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Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta

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

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

Translated by Piya Tan ©2012, rev 2016

1 Sutta summary and highlights

1.0.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

The **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta** (D 25) records the Buddha teaching the arrogant wanderer **Nigrodha** and his followers at the Udumbarikā wanderers' park (*paribbājak'ārāma*). The Sutta opens with the lay disciple **Sandhāna** [§1.3n], on his way to see the Buddha, dropping in at the wanderers' park because it was too early to see the Buddha. (This would be just before dawn.) At the start of their conversation, **Nigrodha** speaks disparagingly of the Buddha's love of solitude.

Seeing the Buddha meditatively walking along the banks of the Sumāgadhā lake, Nigrodha invites him to the park. When Nigrodha questions the Buddha how he trains his followers, the Buddha suggests that they discuss on the goals of "**ascetic abstinence**" (*tapo jigucchā*), which probably refers to the early Jain practice of self-mortification. [§7]

The Buddha shows a full understanding of the practice (from his own 6 years of self-mortification).¹ Using a **tree metaphor**, comprising a set of 4 tree-trunk parables [1.1], the Buddha depicts how the gradual training progresses from moral discipline to mental cultivation, and ending in the attainment of the twin powers of knowledge of one's own rebirth and how beings fare according to their karma. [1.1.3.5]

Visibly impressed by the Buddha's teaching, Nigrodha and the wanderers are, however, not ready for renunciations. Despite their admiration for the teaching, they do not become followers of the Buddha, despite the Buddha clearly stating the vital difference between conversion and **awakening**; the latter depends on our own moral and mental purification. The Sutta's highlight is the Buddha's declaration of what we would today call the 7 principles of interfaith dialogue [2.1]. It is on this account that the Sutta is called a "**lion-roar**" (*sīha,nāda*), in this case, a remarkable public declaration of true faith.

1.0.2 SUTTA CONTENTS

- §§1-4 The lay-disciple **Sandhāna** visits Nigrodha and the wanderers, noisily engaged in "low talk."
§5 When Sandhāna speaks highly of the Buddha's love of peace and solitude, Nigrodha mocks the Buddha for being a "wallflower."
§§6-7 The Buddha visits Nigrodha and, when questioned by the latter, proposes that they discuss the nature of **the wanderers' "ascetic abstinence."** [1.1]
§§8-12 The Buddha lists the ascetic's rules, and states that these may merely be an external display, when the ascetic is not really inwardly purified.
§§13-15 Even for such a "purified" ascetic, this is merely the "**loose outer bark**" of the tree of spiritual training.
§§16-17 Even with the observance the "4 restraints" (*catu,yāma*) (probably the early Jain precepts), the ascetic reaches only the tree's "**bark.**" [1.1.3.2]
§18 With the ascetic's attaining of the power to recall one's own past lives, that is, concerning **rebirth**, he only attains the "**sapwood.**" [1.1.3.3]

¹ On the Buddha's 6 years of self-mortification (*koṭi-p,patta*), see SD 52.1 (13). On the nature of these extreme practices, see **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,17-30:242-246), SD 1.12; **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,44-63/1:77-83), SD 1.13.

- §19 The “**heartwood**” of the spiritual training is that of attaining of the knowledge of understanding of how beings fare according to their karma. [1.1.3.3]
- §§20-22 Sandhāna reminds Nigrodha how he had mocked the Buddha earlier one. Nigrodha accepts his lapse and apologizes to the Buddha.
- §22 The Buddha encourages Nigrodha and the wanderers to try Dharma training for even just 7 days.
- §23 The Buddha’s declaration on the true purpose of his teaching: **the principles of interfaith practice and dialogue**. [2]
- §24 The wanderers are unresponsive on account of Māra. The Buddha and Sandhāna depart.

1.1 THE BUDDHA’S TEACHINGS TO NIGRODHA AND THE WANDERERS

1.1.1 Nigrodha’s question, the Buddha’s counterquestion

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

Nigrodha asks the Buddha: “What is the doctrine in which the Blessed One trains his disciples, by which the Blessed One’s disciples gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamental of the holy life?” [§7.4]. This is a long-winded question which invites no beneficial answer. Instead of answering this question, the Buddha counter-questions him, thus:

“Come now, Nigrodha, ask me about your own teachings, about what you regard as **abstinence** [about the highest abstinence], thus:

‘And how, bhante, is the practice of ascetic abstinence fulfilled, and how is it not fulfilled?’” [§7.6]

The assembled wanderers are surprised and impressed by the Buddha’s gesture. Nigrodha then asks the Buddha”

“Bhante, we live by the doctrine of **ascetic abstinence**, by the essence of ascetic abstinence, by keeping to *ascetic abstinence*. Such being the case, **what constitutes their fulfillment or non-fulfillment?**” [§8]. The Sutta takes this as its thesis, and the Buddha begins his teaching for Nigrodha and the assembled wanderers.

With this, the Buddha not only presents himself as being open to listening to outside views, but also to gauge how well Nigrodha knows what he claims to profess as a wanderer.

1.1.1.2 The Buddha then shows his profound familiarity with the **ascetic abstinences** of the wanderers² [§8]. It is probable that the self-mortifying observances listed in detail by the Buddha are those of the early Jains. It is possible that Nigrodha and his community of wanderers were either Jains themselves or followed teachings and practices similar to the Jains.

Familiar with the dubious, often worldly, ways of the wanderers, the Buddha then cautions: “But, Nigrodha, this practice of ascetic abstinence has various **imperfections**, I say!” When Nigrodha asks for clarifications, the Buddha lists 22 kinds of them [§§9-13]. When asked by the Buddha whether all this is true, Nigrodha admits that they are so. He defensively adds:

² During the Bodhisattva’s 6 years of self-mortification, he practised austerities in “their most extreme forms” (*koṭi-p, patta*), incl practically every one of these “ascetic abstinences”: SD 52.1 [132.1.1]. For descriptions of these austerities, see eg **Mahā Sīha, nāda S** (M 12), SD 49.1.

“There is that possibility, bhante, that here a certain ascetic might have all these imperfections—but so does any other!” His answer interestingly betrays a defence mechanism of projection, seemingly to downplay or brush them aside, claiming any ascetic may have such imperfections, “But so does any other!” [§12.2]

1.1.2 The 4 parts of a tree-trunk

1.1.2.1 On a positive note, as if to correct Nigrodha, the Buddha then speaks on those ascetics who *do* follow these 22 kinds of austerities; hence, they are “**purified.**” [§§13-15]. When Nigrodha concludes that *this* is the “peak ... the heartwood” of spiritual practice, the Buddha retorts that this is *only* “the loose outer bark”! [§15.3]

This is **the 1st cycle** or parable in **tree-trunk metaphor** reflecting the stages of the spiritual life.

1.1.2.2 The 4 parables of **the tree-trunk metaphor** are as follows:

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

In all the passages⁴ where these similes are found, the various parts are always contrasted with the pith (*sāra*).

1.1.3 The 4 tree cycles

1.1.3.1 In his **2nd tree-trunk cycle**—centred on the parable of **the bark**—speaks of how a practitioner observes the 4 restraints (*catu, yāma, saṁvara*)—abstinence from killing, from stealing, from lying, and from desiring for sense-pleasures [§16.2]—in preparation to overcome the mental hindrances [§16.2]. Properly prepared, the practitioner goes on to cultivate the 4 divine abodes [§17]. When Nigrodha concludes that *this* then must be the heartwood of the spiritual life, the Buddha replies that is only “**the bark**”!

1.1.3.2 The 3rd tree-trunk cycle centres on the parable of **the sapwood**. Here, the practitioner, having meditated properly, gains the power of recollection past lives, that is, knowledge of one’s own previous existences (affirming the truth of rebirth). Even this is *not* yet the heartwood of spiritual life, as Nigrodha thinks. This is merely its **sapwood**!

1.1.3.3 Finally, the Buddha comes to **the 4th tree-trunk cycle** (the last)—this is the parable of **the heartwood**. This is the attainment of the divine, that is, the knowledge of how beings progress in accord-

³ “Heartwood,” *sāra*, ie, the core or essence of anything; the pith or the best of wood—a simile for spiritual power and attainment. See **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18,12/1:111), SD 6.14, and **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118,8/3:80) for other applications of the heartwood (*sāra*) simile. Here, the Buddha’s humour is evident in such a parable given in **Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,15-19/3:47-53), SD 1.4. In (**Saṅgha**) **Uposatha S** (A 4.190,1.2/2:182), SD 15.10b, *sāra* means “core, essence,” in the sense of being accomplished in moral virtue, etc (AA 3:168).

⁴ See D 3:51; M 1:192 f; S 4:168; A 1:152, 2:10 = Pug 52; A 3:20; cf **Aggi Vaccha, gotta S** (M 72) for a slightly more elaborate tree metaphor—incl branches and leaves—used by Vaccha, gotta to illustrate the teaching the Buddha has just given him (M 72,21/1:488), SD 6.15.

ance with their karma (affirming the truth of karma). This is actually only the 2nd of **the 3 knowledges** (*te, vijjā*)⁵ of the arhats, such as famously demonstrated in **the Mahā Saccak Sutta** (M 36)⁶ and **the Te, vijja Sutta** (D 13).⁷ The Buddha, however, stops right here. This is **the heartwood** of the spiritual life—and Nigrodha agrees. In other words, the wanderers are able only to reach this 2nd knowledge, but not the 3rd, that is arhathood itself. [1.1.2.4].

1.1.3.4 Each of **the 4 tree-trunk cycles** [1.1.2] follows a template sequence of moral training (the 4 restraints), concentration (the hindrances + dhyana through the immeasurables) and wisdom (super-knowledges): [1.1.2.5] This is essentially the format of the 3 trainings, as in the Buddhist training, too.

Otherwise, the key differences between the 2 systems—that of the wanderers and of the Buddha—are in the initial stage and the goal. While the Buddha rejects the wanderers' *moral training* that is self-mortification [§8], his path goes beyond their "heartwood" (the divine eye) [§19.8], to attain arhathood.

In fact, **arhathood** is not mentioned in the Sutta, but only hinted at. In inviting the wanderers to practise his teaching, the Buddha declares that they will generally take "7 years," but with diligence, they will attain "that supreme goal of the holy life" that one renounces for, in "**only 7 days**" [§22.3; 1.1.3.5]. There is no awakening of arhathood outside of the teaching: the 4 kinds of path saints are only found in the Buddha's teaching.⁸

1.1.3.5 We have noted that **arhathood** (by way of the destruction of the influxes) is not found outside of the Buddha's teaching. Hence, the Sutta only mentions 2 of **the 3 knowledges** (*te, vijjā*) as being attainable in the wanderers' system, that is, the recollection of past lives [§18.5] and the divine eye (the recollection of the passing away and rebirth according to karma) [§19.7]. These 2 knowledges are found in the wanderers' system [§§19.6-10], but not the 3rd knowledge, that of arhathood.

Mention of these 2 superknowledges is significant in that while the knowledge of the recollection of past lives affirms **rebirth**, the knowledge of the divine eye (the recollection of the passing away and rebirth according to karma) affirms **karma**. These are 2 key doctrines that are the staple of early Buddhism. It is only through the Buddha's teaching that we can be liberated from them.

Sadly, however, neither Nigrodha nor any of the assembled wanderers goes for refuge nor takes up the training under the Buddha. Their minds are profoundly distracted "by Māra" [§24 n], that is, their own views, so that none of them sees the benefit of going for say, a 7-day retreat, with the Buddha and his monks. On a positive note, the Commentary notes that since they have been in touch with the Buddha, they will, at a later time, reconnect with the Buddha or his teaching and benefit from it (DA 3:844).

⁵ The 2 superknowledges are mentioned in **S 12.70**/2:122 f (SD 16.8); 2 of the 4 knowledges (excluding that of arhathood) attainable through the "bases of spiritual power" (*iddhi, pāda*), **S 51.11**/5:164 f. On the 3 superknowledges (*te, vijjā*): **D 33**,1.10(58)/3:220,15, **34**,1.4(10)/3:275,25; **M 36**,34-44/1:247-249 (SD 49.4), **71**,6-9/1:482 f (SD 53.3), ***86**,34/2:105 = Tha 886 (SD 5.11), **145**,7/3:269 (SD 20.15); **S 6.5**/1:146 = v580 (SD 54.18), **7.8**/1:166 + v635 (SD 22.9), **8.1**/1:196 = v757, **8.7**/1:191 f (SD 49.11), **8.9**/1:194 f = v748, **35.88**/4:63; **A 8.30**/4:235 (SD 19.5), **10.102**/5:211. On the 6 superknowledges (*cha-!-abhiññā*): **D 2**,1:77-84 (SD 8.10), **34**,2.7(10)/3:281; **M 6**,14-19/1:34 f (SD 59.1); **S 16.9**/2:213 f (SD 50.7); **A 3.100a**,5-10/1:254-256 (SD 19.11), **5.23**/3:16-19 (SD 74.3), **6.2**/3:280 f, **9.35**/4:421 f (SD 24.3). The 6 superknowledges are amongst the 14 powers developed by Anuruddha from his mastering of the 4 satipatthanas: **S 51.11-24**/5:303-306. For other refs, see DEB: te, vijjā.

