

16.10 (Tika) Saṅgārava Sutta

The (Threes) Discourse to Saṅgārava | A 3.60
or, (Paṭihāriya) Saṅgārava Sutta The Discourse to Saṅgārava (on miracles)

Theme: The greatest miracle is education
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2005, 2024

1 The brahmin youth Saṅgārava

Saṅgārava was a deeply learned brahmin youth of Caṇḍala, kappa in Kosala.¹ The Aṅguttara Commentary says that he was an overseer of repairs of old buildings in Rājagaha (*rājagaha, nagare jīṇṇa, paṭi-saṅkharāṇa, kāraṇa āyuttaka, brāhmaṇo*, AA 2:266). The Majjhima Commentary says that Saṅgārava was the youngest of the Bhāradvājas, brothers of Dhānañjānī's husband.² It may be this very same Saṅgārava who is mentioned several times in the Aṅguttara Nikāya (A 1:168 f, 3:230 f, 5:232, 252).³

Saṅgārava visits the Buddha and states that a brahmin brings more benefits than a wanderer (*parib-bājaka*) because he not only performs sacrifices himself, but makes others do likewise. The Buddha says that the appearance of a Tathāgata in the world is of benefit to many beings. Ānanda asks Saṅgārava which of the two practices appears to him the simpler and of greater benefit. Saṅgārava evades a straight answer, even though being asked three times.

The Buddha then tells him of the miracles (*pāṭihāriya*) of psychic marvels (*iddhi*), of thought-reading (*ādesanā*) and of teaching (*anusāsanā*) possessed by monks, and describes them in detail. Saṅgārava admits that “the miracle of teaching” (*anusāsanī pāṭihāriya*) appeals most to him. The Buddha tells him that numerous monks in the Order possess all the three miraculous powers. (A 3.60/1:168 ff)

2 Miracles

2.1 The (Paṭihāriya) Saṅgārava Sutta (A 3.60)⁴ speaks of the 3 kinds of miracles (*pāṭihāriyā*): those of psychic powers (*iddhi, pāṭihāriya*), of thought-reading (*ādesanā, pāṭihāriya*), and of instruction (*anusāsanī, pāṭihāriya*). The Sutta opens with the brahmin Saṅgārava meeting the Buddha and claiming that

We sacrifice and cause others to sacrifice ... so both engage in a meritorious practice, the offering of sacrifice that extends to many people. But when one leaves the household life for the homeless life...he attains nirvana for himself alone. This being the case, he only engages in a meritorious deed involving only one person ...
(A 3.60/1:168), SD 16.10

The Buddha then replies that the Tathagata arises in the world for the benefit of the masses, teaching others the liberating truth that he himself has discovered, benefitting countless people. Ānanda then counter-questions Saṅgārava:

¹ On other brahmins named Saṅgārava, see SD 50.41 (1.3).

² The brahminee Dhānañjānī was married to the eldest of the Bhāradvāja, but whose name is not mentioned. The other Bhāradvāja brothers were Akkosaka Bhāradvāja, Asur'indaka Bhāradvāja, and Bīlaṅgika Bhāradvāja (S 1:160 ff; SA 1:229 f), which also say their first-names were given by the Council elders (*saṅgītikārā*); MA 3:452 f; Sundarika Bhāradvāja (DhA 4:163); Piṅgala Bhāradvāja (MA 3:452).

³ For details see (Nīvaraṇā) Saṅgāravā S (S 46.55), SD 3.12 (1).

⁴ A 3.60,4-6/1:171 (SD 16.10). Chinese **Madhyama Āgama** parallel, 傷歌羅經 *Shānggēluó Jīng*, is at MĀ 143 = T1.650b11-652a06.

