

## SD 61.22 Nandati Suttas

SD 61.22a (Devatā) Nandati Sutta The (Devatā) Discourse on “One Delights” | S 1.12

SD 61.22b (Māra) Nandati Sutta The (Māra) Discourse on “One Delights” | S 4.8

or, (Māra) Nandana Sutta, the (Māra) Discourse on Delighting

Theme: The joy of having family and property

Translated by Piya Tan ©2024

### 1 Sutta summary and provenance

#### 1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

##### 1.1.1 The twin verses on acquisitions

**1.1.1.1** Both the (Devatā) Nandati Sutta (S 1.12) and the (Māra) Nandati Sutta (S 4.8) present the same 2 verses regarding the nature of “acquisitions” (*upadhi*), that is, the supports or substrates of worldly life. The 1<sup>st</sup> verse represents the worldly or conventional truth (*sammuti sacca*) while the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse (the Buddha’s reply) is ultimate reality or Dharma truth (*param’attha sacca*).

**1.1.1.2** S 1.12 records the 1<sup>st</sup> verse as being spoken by a deity (*devatā*), while in S 4.8 the 1<sup>st</sup> verse is spoken by Māra. The oldest occurrence of the 1<sup>st</sup> verse is probably in the Dhaniya Sutta (Sn 1.2) where it is spoken by Māra (Sn 33), and the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse (the reply) by the Buddha (Sn 34).

It may also be conjectured that it is Māra who inspired the deity or is himself disguised as the deity who speaks the 1<sup>st</sup> verse. This then makes Māra as the sole or ultimate source of the 1<sup>st</sup> verse. Whoever is the source of the 1<sup>st</sup> verse, the point remains that it represents the worldly or conventional view.

[1.2.1.2]

#### 1.2 OCCURRENCES OF THE SUTTA VERSES

##### 1.2.1 The Dhaniya Sutta (Sn 33 f), SD 50.20

**1.2.1.1** The *Netti-p, pakaraṇa* states that the cowherd Dhaniya (Nett 34,13-30) is the “source” (*nidāna*) of the quote.<sup>1</sup> The textual apparatus of the Sutta Nipāta (preserving the Dhaniya Sutta) notes that the verse is spoken by Māra. We must conclude then that Māra spoke through Dhaniya. This is understandable because Dhaniya, as a cattle-herder, would hold such a view. It is also for this very reason that the Buddha has the Dharma dialogue with Dhaniya.

**1.2.1.2** In the Dhaniya Sutta, Dhaniya sings of his worldly happiness in the first 6 of his verses. For each of these verses, the Buddha simply shows how the bases of Dhaniya’s happiness—his acquisitions—are of a worldly nature, while the Buddha enjoys the spiritual or higher happiness by being free of that worldly happiness.

Dhaniya’s verses sing of his **acquisitions** (*upadhi*) in the following 4 ways (SA 1:31,23-32,3):

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| (1) sensual pleasures ( <i>kāmūpadhi</i> ) | Sn 20, 22; |
| (2) the aggregates ( <i>khandhūpadhi</i> ) | Sn 30;     |
| (3) defilements ( <i>kilesūpadhi</i> )     | Sn 33, 22; |

<sup>1</sup> See also Peṭk 55.

S 1.1.2.2 Saṃyutta Nikāya 1, Sagāthāvagga 1, Devatā Saṃyutta 2, Nandana Vagga 2

S 1.4.1.8 Saṃyutta Nikāya 1, Sagāthāvagga 4, Māra Saṃyutta 1, Paṭhama Vagga 8

(4) karma-formations (*abhisāṅkhārûpadhi*) Sn 18, 24, 26, 28.

### **1.2.2 The (Devatā) Nandati Sutta (S 1.12), SD 61.22a**

As the title, (Devatā) Nandati Sutta, suggests, its verse (**S 22**) is spoken by a deity (*devatā*). Neither text nor commentary tells us which deity this is. It would be strange for a deity enjoying the heavenly pleasures to sing highly of earthly delights. Hence, it is very likely Māra disguised as a deity uttering this verse with which he is associated on the other 2 occasions, that is, at **Sn 33** and **S 4.8**.

Since the 2 verses are identical in all the 3 Suttas mentioned here, please refer to the same notes at [1.1.1].

### **1.2.3 The (Māra) Nandati Sutta (S 4.8), SD 61.22b**

As the title, (Māra) Nandati Sutta, suggests, its verse (**S 461**) is spoken by Māra, who is stated in **the Dhaniya Sutta** (Sn 33) as the speaker of the same verse. It seems that Māra appears to the Buddha again on another occasion and utters just the same verse to the Buddha.