⁶ M 36,34-44/1:247-249 (SD 49.4).

⁷ D 13 + SD 1.8 (2.2).

⁸ See **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16,5.27/2:151), SD 9.

1.2 HUMOUR AND MISSION

This Sutta is a good example of early Buddhist **humour**.⁹ It is also an important document on the Buddhist tolerance of other faiths and, as such, serves as an excellent platform for interfaith dialogue. It also shows that the Buddha does not always teach to convert, but teaches because there are negative and bad states that bring about rebirth and suffering, and it is to free us from them that the Buddha teaches the Dharma.

The boastful, almost puerile, wanderer **Nigrodha** makes an interesting contrast to the cynical brahmin **Lohicca**, who before meeting the Buddha holds the view that it is not worthwhile for an accomplished teacher to teach another because it would be tiresome and frustrating if the other party is incapable of understanding the teaching. However, after the Buddha's admonition, he not only goes for refuge, but also gives up his wrong view.¹⁰

1.3 KEY WORDS

1.3.1 This sutta has been translated by T W Rhys Davids (1921) (D:RD) and by Maurice Walshe (1995) (D:W). It contains some challenging Pali words like *go,kāṇhā* [§5], *ācariyaka* [§7.2], *adhi,jegucchā* [§7.2] and *tapā,jegucchā* [§7.2], which here have been translated according to their context and commentaries. Rhys Davids' translation over a century old, while Walshe's translation lacks explanatory notes.

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

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

<p><i>Tapūpanissāya jigucchitaṃ vā atha vā pi diṭṭhaṃ va sutarṃ mutarṃ vā uddharṃ.sarā,suddhiṃ¹¹ anutthūṇanti avīta,taṇhāse bhavābhavesu</i></p>	<p>Dependent on <u>asceticism consisting of abstinence</u>, or on what is seen or heard or otherwise sensed, they speak again and again of purity while flowing in samsara, with craving for existence after existence not gone away.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Sn 901)¹²</p>
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From line a, it is clear that *tapo,jigucchā* is a karmadharaya, a descriptive compound. British philologist **K R Norman** has pointed that PED is wrong in taking it as a tatpuruṣa (a dependent compound) meaning "detesting asceticism" or "disgust for asceticism" (sv *tapā*).¹³ Norman points out that *jigucchita*

⁹ See SD 2.19 (5); also **The Buddha's humour**, SD 98.1 (pending).

¹⁰ See **(Sāla,vatikā) Lohicca S** (D 12/1:224-234), SD 34.8.

¹¹ Comy erroneously takes *uddharṃsarā* as pl of adj (*akiriya,diṭṭhiyā vā uddharṃsarā hutvā*, SnA 558,33). See CPD sv *uddharṃ-sarā*, then under *-suddhi*.

¹² Sn 901d = 776d; cf Sn 777).

¹³ Sn:N 2001: 369 n901. The usu sense of *jigucchita* (mfn, pp as an action n) (cf Skt *jugupsita*) is "disliked, detested" (Tha 621 Suṇīta the erstwhile road-sweeper describing how people "detested" him; VA 738,31), but here it has the sense of an action n, "avoidance, abstention" (Sn 901a; SnA 558,31); cf *jigucchitabba*, "to be abstained from, avoided" in the phrase "then, Rāhula, you should be concerned, ashamed, disgusted regarding that mental action" (*eva,rūpe te rāhula mano,kamme aṭṭiyitabbarṃ harāyitabbarṃ ~arṃ*) (M 61.17/1:419,28), SD 3.10.

is actually a participle used as an action noun,¹⁴ meaning “abstinence, abstention, avoidance,” which I have followed here.

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

1.3.4 My own understanding is that we can safely render *tapo,jigucchā* simply as a karmadharaya, as “asceticism consisting of abstention” or “the ascetic abstinence.” This translation is well attested here in the **Udumbarikā Sihanāda Sutta** [§8.2], where a well known list of ascetic abstinences and self-mortification is listed.¹⁵ What other information on *tapo,jigucchā* can we cull from the Suttas and Commentaries?

1.3.5 *Tapo,jigucchā* is defined in the **Dīgha Commentary** as “efforts in the burning (*santāpa*) of the defilements” (*kilesa,santāpaka,viriya*) (DA 2:369).¹⁶ There is a wordplay on *santāpa* which means “burning” and “torture, mortification.” In the **Mahā Sihanāda Sutta** (D 8), the Buddha declares that he is supreme in *tapo,jigucchā*—which **M Walshe** translates as “self-mortification and scrupulous austerity.”

This is clearly a synonym for self-mortification,¹⁷ and the **Vibhaṅga Subcommentary** (Mūla Tīkā) defines *dukkara,kiriya* as “mortifying practices such as the 5 fires, etc” (*pañcātapa,tappan’ādi,dukkara,kiriya*).¹⁸ As such, we can say that *tapo,jigucchā*, at least in some sutta contexts, can mean self-mortification, such as those performed by the ascetic Bodhisattva.¹⁹

2 The Buddha’s challenge to religion

2.1 THE 7 POINTS OF RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The Udumbarikā Sihanāda Sutta contains one of the most important statements on **Buddhist missionary**, that is, the 7 points of interfaith dialogue [§23], given towards the end of the Sutta, as follows:²⁰

- (1) “Let whoever is your teacher (*ācariya*) remain as your teacher.”
- (2) “Let your training (*uddesa*) remain as your training.”
- (3) “Let your livelihood (*ājīva*) remain as your livelihood.”
- (4) “Let what you consider unwholesome (*akusala*) continue to be so considered.”
- (5) “Let what you consider wholesome (*kusala*) continue to be so considered.”
- (6) “There are unwholesome states” not yet abandoned, that conduce to **rebirth and suffering**.
- (7) “By your own insight and realization, you will attain **the fullness of wisdom**.”

¹⁴ Sn:N 2001 (id) and his n on Sn 331.

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

¹⁶ See also D 1:174, 3:40, 42 f, 48 f; A 2:200, 205 ff; DA 3:840.

¹⁷ Ie *attā,kilamathānuyoga* (S 5:421) or *dukkara,kiriya* (CA 272, 335).

¹⁸ VbhAṬ:Be 106.

¹⁹ For refs, see n8 on “Abstinences & self-mortification” above.

²⁰ For an interpretation in the context of *papañca*, see SD 19.1(7.3-7.4).

The first 5 points are universal qualities that keep us civilized as social beings, that keep us **human**, and even rise into **divinity**; the last 2 are spiritual imperatives that compel us rise above both our humanity and divinity, to awaken to true reality. Let us examine each of these 7 points more closely in the spirit of the Buddha's teaching.

(1) We can keep to our religious discipleship or academic training. We need not give up our religion or academic training to practise the Buddha's teachings. Even followers of other religions convert to Buddhism, the Buddha encourages them to continue to respect and even support their erstwhile teachers. The best known case is that of **the houselord Upāli** of Nālandā, ex-chief supporter of the Jain leader, Ni-gaṇṭha Nātaputta. The Buddha admonishes him, "Houselord, long indeed has your family supported the Nirgranthas, and please consider that almsfood should still be given to them when they come."²¹ This is a very early example of what we today call "professional courtesy."

On a higher level, this is **the quality of religion or faith**, the desire to connect with something higher: we can call this *life*, which is of the greatest value to us. On the simplest level, it keeps us **human**, inspired by the value of life (the basis for **the 1st precept** against killing and violence).

Hence, the Buddha says: "I do *not* speak thus out of desire to win pupils." [§23.2]

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

Only when we communicate in truth and goodness can there be a progressive society, that is, **the quality of education**, that is, proper learning. To live is to learn; hence, the need for education. On a higher level, this is the value of truth (the basis for **the 4th precept** against falsehood).

Hence, the Buddha says: "I do *not* speak thus out of desire to make you fall from your rules." [§23.2]

(3) We do not need to give up our occupation or means of living ourselves. We need some kind of suitable livelihood to support ourselves and others. The more conducive our livelihood is for spiritual development, the easier it is for us to understand the true purpose and efficacy of the Buddha Dharma. Often enough, the light of the Buddha's truth is so penetrating that we see through our own lifestyles, and know what to do about it, to take that next step up the spiral path to spiritual liberation.

This is **the quality of profession**, rooted in the value of work and creativity. On a higher level, this is the value of beauty (which is the root of happiness). We work not only to support ourselves, but also to see meaning and purpose in our lives: this brings us happiness (rooted in beauty and truth), the value which roots **the 2nd precept** against taking the not-given.

Hence, the Buddha says: "I do *not* speak thus out of desire to make you fall from your livelihood." [§23.2]

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

To attain this, there must be the freedom to think and act (or not act) for oneself, for the greater good, and for a sustainable environment. Basically, this is philosophy, the ability and willingness to think, define problems and solve them. To be truly *free*—to taste **the quality of philosophy**—is to be able to

²¹ *Dīgha, rattarāṃ kho te gaha, pati nigaṇṭhānaṃ opāna, bhūtaṃ kulaṃ, yena nesarāṃ upagatānaṃ piṇḍakaṃ dātābarāṃ maññeyyāsī ti.* See **Upāli 5** (M 56,17/1:379), SD 27.1.

think and act for ourself and as a community: this is rooted in the value of freedom (the root of the 3rd precept against sexual misconduct and exploiting the person of others).

Hence, the Buddha says: “I do *not* speak thus out of desire to establish you in teachings considered unwholesome.” [§23.2]

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

The *wisdom* we speak of previously—rooted in the value of freedom—is a “worldly” wisdom, by which we progress materially, in the here and now. The tools of freedom are the capacity for thinking and feeling. *Thinking* is the basis for defining and solving problems; *feeling* is the ground for enjoying the good (truth and beauty) that follows.

These are the bases for higher knowledge, that is, wisdom, insight into the true nature of things that brings us inner calm and clarity. This is **the quality of learning**, the evolution of knowledge and *wisdom*, which is also the value that is the root of the 5th precept, against taking strong drinks and drugs to that *our mind is unclouded and clear*. For, the mind is the vehicle of wisdom for self-awakening.

Religion, education, profession, philosophy and learning—what the above 5 points are all about—are rooted in the **values of life, truth, happiness, freedom and wisdom**,²² which are the bases for spiritual development. We can have all these 5 things at their best, but we may still lack spiritual wisdom and liberation. Indeed, these are the very things that could be holding us back from being better than what we are right now. How often these self-approved systems are actually the result of comparing ourselves with others, and defining happiness as having things (wealth, status, power, pleasure), rather than of truly being happy.

Hence, the Buddha says: “I do *not* speak thus out of desire to separate you from teachings considered wholesome.” [§23.2]

(6) There are unwholesome states, not yet abandoned, that conduce to rebirth and suffering. In other words, there is still a missing piece in our life’s puzzle, a vital piece that often eludes us as we are distracted by the religion of words, wealth, status, power and pleasure. How often we are goaded on mostly by the fear of loss, the promise of power, the comfort of other-love, or the dependence on pleasure. All that we have really achieved is only a sense of a very private limited self-fulfillment.

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

This is the value of **liberating wisdom**, the understanding that frees us from the world and suffering. This wisdom arises only after we have cultivated our body to rise above the subhuman (the animal, the ghostly, the violent) to be truly human, when we have fully mastered our **mind**. Then, we better understand how our **heart** feels, and so rise into divinity even here and now. This is **the wisdom imperative**.

Hence, the Buddha says that there are unwholesome things, which when unabandoned will bring rebirth and suffering. “It is for the abandonment of these things that I teach Dharma.” [§23.2]

(7) “By your own insight and realization, you will attain the fullness of wisdom.” We will not realize our true goodness, especially when we are always seeking the limelight, the bright lights, of the perceived success of others. Like moths, we mistake the candle for the sun but the candle still burns and kills. Then,

²² On the 5 values, see SD 1.5 (2.7+2.8); SD 51.11 (2.2.3.4); SD 54.2e (2.3.2.5).

like Prometheus²³ being tortured from bringing fire to the world, we are burned again and again by the flame, moment after moment, life after life. It is all so boringly familiar. Yet, we think that *this* seems to be a great achievement!

Human or divine, we are still caught in this world of comings and goings, or impermanence and change. Only when we finally become **truly free** through the “liberating wisdom” we have spoken of, are we really free from all conditionality, worldly or divine. This is the freedom of **nirvana**, which arises only after we have journeyed the path of awakening, the noble eightfold path. This is **the freedom imperative**.²⁴

Hence, the Buddha says that when we practise his teaching accordingly, we “will realize here and now, the bounty of the accomplishment of wisdom.” [23.2]

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

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

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

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

Table 2.2 The Buddha’s 7 points for interfaith dialogue

THE BUDDHA’S 7 STATEMENTS

	<u>quality</u>	<u>value</u>	<u>precept</u>
<i>“I do <u>not</u> speak thus out of desire”:</i>			
(1) to win pupils.	religion (faith)	life	1 st precept
(2) to make you fall from your rules.	education	truth	4 th precept
(3) to make you fall from your livelihood.	profession	happiness	2 nd precept
(4) to establish you in teachings considered unwholesome.	philosophy		
freedom	3 rd precept		
(5) to separate you from teachings considered wholesome.	learning	wisdom	5 th precept
<i>(The Buddha teaches for the sake of:)</i>	<i>(imperatives:)</i>		
(6) overcoming unwholesome things	liberating wisdom	true wisdom	
(7) the accomplishment of wisdom	liberation	true freedom	

²³ See **The Buddha as a myth**, SD 36.2 (8.1).

