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Buddhism

Sutta Nipāta — The Anthology

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Buddhist tradition (attributed to the Buddha and his disciples)

Translation by Bhikkhu Sujato

Credits

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About:

One of the oldest collections of the canon, nearly entirely in verse, in five chapters. It contains the Rhinoceros Sutta ("wander alone like a rhinoceros horn"), the Metta Sutta, the Ratana Sutta and, in its last two chapters (Aṭṭhakavagga and Pārāyanavagga), poems counted among the oldest Buddhist teachings.

It belongs to the Khuddaka Nikāya, the "minor collection" of the Pali canon. The Aṭṭhakavagga is cited by name elsewhere in the canon, a sign that it circulated very early as a separate work.

These poems speak of a wandering ascetic who lets go even of attachment to views, and show the Buddhism of the earliest times, before the schools and the commentaries.

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1.1 — THE SERPENT

✦

1 When anger surges, they drive it out,
as with medicine a cobra's spreading venom.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

2 They've cut off greed entirely,
like a lotus plucked flower and stalk.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

3 They've cut off craving entirely,
drying up that swift-flowing stream.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

4 They've swept away conceit entirely,
as a fragile bridge of reeds by a great flood.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

5 In future lives they find no worth,
as an inspector of fig trees finds no flower.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

6 They hide no anger within,
passed beyond any kind of existence.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

7 Their mental vibrations are cleared away,
internally clipped off entirely.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

8 They have not run too far nor run back,
but have gone beyond all this proliferation.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

9 They have not run too far nor run back,
for they know that nothing in the world <j>is what it seems.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

10 They have not run too far nor run back,
knowing nothing is what it seems, free of greed.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

11 They have not run too far nor run back,
knowing nothing is what it seems, free of lust.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

12 They have not run too far nor run back,
knowing nothing is what it seems, free of hate.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

13 They have not run too far nor run back,
knowing nothing is what it seems, free of delusion.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

14 They have no underlying tendencies at all,
and are rid of unskillful roots,
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

15 They have nothing born of distress at all
to make them to return to the near shore.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

16 No snarl grows in them at all,
that would shackle them to a new life.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

17 They've given up the five hindrances,
untroubled, rid of indecision, free of thorns.
Such a mendicant sheds the near shore and the far,
as a serpent its old worn-out skin.

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1.2 — THE WEALTHY RANCHER

✦

1 “I’ve boiled my rice and drawn my milk,”
said Dhaniya the rancher, “I stay with my family along the bank of the Mahī.
My hut is roofed, my sacred fire kindled:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

2 “I boil not with anger <j>and have drawn out hard-heartedness,”
said the Buddha, “I stay for one night along the bank of the Mahī.
My hut is wide open, my fire is quenched:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

3 “No gadflies or mosquitoes are found,”
said Dhaniya, “cows graze on the lush meadow grass.
They get by even when the rain comes:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

4 “I bound a raft and prepared it well,”
said the Buddha, “and with it I crossed over, went to the far shore, <j>and dispelled the flood.
Now I have no need for a raft:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

5 “My wife is obedient, not wanton,”
said Dhaniya, “long have we lived together happily.
I hear nothing bad about her:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

6 “My mind is obedient and freed,”
said the Buddha, “long nurtured and well-tamed.
Nothing bad is found in me:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

7 “I am self-employed,”
said Dhaniya, “and my healthy children likewise.
I hear nothing bad about them:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

8 “I am no one’s lackey,”
said the Buddha, “with what I have earned I wander the world.
I have no need for wages:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

9 “I have heifers and sucklings,”
said Dhaniya, “cows in calf and breeding cows.
I’ve also got a bull, captain of the herd here:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

10 “I have no heifers or sucklings,”
said the Buddha, “no cows in calf or breeding cows.
I haven’t got a bull, captain of the herd here:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

11 “The stakes are driven in, unshakable,”
said Dhaniya, “The grass halters are new and well-woven,
not even the sucklings can break them:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

12 “Like a bull I broke the bonds,”
said the Buddha, “like an elephant I snapped the vine.
I will never lie in a womb again:
so rain forth, heavens, if you wish.”

13 Right then a vast cloud rained forth,
soaking the uplands and valleys.
Hearing the heavens rain down,
Dhaniya said this:

14 “It is no small gain for us
that we have seen the Buddha.
We come to you for refuge, Clear-eyed One.
O great sage, please be our Teacher.

15 My wife and I, obedient,
shall lead the spiritual life under the Holy One.
Gone beyond birth and death,
we shall make an end of suffering.”

16 “Children bring you delight!”
said Māra the Wicked, “Cattle also bring you delight!
For attachments are a man’s delight;
without attachments there’s no delight.”

17 “Your children bring you sorrow,”
said the Buddha, “Your cattle also bring you sorrow.
For attachments are a man’s sorrow;
without attachments there are no sorrows.”

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1.3 — THE HORNED RHINO

✦

1 When you've laid down violence toward all creatures,
not harming even a single one,
don't wish for a child, let alone a companion:
live alone like a horned rhino.

2 Those with close relationships have affection,
following which this pain arises.
Seeing this danger born of affection,
live alone like a horned rhino.

3 When feelings for friends and loved ones
are tied up in selfish love, you miss out on the goal.
Seeing this peril in intimacy,
live alone like a horned rhino.

4 As a spreading bamboo gets entangled,
so does concern for partners and children.
Like a bamboo shoot unobstructed,
live alone like a horned rhino.

5 As a wild deer loose in the forest
grazes wherever it wants,
a smart person looking for freedom would
live alone like a horned rhino.

