<sup>37</sup>

### **2.2.2 Satipatthana, thought and the gradual path**

2.2.2.1 The Madhyama Āgama version tends to truncate the fruits of recluseship pericope [§§13-29], mentioning only the 4 focuses of mindfulness (satipatthanas), omitting the other practices of the gradual paths.<sup>38</sup> In the sutta quote of the Samatha,deva’s commentary (in the Tibetan version), however, the passage on the removal of the 5 hindrances precedes the passage on the 4 satipatthanas [§23].<sup>39</sup>

2.2.2.2 **Analayo** notes that from the perspective of textual transmission, it would be easier to imagine that a reference to the arising of a Tathagata [§13] caused the reciters to supplement a full account of the gradual path of practice, detailing the undertaking of sense-restraint, moderation with food, wakefulness, etc, than to assume that considerable parts of an account of the gradual path have been lost. Based on the hypothesis that the other practices of the gradual path may have been added to an originally briefer account during the transmission of the Pali version, it would be quite understandable how satipatthana was consequently displaced from its original location to stand after the removal of the 5 hindrances, thereby placed in a position that would better fit the attaining of the dhyanas. (2011:718 f)

2.2.2.3 The Madhyama Āgama, in its parallel to §24, instructs us to avoid thoughts connected with sensuality when contemplating the body and to avoid thoughts that are “against the Dharma” or “not right” (*adharmā*), when contemplating dharmas [realities as states of mind].<sup>40</sup> Unfortunately, the instructions for contemplation of feelings and dharmas are only abbreviated in the Chinese version, so that in these two cases we can only conjecture what type of thoughts are better avoided.

2.2.2.4 The need to avoid sensual thoughts would fit the context in the Madhyama Āgama version well, where satipatthana comes right after the disciple has established a basis of moral purity. Thus, from the perspective of the Madhyama Āgama account, the present stage would be a further development of satipatthana contemplation with particular emphasis given to overcoming any trace of sensuality. Such practice is then said to have “well-established” (*supatitṭhita*) satipatthana to such an extent that sensual thoughts no longer arise.<sup>41</sup>

2.2.2.5 The instruction to avoid sensual thoughts [§24] is clearly out of place, as here satipatthana has arisen *after* the overcoming of the 5 hindrances, including the first hindrance of sensual desire. For satipatthana to arise at this point, the instruction to avoid any type of thought in connection with the satipat-

is found in MĀ 212 @ T1.794a29, which also has men in addition to the elephants, horses, and oxen mentioned in M 90/2:129,4. See Analayo 2011:522 n388.

<sup>36</sup> A minor difference between the two versions is that, in M 125/3:131,19, the Buddha, in his parable, says that the mass of ignorance overwhelming prince Jayasena is even greater than the mountain, a remark not found in MĀ 198.

<sup>37</sup> On the “fruits of recluseship” (*sāmañña,phala*), see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,39-100), SD 8.10; also SD 21.6 (2).

<sup>38</sup> See Analayo 2011:719 & Table 13.4.

<sup>39</sup> D (4094) mngon pa, nyu 40b6 or Q (5595) thu 79a8. According to M 10/1:60,11 (or D 22/2:300,10) and MĀ 98 @ T1.584a24, awareness of the presence of the 5 hindrances is a task that forms part of *satipatṭhāna*, so that *satipatṭhāna* practice would not necessarily require the previous removal of the 5 hindrances; cf also A 9.64/4:458,5, which presents satipatṭhāna as the tool for overcoming the 5 hindrances. Nevertheless, for advanced stages of *satipatṭhāna* practice, the removal of the 5 hindrances would be required.

<sup>40</sup> MĀ 198 @ T1.758b15: 莫念欲相應念，乃至觀覺，心法如法，莫念非法相應念。 This instruction recurs in MĀ 144 @ T1.652b7, parallel to M 107, see Analayo 2011:620 n174. An extract from the present discussion is found in Analayo 2005:103f.

<sup>41</sup> See eg S 22.80/3:93,21 and its parallel SĀ 272 @ T2.72a24.

thana-object would fit the context better, which leads to a level of thought-free mindfulness that can serve as a basis for the development of dhyanas.<sup>42</sup>

“Thought” (*vitakka*) is clearly the keyword of §24, which is very significant for a better understanding of meditation, both in theory and in practice. The Chinese parallel here (MĀ 198 @ T1.758b15) also states that satipatthana practice should be done free from thinking.

Here, the translation adopts the PTS and the Siamese readings, thus: “Do not think a thought regarding the (body | feeling | the mind | dharma)” (*mā ca kāy’upasaṃhitam...mā vedan’upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ...mā citt’upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ...mā dhamm’upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*). The Sanskrit work, Pañca, vimśati, sāhaśrikā Prajñā, pāramitā preserves a similar instruction regarding the body contemplation: *na ca kaya, saḥagatan vitarkan vitarkayati* (Dutt 1934:204,2). The Pratyutpanna, buddha, saṃmukha, vasthita, samādhi Sūtra, too, records the instruction not to think any thoughts connected with any of the 4 *smṛtyūpsthānā*.<sup>43</sup> In fact, either reading *kāmūpasaṃhitam* (“connected with sensuality,” Be Ce) or *kāmūpasaṃhitam* (“connected with the body,” Ee Se) is acceptable here, as the import here is that no “thinking,” but only “observing [contemplating]” (*anupassanā*), should occur in any of the 4 satipatthanas. When a focus of mindfulness is fully established, all thoughts cease.<sup>44</sup>

### 3 Is the first dhyana omitted from the Sutta?

**3.1** Both the Danta, bhūmi Sutta and its Chinese version, after presenting the 4 satipatthanas and not letting thought disrupt any of them [§24], continue with the attaining of the form dhyanas [§25]. The Chinese version next describes the first dhyana,<sup>45</sup> but the Danta, bhūmi Sutta, omitting this, goes directly into the second dhyana.<sup>46</sup>

**3.2** Concerning this apparent omission, notes Analayo, it strikes an unfamiliar note when the Danta, bhūmi Sutta presents a progression of practice that leads from satipatthana meditation directly to the second dhyana, *without first attaining the first dhyana*. Although satipatthana can serve as a foundation for the development of the dhyanas,<sup>47</sup> in itself, it does not constitute a form of dhyana practice. Perhaps, Analayo thinks, the occurrence of the word *vitakka* in the passage on satipatthana without thought has led to a lapse on the part of the reciter(s) of the Sutta, who continued straight away with the calming of *vitakka* (*vitakka, vicārānaṃ vūpasama*), mentioned at the outset of the second dhyana formula, thereby unintentionally dropping the first dhyana in between.<sup>48</sup>

**3.3** On the other hand, by the same argument, we can justly surmise that the first dhyana is already *implicitly stated* in §25, which deals at length with the transcending of thought. This is a very important passage for those practitioners familiar with dhyana, or even meditation in general. The overcoming of all thoughts (*vitakka*) is tantamount to the first dhyana itself.<sup>49</sup> As such, it would be redundant to mention the first dhyana. In this sense, the Danta, bhūmi Sutta is unique in presenting us this valuable insight into the nature of dhyana meditation.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>42</sup> See *Samatha and vipassanā*, SD 41.1 (6.3.6): Two aspects of satipatthana.

<sup>43</sup> Harrison 1978:130,13, also 155,22), tr in Harrison 1990:125+144

<sup>44</sup> See esp **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9) on the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana: “if he has any previous sense-desires, it disappears” (D 9, 10.3), SD 7.14; also **Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80,20/3:93,21), SD 28.9a & its Chin parallel SĀ 272/T272a24. See Analayo 2006:12-13+n32 & 2011:719 + n167). Cf M:ÑB 1338 n1177 for pref of reading *kāmū-*. See also **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10), which apparently shows a similar split between satipatthana before and after samadhi (S 47.10/5:-155,31-157,20), SD 24.2. See **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (6.2.2): Dhyana is beyond words and thoughts. See §24 below (text + n).

<sup>45</sup> MĀ 198 @ T1.758b25. See Analayo 2011:719 Table 13.4.

<sup>46</sup> M 125/3:136,26. All MSS—Be 3:175,25, Ce 3:316,20, Ee 3:136,30, Se 3:269,20—mention the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> dhyanas (pace Analayo 2011:721 n172).

<sup>47</sup> The foundational role of *satipatthāna* for deeper levels of concentration can be seen, eg in D 18/2:216,12, S 52.6/5:299,19, and S 52.11-24/5:303-305.

<sup>48</sup> See Analayo 2011:721. For a similar case, see 2011:140; also 2012d.

<sup>49</sup> See esp **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9) on the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana (D 9,10.3), SD 7.14.

<sup>50</sup> See *Samatha and Vipassanā*, SD 41.1 (6.3.6).

## 4 Imperturbability

### 4.1 WORD COMMENTARY

#### 4.1.1 Meaning of “imperturbability”

4.1.1.1 The climax of the elephant taming parable is when it is able to master the level of “imperturbability” (*ānejjā, kāraṇa*), that is, to remain totally unmoving and unmoved [§12.11] by either of two kinds of assault, thus:

The royal elephant endures being hit by spears, by swords, by arrows, by enemies from the other side; and the sounds and din of the bheri [conical drum], cymbals, conch-shells, and the dindima [small drum]. [§12.13]

4.1.1.2 This expression *ānejjā, kāraṇa* is found in the same context in at least two Jātaka stories, that is, **the Dubbala, kaṭṭha Jātaka** (J 105) and **the Bhisā Jātaka** (J 488). In J 105, it is said,

And in those days the king put his state elephant in the elephant-trainers’ hands to be broken in to stand firm.

*Tasmim kāle bāraṇī, rājā attano maṅgala, hatthim ānañja, kāraṇam sikkhāpetum hattha, cariyānam adāsi.*  
(J 1:415, R Chalmers’ translation, 1895)

In J 488, the narrator speaks of an elephant that is unable to be broken in, as described above. It is said:

to have been unable to bear the pain of remaining unperturbed [of keeping up “the imperturbable” training], breaking from the stake, it fled.

*ānañja, kāraṇam kāriyamāno dukkham adhivāsetum asakkanto ālānam bhinditvā palāyitvā.*  
(J 4:308)

4.1.1.3 This surely cannot be “pretending to be dead” (as suggested by PED), but either (1) a fearless and unflinching “standing of one’s ground” in battle or in the face of challenges, or (2) a strategic posture the elephant takes during battle, as described by R Morris in the *Journal of the Pali Text Society*: “The *ānañja-kamma* [sic] seems to have been (1) a kind of bending of knees as a mark of obsequence [sic], or respect (J 4:49); (2) a kind of squatting down, (so as not to be seen).” (JPTS 1886:155).

