

## 22

**(Chakka) Appamāda Sutta**

The Discourse on Diligence (the Sixes) | A 6.53/3:364 f

Theme: Diligence is beneficial both here and hereafter

Translated &amp; annotated by Piya Tan ©2013

**1 Sutta highlights**

**1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY.** The (Chakka) Appamāda Sutta, given in answer to a question asked by a certain brahmin [§2], is so called because it deals with diligence (*appamāda*) as foremost of wholesome qualities that benefits us both in this world and the hereafter [§5]. The Buddha uses 6 parables to illustrate this primacy of diligence, that is:

	<u>Significance</u>	
(1) the elephant's hoofprint parable,	all other hoofprints fit into an elephant's hoofprint	[§6]
(2) the parable of the ridgepole,	all the rafters of a house meet up in the ridgepole	[§8]
(3) the parable of the reed-cutter,	the reed-cutter holds the reed by its top	[§10]
(4) the parable of the mango bunch,	all the mangoes move along with its stalk	[§12]
(5) the moonlight parable.	moonlight is the foremost light in the night sky	[§14]

These parables, however, are meant only to show the primacy of diligence, but its twin benefits are here and in the hereafter. Perhaps we could tease this interpretation out of the third and the fourth parables: that the reed-cutter having cut the weeds (here and now) will benefit from using them later, and that having the mangoes now, we would be able to feast on them later. As for the remaining parables, we need to stretch our imagination to relate them to the twin benefits of diligence. [1.3]

**1.2 SKILLFUL MEANS.** Furthermore, this Sutta only states the primacy of diligence and its twin benefits, without actually telling us what these benefits are or how we are to be diligent. Even the related but shorter discourse, **the (Ubho Attha) Appamāda Sutta** [3.2] only says in its closing verse that “the wise praise diligence | in the making of merit” [3.2: verse 8cd], without explaining how this is done. An important clue here is, of course, the term, “making of merit” (*puñña, kiriyā*), which is a pre-Buddhist term for proper ritual action and its benefits.<sup>1</sup>

Significantly, the (Ubho Attha) Appamāda Sutta is addressed to the rajah Pasenadi, who is surely familiar with the old religious system. Here the Buddha uses this old term, *puñña, kiriyā*, but gives it a new sense that is synonymous with “wholesome action” (*kusala, kamma*), which are directed to moral cultivation, mental training, and the attaining of liberating wisdom.<sup>2</sup>

**1.3 RELATED TEACHINGS.** In the course of analyzing the key-word, *appamāda*, “diligence,” and its related words [2.2], we have mentioned some related references, as follows:

Diligence, not prayer, is the key to success	<b>Iṭṭha Sutta</b> (A 4.43/3:48 f)	SD 47.2
On diligence as the 3 trainings ( <i>sikkhā</i> )	<b>Sīla samādhi paññā</b>	SD 21.6
On the 5 precepts as diligence in moral training	<b>Right livelihood</b> [2.2]	SD 37.8
On not being intoxicated ( <i>mada</i> ) by things we use	<b>Sabb'āsava Sutta</b> (M 2,13-17/1:110)	SD 30.3
On avoiding the 3 intoxications ( <i>mada</i> )	<b>Mada Sutta</b> (A 3.39/1:146 f)	SD 42.13
On the practice of lovingkindness as merit-making	<b>Puñña Metta Sutta</b> (A 7.58a/4:88-91)	SD 2.11a
On the practice of lovingkindness as merit-making	<b>Mā Puññā Bhāyī Sutta</b> (It 22/14-16)	SD 2.11b
On diligence in spiritual friendship	<b>Kalyāṇa, mitta Appamāda Sutta</b> (S 3.18/1:89)	SD 34.3

<sup>1</sup> See eg **Puñña Metta S** (A 7.58a/4:88-91), SD 2.11a, & **Mā Puññā Bhāyī S** (It 22/14-16), SD 2.11b.

<sup>2</sup> See the 3 trainings, see **Sīla samādhi paññā**, SD 21.6.

## 2 Diligence (*appamāda*)

**2.1 THE FOREMOST OF WHOLESOME STATES.** Diligence, or heedfulness, or heedful diligence (*appamāda*) is the key-word of the **(Chakka) Appamāda Sutta** (A 6.53), where it is effectively declared to be the foremost of wholesome states. If we cultivate heedful diligence, it will be beneficial both in this world as well as in the hereafter, meaning that heedful diligence can lead us even to awakening itself.