6 When among friends, whether staying in place
or going on a journey, you're always on call.
Looking for the uncoveted freedom,
live alone like a horned rhino.

7 Among friends you have fun and games,
and for children you are full of fondness.
Though loathe to depart from those you hold dear,
live alone like a horned rhino.

8 At ease in any quarter, unresisting,
content with whatever comes your way;
prevailing over adversities, dauntless,
live alone like a horned rhino.

9 Even some renunciates are hard to please,
as are some layfolk dwelling at home.
Don't worry about others' children,
live alone like a horned rhino.

10 Having shed the marks of the home life,
like the fallen leaves of the Shady Orchid Tree;
having cut the bonds of the home life, a hero would
live alone like a horned rhino.

11 If you find an alert companion,
an attentive friend to live happily together,
then, overcoming all adversities,
wander with them, joyful and mindful.

12 If you find no alert companion,
an attentive friend to live happily together,
then, like a king who flees his conquered realm,
wander alone like a tusker in the wilds.

13 Clearly we praise the blessing of a friend,
it's good to be with friends your equal or better.
But failing to find them, eating blamelessly,
live alone like a horned rhino.

14 Though made of shining gold, <j>well-finished by a smith,
when two bracelets share the same arm
they clash up against each other. Seeing this,
live alone like a horned rhino.

15 Thinking, "So too, if I had a partner,
there'd be flattery or curses."
Seeing this peril in the future,
live alone like a horned rhino.

16 Sensual pleasures are diverse, sweet, delightful;
appearing in disguise they disturb the mind.
Seeing danger in sensual stimulations,
live alone like a horned rhino.

17 This is a calamity, a boil, a disaster,
an illness, a dart, and a danger for me.
Seeing this peril in sensuality,
live alone like a horned rhino.

18 Heat and cold, hunger and thirst,
wind and sun, flies and reptiles:
having put up with all these things,
live alone like a horned rhino.

19 As a full-grown elephant, lotus-fond, magnificent,
forsaking the herd,
stays as it pleases in the forest,
live alone like a horned rhino.

20 It's impossible for one who delights in company
to experience even temporary freedom.
Heeding the speech of the Kinsman of the Sun,
live alone like a horned rhino.

21 Thinking, "I have left twisted views behind,
reached the sure way, and gained the path;
I've given rise to knowledge, <j>and need no one to guide me",
live alone like a horned rhino.

22 No greed, no guile, no thirst, no slur,
dross and delusion is smelted off;
free of hoping for anything in the world,
live alone like a horned rhino.

23 Avoid a wicked companion,
blind to the good, habitually immoral.
Don't befriend the heedless and the hankering, but
live alone like a horned rhino.

24 Spend time with the learned <j>who have memorized the teachings,
an eloquent and uplifting friend.
When you understand the meanings <j>and have dispelled doubt,
live alone like a horned rhino.

25 When you realize that worldly fun and games
and pleasure are inadequate, <j>unconcerned with them,
as one unadorned, a speaker of truth,
live alone like a horned rhino.

26 Children, partner, father, mother,
wealth and grain and relatives:
having given up sensual pleasures to this extent,
live alone like a horned rhino.

27 "This is a chain. Here there's hardly any happiness,
little gratification, and it's full of drawbacks.
It's a hook." Knowing this, a thoughtful person would
live alone like a horned rhino.

28 Having burst apart the fetters,
like a fish that tears the net and swims free,
or a fire not returning to ground it has burned,
live alone like a horned rhino.

29 Eyes downcast, not footloose,
senses guarded, mind protected,
not festering or burning with desire,
live alone like a horned rhino.

30 Having shed the marks of the home life,
like the fallen leaves of the Orchid Tree,
and gone forth in the ocher robe,
live alone like a horned rhino.

31 Not wanton, nor rousing greed for tastes,
providing for no other, <j>wandering indiscriminately for alms,
not attached to this family or that,
live alone like a horned rhino.

32 When you've given up five mental obstacles,
and cast aside all corruptions,
and cut off affection and hate, being independent,
live alone like a horned rhino.

33 When you've put pleasure and pain behind you,
and former happiness and sadness,
and gained equanimity serene and pure,
live alone like a horned rhino.

34 With energy roused to reach the ultimate goal,
not sluggish in mind or lazy,
vigorous, strong and powerful,
live alone like a horned rhino.

35 Not neglecting retreat and absorption,
always living in line with the teaching,
comprehending the danger in rebirths,
live alone like a horned rhino.

36 One whose aim is the ending of craving—
diligent, clever, learned, mindful, resolute—
who has appraised the teaching and is assured, destined for awakening, should
live alone like a horned rhino.

37 Like a lion not startled by sounds,
like wind not caught in a net,
like water not sticking to a lotus,
live alone like a horned rhino.

38 Like the fierce-fanged lion, king of beasts,
who wanders as conqueror and victor,
you should frequent remote lodgings, and
live alone like a horned rhino.

39 In time, cultivate freedom through
love, compassion, rejoicing, and equanimity.
Not upset by anything in the world,
live alone like a horned rhino.

40 Having given up greed, hate, and delusion,
having burst apart the fetters,
unafraid at the end of life,
live alone like a horned rhino.

41 They befriend you and serve you for their own sake;
these days it's hard to find friends <j>lacking ulterior motive.
Impure folk cleverly profit themselves—
live alone like a horned rhino.

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1.4 — WITH BHĀRADVĀJA THE FARMER

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in the land of the Magadhans in the Southern Hills near the brahmin village of Ekanāḷa. Now at that time the brahmin Bhāradvāja the Farmer had harnessed around five hundred plows, it being the season for sowing.