²⁴ On the last 2 imperatives, those of wisdom and freedom, see SD 10.16 (9+10).

2.3 THE BUDDHA'S LION-ROAR

2.3.1 The Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta (D 25) is special in that it is a discourse on the Buddha's own lion-roar (*sīha,nāda*). The Majjhima Commentary says that a lion-roar is a statement of *supremacy and fearlessness*, one that cannot be debunked.²⁵ Two other related discourses that refer to the lion and his roar—the jungle animals fear and cower at the lion's roar—in connection with the Buddha's teaching, are **the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta** (A 4.33) and **the (Dasaka) Sīha,nāda Sutta** (A 10.21).²⁶

2.3.2 The (Kassapa) Mahā,sīha,nāda Sutta (D 8) defines a lion-roar as follows: “The ascetic Gotama roars his **lion-roar** in company and confidently, they question and he answers, he wins them over with his answers, they find it pleasing and are satisfied with what they have heard, they show that they are satisfied, they practise for the sake of realizing true reality, and they are satisfied with the practice.”²⁷

Non-Buddhists, with wrong views, fear to hear the Buddha's lion-roar on impermanence, suffering and non-self. The open-minded are curious and fascinated about the Buddha's special qualities. Those with wrong views vainly try to disprove the veracity and goodness of the Buddha Dharma, but they fail miserably. The open-minded seek to learn more about the Buddha's qualities, and so discover the liberating truth.

2.3.3 The Buddha specifically defines the “**lion-roar**” as the declaration that the 4 types of saints are found only in his teaching (*sāsana*).²⁸ The most elaborate lion-roars are those given by the Buddha himself in reply to the naked ascetic Kassapa's question on asceticism (D 8) and in reply to Sunakkhatta's accusation that he lacks spiritual powers (M 12).

2.3.4 Other disciples have also made lion-roars: **Mahā Kassapa**, on his ascetic forest practice, as recorded in **the Mahā Gosiṅga Sutta** (M 32)²⁹ and **Sāriputta**, on his faith in the Buddha (D 16).³⁰ In the late **Cakka,vatti Sīha,nāda Sutta**, a lion-roar is made by the sage-king, admonishing his son, the new king to be a “noble wheel-turner,” that is, not just a king, but a just king.³¹

2.3.5 The monk who is the foremost amongst lion-roarers is **Piṇḍola Bhāra,dvāja**, due to his readiness to answer the questions of any doubting monks.³² On his attaining arhathood, knowing that whatever a disciple needs to attain has been attained by him, he roars his lion-roar before the Buddha himself, “Let those who have any doubt in the path and fruition [the stages of sainthood] question me!” (ApA 300)³³

2.4 TEACHING THE UNCONVERTED

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

²⁵ MA 2:7; AA 2:303, 4:171.

²⁶ Respectively A 4.33/2:33 f = S 22.78/3:84-86 (SD 42.10) & A 10.21/5:32-36 (SD 81.2).

²⁷ D 8,22/1:175 (SD 73.12).

²⁸ D 16,5.27/2:152; M 11.2/1:64 f; MA 2:7.

²⁹ M 32,7/1:214; see also S 16.5/2:202.

³⁰ D 16,1.16-17/2:81-83 (SD 9).

³¹ D 26,5/3:61 (SD 36.10).

³² A 1:23; AA 1:197 f; ApA 300; ThaA 2:3 f. See **Piṇḍola Bhāra,dvāja**, SD 27.6a(1.2).

³³ On this preeminence, A 1:23; SA 2:393; AA 1:199; ThaA 2:4; UA 252; J 4:263.

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

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

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

— — —

Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta

The Discourse on the Lion-roar at Udumbarikā

D 25³⁴

[36] 1 Thus have I heard.

Sandhāna

1.2 ³⁵At one time the Blessed One was staying on Vulture’s Peak near Rājagaha. At that time, **the wanderer Nigrodha** was staying at **the Udumbarikā wanderers’ park**³⁶ with a large company of some 3,000 wanderers.

1.3 At dawn, the houselord **Sandhāna**³⁷ came to Rājagaha to see the Blessed One. Then, it occurred to the houselord Sandhāna:

“It is not the proper time to see the Blessed One since he is still in retreat. It is also not the proper time to see the monks worthy of esteem,³⁸ since these esteemed monks, too, are still in retreat. Perhaps I should go to the Udumbarikā wanderers’ park and call on the wanderer Nigrodha.”

³⁴ Mark Allon, in his in-depth study of the early Buddhist oral tradition, did a quantitative analysis of **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25). According to him, almost 87% of it is repetition in one form or another. Much (not all) of the remaining 13% is also repetition found elsewhere in the Nikāyas (*Style and Function*, 1997a:53; “The oral composition and transmission of early Buddhist texts,” 1997b).

³⁵ §§1-3 parallel **Samaṇa,maṇḍikā S** (M 78,1-3/2:22 f), SD 18.9.

³⁶ *Udumbarikā paribbājak’ārāma*. This park belongs to queen Udumbarikā who has dedicated it to the wanderers. Nearby is the peacocks’ feeding-ground (*mora,nivāpa*) beside the Sumāgadhā lotus lake (DA 3:835), both of which are part of the Bamboo Grove (*Velu,vana*). On other wanderers’ parks, see **Kuṇḍaliya S** (S 46.6), SD 35.3 (1.1).

³⁷ According to Buddhaghosa (DA 3:832), **Sandhāna**, a **layman non-returner**, was the leader of 500 laymen. The Aṅguttara lists him amongst the foremost lay disciples who have **6 qualities**: faith in the 3 jewels, noble virtue, noble knowledge and noble freedom. (A 3:451; cf Divy 546)

And the houselord Sandhāna went to the Udumbarikā wanderers' park and approached the wanderer Nigrodha.

The wanderers

2 Now, at that time the wanderer Nigrodha was sitting with a large crowd of wanderers, all talking loudly, shouting, making great noise, a din, and indulging in various kinds of **low talk**,³⁹ that is to say, talk about kings, robbers, [37] ministers of state; about armies, dangers, and wars; about food and drink; about clothing, beds [furniture], garlands, and scents; about relatives; about vehicles; about villages, towns, cities, the countryside; about women and heroes; gossips of the street and at the well; tales of the dead; diverse desultory talks (about the past and future), talk about the origin of the world, the origin of the sea, and talk about rebirth in this or that existence [talk about gain and loss].⁴⁰

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

“Good sirs [Bhonto], be quiet please! Don’t make a noise, good sirs! The houselord Sandhāna, a disciple of the recluse Gotama, is approaching. He is one of those white-dressed lay disciples⁴¹ of the recluse Gotama in Rājagaha. And these good folks are **fond of quiet**; they are taught to be quiet and speak in praise of quiet.⁴² If he sees that this company is quiet, he will most likely want to come and visit us.”

When this was said, the wanderers fell silent.

Sandhāna’s remark

4 Then, the houselord Sandhāna approached the wanderer Nigrodha and exchanged courtesies. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side.

Seated down at one side, **the houselord Sandhana** said to the wanderer Nigrodha:

³⁸ “Worthy of esteem” and “esteemed,” *mano, bhāvaniyā* or *-bhāvaniyā*, often used in apposition with *bhikkhū* (D 2:140; M 2:23, 3:36, 3:261; S 3:1, 5:369, 371; A 3:317-322, 5:185, 189; Vv 34.13/49; Miln 129); used of the Buddha, *mano, bhāvaniyam buddham*, at **Sovaṇṇa, kattarika Ap** (Ap 427.1/2:389). SA comments that “those great elders such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna are called ‘worthy of esteem’ because the mind grows in wholesome qualities whenever they are seen” (SA 2:249 f). See DA 3:832; MA 3:17, 266. **Bodhi** notes that “the expression is a gerundive meaning literally ‘who should be brought to mind,’ ie who are worthy of esteem” (S:B 1043 n2). **Sadda, nīti** (Dhātu, -mālā), however, gives both meanings of *mano, bhāvaniyā*: (1) one who is worthy of being greeted and asked after his health; (2) one who develops his mind (Sadd:Be 330).

³⁹ *Tiracchāna, kathā*, lit “animal talk.” As animals mostly walk parallel to the earth, so this kind of talk does not lead on upwards. This section is *mutatis mutandis* as at **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9.3/1:178 f). Cf **Lohicca S** (D 1:228). For a fuller list, called “the moralities” (*sīla*), see **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1.43-62/1:4-12), SD 25.2 & Intro (3), & **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.43-63/ 1:63-70), SD 8.10 & Intro (3). For details on *tiracchāna, kathā*, see SD 10.16 (3.4.2). See DEB: *tiracchāna, kathā*.

⁴⁰ *Iti, bhavābhāva, kathā* may be rendered as “being and non-being” or as “profit and loss”: see n at **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1) ad loc, SD 25.2.

⁴¹ Lay disciple, *sāvaka gīhi*, lit householder disciple.

⁴² *Appa, sadda, kāmā kho pan’ete āyasmanto, appa, sadda, vinīta appa, saddassa vaṇṇa, vādino*: **Udumbarika Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,3/3:37, 6/3:39 sg); **Sandaka S** (M 76,4/1:514), **Mahā Sakul’udāyi S** (M 77,4/2:2 sg), **Samaṇa Muṇḍika S** (M 78,3/2:23), **Cūḷa Sakul’udāyi S** (M 79,4/2:30 sg); **Kim’ Diṭṭhika S** (A 10.93,2/5:185), **Vajjiya Māhita S** (A 10.94,2/5:190). Only M 67 first reading has *ete*, while the others omit it (or use *te*).

“Good sir, the way those wanderers outside the faith conduct themselves when they assemble is one thing:

they talk loudly, shouting, making great noise, [38] and indulging in various kinds of **low talk** ... [as in §3] ...

The Blessed One’s way is different:

he resorts to remote and secluded dwellings in the forest, in the jungle, free from noise, with little sound, alone with the winds,⁴³ away from humans, conducive for seclusion.”

Nigrodha’s challenge

5 When this was said, **the wanderer Nigrodha** replied to the houselord Sandhāna:

“Well now, houselord, do you know with whom the recluse Gotama talks?

With whom does he converse? From whom does he find his clarity of wisdom?

He is awkward in an assembly; no good at conversation. He keeps only to the fringes of things. Just like a **one-eyed cow**,⁴⁴ walking in circles, keeps to the fringes (of a field), even so, the recluse Gotama’s wisdom is destroyed by the solitary life.

He is awkward in an assembly; no good at conversation. He keeps only to the fringes of things.

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

The Buddha arrives

6 Now, **the Blessed One**, with his divine-ear faculty,⁴⁵ purified and superhuman [reaching beyond the normal human range], heard this exchange between the houselord Sandhāna and the wanderer Nigrodha.

And, descending from the Vulture’s Peak, he came to the bank of the Sumāgadhā⁴⁶ beside the peacocks’ feeding ground. [39] Having gone to the bank of the Sumāgadhā beside the peacocks’ feeding ground, walked up and down there in the open.

6.2 Then, the wanderer Nigrodha saw the Blessed One on the bank of the Sumāgadhā beside the peacocks’ feeding ground, walking up and down there in the open. Seeing the Blessed One, he called his company to order, saying:

“Good sirs, be quiet please! Don’t make a noise, good sirs!⁴⁷ The recluse Gotama is walking up and down in the open on the Sumāgadhā bank. He is fond of quiet, and speaks in praise of quiet. If he sees that this company is quiet, he will surely want to come and visit us.

Should the recluse Gotama come to this assembly, we will put this question to him:

⁴³ Alone with the winds, *vijana, vatāni*; D:W has “far from the madding crowd.” Cf D:RD 3:35 n1.

⁴⁴ *Go, kāṇā*; cf *go, kaṇṇa*, “a large species of deer, J 5:406” (PED). D:W has “bison.” D:RD and here follow the Comy. Cf *go, maṇḍala va parinesi* (“led around in a circle like a cow”): see Tha 1143 @ SD 20.9.

⁴⁵ The divine ear (*dibba, sota*) or clairaudience is the psychic ability to hear sounds that are not normally audible or beyond the ability of normal people to hear: see **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,91 f/1:79), SD 8.10. See SD 27.5a (5.2). This is the 1st of 2 occasions of the Buddha’s psychic powers mentioned in this Sutta; the other is his power of teleportation [§24.3], when he departs from the wanderers’ park.