From all this, we might surmise that *ānejjā, kāraṇa* means that the royal elephant fearlessly stands its ground unflinching in battle or adversity, and that it is capable of going down on its knees and remaining unmoving so when commanded or as a strategic manoeuvre. In short, the royal elephant is fearless, agile, disciplined and intelligent.

**4.1.2 Figurative sense.** According to the Chinese version of the Danta, bhūmi Sutta, the elephant’s training in imperturbability refers to an attainer of the 4 dhyana’s gaining a level of mental imperturbability.<sup>51</sup> The Sutta itself, however, does not relate the elephant’s training to this stage of the gradual path, even though it has explicitly presented the stage of the elephant’s training in “imperturbability,” during which, according to the description given in both versions, the elephant has to remain unmoved even in a situation that resembles an actual attack or battle [§12.11], or any kind of turmoil [§12.12]

**4.2** The Chinese version explains that the meditator’s imperturbability also covers external situations, such as being able to bear hunger and thirst, mosquitoes and gadflies, the inclemencies of the weather, unpleasant words, and disease,<sup>52</sup> just as the elephant, on reaching imperturbability, was able to endure the blows and noise of a battle situation. The Danta, bhūmi Sutta, however, later on, does mention the practitioner’s endurance [§30], but without relating it to the elephant’s endurance.

**4.3** The Chinese parallel concludes by stating that a practitioner, who has such an endurance has reached an excellent level of taming, and becomes a supreme field of merit, comparable to an elephant who, by reaching an excellent level of taming, becomes worthy of personal service to a king.

<sup>51</sup> MĀ 198 @ T1.758b29.

<sup>52</sup> MĀ 198 @ T1.758c8 differs from the Pali version in mentioning the possibility that the practitioner may be attacked with sticks, 捶杖 *chuí zhàng*.

4.4 The Danta,bhūmi Sutta's account of the elephant's training similarly says that after mastering the stage of imperturbability, the elephant becomes worthy serving the king.<sup>53</sup> Otherwise, the Sutta continues differently, since before turning to the practitioner's ability to bear up with various vicissitudes, it describes how the practitioner attains the 3 higher knowledges. [4.5]

4.5 Concerning this difference [4.4], it is rather unusual that MĀ 198 would praise the practitioner's excellent level of taming without relating it to the cultivation of liberating wisdom. From this perspective, our Sutta better reflects the practitioner's training leading to awakening. Here, however, both versions deal with how a practitioner, through diligence, gains mental oneness. From this perspective, it would make sense to only give an account of the practitioner's training up to the fourth dhyana, at which point mental oneness is fully accomplished.

The presentation in MĀ 198 is supported by **(Catukka) Nāga Sutta** (A 4.114)<sup>54</sup> and **(Pañcaka) Sota Sutta** (A 5.140),<sup>55</sup> which compare qualities of a practitioner to those of a trained elephant. These two Suttas describe how a practitioner overcomes unwholesome thoughts and cultivates the ability to bear patiently the inclemencies of the weather, etc, which they compare to an elephant's ability to bear patiently a battle situation. The two suttas then compare a disciple who swiftly approaches liberation to the elephant's ability to approach swiftly any place that the trainer wants it to go.

4.6 From the perspective of these two Suttas, the stages of an elephant taming described in the Danta,bhūmi Sutta and its Chinese parallel illustrate the stages that lead up to only the point when the practitioner is *ready* for liberation, but not up to his *actual* awakening. The actual awakening, judging from the two Suttas, would correspond to the elephant swiftly going to whatever place he is being told to go, something not mentioned in the description of the elephant's training in the Danta,bhūmi Sutta (M 125) or its Chinese version (MĀ 198).

From the perspective of transmission, **Analayo** thinks, it could more easily be imagined that a reciter supplied the "missing" attainment of the 3 higher knowledges to an account of the gradual path, than to assume that the higher knowledges were lost. Since the Danta,bhūmi Sutta has early expanded along the lines of a full account of the gradual path, it would not be surprising if the same should have happened here, too.<sup>56</sup>

## 5 Arhathood

5.1 Towards the end, both the Danta,bhūmi Sutta and its Chinese parallel agree by comparing a novice monk, a middle-aged monk or an elder monk, who passes away untamed, to a young, a middle-aged, and an old elephant, respectively, who passes away untamed. The same imagery is then used for the corresponding cases of tamed monks or elephants<sup>57</sup> [§31].

5.2 However, the two versions differ at the very end in terms of the attainment of the practitioner. While the Danta,bhūmi Sutta speaks of one whose influxes have been destroyed, that is, the arhat<sup>58</sup> [§32], the Chinese version simply speaks of a well trained practitioner.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> M 125/3:133,28: *rājāraho rāja,bhoggo*.

<sup>54</sup> A 4.114/2:117,31 (SD 51.12).

<sup>55</sup> A 5.140/3:163,28 (SD 51.13).

<sup>56</sup> Analayo 2011:722 & Table 13.4.

<sup>57</sup> Wayman 1982:282 notes that the image of passing away untamed or tamed recurs in a listing of 6 types of death in Yogâcāra,bhūmi: 不調伏死, 調伏死 (T1579 @ T30.76c14).

<sup>58</sup> M 125/3:137,24: *thero...majjhimo...navo...bhikkhu khiṇ'āsavo*.

<sup>59</sup> MĀ 198 @ T1.759a6: 少. 中. 老聖弟子善調御 *shào, zhōng, lǎo shèng dìzǐ shàn tiáo yù*.

## The Discourse on the Taming Grounds

M 125

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was residing in the squirrels' feeding ground, in the Bamboo Grove, outside Rājāgaha.

### Prince Jaya,sena meets novice Acira,vata

2 Now at that time, **the novice**<sup>60</sup> **Acira,vata** was dwelling in a forest cell.<sup>61</sup>

2.2 Then, prince Jaya,sena,<sup>62</sup> while walking about on a stroll,<sup>63</sup> approached the novice Aciravata, and exchanged greetings with him. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, prince Jaya-sena sat down at one side.

2.3 Having sat down at one side, prince Jayasena said this to the novice Aciravata:

“This I have heard, master Aggivessana,<sup>64</sup> that here a monk who dwells diligent, ardent and resolute<sup>65</sup> would achieve oneness of mind.”<sup>66</sup>

2.4 “That is so, my prince! That is so, my prince! Here, a monk who dwells diligent, exertive and resolute would achieve oneness of mind.”

<sup>60</sup> *Samaṇ'uddesa*: see (1.2.2) n.

<sup>61</sup> *Tena kho pana samayena aciravato samaṇuddeso araṇṇakuṭīkāyaṃ viharati*. Comy says that the forest cell is in a secluded part of the Bamboo Grove for the use of monks who wanted to practise striving (*padhāna*) (MA 4:97).

<sup>62</sup> A son of Bimbi,sāra, king of Magadha.

<sup>63</sup> *Jaṅghā,vihāraṃ anucaṅkamamāno anuvicaramāno*, lit “wandering to and fro on foot, walking up and down.” Stock phrase at D 1:235; M 1:108, 227, 2:118, 3:128; A 1:136, 138, 3:76; Sn p105, p115. Or, in the case of meditators, “walking about to stretch his legs.” Comy on **Meghiya S** (A 9.3 = U 31) explains *jaṅghā,vihāra* as stretching of one's legs after a long sitting in meditation (UA 217), or of the Buddha himself, ie, walking about for the sake of easing up the legs' tightness (*jaṅghā,kilamatha,vinodan'attham jaṅghā,cāraṃ*, MA 2:151); or, going for a stroll, “for the sake of seeing parks, woods, mountains,” as in the case of Daṇḍa,pānī (MA 2:73) in **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,3), SD 6.14; or for sight-seeing, “For the sake of seeing parks, woods, mountains” (MA 2:73). This is stock: D 1:235; M 1:108, 2:118, 2:118; Sn p105. Cf Miln 22; J 2:240, 272. See **Tevijja S** (D 13,3/1:234) @ D:RD 1:301n. See MA 2:270 (Assaji, Sāriputta's teacher); PvA 73. For a detailed treatment on the phrase, see SnA 447 f & K R Norman, *Group of Discourses II*, 1992: 63. For stock refs & nn, see M 18,2 n @ SD 6.14.

<sup>64</sup> Aggi,vessana: see (1.2.3).

<sup>65</sup> A longer version of this shorthand phrase, “diligent, exertive and resolute” (*appamatto ātāpī pahitatto*) is “having put away covetousness and displeasure in the world, he dwells exertive, clearly comprehending, mindful...” (*ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā,domanassam*). See **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,3 nn) @ SD 13.3.

<sup>66</sup> *Sutam m'etaṃ bho aggivessana, idha bhikkhu appamatto ātāpī pahitatto viharanto phuseyya cittassa ekaggatan'ti*. Comy says that this refers to the form dhyanas and formless attainments (MA 4:197). The phrase *appamatto ātāpī pahitatto viharanto*, “dwelling diligent, exertive and resolute” is stock, and here refers to general practice along with these refs [“+arhathood” = ending with arhathood pericope]: **M 92,27/2:146** = Sn 3.7/p111 f, **124,37/3:128**×2, 129; **S 4,22/1:119**×2, 120×2, **4,23/1:120**×2, 121×2, **18,1/2:244**, **22,35/3:35** (+arhathood), **22,36/3:36**, **22,63/3:73**, **22,159/3:187**, **23,23/3:198**, **23,46/3:200**, **35,64/4:37** (+arhathood), **35,76/4:48**, **35,86/4:54**, **35,88/4:60**, **35,89/4:63** (+arhathood), **35,95/4:72** (+arhathood), **47,3/5:143** (+arhathood), **47,15/5:165** (+arhathood); **A 4,257/2:248** (+arhathood); **Nm 2:455**; **Nc:Be 211, 230**. More commonly, the phrase is part of the famous arhathood pericope that often closes a sutta [“practice” = preceded by practice formula]: **D 8/1:177**, **9/1:202**, **16/2:153**, **30/3:76**; **M 7,22/1:40**, **57,15/1:392**, **73,26/1:496**, **75,28/1:513**, **82,14/2:61**, **86,16/2:103**, **124,39/3:127**, **128,19+24+28+29/3:158, 160, 161** ×2, **145,-1/3:267**; **S 6,2/1:140**, **7,1/1:161**, **7,2/1:163**, **7,10/1:171**, **12,17/2:22**, **18,1/2:244**, **22,35/3:36** (practice), **22,63/3:74** (+arhathood), **35,64/4:38** (practice), **35,89/4:64** (practice); **35,95/4:76** (practice), **35,162/4:145** (practice), **41,9/4:302**, **47,3/5:144** (practice), **47,15/5:166** (practice), **47,164,46/5:166**×2, **47,46/5:187, 188**, **47,47/5:188**; **A 3,130/1:282**; **4,257/2:249**; **5,56/3:70**, **5,180/3:217**, **6,55/3:376**, **6,60/3:399**; **7,83/4:143** (with *nibbidā* formula); **8,30/4:235**, **8,63/-4:299, 301**, **8,64/4:302**×2, 303×2, 304, **U 3,2/23**; **Sn 1,4/p16**, **3,7/p11 f** = M 92,27; **Vinaya: Mv 5,1.18** @ 1:183, **Cv 11,1.15** @ 2:292; the attaining of streamwinning: **A 10,46/5:84**, 85×4, 86.

