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Bāhitika Sutta

The Discourse on the Foreign Cloth | M 88
Theme: Determining the Buddha's goodness
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2016

1 Sutta summary and highlights

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

1.1.1 The Bāhitika Sutta, the Discourse on the Foreign Cloth, recounts king Pasenadi's attempts to ascertain the Buddha's moral integrity in a discussion with Ānanda. The king's effort is part of an investigation into allegations made by sectarian heretics of immoral conduct and murder against the Buddha. Hence, this Sutta has "arisen in connection with the case of Sundarī" (*sundari, vatthusmim uppannam idam suttaṃ*, MA 3:346,16).

[§1] The Buddha was dwelling in Ānātha, piṇḍika's park monastery in Sāvathī.

1.1.2 Pasenadi meets Ānanda

[§§2-6] King Pasenadi, riding into Sāvathī at midday sees Ānanda heading for the mansion of Migāra's mother, and instructs a servant to invite Ānanda to meet him on the Aciravatī river bank. And Ānanda consents.

[§7] On the Aciravatī river bank, Ānanda sits under a tree. Pasenadi then offers Ānanda his elephant rug to sit on, but Ānanda declines it, saying that he is already sitting on his own rug, and invites the king to sit down.

1.1.3 Pasenadi asks about the Buddha

[§8] Pasenadi starts by asking Ānanda whether the Buddha would act bodily, verbally or mentally (act, speak or think) in any ways that would be censured by recluses and brahmins. Ānanda replies each time that he would not act in any way that wise (*viññū*) recluses and brahmins would censure.

[§9] The king expresses his approval of Ānanda's answer which hints that it is the views of the "wise" that matter.

1.1.4 The 3 unwholesome doors of karma

[§10] Then, Pasenadi asks Ānanda about **bodily action** which is defined as being "unwholesome," which is then said to be "blameworthy," because it is "afflictive," that is, it brings suffering, that is, it afflicts self, others and both. As a result, good decreases and bad increases. This is censured by wise recluses and brahmins.

[§11] The same analysis is applied to **verbal action** (speech).

[§12] The same analysis is applied to **mental action** (thoughts).

[§13] Ānanda confirms that the Buddha is one who is accomplished in all wholesome states.

1.1.5 The 3 wholesome doors of karma

[§§14-16] In response to Pasenadi's questions, Ānanda now gives the same treatment to wholesome actions of the body, speech and the mind, respectively, and

[§17] re-confirms the Buddha's virtue [§13].

1.1.6 Pasenadi's gift

[§18] Pasenadi exults that he would have given Ānanda the royal horse, or royal elephant, or the village revenue, had these been allowable. Since they are not allowable, he would instead like to give a precious foreign cloth (*bāhitika*) given to him by his nephew, King Ājātasattu of Magadha. Ānanda, however, declines to accept, saying that his robes are sufficient.

[§19] Pasenadi then invokes the Aciravatī parable implying that if Ānanda accepts the cloth, turning them into his triple robes, and gives away his old robes, he (Pasenadi) would gain a torrent of merits like the overflowing river after heavy rains. Upon his insistence, Ānanda accepts the cloth.

[§20] Pasenadi takes leave; [§21] and Ānanda then approaches the Buddha and presents him with the cloth. [§22] The Buddha declares that king Pasenadi has received "a great gain," on account of meeting and showing respect to Ānanda; in other words, in acting morally and rightly himself.

1.2 SUTTA HIGHLIGHTS

1.2.1 Why does the king not question the Buddha directly in person?

1.2.1.1 The king has known the Buddha well since they were young: they are both of the same age, as, for example, attested in **the Dahara Sutta** (S 3.1), which probably records their first meeting.¹ Even in their last meeting, both are 80 years old—as movingly recorded in **the Dhamma,cetiya Sutta** (M 89)—we see Pasenadi showing profound respect for the Buddha.²

1.2.1.2 It is because Pasenadi respects the Buddha so deeply, and that he (Pasenadi) holds the Dharma as highly as his royal life that he finds it difficult to confront the Buddha personally. Moreover, if he were to question the Buddha himself, it would easily be misconstrued as a biased move. His dialogue with Ānanda is like a third-party investigation.

We may even say that Pasenadi knows the Buddha well enough to understand that he is incapable of an offence such as sexual misconduct or a crime such as murder. But still, as a king, he is duty-bound to investigate all parties when a crime is reported, even falsely so. In due course, he does solve the case and punish the real perpetrators. [2.3.1]

1.2.2 Pasenadi’s attitude to early Buddhism

1.2.2.1 Pasenadi starts the conversation by openly asking Ānanda if the Buddha is capable of *any* bodily action that “would be censured by recluses and brahmins” [§8.1], that is, seen as wrong by the most influential members of Indian society then. Note, then, that as a king—the upholder of secular law and order—he is more concerned with public opinion. [1.2.3]

As a king, Pasenadi is said to be a kind of “benevolent despot.” In other words, he has absolute power over his subjects, and he answers to no one else, although he may have a council of ministers to advise him and help him run his kingdom. Ultimately, he is the one who decides what’s wrong or right regarding matters that are brought before him.

1.2.2.2 Despite the various battles fought amongst the kings and tribal rulers of the Buddha’s days, we can see a general peace and cooperation persisting amongst the powers of the day. The various rulers probably understood that they had more to gain from peace than war. With peace, people were able to direct their efforts and resources to economically valuable activities, enriching the rulers and almost everyone else.

It was also the Iron Age (1200-200 BCE) in the Central Ganges Plain and the Eastern Vindhyas. The beginning of the use of iron was traditionally associated with the eastward migration of the later “Vedic” people who were considered as the agents that revolutionized material culture particularly in eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. In other words, this was an age of technological development, which, in turn, aided economic growth.³

1.2.3 The teachings of the Bāhitika Sutta

1.2.3.1 The Sutta teachings centre around two important themes:

- (1) socially acceptable conduct and
- (2) the doctrine of the “3 karmic doors” (*dvāra*).

The 3 karmic doors refer to the deliberate and morally significant actions of the body, speech and the mind. The uniqueness of the way the teaching is presented in the Sutta is that it is an investigation into the moral integrity of the Buddha himself.

1.2.3.2 The first Dharma discussion centres around **socially acceptable conduct** [§§8-9]. Pasenadi starts by asking Ānanda if the Buddha would commit any bodily deed that would be “censured by recluses and brahmins,” that is, the most influential members of society then. Broadly put, would the Buddha act in a manner that is socially unacceptable?

Ānanda replies with a caveat: The Buddha will never act bodily in any way that is censurable by the **wise** (*viññū*) recluses and brahmins. In other words, no matter how rightly or morally the Buddha or anyone else may act, they will be always those who will not see them as being so. Only the opinions and

¹ S 3.1/1:68-70 (SD 42.11).

² M 89,9-10/2:120 (SD 64.10).

³ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iron_Age_India.

decisions of the wise—who understand proper moral conduct and who *themselves* keep to such a standard—are reliable as the judges for a social moral standard.

The views of the unwise—because they are prone to commit unwholesome deeds themselves—should be rejected, especially in this case before them. Pasenadi is especially delighted by Ānanda pointing out this distinction because, declares Pasenadi, “We rely on the praise or blame by the wise, intelligent and experienced, who speak after having investigated or scrutinized the matter, as this has the essence of it” [§9].

1.2.3.3 The second Dharma discussion comprises two parts: (1) on the 3 unwholesome doors of karma [§§10-13] and (2) on the 3 wholesome doors of karma [§§14-17]. From **the first discussion**—on the 3 unwholesome doors of karma [§§10-13] we learn of the 5 criteria of a bad deed in the following causal sequence:

An act is **unwholesome** (*akusala*) if rooted in one of the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala,mūla*)—greed, hate and delusion—and, as such, are our psychological roots of unwholesome motivation. The actions they produce—whether mental, verbal or bodily—are morally blameworthy (*sāvajja*) because of the negative effects they bring upon us as a person, stunting our personal and spiritual growth.

In aesthetic terms, such actions are **afflictive** (*sa,vyābajjha*) as they conflict with the good and true in us, conflicting against the beauty and truth of the Dharma—causing us general unhappiness or dissatisfaction, that is, **fruiting in suffering** (*dukkha,vipāka*). This ethical effect may not be seen immediately, but it accumulates as our negative habits grip and drown us.

Then, we break the golden rule—we harm **ourselves, others and society**—and, on account of which, “unwholesome states increase, wholesome states decrease.” In other words, we degenerate spiritually.