Which of these two practices appeals to you as being simpler and less harmful, and giving richer fruit and greater benefit? (A 3.60/1:169)

2.2 Saṅgārava avoids a direct answer (like Mahā Brahmā in the Kevaḍḍha Sutta)⁵ by thrice replying to Ānanda: “I must honour and praise those like Master Gotama and Master Ānanda!” The Buddha then decides to “release Saṅgārava from that situation” and asks him what the courtiers at the royal palace are discussing that day. To this question, Saṅgārava replies:

The topic of conversation is this, Master Gotama: ‘Formerly there were fewer monks but there were more who performed miracles; but now there are more monks, but fewer who perform miracles.’ (A 1:170)

The Buddha replies by speaking on the 3 miracles but gives a more detailed account of the second miracle than in the Kevaḍḍha Sutta. This is especially interesting because it explains how “someone with faith⁶ and devotion”⁷ is able to be an informed eye-witness of such a mind-searching psychic display by another, that is,

- (1) by means of a sign or clue (*nimitta*);
- (2) by hearing the voices of humans, non-humans or devas;
- (3) by listening to the sounds of a person’s thought-vibrations⁸ [mental chatter] (*vitakka, vipphāra, -sadda*);
- (4) by mentally penetrating the direction of his mental dispositions when he is in a thought-free samadhi.

2.3 The Aṅguttara Commentary explains how each of these methods work:

- (1) by “**sign**” is meant a revelation one receives from a deva who has supernormal knowledge of others’ minds;
- (2) through directly hearing the voices of those beings;
- (3) the 3rd method depends on the subtle sounds produced by the thoughts that are penetrated by the divine ear itself;
- (4) for one in a thought-free samadhi, the mind-reader can only predict, on the basis of the meditator’s mental disposition, the thoughts he would think on emerging from the meditation.

However, the text actually reads as “but, having attained samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering, one knows the mind of another with his own, thus:

⁵ D 11,81-83/1:221 (SD 1.7).

⁶ “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). **Gethin** 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, the cognitive element is completely secondary.” (Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:107; my emphases).

⁷ D 11.4, 6/1:212 f @ SD 1.7.

⁸ Bodhi’s tr.

‘By the way the mental formations of this good man are inclined, the depth of that mind will think such and such a thought’.” [§5(iv)] (AA 2:269-271)

Here “samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering” can refer to the second, the third or the fourth dhyana, especially the last, where psychic powers (such as thought-reading or mind-reading)⁹ really take effect.¹⁰ However, it is impossible to read such a meditator’s mind as his thinking is suspended during dhyana. It makes better sense to understand that “mental chatter” or “subverbalization” is meant here.¹¹

At the end of the exposition, Saṅgārava takes refuge in the 3 jewels for life.

2.4 The Pāṭihāriya Saṅgārava Sutta should be studied with **the (Pāṭihāriya) Mahaka Sutta** (S 4.14), which records how Mahaka, on account of his miraculous power, impresses Citta the householder, proposing to support him with his basic needs. Mahaka, however, politely rejects the offer and leaves Macchikā,saṅḍa (where Citta lives) for good.¹² The (Pāṭihāriya) Saṅgārava Sutta should also be studied in connection with **the Kevaḍḍha Sutta** (D 13)¹³ that deals with the same three miracles, in more briefly.

3 The miracle of instruction (education)

3.1 The highlight of **the (Pāṭihāriya) Saṅgārava Sutta** is when the protagonist, Saṅgārava declares, in agreement with the Buddha, that the greatest of miracles is that of instruction (*anusāsani,pāṭihāriya*), which is defined in the Sutta as follows:

You should think in this way, not in that way.
Direct your attention to this, not to that.
Let go of this; dwell, cultivating that.

*Evaṃ vitakketha, mā evaṃ vitakkayittha.
Evaṃ manasi karoṭṭha, mā evaṃ manasākattha.
Idaṃ pajahatha, idaṃ upasampajja viharatha.*

[§6 (3)]

3.2 One the best examples of the miracle of instruction, if not its locus classicus, is that of Aṅguli,māla’s conversion from being a serial killer into a liberated saint.¹⁴ This important statement reminds us of the famous English saying that “knowledge is power,” taken in a wholesome sense.¹⁵

Saṅgārava’s explanation for his understanding why *education* is the greatest of miracles, too, is worth noting. Of each of the first two—the psychic miracles—he says:

⁹ On the differences between mind-reading and thought-reading, see SD 27.5a (5.3+5.5.4.4).

¹⁰ See eg **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,81-94/1:71-82), SD 8.10. See also SD 17.7 (6.2).

¹¹ See SD 27.5 (5.5.5.2).

¹² S 4.14/4:288-291 @ SD 27.2.

¹³ D 11,4-11/1:213 f @ SD 1.7.

¹⁴ See **Aṅguli,māla S** (M 86/2:97-105), SD 5.11.