### Aciravata reluctantly teaches the Dharma

3 “It would be good, master Aggivessana, if you were to teach me the Dharma as you have heard it, as you have mastered it.”

3.2 “I’m unable, my prince, to teach you the Dharma as I’ve heard it, as I’ve mastered it. If I, my prince, were to teach you the Dharma *as I’ve heard it, as I’ve mastered it*, you would not be able to understand its meaning.<sup>67</sup> It would tire me, it would vex me.”<sup>68</sup> [129]

4 “Teach me, master Aggivessana, the Dharma as you have heard it, as you have mastered it. Perhaps, I, master Aggivessana, may understand it!”

4.2 Then, I shall teach you the Dharma *as I’ve heard it, as I’ve mastered it*. If you can understand the meaning of my word, that will be good.

But if you, my prince, do not understand the Dharma *as I’ve heard it, as I’ve mastered it*, then we’ll leave it at that,<sup>69</sup> and you will question me no further.”<sup>70</sup>

4.3 “Teach me, master Aggivessana, the Dharma *as you have heard it, as you have mastered it*.

If I, master Aggivessana, understand the meaning of what is spoken by master Aggivessana, that will be good.

If I do not understand what has been spoken by master Aggivessana, then we will leave it at that, and I will question you no further.

### Jayasena is dissatisfied with Aciravata’s teaching

5 The novice Aciravata then taught the Dharma *as he has heard it, as he has mastered it*, to prince Jayasena.

5.2 When this was said, prince Jayasena said this to the novice Aciravata,

“That is impossible, master Aggivessana, there is no way it can be, where a monk who dwells diligent, ardent and resolute would achieve oneness of mind!”<sup>71</sup>

6 Then, prince Jayasena, having declared that it is impossible, that there is no way it can be, rose from his seat and departed.

### Aciravata approaches the Buddha

6.2 Then, not long after prince Jayasena had left, the novice Aciravata approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side.

6.3 Seated thus at one side, he recounted to the Blessed One the whole conversation that he had with prince Jayasena.

6.4 When this was said, the Blessed One said this to the novice Aciravata,

7 “How is it ever possible here,<sup>72</sup> Aggivessana, with that which

should be <u>known</u> through renunciation,	<i>nekkhammena ñātabbam</i>
should be <i>seen</i> through renunciation,	<i>nekkhammena datṭhabbam</i>
should be <i>attained</i> through renunciation,	<i>nekkhammena patṭabbam</i>
should be <i>realized</i> through renunciation?	<i>nekkhammena sacchikātabbam</i>

That this would ever be known, seen, attained, realized<sup>73</sup> by prince Jayasena,

<sup>67</sup> *Ahaṃ carahi* [Ce Ee; Se *ahañ carahi*; Be *ahañ ca hi*] *te rāja, kumāra, yathā, sutam yathā, pariyattam dhammam deseyyam, tvañca me bhāsītassa attham na ājāneyyāsi.*

<sup>68</sup> Acira, vata is echoing the newly awakened Buddha’s words when he first hesitates whether to teach the Dharma (V 1:5,4-5): see SD 12.1 (2.3.1).

<sup>69</sup> Comy: “You must remain in your own state of not knowing” (*attano ajānana, koṭṭhāse yeva tiṭṭheyysīti*, MA 3:197).

<sup>70</sup> *No ce me tvañ bhāsītassa attham ājāneyyāsi, yathā sake tiṭṭheyysīti na mañ tattha uttarim paṭipuccheyyāsi.*

<sup>71</sup> *Aṭṭhānam-etam bho aggivessana anavakāso, yañ bhikkhu appamatto ātāpī pahitatto viharanto phuseyya cittassa ekaggatan’ti.* Cf §§2.3+2.4.

<sup>72</sup> *Tam kut’ettha...labbhā*, lit “How could one obtain that here?” “Here” (*ettha*) means “in this training” or “in this Dharma-Vinaya.”

who lives enjoying sensual pleasures,  
 being consumed with sensual thoughts,  
 burning with the fever of sensual pleasures, [130]  
 being caught up with seeking sensual pleasures—this is impossible!

### Parable of the two tamable animals

**8** Suppose there were **two tamable elephants or tamable horses or tamable oxen** that were *well tamed and well disciplined*, and **two tamable elephants or tamable horses or tamable oxen** that were *untamed and undisciplined*.

8.2 What do you think, Aggivessana? Would the two tamable elephants or tamable horses or tamable oxen that were well tamed and well disciplined, being tamed, assume *the nature of the tamed*? Would they attain to the level of *the tamed*?<sup>74</sup>

“Yes, bhante.”

8.3 “But would the two tamable elephants or tamable horses or tamable oxen that were untamed and undisciplined assume *the nature of the tamed*?

Would they attain to the level of the tamed, like the two tamable elephants or tamable horses or tamable oxen that were well tamed and well disciplined?”

“No, bhante.”

8.4 “Even so, Aggivessana, it is with that which  
 should be known through renunciation,  
 should be seen through *renunciation*,  
 should be attained through *renunciation*,  
 should be realized through *renunciation*— [§10]

that this would ever be known, seen, attained, realized by prince Jayasena, *who lives enjoying sensual pleasures, being consumed with sensual thoughts, burning with the fever of sensual pleasures, being caught up with seeking sensual pleasures—this is impossible!*<sup>75</sup>

### The parable of the hill view

**9** Suppose, Aggivessana, there were **a great hill** [a great cliff] not far from a village or a market town, and two friends from that village or market town were to depart from it and approach the hill hand in hand.<sup>76</sup>

9.2 On reaching it, one friend were to remain at the foot of the hill, while the other would climb to the top of the hill.

9.3 Then, the friend *at the foot of the hill* would say to the friend *at the top of the hill*, thus:

‘Well, my friend [my dear], what do you see as you stand on the hill-top?’

9.4 He would reply thus,

‘Standing on the hill-top, my friend, I see delightful parks, delightful forests, delightful terrains [grounds], delightful lotus lakes.’

9.5 He (the other friend) would say thus:

‘That is impossible, [131] my friend, there is no way that you, standing on the hill-top, can see *delightful parks, delightful forests, delightful terrains, delightful lotus lakes!*’

<sup>73</sup> *Ñassati vā dakkhiti vā sacchī vā karissatī’ti*. Horner suggests emending this reading to *dakkhati vā pāpuṇissati vā sacchikarissati vā*, “thus balancing the modes by which renunciation can be apprehended, given in the same sentence” (M:H 3:176 n4). This line (along with the form *sacchi vā karissati*, which seems to be a wordplay on *sacchikarissati*, “he realizes”) recurs in (**Brahma, vihāra**) **Subha S** (M 99/2:201,4), SD 38.6.

<sup>74</sup> This parable recurs in **Kaṇṇaka-ṭṭhala S** (M 90,11), SD 10.8.

<sup>75</sup> A related parable is that of the ass that thinks it is a cow: see **Samāṇa Gadrabha S** (A 3.81,2), SD 24.10b.

<sup>76</sup> *Seyyathā’pi aggivessana, gāmassa vā nigamassa vā avidūre mahā’pabbato, tam enaṃ dve sahāyakā tamhā gāmā vā nigamā vā nikkhamitvā hattha, vilaṅghakena yena so pabbato, ten’upasaṅkameyyuṃ.*

9.6 Then, the friend standing on the hill-top, comes down to the foot of the hill, and taking his friend by the arm, brought him up to the hill-top.

After giving him a moment to catch his breath, he spoke thus to him,

‘Now, my friend, standing on the hill-top, what do you see?’

9.7 His friend would reply thus,

‘Standing on this hill-top, my friend, I too see *delightful parks, delightful forests, delightful terrains, delightful lotus lakes!*’

9.8 He (the other friend) would say thus,

‘Only just now, my friend, we know you to have said to us, thus, “*That is impossible, my friend, there is no way that you, standing on the hill-top, can see delightful parks, delightful forests, delightful terrains, delightful lotus lakes!*”’

But now we know you saying, “*Standing on this hill-top, my friend, I too see delightful parks, delightful forests, delightful terrains, delightful lotus lakes!*”’

He (the other friend) would reply, “That’s because, my friend, I was obstructed by this high hill so that I am unable to see what should be seen.”<sup>77</sup>

**10** So, too, Aggivessana, was prince Jayasena obstructed, hindered, covered, shrouded by an even greater mass than this—that of ignorance.<sup>78</sup>

10.2 *Even so it is with that which*

*should be known through renunciation,*

*should be seen through renunciation,*

*should be attained through renunciation,*

*should be realized through renunciation—*

that this would ever be known, seen, attained, realized by prince Jayasena, *who lives enjoying sensual pleasures, being consumed with sensual thoughts, burning with the fever of sensual pleasures, being caught up with seeking sensual pleasures—this is impossible!*

**11** Now, Aggivessana, if these two parables had occurred to you for the sake of prince Jayasena, it would not be surprising [it would be natural]<sup>79</sup> that this prince Jayasena would have had faith.

And filled with *faith*, he would have faith in you.<sup>80</sup>

## The parable of elephant training

11.2 “But how, bhante, could these two parables, that I’ve not heard of before, have occurred to me naturally [spontaneously] for the sake of prince Jayasena, as they did for the Blessed One?”<sup>81</sup> **[132]**

**12** “Aggivessana, suppose a **head-anointed kshatriya rajah** [noble king] were to address his elephant forester, thus,

(1)<sup>82</sup> ‘My good elephant forester, mount the royal elephant, enter the elephant forest, and upon seeing the forest elephant, bind him by the neck to the royal elephant.’<sup>83</sup> [§13]

<sup>77</sup> *So evaṃ vadēyya, tathā hi paṇāhaṃ samma, iminā mahatā pabbatena āvuto daṭṭheyyaṃ nāddasan’ti.*

<sup>78</sup> *Evam eva kho ato [Be Ce Ee Se; vll ...āvuto, ...āvāto] mahantatarena kho aggi,vessana, avijjā khandhena jaya,seno rāja,kumaro āvuto nivuto ovuto pariyanaddho.* On the phrase *āvuto nivuto ovuto pariyanaddho*, see SD 1.8 (30) n. *Ato* (indecl), “than this.”