⁴⁶ A lotus lake near Rājagaha. Beside it is the peacocks’ feeding-ground (*mora, nivāpa*), and within visible walking distance, the wanderers’ park (*paribbājak’ārāma*) in Udumbarikā’s park. See **Loka, cintā S** (S 56.41), SD 77.11.

⁴⁷ We see a similar response from the wanderer Sakul’udāyi in **Mahā Sakul’udāyi S** (M 77,5), SD 49.5.

6.3 ‘Bhante, what is **the doctrine** in which the Blessed One trains [disciplines] his disciples, by which the Blessed One’s disciples **gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life?**’⁴⁸ [§§7.4, 19.7]

When this was said, the wanderers fell silent.

TALK ON THE ASCETIC ABSTINENCE

Tapo, jigucchā, vāda

7 Then, the Blessed One approached the wanderer Nigrodha. Then, the wanderer Nigrodha said this to the Blessed One:

“Please come, bhante, Blessed One! Welcome, bhante, Blessed One!⁴⁹ It’s been a long time since bhante Blessed One has found the occasion to come here.⁵⁰ Let bhante Blessed One take a seat. Here’s a seat prepared.”

7.2 The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat, and the wanderer Nigrodha taking a low seat, sat down at one side. Having sat down, the Blessed One said to the wanderer Nigrodha:⁵¹

“Nigrodha, what is the talk you are having, sitting together here? And what is the conversation that is left unfinished?”⁵²

7.3 The wanderer Nigrodha replied to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, we saw the Blessed One walking up and down exercising his legs⁵³ by the Sumāgadhā Bank at the Peacock’s Feeding Ground in the open, [40] and we thought:

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

*“Bhante, what is **the doctrine** in which the Blessed One trains [disciplines] his disciples, by which the Blessed One’s disciples gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life?”* [§§6.3; 19.7]

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

⁴⁸ *Ko nāma so bhante bhagavato dhammo, yena bhagavā sāvake vineti, yena bhagavatā sāvakā vinītā assāsa-p, pattā paṭijjānanti ajjhāsayam ādi, brahma, cariyān’ti?* Here, in *assāsa, patta*, *assāssa* means “self-confidence” or simply “confidence,” as at *Assāsa S* (S 38.5) where it refers to a saint of the path (*sekha*), short of the arhat (S 38.5/-4:254,29); or “consolation,” as at *Param’assāsa S* (S 38.6), where the “supreme consolation” (*param’assāsa*) refers to the arhat (S 38.6/4:254 f).

⁴⁹ On wanderers addressing the Buddha as “venerable Blessed One,” see SD 49.5 (2.1.1).

⁵⁰ “Please come, ... to come here,” *etu kho bhante bhagavā svagataṃ bhante bhagavato, cirassam kho marisā imam pariāyam akāsi yad idam idh’āgamanāya*, using the 3rd imp sg *etu* (“Let...come!”) as a polite formality (D 25.7a/3:39). The passage is stock: *Poṭṭhapāda S* (D 9,5/1:179), SD 7.14; *Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S* (D 25,6,2/3:39), SD 1.4 (with additional remark); *Tevijja Vaccha, gotta S* (M 73,4.4), SD 53.3; *Mahā Sakul’udāyi S* (M 77,5/2:2), SD 49.5; *Gopaka Moggallāna S* (M 108,4/3:7), SD 33.5. In the phrase, *pariāyam akasi*, “made it an occasion,” Comy glosses *pariāya* as *vāra* (“occasion, opportunity”) (UA 115). This is stock: **D** 1:90 (DA 2:369), 179 (see D:RD 1:245 n2), **2**:270, **3**:2, 39; **M** 1:252 (MA 2:300 f), 326, 481, **2**:2, 30, **3**:7; **S** 1:142; **A** 3:332 (AA 3:363), **4**:76; **U** 13 (UA 115); **J** 3:359. In *Brahma Nimantanika S* (M 49), Baka Brahmā says: *ehi kho marisā, sāgataṃ marisā, cirassam kho marisā imam pariāyam akāsi yadidam idh’āgamanāya*.

⁵¹ This episode of the Buddha interrupting an “unfinished conversation” (*antarā, kathā vipakatā*) is stock, eg, D 1.1.4/1:2; D 2.7a/3:39 f; M 119.2/3:89, U 2.2/11.

⁵² *Kāya nu’ttha, bho ānanda, etarahi kathāya sannisinnā, kā ca pana vo antarā, kathā vipakatā ti?* This is stock, where the person interrupting is usu the Buddha, eg, **D** 1,1.4/1:2; **M** 108,6/3:8 (the brahmin Vassa, kāra), **119**,2/-3:89, **U** 2.2/11; **J** 4/1:120

⁵³ “Walking up and down exercising his legs,” *jaṅghā, vihāram anucaikamanam anuvicaramāno*, lit “wandering to and fro on foot and walking up and down” (K R Norman, *Group of Discourses II*, 1992:63).

The Buddha's counter-question⁵⁴

7.5 “Nigrodha, it is hard for one, holding a different view, keeping different priority, having a different personal preference [under a different influence], keeping to a different practice, following a different teaching,⁵⁵ to understand the doctrine that I teach my disciples (*regarding their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life*).⁵⁶

7.6 Come now, Nigrodha, **ask me about your own teachings**, about what you regard as **abstinence** [about the highest abstinence],⁵⁷ thus:⁵⁸

‘And how, bhante,⁵⁹ is the practice of ascetic abstinence⁶⁰ fulfilled, and how is it not fulfilled?’”

7.7 When this was said, a great commotion arose amongst the wanderers:⁶¹

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

8 Then, the wanderer Nigrodha, silencing the wanderers, said to the Blessed One:

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

The Buddha's reply

THE EXTENDED SELF-MORTIFICATION PERICOPE⁶²

8.2 “Here, Nigrodha, a (self-mortifying) **ascetic**⁶³ is one who goes about naked,⁶⁴ of loose habits (flouting conventions),⁶⁵

⁵⁴ This is an occasion when the Buddha responds a question with a counter-question (which cover the bulk of the teaching). The 4 modes for properly answering a question (*pañha, vyākaraṇa*) are: (1) categorically (yes-no) (*ekam-sa.vyākaraṇīya*); (2) analytically (in detail) (*vibhajja, vyākaraṇīya*); (3) by a counter-question (*paṭipucchā, vyākaraṇīya*); (4) to be set aside (left unanswered) (*ṭhapanīya*). See SD 7.12(4): **Pañha Vyākaraṇa S** (A 4.42/2:46), SD 46.12.

⁵⁵ “Holding a differing view ... following different teachings,” *añña, diṭṭhikena añña, khantikena añña, rucikena añña, ānātrāyogena aññatrācariyakena*. This is stock: **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,24/1:187 ×2); **Pāṭhika S** (D 24,2.21/3:35 ×2); **Aggi Vaccha, gotta S** (M 72,18/1:487); **Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,7/3:40); **Vekhanassa S** (M 80,14/2:43). D:W has “holding different views, being of different inclinations and subject to different influences, following a different teacher,” apparently missing *aññatrāyogena*.

⁵⁶ Cf Soṇa, daṇḍa's fear that the Buddha might ask him something beyond his ken: **Soṇa, daṇḍa S** (D 4,11/1:119), SD 30.5.

⁵⁷ *Adhi, jegucche*, lit “regarding what is loathsome” following CPD & DP. To reflect the context more closely, it is here rendered as “regarding abstinence.” D:W has “about your extreme austerity,” foll Comy: *uttamaṃ jeguccham*, “highest loathsomeness” or “supreme abstinence” (DA 2:369). See D:RD 3:37 n1.

⁵⁸ *īṅha tvaṃ maṃ, nigrodha, sake ācariyake adhijegucche pañhaṃ puccha*.

⁵⁹ *Bhante*, found in all MSS, but omitted by both D:RD and D:W.

⁶⁰ “The practice of ascetic abstinence,” *tapo, jigucchā*, see (1.3).

⁶¹ The assembly is amazed probably because the Buddha has proposed to discuss a topic that is at the heart of their training or system.

⁶² This extended self-mortification pericope [§§8.2-6] is mutatis mutandis at **Kassapa Sīha, nāda S** (D 8,14/1:165-167 @ SD 77.1) = **Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,8.2/3:41 @ SD 1.4). The “extension” is a set of 6 additional observances [§8.5], not found in the otherwise identical “medium self-mortification pericope” found in **Mahā Sīha, nāda S** (M 12,45/1:77 f), SD 49.1 = **Kandaraka S** (M 51,8/1:342 f), SD 32.9 = **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60,36/1:412), SD 35.5, with 6 additional observances = **Ghoṭa, mukha S** (M 94,10/2:161), SD 77.2 = **Acelaka Paṭipadā S 1** (A 3.151/1:295), SD 78.-13 = **Atta, daṇḍa Sutta Nd** (Nm 15/416 f).

⁶³ Ascetic (*tapassī*), ie, one who practises *tapā*, religious austerities or self-mortification. Here, prob a Jain ascetic is meant. See prec n.

⁶⁴ This possibly refers to Jain naked ascetics, in later times known as Digambara (sky-clad).

licking his hands,⁶⁵

not coming when invited, not stopping when invited. [41]

He does not accept food brought to him nor food specially prepared for him nor a meal invitation;

accepts nothing from a pot, from a bowl,

from across a threshold, among the firewood, from among the rice-pounders,

from two eating together, from a pregnant woman,⁶⁷ from a woman giving suck,

from a woman gone to a man,⁶⁸ from a food-distribution centre,

from where a dog is waiting, from where flies are swarming;

accepts neither fish nor meat, drinking no wine nor beer nor cereal brew.⁶⁹

THE WANDERERS' PRACTICES

8.3 He keeps himself to 1 house, to 1 morsel (when collecting alms) ... to 2 houses, to 2 morsels ... to 7 houses, to 7 morsels.

He lives on 1 small serving (of food), or 2 ... or 7 small servings a day.⁷⁰

He takes food once a day; once every 2 days ... once every 7 days.

Thus, even up to a fortnight,

he dwells pursuing the practice of taking of food at such regular intervals.

8.4 ⁷¹He is an eater of greens [a vegetarian] or of millet or of wild rice or of hide-parings or of water-lettuce⁷² or of rice-bran or of rice-remnants,⁷³ or of sesamum flour, or of grass, or of cow-dung.

⁶⁵ *Mutt'ācāro*.

⁶⁶ *Hatthāpalekhano*. Cf Sekh 52 (V 4:98) which proscribes hand-licking; D 1:166, 3:40; M 1:77, 238, 307; A 1:295; Pug 55.

⁶⁷ "From a pregnant woman ... gone to a man" (*gabbhinī pāyamanā puris'antara,gatā*), which is stock (M 1:77 = A 1:295; M 1:238, 307, 342 = 2:162 = Pug 55; A 2:206). On the last, see foll n.

⁶⁸ "A woman gone to a man," *puris'antara,gata*, ie a woman having sex with a man. Comys gloss ~ as *rati antarāyo hoti ti na ganhati*, "so that he does not face danger on account of lust" (DA 2:355; AM 2:44; AA 2:384; NmA 2:430; PugA 231), ie in interrupting the act; cf *pumañ gata*, "gone to a man" (J 5:154). This is contextual: for, Old Comy glosses more generally it as "married" (*gihi,gata*, "gone to a householder," V 4:322,10), and other Comys, simply as an "adult woman" (*itthi*) (DA 1:79 = *itthi*, "woman," as opp *kumārikā*, "girl"; MA 2:209).

⁶⁹ *Na suraṃ, na merayaṃ, na thus'odakaṃ pivati*. "Rice-wine," *thus'odaka* (Skt *tuṣodaka*, "rice chaff") "sour rice- or barley-gruel" (SED, sv *tuṣāmbu*). Comys: "a drink called *Sovīraka* made from (the husk of) all kinds of grain" (*sabba,sassa,sambhārehi kataṃ sovīrakaṃ*, DA 2:355 = NmA 431 = PugA 232; *sabba,sassa,sambhārehi kataṃ loṇa,sovīrakaṃ*, MA 2:44); *sabba,sassa,sambhārehi kata,sovīrakaṃ*, AA 2:385: all add that *thusodaka* is a strong drink and as such blamable (*ettha ca surā,pānam eva sāvajjāṃ*). On "salted *Sovīraka* (sour gruel)" (*loṇa,sovīraka*); see Vinaya, where it is mentioned as a cure for stomach wind, and allowed as a beverage if mixed with water (Mv 6.16.3/V 1:210); mentioned in a list of drinks given to monks (Vv 177/2.2.6/23). **Suśruta Saṃhita** describes preparation of *tuṣodaka* as a medicine (SuśSaṃ 44, 40cd-44ab); said to be sour gruel prepared with unhusked cereals; SuśSaṃ refers to it as "fermented liquors of barley with husks" used as a purgative (G J Meulenbeld (tr), *Mādhvanidāna*, Leiden, 1974:408 f). When boiled with pulse and barley, it becomes an acetous fermentation called *tuṣāmbu*. D:RD 3:38, "gruel"; M:ÑB 1:104 "rice gruel." See D:RD 1:229 n2, D:W n196. My tr is contextual, suggesting some kind of fermented drink.