The significance of heedful diligence is highlighted by the fact that the **Dhammapada** dedicates the whole of its second canto—the Appamāda Vagga (Dh 21-32)—to it. The very first verse of this canto declares its vital role in our spiritual life, thus:

<i>Appamādo amata, padaṃ</i>	Heedful diligence is the path to the death-free; <sup>3</sup>	
<i>pamādo maccuno padaṃ</i>	heedlessness is the path of death.	
<i>appamattā na mīyanti</i>	The heedfully diligent do not die;	
<i>ye pamattā yathā matā</i>	the heedless are as if already dead.	Dh 21

Due to the key role that diligence plays in spiritual training and growth, it is found in all the key teachings of the Buddha.<sup>4</sup>

### 2.2 APPAMĀDA AND RELATED TERMS

**2.2.1 Etymology of *appamāda*.** The word *appamāda* (literally, “non-heedlessness, non-laxity”), meaning “diligence, heedfulness, earnestness.”<sup>5</sup> It is a negative term resolved as: *na* “no, not”) + *pamāda* (“heedlessness”; cf Ved *pramāda*), which is in turn resolved as *pa-* (a prefix signifying strength and excess) + *mada* (“intoxication”), which derives from √MAD, “to be exhilarated.”

**2.2.2 *Mada*.** The term *mada* means “intoxication, drunkenness, sensual excess” and comes from √MAD, “to be exhilarated.”<sup>6</sup> It is famously found in the phrase *n’eva davāya na madāya na maṇḍanāya na vibūsanāya*, “not for amusement,<sup>7</sup> not for intoxication, not for fattening, not for beautifying,” which is the mindfulness that a monastic must show when taking food. The **Sabba’āsava Sutta** (M 2) includes this practice as one of the methods for destroying the mental influxes (*āsava*), that is, by way of the proper use of the life supports.<sup>8</sup>

In a broader psychological perspective, diligence should be shown in warding off the 3 intoxications (*mada*), that is, those of youth, of health, and of life, as laid out in the **Mada Sutta** (A 3.39). The Sutta warns that when we are blinded by any of these 3 kinds of intoxication, we commit all kinds of bad deeds through the body, speech and the mind, and so face the consequences of bad karma.<sup>9</sup>

The notion of this psychological “intoxication” is closely connected with the nature of craving (*taṇhā*), literally a “thirst” for youth, health, life, status and things. We feel a sense of lack partly from past conditioning and from present measuring of ourselves against others.<sup>10</sup> This is rooted in the view that happiness is defined by our “having” things, instead of *being* happy. It is only when we have a proper level of mindfulness that we are really able to *enjoy* anything worth enjoying.

To be mindful here includes the idea of seeing *joy* in all our actions and the events around us. This is rooted in the understanding that all life is impermanent, and that we are all beings in process. We only need to learn from suffering to better ourselves and work towards spiritual liberation.

<sup>3</sup> *Amata, pada*, as an epithet of nirvana, should be tr as “the death-free state,” but here the context is that of spiritual training. Cf Dh:N 66 n21 & K R Norman, “Mistaken ideas about nibbāna,” 1994A:217 f = *Collected Papers* 6, 1996:9-30.

<sup>4</sup> Ie, in the 7 sets, comprising the 27 limbs of awakening (*bodhi.pakkhiya, dhamma*): see **Sāra, gandha S** (S 45.-143/5:44), SD 42.24. On the “7 sets,” see **Bodhi.pakkhiyā, dhamma**, SD 10.1 (1).

<sup>5</sup> D 3:156; S 1:86-89, 5:30-45; A 1:11-17, 3:365, 5:21.

<sup>6</sup> For other refs, see PED: mada.

<sup>7</sup> This stock: M 1:355; A 2:40, 145; Dhs 1346; Pug 21; Vbh 249.

<sup>8</sup> This technically refers to “the influxes to be abandoned by reflective use” (*paṭisevana pahatabb’āsava*): M 2,13-17/1:110 = SD 30.3.

<sup>9</sup> Ie respectively, *yobanna, mada, ārogya, mada* and *jīvita, mada* (A 3.39/1:146 f), SD 42.13.

<sup>10</sup> See SD 42.13 (2) Mental intoxication in contemporary society.