<sup>79</sup> “Would not be surprising,” *anacchariyaṃ* (lit, “not wonderful”) = *na*, “not,” + *acchariya*, “wonderful, miraculous, marvelous,” ie, not wonderful, naturally, spontaneously (V 1:5,6 ≈ S 1:136,19 ≈ D 2:36,13; 38,1 ≈ M 1168,3; D 2:93,11 = S 5:359,15; cf V 2:17,31; M 3:131,29; S 4:301,21; A 4:211,13; J 3:406,20, 4:153,1:1, 6:220,24, 255,20; MA 2: 65,19; KhpA 1:150,27; DhA 2:121,19). Esp in the well known phrase, “unheard before, spontaneously occurred” (*anacchariyā pubbe assuta,pubbā*) (M 1:240,30 ≠ 3:131,33). See CPD sv.

<sup>80</sup> *Sace kho taṃ aggivessana jaya,senassa rāja,kumārassa imā dve upamā paṭibhāseyyūṃ anacchariyaṃ te jaya,-seno rāja,kumaro pasīdeyya: pasanno ca te pasannākāraṃ kareyyāti.*

<sup>81</sup> *Kuto pana maṃ bhante jaya,senassa rāja,kumārassa imā dve upamā paṭibhāsissanti anacchariyā pubbe assuta,pubbā, seyyathā’pi bhagavantā’ti.* For another parable on elephant-training, see (**Rāja**) **Nāga S** (A 4.114), SD 46.8.

<sup>82</sup> These numbers in **bold** parentheses show the elements of the elephant-training parable.

12.2 Aggivessana, then, **the elephant forester** replies to the head-anointed kshatriya rajah, ‘Yes, your majesty!’

Then, he would mount the royal elephant, enter the elephant forest, and upon seeing the forest elephant, bind him by the neck to the royal elephant. This royal elephant will lead him out into the open.

And, Aggivessana,<sup>84</sup> to that extent, the forest elephant would have come out into the open.<sup>85</sup> For, Aggivessana, here, the forest elephant clings to that elephant forest.

12.3 (3) That elephant forester then tells the head-anointed kshatriya rajah,

‘Your majesty, the forest elephant **has come out into the open!**’ [§14.3]

12.4 Then, Aggivessana, the head-anointed kshatriya rajah would address the elephant tamer,

‘Come, my good elephant tamer, tame the forest elephant,

so as to subdue his habits of the forest,<sup>86</sup>

so as to subdue his memories and thoughts of the forest,<sup>87</sup>

so as to subdue his distress, weariness and fever for the forest,<sup>88</sup>

(4) Get him to delight being near a village, so that he feels natural being amongst humans!’<sup>89</sup>

‘Yes, your majesty!’ Aggivessana, replies the elephant tamer to the head-anointed kshatriya rajah.

12.5 (5) Then, Aggivessana, he **sinks a great post into the ground,** and binds the forest elephant by the neck to it,<sup>90</sup>

*so as to subdue his habits of the forest,*

*so as to subdue his memories and thoughts of the forest,*

*so as to subdue his distress, weariness and fever for the forest,* [§20-21]

*and get him to delight being near the village, so that he feels natural being amongst humans.*

12.6 The elephant tamer, Aggivessana, then addresses it with words that are gentle, pleasant to the ear, loving, touching the heart, urbane [refined], delighting to the multitude, pleasing to the multitude.<sup>91</sup>

Then, Aggivessana, the forest elephant, on being addressed with words that are gentle, pleasant to the ear, loving, touching the heart, urbane [refined], delighting to the multitude, [133] pleasing to the multitude, listens, gives ear, sets his mind on learning.<sup>92</sup>

12.7 (7) The elephant tamer, Aggivessana, further offers him **grass, fodder and water.**<sup>93</sup>

When the forest elephant *accepts the grass, fodder and water,* it occurs to the elephant tamer,

‘Now this royal<sup>94</sup> forest elephant will live!’<sup>95</sup>

<sup>83</sup> *Tvaṃ samma nāga, vanika, rañño nāgaṃ abhiruhitvā nāga, vanaṃ pavisitvā ārañṇakaṃ nāgaṃ atipassitvā rañño nāgassa gīvāya* [Ce Ee; Be *gīvāyaṃ*; Se *gīvāyaṃ*] *upanibandhāhīti.*

<sup>84</sup> I follow the Pali here, where the Buddha addresses the novice Acira, vata as “Aggi, vessana” [1.2.2] and throughout the narrative. Horner simplifies her tr by omitting the vocative (M:H 3:178).

<sup>85</sup> *Ettāvātā ca kho aggi, vessana ārañṇako nāgo abbhokāsaṃ gato hoti.*

<sup>86</sup> *Ārañṇakaṃ nāgaṃ damayāhi ārañṇakānaṃ c’eva sīlānaṃ abhinimmanāya,*

<sup>87</sup> *Ārañṇakānaṃ c’eva sara, saṅkappānaṃ abhinimmanāya,*

<sup>88</sup> *Ārañṇakānaṃ c’eva daratha, kilamatha, pariḷāhānaṃ abhinimmanāya,*

<sup>89</sup> *Gāmaṃ ante abhiramāpanāya, manussak’antesu sīlesu samādapanāyāti.*

<sup>90</sup> On the figure of sinking the post, see §23.2+n.

<sup>91</sup> *Tam enaṃ hatthi, damako yā sā vācā nelā kaṇṇa, sukhā pemaṇīyā hadayaṃ, gamā porī bahu, jana, kantā bahu, jana, manāpā, tathā, rūpāhi vācāhi samudācarati. Nela (na + eḷa = Skt anenas, opp of enas, “fault, bad”), (of speech) gentle, humane. As in **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114, 6.7(13)), SD 39.8, except that *tathā, rūpāhi vācāhi samudācarati* here is replaced by *tathā, rūpīm vācam bhāsītā hoti*, “he utters...such words...”.*

<sup>92</sup> “Listens, gives ear, sets his mind on learning,” *sussūsati sotaṃ odahati aññā cittaṃ upaṭṭhapeti.* The Sutta does give a Dharma counterpart of the parable element [§12.6]. Here, the Buddha and arhats further teach the true Dharma to the renunciant who listens attentively. The “pleasant words” here refers further meditation instructions being taught to renunciant. [2.1.2.3(6)]

<sup>93</sup> *Tam enaṃ hatthi, damako uttarim tiṇa, ghās’odakaṃ anuppavecchati.*

<sup>94</sup> Henceforth, the elephant, since he is becoming more docile and amenable, is called “royal” (*rañño*).

<sup>95</sup> This & prec line: *Tatra* [Be Ce; Ee *Tattha*] *hatthi, damakassa evaṃ hoti: jivissati kho’ dāni* [Be Ee Se *jivissati kho dāni*; Ce ...*nu kho*] *rañño* [Ce Ee; Be Se *ārañṇako*] *nāgo’ ti.* The Sutta does not give any counterpart for this

12.8 (8) The elephant tamer then makes him work further,<sup>96</sup> saying,  
‘Take it up,<sup>97</sup> sir! Put it down, sir!’<sup>98</sup>

12.9 Now, Aggivessana, when the royal elephant obeys the elephant tamer’s orders to take something up and put it down,<sup>99</sup>

the elephant tamer makes him work further, saying.

‘Go forward, sir! Go backward, sir!’

12.10 Now, Aggivessana, when the royal elephant obeys the elephant tamer’s orders to take something up and put it down,

the elephant tamer makes him work further, saying.

‘Stand up, sir! Sit down, sir!’<sup>100</sup>

12.11 Now, Aggivessana, when the forest elephant obeys the elephant tamer’s orders to stand up and sit down,

(9) the elephant tamer makes him work further to do a task called ‘**the imperturbable**.’<sup>101</sup>

He binds a great shield to his trunk.<sup>102</sup> A man holding a lance sits on his neck.<sup>103</sup>

And men, each holding a lance in his hand, stand surrounding him. And the elephant tamer himself, holding a long lance-pole, stands in front of him.

12.12 Now, while he is performing the task called ‘the imperturbable,’<sup>104</sup> he moves neither his fore-legs nor his hind-legs; he moves neither the front of his body nor his back; he moves neither his head nor his ears; he moves neither his tusks nor his tail; he moves not his trunk.

12.13 The royal elephant endures being hit by spears, by swords, by arrows, and by enemies from the other side; and endures the sounds and din of the bheri [conical drum], cymbals, conch-shells, and the dindima [small drum].<sup>105</sup>

parable element. Here, the renunciant understands the nature of the 4 supports and right livelihood, and lives mindfully without exploiting or corrupting the laity. [2.1.2.3(7)]

<sup>96</sup> “Makes him do a further task,” *uttariṃ kāraṇaṃ kāreti*.

<sup>97</sup> Ee Se *ādissa*, Be Ce *ādiya*: PED (*ādissa*) takes *ādissa* as imperative of *ādiyati* (sv), “he takes (up)”; but DP (*ādiyati*<sup>1</sup>) thinks this is wr at M 3:133,7. Noun: *ādāna*. Cf *ādāna, nikkhepe* [§12.9 = M 3:133,9]; *ādāna, nikkhepanam*, S 4:171,19, Vism 619,1).

<sup>98</sup> *Ādissa bho, nikkhipa bho ’ti*. Instead of Ee Se *ādissa*, M:Be 3:173,16 and M:Ce 3:310,23 read *ādiya*. For an apparent textual problem, see Analayo 2011:720 n171. See prec n.

<sup>99</sup> *Yato kho aggi, vessana ārañṇako nāgo hatthi, damakassa ādāna, nikkhepe vacana, karo hoti ovāda, patikaro*.

<sup>100</sup> *Uṭṭhaha bho, nisīda bhoti*. Instead of *nisīda*, M:Se 3:266,19 reads *nipajja*. The Chin parallel compares this stage of satipatthana to the elephant trainer’s instruction to the wild elephant to sit down and get up, to go forward and backward, to take something up and put it down (MĀ 198 @ T1.758b20): 臥起, 去來, 取捨, *wò qǐ, qù lái, qǔ shě* which follow the instructions to bend and stretch, 屈伸 *qū shēn*, two activities not mentioned in the Sutta. By including bending and stretching, MĀ 198 presents a closer connection between these instructions to the elephant and the satipatthana practice of mindfulness and clear comprehension in terms of body-based contemplation (**Saripaṭṭhana S**, M 10/1:57,5 = D 22/2:292,25; MĀ 98 @ T1.582b25), which however includes the acts of going forward and backward (*abhikkante paṭikkante*) 出入 *chūrù*, of carrying (a bowl, etc) (*dharāṇe*) 著 *zhuó*, and of sitting and lying down (*nisinne sutte*) 坐臥 *zuò wò*, and also bending and stretching (*samiñjite pasarite*) 屈伸 *qū shēn*. However, it should be noted that bending and stretching are not common acts of an elephant.