⁷⁰ "Small serving," *datti*. Comy says that a *datti* is a small bowlful from which they leave out the main food (MA 2:45).

⁷¹ These 6 lines, up to "owl's wings," are spoken of as forms of "solitude" of outside sectarian wanderers in **Pavi-veka S** (A 3.92,1.3-4), SD 44.2.

⁷² "Water-lettuce," *haṭṭa*, a kind of water-plant, *Pistia stratiotes* (PED) of the Arales order.

⁷³ "Rice-remnants," *ācāma*, "the moisture of boiled rice, rice-scum, rice-water (without condiments, a mean un-savoury food—hence, prob interpreted as the burnt crust sticking to the pot" (CPD): DA 356,15 = MA 2:45,12 = AA 2:355,17 = PugA 232,25; ie "burnt rice remnants in a pot," or "kerak nasi" in Malay.

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

He clothes himself in hemp; in hemp-mixed cloth; in shrouds;⁷⁴ in refuse rags; in *tirīṭa*-tree⁷⁵ bark; in antelope hide; in strips of antelope hide; in kusa-grass fabric; in bark fabric; in wood-shaving fabric; in a human-hair cloak; in bristle-blanket;⁷⁶ in owl's wings.

8.5 He plucks (his) hair and beard,⁷⁷ [42] devoted to this practice of plucking hair and beard.

He stands continuously, rejecting seats.

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

He uses a matting of thorns, sleeps on the matting of thorns.⁷⁸

8.6 ⁷⁹*He makes a plank his bed.*

He makes the hard stony ground his bed.

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

He lies in the open on whatever groundsheet there is.

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

He does not drink (cold water), devoting himself to not drinking (cold water).⁸⁰

8.7 He dwells devoted to (the ritual of) bathing in water thrice a day, the third one in the evening.⁸¹

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

"Indeed, bhante, it is fulfilled."

"But, Nigrodha, this practice of ascetic abstinence has various **imperfections**, I say!"

⁷⁴ *Chava, dussa*, cloth of coverlet woven from cat-tail grass (cf CPD), Comy here says that it refers to discarded cloth made of *eraka*, taken from corpses and made into garments (*Chava, dussānīti mata, sarīrato chaḍḍita, vatthāni, eraka, tiṇ'ādīni vā ganthetvā kata, nivāsanāni*, AA 2:354). *Eraka* (Skt; Marathi) is Typha grass (PED; CPD), prob Typha elephantine, also called bulrush, cat-tail grass, or Indian reed mace, one of the most universal of perennial grasses, which grows in wetlands and watersides. In ancient India, it was often woven together as rough clothing or mats. See J A Parrotta, *Healing Plants of Peninsular India*, NY: CABI Publishing, 2001; Malten 2003, See Daniel F Austin, "Sacred connections with cat-tail," *Ethnobotany Journal* 5, 2007:273-303:

<http://ethnobotanyjournal.org/era/index.php/era/article/view/137/122> or

<http://ethnobotanyjournal.org/era/index.php/era/article/download/137/122>.

⁷⁵ *Tirīṭa* (ts; BHS *tirīṭī*), which PED & BHS identify as *Symplocos racemosa* (V 1:306 ~ka; D 1:166 = A 1:295; M 1:343; Pug 51). Its Indian names are the lodh, lodhra, tilva, or shavara; also śrimala ("propitious") or tilak (because it is used to make the *tilaka* or forehead mark). Its bark has medicinal usages. *Iranian Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, Supplement 2 2004:44.

⁷⁶ *Vāla* specifically refers to the horse's tail or the hair at the end of the tail. Here, it refers to any kind of animal hair.

⁷⁷ A key ascetic (*tap*) practice, called *kāya klesh* ("bodily forbearance"), of Jain monks; a painful practice today popular with lay Jain practitioners, too.

⁷⁸ Here, Dīgha Nikāya pericope lists 6 additional self-mortifying observations [below]: **Kassapa Sīha, nāda S** (D 8,-14/1:167), SD 1.4 & **Udumbarikā Sīha, nāda S** (D 25,8.2/3:42), SD 1.4.

⁷⁹ *Phalaka, seyyam pi kappeti, thaṇḍila, seyyam pi kappeti, eka, passayiko pi hoti rajo, jalla, dharo, abbhokāsiko pi hoti yathā, santhatiko, vekaṭiko pi hoti vikaṭa, bhojanānuyogam-anuyutto, apānaka opi hoti apānakattam-anuyutto*. These 6 self-mortifying practices listed here, until "devoting himself to not drinking (cold water)," are found only in the Dīgha Nikāya pericopes, not listed elsewhere (such as the Majjhima stock passage).

⁸⁰ *Apānaka*, lit "non-drinker." I follow Walshe in the amplification. This practice probably refers to those who (like the Jain monks) do not drink cold water because of living beings in it. (D:W n200).

⁸¹ Apparently to wash away his sins as related in (**Suddhika**) **Saṅgārava S** (S 7.21/1:183), SD 79.3. This whole passage [S8.2] is at **Apānaka S** (M 60), where this last sentence is replaced by "This is called the person who torments himself and is intent on tormenting himself." (M 60,36/1:412), SD 35.5

The imperfections of the practice of ascetic abstinence

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

(1) “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he **delights** in it, thinking that he has won the goal.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practises austerity, on account of which he delights in it, thinking that he has won the goal*—this, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(2) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he **extols** himself and **disparages others**.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practises austerity, on account of which he extols himself and disparages others*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(3) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he becomes intoxicated with **conceit, infatuated and heedless**.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practices austerity, on account of which he is intoxicated with conceit, [43] infatuated and heedless*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

10 (4) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he obtains **gains, honours and fame**. As a result of such gains, honours and fame, he rejoices, thinking he has won his goal.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practises austerity, on account of which her obtains gains, honours and fame, as a result of which he rejoices, thinking he has won his goal*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(5) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he obtains gains, honours and fame. As a result of such *gains, honours and fame*, he **extols** himself and **disparages others**.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he gains gains, honours and fame, and as a result of such gains, honours and fame, he extols himself and disparages others*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(6) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that austerity, he obtains gains, honours and fame. As a result of such *gains, honours and fame*, he is **elated, infatuated, and falls into heedlessness**.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practises austerity, and account of that asceticism, obtains gains, honours and fame, as a result of such gains, honours and fame, he is elated, infatuated, and falls into heedlessness*—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic.

(7) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity. On account of which he **divides his food into two portions**, thinking:

‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ And what does not suit him he readily rejects, while what suits him he **eats with relish**,⁸² unaware of the danger, knowing no way out.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic practises austerity. On account of that asceticism, he divides his food into two portions, thinking: ‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ And what does not suit him he readily*

⁸² Read *ajjhopanno* (see CPD), “being addicted to, being enthralled by,” (to enjoy doing something) with relish. PTS has *ajjhāpanna*, “with guilt,” guiltily.

rejects, while what suits him he eats with relish, unaware of the danger, knowing no way out—this, too, Nigrodha, is an imperfection in that ascetic. [44]

(8) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity for the sake of **gains, honours and fame**, thinking: ‘Kings, ministers, nobles [kshatriyas], brahmin housemasters,⁸³ religious teachers will honour me!’

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

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

‘See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems, joints, cuttings, and seeds⁸⁴—munching them all up with that bunch of lightnings, that jaw full of razor-teeth of his,⁸⁵ and they call *him* an ascetic!’

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

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

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

‘This fellow is living in abundance. He is being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship *me*, an ascetic who lives a rough life!’

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

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

‘*This fellow in living in abundance. He is being patronized honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!*’

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

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

⁸⁴ Cf *Brahmajāla S* where the Buddha states that he does not destroy plants propagated from any of these 5 plant-parts (D 1,1.11).

⁸⁵ “With that bunch of lightnings ... razor-teeth of his,” *asani, cakkam danta, kūṭam*. *Kūṭa* is polysemic: it can mean pointed (like a spire or spike) or hammer-like. The imagery of “lightning” suggests the force of a sharp cutting action, suggested by “razor-teeth.”

(11) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **one who sits before the people in public**.⁸⁶

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

(12) Furthermore, an ascetic **goes about ostentatiously [showing off]**⁸⁷ among the families, as if to say: ‘Look at this asceticism of mine! Look at this asceticism of mine!’

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

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

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

12 (14) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic, when the Tathāgata or a Tathāgata’s disciple presents the Dharma in a way that *deserves his assent*, **withholds his assent**.⁸⁸

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

(15) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **angry and resentful**.⁸⁹

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

(16) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **mean and spiteful**.⁹⁰

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

(17) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **envious and selfish**.⁹¹

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

(18) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **crafty and deceitful**.⁹²

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

(19) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **obstinate and arrogant**.⁹³

⁸⁶ “Who sits facing the people in view of everyone” (*āpāthaka, nisādi*). Comy explains that he sits in full view of others, where he executes the bat-rite (*vagguli, vata*), hanging himself upside down, like a bat (cf J 1:493, 3:235, 4:299); practising the fivefold fires (*pañc’ātāpa*) (he sits in the midst of 4 blazing fires with the sun as the fifth fire); stands on one leg; or worships the sun (DA 3:838).

⁸⁷ There are difficulties with *adassayamāno* (which D:RD renders as “furtively”). The Sub-Comy, according to D:W, explains its meaning as *ādassamāno* (“showing off”). I follow D:W here. This “show-off” includes dressing oneself or exuding a grand air in a way as to suggest some kind of status or importance.

⁸⁸ This seems to suggest a feeling of professional jealousy and rivalry on his part.

⁸⁹ *Kodhano hoti upanāhī*. A list of opposing qualities appears in §15. Qualities (15-22) recur in **Anumāna S** (M 15,3 etc), as part of the 16 traits that makes one difficult to admonish (SD 59.3); and in **Vivāda, mūla S** (A 6.36,30), except for (19), and (20-21) are conflated (qv). Cf this list of mental defilements [§12] to the 16 listed in **Vatthūpa-ma S** (M 7,3), SD 28.12, and **Salekkhana S** (M 8,12), SD 51.8. See SD 51.8 (Tables 3.2).

⁹⁰ *Makkhī hoti paḷāsī*.

⁹¹ *Issukī hoti maccharī*.

⁹² *Saṭho hoti māyāvī*.

⁹³ *Thaddho hoti atimānī*.

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

(20) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic has **bad desires** and is under their sway.⁹⁴

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

(21) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic **holds wrong views** and is given to extreme opinions.⁹⁵

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

(22) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic **stuck to his own views**, tenaciously holding on to them, unable to let them go.⁹⁶

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

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

“Certainly, bhante, these things are not perfections, they are **imperfection**, in the practice of ascetic abstinence.

There is that possibility, bhante, that here a certain ascetic might have all these imperfections—but so does any other!”⁹⁷

THE ASCETIC ABSTINENCE (*tapo jigucchā*)

The 1st tree cycle. The loose outer bark⁹⁸ [§§16, 18, 19]

The purified ascetic

13 (1) Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, **he is not pleased with himself, thinking that he has won the goal.**

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity,

on account of that austerity, he is not pleased with himself, [46] thinking that he has won his goal—that being the case, he is purified.

(2) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, **he neither extols himself nor disparages others.**

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, *on account of that austerity,*

he neither extols himself nor disparage others—that being the case, he is purified.

⁹⁴ *Pāp’iccho hori pāpakānaṃ icchānaṃ vasaṃ gato*, Cf **Vivāda,mūla S** (A 6.36), which here has “one with bad wishes, with wrong views” (*pāp’iccho hoti micchā,diṭṭhi*) (A 6.36,30), SD 47.14. See foll qualities.

⁹⁵ *Micchā,diṭṭhiko hoti anta-g,gāhikāya diṭṭhiyā samannāgato*. **Vivāda,mūla S** (A 6.36) seems to conflate this quality with the prec (qv), SD 47.14.

⁹⁶ *Sandiṭṭhi,parāmāsī hoti ādhāna,gāhī duppaṭinissaggi*. This is the last of the 16 traits that makes one (esp a monastic) difficult to admonish (*dovacassa,karaṇa*): **Anumāna S** (M 15,3(16)), SD 59.3.

⁹⁷ *Thānaṃ kho pan’etaṃ bhante vijjati, yaṃ idh’ekacco tapassa sabbeh’eva imehi upakkileshi samannāgatā assa, ko pana vādo aññatar’aññatarenāti*. Psychologically, Nigrodha is reacting with the defence mechanism of **projection**, where a criticism is brushed off with another: see (**Aṭṭhaka**) **Khaluṅka S** (A 8.14,12), SD 7.9.

⁹⁸ Ce *parisuddha,papaṭika-p,patti kathā*, “the talk of the attaining of purity comparable to the loose outer bark.” On the 4 cycles of the tree metaphor, see [1.1.2].

(3) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, he is **neither elated nor infatuated nor falls into heedlessness**.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, *on account of that austerity,*
he is neither elated nor infatuated nor falls into heedlessness—
 that being the case, he is purified.