### **2.2.3 Pamāda and mindfulness**

2.2.3.1 The important term, *pamāda* has this range of senses: “carelessness, negligence, indolence, remissness.”<sup>11</sup> One of the common application of *pamāda* is in the compound *pamād-ṭ,ṭhāna*, “the basis for intoxication or heedlessness,” commonly found in the later works and the commentaries. However, its best known usage is clearly in the fifth of the 5 precepts, that is, *surā,meraya,majja-p,pamāda-ṭ,ṭhānā veramaṇī samādiyāmi*, “I undertake to refrain from strong drinks, distilled drinks, and intoxicants that are the bases for heedlessness.”<sup>12</sup>

2.2.3.2 The location of this precept as the fifth and last of the 5 precepts is highly significant. While the first 4 precepts—refraining from killing, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, and from falsehood—deal with the body and speech, the precept against intoxication deals with both the body and the mind. This precept helps our minds in our efforts to attain calm and clarity, especially for mental training and meditation. While the former is “moral training,” this latter is “mental training,” and both form the bases for “wisdom training.”<sup>13</sup>

**2.2.4 Appamāda as mindfulness.** Hence, discourses such as **the (Chakka) Appamāda Sutta** (A 6.-53) declares that diligence is the one dharma that is beneficial both in this world, by keeping our body and mind free from carelessness and craving, and if we do not awaken in this life, we have done the groundwork for a happy future life that is the basis for liberation. Hence, the commentary to **the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta** (D 22, M 10) explains *appamāda* as the presence of mindfulness (*satiyā avippavāsa*) which is “the one-going path”<sup>14</sup> that leads to purification and liberation.<sup>15</sup>

The universal reality that we cannot change is that of impermanence (*anicca*). Change brings on suffering, but it also teaches us that there is no abiding state or entity behind all existence. On the positive side, it means that we are all changing, physically and mentally. These, however, are those that continued to imprison us to more changes, so that we are caught in a rut of repetitive and cyclic changes.

We need to understand the nature of impermanence so that we can effectively work for inner or spiritual change, which understand how the external world tends to be a reflection of our internal state. Once we are fully changed internally, we are free from the external changes. This is the task of the spiritual life. So vital is diligence to the spiritual life that the Buddha, with his part breaths, uttered: “Conditioned things are subject to decay. Strive on diligently” (*vaya,dhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādeṭṭha*).<sup>16</sup>

## **3 (Ubho Attha) Appamāda Sutta (S 3.17)**

**3.1 The (Ubho Attha) Appamāda Sutta** (S 3.17) is a short dialogue between the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala and the Buddha on the benefit of diligence both in this life and the hereafter. The Sutta opens with Pasenadi asking whether there is one dharma that is beneficial both here and in the hereafter [§2]. The Buddha answers that there is [§§3-4], and that it is diligence (*appamāda*), and invokes the parable of the elephant’s hoofprint [§5]. The Sutta closes with 3 verses on the teaching [§6].

This Sutta is a shorter version of the (Chakka) Appamāda Sutta (A 6.53), both of which has the parable of the elephant’s hoofprint [A 6.53,6]. However, it is difficult to say whether it is an extended form of the former. Often the shorter version, preserved by the Saṃyutta reciters, is likely to be the older one, that is, the dialogue between the Buddha and the rajah Pasenadi (S 3.17). The Āṅuttara reciters probably heard or remembered the longer version which is a dialogue between the Buddha and a certain brahmin (A 6.53).

<sup>11</sup> The late form *pamajjanā*, an abstract noun, occurs in a technical list of synonyms in an exegesis of *pamāda* (Vbh 350 = Nm 423).

<sup>12</sup> On the 5 precepts, see **Right livelihood**, SD 37.8 (2.2).

<sup>13</sup> See **Sakkāya S** (S 22.105/3:159) & SD 42.21 (4). On the 3 trainings, see **Sīla samādhi paññā**, SD 21.6.

<sup>14</sup> More fully, “the path for one-going [the path where one goes by oneself],” *ekāyano maggo*, lit “one-going path,” ie “the direct one-way path to samadhi.” See SD 13.1 (3.2).

<sup>15</sup> M 10,2/1:55 = SD 13.3.

<sup>16</sup> D 16,3.51/2:120 = SD 9.