1.2.3.4 From **the second discussion**—on the 3 wholesome doors of karma [§§14-17] we learn of the 5 criteria of a good deed in the following causal sequence:

An act is **wholesome** (*kusala*) if it is mentally rooted in one of the 3 wholesome roots (*kusala,mūla*)—non-greed (charity), non-hate (lovingkindness) and non-delusion (wisdom)—and, as such, are our psychological roots of wholesome motivation. The actions they produce—whether mental, verbal or bodily—are morally blameless (*anavajja*) because of the positive effects they bring upon us as a person, stimulating our personal and spiritual growth.

In aesthetic terms, such actions are **unafflictive** (*avyābajjha*) as they harmonize with the good and true in us, manifesting the beauty and truth of the Dharma—bringing us persistent happiness and satisfaction, that is, **fruiting in happiness** (*sukha,vipāka*). This ethical effect may not be seen immediately, but it accumulates as our wholesome habits grow and enrich us.

We uphold the golden rule—we do not harm **ourselves, others or society**—and, on account of which, “wholesome states increase, unwholesome states decrease.” In other words, we grow spiritually.

2 Sundarī, victim of a plot

2.1 SUNDARĪ OR SUNDARIKĀ

2.1.1 She is a wanderer (*paribbājaka*). Sundarī is a member of a group of sectarian heretics (*titthiyā*) who suffer losses on account of the Buddha’s and the sangha’s popularity. The suttas and commentaries say nothing about her beyond the fact she is a very beautiful and fair young wanderer who is blindly devoted to her sect. Of all the female wanderers of her time, she is said to be most beautiful, fair to behold, of exquisite lotus-like complexion; hence, she is called Sundarī or Sundarikā, “beautiful.” Apparently, this is her nick-name: we do not know her real name. Understandably, it was the female wanderer Sundarī that they [the heretical wanderers] assigned their nefarious deed.⁴ (UA 256)⁵ [2.3.1]

2.1.2 Her story closely parallels that of **Ciñcā Māṇavikā** (“the young woman”), except in this latter case, Ciñcā goes on to feign pregnancy, and she publicly blames the Buddha for being the child’s father.

⁴ *Sā ca anatāta,yobbanā asaṃyata,samācārāva hoti, tasmā te sundarim paribbājikam papa,kamme uyyojesum.*

⁵ *Sā kira tasmim kāle sabba,paribbājikāsu abhirūpā dassanīyā pāsādikā paramāya vaṇṇa,pokkharatāya saman-nāgatā, ten’eva sā sundarī’ti paññāyittha.* Cf UA 172, 273.

Her ruse, however, is exposed by Sakra, king of the gods, whereupon she is chased out of the vihara. Then, the ground opens up and hell-fire swallows her up.⁶

2.1.3 It is possible that both **Ciñcā and Sundarī** belong to the same heretical sect. The case of Ciñcā is probably the sectarians' first attempt to discredit the Buddha. When she fails, the sectarians then make use of Sundarī. There is also the possibility that the Sundarī story is derived from that of Ciñcā, or that both stories are derived from a common ur-text or ancient source.⁷

2.2 THE SOURCES of the Sundarī story are as follows:

Bahitika Sutta	M 88/2:112-117	A canonical account of Pasenadi's investigation of the Buddha, probably within a week of the wanderers' public defamation of the Buddha.
Sundarī Sutta	U 4.8/43-45	The only canonical account: SD 49.23. [foll]
Udāna Commentary (Dhammapāla)	UA 256-266 ⁸	Commentary on U 4.8/43-45 [prec]. The sangha itself is the subject of public abuse. The longest commentarial account of Sundarī. [2.3.1.1]
Dhammapada Commentary (Buddhaghosa)	DhA 22.1/3:474-478 Identical to J 285/- 2:425-417	On Dh 306 [2.3.1.2]; only the Buddha is abused. Cf story of Ciñcā, DhA 3.9. ⁹
Jātaka Commentary (Buddhaghosa)	J 285/2:415-417 [3.2]	On J 285 [3.2]; identical to DhA 22.1, quotes Dh 306 [2.3.2.3]. J 2:415,13 refers to Mv 1.24.6 (V 1:43). Cf U 4.8/45,5-7.
Sutta Nipāta Commentary (Buddhaghosa)	SnA 518 f	(Commentary on Sn 4.3) [3.1] agrees with DhA 22.1 in basic plot [2.2].
Chinese Aṭṭhaka, vagga	T198 (T4.176c3)	Translated in P V Bapat, 1945:156-158. ¹⁰
Udānālaṅkāra (Tocharian)	cf fragment 16b4-6	E Sieg 1949:29. ¹¹
Musā,vāda Sutta	It 1.3.5	Those rejecting the hereafter are liable to deliberately lying (related to Ciñcā [2.1.1], ItA 86 f)

2.3 THE HERETICAL WANDERERS' PLOT

2.3.1 The Udāna (U 4.8) and its commentary

2.3.1.1 A canonical account of the Sundarī story is given in **the Sundarī Sutta** (U 4.8).¹² While this account is mainly instructive in the Dharma sense, its commentary gives us very interesting narrative details that are worth our attention, such as the Buddha's personal background [2.3.1.3]. Otherwise, the Sundarī stories in the other sources share the same narrative drift—with another important exception: while Dhammapāla (UA) reports that, as a result of the wanderers' smear campaign, the sangha, too, is publicly abused, while the other sources (Buddhaghosa) report the abuses as directed *only* to the Buddha.

The Sundarī Sutta gives us the impression that *only* sangha members—the recluses, disciples of the Sakyan sons (*samaṇā sakyā, puttiyā*) (U 43)—are the victim of abuse by those who spread the rumours,

⁶ DhA 13.9/3:178-182; J 4:187 f (story of present almost identical to J 472 intro); ItA 86 f (ad It 1.3.5). For Chin parallels, see Analayo 2011:507 n321.

⁷ See, eg, Feer's (dated) comparative study of Ciñcā and Sundarī, *Journal Asiatique* 9,9 Mar-Apr 1897:288-317.

⁸ A summary of the Buddha's past bad karmas (done before he was a Bodhisattva—from the **Kamma, pilotikā**, Ap 1:299 f)—is listed at UA 263-266. [2.3.2.10]

⁹ Cf Leon Feer's (dated) comparative study of Ciñcā and Sundarī, "Cinca-mānavikā Sundarī," *Journal Asiatique* 9,9 Mar-Apr 1897:288-317. He suggests (316) that the two stories could have been derived from a single event.

¹⁰ P V Bapat, "The Arthapada-Sūtra Spoken by the Buddha," *Visva-Bharati Annals* part 1 (vol 1, 1945:135-227) & part 2 (vol 3, 1950:1-109).

¹¹ E Sieg et al, *Tocharische Sprachreste, Sprache B, Die Udānālaṅkāra Fragmente*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1949.

¹² U 4.8/43-45 (SD 49.23).

and by those who believe them or, for any reason, dislike them. However, if we consider the insidious plot of the heretical wanderers, it is the Buddha himself that they see as the source of their losses. In other words, at least, in the Sundarī Sutta, we should understand *samaṇā sakya,puttiyā* as being inclusive of the Buddha, too.¹³

Of the two accounts, then, Dhammapāla’s account—where the Buddha is the main accused and the sangha, too, is accused on account of him—is the more complete account.

2.3.1.2 Unlike the other commentarial accounts (attributed to Buddhaghosa), Dhammapāla’s **Udāna Commentary** (UA) account [2.2], besides explaining **the Sundarī Sutta** (U 4.8),¹⁴ recounts in helpful detail the significance of the dastardly plot of the heretical wanderers. He begins by explaining thus:

“These wanderers of other sects, whose gains and respect were destroyed on account of the arising of the Buddha, were simply overwhelmed by envy on seeing the vast and unlimited gains and honour accumulating for the Blessed One and the community of monks, as stated in the commentary on the Akkosaka Sutta handed down to us—they gathered together and consulted one another.”¹⁵ (UA 256 f)

2.3.1.3 Dhammapāla (UA) elaborates on the Buddha’s remarkable person and life, and on his ancient and noble lineage that goes back unbroken to Mahā,sammata, “the great elect,” himself as well as his other noble qualities and marvelous characteristics.¹⁶ Dhammapāla highlights the reasons for **the Buddha’s** charisma. Further, it was rumoured amongst the wanderers that, physically, the Buddha was “exceedingly good-looking, god-like, tender—one who would be attached upon obtaining a woman equal in beauty to him” (*abhirūpo deva,samo taruṇo, attano sama,rūpaṃ mātu,gāmaṃ labhitvā sajjeyya*).

Sundarī, “still in her youth, exceedingly beautiful, accomplished in gracefulness” (*paṭhama,vaye thitā abhirūpā sobhagga-p,pattā ca*), in the eyes of the decadent heretical wanderers, was the right match, hedonistically speaking, for the Buddha—and so they recruited her for their malicious plot against him (UA 257).