(4) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, he obtains **gains, honours and fame**.

he delights not in them, knowing that he has *not* won his goal.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and
on account of that asceticism, obtains gains, honours and fame,
but, as a result of such gains, honours and fame,
he delights not, knowing that he has not won his goal—that being the case, he is purified.

(5) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, he obtains gains, honours and fame.

As a result of such gains, honours and fame, **he neither praises himself nor disparages others**.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and
on account of that austerity, obtains gains, honours and fame,
but as a result of such gains, honours and fame,
he neither praises himself nor disparages others—that being the case, he is purified.

(6) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, obtains gains, honours and fame.

As a result of such gains, honours and fame,

he is neither elated nor infatuated nor falls into heedlessness.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity, and
on account of that asceticism,
obtains gains, honours and fame, but as a result of such gains, honours and fame,
he is neither elated nor infatuated nor falls into heedlessness—
 that being the case, he is purified.

(7) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that austerity, he **does not divide his food into two portions**, thinking:

‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ so that what does not suit him,
 he does not reject, while what suits him he does not eat with relish;⁹⁹
 he is aware of the danger, knowing the way out.

Nigrodha, that an ascetic practises austerity.

On account of that asceticism, he does not divide his food into two portions, thinking:

‘This portion suits me, that doesn’t suit me!’ so that what does not suit him,
 he does not reject, while what suits him he does not eat with relish.

He is aware of the danger, knowing the way out—that being the case, he is purified.

(8) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic practises austerity **not for the sake of gains, honours and fame**, thinking:

⁹⁹ Read *ajjhopanno* (see CPD), “being addicted to, being enthralled by,” (to enjoy doing something) with relish. PTS has *ajjhāpanna*, “with guilt,” guiltily.

'Kings, ministers, nobles, brahmin housemasters, religious teachers will honour me.'

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

14 (9) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic **does not disparage some recluse or brahmin**, saying:

'See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—

that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems, joints, cuttings, and seeds—munching them all up with that bunch of lightnings, that jaw full of razor-teeth of his, and they call him an ascetic!'

Nigrodha, that an ascetic *does not disparage some recluse or brahmin*, saying: **[47]**

'See how he lives in abundance, eating all sorts of things—

that is to say, these 5 parts of a plant, namely, roots, stems, joints, cuttings, and seeds—munching them all up with that bunch of lightnings, that jaw full of razor-teeth of his, and they call him an ascetic!'—that being the case, he is purified.

(10) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic sees another recluse or brahmin **being patronized**, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but does not think:

'This fellow is living in abundance.

He is being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!"

Thus, **envy and jealousy do not arise in him** because of those householders.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic sees another recluse or brahmin being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but does not think:*

'This fellow is living in abundance.

He is being patronized, honoured, respected, worshipped amongst families, but they do not patronize, honour, respect, worship me, an ascetic who lives a rough life!"

Thus, envy and jealousy do not arise in him because of those householders—

that being the case, he is purified.

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

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic is not one who sits before the people in public—*

that being the case, he is purified.

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

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic does not go about ostentatiously among the families, as if to say: '*

Look at this asceticism of mine! Look at this asceticism of mine!'—that being the case, he is purified.

(13) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic does not resort to **underhanded conduct**.

On being asked: 'Do you approve of this?', when he does not approve, he says, 'I do not approve,' or when he does approve, he says, 'I do approve.'

In this way, he does not tell a deliberate lie.

Nigrodha, that *an ascetic does not resort to underhanded conduct,*

on being asked: 'Do you approve of this?', when he does not approve, he says, 'I do not approve', or when he does approve, he says, 'I do approve.'

*In this way, he does not tell a deliberate lie—*that being the case, he is purified.

15 (14) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic, when the Tathāgata or a Tathāgata’s disciple presents the Dharma exposition in a way that deserves his assent, **gives his assent**—that being the case, he is purified.¹⁰⁰

(15) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **neither angry nor resentful**.¹⁰¹
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither angry nor resentful*—that being the case, he is purified.

(16) Furthermore, Nigrodha, an ascetic is **neither mean nor spiteful**.¹⁰²
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither mean nor spiteful*—that being the case, he is purified.

(17) An ascetic is **neither envious nor jealous**.¹⁰³
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither envious nor jealous*—that being the case, he is purified.

(18) An ascetic is **neither crafty nor deceitful**.¹⁰⁴
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither crafty nor deceitful*—that being the case, he is purified.

(19) An ascetic is **neither obstinate nor [48] arrogant**.¹⁰⁵
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither obstinate nor arrogant*—that being the case, he is purified.

(20) An ascetic **neither has bad desires nor is he under their sway**.¹⁰⁶
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *neither has bad desires nor is he under their sway*—that being the case, he is purified.

(21) An ascetic **neither holds wrong views nor is he given to extreme opinions**.¹⁰⁷
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *neither holds wrong views nor is he given to extreme opinions*—that being the case, he is purified.

(22) An ascetic is **neither stuck in self-view, nor firmly holds on to it, but easily lets it go**.¹⁰⁸
Nigrodha, that an ascetic *is neither stuck in self-view, nor firmly holds on to it, but easily lets it go*—that being the case, he is purified.

15.2 What do you think, Nigrodha: is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified by these things or not?
“Certainly it is, bhante, it reaches its peak here, penetrating **the heartwood!**”

15.3 “**No**,¹⁰⁹ Nigrodha, it does not reach its peak there, penetrating the heartwood. It has only reached **the loose outer bark!**”¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁰ This section lists the opposite (positive) qualities of those at §12 & nn.

¹⁰¹ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī akodhano hoti anupanāhī.* See prec n.

¹⁰² *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī amakkhī hoti apalāsī.*

¹⁰³ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī anissukī hoti amaccharī.*

¹⁰⁴ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī asaṭho hoti amāyāvī.*

¹⁰⁵ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī athaddho hoti anatimānī.*

¹⁰⁶ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī pāp’iccho hoti pāpikānaṃ icchānaṃ vasaṃ gato.*

¹⁰⁷ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī na micchā.ditthiko hoti ananta-g.gāhikāya ditthiyā samannāgato.*

¹⁰⁸ *Puna ca param nigrodha tapassī asanditthi,parāmāsī hoti anādhāna,gāhī suppaṭinissaggī.* This line parallels that of defilement (44) [§12 etc].

¹⁰⁹ This is the 1st of 3 negations (§§15.3, 17.2, 18.6) by the Buddha to Nigrodha’s confident responses, which effectively shows that he does not really know his own training! The Buddha answers “Yes” at §19.6, saying that the “heartwood” (attainment of the divine abodes and the divine eye), but the Buddha trains his disciples in “something higher and finer”! [§19.7]

The 2nd tree cycle: The tree-bark¹¹¹ [§13.1]

16 “Well then, bhante,
how does the practice of **ascetic abstinence** reach its peak, *penetrating the heartwood*?
It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One were to cause my practice of ascetic abstinence to reach
its peak, *penetrating the heartwood!*”¹¹²

Refrain: The 4 restraints (1)

16.2 “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints.¹¹³ And what are **the 4 restraints**?
Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic:

- (1) does not harm a living being,
nor cause any to be harmed, nor does he approve of such harming; [49]
- (2) he does not take the not-given,
nor cause any to be taken, nor does he approve of such taking;
- (3) he does not tell a lie,
nor cause any lie to be told, nor approve of such lying;
- (4) he does not desire for sense-pleasure,¹¹⁴
nor cause others to do so, nor approve of such desire.

In this way, Nigrodha, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints.

Indeed, Nigrodha, so long as the ascetic is thus restrained by these 4 restraints, making them his
austerity, he rises higher, he does not fall back into low things.¹¹⁵

Refrain: The 5 hindrances (1)¹¹⁶

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

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

- (1) Abandoning **covetousness**¹¹⁷ for the world,

¹¹⁰ “The loose outer bark,” *papaṭika*, ie pieces of dry bark that flake off. Cf §§17.2, 18.3, 19.3. This imagery forms part of a series of similes in reference to the parts of a tree-trunk [1.1.1].

¹¹¹ *Ce parisuddha, taca-p, patta, kathā*, “talk on the purity comparable to the tree-bark.” This is the 2nd of the 4 cycles of **tree parables** [1.1.2].

¹¹² *Sādhu me bhante bhagavā tāpo, jigucchāya aggam yeva pāpetu saram pāpetūti*. We see here Nigrodha (and the wanderers) attentively following the Buddha’s teaching, ready for the training: this positive response recurs at §§18.1, 19.1. All this, however, seems to take a turn-around later, esp after Sandhāna’s remark to Nigrodha [§20], where see nn.

¹¹³ *Catu, yāma, saṃvara*, D 1:57, 3:48; S 1:66; M 1:377; Vism 416. This is the practice of the Jain recluse (muni). See Prasad 1926:704 f.

¹¹⁴ *Na bhāvitam āsaṃsati*. A difficult reading that Comy explains as “he does not crave for sense-pleasures” which D:RD follows. Cf Walshe: D:W n766.

¹¹⁵ *Yato kho nigrodha tapassī evaṃ cātu, yāma, saṃvara, saṃvuto hoti, aduñ c’assa hoti tapassitāya, so abhiharati no hīnāy’āvattati*. This refrain recurs at §§18.2, 19.2.

¹¹⁶ For details, see **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2, 68-74/2:71-73) & **Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55/5:121-126). Both employ colourful parables.

- he dwells with a mind free from such covetousness, the mind is purified of *covetousness*.
- (2) Abandoning **ill will and hatred**,
he dwells with a mind free from ill will,¹¹⁸ compassionate to all living beings,
the mind is purified of *ill will and hatred*.
- (3) Abandoning **sloth and torpor**,
he dwells with a mind purified of sloth and torpor, and perceiving light, mindful and fully knowing,
the mind is purified of *sloth and torpor*.
- (4) Abandoning **restlessness and worry**,
he dwells with a mind purified of restless and worry, with the mind pacified,
the mind is purified of *restlessness and worry*.
- (5) Abandoning **doubt**, he dwells having overcome doubt,
without uncertainty regarding the wholesome, the mind is purified of *doubt*.

Refrain: The 4 immeasurables (1)¹¹⁹

17 (1) THE CULTIVATION OF LOVINGKINDNESS

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and
in order *to weaken the impurities of the mind* by applying insight,¹²⁰
he dwells with a heart of **lovingkindness**, suffusing one quarter;
so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
he dwells suffusing all the world with lovingkindness
that is vast, [50] grown great [exalted],¹²¹ immeasurable, without hate, without ill will.¹²²

(2) THE CULTIVATION OF COMPASSION

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and
in order *to weaken the impurities of the mind* by applying insight,
he dwells with a heart of **compassion**, suffusing one quarter,
so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
he dwells suffusing all the world with compassion
that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill will.

(3) THE CULTIVATION OF GLADNESS

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

¹¹⁷ “Covetousness,” *abhijjhā* = *kāma-c, chanda*, which is the more usual term (A 3:62; Vbh 378). Alt tr “longing.”

¹¹⁸ “A mind free from ill will,” *avyāpanna, citto viharati*.

¹¹⁹ This refrain recurs at: §§ 18.4, 19.3. For a description of the immeasurable or divine abodes with parables, see **Tevijja S** (D 13,76-79/1:251), SD 1.8. On the divine abodes with the elements, see **Vuṭṭha Vass’āvāsa S** (A 9.11,-4/4:375 f), SD 28.21. On how the divine abodes limit karma, see **Brahma, vihāra S** (A 10.206/5:299), SD 2.10.

¹²⁰ *So ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbhā, karaṇe*. The application of insight is done through the calm and clarity after emerging from dhyana: SD SD 33.8 (3). This refrain recurs at §§18.4, 19.4.

¹²¹ The mind “grown great” (*maha-g, gatā*) or exalted perception refers to the mind in dhyana, ie in the form sphere (*rūpāvacara*). See **Catuttha Jhāna Pañha S** (S 40.4), SD 24.14 (4).

¹²² The recurrence of these last two phrases—“without hate, without ill will”—attests to the fact that lovingkindness is the basis for all the other three abodes, ie, they are actually a refinement of lovingkindness applied on deeper and broader levels.

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

(4) THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and
 in order *to weaken the impurities of the mind* by applying insight,
 he dwells with a heart of **equanimity**, suffusing one quarter,
 so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
 thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
 he dwells suffusing all the world with equanimity
 that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill will.

17.2 What do you think, Nigrodha—such being the case, is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified or not?”

“Certainly it is, *bhante*, such being the case, the practice of ascetic abstinence *reaches its peak here, penetrating the heartwood.*”

“**No**, Nigrodha, the practice of ascetic abstinence does not reach its peak there, nor penetrate the heartwood. It has only reached **the bark!**”¹²³

18 “Well then, *bhante*,
how does the practice of ascetic abstinence reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood?
It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One were to cause my practice of ascetic abstinence to reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood!”¹²⁴ [§15.3 n]

The 3rd tree cycle: The sapwood¹²⁵ [§13.1]

Refrain: The 4 restraints (2)

18.2 “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints. And what are **the 4 restraints**? [§16.2]

Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic

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

¹²³ “The bark,” *taca* [cf §15.2]. See **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,12) and **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118,8) for other applications of the heartwood (*sāra*) simile.