1.2 Then the Buddha robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, went to where Bhāradvāja the Farmer was working. Now at that time Bhāradvāja the Farmer was distributing food. Then the Buddha went to where the distribution was taking place and stood to one side.

2 Bhāradvāja the Farmer saw him standing for alms and said to him, "I plough and sow, ascetic, and then I eat. You too should plough and sow, then you may eat."

3 "I too plough and sow, brahmin, and then I eat." "I don't see the worthy Gotama with a yoke or plow or plowshare or goad or oxen, yet he says: 'I too plough and sow, brahmin, and then I eat.'"

4 Then Bhāradvāja the Farmer addressed the Buddha in verse:

5 "You claim to be a farmer,
but I don't see you farming.
Tell me your farming when asked,
so I can recognize your farming."

6 “Faith is my seed, fervor my rain,
and wisdom is my yoke and plough.
Conscience is my draft-pole, mind my strap,
mindfulness my plowshare and goad.

7 Guarded in body and speech,
I restrict my intake of food.
I use truth as my scythe,
and gentleness is my release.

8 Energy is my harnessed beast,
transporting me to sanctuary from the yoke.
Without turning back, it goes
to where there is no sorrow.

9 That’s how to do the farming
that has freedom from death as its fruit.
When you finish this farming
you’re released from all suffering.”

10 Then Bhāradvāja the Farmer poured milk-rice in a large bronze cup and presented it to the Buddha: “May the worthy Gotama eat the milk-rice! The worthy one is a farmer. For the worthy Gotama does the farming that has freedom from death as its fruit.”

11 “Food enchanted by a verse isn’t fit for me to eat.
That’s not the principle of those who see, brahmin.
The Buddhas cast aside things enchanted with verses.
Since there is such a principle, brahmin, <j>that’s how they live.

12 Serve with other food and drink
the consummate one, the great seer,
with defilements ended and remorse stilled.
For he is the field for the seeker of merit."

13 "Then, worthy Gotama, to whom should I give the milk-rice?" "Brahmin, I don't see anyone in this world—with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans—who can properly digest this milk-rice, except the Realized One or one of his disciples. Well then, brahmin, throw out the milk-rice where there is little that grows, or drop it into water that has no living creatures."

14 So Bhāradvāja the Farmer dropped the milk-rice in water that had no living creatures. And when the milk-rice was placed in the water, it sizzled and hissed, steaming and fuming. Suppose there was an iron cauldron that had been heated all day. If you placed it in the water, it would sizzle and hiss, steaming and fuming. In the same way, when the milk-rice was placed in the water, it sizzled and hissed, steaming and fuming.

15 Then Bhāradvāja the Farmer, shocked and awestruck, went up to the Buddha, bowed down with his head to the Buddha's feet, and said, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! As if he were righting the overturned, or revealing the hidden, or pointing out the path to the lost, or lighting a lamp in the dark so people with clear eyes can see what's there, worthy Gotama has made the teaching clear in many ways.

15.2 I go for refuge to the worthy Gotama, to the teaching, and to the mendicant Saṅgha. May I receive the going forth, the ordination in the worthy Gotama's presence?"

16 And Bhāradvāja the Farmer received the going forth, the ordination in the Buddha's presence. Not long after his ordination, Venerable Bhāradvāja, living alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute, soon realized the supreme culmination of the spiritual path in this very life.

16.2 He lived having achieved with his own insight the goal for which gentlemen rightly go forth from the lay life to homelessness. He understood: "Rebirth is ended; the spiritual journey has been completed; what had to be done has been done; there is nothing further for this place." And Venerable Bhāradvāja became one of the perfected.

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1.5 — WITH CUNDA

✦

1 “I ask the sage abounding in wisdom,”
said Cunda the smith, “the Buddha, master of the teaching, free of craving,
best of men, excellent charioteer, please tell me this:
how many ascetics are there in the world?”

2 “There are four ascetics, not a fifth.”
said the Buddha to Cunda, “Being asked to bear witness, <j>I will explain them to you:
the path-victor, the path-teacher,
the path-liver, and the path-wrecker.”

3 “Who is a path-victor according to the Buddhas?”
said Cunda the smith, “and how is one an unequaled explainer of the path?
Tell me when asked about one who lives the path,
then declare the path-wrecker.”

4 “Rid of indecision, free of thorns,
delighting in extinguishment, not fawning,
a guide for the world with its gods.
The Buddhas say one such is victor of the path.

5 Knowing the ultimate as ultimate,
they explain and analyze the teaching right here.
That sage unstirred, with doubt cut off,

is the second mendicant, I say, the teacher of the path.

6 Living restrained and mindful on the path
of the well-taught passage of teaching,
cultivating blameless states,
is the third mendicant, I say, the path-liver.

7 Dressed like one true to their vows,
pushy, rude, a corrupter of families,
devious, unrestrained, chaff,
the path-wrecker's life is a sham.

8 A layperson who gets this,
a learned, wise noble disciple,
knows that 'They are not all like that one'.
So when they see them they don't lose their faith.
For how could one equate them—
the corrupt with the uncorrupt, <j>the pure with the impure?"

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1.6 — DOWNFALLS

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then, late at night, a glorious deity, lighting up the entire Jeta's Grove, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side. Standing to one side, that deity addressed the Buddha in verse:

2 "We ask Gotama
about a man's downfall.
We have come to ask you, sir:
what leads to downfall?"

3 "It's easy to understand success,
understanding downfall is just as easy.
One who loves the teaching succeeds,
but a hater of the teaching meets their downfall."