The Commentary on this Sutta refers back to **the (Devatā) Nandati Sutta**: *devata,samyutte vuttam eva* (SA 1:31 f).

Since the 2 verses are identical in all the 3 Suttas mentioned here, please refer to the same notes at [1.1.1].

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SD 61.22a

**(Devatā) Nandati Sutta**

The (Devatā) Discourse on “One Delights”

S 1.12

1 At Sāvattthī.

Standing at one side, the deity [devatā] spoke this verse before the Blessed One:

2 *nandati puttehi puttimā* One who has sons delights in sons,  
*gomiko gohi that’eva nandati* one with cattle delights in cattle.  
*upadhīhi narassa nandanā* Acquisitions<sup>2</sup> truly are a person's delight;  
*na hi so nandati yo nirupadhī ti* S 22 without acquisitions one does not delight. [Sn 33]

[The Blessed One:]

3 *socati puttehi puttimā* One who has sons sorrows over sons,  
*gomiko gohi that’eva socati* one with cattle sorrows over cattle.  
*upadhīhi narassa socanā* Acquisitions truly are a person's sorrow;  
*na hi so socati nirupadhī ti* S 23 without acquisitions one sorrows not.

evam

<sup>2</sup> “Acquisitions,” *upadhi*, the substrata of existence (incl the body). From *upa* + √DHĀ, to put [SED: sv *upa* + √dhā], lit, that on which something is laid or rests, basis, foundation, substratum. Etym: “The happiness here is acquired in them because they are the basis for pleasure ... hence they are called acquisitions” (*sukhassa adhiṭṭhāna, bhāvato upadhīyati ettha sukhan ti ... (kā mā) upadhī ti vuccanti*, SnA 44,27 = M 1:85,28). 4 kinds: acquisitions of sense-pleasures, of the aggregates, of defilements and of karma-formations (*upadhī ti cattāro upadhayo kāmūpadhi khandhūpadhi kilesūpadhi abhisankhārūpadhī ti*, SnA 44,24 f) [SD 50.20 (3.2.2)]. *Upadhi* is the root of suffering: M 2:454,2 f; S 2:108; Sn 728 = 1051 = Tha 152; the rejection of all upadhis is nirvana: D 2:36 (cf M 1:107 = 2:93; S 1:136, 3:133, 5:226; A 1:80; V 1:5, 36 = J 1:83 = Mvst 2:444; It 46, 62). Also SD 28.11 (3.2); SD 53.7 (2.3.1); **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16), SD 9.15; **Ariya Pariyesanā** (M 26,6), SD 1.11; **The unconscious**, SD 17.8b (4.4); **S 503\*** (S 4.24,8), SD 36.5; SD 51.24 (2.5.2.3 (3) n).

SD 61.22b

**(Māra) Nandati Sutta**

The (Māra) Discourse on “One Delights”

S 4.8

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Jeta’s Grove in Anāthapiṇḍika’s park outside Sāvathī.

2 Then Mara the Evil One approached the Blessed One and uttered this verse before the Blessed One:

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| <p>2.2 <i>nandati puttehi puttimā<br/>gomiko gohi that’eva nandati<br/>upadhīhi narassa nandanā<br/>na hi so nandati yo nirupadhī ti</i></p> | <p><b>S 461</b> One who has sons delights in sons,<br/>one with cattle delights in cattle. <b>[108]</b><br/>Acquisitions truly are a man’s delight;<br/>without acquisitions one does not delight. [Sn 33]</p> |
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[The Blessed One:]

|   |  |
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| <p>3 <i>socati puttehi puttimā<br/>gomiko gohi that’eva socati<br/>upadhīhi narassa socanā<br/>na hi so socati nirupadhī ti</i></p> | <p><b>S 462</b> One who has sons sorrows over sons,<br/>one with cattle sorrows over cattle.<br/>Acquisitions truly are a person’s sorrow;<br/>without acquisitions one sorrows not.</p> |
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4 Then Mara the evil one, thinking,  
“The Blessed One knows me, the well gone knows me!”  
sad and disheartened, disappeared right there.<sup>3</sup>

evam

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<sup>3</sup> *Dukkhī dummano tatth’ev’antaradhāyi*. Ee omits this para. This stock occurs some 32 times in Saṃyutta in connection with Māra [SD 61.9 (3.1.2)].