2.3.1.4 The way the heretical wanderers induced Sundarī into volunteering as the Buddha’s temptress is an interesting study in the psychology of **emotional blackmail** by invoking in her: fear, obligation and guilt (FOG).¹⁷ When Sundarī approached and greeted them, they coldly acknowledged her and then remained silent. Troubled by their silence, she repeatedly addressed them, asking:

“Have I offended you in any way? Why do you not reply?”

“Why are you so indifferent when we are being antagonized?”

“Who is antagonizing you?”

“But do you not see the recluse Gotama going about antagonizing us, hurting out gain and respect?”

“What may I do in this connection?”

“In that case, you should go to the vicinity of Jeta’s grove and then speak to the people like this” (UA 257 f)

¹³ On *sakya,puttiya*, see U 4.8/43 passim @ SD 49.23 (2).

¹⁴ See SD 49.23.

¹⁵ *Te hi añña,titthiyā buddh’uppādato paṭṭhāya sayam hata,lābha,sakkārā heṭṭhā akkosa,sutta,vaṇṇanāyaṃ āgata,nayena bhagavato bhikkhu,saṅghassa ca uḷāraṃ aparimitaṃ lābha,sakkāraṃ pavattamānaṃ disvā issā,pakatā ekato hutvā sammantayimsu* (UA 256). The “commentary to the Akkosa Sutta” is clearly that at UA 112-115 on **Sakkāra S** (U 2.4), the name given in most MSS and their comys. Although there is an **Akkosa S** (S 7.2/1:161) = **Akkosaka Bhāra,dvāja S** (SD 84.2), it deals with a very different topic. We can only conclude that Dhammapāla knew U 2.4 as Akkosa S. See UA:M 2:707 n668.

¹⁶ UA 256 f. The title of the mythical first king elected by the early humans as recounted in **Aggañña S** (D 3:93). The Commentaries and Chronicles mention Mahā Sammata as the *name* of the first king of the Solar Race, ancestors (among others) of the Sakya rulers; hence, of Siddhattha Gotama (the Buddha) (J 2:311, 3:454; Mahv 2.1 ff; Dīpv 3.1 ff; MAT 122 ff).

¹⁷ **Emotional blackmail** and FOG, terms coined by psychotherapist Susan Forward, are about controlling people in relationships and the theory that fear, obligation and guilt (“FOG”) are the transactional dynamics at play between the controller and the person being controlled. Her ground-breaking book, *Betrayal of Innocence* appeared in 1978. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emotional_blackmail.

2.3.1.5 The Commentary notes that the heretical wanderers then told her that she was like a “relative” to them, and that as a relative she should do them a favour—that is, help them to discredit the Buddha. “Like a doe whose leg is snared by a creeper,” she fatefully replied that, as a relative, she was ready even to sacrifice her life for them. She was instructed to frequent the vicinity of Jeta’s grove.

When the people were leaving Jeta’s grove after listening to the Buddha’s teaching and heading back into the city, she would be seen, bearing “garlands, scents, betel and mouthwash,” heading for Jeta’s grove. When anyone asked, she told them she was meeting the Buddha to spend the night with him in his fragrant cell. (UA 258 f)

2.3.1.6 After a few days, the depraved wanderers hired some debauched persons to kill Sundarī and hide her body in the heap of withered garlands and rubbish near the fragrant cell. After Sundarī’s death, they raised an outcry, reporting to the king that Sundarī was missing.

A search was made and her body was found near the Buddha’s fragrant cell. Placing Sundarī’s body on a litter, they went about the city, from street to street, crying: “See the deed of the recluses, sons of the Sakya!”¹⁸ Others who were not noble disciples (not saints), believed the rumours and repeated them. Then, they went to the palace door. The king had the body placed in a charnel ground (*āmaka,susāna*)¹⁹ and kept it guarded. (UA 259)

2.3.1.7 When the monks informed the Buddha of the wanderers spreading those rumours, the Buddha replied that they should respond by saying, “One who speaks falsely goes to hell ...” (**Dh 306**) [2.3.2.3]. He further instructed the monks on this verse and on how to deal with such rumours. (UA 259)

2.3.1.8 King Pasenadi, on his part, sent out spies to ferret out the real culprits. The killers of Sundarī were then engaged in a drunken brawl, arguing over the fees they had obtained for this misdeed. Learning the truth from them, the king’s spies seized them and brought them before the king. When they confessed on who the real perpetrators are, the kings arrested the wanderers involved and punished them for homicide. With this, the good name of the Buddha and the sangha was restored, and they received even greater gains and honour from the populace. (UA 261 f)

2.3.1.9 Dhammapāla then asks: Why did the Buddha, with his omniscience, not reveal who the true culprits are? He gives the following reasons:

- (1) There is no need of informing noble disciples as they, being saints, very well know what to do.
- (2) The worldlings (those unawakened) are not given any explanation, too, because, those who do not believe in the Buddha would react negatively, and would then create bad karma for their own suffering for a long time.
- (3) Buddhas are not in the habit of speculating about what have not yet happened.
- (4) Equanimous about such accusations, the Buddha merely explains what is defiled without specifying anyone.²⁰
- (5) Once karma has found the opportunity for fruiting, it cannot be stopped.²¹ (UA 262 f)

¹⁸ *Passatha samaṇānaṃ sakya,puttiyānaṃ kammaṃ*. Masefield correctly tr *samaṇa sakya,puttā*, etc, as “the followers of the Sakyans’ Son” (note the plural “Sakyans”) (eg U:M 75; UA:M 627). We may, in fact, render this phrase more fully, but awkwardly, as “the recluses who are sons of the Sakyans,” which then, as a generic term, includes the Buddha, too. This applies at least in this context and in that of the Sundarī S.

¹⁹ Lit “carrion cemetery,” this phrase is comy, not found in the canon. The older and commoner term for “charnel ground” in the suttas is simply *susāna* (M 1:71, 207, 2:242, 3:8, 48; M 1:181, 269, 274, 346, 440×2, 441×2, 2:162, 226, 3:3×3, 35, 116×3, 117; A 1:241×2, 2:210, 3:92, 100, 221, 4:437, 5:207; Sn 186; Tha 467; V 1: 15, 50, 61, 282×8, 283, 2:227. 231, 235, 3:58; Vbh 224, 251; Pug 59, 68). In the suttas, it is part of a stock for places conducive for meditation.

²⁰ *Parānuddesikam eva hi bhagavā saṅkilesa,pakkhaṃ vibhāveti*. The word *parānuddesika* = *para*, “others” + *anuddesika*, “without any special reference to (without pointing out),” ie, without specifying anyone. Cf *anuddesika* + *uddesika* (VvA 81) and *anuddesika* + *att’uddesika* (VvA 241): Masefield tr the former as “non-referentially” + “referentially” (VvA:M 241) and the latter as “non-referentially” and “by way of reference to himself” (VvA:M 368). CPD define *anuddesika* (sv) as “without any special aim or intention” (SnA 1:29,14 = VA 2:444,4).

The meaning of the last statement is that when a bad karma has started operating, it will take its course, so that it impossible to stop. However, it will affect different people differently. The wise will let it pass, while the foolish only suffer further by creating more bad karma [2.3.2.10]. Dhammapāla then quotes **Dh 127**:

*Na anta,likkhe na samudda,majjhe
na pabbatānaṃ vivaraṃ pavissa
na vijjati so jagati-p,padeso
yattha-ṭ,ṭhito mucceyya papa,kammā*

Neither in the sky nor mid-ocean,
nor by entering the clefts of mountains:
there is no place in the world
abiding wherein one is free from bad karma.

(Dh 127)²² (UA 262)²³

2.3.1.10 Dhammapāla’s narrow statement on karmic fruits [2.3.2.9 (5)] serves as a warning for what follows, that is, his summary of **the Pubba,kamma,piloti(kā)**, a late Apadāna work recounting 14 of the Buddha’s “past bad karmas,” committed before he was a Bodhisattva. The karmic remnants (*kamma,pilotikāni*)²⁴ still affect the Buddha (and the arhats)—but only bodily, not mentally—when the conditions are right. However, they are able to bear them with equanimity until they pass. They can, of course, get into dhyana to lessen the negative effects on their bodies, if they wish to.

According to the **Pubba,kamma,piloti(kā)** (Ap 1:229 f), the Bodhisattva was once a pleasure-seeker named Munāli (UA 263). One day, he saw Surabhi, a pratyeka-buddha, putting on his outer robe just outside the city. A woman was walking nearby, and Munāli said in jest, “Look, this recluse is no celibate, but a rake!” It was this malicious utterance that ripened as karmic retribution to the Buddha, that is, the abuses he has to face in connection with Sundarī.²⁵

2.3.2 The Dhammapada commentarial account

2.3.2.1 **The Dhammapada Commentary** account [2.2] opens with Buddhaghosa (the Commentary author) saying that the Buddha and the sangha were receiving “gains and honour like the mighty flood at the confluence of the five great rivers.” The sectarian heretics (*titthiyā*), on account of this, suffered a reversal of fortune—that is, on account of the rising popularity of the Buddha and his sangha. The sectarian heretics became “lustreless like fireflies at sunrise”²⁶ (DhA 3:474). So, they gathered together and decided to hatch an insidious plot to discredit the Buddha and the sangha.