**SD 42.22(3.2)****(Ubho Attha) Appamāda Sutta**

The Discourse on Diligence (being beneficial both ways) | S 3.17/1:86 f

**Appamāda Sutta 1** The First Discourse on Diligence

Traditional: S 1.3.2.7 Saṃyutta Nikāya 1, Sa, gāthā Vagga 3, Kosala Saṃyutta 2, Dutiya Vagga 7

Theme: Diligence is beneficial both here and hereafter

1 Originating in Sāvathī.

The rajah's question

2.1 (Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala,) sat down at oneside.

Seated thus at one side, Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala, said this to the Blessed One:

2.2 “Now, bhante, is there one dharma, when cultivated, often developed,

would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter?”

The one thing beneficial both ways

3 “There is, maharajah, the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.”

4 “And what, bhante, is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed,

would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter?”

Diligence5.1 “Indeed, maharajah, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed,

would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.

The elephant's hoofprint parable5.3 Maharajah, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within an elephant's hoof-print,<sup>17</sup> and so the elephant's hoof-print is declared to be the foremost of them because of its great size,<sup>18</sup>5.4 even so, maharajah, diligence is the one dharma, [87] when cultivated, often developed,

would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter

The Pasenadi deilignce verses6<sup>19</sup> The Blessed One said this. Having said this, the well-farer [sugata], the teacher, said this.<sup>20</sup>

<sup>17</sup> This parable appears in **(Ubho Attha) Appamāda S** (S 3.17/1:86), SD 42.22(3.2), & **(Chakka) Appamāda S** (A 6.53/3:364 f), SD 42.22. In both cases, the Buddha says that diligence (*appamāda*) is beneficial both here and hereafter.

<sup>18</sup> *Seyyathā'pi mahā,rāja yāni kānici jaṅgalānaṃ\* pāṇānaṃ pada,jātāni, sabbāni tāni hatthi,pade samodhānaṃ gacchanti, hatthi,padaṃ tesāṃ aggamaṃ akkhāyati yad idaṃ mahantattena. \*Be Se jaṅgalānaṃ; Ce Ee jaṅgamānaṃ* (cf SA 1:98, 99; CA 334). This passage recurs in **Mahā Hatthi,padōpama S** (M 28), where it is the key parable for the 4 noble truths being inclusive of “all wholesome states” (M 28,2/1:184), SD 6.16; also in **(Dasaka) Appamāda S** (A 10.15,3/5:21), SD 42.23.

<sup>19</sup> From hereon, the numberings do not follow PTS ed.

- 7 *Āyuni arogiyaṃ vaṇṇaṃ  
saggaṃ uccā, kulīnataṃ  
ratiyo patthayantena  
uḷārā aparâparā* Long life, good health, beauty,  
heaven, high birth—  
for those who hope [pray] for delights  
so great, ever and again—
- 8 *Appamādaṃ pasamsanti  
puñña, kiriyāsu paṇḍitā  
appamatto ubho atthe  
adhiggaṇhāti paṇḍito* the wise praise diligence  
in the making of merit.<sup>21</sup> 410<sup>22</sup>  
On account of diligence,  
the wise benefit both ways:
- 9 *Diṭṭhe dhamme ca yo attho  
yo cattho samparāyiko  
atthābhisamayā<sup>23</sup> dhīro<sup>24</sup>  
paṇḍitōti pavuccatīti* there is the benefit here and now,  
and the benefit in the hereafter, too.  
The steadfast who attains the goal<sup>25</sup>  
is said to be wise. 411

— evaṃ —

## The Discourse on Diligence

A 6.53/3:364 f (Internal numbering does not follow PTS)

1 Then a certain brahmin approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One, he exchanged greeting with him. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, the brahmin sat down at one side.

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

### A certain brahmin's question

2 “Now, master Gotama, is there one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter?”<sup>26</sup>

<sup>20</sup> These verses are in (Ubho Attha) Appamāda S (S 3.17/1:87), SD 42.22(3.2), Kalyāṇa, mitta Appamāda S (S 3.18/1:89), SD 34.3; Itṭha S (A 4.43/3:48 f), SD 47.2. In Dīgha Comy, the last verse [§9] illustrates one meaning of *abhisamaya* as “obtaining” (*paṭilābha*) (DA 1:32).

<sup>21</sup> See eg Puñña, kiriyā, vatthu S (A 8.36/4:241-243), SD 22.17.

<sup>22</sup> This and the foll numberings of the verses are from S:B which follows the 1998 PTS ed of Sa, gāthā Vagga of the Saṃyutta (S 1).