¹⁵ Orig in Latin, **scientia potentia est**, which the Elizabethan philosopher, Francis Bacon, in his *Meditationes Sacrae* (1597), writes as “For also knowledge itself is power,” which in modern times is often paraphrased as “knowledge is power.” The phrase implies that knowledge or education increases our potential or abilities. It also refers an excuse for not sharing information, since some advantage may be gotten by the use or manipulating of knowledge. Bacon was probably paraphrasing Proverbs 24:5: “A wise man is strong; yea, a man of knowledge increaseth strength” (KJV) or “A wise man is mightier than a strong man, and a man of knowledge than he who has strength” (RSV). Another possible meaning for this phrase can be found in philosophical idealism: if the world exists solely as the content of consciousness, then knowledge itself can be used to directly manipulate the content of reality. (Based on Wikipedia.)

In the case of this miracle, master Gotama,
only the one who performs it, experiences it: it belongs only to the one who performs it.¹⁶

Indeed, master Gotama, this miracle seems like it is related to the false dharma of magic [illusion] [§6.3(1)]

3.3 Only the miracle-worker knows how the miracle works, and what it really is. As such, it is only really useful to the miracle-worker. The believer would still be in ignorance of what really is going on, and this will not be to his advantage in the end. Indeed, we can never really distinguish between a “real” miracle and a “false” miracle, since all miracles are *illusory* in the end. We make out what we are conditioned to do so whether we see a “miracle” or an everyday event. As such, a good education and true knowledge, is the greatest of miracles, as it makes us not only understand what miracles are really about, but to look beyond them into true reality and spiritual liberation.¹⁷

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(Tika) Saṅgārava Sutta

The (Threes) Discourse to Saṅgārava

A 3.60

Saṅgārava thinks going forth is self-centred

1 Then, **the brahmin Saṅgārava** approached the Blessed One, saluted him and exchanged friendly words and cordial greetings. When the friendly greetings were concluded, he sat down at one side.

Seated thus at one side, the brahmin Saṅgārava said this to the Blessed One:

1.2 “We are brahmīns, master Gotama. We offer sacrifices and have others offer sacrifices.¹⁸ Now, good Gotama, one who offers sacrifices and have others offer sacrifices, both are engaged in the way of merit for many persons,¹⁹ that is to say, on account of the sacrifices.

1.3 But, master Gotama, one of this or that family who goes forth from home into homelessness, he tames himself **alone**, he calms himself alone, he attains nirvana for himself *alone*.

In that case, this is engaged in the way of merit for only one person, that is to say, on account of the going forth.”

Renouncing for the good of the many

1.4 “In that case, brahmin, I will ask you in return. Please answer as you think fit.

Now, brahmin, what do you think of this?

1.5 There arises in the world **the Tathagata** [Thus Come], arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-gone, knower of the worlds, unexcelled trainer of tamable persons, teacher of beings human and divine, awakened, blessed.

He says thus:

¹⁶ *Yo ca naṃ karoti so ca naṃ paṭisaṃvedeti, yo ca naṃ karoti tassa c’eva taṃ hoti.*

¹⁷ For a detailed study, see **Miracles**, SD 27.5a.

¹⁸ *Yaññaṃ yajāma pi yajāpema pi.*

¹⁹ “For the sake of many persons,” *aneka,sārīrikaṃ*, lit “concerning many bodies” (CPD).

‘Come! This is the path, the way following which I have myself realized the highest consummation of the holy life that I now proclaim.

Come! You too follow this path, this way and dwell having accomplished, having realized *the highest consummation of the holy life*.

1.6 Thus indeed this teacher teaches the Dharma and others, too, practise in that way. [169] And of those who do so, there are many hundreds, many thousands, even many hundreds of thousands.

1.7 What do you think, brahmin?

That being the case, is only one person engaged in the way of merit, or many persons, that is to say on account of going forth?”

“That being the case, master Gotama, **many persons** are engaged in the way of merit, that is to say on account of going forth!”