4 "We understand what you're saying,
this is the first downfall.
Tell us the second, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?"

5 "The bad are dear to him,
he has no love for the good.
He believes the teaching of the bad;
and that leads to his downfall."

6 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the second downfall.
Tell us the third, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

7 “Fond of sleep, fond of company,
a man who does no work;
he’s lazy, marked by anger,
and that leads to his downfall.”

8 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the third downfall.
Tell us the fourth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

9 “Though able, he does not look after
his mother and father
when elderly, past their prime,
and that leads to his downfall.”

10 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the fourth downfall.
Tell us the fifth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

11 “He deceives with lies
ascetics and brahmins
and other supplicants,
and that leads to his downfall.”

12 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the fifth downfall.
Tell us the sixth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

13 “A man with plenty of wealth,
including gold coin and food,
eats delicacies alone,
and that leads to his downfall.”

14 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the sixth downfall.
Tell us the seventh, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

15 “Vain of birth, wealth,
and clan, a man
looks down on his own family,
and that leads to his downfall.”

16 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the seventh downfall.
Tell us the eighth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

17 “In womanizing, drinking,
and gambling, a man
wastes all that he has earned,
and that leads to his downfall.”

18 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the eighth downfall.
Tell us the ninth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

19 “Not content with his own partners,
he debauches himself with prostitutes,
and with others’ partners,
and that leads to his downfall.”

20 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the ninth downfall.
Tell us the tenth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

21 “A man well past his prime
marries a girl with budding breasts;
he cannot sleep for jealousy,
and that leads to his downfall.”

22 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the tenth downfall.
Tell us the eleventh, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

23 “He places in authority
a woman or a man
who’s a drunkard and a wastrel,
and that leads to his downfall.”

24 “We understand what you’re saying,
this is the eleventh downfall.
Tell us the twelfth, Blessed One:
what leads to downfall?”

25 “A man of little wealth and strong craving,
born into an aristocratic family,
sets his sights on kingship,
and that leads to his downfall.

26 Seeing these downfalls in the world,
an astute and noble person,
accomplished in vision,
will enjoy a world of grace.”

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1.7 — THE LOWLIFE

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then the Buddha robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, entered Sāvatthī for alms. Now at that time in the brahmin Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper's home the sacred flame had been kindled and the oblation prepared. Wandering indiscriminately for almsfood in Sāvatthī, the Buddha approached Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper's house.

2 Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper saw the Buddha coming off in the distance and said to him, "Stop right there, shaveling! Right there, fake ascetic! Right there, lowlife!"

3 When he said this, the Buddha said to him, "But brahmin, do you know what is a lowlife or what are the qualities that make you a lowlife?" "No I do not, worthy Gotama. Please, worthy Gotama, teach me this matter so I can understand what is a lowlife or what are the qualities that make you a lowlife." "Well then, brahmin, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak." "Yes, worthy sir," Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper replied. The Buddha said this:

4 "Irritable and acrimonious,
wicked and offensive,
a man deficient in view, deceitful:
know him as a lowlife.

5 He harms living creatures
born of womb or of egg,
and has no kindness for creatures:
know him as a lowlife.

6 He destroys and devastates
villages and towns,
a notorious oppressor:
know him as a lowlife.

7 Whether in village or wilderness,
he steals what belongs to others,
taking what has not been given:
know him as a lowlife.

8 Having fallen into debt,
when pressed to pay up he flees, saying
‘I don’t owe you anything!’:
know him as a lowlife.

9 Wanting some item or other,
he attacks a person in the street
and takes it:
know him as a lowlife.

10 For his own sake or the sake of another,
or for the sake of wealth, a man
tells a lie when asked to bear witness:
know him as a lowlife.

11 He is spied among the partners
of relatives and friends,
by force or seduction:
know him as a lowlife.

12 Though able, he does not look after
his mother and father
when elderly, past their prime:
know him as a lowlife.

13 He hits or verbally abuses
his mother or father,
brother, sister, or mother-in-law:
know him as a lowlife.

14 When asked about the good,
he teaches what is bad,
giving secretive advice:
know him as a lowlife.

15 Having done a bad deed, he wishes,
‘May no one find me out!’
His deeds are underhand:
know him as a lowlife.

16 When visiting another family
he eats their delicious food,
but does not return the honor:
know him as a lowlife.

17 He deceives with lies
ascetics and brahmins
and other supplicants:
know him as a lowlife.

18 When time comes to offer a meal
to brahmins or ascetics,
he abuses them and does not give:
know him as a lowlife.

19 He talks about what never happened,
being wrapped up in delusion,
chasing after some item or other:
know him as a lowlife.

20 He extols himself
and disparages others,
brought down by his pride:
know him as a lowlife.

21 He's a bully and a miser,
of corrupt wishes, stingy, and devious,
shameless, imprudent:
know him as a lowlife.

22 He insults the Buddha
or his disciple,
whether lay or renunciate:
know him as a lowlife.

23 He claims to be a perfected one,
when he really is no such thing.
In the world with its divinities,
that crook is truly the lowest lowlife.
These who are called lowlifes
I have revealed to you.

24 You're not a lowlife by birth,
nor by birth are you a brahmin.
You're a lowlife by your deeds,
by deeds you're a brahmin.

25 And also you should know
according to this example.
A corpse-worker's son of the dog-eating caste
became renowned as Mātaṅga.

26 Mātaṅga achieved the highest fame
so very hard to find.
Lots of aristocrats and brahmins
came to serve him.

27 He ascended the stainless highway
that leads to the heavens;
having discarded sensual desire,
he was reborn in a realm of divinity.
His birth did not prevent him
from rebirth in the realm of divinity.