<sup>23</sup> Comy on A 5.43: “*atthābhisamayā* means by coming to the goal (*attha*), which is said to be by way of obtaining the goal (or the good)” (*atthābhisamayā'ti atthassa abhisamāgamena, attha, paṭilābhenāti vuttaṃ hoti*, AA 3:252).

<sup>24</sup> *Dhīra* is a pregnant Pali word with at least 2 senses, based on the foll: (1) Sītk *dhīra*, “firm,” from *dhārayati* (to hold out), prob from √DHĀ or DADH. to put; (2) Ved *dhīra*, “wise,” from *dīdhite* (to think, perceive, reflect, wish, desire), from √DHĪ or DĪDHĪ, to think (see PED: dhī<sup>2</sup>). Often these 2 senses apply, or the better sense can be teased out from the context; often as syn of *paṇḍita*, “wise” and epithet of an arhat: D 2:128; S 1:24, 87 (411\*), 89 (413\*), 121 (493\*), 122 (495\*), 221; Sn 45, 235, 913, 1052; It 68, 122; Tha 4 (ThaA: “firm”), 500 (ThaA *sa, paññā*), 665 (ThaA *paṇḍita*); Thī 7; J 3:396, 5:116; Pv 2.1.6, 2.9.45; Nm 44, 55, 482; Nc 324 (= *jutimā*); Miln 342; KhpA 194, 224, 230; DhA 3:189 (= *paṇḍita*). As a pregnant word, we can tr it as “the steadfastly wise, the wisely steadfast” or the like.

<sup>25</sup> From the context here, it is helpful to render *attha* as “goal” rather or “good, benefit, etc”.: see prec n.

<sup>26</sup> *Yo ubho atthe samadhigayha tiṭṭhati diṭṭha, dhammikañ c'eva attham yo ca attho samparāyikōti.*

## The one thing that benefits both world

3 “There is, brahmin, one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.”

4 “And what, master Gotama, is that one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter?”

5 “**Diligence**, brahmin, is that one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.

### (1) The elephant’s hoofprint parable

6 Brahmin, just as the footprint of any living being that walks can be placed within an elephant’s hoof-print,<sup>27</sup> and so the elephant’s hoof-print is declared to be the foremost of them because of its great size,<sup>28</sup>

7 *even so, brahmin, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.*

### (2) The parable of the ridgepole<sup>29</sup>

8 Bhikshus, just as all the rafters of a house with a peaked roof lead to **the ridgepole**, slope towards the ridgepole, converge at the ridgepole, and the ridgepole is said to be their peak<sup>30</sup>—

9 *even so, brahmin, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.*

### (3) The parable of the reed-cutter<sup>31</sup>

10 Bhikshus, just as a **reed-cutter** would cut down a bunch of reeds [bulrushes], grab it by the top, shake it down, shake it about, thresh it about<sup>32</sup>—

11 *even so, brahmin, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.*

<sup>27</sup> This parable as in **Appamāda S 1** (S 3.17) (S 3.17/1:86), SD 42.22(3.2), & **(Chakka) Appamāda S** (A 6.53/-3:364 f), SD 42.22. In both cases, the Buddha declares the universal quality to be diligence (*appamāda*).

<sup>28</sup> *Seyyathā’pi brāhmaṇa yāni kānici jaṅgalānaṃ\* pāṇānaṃ pada,jātāni, sabbāni tāni hatthi,pade samodhānaṃ gacchanti, hatthi,padam tesam aggam akkhāyati yad idam mahantattena.* \*Be Se *jaṅgalānaṃ*; Ce Ee *jaṅgamānaṃ*. In both cases, the Buddha declares that diligence (*appamāda*) is helpful both in this life and the hereafter. This passage also recurs in **Mahā Hatthi,padōpama S** (M 28), where it is the key parable for the 4 noble truths being inclusive of “all wholesome states” (M 28,2/1:184), SD 6.16. See Intro (1).

<sup>29</sup> This parable recurs in **Anicca Saññā S** (S 22.102) as its fourth, which is applied to the teaching that the perception of impermanence, properly cultivated, completely destroys all sensual lust, lust for form, lust for existence, ignorance, and the “I am” conceit (S 22.102,7/3:158), SD 12.12.