¹²⁴ On this positive response from Nigrodha, see §16.1+n.

¹²⁵ *Ce parisuddha,pheggu,patta kathā*, “the talk on the purity comparable to reaching the sapwood.” On the 4 tree cycles [1.1.2].

In this way, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints.

Indeed, Nigrodha, so long as the ascetic is thus restrained by these 4 restraints, making them his austerity, he rises higher, he does not fall back into low things.

Refrain: The 5 hindrances (2)

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

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

he sits down cross-legged and holding his body erect, establishes mindfulness before him. [§16.3]

- (1) Abandoning **covetousness** for the world, he dwells with a mind free from such covetousness, and the mind is purified of covetousness.
- (2) Abandoning **ill will and hatred**, he dwells with a mind free from ill will, compassionate to all living beings, the mind is purified of ill will and hatred.
- (3) Abandoning **sloth and torpor**, he dwells with a mind purified of sloth and torpor, and perceiving light, mindful and fully comprehending, the mind is purified of sloth and torpor.
- (4) Abandoning **restlessness and worry**, he dwells with a mind purified of restless and worry, with the mind pacified, the mind is purified of restlessness and worry.
- (5) Abandoning **doubt**, he dwells having overcome doubt, without uncertainty regarding the wholesome, the mind is purified of doubt.

Refrain: The 4 immeasurables (2)

(1) THE CULTIVATION OF LOVINGKINDNESS

18.4 Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,¹²⁶ he dwells with a heart of **lovingkindness**, suffusing one quarter; so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth; thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing all the world with lovingkindness that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill will.

(2) THE CULTIVATION OF COMPASSION

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight, he dwells with a heart of **compassion**, suffusing one quarter, so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth; thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing all the world with compassion that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill will.

(3) THE CULTIVATION OF GLADNESS

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

¹²⁶ On the application of insight, see §17 (1) n.

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

(4) THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY

Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and
in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,
*he dwells with a heart of **equanimity**, suffusing one quarter,
so, too, the second; so, too, the third; so, too, the fourth;
thus above, below, across, everywhere, and to everyone as well as to himself,
he dwells suffusing all the world with equanimity
that is vast, grown great [exalted], immeasurable, without hate, without ill will.*

THE 2 SUPERPOWERS¹²⁷THE 1ST SUPERKNOWLEDGE: RECOLLECTION OF PAST LIVES¹²⁸

18.5 Thus, he recalls **his manifold past lives**, that is to say,
one birth, two births, three births, four births, five births,
ten births, twenty births, thirty births, forty births, fifty births,
one hundred births, one thousand births, one hundred thousand births,
many aeons of world contraction, many aeons of world expansion, many aeons of world contraction and expansion, (recalling thus):
‘There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance.
Such was my food, such my experience of joy and pain, such the end of my life.
Passing away from that state, I re-arose there.
There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance.
Such was my food, such my experience of joy and pain, such my life-span.
Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.’¹²⁹ **[51]**
Thus he recalls his manifold past existence in their modes and their details.¹³⁰

18.6 What do you think, Nigrodha? This being the case, is the practice of ascetic abstinence purified or not?”

“Certainly it is, bhante, this being the case, the practice of ascetic abstinence attains its peak here, penetrating **the heartwood**.”

“**No**, Nigrodha, the practice of ascetic abstinence does not reach its peak there, nor penetrate to the heartwood. It has only reached **the sapwood!**”¹³¹

¹²⁷ In the proper Dharma-based training for a practitioner in the teaching, the 3 superknowledges (*abhiññā*) would follow: D 3:281; M 1:34; A 1:255, 258, 3:17, 280, 4:421 & SID: te,vijjā. The 3rd knowledge, the direct knowledge, that of the destruction of the influxes (*āsava-k,khaya,ñāṇa*) or arhathood, is omitted here. The reason is that Nigrodha has neither gone for refuge nor taken up the training under the Buddha. See foll n.

¹²⁸ Note that this is the 1st of the 3 superknowledges (*te,vijjā*); the 2nd is the divine eye (the recollection of the other beings’ rebirths according to karma) [§§19.7-10]. On the mention of only 2 superknowledges out of the well known set of 3, see [1.1.2.2].

¹²⁹ This para as in **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28,15.1/3:108 f). For details, see Vism 13.13-71/411-423.

¹³⁰ As in **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,93/1:81).

The 4th tree cycle: The heartwood¹³² [§13.1]

19 “Well then, bhante,
how does the practice of ascetic abstinence reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood?
It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One were to cause my practice of ascetic abstinence to reach its peak, penetrating the heartwood!”¹³³ [§15.3 n]

Refrain: The 4 restraints (3)

19.2 “Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints. And what, Nigrodha, are **the 4 restraints?** [§16.2]

Here, Nigrodha, an ascetic

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

In this way, an ascetic observes the 4 restraints.

Indeed, Nigrodha, so long as the ascetic is thus restrained by these 4 restraints, making them his austerity, he rises higher, he does not fall back into low things.

Refrain: The 5 hindrances (3)

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

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

he sits down cross-legged and holding his body erect, establishes mindfulness before him. [§16.3]

- (1) *Abandoning **covetousness** for the world, he dwells with a mind free from such covetousness, and the mind is purified of covetousness.*
- (2) *Abandoning **ill will and hatred**, he dwells with a mind free from ill will, compassionate to all living beings, the mind is purified of ill will and hatred.*
- (3) *Abandoning **sloth and torpor**, he dwells with a mind purified of sloth and torpor, and perceiving light, mindful and fully comprehending, the mind is purified of sloth and torpor.*
- (4) *Abandoning **restlessness and worry**, he dwells with a mind purified of restless and worry, with the mind pacified, the mind is purified of restlessness and worry.*

¹³¹ “The sapwood,” *pheggū*, ie the fibre surrounding the pith [cf §15.2]. Cf M 29. See also **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,12/1:111) and **Ānāpāna,sati S** (M 118,8) for other applications of the heartwood (*sāra*) simile.

¹³² Cf *parisuddha,agga-p,patta,sāra-p,patta,kathā*, “the talk on gaining of the foremost purity comparable to attaining the heartwood.” On the 4 tree cycles [1.1.2].

¹³³ On this positive response from Nigrodha, see §16.1+n.

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

Refrain: The 4 immeasurables (3)

(1) THE CULTIVATION OF LOVINGKINDNESS

19.4 Having abandoned these 5 hindrances, and in order to weaken the impurities of the mind by applying insight,¹³⁴

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

(2) THE CULTIVATION OF COMPASSION

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

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

(3) THE CULTIVATION OF GLADNESS

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

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

(4) THE CULTIVATION OF EQUANIMITY

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

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

THE 1ST SUPERKNOWLEDGE: **REFRAIN** [§18.5]

19.6 Thus, he recalls **his manifold past lives**, that is to say,
one birth, two births, three births, four births, five births,
ten births, twenty births, thirty births, forty births, fifty births,
one hundred births, one thousand births, one hundred thousand births, ...
Thus he recalls his manifold past existence in their modes and their details.

¹³⁴ On the application of insight, see §17 (1) n.

Thus, he [52] recalls his manifold past lives with their conditions and details.

THE 2ND SUPERKNOWLEDGE: THE DIVINE EYE

19.7 And then, by means of **the divine eye** [clairvoyance],¹³⁵ purified and surpassing the human, he sees beings passing away and re-arising, and

he knows how they are inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, in the heavens, in the suffering states, faring according to their karma.

19.8 ‘Sirs, these beings possess bad bodily karma, possess bad verbal karma, bad mental karma; who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views, acted under the influence of wrong views, after death, when the body has broken up, they re-appear in a plane of misery, a bad destination, a lower realm, in hell.

19.9 Sirs, these beings possess good bodily karma, possess good verbal karma, good mental karma; who reviled not the noble ones, held right views, acted under the influence of right views, after death, when the body has broken up, they re-appear in a happy destination, in heaven.’

19.10 Thus, by means of **the divine eye** [clairvoyance], purified and surpassing the human, he sees beings passing away and re-arising, and he knows how they are inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, in the heavens, in the suffering states, faring according to their karma.

THE HEARTWOOD

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

“Certainly it is, bhante, this being the case, the practice of ascetic abstinence reaches its peak here, penetrating **the heartwood**.”

“Yes, indeed it is, Nigrodha, the practice of ascetic abstinence reaches its peak here, penetrating to the heartwood [the pith]. It has reached **the heartwood**.¹³⁶ [§15.3 n]

The wanderers’ spiritual limitations

19.12 Now, Nigrodha, you asked:

‘*Bhante, what is **the doctrine** in which the Blessed One trains [disciplines] his disciples, by which the Blessed One’s disciples **gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life**?*’ [§6.3, 7.4]—

19.13 Nigrodha, I train my disciples in **something higher and finer**—it is through this that they gain the confidence to declare their principal support and the fundamentals of the holy life.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ *Dibba, cakkhu*, clairvoyance, not to be confused with the Dharma-eye (*dhamma, cakkhu*): this is the 2nd of the 3 superknowledges (*te, vijjā* or *abhiññā*) [§18.5+n], on which see foll n. On the relationship of this knowledge to the 62 grounds for wrong views, see **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1), SD 25.3 (76.3).

¹³⁶ “Heartwood,” *sāra*, or “pith,” ie, the core or essence of anything; the pith or the best of wood—a simile for spiritual strength and attainment. Here, the Buddha’s humour is evident in such a simile given in the latter [§15-19]: he hints that the “highest” attainable outside the teaching is the recollection of past lives (not arhathood), See **Madhu, piṇḍika S** (M 18,12/1:111), SD 6.14. In (**Saṅgha**) **Uposatha S** (A 4.190,1.2/2:182), SD 15.10b, *sāra* means “essence,” referring to accomplished in moral virtue, concentration, wisdom, etc (AA 3:168). Cf §15.2. See §18.3 n.

¹³⁷ *Iti kho taṃ nigrodha thānaṃ uttaritaraṃ ca paṇītataraṃ ca yenāhaṃ mayā sāvakā vinemi, yena mayā sāvakā vinītā assāsa, pattā paṭijānanti ajjhāsayaṃ ādi, brahma, cariyaṃ’ti*. Nigrodha has openly declared that the previous stage is the highest, but the Buddha now says that there is “something higher and finer”!

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

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

NIGRODHA’S REMORSE

Nirodhassa pajjhāyana

Sandhāna’s retort

20 And when the houselord Sandhāna understood, thus:¹³⁸

“Surely, now these wanderers outside the faith are actually heeding the Blessed One’s word, giving ear to it, directing their minds towards direct knowledge.”¹³⁹

20.2 Then, he said this to the wanderer Nigrodha:

“**Bhante Nigrodha**,¹⁴⁰ you had said to me: [§5]

‘Well now, houselord, do you know with whom the recluse Gotama talks?

With whom does he converse? From whom does he find his clarity of wisdom?

He is awkward in an assembly; no good at conversation. He keeps only to the fringes of things.

*Just like a **one-eyed cow**,¹⁴¹ walking in circles, keeps to the fringes (of a field),*

even so, the recluse Gotama’s wisdom is destroyed by the solitary life.

He is awkward in an assembly; no good at conversation. He keeps only to the fringes of things.

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

20.3 So now, bhante, that the Blessed One, the worthy [arhat], fully self-awakened, has come here, show that he is no good at conversation!

Show that he is a one-eyed cow, walking in circles, keeping to the fringes!

Baffle him with a single question, knock him over like an empty pot!”

20.4 And at these words, the wanderer Nigrodha sat silent, dismayed, his shoulders drooping, face down [hanging his head], glum, unable to speak [at a loss for words].¹⁴²

The Buddha’s admonition

¹³⁸ *Yadā aññāsi sandhāno gahapati*. The vb *aññāsi* (aor 3 sg of *jānāti*, to know, or *ājānāti*, to understand) is rarely used, esp for a layman. In **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11,16+20), it is famously applied to Koṇḍañña’s attaining of streamwinning (SD 1.1). It may be reflective of Sandhāna’s spiritual state as a non-returner [§1.3n].

¹³⁹ *Añña-d-atthu kho dan’ime añña,titthiyā paribbājakā bhagavato bhāsitaṃ sussūsanti, sotam odahanti añña,-cittaṃ upaṭṭhapentīti*. Clearly, Sandhāna is joyfully responding in faith and hope, but apparently Nigrodha is either unready or was confused (by Māra).

¹⁴⁰ Although this is the only time that Nigrodha is addressed so, it need not be construed as sarcasm on Sandhāna’s part from what is stated in §20.1 of his understanding of the situation. The only issue is perhaps his apparent directness towards Nigrodha, who is still an outsider (*bāhira*). Hence, Nigrodha may be tacitly embarrassed or offended. Indeed, if Nigrodha has matured or attained streamwinning, he would have responded positively to the Buddha. Hence, it is unlikely that Sandhāna is at fault for Nigrodha’s failure to go for refuge or renounce. Moreover, Māra is mentioned [§24.1].