<sup>101</sup> *Tam enaṃ hatthi, damako uttariṃ ānejjaṃ nāma kāraṇaṃ kāreti (tam enaṃ hatthi, damako uttariṃ ānejjaṃ nāma kāraṇaṃ karoti*, M:Be 3:173,24, M:Ce 3:310,31, and M:Se 3:267,2 read *ānejjaṃ nāma kāraṇaṃ*, Be also reads *uttari*). MĀ 198 @ T1.758a8 has: “I will now train you in imperturbability, you must not move,” 我今治汝令不移動治, 汝勿動搖! *wò jīn zhì rù, líng bù yídòng zhì, rǔ wù dòngyáo*. See [12.12]+n & (4).

<sup>102</sup> *Mahanta ’ssa phalakaṃ soṇḍāya upanibandhati*.

<sup>103</sup> *Tomāra, hattho ca puriso upari gīvāya nisinno hoti*.

<sup>104</sup> *Ānejja, kāraṇa* or *ānejja, kāraṇa*. See (4.1.1.2).

<sup>105</sup> *So hoti rañño nāgo khamo satti-p, pahārānaṃ asi-p, pahārānaṃ usu-p, pahārānaṃ para, sattu-p, pahārānaṃ* [Ee Se; Ce *para, sattha-p, pahārānaṃ*; Be *sara, patta-p, pahārānaṃ*]\* *bheri, paṇava saṅkha, deṇḍima* [Be; Ce *saṅkha, dindima*; Ee *saṅkha, tiṇava*], *ninnāda, saddānaṃ*. [\*A 2:117,5: *pharasu-p, pahārānaṃ*, “being hit by axes” or “axe-

12.14 **(10)** Being free of all wiles and faults, purified of any deficiency, he is worthy of the king, in the king’s service, and is reckoned as a limb [an emblem] of the king.<sup>106</sup> [134]

## THE FRUITS OF RECLUSESHIP

### The Buddha’s presence

**13** So, too, Aggivessana,

**(1)**<sup>107</sup> [THE RENUNCIATION PERICOPE] here, there arises in the world **the Tathagata** [the Buddha Thus Come], an arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-gone [*sugata*], world-knower, unexcelled trainer of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

Having realized, by his own direct knowledge,

this world with its gods, its Māra [the bad one], and its Brahmā [the high god],

this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers<sup>108</sup> and people,

he makes it known to others.

He teaches **the Dharma**, good in its beginning, good in its middle, good in its end,

endowed with meaning and phrasing.

He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure. [§12.1]

**14 (2)** A householder or a householder’s son, hearing the Dharma, gains faith<sup>109</sup> in the Tathagata and reflects, thus:

‘The household life is a stifling, dusty path.<sup>110</sup> The life of renunciation is like the open air. It is not easy living in a house to fully practise the holy life, in all its purity, like a polished conch-shell.

blows.” But *parasu* at S 4:441; J 3:179.] This parable recurs in **Rāja Nāga S** (A 4.114,4/2:117), SD 51.12. On the various sounds, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,92), SD 8.10.

<sup>106</sup> *Sabba,vaṅka,dosa,nihita,ninnīta,kasāvo rājāraho rāja,bhoggo rañño aṅgan’t’eva saṅkham gacchati. Sabba,vaṅka,dosa,nihita*, “all deceitfulness [“crookedness”] and faults removed,” *ninnīta,kasāvo*, “purified of deficiencies.” On “purified of any deficiency,” *ninnīta,kasāvo*, we have *aninnīta,kasāvo* in **Paṃsu,dhovaka S** (A 3.100a), where it means “its debris still not removed” (A 3.100,2.2/1:254), SD 19.11. The phrase *rājāraho rāja,bhoggo rañño aṅgan’t’eva saṅkham gacchati* recurs (with a minor variation) at **A 3.94**, 1/1:244, **3.131**, 1/1:284, **4.112**, 2/2:113, **4.181**, 1/2:170: in all cases, *rājāraho hoti* etc.

<sup>107</sup> The parenthesized numbering in **bold italics** shows the counterparts to the parable elements in the preceding sections. On the renunciation pericope (§§13-14): see **(Ānanda) Subha S** (D 10,1.7) n, SD 40a.13.

<sup>108</sup> *Deva*, here in the sense of “devas by convention” (*sammati,deva*), ie kings. The other 2 types of *deva* are “gods by rebirth” (*upapatti,deva*) and “gods by purification” (*visuddhi,deva*), ie the buddhas, pratyeka buddhas and arhats. (Nc 307; KhpA 123).

<sup>109</sup> “Faith,” *saddhā*. There are 2 kinds of faith (*saddhā*): (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlaka,saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith. (M 2:170); (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravati,saddhā*), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320,8 401,23); also called *avecca-p,pasāda* (S 12.41,11/2:69). “Wise faith” is syn with (2). *Amūlaka* = “not seen, not heard, not suspected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy). **Ledi Sayadaw** speaks of 2 kinds: “ordinary faith” (*pakati saddhā*) and “faith through cultivation” (*bhāvanā saddhā*) (*The Manuals of Buddhism*, 1965:339 f). “Ordinary faith” is mainly based on giving and pious acts (which can be either wholesome or unwholesome, depending on the intention). “Faith through cultivation” is founded on mindfulness practice and meditation. **Gethin** also speaks of 2 kinds of faith: the cognitive and the affective (eg ERE: Faith, & Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963: 387): “Faith in its cognitive dimension is seen as concerning belief in propositions or statements of which one does not—or perhaps cannot—have knowledge proper (however that should be defined); cognitive faith is a mode of knowing in a different category from that knowledge. Faith in its affective dimension is a more straightforward positive response to trust or confidence towards something or somebody...the conception of *saddhā* in Buddhist writings appears almost, if not entirely affective [sic]; the cognitive element is completely secondary” (Gethin 2001:107; my emphases); further see J T Ergardt, *Faith and Knowledge in Early Buddhism*, Leiden, 1977:145.

<sup>110</sup> *Sambādhō gharavāso rajā,patho*. There is a wordplay on *sambādhā*, “crowded, stifling, narrow, full of hindrances,” which also refers to the sexual organ, male (V 1:216, 2:134) or female (V 4:259; Sn 609; J 1:61, 4:260).

What if I were to shave off my hair and beard, put on the saffron robes, and go forth from the household life into homelessness?’ [§12.2]

14.2 (3) Then, after some time, he abandons all his pile of wealth, little or great,<sup>111</sup> and circle of relatives, small or large, shaves off his hair and beard, puts on the saffron robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness.

14.3 Indeed, Aggivessana, to that extent the noble disciple **has come out into the open**.<sup>112</sup> [§12.3]

But here, Aggivessana, gods and humans have greed, that is to say, the 5 cords of sense-pleasures.<sup>113</sup>

## Training in moral virtue

**15 (4) MORAL CONDUCT.** The Tathagata leads him further in this, thus,<sup>114</sup>

‘Come, bhikshu, be **morally virtuous**. [§12.4]

15.2 Dwell restrained in the restraint of the Pātimokkha [the monastic code], possessed of proper conduct and resort.<sup>115</sup>

Having taken up the training-rules, he trains himself in them, seeing danger in the slightest faults.<sup>116</sup>

**16 (5)** Aggivessana, when the noble disciple is morally virtuous,

*he dwells restrained in the restraint of the Pātimokkha, possessed of proper conduct and resort;*

*having taken up the training-rules, he trains himself in them, seeing danger in the slightest faults.*

16.2 SENSE-RESTRAINT. The Tathagata *leads him further in this*, thus:

**(6)** ‘Come, bhikshu, **be guarded in your senses**.

(1) Seeing **a form** with the eye, *do not grasp the signs, do not grasp the details*.

For, if you dwell with the eye-faculty unrestrained,

bad, unwholesome states in the form of covetousness and displeasure would assail you.

So practise restraint towards it—guard the eye-faculty, keep the eye-faculty restrained.

(2) Hearing **a sound** with the ear, *do not grasp the signs, do not grasp the details*.

For, if you dwell with the ear-faculty unrestrained,

bad, unwholesome states in the form of covetousness and displeasure would assail you.

So practise restraint towards it—guard the ear-faculty, keep the ear-faculty restrained.

(3) Smelling **a smell** with the nose, *do not grasp the signs, do not grasp the details*.

For, if you dwell with the nose-faculty unrestrained,

bad, unwholesome states in the form of covetousness and displeasure would assail you.

So practise restraint towards it—guard the nose-faculty, keep the nose-faculty restrained.

(4) Tasting **a taste** with the tongue, *do not grasp the signs, do not grasp the details*.

For, if you dwell with the tongue-faculty unrestrained,

bad, unwholesome states in the form of covetousness and displeasure would assail you.

So practise restraint towards it—guard the tongue-faculty, keep the tongue-faculty restrained.

<sup>111</sup> On the accumulation of wealth, cf **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,1.23-24/2:85 f).

<sup>112</sup> *Ettāvatā kho aggi,vessana, ariya,sāvako abbhokāsa,gato hoti.*

<sup>113</sup> *Ettha gedhā hi aggi,vessana, yad idaṃ pañca,kāma,guṇā.*

<sup>114</sup> *Tam enaṃ tathāgato uttariṃ vineti.*

<sup>115</sup> *Go,cara*, lit “a cow’s habitual path or pasture.” Here it refers to 2 aspects of the renunciant’s life. In the Canon, it refers to places that are regarded as suitable for collecting almsfood (V 2:208). In this sense, *agocara* refers to places that are unsuitable for renunciants as resort (whether for alms or otherwise) (D 1:63 = It 118; M 1:33, S 5:-187; It 96; cf Dh 22). In Comys, *go,cara* refers to places suitable for meditation (Vism 127). We can also take *go,-cara* here in a psychological sense of *ārammaṇa*, ie, sense-objects. In other words, one “possessed of proper conduct and resort” (*ācāra,gocara,sampanna*) can also incl the meaning “accomplished in proper conduct of body and of mind.” Cf *gavesanā*, SD 43.10 (1.2.3).

<sup>116</sup> The Chin parallel simply speaks of purifying body, speech, and mind (MĀ 198 @ T1.758a29). This minor difference, however, often recurs, that is, where the Pali suttas describes how a renunciant is conscientious in keeping to the training rules, the Madhyama Āgama parallels highlight the purpose of observing the rules for the sake of developing bodily, verbal, and mental purity.