2.3.2.2 Using **emotional blackmail** (fear, obligation and guilt) [2.3.2.4], they impressed on the devout and impressionable young Sundarī that the Buddha was depriving them of gain and honour. They praised her beauty and youth, explaining to her how she would be able to bring disgrace to the Buddha with rumours amongst the populace, and so deprive him of his gains and honour. In that way, they would regain their gains and honour (DhA 3:475).

Sundarī eagerly agreed to what she saw as her pious duty, and pretended to visit Jeta’s grove and telling people who asked that she was having an affair with the Buddha. After a few days, the wanderers (without her knowledge) had her killed, and dumped her body in a refuse heap near the fragrant cell. Then, the wanderers raised an outcry, so that the king had to investigate.

When the body was found, the wanderers loudly claimed that the “recluses who are Gotama’s disciples” (*samaṇassa gotamassa sāvaka*) had killed Sundarī to hide their Teacher’s misdeed. They put her

²¹ *Kammaṇ ca kat’okāsaṃ na sakkā nivattetuṃ*. This is, of course, Dhammapāla’s own narrow def of karmic results. Any kind of bad karmic result (except those of the 5 heinous acts, *ānantarika kamma*), can at least be lessened or even changed with enough metta: see SD 2.10 (2) & SD 3.9 (7.2.3). On the 5 heinous karma, see SD 46.19 (3.1).

²² Dh 127 is also at UA 295; PvA 104; Miln 150; DhsA 273; Udāna,varga 9.5 (Karma) (ed Bernhard); Divyāvādāna p561 (ed Cowell & Neil).

²³ US 262, tr in UA:M 631.

²⁴ See UA:M 713 n768.

²⁵ **Pubba,kamma,piloti(kā)** (“The strands (or rags) of past karma”; Ap 387/1:299-301) is a collection of 12 stories related to the Buddha’s past karma before he was a Bodhisattva [2.2 Udāna n]: see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, Singapore, 2002b, 2013 ch 23.

²⁶ *Hata,lābha,sakkārā añña,titthiyā sūriy’uggamana,kāle khajj’opanakā viya nippabhā hutvā* (DhA 3:474).

body on a litter and paraded it in the city streets, proclaiming, “See the deed of the recluses who are the Sakyas’ sons” and so on (*passatha samañānaṃ sakyā,puttiyānaṃ kamman’ti,ādīni vatvā*). The wanderers’ plot seemed to be working. (DhA 3:477)

2.3.2.3 When the monks report the matter to the Buddha, he told them to reprove the wrong-doers by simply saying:

*Abhūta,vādī nirayaṃ upeti
yo cāpi katvā na karomīti c’āha
ubho’pi te pecca samā bhavanti
nihīna,kammā manujā parattha.*

One who speaks falsely goes to hell,
so does the one who, having done, says I did not.
After death, both become the same,
men of base karma in the hereafter.²⁷

(Dh 306 = Sn 661 = It 42; quoted at J 285)²⁸ [2.2]

2.3.2.4 King Pasenadi sent out his men, instructing them, “Find out if someone else caused Sundarī’s death!” (*sundariyā aññehi mārita,bhāvaṃ jānāthāti*). The king’s men found the culprits drinking away the money they received for murdering Sundarī, and found out the truth, which exposed the wanderers’ plot. The wanderers involved were arrested and faced punishment for murder. As for the Buddha, the honour shown him grew even more. (DhA 3:477)

2.3.3 The Sutta Nipāta Commentary says that for 7 days, the Buddha stays in his fragrant cell, not going into the city for alms. Ānanda even suggests to him that they go to another city. The Buddha tells Ānanda that they should not run away from a false report, and that there are always others who would again plot similar mischiefs. The Buddha utters **Dh 306** [2.3.2.3], and then declares that in 7 days’ time, the whole matter would settle. (SnA 519 f)

2.3.4 It is at this point that the king speaks with Ānanda, as recorded in **the Bāhitika Sutta** (M 88). The king then sends out spies who, within a week, find the murderers quarrelling amongst themselves after some drinks. They are seized and brought before the king, and they confess their role. The king sends for the guilty sectarians who then confess their crime. They are punished for it.

3 Related suttas

3.0 The Duṭṭh’atṭhaka Sutta (Sn 4.3) [3.1] and **the Maṇi,sūkara Jātaka** (J 285) [3.2] are taught in this connection.

3.1 THE DUṬṬH’ATṬHAKA SUTTA (Sn 4.3)

3.1.1 The Commentary to this Sutta gives an account of Sundarī which is identical to the Dhammapada Commentary version, that is, the purpose of the plot is to discredit the Buddha (SnA 518 f). [2.2]

3.1.2 The Chinese version of the Atṭhaka,vagga, in its introduction to its parallel version of the Duṭṭh’atṭhaka Sutta, gives an almost identical plot (to discredit the Buddha) (T198 @ T4.176c3) [2.2].

SD 49.12(3.1)

Duṭṭh’atṭhaka Sutta

The Eights Discourse on the Bad | **Sn 4.3** = Sn 780-787 = Sn no 41/153 f
Traditional: Sn 4.3 = (Khuddaka Nikāya 5) Sutta Nipāta 4, Atṭhaka Vagga 3
Theme: The awakened holds no views and is troubled by none

780 *Vadanti ve²⁹ duṭṭha,manā’pi eke³⁰
atho’pi ve³¹ saccamanā vadanti*

Some who are bad-minded talk,
others talk, too, thinking it to be true.

²⁷ Comys say that this line refers to the hell state (DhA 3:478; SnA 478; ItA 1:177)

²⁸ **Dh 306** qu at U 4.8/45,10. It recurs as **Sn 661** in **Kokaliya S** (Sn 3.10/127). Parallels are Patna Dh 114 (Cone, JPTS 13, 1989:132; Roth, “Text of the Patna Dharmapada,” in *The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition* (seminar), Göttingen, 1980:107). Skt & Tib Udāna,varga in Bernhard, Göttingen, 1965:191. Chin versions: T210 (T4.570a7); T212 (T4.663c29); T213 (T4.781b3). For other refs, see Analayo 2011:508 n322.

²⁹ Be ce

³⁰ Ce etc.

- vādañ ca jātaṃ muni no upeti
tasmā munī n'atthi khilo kuhiñci*
- But the sage enters not into any dispute that's arisen:
therefore, the sage has no mental barrenness³² at all.
- 781** *Sakañ hi diṭṭhiṃ katham accayeyya
chandānuniṭṭho ruciyā niviṭṭho
sayam samattāni pakubbamāno
yathā hi jāneyya tathā vadeyya*
- How can one's own view, indeed,
when led on by desire, stuck in prejudice,
putting it all together himself?
For, he only speaks as he knows.
- 782** *Yo attano sīla,vatāni jantu
anānupuṭṭho 'va paresa³³ pāva³⁴
anariya,dhammaṃ kusalā tam āhu
yo ātumānaṃ sayam eva pāva¹⁰*
- One who tells his own virtues and vows,
who speaks thus unasked by others—
that is an ignoble nature, say the skillful,
that he himself speaks so of himself.
- 783** *Santo ca bhikkhu abhinibbut'atto
iti'han'ti sīlesu akatthamāno
tam ariya,dhammaṃ kusalā vadanti
yass'ussadā n'atthi kuhiñci loke [154]*
- But, a monk who is calm, with self fully quenched,
not boasting of his virtues, “Thus am I!”—
this is noble nature, say the skillful,
that he is not puffed up at all in the world.
- 784** *Pakappitā sañkhatā yassa dhammā
purakkhatā³⁵santi avīvadātā³⁶
yad attani passati ānisaṃsaṃ
tam nissito kuppā,paṭicca,santiṃ*
- Whose ideas are conceived, conditioned,
preferred, but unclean [unpurified],
he sees that an advantage for himself—
that peace which relies on the unstable.
- 785** *Diṭṭhī,nivesā na hi svātivattā
dhammesu niccheyya samuggahītaṃ
tasmā naro tesu nivesanesu
nirassatī ādiyati ca³⁷ dhammaṃ*
- For, not easily overcome is clinging to views,
one having grasped them from many things—
thus, from amongst these clings,
takes up or lays down an idea.
- 786** *Dhonassa hi n'atthi kuhiñci loke
pakappitā diṭṭhi bhavābhavesu
māyañ ca mānañ ca pahāya dhono
sa kena gaccheyya anūpayo so*
- For, one purified, no where in the world,
forms any view about this or that state.
Purified, he has given up deceit and conceit³⁸—
not drawn to anything, by what would he go?³⁹
- 787** *Upayo hi dhammesu upeti vādaṃ
anūpayam kena kathaṃ vadeyya*
- For, one “involved” falls into dispute about things:
how can the uninvolved speak of anything?