<sup>30</sup> *Seyyathāpi bhikkhave kūṭāgārassa yā kāci gopānasiyo sabbā tā kūṭāṅgamā kūṭa,ninnā kūṭa,samosaraṇā kūṭam tāsam aggam akkhāyati.* Alt tr: “Bhikshus, just as all the rafters of a pinnacle house meet up at the pinnacle, slope towards the pinnacle, and the pinnacle is said to be their peak [foremost].” See Intro (1) & SD 12.12 (2.0.2).

<sup>31</sup> This parable recurs in **Anicca Saññā S** (S 22.102) as its second, which is applied to the teaching that the perception of impermanence, properly cultivated, completely destroys all sensual lust, lust for form, lust for existence, ignorance, and the “I am” conceit (S 22.102,5/3:155 f), SD 12.12.

<sup>32</sup> *Seyyathā’pi bhikkhave babbaja,lāyako babbajam\* [Ce Ee] lāyitvā agge gahetvā odhunāti niddhunāti nicchoṭeti.* \*Be Se *pabbaja,lāyako pabbajam*. See Intro (1) & SD 12.12 (2.2).

**(4) The parable of the mango bunch<sup>33</sup>**

**12** Bhikshus, just as when a **stalk of a bunch of mangoes** has been cut, all the mangoes attached to the stalk would go with it<sup>34</sup>—

**13** *even so, brahmin, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.*

**(5) The wheel-turner parable<sup>35</sup>**

**14** Bhikshus, just as petty princes are all the vassals of **the wheel-turning monarch**, and the wheel-turning monarch is declared to be the foremost amongst them<sup>36</sup>—

**15** *even so, brahmin, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.*

**(6) The moonlight parable<sup>37</sup>**

**16** Bhikshus, just as the light of all the stars do not amount to a sixteenth [an iota] of **moon's light**,<sup>38</sup> and moonlight is declared to be the foremost amongst them—

**17** *even so, brahmin, diligence is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.*

**18** This, indeed, brahmin, is the one dharma, when cultivated, often developed, would accomplish both kinds of benefits, that is, as a benefit that stands right here and now, and as a benefit in the hereafter.”

**The brahmin's refuge-going**

**19** “Excellent, master Gotama! Excellent, master Gotama! May Blessed Gotama remember me as a layman who has gone for refuge from this day forth, for life.

Just as if, Blessed Gotama, 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 master Gotama.

<sup>33</sup> This parable recurs in **Anicca Saññā S** (S 22.102) as its third, which is applied to the teaching that the perception of impermanence, properly cultivated, completely destroys all sensual lust, lust for form, lust for existence, ignorance, and the “I am” conceit (S 22.102,6/3:156), SD 12.12.

<sup>34</sup> *Seyyathā'pi bhikkhave amba,piṇḍiya vaṇṭa-c, chinnāya yāni tatra ambāni vaṇṭa,paṭibaddhāni sabbāni tāni tad- anyyāni bhavanti.* See Intro (1) & SD 12.12 (2.3).

<sup>35</sup> This parable recurs in **Anicca Saññā S** (S 22.102) as its eighth, which is applied to the teaching that the perception of impermanence, properly cultivated, completely destroys all sensual lust, lust for form, lust for existence, ignorance, and the “I am” conceit (S 22.102,11/3:157), SD 12.12.

<sup>36</sup> *Seyyathāpi bhikkhave ye keci kuḍḍa,rājāno* [Be *kuṭṭa,rājāno*; Ee *khudda,rājāno*; Ce *kuḍḍa,rājāno*; Se *khudda-ka,rājāno*] *sabbe te raññō cakkavattissa anuyāntā bhavanti.* See Intro (1) & SD 12.12 (2.8).

<sup>37</sup> This parable recurs in **Anicca Saññā S** (S 22.102) as its ninth, which is applied to the teaching that the perception of impermanence, properly cultivated, completely destroys all sensual lust, lust for form, lust for existence, ignorance, and the “I am” conceit (S 22.102,12/3:156), SD 12.12.

<sup>38</sup> *Seyyathāpi bhikkhave yā kāci tārika,rūpānam pabhā sabbā tā candima,pabhāya kalam nāgghanti soḷasim candā-p,pabhā tāsam aggam akkhāyati.* See Intro (1) & SD 12.12 (2.9).

I go to the Blessed Gotama for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks.  
May the master Blessed remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge from this day  
forth for life.”

— evaṃ —

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