28 Those born in a brahmin family
who recite as kinsmen of the hymns,
are often discovered
in the midst of wicked deeds.

29 Blameworthy in this very life,
and in lives to come, a bad destination.
Their birth does not prevent them
from blame or bad destiny.

30 You're not a lowlife by birth,
nor by birth are you a brahmin.
You're a lowlife by your deeds,
by deeds you're a brahmin."

31 When he had spoken, the brahmin Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper said to the Buddha, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! ... From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life."

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1.8 — THE DISCOURSE ON LOVE

✦

1 Those who are skilled in the meaning of scripture
should practice as follows <j>to realize the state of peace.
Let them be capable and upright, very upright,
easy to speak to, gentle and humble;

2 content and unburdensome,
unbusied, living lightly,
alert, with senses calmed,
courteous, not fawning on families.

3 Let them not do the slightest thing
that others who are wise would blame.
May they be happy and safe!
May all beings be happy!

4 Whatever living creatures there are
with not a one left out—
frail or firm, long or large,
medium, small, tiny or round,

5 seen or unseen,
living far or near,
those who have been born <j>and those about to be born—
may all beings be happy!

6 Let none deceive another,
nor look down on anyone anywhere.
Though provoked or aggrieved,
let them not wish pain on each other.

7 Even as a mother would protect with her life
her child, her only child,
so too for all creatures
unfold a boundless heart.

8 With love for the whole world,
unfold a boundless heart:
above, below, all round,
unconstricted, without enmity or foe.

9 When standing, walking, sitting,
or lying down while yet unweary,
keep this ever in mind;
for this, they say, is a divine meditation <j>in this life.

10 Avoiding harmful views,
virtuous, accomplished in insight,
with desire for sensual pleasures dispelled,
they never return to a womb again.

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1.9 — WITH HEMAVATA

✦

1 “Today is the fifteenth day sabbath,”
said Sātāgira, the native spirit of mount Sātā, “a holy night is at hand.
Come now, let us see Gotama,
the Teacher of peerless name.”

2 “Isn’t his mind well-disposed,”
said Hemavata, the native spirit of the Himalayas, “impartial toward all creatures?
And aren’t his thoughts under control
when it comes to likes and dislikes?”

3 “His mind is well-disposed,”
said Sātāgira, “impartial toward all creatures.
His thoughts are under control
when it comes to his likes and dislikes.”

4 “Doesn’t he not steal?”
said Hemavata, “And doesn’t he harm not a creature?
Isn’t he far from negligence?
And doesn’t he not neglect absorption?”

5 “He does not take what is not given,”
said Sātāgira, “and he harms not a creature.
He is far from negligence—
the Buddha does not neglect absorption.”

6 “Doesn’t he avoid lying?”
said Hemavata, “And doesn’t he not speak sharply?
Doesn’t he avoid backbiting,
as well as speaking nonsense?”

7 “He does not lie,”
said Sātāgira, “nor does he speak sharply.
He avoids backbiting,
and thoughtfully speaks wise counsel.”

8 “Doesn’t he find sensual pleasures unattractive?”
said Hemavata, “And isn’t his mind unclouded?
Hasn’t he escaped delusion?
Does his eye see clearly in all things?”

9 “He does not find sensual pleasures attractive,”
said Sātāgira, “and his mind is unclouded.
He has escaped all delusion—
the Buddha, whose eye sees clearly in all things.”

10 “Isn’t he accomplished in knowledge?”
said Hemavata, “And doesn’t he live a pure life?
Aren’t his defilements all ended?
Doesn’t he have no future lives?”

11 “He is accomplished in knowledge,”
said Sātāgira, “and he does live a pure life.
His defilements are all ended,
there’ll be no more future lives for him.”

12 “Accomplished is the sage’s mind
in action and in speech,
and he’s accomplished in knowledge and conduct
as per the teaching you praise.”

13 “Accomplished is the sage’s mind
in action and in speech,
and he’s accomplished in knowledge and conduct
as per the teaching you rejoice in.

14 Accomplished is the sage’s mind
in action and in speech,
and he’s accomplished in knowledge and conduct:
come now, let us see Gotama.”

15 “The hero so lean, with antelope calves,
not greedy, eating little,
the sage meditating alone in the forest,
come now, let us see Gotama.

16 A giant, wandering alone like a lion,
unconcerned for sensual pleasures,
let’s approach him and ask about
release from the snare of death.”

17 “The communicator, the instructor,
who has gone beyond all things,
Awakened, beyond enmities and fears,
let us ask Gotama.”

18 “What has the world arisen in?”
said Hemavata, “What does it get close to?
By grasping what
is the world troubled in what?”

19 “The world’s arisen in six,”
said the Buddha to Hemavata. “It gets close to six.
Derived from the six,
the world’s troubled in six.”

20 “What is that grasping
by which the world is troubled?
Tell us the exit when asked:
how is one released from all suffering?”

21 “The world has five kinds of sensual stimulation,
and the mind is said to be the sixth.
When you’ve discarded desire for these,
you’re released from all suffering.

22 This is the exit from the world,
explained in accord with the truth.
The way I’ve explained it is how
you’re released from all suffering.”

23 “Who here crosses the flood,
Who crosses the deluge?
Who, not standing and unsupported,
does not sink in the deep?”

24 “Someone who is always endowed with ethics,
wise and serene,
inwardly reflective, mindful,
crosses the flood so hard to cross.

25 Someone who desists from sensual perception,
who has escaped all fetters,
and has ended relish for rebirth,
does not sink in the deep.”