¹⁴¹ *Go,kāṇā*; cf *go,kaṇṇa*, “a large species of deer, J 5:406” (PED). D:W has “bison.” D:RD and here follow the Comy. Cf *go,maṇḍala va parinesi* (“led around in a circle like a cow”): see Tha 1143 @ SD 20.9.

¹⁴² *Tuṇhī,bhūto maṅku,bhūto patta-k,khandho adho,mukho pajjhāyanto appaṭibhāno nisīdi*. See §16.1+n, + foll n.

21 Now, the Blessed One, seeing that the wanderer Nigrodha was *silent, dismayed, his shoulders drooping, hanging his head, glum, unable to speak [at a loss for words]*,¹⁴³ the Blessed One said this to the wanderer Nigrodha:

“Is it true, Nigrodha, that you said those words?” [54]

“Bhante, it is true that I said those words—foolishly, mistakenly, unskillfully.”¹⁴⁴

21.2 “What do you think, Nigrodha—have you heard it being said by wanderers who were old, venerable, teachers and the teachers of teachers, that those who in the past were **arhats, fully self-awakened buddhas**, whenever they gathered, shouted, screamed, made a great noise, and indulged in low talk, that is to say, talk about kings, robbers, ... and talk about rebirth in this or that existence [*as in §2*] like you with your teaching?”

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

21.4 “Bhante, I have heard it said by wanderers who were old, venerable, teachers, the teachers of teachers, that those who in the past were arhats, fully self-awakened buddhas, whenever they gathered, never gathered in this manner: they did not indulge in loud talk nor low talk ... but resorted to dwelling in the forest ... just as the Blessed One does now.”

21.5 “Nigrodha, you are **an intelligent man of mature years**.¹⁴⁵ Has it never occurred to you that, ‘Having awakened himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma of awakening; having tamed [disciplined] himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma for taming oneself; having calmed himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma leading to calm; having himself crossed beyond,¹⁴⁶ [55] the Blessed One teaches the Dharma for crossing beyond; having attained nirvana himself, the Blessed One teaches the Dharma for attaining nirvana?’¹⁴⁷

¹⁴³ *Tuṇhī, bhūtaṃ maṅku, bhūtaṃ patta-k, khandhaṃ adho, mukhaṃ pajjhāyantaṃ appaṭibhānaṃ viditvā*, D 3:53, 26 = M 1:132,34 = 234,4 = 258,31 = 2:154,27 = 3:298,23 ≈ A 3:57,13 (*dukkhīṃ dummanāṃ patta-k, khandhaṃ +*). **Tuṇhī, bhūto +**, M 1:132,30 (= Comy: *kiñci paṭibhānaṃ apassanto chinna, paṭibhāṇo*, lit “not seeing any wit, wit uprooted,” ie at one’s wit’s ends, at a loss) = 234,2 (= Comy: *uttaraṃ apassanto*, “not seeing a refutation [not knowing how to answer]”) = 258,29 = 2:154,25 = 3:187,18 = 208,22 = M 3:298,21 = S 1:124,12 = A 1:186,29 ≈ A 3:57,11 (*dukkhī dummano patta-k, khandho +*) ≈ D 3:53,22 (see prec n). **3 pl nisidimsu tuṇhī, bhūtā +**, V 3:162,4 = 2:78,24 ≈ D 3:57,13 = A 5:188,18. See **Satta Vassa S** (A 4.24,13 n), SD 36.5.

¹⁴⁴ *yathā, bālena yathā, mūlkena yathā, akusalena*, also at §22x2. These are cases of waxing syllables: SD 58.1 (4.2.4).

¹⁴⁵ *Tassa te nigrodha viññussa sato mahallakassa*. This shows that Nigrodha is an elderly wanderer.

¹⁴⁶ ie, crossed beyond suffering.

¹⁴⁷ *Buddho so bhagavā bodhāya dhammaṃ deseti; danto so bhagavā damathāya dhammaṃ deseti; santo so bhagavā samathāya dhammaṃ deseti; tiṇṇo so bhagavā taranāya dhammaṃ deseti; parinibbuto so bhagavā parinibbānāya dhammaṃ deseti ti*. Also at **Cūḷa Saccaka S** (D 35.26/3:235). This passage and its Chinese Āgama parallel (T1 = 1.49a26-28 & T11 = 1.226a4-7) have been cited as the locus classicus of the Bodhisattva vows, such as that found in the early Mahāyāna work, **Ugra Paripṛcchā**: “The unrescued I will rescue. The unliberated I will liberate. The uncomforted I will comfort. Those who have not yet reached parinirvana I will cause to attain parinirvana.” (UgraP:N §2C)—also found in **Avadāna Śataka**, **Aṣṭa, sahaśrikā Prajñā, pāramitā** (Chin tr Lokakṣema & Chih Ch’ien), **Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra** (Lotus Sutra) (Chin tr Dharmarakṣa & Kumārajīva), and **Karuṇā, puṇḍarīka Sūtra** (with a variant 3rd vow. A differing version of the vow is found in **Dīpaṅkara Jātaka**, **Mahāvastu**, **Aṣṭa, sahaśrikā Prajñā, pāramitā** (in the extant Skt and in Kumārajīva’s Chin tr), **Pañca, viṃśati, sahaśrikā Prajñā, pāramitā** (Chin trs of Mok-

REALIZING THE ULTIMATE GOAL OF THE HOLY LIFE

Brahmacariya, pariyosāna sacchikiriya

Nigrodha's apology

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

“Bhante, I have transgressed—just as one foolish, as one confused, as one unskilful¹⁴⁸—that I spoke thus of the Blessed One!

May the Blessed One accept my transgression as a transgression, so that I may henceforth show restraint.”¹⁴⁹

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

But, Nigrodha, since you see your transgression as a transgression and make amends in accordance with the Dharma, we¹⁵⁰ accept it.

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

The Buddha's challenge

22.2 Now, Nigrodha, I tell you this:

Let an intelligent person, honest, trustworthy, upright,¹⁵¹ come to me, and I will instruct him, I will teach him the Dharma.¹⁵²

If he then practises what he is taught to attain for himself here and now that supreme goal of the holy life, for the sake of which sons of family go forth from the household life into the homeless state, will take him **7 years**.¹⁵³

ṣala, Kumārajīva, & Xuanzhang), thus: “Having crossed over, I will rescue (others). Liberated, I will liberate (others), Comforted, I will comfort (others). Having attained parinirvana, I will cause (others) to attain parinirvana.” See KAGAWA Takao, “Shi guzeigan no genryū” [The origins of the four universal vows], *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 30,1 1989:294-302; & UgraP:N 147-151.

¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁹ *Tassa me bhante bhagavā accayaṃ accayato paṭiggaṇhātu āyatim saṃvarāyā ti.* Cf Ajātasattu's confession in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.99 f/1:87) + SD 8.10 (6) on confession.

¹⁵⁰ “We forgive,” *paṭiggaṇhāma*, lit “we accept”; here the 1st pl is not the royal pronoun, but the Buddha, on behalf of the Sangha, forgives the transgression.

¹⁵¹ “Honest, trustworthy, upright,” *asaṭho amāyāvī uju, jātiko* (= M 2:44/80.16), lit “not treacherous, not deceitful, straightforward.” M:ÑB has “honest and sincere, a man of rectitude” (M:ÑB 664)

¹⁵² These 2 lines: *Etu viññū puriso asaṭho amāyāvī uju, jātiko aham anusāsāmi, ahaṃ dhammaṃ desemi.* This second line and the foll line [§16.4: see foll n], also spoken by the Buddha to the 5 monks at **V 1:9,15-17**, where instead of “recluseship” (*sāmañña*), the ref is to the true purpose of renunciation (as in the stock passage).

¹⁵³ *Etu viññū puriso asaṭho amāyāvī uju, jātiko, aham anusāsāmi ahaṃ dhammaṃ desemi. Yathā'nusiṭṭhaṃ tathā paṭipajjamāno—yass'atthāya kula, puttā samma-d-eva agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajanti, tad anuttaraṃ—brahma, cariya, pariyosānaṃ diṭṭh'eva dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissati satta, vassāni.* These last 4 lines on the Buddha's “prediction” of realization are also found in **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,22) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,46), SD 13, & also Analayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The direct path to realization*, 2003:250-257.

Let alone 7 years, Nigrodha.

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

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

Let alone **1 year**, Nigrodha.

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

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

Let alone **7 months**, Nigrodha, ...

6 months, ... 5 months, ... 4 months, ... 3 months, ... 2 months, ... 1 month, ... a fortnight.

22.3 Let alone **a fortnight**, Nigrodha,

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

will take him only 7 days.¹⁵⁴

THE WANDERERS' REMORSE *Paribbājakānaṃ pajjhāyana*

23 THE TRUE PURPOSE OF THE BUDDHA DHARMA

(1) Nigrodha, you may think,

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

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

(2) Nigrodha, you may think,

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

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

(3) Nigrodha, you may think,

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

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

(4) Nigrodha, you may think,

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

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

(5) Nigrodha, you may think,

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

¹⁵⁴ See (1.1.3.4 f).

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

23.2 Indeed, Nigrodha,	[Table 2.2] ¹⁵⁵
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to win pupils.</u>
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to make you fall from your rules.</u>
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to make you fall from your livelihood.</u>
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to establish you in teachings considered unwholesome.</u>
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to separate you from teachings considered wholesome.</u>

(6) There are, Nigrodha, **unwholesome things** that have not been abandoned, defiled, conducive to rebirth, fearful, productive of painful results in the future, associated with birth, decay and death.

It is for the abandonment of these things that I teach Dharma.¹⁵⁶

(7) If you practise accordingly, **these defiled states will be abandoned**, the states that purify will increase, and *by your direct knowledge*, you will realize, here and now, the bounty of the accomplishment of wisdom.¹⁵⁷

Māra the bad

24 When this was said, the wanderers sat silent, dismayed, their shoulders drooping, hanging their heads, downcast, at a loss for words, so possessed were their minds by **Māra** [the bad one].¹⁵⁸

24.2 Then, the Blessed One thought:

“Every one of these hollow men¹⁵⁹ is possessed by the Bad One, so that *not even one of them* thinks:

‘Let us now follow the holy life proclaimed by the recluse Gotama, that we may know it—for what do

7 days matter?’” [1.1.3.5]

24.3 Then, the Blessed One, having uttered **the lion-roar**¹⁶⁰ in the Udumbarikā wanderer’s park, rose up into the air and returned to Mount Vulture Peak.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁵ On the Buddha’s 7 points for interfaith dialogue, see **Table 2.2**.

¹⁵⁶ *Santi ca kho Nigrodha, akusalā dhammā appahīṇā saṅkilesikā ponobhavikā sadarā dukkha, vipākā āyatim jāti, jarā, marañiyā, yesāhaṃ pahānāya dhammāṃ desemi yathā paṭipannānaṃ vo saṅkilesikā dhammā pahiyissanti.* On the urgency of avoiding bad, doing good, see **Kesa,puttiya S** (A 3.65,10-12), SD 35.4a.

¹⁵⁷ *Yathā, paṭipannānaṃ vo saṅkilesikā dhammā pahiyissanti, vodāniyā dhammā abhivaḍḍhissanti, paññā, pāripūrim vepullattañ ca diṭṭh’eva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissathā ti.* On the significance of this whole passage, see SD 19.1 (7.3).

¹⁵⁸ Like Ānanda in **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16,3.4/2:103). In both cases, it is obvious that “**Māra**” refers to a distracted mind that is unable to comprehend the significance of the Buddha’s invitation. If it were really Māra the deity, the Buddha could have easily exposed him. It is interesting to see here that Māra is always dealt with the person himself, and not “exorcised” by another. This further points to the fact that Māra is *the distracted mind*. [1.1.3.5]

¹⁵⁹ *Mogha, purisa*, lit “empty person.” I’ve followed a safe well-tested translation here. However, while *mogha* evokes a sense of serious spiritual lack, “misguided” connotes more of psychosocial errancy. Cf T S Eliot’s “Hollow Men” (where “empty men” is also mentioned) which fully brings out the meaning here but lacks emotional connection for those unfamiliar with the poem.

¹⁶⁰ “Lion-roar,” *sīha, nāda*. See (2.2).

¹⁶¹ This is 2nd of 2 occasions in this Sutta of the Buddha using his psychic power. The 1st is that of the “divine ear” or clairaudience [§16.1+n]. This must have been before monastics are proscribed from public display of psychic powers, which suggests the early age of the Sutta, or at least of the story that it recounts. A monastic who displays

And the houselord Sandhāna, too, returned to Rāja,gaha.¹⁶²

— evaṃ —

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feats of psychic power to lay people entails "wrong-doing," dukkaṭa (Cv 5.8.2 = V 2:110 f). It should be noted that the wanderers are not regarded as "lay followers." See SD 27.6a (1.4.3).

¹⁶² Comy says that although the Buddha's word was unsuccessful at that time, it would benefit the wanderers in the future (DA 3:844). See (1.1.3.5, 2.3).