Saṅgārava evades Ānanda’s question

2 When this was said, the venerable **Ānanda** said this to the brahmin Saṅgārava:

“Brahmin, of these two practices [ways], which do you regard as less troublesome and less difficult, and as giving greater fruit and greater benefit?”²⁰

2.2 When this was said, the brahmin **Saṅgārava** said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“I must honour, I must praise those of the likes of master Gotama and master Ānanda.”²¹

2.3 For **the 2nd time**, the venerable Ānanda said this to the brahmin Saṅgārava:

“I do not ask you, brahmin, whom you must honour or must praise. I ask you thus:

‘*Brahmin, of these two practices, which do you regard as less troublesome and less difficult, and as giving greater fruit and greater benefit?*’”

2.4 For the 2nd time, the brahmin Saṅgārava said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“I must honour, I must praise those of the likes of master Gotama and master Ānanda.”

2.5 For **the 3rd time**, the venerable Ānanda said this to the brahmin Saṅgārava:

“I do not ask you, brahmin, whom you must honour or must praise. I ask you thus:

‘*Brahmin, of these two practices [ways], which do you regard as less troublesome and less difficult, and as giving greater fruit and greater benefit?*’”

2.6 For the 3rd time, the brahmin Saṅgārava said this to the venerable Ānanda:

“I must honour, I must praise those of the likes of master Gotama and master Ānanda.” [170]

The Buddha intervenes

3 Then it occurred to **the Blessed One**:

“Even for the 3rd time, this brahmin Saṅgārava, on being asked by Ānanda regarding a reasonable question,²² evades the issue and does not reply. What now if I were to free the situation?”²³

3.2 Then the Blessed One said this to the brahmin Saṅgārava:

²⁰ *Imāsaṃ te brāhmaṇa dvinnam paṭipadānaṃ katamā paṭipadā khamati appa-ṭ, ṭhatarā ca appa, samārambhatarā ca maha-p, phalatarā ca mah’ānisaṃsatarā ca?*

²¹ Saṅgārava evades because he does not want to admit that his earlier statement is thus wrong, Comy: He does not want to answer. So he tries to lead the discussion away with words of praise.” (AA 2:267,25-32)

²² *Saha, dhammika pañha:* see foll n.

²³ Here it is Ānanda who initiated the “reasonable” question; hence, there is no threat of head-shattering, as in **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3), which is asked by the Buddha (D 3,1.20/1:94), SD 21.3 (4.2).

“What now, brahmin, might be the topic of conversation that has arisen amongst the rajah’s courtiers when they assembled in the palace today?”

3.3 “This, master Gotama, is the topic of conversation that has arisen amongst the rajah’s courtiers when they assembled in the palace today:

‘Formerly there were fewer monks, but there were more who displayed superhuman feats of psychic miracles.’²⁴

However, now there are more monks, but fewer who display superhuman feats of psychic miracles.²⁵

This, master Gotama, was the topic of conversation that has arisen amongst the rajah’s courtiers when they assembled in the palace today.”

The 3 kinds of miracles

4 “Brahmin, there are these **3 kinds of miracles**. What are the three?²⁶

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) The miracle of psychic power | <i>iddhi, pāṭihāriya;</i> |
| (2) The miracle of thought-reading | <i>ādesanā, pāṭihāriya;</i> |
| (3) The miracle of instruction | <i>anusāsani, pāṭihāriya.</i> |

4.2 (1) And what, brahmin, is **the miracle of psychic power** (*iddhi, pāṭihāriya*)?

Here, brahmin, a certain person enjoys various kinds of psychic powers:

Having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one.

He appears and vanishes.

He goes unhindered through walls, through ramparts, and through mountains as if through space.

He dives in and out of the earth as if it were water.

He walks on water without sinking as if it were earth.

Sitting cross-legged, he flies through the air like a winged bird.

With his hand he touches and strokes even the sun and the moon, so mighty, so powerful.

He has power over his body up to as far as the Brahmā worlds.

This, brahmin, is the miracle of **psychic power**.

5 (2) And what, brahmin, is **the miracle of thought-reading** (*ādesanā, pāṭihāriya*)?²⁷

i. THROUGH BODY LANGUAGE

Here, brahmin, a certain person, by means of a sign [clue],²⁸ declares:

²⁴ “Superhuman feats of psychic miracles,” *uttari, manussa, dhammā iddhi, pāṭihāriyam*.