- (5) Feeling **a touch** with the body, *do not grasp the signs, do not grasp the details.*  
 For, if you dwell with the body-faculty unrestrained,  
 bad, unwholesome states in the form of covetousness and displeasure would assail you.  
 So practise restraint towards it—guard the body-faculty, keep the body-faculty restrained.
- (6) Thinking **a thought** with the mind, *do not grasp the signs, do not grasp the details.*  
 For, if you dwell with the mind-faculty unrestrained,  
 bad, unwholesome states in the form of covetousness and displeasure would assail you.  
 So practise restraint towards it—guard the mind-faculty, keep the mind-faculty restrained.

**17 (7) MODERATION IN FOOD.** Aggivessana, when the noble disciple is guarded in his sense-doors, the Tathagata *leads him further* in this, thus:

‘Come, bhikshu, **be moderate in food.**<sup>117</sup>

Wisely reflecting, he uses almsfood:

not for amusement,<sup>118</sup> not for intoxication,

not for fattening, not for beautifying,

but only for keeping this body going and enduring,

for ending hunger pangs,<sup>119</sup>

for the sake of supporting the holy life,<sup>120</sup> considering,

‘Thus I shall get rid of an old feeling, and not let a new feeling arise,

and so that I will be healthy and blameless, and live at ease.’<sup>121</sup>

**18 WAKEFULNESS.** Aggivessana, when [135] the noble disciple is moderate in food, the Tathagata *leads him further* in this, thus:

‘Come, bhikshu, **dwel devoted to wakefulness [vigilance].**<sup>122</sup>

During the day, while walking to and fro and sitting down,

we will purify the mind of obstructions.<sup>123</sup>

During the first watch of the night,<sup>124</sup> while walking to and fro and sitting down,

*we will purify the mind of obstructions.*

During the middle watch of the night, we will, *after mentally noting the time for rising,*<sup>125</sup>

<sup>117</sup> This reflection is found by itself at **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39,9/1:273), SD 10.13; **Sekha S** (M 53,10/1:355), SD 21.14; **Gaṇaka Moggallāna S** (M 107,5/3:2), SD 56.3; **Sāriputta Saddhi, vihārika S** (S 35.129/4:104), SD 103.1; **Rathōpama S** (S 35.239/4:176, 177), SD 55.14; **Apaṇṇaka Paṭipada S** (A 3.16/1:114), SD 74.11; (**Catukka) Aparihāna S** (A 4.37,4/2:40), SD 103.2; (**Taṇhā) Bhikkhuṇī S** (A 4.159,4/2:145), SD 10.14; **Nanda S** (A 8.9,-3/4:167); **Nm** 1:240, 241, 368× 2, 484; **Nc:Be** 292; **Dhs** 231; **Vbh** 249; **Pug** 25.

<sup>118</sup> This stock: M 1:355; A 2:40, 145; Dhs 1346; Pug 21; Vbh 249.

<sup>119</sup> Vism 1.92/32.

<sup>120</sup> Buddhaghosa distinguishes 2 kinds of holy life (*brahma, cariya*): the teaching (*sāsana*) as a whole, and the holy life of the path (*magga brahma, cariya*), ie sainthood (Vism 1.92/32).

<sup>121</sup> “Live at ease” (*phāsu, vihāra*) refers to bodily ease or comfort, free from pain and distraction, so that we could direct our mind to meditation.

<sup>122</sup> *Ehi tvam bhikkhu jāgariyam anuyutto viharāhi.*

<sup>123</sup> “Obstructions,” *āvaraṇā*, syn of *nīvaraṇā*, “mental hindrance.” See **Āvaraṇa Nīvaraṇa S** (S 46.38/5:94-96), SD 41.10.

<sup>124</sup> In the Buddha’s time, the day was divided into 2 parts: forenoon (dawn to noon) and afternoon (noon to sunset); and the night into 3 watches (*yāma*): the first watch (6.00-10.00 pm), the middle watch (10.00 pm-2.00 am) and the last watch (2.00 am-6.00 am) (DA 1:45 ff, 3:727; MA 1:255; SA 3:184; SnA 131 f; BA 8, 133. 298).

<sup>125</sup> After mentally noting the time for rising,” *uṭṭhāna, saññam manasi karitvā*: **D** 33/3:209; **M** 39,10/1:274, 53,5 +10/1:354 f; **S** 4.7/1:107, 35.120/4:105, 35.239/4:177, 35.243/4:184; **A** 3.16/1:114, 4.23/2:40, 4.58.9/4:87, 8.9.4/-4:168, 10.67.1/5:123, 10.68.1/5:126; **U** 8.5/84. When one is going to sleep is an example of “sleeping mindfully,” mentioned in **Sati, paṭṭhāna S** (M 10,8(7)/1:57). In **Pacalā S** (A 7.58), the Buddha exhorts, “Moggallāna, mindful and clearly comprehending, you should lie down lion-like on your right side, placing foot on foot, keeping in mind the thought that on awakening, you would get up quickly, thinking, ‘I will dwell without indulging in the pleasure of sleep, or in the pleasure of reclining, or in the pleasure of drowsiness’” (*na seyya, dukham na passa, sukham na mid-*

mindfully and clearly comprehending lie down,  
 lion-like<sup>126</sup> on our right side, one foot placed on the other.<sup>127</sup>  
 During the last watch of the night, while walking to and fro and sitting down,  
*we will purify the mind of obstructions.*<sup>128</sup>

**19** MINDFULNESS AND CLEAR COMPREHENSION. Aggivessana, when the noble disciple is devoted to wakefulness, the Tathagata leads him further in this, thus:

‘Come, bhikshu, be accomplished in **mindfulness and clear comprehension**.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (1) In going forward or going backward [stepping back],   | do so clearly comprehending.                |
| (2) In looking forward or looking back,   | do so clearly comprehending.                |
| (3) In bending or stretching,   | do so clearly comprehending.                |
| (4) In carrying his upper robe, outer robe and bowl,  | do so clearly comprehending.                |
| (5) In eating, drinking, chewing and tasting,   | do so clearly comprehending.                |
| (6) In voiding or peeing,   | do so clearly comprehending.                |
| (7) In walking, in standing, in sitting, in being asleep,<br>in being awake, <sup>129</sup> in talking, or in remaining silent, | do so clearly comprehending. <sup>130</sup> |

**20** Aggivessana, when the noble disciple is accomplished in mindfulness and clear comprehension, the Tathagata leads him further in this, thus:

SOLITARY LODGING. ‘Come, bhikshu, resort to **a secluded dwelling**: a forest, the foot of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a jungle grove, the open air, a heap of straw.<sup>131</sup>

**21** He resorts to *a secluded dwelling: a forest, the foot of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a jungle grove, the open air, a heap of straw.*

21.2 Returning from his alms-round, after his meal, he sits down, crosses his legs, holds his body upright, and establishes mindfulness before him.<sup>132</sup>

*dha,sukham anuyutto*) (A 7.58/4:87), SD 4.11. On this mental noting of rising up again, see also n at **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.4.14/2:135, 16.5.1/2:137), SD 9 §§4.40, 5.1.

<sup>126</sup> **Seyyā S** (A 4.244) mentions 4 sleeping-postures (*seyyā*): that of the ghosts (*petā*) (lying supine like a corpse); that of those who indulge in sense-pleasures (*kāma,bhogī*) (lying on the left side); that of the lion (lying on the right side); and that of the Tathāgata (lying while in the 4 dhyanas); the lion’s sleeping posture is described in detail (A 4.244/2:244 f), SD 76.6. Comy qu **Seyyā S** but places *kāma,bhogī,seyyā* first (MA 2:316). See **Avassuta Pariyāya S** (S 35.143) where the Buddha, after saying, “My back aches, so I will stretch it,” and lies in the lion posture (S 35.-143/ 4:184). Cf SA 1:78; UA 403; VbhA 345.

<sup>127</sup> Those who have tried to sleep in this manner, will notice it is very difficult to do so for long, unless we are sleep with some level of mental peace, or in dhyana. Dhyanic sleep is veritably the so called “sleeping meditation.”

<sup>128</sup> *Divasam caṅkamaena nisajjāya āvaraṇīyehi dhammehi cittaṃ parisodhehi. Rattiyā paṭhamam yāmam caṅkame-na nisajjāya āvaraṇīyehi dhammehi cittaṃ parisodhehi. Rattiyā majjhimam yāmam dakkhiṇena passena sīha,seyyam kappeyyāsi pāde pādā accādhāya sato sampajāno utṭhāna,saññam manasi karitvā rattiyā pacchimam yāmam paccuṭṭhāya caṅkamaena nisassāya āvaraṇīyehi dhammehi cittaṃ parisodhehīti.* This is stock: **Mahā Assa,pura S** (M 39,10/1:273 f), SD 10.13; **Sekha S** (M 53,10/1:355), SD 21.14; **Gaṇaka Moggallāna S** (M 107,7/3:3), SD 56.3; **Sāriputta Saddhi,vihārika S** (S 35.120,8/4:104 f), SD 103.1; **Rathōpama S** (S 35.239,8/4:177), SD 55.14; **Apaṇṇaka Paṭipada S** (A 3.16/1:114), SD 74.11; (**Catukka**) **Aparihāniya S** (A 4.37,3/2:40), SD 103.2; **Nanda S** (A 8.9,4/4:168), SD 84.18; **Tuvaṭṭaka Sutta Niddesa** ad Sn 926 (Nm 2:377,26); **Sāriputta Sutta Niddesa** ad Sn 964 (Nm 4:484,10) & ad Sn 972 (Nm 2:501,3); **Jhāna Vibhaṅga** (Vbh §519/249,24).

<sup>129</sup> “When asleep, when awake” *sutte jāgarite* (both loc of reference). Comy glosses *sutte* as *sayane*, “lying down, reclining.” See SD 13.1 (3.6.2).

<sup>130</sup> On this pericope, see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,8) n, SD 13.3.

<sup>131</sup> *Ehi tvam bhikkhu vivittam senāsanam bhaja, araññam rukkha,mūlam pabbatam kandaram giri,guham susānam vana,paṭham abbhokāsam palāla,puñjan’ti.* For details, see **Mahā Assa,pura S** (M 39,12.2) n, SD 10.13.