26 “Behold him of wisdom deep <j>who sees the subtle meaning,
who has nothing, unattached to sensual life,
everywhere free,
the great seer treading the holy road.

27 Behold him of peerless name <j>who sees the subtle meaning,
giver of wisdom, <j>unattached to the realm of sensuality:
the all-knower, so very intelligent,
the great seer treading the noble road.

28 It was a fine sight for us today,
a good sunup, a good rising,
to see the Awakened One,
the undefiled one who has crossed the flood.

29 These thousand native spirits
powerful and glorious,
all go to you for refuge,
you are our supreme Teacher.

30 We shall journey
village to village, peak to peak,
paying homage to the Buddha,
and the clear rightness of the teaching!”

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1.10 — WITH ĀḶAVAKA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Aḷavī in the haunt of the native spirit Aḷavaka. Then the native spirit Aḷavaka went up to the Buddha, and said to him: "Get out, ascetic!" Saying, "All right, respectable sir," the Buddha went out. "Get in, ascetic!" Saying, "All right, respectable sir," the Buddha went in.

2 For a second time … And for a third time the native spirit Aḷavaka said to the Buddha, "Get out, ascetic!" Saying, "All right, respectable sir," the Buddha went out. "Get in, ascetic!" Saying, "All right, respectable sir," the Buddha went in.

3 And for a fourth time the native spirit Aḷavaka said to the Buddha, "Get out, ascetic!" "No, respectable sir, I won't get out. Do what you must."

4 "I will ask you a question, ascetic. If you don't answer me, I'll drive you insane, or explode your heart, or grab you by the feet and throw you to the far shore of the Ganges!"

5 "I don't see anyone in this world with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans who could do that to me. But anyway, ask what you wish." Then the native spirit Aḷavaka addressed the Buddha in verse:

6 "What's a person's best wealth?
What brings happiness when practiced well?
What's the sweetest taste of all?

The one they say has the best life: how do they live?”

7 “Faith here is a person’s best wealth.
The teaching brings happiness when practiced well.
Truth is the sweetest taste of all.
The one they say has the best life lives by wisdom.”

8 “How do you cross the flood?
How do you cross the deluge?
How do you get over suffering?
How do you get purified?”

9 “By faith you cross the flood,
and by diligence the deluge.
By energy you get past suffering,
and you’re purified by wisdom.”

10 “How do you get wisdom?
How do you earn wealth?
How do you get a good reputation?
How do you hold on to friends?
How do the departed not grieve
when passing from this world to the next?”

11 “One who is diligent and discerning
gains wisdom by wanting to learn,
having faith in the perfected ones,
and the teaching for becoming extinguished.

12 Being responsible, acting appropriately,
and working hard you earn wealth.
Truthfulness wins you a good reputation.
You hold on to friends by giving.

13 A faithful householder of discernment
who possesses these four qualities
does not grieve after passing away:
truth, principle, steadfastness, and generosity.

14 Go ahead, ask others as well,
there are many ascetics and brahmins.
See whether anything better is found
than truth, principle, generosity, and patience."

15 "Why now would I question
the many ascetics and brahmins?
Today I understand
what's good for lives to come.

16 It was truly for my benefit
that the Buddha came to stay at Aḷavī.
Today I understand
where a gift is very fruitful.

17 I myself will journey
village to village, town to town,
paying homage to the Buddha,
and the clear rightness of the teaching!”

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1.11 — VICTORY OVER DESIRE FOR THE BODY

✦

1 Walking and standing,
sitting and lying down,
extending and contracting the limbs:
these are the movements of the body.

2 Linked together by bones and sinews,
plastered over with flesh and hide,
and covered by the skin,
the body is not seen as it is.

3 It's full of guts and belly,
liver and bladder,
heart and lungs,
kidney and spleen,

4 spit and snot,
sweat and fat,
blood and synovial fluid,
bile and grease.

5 Then in nine streams
the filth is always flowing.
There is muck from the eyes,
wax from the ears,

6 and snot from the nostrils.
The mouth sometimes vomits
bile and sometimes phlegm.
And from the body, sweat and waste.

7 Then there is the hollow head
all filled with brains.
Governed by ignorance,
the fool thinks it's lovely.

8 And when it lies dead,
bloated and livid,
dumped in a charnel ground,
the relatives forget it.

9 It's devoured by dogs,
by jackals, wolves, and worms.
It's devoured by crows and vultures,
and any other creatures there.

10 A wise mendicant here,
having heard the Buddha's words,
fully understands it,
for they see it as it is.

11 "As this is, so is that,
as that is, so is this."
They'd blanch desire for the body
inside and out.

12 That wise mendicant here
rid of desire and lust,
has found the peace free of death,
extinguishment, the state that does not pass.

13 This two-legged body is dirty and stinking,
full of different carcasses,
and oozing all over the place—
but still it is cherished!

14 And if, on account of such a body,
someone prides themselves
or looks down on others—
what is that but a failure to see?

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1.12 — THE SAGE

✦

1 Peril stems from intimacy,
dust comes from an abode.
Freedom from abode and intimacy:
that is the sage's vision.

2 Having cut down what's grown, <j>they wouldn't replant,
nor would they nurture what's growing.
That's who they call a sage wandering alone,
the great seer has seen the state of peace.

3 Having appraised the fields and measured the seeds,
they wouldn't nurture them with moisture.
Truly that sage who sees the ending of rebirth
has left speculation behind and is beyond reckoning.

4 Understanding all the planes of rebirth,
not wanting a single one of them;
truly that sage freed of greed
need not swim, <j>for they have reached the far shore.