²⁵ The reason for this is not that there are less monastics who have psychic powers, but that there are Vinaya rules proscribing them: see Pārajika 4 (V 3:91) & Pācittiya 8 for monks, & Bhī Pār 4 (V 3:133) & Bhī Pāc 104 (V 4:25) for nuns. See esp **Piṇḍola Bhāra, dvāja** (Cv 5.8 = V 2:110-112); see SD 27.6 Intro (2). There is an apocryphal story about German founder of analytical psychology, Carl Jung, that he loved to tell the story of the rabbi who was asked one day, “Why did God so often show himself to people in ancient times; but today no one sees God?” The rabbi replied, “Because, now, no one will bow low enough to see God!”

²⁶ The full 3 kinds of miracles are discussed in greater detail in **Kevalāḍḍha S** (D 11,3-8/1:212-14), SD 1.7.

²⁷ The miracle of thought-reading is given briefly in **Kevalāḍḍha S** (D 11,6/1:213 f), SD 1.7.

²⁸ *Nimitta*, which Comy glosses as external signs, reflecting the person’s mental state (AA 2:269,4-15), ie, through external signs, reflecting the person’s mental state (similar to the modern idea of “body language”), or through a revelation one receives from a deva who has supernormal knowledge of others’ minds. On other meanings of *nimitta*, see SD 13.1 §3.1d.

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”²⁹

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

ii. THROUGH SPEECH

Now, here, brahmin, a certain person does *not* declare³⁰ by means of a sign, [171] but from listening to the sounds of humans, of non-humans, or of devas, declares,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”³¹

And however many such declarations one makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

iii. THROUGH THOUGHT-VIBRATIONS

Now, here, brahmin, a certain person does *not* declare by means of a sign, *nor from having* listened to the sounds of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

but, from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them),³² declares,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations one makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

iv. THROUGH MEDITATION

Now, here, brahmin, a certain person does *not* declare by means of a sign, *nor* from having heard voices of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

nor from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them),

³³but, from having attained samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering,³⁴

one knows the mind of another with one’s own, thus:

“By the way the mental formations of this good man are inclined, the depth of that mind will think such and such a thought.”³⁵

²⁹ *Evam pi te mano, ittham pi te mano, iti pi te cittan ti.* Thought-reading is an aspect of mind-reading (*ceto, pariya, ñāṇa*), which is itself a power of the “divine eye” (*dibba, cakkhu*): see (1). (Pāṭihāriya) Saṅgārava S (A 3.60.5), SD 16.10, & Sampasādaniya S (D 28,6/3:104 f), SD 14.10, give a more detailed def of mind-reading; see also SD 27.5a (5.3.2.2). On similar statements (and words of the mind), see SD 17.8a (12.4).

³⁰ “Make a declaration,” *ādisati* (*ā-disati*. From √DIS, “to point”), “to point out, explain; to foretell, prophesy; to guess, read.”

³¹ Having directly heard their sounds, he makes his reading. On similar statements (and words of the mind), see SD 17.8a (12.4).

³² “But ... thought-vibrations,” *api ca kho vitakkayato vicarayato vitakka, vipphāra, saddam sutvā. Vitakka, vipphāra* also suggests some kind of “thought-frequency.” Depending on the subtle sounds produced by the thoughts that are penetrated by the divine ear itself, he makes a reading. *Vipphāra* is prob a wrong reading. **Paṭisambhidā, magga** (§3.7 = 27), in its def of the 3 marvels, in place of *vitakka, vipphāra, saddam* has ***vitakka, vicāra, saddam***, “the sound of thinking and pondering” (ie, mental chatter or subverbalization)—this is prob a better reading. Comy explains: “Having heard sounds, arising from thought-vibration, of muttering by those asleep or heedless” (AA 2:26 f). See SD 27.5a (5.5.5.2).

³³ From here to “thus”: *api ca kho avitakkaṃ avicāraṃ samādhim samāpannassa cetasā ceto paricca pajānāti.* See Intro (2) where Comy seems to misread the text.

³⁴ Here “samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering” can refer to the 2nd, the 3rd or the 4th dhyana, esp the last, where psychic powers (such as mind-reading) really take effect. See eg **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,81-94/1:71-82), SD 8.10. See also SD 17.7(6.2).

³⁵ *Yathā imassa bhoto mano, saṅkhārā paṇihitā imassa cittassa antarā amun, nāma vitakkaṃ vitakkissatī ti.* For one in a thought-free meditation, the mind-reader can only predict, on the basis of the meditator’s mental disposi-

And however many such declarations one makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

This is called the miracle of *thought-reading*.