<sup>132</sup> Comy. He applies mindfulness towards his meditation subject; or he sets it up in the region of the mouth. As such, it is said in **Vibhaṅga**: “This mindfulness is set up, set up well, at the tip of the nose or at the sign of the mouth” (MA 2:216; DA 1:210; SA 1:238; Vbh §537/252). **M Abhinava Ṭikā**: The “sign of the mouth” (*mukha,-*

## Overcoming the mental hindrances

### 21.3 EFFECTIVE MEDITATION<sup>133</sup> [§12.5]

- (1) Abandoning **covetousness** with regard to the world,  
he dwells with a mind devoid of covetousness.  
He cleanses his mind of covetousness.
- (2) Abandoning **ill will and anger**,  
he dwells with a mind free of ill will,  
caring for the welfare of all living beings.  
He cleanses his mind of ill will and anger.
- (3) Abandoning **sloth and torpor**,  
he dwells with a mind devoid of sloth and torpor, mindful, alert, perceiving light.  
He cleanses his mind of sloth and torpor. [136]
- (4) Abandoning **restlessness and remorse**,  
he dwells undisturbed, his mind inwardly stilled.  
He cleanses his mind of restlessness and worry.
- (5) Abandoning **doubt**,<sup>134</sup>  
he dwells having crossed over doubt,  
with no perplexity with regard to wholesome mental states.  
He cleanses his mind of doubt.

## The 4 focuses of mindfulness

**22 (8)** Having given up these 5 mental hindrances, mental impurities that weaken wisdom,

- (1) he dwells<sup>135</sup> exertive, clearly comprehending, mindful,  
**observing [watching] the body in the body**,<sup>136</sup>  
removing<sup>137</sup> covetousness and displeasure [discontent]<sup>138</sup> in regard to the world,<sup>139</sup>
- (2) he dwells exertive, clearly comprehending, mindful,  
**observing feelings in the feelings**,  
removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world;
- (3) he dwells exertive, clearly comprehending, mindful,  
**observing the mind in the mind**,  
removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world;
- (4) he dwells exertive, clearly comprehending, mindful,  
**observing dharmas in the dharmas**,

*nimitta*) is the middle region of the upper lip, against which the air strikes when it comes out of the nose (MAT:Be 2:124). On the “location” of the breath, see SD 7.13 (2) esp (2.4).

<sup>133</sup> This whole section as in **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39), where it is followed by parables, and the 4 dhyanas (M 39,13.2), SD 10.13. Here, however, **Danta, bhūmi S** has, instead of the parables, the 4 satipatthanas [§22+n], followed by the 4 dhyanas [§23].

<sup>134</sup> These are not doubts seeking answers, but persistent doubts regarding the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, the threefold training (moral virtue, mental cultivation, wisdom), the past, the future, both past and future, and states arising through specific conditionality and dependent arising (Vbh 914/365).

<sup>135</sup> *Ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā, domanassam*. Here we find 4 of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'-indriya*) in action: see SD 13.1 (4.2).

<sup>136</sup> “Observing the body in the body” (*kāye kāyānupassī*). See SD 13.1 (3.4).

<sup>137</sup> *Vineyya* can mean “should remove” (as pot, like *vineyya*, Sn 590) or as “having removed” (as ger, like *vinayitvā*, Pm 1:244), and both senses apply in Satipaṭṭhāna S. U Silananda similarly ends the sentence with “removing covetousness and grief in the world” (1990:177); also 1990:22-25. See SD 13.1 (4.2c) above.

<sup>138</sup> “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā, domanassam*, alt trs: “desire and discontent,” “desiring and disliking,” or “longing and loathing.” Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders it as “hankering and fretting [in regard to the world].” See SD 13.1 (4.2) above.

<sup>139</sup> “World” (*loka*). See SD 13.1 (4.2.4).

removing covetousness and displeasure in regard to the world.<sup>140</sup>

### Letting go of the world

**23** Aggivessana, just as the elephant tamer, having sunk **a great post**<sup>141</sup> into the ground, binds the forest elephant by the neck to it, [§12.5]

*so as to subdue his habits of the forest,*

*so as to subdue his memories and thoughts of the forest,*

*so as to subdue his distress, weariness and fever for the forest,*

*and get him to delight being near the village, so that he feels natural being amongst humans,* [§23.5]

23.2 even so, Aggivessana, **these 4 focuses of mindfulness** are the leashes<sup>142</sup> for the noble disciple's mind,

for the subduing of his conduct [habits] of the household life,<sup>143</sup>

for the subduing of his thoughts rooted towards the household life,<sup>144</sup>

for the subduing of his distress, fatigue, and fever for the household life,<sup>145</sup>

for the sake of attaining the true way and realizing nirvana.<sup>146</sup>

### Letting go of thoughts

**24 (9)** Then, the Tathāgata *leads him further* in this, thus:

‘Come, bhikshu,

(1) dwell observing **the body in the body,**

and do not think (any) thought<sup>147</sup> regarding *the body*;<sup>148</sup>

<sup>140</sup> As already noted at §21.3 (overcoming the mental hindrances), in **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39), it is followed by parables, and then the 4 dhyanas (M 39,13.2), SD 10.13. Here, however, **the 4 satipatthanas** [§24] replaces the parables, and then the 4 dhyanas follow [§25]. In other words, here satipatthana is used to cultivate dhyana: see **Sati-patthāna S** (M 10) @ SD 13.1 (4.3.2). See Intro (2.2.2).

<sup>141</sup> The Pali, Chinese, and Tibetan versions agree in comparing the practice of satipatthana to a strong post to which the elephant trainer binds the forest elephant [§12.5], explaining that the function of the 4 satipatthanas is to overcome thoughts related to the household life. This explanation supports the Madhyama Āgama's presentation, since if the practice of satipatthana were to take place after the 5 hindrances have already been removed, there would be little need for it to perform the function of overcoming thoughts related to the household life. MA 4:199,12 explains that the expression “habits [related to] the household life” [cf §23.2] refers to habits based on the 5 sensual pleasures (*gehasita, silānaṃ 'ti pañca, kāma, guṇa, nissita, silānaṃ*). With the removal of the hindrances, there would be no need for concern with these sensual pleasures.

<sup>142</sup> “Leashes,” *upanibandhana*, ie *upa* (“close up to”) + *ni* (“down”) + *bandhana* (“tying”): “tying, fastening, what ties or connects, rope.” From vb *upanibandhati* (BHS *upanibadhnāti*; Skt, “to compose”) “to connect, attach to.”

<sup>143</sup> *Gehasitānañ c'eva silānaṃ abhinimmanāya.*

<sup>144</sup> *Gehasitānañ c'eva sara, saṅkappānaṃ abhinimmanāya.*

<sup>145</sup> *Gehasitānañ c'eva daratha, kilamatha, pariāhānaṃ abhinimmanāya.*

<sup>146</sup> *Ñāyassa adhiḡamāya nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya.*

<sup>147</sup> “Thought” (*vitakka*): This is clearly the keyword in this para. The Chin parallel here also in Chin version (MĀ 198 @ T1.758b15) also states that satipatthana practice should be done free from thinking. M:Ee 3:136,21 and M:Se 3:269,16 instruct: “Do not think a thought regarding the ⟨body | feeling | mind | dharma⟩” (*mā ca kāy'upasaṃhitam... mā vedan'upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ... mā citt'upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ... mā dhamm'upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*). M:Be 3:175,20 and M:Ce 3:316,16 state for all 4 satipatthanas: “Do not think a thought related to sensuality” (*mā ca kāmūpasamhitam vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*). The Skt work Pañca, vimśati, sāhasrikā Prajñā, pāramitā preserves a similar instruction regarding the body contemplation: *na ca kaya, sahaḡatan vitarkan vitarkayati*. (Dutt 1934:204,2). Pratyutpanna, buddha, saṃmukha, vāsthita, samādhi Sūtra also records the instruction not to think any thoughts to all 4 *smṛtyūpasthānā*. (Harrison 1978b:130,13, also 155,22), tr in Harrison 1990:125+144). See foll n: Either reading *kāmūpasamhitam* (“connected with sensuality,” Be Ce) or *kāyūpasamhitam* (“connected with the body,” Ee Se) is acceptable here, as the import here is that no “thinking,” but “observing [contemplating]” (*anupassanā*), should occur in any of the 4 satipatthanas. When satipatthana (focus of mindfulness) is fully established, all thoughts cease: see esp **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9) on the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana: “if he has any previous sense-desires, it disappears” (D 9,10.3), SD 7.14; also

- (2) dwell observing **feelings in feelings**,  
and *do not think (any) thought* regarding *feelings*;  
(3) dwell observing **the mind in the mind**,  
and *do not think (any) thought* regarding *the mind [thoughts]*;  
(4) dwell observing **dharmas in the dharmas**,  
and *do not think (any) thought* regarding *dharmas [realities]*. [§§12.8-10]

### The 3 dhyanas<sup>149</sup>

**25** <sup>150</sup>With the stilling of initial application and sustained application, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he enters and dwells in **the second dhyana**, free from initial application and sustained application, accompanied by zest and joy, born of concentration.<sup>151</sup>

25.2 And with the fading away of zest, he dwells equanimous. Mindful and clearly comprehending, he experiences joy with the body.

**26** He enters and dwells in **the third dhyana**, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’

26.5 With the abandoning of joy and abandoning of pain, and with the earlier disappearance of pleasure and displeasure, he attains and dwells in **the fourth dhyana** that is neither painful nor pleasant, and with *mindfulness fully purified by equanimity*. [§§12.11-12]

### The 3 knowledges

(1) RECOLLECTION OF PAST LIVES

**27** With his concentrated mind thus purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects,<sup>152</sup> pliant, malleable, steady and utterly unshakable, he directs it to **the knowledge of the recollection of past lives**.<sup>153</sup>

He recollects manifold past existence, that is to say, 1 birth, 2 births, 3 births, 4 births, 5 births, 10 births, 20 births, 30 births, 40 births, 50 births,

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**Piṇḍolya S** (S 22.80,20/3:93,21), SD 28.9a & its Chin parallel SĀ 272/T2.99.72a24. See Analayo 2006:12-13+n32 & 2011:719 + n167). Cf M:ÑB 1338 n1177 for pref of reading *kāmū~*. See also **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10), which apparently shows a similar split between satipatthana before and after samadhi (S 47.10/5:155,31-157,20), SD 24.2. See foll n & (2.2.4.4).

<sup>148</sup> Here, and in the other satipatthanas below, the preferred reading follows Ee & Se: *mā ca kāy’upasaṃhitam... mā vedan’upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ...mā citt’upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ...mā dhamm’upasaṃhitam vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*: see prec n & (2.2.4.3).

<sup>149</sup> This section on the 4 dhyanas, as in **Kandaraka S** (M 51,21-23), SD 32.8.

<sup>150</sup> On the omission of the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana here, see Intro (3).