³¹ Ce ce.

³² Mental barrenness or obstruction (*khila*): see **Ceto,khila S** (M 16 = A 10.14) @ SD 32.14 (2.2).

³³ Be:Ka *parassa*.

³⁴ So Be; Ce Ee Se *pāvā*.

³⁵ Ce *purekkhatā*.

³⁶ Comy: *avīvadātā'ti avodāta* (SnA 2:521,27). For etym, see Sn:N 332 n521.

³⁷ Ee *ādiyati-icca*.

³⁸ “Deceit and conceit” (*māyañ ca mānañ ca*): I borrow this from Jayawickrama (Sn:J).

³⁹ “Not drawn to anything,” *anūpayo* = *an* + *upaya* (with metrical lengthening), “not approaching, not free from attachment, independent” (S 1:181,15*; A 2:24,15*; It 122,13*= Sn 786, 897); cf Sn 787. Comys explain that he falls not under this cause or that condition or any reason (*so hetu n'atthi paccayo n'atthi kāraṇam n'atthi yena gaccheyya*, Nm 1:81,13); that he goes about “free of the fault of lust and so on” (*rād'ādīnaṃ dosaṃ kena gaccheyya*) and so falls not into any low destinies, that is, the hells etc (an allusion to the arhat) (SnA 2:522,9).

*attā nirattā⁴⁰ na hi tassa atthi
adhosi so diṭṭhim idh'eva sabban'ti⁴²*

For him there is neither taking up nor laying down:⁴¹
he has here rejected all views whatsoever.

— evaṃ —

SD 49.12(3.2)

Mani,sūkara Jātaka

The Birth-story of the Boar named Manī | J 285/2:415-418

Traditional: J 3.4.5 = (Khuddaka Nikāya 10) Jātaka 3, Tika Nipāta 4, Abbhantara Vagga 5

Theme: The virtuous cannot be sullied in any way

[This story is told by the Buddha in reference to an attempt by some heretic wanderers to discredit the Buddha by a charade of Sundarī being seduced, and which, in turn, brought about her own death.]⁴³

1 In the past, when king Brahmadata was ruling in Benares, the Bodhisattva was born amongst the villagers, into a brahmin family. When he came of age, seeing the dangers in sensual desires, he left home for the Himalayan region. After crossing three mountain-ranges, he became an ascetic, living in a leaf-hut.

2 Near his hut there was a crystal cave, in which lived some thirty boars. A certain lion roamed near the cave, [416] and his reflection could be seen in the crystal. The boars saw the reflection and they were so terrified that they lost flesh and blood.⁴⁴

3 They thought, “These reflections are there because of the crystal’s clarity. We will dirty it so that it will lose its colour!”

So, they brought some mud from a pool nearby and smeared the crystal with it. But as they rubbed the crystal, it only became more clear.

4 Seeing no way out, they thought: “We will ask the ascetic how we may sully this crystal. They approached the Bodhisattva, saluted him and standing at one side, uttered these two verses:

5 *Dariyā satta vassāni
timsamattā vasāmase
Haññāma maṇino ābham
iti no mantaram ahu*

For seven years, in this cave,
we thirty have lived.
We wish to destroy the crystal’s light—
please show us your wisdom in this. J v460

6 *Yāvatā maṇim ghaṃsāma
bhiyyo vodāyate maṇi
Idaṇ ca dāni pucchāma
kim kiccaṃ idha maññasīti.*

Much as we rubbed the crystal,
the ever cleaner it became.
Today, we ask you about this:
What do you think here needs to be done? J v461

⁴⁰ So Be; mostly *nirattam*.

⁴¹ “There is neither taking up nor laying down ... “ (*attā nirattā ... n’atthi*), ie, of views: a wordplay, contrasting with 785d, “(he) takes up or lays down an idea” (*nirassati ādiyati ca dhammam*). Here, *atta* is pp of *ādiyati*, “(he) takes up,” while *niratta* is pp of *nirassati*, “(he) throws off, lets go” (Skt *nirasta*, “cast away”). Cf Sn 935 (where *atta,daṇḍa* means “with raised rod” & Dh 406b (*atta,daṇḍesu nibbutim*, “amongst the violent [those with raised rods], he is cool(ed)”; cf Dh 209, 406. The phrase, *atta niratta*, recurs at Sn 858c, 919d and 1098c. Comy interprets the phrase as alluding to eternalist view (*sassata,diṭṭhi*) and annihilationist view (*uccheda,diṭṭhi*) (Nm 1:83,25 f), but this is being too technical. For scholarly discussion, see Sn:N 380 n935 & n787.

⁴² So Be Ce Se; Ee *sabbā’ti*

⁴³ The commentarial glosses have been omitted.

⁴⁴ “Lost flesh and blood,” *appa,maṃsa,lohita ahesuṃ*, ie, they became lean and less vigorous.

7 Then, the Bodhisattva explaining it to them, uttered the third verse, thus:

<p>8 <i>Ayam maṇi veḷuriyo akāco vimalo subho Nāssa sakkā sirim hantum apakkamatha sūkarāti.</i></p>	<p>This crystal is beryl: it is not glass, but spotlessly beautiful. You will not be able to destroy its radiance— Boars, just go away!</p>
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9 And so they did upon hearing the answer.

The Bodhisattva cultivated dhyana and crossed over into the brahma world.

10 Having completed this Dharma teaching, the Teacher identified the birth-story:
“At that time, I was myself the ascetic.”

— — —

The Discourse on the Foreign Cloth

M 88

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was dwelling in Anātha,piṇḍika’s park monastery, in Jeta’s grove, outside Sāvattthī.

King Pasenadi invites Ānanda

2 Then, early at dawn, the venerable Ānanda, having dressed himself, taking bowl and robe, entered Sāvattthī for alms. Having gone on his almsround, having taken his almsfood, after his meal, he went to the mansion of Migāra’s mother in the Eastern Park for the day-rest.

3 Now, at that time, king Pasenadi of Kosala, riding his bull elephant, One-lotus (*eka,puṇḍarīka*), was leaving Sāvattthī at midday.

Now, king Pasenadi of Kosala saw the venerable Ānanda coming from afar. Seeing him, he addressed his chief minister (*mahāmacca*) Sirivaḍḍha:⁴⁵

“Master Sirivaḍḍha, isn’t that the venerable Ānanda?”

“Yes, maharajah, it is the venerable Ānanda.”

4 Then, king Pasenadi of Kosala addressed a certain man:

“Come, my good man, approach the venerable Ānanda in my name and bow with your head at his feet, saying thus:

‘Bhante, king Pasenadi of Kosala bows with his head at the venerable Ānanda’s feet.

And then say thus:

‘If, bhante, the venerable Ānanda has no urgent business to be done, it is good if the venerable Ānanda [113] wait for a moment, out of compassion!’”

5 “Yes, sire, replied the man. He approached the venerable Ānanda, saluted him, and stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, the man said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Bhante, king Pasenadi of Kosala bows with his head at the venerable Ānanda’s feet, and says thus:

‘If, bhante, the venerable Ānanda has no urgent business to be done, it is good if the venerable Ānanda wait for a moment, out of compassion!’”

6 The venerable Ānanda consented by his silence.

⁴⁵ The name Sirivaḍḍha apparently recurs in **Sirivaḍḍha S** (S 47.29/5:176), where he refers to a sick householder visited by Ānanda.

King Pasenadi sits with Ānanda

6.2 Then, king Pasenadi of Kosala, having gone by elephant as far as the ground allowed, descended and approached the venerable Ānanda on foot.

Having approached the venerable Ānanda, he saluted him and stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, king Pasenadi of Kosala said to the venerable Ānanda:

“If, bhante, the venerable Ānanda has no urgent business to be done, it is good if the venerable Ānanda, out of compassion, go to the Acira,vaṭī river bank!”

7 The venerable Ānanda consented by his silence.

Then, the venerable Ānanda went to the Acira,vaṭī river bank, approached the foot of a certain tree, spread out his mat and sat down.

7.2 Then, king Pasenadi of Kosala, having gone by elephant as far as the ground allowed, descended and approached the venerable Ānanda on foot.

Having approached the venerable Ānanda, he saluted him and stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, king Pasenadi of Kosala said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Here, bhante. Let the venerable Ānanda sit on an elephant rug.”⁴⁶

“There’s no need for that, maharajah, please sit down! I am sitting on my own seat.”