6 (3) And what, brahmin, is **the miracle of instruction** (*anusāsani, pāṭihāriya*)?

Here, brahmin, a certain person instructs thus:

‘You should think in this way, not in that way.

Direct your attention to this, not to that.

Let go of this; dwell, cultivating that.’

This, brahmin, is called the miracle of *instruction*.³⁶

Evaṃ vitakketha, mā evaṃ vitakkayittha.

Evaṃ manasi karotha, mā evaṃ manasākattha.

Idaṃ pajahatha, idaṃ upasampajja viharatha.

These, brahmin, are the 3 kinds of miracles.

The greatest miracle

6.2 Of these 3 kinds of miracles, brahmin, which do you regard as the most excellent, the most exquisite?”

[Saṅgārava]

6.3 (1) “Now, master Gotama, as regards this miracle—

[§4.2] *Here a certain person enjoys various kinds of psychic powers:*

Having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one.

He appears, and vanishes.

He goes unhindered through walls, through ramparts, and through mountains as if through space.

He dives in and out of the earth as if it were water.

He walks on water without sinking as if it were earth.

Sitting cross-legged, he flies through the air like a winged bird.

With his hand he touches and strokes even the sun and the moon, so mighty and powerful.

He has power over his body up to as far as the Brahmā worlds.

—In the case of this miracle, master Gotama,

only the one who performs it, experiences it: it belongs only to the one who performs it.³⁷

Indeed, master Gotama, this miracle seems like it is related to the false dharma of magic [illusion].³⁸

tion, the thoughts he would think on emerging from the meditation. The “thought-free” meditation implies the 2nd dhyana upwards.

³⁶ This miracle of instruction or true learning—“education” (*e-ducere*) in the sense of bring the good, the better or the best out of oneself—is given in identical words in **Kevalāḍḍha S** (D 11,8/1:213 @ SD 1.7), where it receives its longest treatment. The best case of the miracle of instruction is clearly that of **Aṅguli, māla**: see M 86/2:97-105 (SD 5.11). A canonical expl of the Buddha’s miracle of instruction is given in **Acchariya Sutta 2** (A 4.128), where after listening to the Buddha’s teachings, (1) those attached to the world let go of their worldly attachments (*ālaya*); (2) the conceited let go of their conceit (*māna*); (3) those not delighting in peace (*anupasama, rata*) turn to peace; (4) those with ignorance destroy their ignorance (*avijjā*) (A 2:131 f). Comy on A 3.60 gives examples of the miracle of instructions thus: “You should think thoughts of renunciation, not thoughts of sensuality. You should practise the perception of impermanence, not the perception of permanence. You should give up desire for the 5 cords of sensual pleasure and acquire the supramundane Dharma of the 4 paths and fruits.” (AA 2:271,19-22)

³⁷ *Yo ca naṃ karoti so ca naṃ paṭisaṃvedeti, yo ca naṃ karoti tassa c’eva taṃ hoti.*

³⁸ *Idam eva bho Gotama pāṭihāriyaṃ mayā saha, dhamma, rūpaṃ viya khāyati.*

(2) Master Gotama, as regards this miracle—

[§5 i] Here, a certain person, by **means of a sign**, declares:

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

[§5 ii] Now, here, master Gotama, a certain person does not declare by means of a sign, but from having heard voices of humans, of non-humans, or of devas, declares,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

[§5 iii] Now, here, master Gotama, a certain person does not declare by means of a sign, nor from having listened to the sounds of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

but, from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them), declares,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations one makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

[§5 iv] Now, here, master Gotama, a certain person does not declare by means of a sign, nor from having heard voices of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

nor from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them),

³⁹but, having attained samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering,⁴⁰

one knows the mind of another with one’s own, thus: **[172]**

“By the way the mental formations of this good man are inclined, the depth of that mind will think such and such a thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

—this miracle, master Gotama, only the one who performs it, experiences it: it belongs only to the one who performs it.

Indeed, master Gotama, this miracle seems like it is related to the false dharma of magic.

(3) Master Gotama, as regards this miracle—

[§6.3] Here, a certain person **instructs** thus:

‘You should think in this way, not in that way.