<sup>151</sup> *So vitakka,vicāranam vupasamā ajjhattam sampasādanam cetaso ekodi,bhāvam avitakkaṃ avicāram samā-dhi,jam pīti,sukham dutiyam jhānam upasampajja viharati*. The 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana is known as “the noble silence” (*ariya,-tunhī,bhāva*) because within it initial application and sustained application (thinking and discursion, *vitakka,vicāra*) cease, and with their cessation, speech cannot occur. (S 2:273); cf S 4:293 where *vitakka* and *vicāra* are called verbal formation (*vacī,sāṅkhāra*), the mental factors responsible for speech: see **Kolita S** (S 21.1/2:273 f), SD 24.12b & **Dutiya Jhāna S** (S 40.2/4:263 f), SD 24.12a. In **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26,4/1:161), SD 1.11, the Buddha exhorts the monks when assembled to “either speak on the Dharma or observe the noble silence” (ie either talk Dharma or meditate).

<sup>152</sup> *Upakkilesa*: to be distinguished from *kilesa*, “defilement.” Perhaps the 10 “imperfections of insight” listed in Vism 20.105 ff are meant here, but potential hindrances at a certain stage of insight meditation.

<sup>153</sup> *Pubbe,nivāsanānussati*, lit “recollection of past abiding [existence].” The remainder of this is expanded into 4 sections in **Brahma,jāla S** (D 1,1.31-34/1:13-), SD 25.3 (76.3) and 3 sections in **Sampasādaniya S** (D 27,15-17/3:-107-112), SD 10.12. In both cases, each explains how the eternalist view arose.

100 births, 1,000 births, 100,000 births,  
 many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion,  
 many aeons of cosmic contraction and expansion, 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.’  
 Thus,<sup>154</sup> bhikshus, he recollects his manifold past lives in their modes and details.

(2) HOW BEINGS FARE ACCORDING TO THEIR KARMA

**28** *With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady and utterly unshakable,*  
 he directs it to **the knowledge of the passing away and re-arising of beings.**<sup>155</sup>  
 He sees—by means of the divine eye [clairvoyance],<sup>156</sup> purified and surpassing the human—  
 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 in accordance with their karma:  
 ‘These beings, alas, sirs—who were endowed with evil conduct of body, speech, and mind,  
 who reviled the noble ones,  
 held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—  
 with the body’s breaking up, after death,  
 have re-arisen in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell.  
 But these beings, sirs—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, and mind,  
 who did not revile the noble ones,  
 who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—  
 with the body’s breaking up, after death, have reappeared in a happy destination, in heaven.’  
 Thus, by means of the divine eye, thus purified, surpassing the human, he sees beings passing away  
 and re-arising, and understands how they fare according to their karma.  
 Thus, too, bhikshus, is the exertion fruitful, the striving fruitful.

(3) THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DESTRUCTION OF MENTAL INFLUXES

**29 (10)** *With his mind thus concentrated, purified, and bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady and utterly unshakable,*  
 he directs it to **the knowledge of the destruction of the mental influxes.**<sup>157</sup>

He knows, as it really is,            ‘This is suffering’;  
 He knows, as it really is,            ‘This is the arising of suffering’;

<sup>154</sup> *Iti.*

<sup>155</sup> *Cutūpapāta ñāṇa*, or “knowledge of rebirth according to karma” (*yathā,kammūpaga ñāṇa*), or “the divine eye” (*dibba,cakkhu*): see foll n.

<sup>156</sup> *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.

<sup>157</sup> *Āsava-k,khaya,ñāṇa*. The term *āsava* (lit “cankers”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints”, RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, bad (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence or becoming (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’-āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16,2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*oghā*) and “yokes” (*yogā*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [43] is prob older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 33,1.10(20)/3:216; M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict under *āsava*.

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| He knows, as it really is, | ‘This is the ending of suffering’;                           |
| He knows, as it really is, | ‘This is the path to the ending of suffering’ <sup>158</sup> |
| He knows, as it really is, | ‘These are mental influxes ( <i>āsava</i> )’;                |
| He knows, as it really is, | ‘This is the arising of influxes’;                           |
| He knows, as it really is, | ‘This is the ending of influxes’;                            |
| He knows, as it really is, | ‘This is the path to the ending of influxes.’ <sup>159</sup> |
- 29.2 His mind, thus knowing, thus seeing, is released from
- |   |                   |
|---|-------------------|
| (1) the influx of sensual desire,           | <i>kām’āsava</i>  |
| (2) the influx of existence,                | <i>bhav’āsava</i> |
| (3) the influx of ignorance. <sup>160</sup> | <i>āvijjāsava</i> |
- With release, there is the knowledge, ‘Released (am I)!’  
 He knows that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life has been lived, done is that which needed to be done.  
 There is nothing further beyond this.’<sup>161</sup> [§12.14]

### The arhat

**30** That monk endures cold and heat, hunger and thirst, gadflies, the touch of mosquitoes and creeping things.<sup>162</sup>

30.2 He has grown patient with words and speech that are ill-spoken and unwelcome, **[137]** with painful feelings that have arisen in his body, sharp, piercing, racking, unpleasant, disagreeable, taxing on the breaths [sapping life itself].<sup>163</sup>

30.3 cleansed and freed of all impurities that is lust, hate and delusion<sup>164</sup>—  
 he is worthy of offerings,<sup>165</sup> worthy of hospitality,<sup>166</sup> worthy of gifts,<sup>167</sup> worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, a supreme field of merit for the world.<sup>168</sup>

## CONCLUSION: HOW TRUE MONASTICS DIE

### How monastics die untamed

**31** If, Aggivessana, the royal elephant were to die in old age, **untamed and undisciplined**,<sup>169</sup>

<sup>158</sup> These 4 statements on suffering pose an interesting problem: they are not called “noble truths” here (nor in **Ariya Pariyesanā S**, M 26,43). Elsewhere, **K R Norman** (a non-Buddhist scholar) remarks that these 4 statements, which also likewise appear in **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,42/1:249), but are not referred to as the noble truths about suffering, “and since they appear to be subordinate to the four statements about the *āsavas*, it is possible that the statements about misery are a later addition [here], which led to a parallel, but inappropriate, set of four statements being evolved about the *āsavas*, to provide a symmetry” (Norman 1990:26). For a discussion on the formulation of the noble truths, see Norman 1982:377-91 & also Schmithausen 1981:205.

<sup>159</sup> As in **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26.42), SD 1. On the application of the 4 noble truth template to both *dukkha* and to *āsava* here, see Analayo 2003:224 n28 + SD 17.4 (8.4)

<sup>160</sup> See §26 n on “mental influxes.”

<sup>161</sup> *Nāparam itthatāya*: lit. “there is no more of ‘thusness.’” See **Mahā, nidāna S** (M 15,22), SD 5.17.

<sup>162</sup> *So hoti, bhikkhu khamo sītassa uñhassa jīghacchāya pipāsāya dāmsamakasavātātapa, sirimsapa, samphassānam.*

<sup>163</sup> See **Sabba, kamma, jaha S** (U 3.1.4/21), SD 37.3 n.

<sup>164</sup> *Sabba, rāga, dosa, moha, nihata, ninnīta, kasāvo*. See M 3:137,3, 3:243,19 (MA 5:54,16) ≈ A 1:254,6.

<sup>165</sup> *Āhuneyyo*. That is, worthy of receiving sacrifices or offerings. The Skt cognate *āhavanīya* refers to that which was offered as an oblation as in *āhuneyy’aggī*, one of the 3 brahminical sacrificial fires (the one in the east).

<sup>166</sup> *Pāhuneyyo*: see **Love**, SD 38.4 (6.2).

<sup>167</sup> *Dakkhineyyo*. Traditionally refers to honoraria or gifts to teachers after completion of tutelage under them. Specifically refers to offerings made for the benefit of the departed by way of dedication of merits to them.

<sup>168</sup> *Āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhineyyo añjali, karaṇīyo anuttaram puñña-k, khettaṃ lokassāti*. This is the closing of the recollection on the sangha: see SD 15.10, esp (4).

- then, he would be reckoned simply as an old royal elephant that had died an untamed death.<sup>170</sup>  
 If, Aggivessana, the royal elephant were to die in middle age, *untamed and undisciplined*,  
 then, he would be reckoned simply as a middle-aged royal elephant that had died *an untamed death*.  
 If, Aggivessana, the royal elephant were to die young, *untamed and undisciplined*,  
 then, he would be reckoned simply as a young royal elephant that had died *an untamed death*.
- 31.2 Even so, Aggivessana, if an elder monk were to die **without having destroyed the influxes**,  
 then he would be reckoned simply as an elder monk who had died an untamed death.  
 If, Aggivessana, a middle-aged<sup>171</sup> monk were to die *without having destroyed the influxes*,  
 then he would be reckoned simply as a middle-aged monk who had died *an untamed death*.  
 If, Aggivessana, a novice monk were to die *without having destroyed the influxes*,  
 then he would be reckoned simply as a novice monk who had died *an untamed death*.

### How monastics die tamed

- 32 If, Aggivessana, the royal elephant were to die in old age, **well tamed and disciplined**,<sup>172</sup>  
 then, he would be reckoned as an old royal elephant that had died a tamed death.<sup>173</sup>  
 If, Aggivessana, the royal elephant were to die in middle age, *well tamed and disciplined*,  
 then, he would be reckoned as a middle-aged royal elephant that had died *a tamed death*.  
 If, Aggivessana, the royal elephant were to die young, *well tamed and disciplined*,  
 then, he would be reckoned as a young royal elephant that had died *a tamed death*.
- 32.2 Even so, Aggivessana, if an elder monk were to die **with influxes destroyed**,  
 then, he would be reckoned an elder monk who had died a tamed death.  
 Even so, Aggivessana, if a middle-aged monk were to die *with influxes destroyed*,  
 then, he would be reckoned a middle-aged monk who had *died a tamed death*.  
 Even so, Aggivessana, if a novice monk were to die *with influxes destroyed*,  
 then, he would be reckoned a novice monk who had *died a tamed death*.”  
 The Blessed One said this. The novice Aciravata joyfully approved of the Blessed One’s word. [138]

— evaṃ —

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<sup>169</sup> *Mahallako ce’pi aggi,vessana rañño nāgo adanto avinīto kālaṃ,karoti.*

<sup>170</sup> *Adantam,araṇaṃ mahallako rañño nāgo kālaṅkato tv-eva saṅkhaṃ gacchati.*

<sup>171</sup> It is possible to say “middling,” a rare usage for “middle-aged” (OED).

<sup>172</sup> *Mahallako ce’pi aggivessana rañño nāgo sudanto suvinīto kālaṃ,karoti.*

<sup>173</sup> *Danta,marāṇaṃ mahallako rañño nāgo kālaṅ,kato tv-eva saṅkhaṃ gacchati..*

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