Socially acceptable conduct

8 King Pasenadi of Kosala sat down on the prepared seat, and then said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Bhante Ānanda, would the Blessed One act bodily⁴⁷ [engage in bodily conduct] in such a way that he would be censured⁴⁸ by recluses and brahmins?”⁴⁹

“No, indeed, maharajah, the Blessed One would not act bodily in any way so that he would be censured by wise⁵⁰ recluses and brahmins.” [114]

8.2 “Then, bhante Ānanda, would the Blessed One speak⁵¹ [engage in verbal conduct] in such a way that he would be censured by recluses and brahmins?”

“No, indeed, maharajah, the Blessed One would not *speak* in any way so that he would be censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins.”

⁴⁶ *Idha bhante āyasmā ānando hatth’atthare nisīdatūti*. A similar context occurs in Raṭṭha,pāla S (M 80/2:66,4). *Hatth’atthara* is also found in the stock: *hatth’atthara ass’atthara rath’atthara*, “elephant-rug, horse-rug, chariot-rug” (V 1:192,9+17, 2:163,24; D 1:7,10, 65,36; A 1:181,23); hence, its sense is clear. Comy on Raṭṭha,pāla S (M 80/3:66,4) says that a thin elephant-rug “padded (thickened) with flowers” (*bahala,puppha*), having been folded double, then spread. It is thus distinguished (*abhilakkhita*) so that it would be improper to sit on it uninvited (MA 3:305). Prob for this reason, M:C (Chalmers) mistranslates it as “clump of flowers.”

⁴⁷ As at V 2:248.

⁴⁸ *Opārambho*, “open to criticism, censurable, offensive, ‘a slur on (the offender)’ (M:H),” Comy explains it as “reproach at faults worthy of reproof” (*upārambham dosam āropanā’raho*, MA 3:346,17), alluding to the story of murderous wanderers: see (2.3).

⁴⁹ *Kim nu kho bhante ānanda so bhagavā tathā,rūpaṃ kaya,samācāraṃ samācareyya, yvāssa kaya,samācāro opārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehīti*. This reading follows M:Be 2:316,6 & M:Ce 2:542,10 where king refers to only censure by “recluses and brahmins” (*samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi*). However, Ānanda, in his reply, qualifies them as “wise recluses and brahmins” (*samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhi*). This important difference is missed in M:Ee 2:133,33 & M:Se 2:500,8, which add “wise” (*viññūhi* etc) throughout. Pasenadi’s questions then give it a more measured tone, and Ānanda is simply answering his questions. Then, there would be no need for Pasenadi to show his appreciation at Ānanda’s acumen to “have fully conveyed with an answer to the question!” [§9]. The Chin version concurs with Be & Ce readings: MĀ 214 records Pasenadi mentioning only “recluses and brahmins,” but Ānanda replies with the qualification “intelligent and wise,” 聰明智慧 *cōng ming zhī huì* (MĀ 214 @ T1.798a12).

⁵⁰ “By wise ... ,” *viññūhi*. They are those who carefully examine the matter before coming into any proper conclusion. Further, they are those who uphold wholesome universal values (of life, happiness, freedom and truth) and are morally upright themselves.

⁵¹ *Tathā,rūpaṃ vacī,samācāraṃ samācareyya*.

8.3 “Then, bhante Ānanda, would the Blessed One think⁵² [engage in mental conduct] in such a way that he would be censured by recluses and brahmins?”⁵³

“No, indeed, maharajah, the Blessed One would not *think* in any way so that he would be censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins.”

9 “It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvelous, bhante! What we have not been able to fully convey with a question, bhante, you, bhante Ānanda, have fully conveyed with an answer to the question!⁵⁴

We, bhante, do not rely on⁵⁵ the praise or blame of others by the foolish, ignorant and inexperienced, who speak without having investigated nor scrutinized⁵⁶ the matter, as this lacks any essence of it.⁵⁷

We, however, bhante, rely on the praise or blame of others by the wise, intelligent and experienced,⁵⁸ who speak after having investigated or scrutinized the matter, as this has the essence of it.

THE 3 UNWHOLESOME DOORS OF KARMA

Bodily conduct censured by the wise

10 Bhante Ānanda, what kind of **bodily conduct** is censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins?”⁵⁹

“The bodily conduct that is unwholesome (*akusala*), maharajah.”⁶⁰

10.2 “What kind of bodily conduct is unwholesome, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct that is blameworthy (*sāvajja*),⁶¹ maharajah.”

10.3 “What kind of bodily conduct is blameworthy, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct that is afflictive [that causes affliction] (*sa,vyābajjha*),⁶² maharajah.”

⁵² *Tathā,rūpaṃ mano,samācāraṃ samācareyya. Vīmaṃsaka S* (M 47) records the Buddha as teaching how some one unable to read minds should examine if the Buddha’s actions or speech are impure, mixed or impure (SD 35.6).

⁵³ **Analayo** make this helpful observation: “When evaluating this difference, the treatment in MĀ 214 would seem sufficient in the present context. The background to the king’s inquiry is an allegation of murder, so that it would be natural for the king to inquire about bodily conduct. A case could still be made for verbal conduct, since the speaking of falsehood in the sense of a denial to have anything to do with the murder could also be pertinent. Once this much has been ascertained, however, to continue examining mental conduct would not add further proof to the king’s inquiry. In the discourses, it is a standard procedure to present conduct from the perspective of its bodily, verbal, and mental aspects, so that it could easily have happened during the process of transmission that an occurrence of bodily conduct on its own, or perhaps of bodily and verbal conduct, was ‘completed’ so as to cover mental conduct as well. (2011:509 n326)

⁵⁴ Pasenadi’s jubilation here is on account of Ānanda pointing out to him (Pasenadi) that it is the judgement of the “wise,” not the “unwise” that really matters (MA 3:346.21).

⁵⁵ “Do not rely on ... any essence,” *sarato paccāgacchāma*, lit “we do not fall back on ... for essence,” ie, there is no value in the testimony of the foolish and ignorant.

⁵⁶ “Without having investigated nor scrutinized,” *ananuvicca अपariyogāhetvā*. Cf **Āyācana Vagga** (A 2.11.12/-1:89,8+9+20+21+30+31, 90,5+6), **Khata S 1** (A 4.3/2:3,3-6+15-17), **Avaññāraha S** (A 4.83/2:84,11-14+20-24).

⁵⁷ *Ye te bhante bālā avyattā ananuvicca अपariyogāhetvā paresaṃ vaṇṇaṃ vā avaññaṃ vā bhāsanti, na mayam taṃ sārato paccāgacchāma.*

⁵⁸ “The wise, intelligent and experienced,” *paññitā viyattā medhāvino*. An elaboration on “the wise” (*viññū*) [§8.1 + n].

⁵⁹ *Katamo pana bhante ānanda kaya,samācāro opārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhīti*. “Conduct,” *samācāra* = *saṃ* + *ācāra* (D 2:279, 3:106, 217; M 2:113; A 2:200, 239, 4:82; Sn 279; V 2:248, 3:184).

⁶⁰ **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114) instructs in detail how we should avoid unwholesome and cultivate the wholesome (SD 39.8).

⁶¹ *Sāvajja* = *sa* (“with”) + *avajja* (“blameable, low, inferior”) (D 1:163, 2:215; M 1:119; S 5:66, 104 f; Sn 534; Pug 30, 41). Comy glosses as “having or with hate” (*sa,doso*, MA 3:347). **Cūḷa Kamma,vibhaṅga S** (M 135) answers such a question as “What is wholesome? What is unwholesome? What is blameable? What is blameless? What is to be cultivated? What is not to be cultivated? What kind of action will lead to harm and suffering for a long time? What kind of action will lead to good and happiness for a long time?” (M 135,17-18), SD 4.15. **Nagarōpama S** (A 7.63), too, has a similar theme (A 7.63/4:109-111), SD 52.13.

10.4 “What kind of bodily conduct is afflictive, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct whose fruit is suffering (*dukkha, vipāka*), maharajah.”⁶³

10.5 “What kind of bodily conduct has fruit that is suffering, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct, maharajah, that brings affliction to oneself, brings affliction to others, and brings affliction to both,⁶⁴

and, on account of which, unwholesome states increase, wholesome states decrease.

10.6 Such a bodily conduct, maharajah, is *censured* by wise recluses and brahmins.”⁶⁵

Verbal conduct censured by the wise

11 Bhante Ānanda, what kind of **verbal conduct** is *censured* by wise recluses and brahmins?”⁶⁶

“The verbal conduct that is unwholesome, maharajah.”

11.2 “What kind of verbal conduct is unwholesome, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct that is blameworthy, maharajah.”

11.3 “What kind of verbal conduct is blameworthy, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct that is afflictive, maharajah.”

11.4 “What kind of verbal conduct is afflictive, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct whose fruit is suffering, maharajah.”