Direct your attention to this, not to that.

Let go of this, dwell, cultivating that.’

—master Gotama, of these 3 miracles, I regard just **this** as *the most excellent, the most exquisite!*⁴¹

The Buddha is able to perform miracles

6.4 It is wonderful, master Gotama! It is marvellous, master Gotama!

How well spoken is this word by master Gotama!

We shall remember the master Gotama as being endowed with these 3 miracles!

³⁹ From here to “thus”: *api ca kho avitakkaṃ avicāraṃ samādhim samāpannassa cetasā ceto paricca pajānāti*. See Intro (2) where Comy seems to misread the text.

⁴⁰ Here “samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering” can refer to the 2nd, the 3rd or the 4th dhyana, esp the last, where psychic powers (such as mind-reading) really take effect. See eg **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,81-94/1:71-82), SD 8.10. See also SD 17.7(6.2).

⁴¹ See Intro (3).

(1) [§4.2] Master Gotama enjoys various kinds of **psychic powers**:

Having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one.

He appears, and vanishes.

He goes unhindered through walls, through ramparts, and through mountains as if through space.

He dives in and out of the earth as if it were water.

He walks on water without sinking as if it were earth.

Sitting cross-legged, he flies through the air like a winged bird.

With his hand he touches and strokes even the sun and the moon, so mighty and powerful.

He has power over his body up to as far as the Brahmā worlds.

(2) Master Gotama,

[§5 i] by **means of a sign**, declares:

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

[§5 ii] Master Gotama *does not declare by means of a sign,*

but after hearing voices of humans, of non-humans, or of devas, declares,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

[§5 iii] Master Gotama *does not declare by means of a sign,*

nor from having listened to the sounds of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

but, from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them), declares,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

[§5 iv] Master Gotama *does not declare by means of a sign,*

nor from having heard voices of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

nor from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them), but, having attained samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering,

he knows the mind of another with his own, thus:

“By the way the mental formations of this good man are inclined, the depth of that mind will think such and such a thought.”

And however many such declarations he makes, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

(3) Master Gotama **instructs** thus:

‘You should think in this way, not in that way.

Direct your attention to this, not to that.

Let go of this, dwell, cultivating that.’”

7 “Surely, brahmin, these words you have spoken are rather personal and bold.⁴² I shall nevertheless explain it to you.⁴³

⁴² The meaning here, I think, is that the interlocutor is attempting to speak for the Buddha right before the Buddha himself, and without any personal experience himself. See **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,10.2) n @ SD 49.4. See foll n for the Pali.

⁴³ *Addhā kho tyāyaṃ brāhmaṇa āsajja upaniya, vācā bhāsītā, api ca tyāhaṃ vyākarissāmi.* CPD 2:233 says PTS has wr *tyāhaṃ* (former) for *tyāyaṃ* (*te ayaṃ*) here. See CPD: **āsajja** (abs of *āsādeti*, “(1) to hit, attack, assail, offend,

(1) Indeed, I do experience [enjoy] these **various kinds of psychic powers**:

Having been one, I become many; having been many, I become one.

I appear, and vanish.

I go unhindered through walls, through ramparts, and through mountains as if through space.

I dive in and out of the earth as if it were water.

I walk on water without sinking as if it were earth.

Sitting cross-legged, I fly through the air like a winged bird.

With my hand touch and stroke even the sun and the moon, so mighty, so powerful.

I have power over my body up to as far as the Brahmā worlds.

(2) Indeed, I do **mentally penetrate and know the minds of others**:

i. THROUGH BODY LANGUAGE

Here, brahmin, I, by means of a sign, declare:

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations I make, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

ii. THROUGH SPEECH

Now, here, brahmin, I do *not* declare by means of a sign,

but from listening to the sounds of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

I declare,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”⁴⁴

And however many such declarations I make, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

iii. THROUGH THINKING

Now, here, brahmin, I do *not* declare by means of a sign,

nor from having listened to the sounds of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

but from having listened to a person’s thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them),

I declare,

“Such is your mind, this is your mind, such is your thought.”