5 The vanquisher of all, knower of all, so very intelligent,
unsullied in the midst of all things,
has given up all, freed in the ending of craving:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

6 Strong in wisdom, <j>with precepts and observances intact,
serene, loving absorption, mindful,
released from chains, kind, undefiled:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

7 The diligent sage wandering alone,
is unshaken by blame and praise—
like a lion not startled by sounds,
like wind not caught in a net,
like water not sticking to a lotus.
Leader of others, not by others led:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

8 Steady as a post in a bathing-place
when others speak endlessly against them,
freed of greed, with senses stilled:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

9 Steadfast, straight as a spindle,
horrified by wicked deeds,
discerning the just and the unjust:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

10 Restrained, they do no evil,
young or middle-aged, the sage is self-controlled.
Irreproachable, he does not insult anyone:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

11 When one who lives on charity receives alms,
from the top, the middle, or the leftovers,
they think it unworthy to praise or put down:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

12 The sage lives refraining from sex,
even when young is not tied down,
refraining from indulgence and negligence, freed:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

13 Understanding the world, <j>the seer of the ultimate goal,
the unaffected one, <j>having crossed the flood and the ocean,
has cut the ties, unattached and undefiled:
that's who the attentive know as a sage.

14 The two are not the same, <j>far apart in lifestyle and conduct—
the householder providing for a wife, <j>and the selfless one true to their vows.
The unrestrained householder kills other creatures,
while the restrained sage <j>always protects living creatures.

15 As the crested blue-necked peacock <j>flying through the sky
never approaches the speed of the swan,
so the householder cannot compete <j>with the mendicant,
the sage meditating secluded in the woods.

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2.1 — GEMS

✦

1 Whatever beings have gathered here,
on the ground or in the sky:
may beings all be of happy heart,
and listen carefully to what is said.

2 So pay heed, all you beings,
have love for humankind,
who day and night bring offerings;
please protect them diligently.

3 There's no wealth in this life or the next,
no sublime gem in the heavens,
that equals the Realized One.
This sublime gem is in the Buddha:
by this truth, may you be well!

4 Ending, dispassion, the undying, the sublime,
attained by the Sakyan Sage immersed in samādhi;
there is nothing equal to that Dhamma.
This sublime gem is in the Dhamma:
by this truth, may you be well!

5 The purity praised by the highest Buddha
is said to be the "immersion with immediate fruit";
no equal to that immersion is found.

This sublime gem is in the Dhamma:
by this truth, may you be well!

6 The eight individual persons praised by the good
are the four pairs of the Holy One's disciples;
they are worthy of religious donations,
what's given to them is very fruitful.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

7 Dedicated to Gotama's dispensation,
strong-minded, free of sense desire,
they've attained the goal, <j>plunged into freedom from death,
and enjoy the quenching they've freely gained.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

8 As Indra's pillar rooted in earth
is not shaken by the four winds,
I say a true person is like this,
who sees the noble truths in experience.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

9 Those who fathom the noble truths
taught by the one of deep wisdom,
do not take an eighth life,

even if they are hugely negligent.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

10 When they attain to vision
they give up three things:
substantialist view, doubt, and any
attachment to precepts and observances.

11 They're freed from the four places of loss,
and cannot do six things.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

12 Even if they do a bad deed
by body, speech, or mind,
they are unable to conceal it;
this, it's said, is the inability <j>of one who has seen the truth.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

13 Like a tall forest tree crowned with flowers
in the first month of summer;
that's how he taught the superb Dhamma,
leading to extinguishment, the ultimate benefit.
This sublime gem is in the Buddha:
by this truth, may you be well!

14 The superb, knower of the superb, <j>giver of the superb, bringer of the superb;
taught the superb Dhamma supreme.
This sublime gem is in the Buddha:
by this truth, may you be well!

15 The old is ended, nothing new is produced;
their minds have no desire for future rebirth.
Withered are the seeds, there's no desire for growth,
those attentive ones are extinguished like this lamp.
This sublime gem is in the Saṅgha:
by this truth, may you be well!

16 Whatever beings have gathered here,
on the ground or in the sky:
the Realized One is honored by gods and humans!
We bow to the Buddha! May you be safe!

17 Whatever beings have gathered here,
on the ground or in the sky:
the Realized One is honored by gods and humans!
We bow to the Dhamma! May you be safe!

18 Whatever beings have gathered here,
on the ground or in the sky:
the Realized One is honored by gods and humans!
We bow to the Saṅgha! May you be safe!

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2.2 — PUTREFACTION

✦

1 “The good eat properly obtained
millet, wild grains, broomcorn,
greens, tubers, and grapes.
They don’t lie to get what they want.

2 But when you eat delicious food,
nicely cooked and prepared, and offered by others,
enjoying a dish of fine rice,
Kassapa, you eat putrefaction.

3 ‘Putrefaction is not appropriate for me’—
so you said, O brahmin only by kin.
Yet here you are enjoying a dish of fine rice,
well prepared with the flesh of fowl.
I’m asking you this, Kassapa:
what do you take to be putrefaction?”

4 “Killing creatures, mutilation, murder, abduction;
stealing, lying, cheating and fraud,
learning crooked spells, adultery:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

5 People here with unbridled sensuality,
greedy for tastes, mixed up in impurity,
nihilists, immoral, intractable:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

6 Tough, callous calumniators,
pitiless and arrogant betrayers of friends,
misers who never give anything:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

7 Anger, vanity, obstinacy, contrariness,
deceit, jealousy, boastfulness,
haughtiness, intimacy with the wicked:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

8 The ill-behaved, debt-evaders, informants,
business cheats and con-artists,
vile men committing sin:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

9 People here who can't stop harming living creatures,
taking from others, intent on hurting,
immoral, cruel, harsh, lacking regard for others:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

10 Greedy, hostile, aggressive to others,
and addicted to evil—<j>those beings pass into darkness,
falling headlong into hell:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.