11.5 “What kind of verbal conduct has fruit that is suffering, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct, maharajah, that brings affliction to oneself, brings affliction to others, and brings affliction to both,

and, on account of which, unwholesome states increase, wholesome states decrease.

11.6 Such a verbal conduct, maharajah, is *censured* by wise recluses and brahmins.”

Mental conduct censured by the wise

12 Bhante Ānanda, what kind of **mental conduct** is *censured* by wise recluses and brahmins?”⁶⁷

“The mental conduct that is unwholesome, maharajah.”

12.2 “What kind of mental conduct is unwholesome, bhante?” [115]

“The mental conduct that is blameworthy, maharajah.”

12.3 “What kind of mental conduct is blameworthy, bhante?”

“The mental conduct that is afflictive, maharajah.”

12.4 “What kind of mental conduct is afflictive, bhante?”

“The mental conduct whose fruit is suffering, maharajah.”

12.5 “What kind of mental conduct has fruit that is suffering, bhante?”

“The mental conduct, maharajah, that brings affliction to oneself, brings affliction to others, and brings affliction to both,

⁶² Comy glosses *sa, vyabajjha* as “having or with suffering” (*sa, dukkho*, MA 3:347). The sense is prob *psychological* and *aesthetic*, relating to whatever that conflicts with the good and true in us, conflicting against the beauty and truth of the Dharma. **Dvedhā Vitakka S** (M 19) deals with the two kinds of conduct, the afflictive, which should be avoided, and the unafflictive, which should be pursued (M 19), SD 61.1.

⁶³ **Mahā Dhamma, samādāna S** (M 46) teaches that there are 4 kinds of actions: those painful now with future painful results, those pleasant now with future painful results, those painful now with future pleasant results, and those pleasant now with future pleasant results (M 46, 14-17/1: 313-315), SD 59.11.

⁶⁴ *Yo kho mahārāja vacī, samācāro attā, vyābādhāya ’pi samvattati, para, vyābādhāya ’pi samvattati, ubhaya, vyābādhāy ’pi samvattati.* In **Amba, laṭṭhikā Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 61), the Buddha instructs the young Rāhula that such actions should be avoided, while those that do not harm self, others or both, should be pursued (M 61, 9-17/1: 415-417), SD 3.10.

⁶⁵ In **Kesa, puttiya S** (A 3.65), the Buddha declares that when we know that “These things are unwholesome. These things are blamable. These things are censured by the wise. These things, fully undertaken for oneself, bring about harm and suffering,” then, we should abandon them. (A 3.65, 3.2), SD 35.4a.

⁶⁶ *Katamo pana bhante ānanda kaya, samācāro opārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhīti.*

⁶⁷ *Katamo pana bhante ānanda mano, samācāro opārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhīti.*

And, on account of which, unwholesome states increase, wholesome states decrease.

12.6 Such a mental conduct, maharajah, is *censured* by wise recluses and brahmins.”

13 Now, bhante Ānanda, does the Blessed One praise the abandoning of all unwholesome states?”

“The Tathagata [thus-come], maharajah, is one who has abandoned all unwholesome states; **he is one accomplished in all wholesome states.**”⁶⁸ [§17.2]

THE 3 WHOLESOME DOORS OF KARMA

Bodily conduct not censured by the wise

14 Bhante Ānanda, what kind of **bodily conduct** is not censured by *wise*⁶⁹ recluses and brahmins?”⁷⁰

“The bodily conduct that is wholesome (*kusala*), maharajah.”

14.2 “What kind of bodily conduct is wholesome, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct that is blameless (*anavajja*), maharajah.”

14.3 “What kind of bodily conduct is blameless, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct that is not afflictive [that does not cause affliction] (*avyābajjha*), maharajah.”

14.4 “What kind of bodily conduct is not afflictive, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct whose fruit is happiness (*sukha, vipāka*), maharajah.”

14.5 “What kind of bodily conduct has fruit that is happiness, bhante?”

“The bodily conduct, maharajah, that brings no affliction to oneself, brings no affliction to others, and brings no affliction to both,⁷¹

And, on account of which, unwholesome states decrease, wholesome states increase.

14.6 Such a bodily conduct, maharajah, is not censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins.”⁷²

Verbal conduct not censured by the wise

15 Bhante Ānanda, what kind of **verbal conduct** is not censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins?”⁷³

“The verbal conduct that is wholesome, maharajah.”

15.2 “What kind of verbal conduct is wholesome, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct that is blameless, maharajah.”

15.3 “What kind of verbal conduct is blameless, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct that is not afflictive, maharajah.”

15.4 “What kind of verbal conduct is not afflictive, bhante?”

“The verbal conduct whose fruit is happiness, maharajah.”

11.5 “What kind of verbal conduct has fruit that is happiness, bhante?”

⁶⁸ *Sabbākusala, dhamma, pahīno kho mahā, rāja tathāgato kusala, dhamma, samannāgato 'ti*, as at §17.2. Comy says that Ānanda surpasses the question asked by Pasenadi, because he shows not only that the Buddha praises the abandoning of all unwholesome states, but that he acts in accordance with his word by having abandoned all unwholesome states, too: “As he does, so he speaks” (*yathā, kārī yathā, vādī*) (MA 3:347). This famous quote is found in: **Mahā Govinda S** (D 19,11/2:224, 229), SD 63.4, **Pāsādika S** (D 29,29.3/3:135), SD 40a.6; (**Tathāgata**) **Loka S** (A 4.23/2:24 = It 112), SD 15.7(2.1.2); Comy on Sn 1114, Posāla Māṇava Pucchā (Nc:Be 169).

⁶⁹ Henceforth, “wise” (*viññūhi*) is supplied throughout so that the closing phrase here reads *samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhi*, even where some MSS omit it.

⁷⁰ *Katamo pana bhante ānanda kaya, samācāro anopārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhīti.*

⁷¹ *Yo kho mahā, rāja kaya, samācāro n'ev'atta, vyābādhāya 'pi samvattati, na para, vyābādhāya 'pi samvattati, na ubhaya, vyābādhāya 'pi samvattati.*

⁷² In **Kesa, puttiya S** (A 3.65), the Buddha declares that when we know that “These things are wholesome. These things are not blameable, these things are praised by the wise. These things, fully undertaken for oneself, bring about good and happiness,” then, we should live cultivating them. (A 3.65,9.2), SD 35.4a.

⁷³ *Katamo pana bhante ānanda kaya, samācāro anopārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhīti.*

“The verbal conduct, maharajah, that brings no affliction to oneself, brings no affliction to others, and brings no affliction to both,

and, on account of which, unwholesome states decrease, wholesome states increase.

15.6 Such a verbal conduct, maharajah, is not censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins.”

Mental conduct not censured by the wise

16 Bhante Ānanda, what kind of **mental conduct** is *not* censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins?”⁷⁴

“The mental conduct that is wholesome, maharajah.” [116]

16.2 “What kind of mental conduct is wholesome, bhante?”

“The mental conduct that is blameless, maharajah.”

16.3 “What kind of mental conduct is blameless, bhante?”

“The mental conduct that is not afflictive, maharajah.”

16.4 “What kind of mental conduct is not afflictive, bhante?”

“The mental conduct whose fruit is happiness, maharajah.”

16.5 “What kind of mental conduct has fruit that is happiness, bhante?”

“The mental conduct, maharajah, that brings not affliction to oneself, brings no affliction to others, and brings no affliction to both,

and, on account of which, unwholesome states decrease, wholesome states increase.

16.6 Such a mental conduct, maharajah, is *not* censured by *wise* recluses and brahmins.”

17 Now, bhante Ānanda, does the Blessed One praise the cultivation [promotion] of all wholesome states?”⁷⁵

17.2 “*The Tathagata, maharajah, is one who has abandoned all unwholesome states; he is one who is accomplished in all wholesome states.*” [§13.2]

THE FOREIGN CLOTH

King Pasenadi exults

18 “It is wonderful, bhante! It is marvelous, bhante!