And however many such declarations I make, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

behave disrespectfully,” (2) to come upon, encounter); often confounded with *āpajja*. CPD def *upanīya* as “bringing forward (charges), criticizing, accusing”; abs of *upaneti*, “leads to; alludes to” (see DP sv). **Madhyama Āgama** parallel has 汝善達此論 *rūshàncīlùn*, “you are good [right, wise] in arriving at the conclusion” (MĀ 143 @ T1.650). **Āsajja upanīya, vācā bhāsītā** is stock: **M 36/1:240,7** [§10.2] SD 49.4, **127/3:152,14** (SD 54.10); **A 3.60/1:172,20** (SD 16.-10), **4.35/2:37,1** (SD 82.9). K Anuruddha’s *Dict of Pali Idioms*, tr it as “Having made a personal reference (to me) words were uttered” (2004:179). At A 1:172 & 2:37, this is rendered by A:W 1:156 & 2:42 as: “your words come close and challenge me to a statement”; at A:ÑB 61: “you have spoken strikingly befitting words” & Ṭhanissaro: “you have affronted me with your personal statement.” M:ÑB tr it as “your words are offensive and discourteous” (M 1:240 = M:ÑB 335; M 3:152 = M:ÑB 1006), but the contexts here (offensive) are clearly different from (Tika) Saṅgārava S (A 3.60). Comys: *gūṇe ghaṭṭetvā c’eva upanetvā ca*, “having knocked against virtues, and having offended” (MA 2:287,4); *mama gūṇe ghaṭṭetvā, mama guṇānaṃ santikaṃ upanīta vācā bhāsītā*, lit “words spoken, knocking up against my virtues, thrusting up against my virtues” (AA 2:272,8). In all the other cases, this passage answers a confrontational remark. Here (**A 3.60**), it is clearly the Buddha’s gentle chiding of Saṅgārava’s bold conclusion without having any direct experience (awakening) into the path. On **āsajja**, see Sn:N 253 n448 & Tha:N 287 f n1204.

⁴⁴ Having directly heard their sounds, he makes his reading. On similar statements (and words of the mind), see SD 17.8a (12.4).

iv. THROUGH MEDITATION

Now, here, brahmin, I do *not* declare by means of a sign,

nor from having heard voices of humans, of non-humans, or of devas,

nor from having listened to a person's thought-vibrations, then thinking and pondering (over them),

⁴⁵but, having attained samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering,⁴⁶

I know the mind of another with my own, thus:

“By the way the mental formations of this good man are inclined,
the depth of that mind will think such and such a thought.”⁴⁷

And however many such declarations I make, they are exactly so and not otherwise.

(3) Indeed, I do instruct others **how to direct their minds**:

Here, brahmin, I instruct a certain person thus:

‘You should think in this way, not in that way.

Direct your attention to this, not to that.

Let go of this, dwell, cultivating that.’”

Many monastics are able to perform miracles, too

7.2 “But, master Gotama, is there, besides master Gotama, any other monk who is endowed with these 3 miracles?”

“Not just one hundred, brahmin, nor two hundred, nor three hundred, nor four hundred, nor five hundred, but even more than that are endowed with these 3 miracles!”

“And, master Gotama, where are these monks dwelling now?” **[173]**

“In the very community of monks, brahmin.”

Saṅgārava goes for refuge

7.3 “Excellent, master Gotama! Excellent, Master Gotama!

Bhante, just as if one were to place upright what had been overturned,
or were to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one who was lost,

or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms,

in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the Blessed Gotama.

I go to the Blessed Gotama for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks.

May the Blessed Gotama remember me as a layman who has gone for refuge
from this day forth for life.”

— evaṃ —

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⁴⁵ From here to “thus”: *api ca kho avitakkaṃ avicāraṃ samādhim samāpannassa cetasā ceto paricca pajānāti*. See Intro (2) where Comy seems to misread the text.

⁴⁶ Here “samadhi that is free from thinking and pondering” can refer to the 2nd, the 3rd or the 4th dhyana, esp the last, where psychic powers (such as mind-reading) really take effect. See eg **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,81-94/1:71-82), SD 8.10. See also SD 17.7 (6.2).

⁴⁷ *Yathā imassa bhoto mano, saṅkhārā paṇihitā imassa cittassa antarā amun, nāma vitakkaṃ vitakkissatī ti*. For one in a thought-free meditation, the mind-reader can only predict, on the basis of the meditator’s mental disposition, the thoughts he would think on emerging from the meditation.