Bhante, we are delighted and satisfied with what is well said by the venerable Ānanda.”⁷⁶

18.2 And, bhante, we are so delighted and satisfied with what is well said by the venerable Ānanda, that, if the elephant jewel (*hatthi, ratana*)⁷⁷ were allowable for the venerable Ānanda, we would give the elephant jewel to the venerable Ānanda;

that, if the horse jewel (*assa, ratana*)⁷⁸ were allowable for the venerable Ānanda, we would give the horse jewel, too, to the venerable Ānanda;

⁷⁴ *Katamo pana bhante ānanda mano, samācāro anopārambho samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhīti.*

⁷⁵ *Kim pana bhante ānanda so bhagavā sabbesaṃ yeva kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ upasampadaṃ vaṇṇetīti.*

⁷⁶ *Acchariyaṃ bhante abbhutaṃ bhante, yāva subhāsitaṃ c’idaṃ bhante āyasmatā ānandena, iminā ca mayāṃ bhante āyasmato ānandassa subhāsitena attamanābhiraddhā.*

⁷⁷ Technically, the elephant jewel and the horse jewel (which follows) are the royal emblems of a wheel-turning monarch (*cakka, vatti*), but Pasenadi is not one. They are likely to be non-technical terms, before the *cakka, vatti* doctrine was introduced into the suttas. Hence, they simply refer to two of Pasenadi’s royal emblems. If this notion is correct, then the Sutta may prob date somewhere in the middle of the Buddha’s ministry, say during the 20th-40th years. See U Chakravarti, *The Social Dimensions of Early Buddhism*, 1987:152-158. [See foll n]

⁷⁸ The Chin version (MĀ 214 @ T1.799a14) mentions an ordinary elephant or horse, but adds cattle, sheep, women and gold, whereas the Sutta here mentions only the *hatthi, ratana* and the *assa, ratana* [see prec n]. In fact, in **Ayyikā S** (S 3.22/1:97,6) and its parallel SĀ 1227 (T2.335b18), Pasenadi similarly indicates that he is willing to give away these two treasures, a village’s revenue, even the country (*janapada*, which can also mean “country-side”), if this prevents his grandmother’s death. Other parallels to S 3.22—SĀ 2 54 (T2.392b6), EĀ 26.7 (T2.638b24), and T122 (T2.545b4), the sacrifice is merely a normal elephant or horse. Further, a related Skt fragment records that it is

that, if the village revenue (*gāma, vara*)⁷⁹ were allowable⁸⁰ for the venerable Ānanda, we would give the village revenue, too, to the venerable Ānanda;

18.3 But, we know, bhante, that this is not allowable for the venerable Ānanda.

18.4 Bhante, I have this **foreign cloth**,⁸¹ sent to me, inserted into the shaft of the royal parasol case, by Ajāta, sattu, son of the Vedehī lady [*vedehi, putta*], king of Magadha, measuring 16 cubits⁸² long and 8 cubits wide.⁸³

18.5 Bhante, let the venerable Ānanda accept this, out of compassion.”

“There’s no need, maharajah, our three robes are complete.” [117]

Pasenadi’s Acira, vatī parable

19 “Bhante, this river Acira, vatī that is seen by the venerable Ānanda and us—

when the clouds have rained down over the mountains, then this Acira, vatī overflows both its banks⁸⁴—even so, bhante, the venerable Ānanda can make for himself the triple robes⁸⁵ from this foreign cloth.

19.2 Bhante, as for the venerable Ānanda’s old robes, let him distribute it to colleagues in the holy life [with other brahmacharis].

19.3 In this way, too, surely this giving of ours will overflow, I say!⁸⁶

his *mother’s* death that Pasenadi would rather have prevented: Bechert & Wille, *Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden* (SHT) VI 1586, 1986:202. [See foll n.]

⁷⁹ The Thai tr of *gāma, vara* is บ้านสวย [*baan2 swei4*], which means “revenue village,” ie, a village (*gāma*) as a boon (*vara*). However, I take *gāma, vara* as chaṭṭhī-tappurisa (genitive cpd)—as *gāmassa varan’ti gāma, varam*—“the revenue of the village(s)” or, more simply, “village revenue.” We see such a privilege of fiefdom (*brahmadeya*) given, eg, by Bimbisāra to Ambatṭha (D 5,1 n), SD 22.8. However, in S 3.22/1:97,6 it is possible to render it as “prize village” or “valuable village.” [See prec n.]

⁸⁰ These rules are found in an ancient stock called “the short section on moral virtue” (*cūḷa, sīla*)—rules (14)-(15) respectively—found in all the first 13 suttas of the Dīgha, eg **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1.9/1:5), SD 25. Accepting revenue from a village by monastics goes against a number of rules, and is against the spirit of renunciation: see **Money and monastics**, SD 4.19-23.

⁸¹ “Foreign cloth,” *bāhitikā*. Comy explains that it is the “name” for a piece of cloth (*vattha*) made outside the kingdom (*bāhita, ratthe*) (MA 3:347). PED, however, derives *bāhitika* (sv) from *bāheti*, “to ward off,” that it refers to a mantle or wrapper that “keeps out” the cold or the wind. But, this is unattested. This *bāhitika*, however, is rather large—measuring **16 by 8** (*soḷasa, samā āyāmena aṭṭha, sama viṭṭhārena*). Note that Pasenadi tells Ānanda that he can make “the triple robes” (*ti, cīvara*) (rather than “3 robes”) from the cloth [§19.1+n]; hence, it is much larger than a robe. Comy says that the measurements refer to the cubit (*hattha*; Skt *hasta*) (MA 3:347,15). This is the distance between the elbow and the middle-finger-tip (ie, the forearm): see SD 49.3 (2.1.2.1) n. An ancient Indian cubit is prob about 18 in (1.14 cm). Hence, the cloth is about 24 ft (7.3 m) long and 12 ft (3.65 m) wide [foll n]. This is also reflected in the Chin version: 長十六肘, 廣八肘 *cháng shí liù zhǒu, guǎng bā zhǒu* (MĀ 214 @ T1.799a22). Cf Miln 317.

⁸² “Cubit,” *hattha* lit “hand” (the term used in Ñāṇamoli, *A Pali-English Glossary of Buddhist Technical Terms*, 1994:141), says Comy (MA 3:347).

⁸³ *Ayam me bhante bāhitikā rañṇā māgadhena ajāta, sattunā vedehi, puttana chatta, nāḷiyā* [so Ee Ke Se; Be Ce *vattha, nāḷiyā*] *pakkhipitvā pahitā soḷasa, samā āyāmena aṭṭha, samā vittārena*. “Hand,” *hattha*, says Comy (MA 3:347). This is the distance between the elbow and the middle-finger-tip (ie the forearm): see SD 49.3 (2.1.2.1) n. Cf Miln 317.

⁸⁴ *Ayam bhante acira, vatī nadī diṭṭhā āyasmatā c’eva ānandena amhehi ca, yadā upari, pabbate mahā, megho abhippavutṭho hoti. athāyam acira, vatī nadī ubhato kūlāni saṁvissandantī gacchati*. The flooded Aciravatī spilling its banks is proverbial: see **Te, vijja S** (D 13,24/1:244,13), SD 1.8. **Viḍḍabha Vatthu** recounts how prince Viḍḍabha and his army, after massacring the Sakyas, sleep on the Aciravatī banks, and are swept away when the river suddenly swells up (DhA 4.3/1:360,8). Cf Miln 36.

⁸⁵ “The triple robes,” *ti, cīvara*, ie, the upper robe (*saṅghāṭi*), the outer robe (*uttar’āsāṅga*) and the undergarment (*antara, vāsaka*, wrapped around the loins as a sarong): see M 10,8(4) n SD 13.3.

⁸⁶ *Evāyam amhākaṁ dakkhiṇā saṁvissandantī mañṇe gamissati*.

Bhante, let the venerable Ānanda accept this foreign cloth!”

19.4 The venerable Ānanda accepted the foreign cloth.

20 Then, king Pasenadi of Kosala said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Well, then, bhante, we must now depart. We have much work, many duties.”

“Maharajah, please do now as you deem fit.”⁸⁷

21 Then, not long after king Pasenadi of Kosala had left, the venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side.

Sitting thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda related his entire conversation with king Pasenadi of Kosala, and presented the foreign cloth to the Blessed One.

22 Then, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“It is a gain, bhikshus, for king Pasenadi of Kosala; it is a great gain for king Pasenadi of Kosala that he has had the opportunity of seeing and paying his respects to Ānanda.”

The Blessed One said this. The monks rejoiced, approving of the Blessed One’s word.

— evaṃ —

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[For **Bibliography**, see the end of SD 49]

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⁸⁷ *Yassa dāni tvaṃ mahārāja kālaṃ maññasī ti*, lit “Please, maharajah, do what you think it is now the time to do.” This is stock: **Sāmañña-phala S** (D 2,103/1:85) SD 8.10; **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14,2.1/2:21), SD 49.8; **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,3.6/2:104), SD 13; **Sekha S** (M 53,3/1:354), SD 21.14; **Kaṇṇaka-t,thala S** (M 90,17/2:132 f), SD 10.8; **Gopaka Moggallāna S** (M 108,28/3:14), SD 33.5; **Puṇṇ’ovāda S** (M 145,6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62,31), SD 20.15); **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:183,15+30); **Khemā Therī S** (S 44.1/4:379,29); **Vesālī S** (S 54.9/5:321,16, 17); **Thapatayā S** (S 55.6/5:348,27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 1993:27-43.