11 Not fish or flesh or fasting,
nudity or baldness, or dreadlocks or dirt,
not rough hides or serving the sacred flame,

or the many endless mortifications in the world,
not hymns or oblations, <j>sacrifices or seasonal observances,
will cleanse a mortal not free of doubt.

12 Guarding the streams of sense impressions, <j>wander with faculties understood,
standing on the teaching, delighting in integrity and tenderness.
The attentive have slipped their chains <j>and given up all suffering;
they don't cling to the seen and the heard."

13 The Buddha explained this matter to him <j>again and again,
until the master of hymns understood it.
It was illustrated with colorful verses
by the sage free of putrefaction, <j>unattached, hard to trace.

14 Having heard the fine words of the Buddha,
that are free of putrefaction, <j>casting aside all suffering;
humbled, he bowed to the Realized One,
and right away begged to go forth.

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2.3 — CONSCIENTIOUS COMPANIONSHIP

✦

1 Flouting conscience, loathing it,
saying "I'm on your side",
but not following up in deeds—
know they're not on your side.

2 Some say nice things to their friends
without following it up.
The wise will recognize
one who talks without doing.

3 No true friend relentlessly
suspects betrayal, looking for fault.
One on whom you rest, like a child on the breast,
is a true friend, not split from you by others.

4 One whose reward is the fruit
of bearing the burden of service
develops a happy state,
producing joy and attracting praise.

5 One who has drunk the nectar of seclusion
and the nectar of peace,
free of stress, free of evil,
drinks the joyous nectar of Dhamma.

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2.4 — BLESSINGS

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then, late at night, a glorious deity, lighting up the entire Jeta's Grove, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side. That deity addressed the Buddha in verse:

2 "Many gods and humans
have thought about blessings
desiring well-being:
declare the highest blessing."

3 "Not to fraternize with fools,
but to fraternize with the wise,
and honoring those worthy of honor:
this is the highest blessing.

4 Living in a suitable region,
having made merit in the past,
being rightly resolved in oneself,
this is the highest blessing.

5 Education and a craft,
discipline and training,
and well-spoken speech:
this is the highest blessing.

6 Caring for mother and father,
kindness to children and partners,
and unstressful work:
this is the highest blessing.

7 Giving and righteous conduct,
kindness to relatives,
blameless deeds:
this is the highest blessing.

8 Desisting and abstaining from evil,
avoiding drinking liquor,
diligence in good qualities:
this is the highest blessing.

9 Respect and placidity,
contentment and gratitude,
and timely listening to the teaching:
this is the highest blessing.

10 Patience, being easy to admonish,
the sight of ascetics,
and timely discussion of the teaching:
this is the highest blessing.

11 Fervor and chastity
seeing the noble truths,
and realization of extinguishment:
this is the highest blessing.

12 Though touched by worldly conditions,
their mind does not tremble;
sorrowless, stainless, secure:
this is the highest blessing.

13 Having completed these things,
undefeated everywhere;
everywhere they go in safety:
this is their highest blessing.”

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2.5 — WITH SPIKY

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Gayā on the cut-stone ledge in the haunt of Spiky the native spirit. Now at that time the native spirits Shaggy and Spiky were passing by not far from the Buddha. So Shaggy said to Spiky, "That's an ascetic." "That's no ascetic, he's a faker! I'll soon find out whether he's an ascetic or a faker."

2 Then Spiky went up to the Buddha and leaned up against his body, but the Buddha pulled away. Then Spiky said to the Buddha, "Are you afraid, ascetic?" "No, respectable sir, I'm not afraid. But your touch is nasty."

3 "I will ask you a question, ascetic. If you don't answer me, I'll drive you insane, or explode your heart, or grab you by the feet and throw you to the far shore of the Ganges!"

4 "I don't see anyone in this world with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans who could do that to me. But anyway, ask what you wish." Then Spiky addressed the Buddha in verse:

5 "Where do greed and hate come from?
From where spring discontent, desire, and terror?
Where do the mind's thoughts originate,
like a crow let loose by boys."

6 “Greed and hate come from here;
from here spring discontent, desire, and terror;
here’s where the mind’s thoughts originate,
like a crow let loose by boys.

7 Born of affection, originating in oneself,
like prop roots sprouting from a banyan;
the many kinds of attachment to sensual pleasures
are like camel’s foot creeper <j>creeping through the woods.

8 Those who understand where they come from
dispel them—listen up, spirit!
They cross this flood so hard to cross,
not crossed before, so as to not be reborn.”

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2.6 — A RIGHTEOUS LIFE

✦

1 A righteous life, a spiritual life,
they call this the supreme treasure.
But if someone goes forth
from the lay life to homelessness

2 who is of scurrilous character,
a beast and a bully,
their life gets worse,
as poison grows inside them.

3 A mendicant who loves to quarrel,
wrapped in delusion,
doesn't even know what's been explained
in the Dhamma taught by the Buddha.

4 Harassing those who are evolved,
governed by ignorance,
they don't know that corruption
is the path that leads to hell.

5 Entering the underworld,
passing from womb to womb, <j>from darkness to darkness,
such a mendicant
falls into suffering after death.

6 One such as that is
like a sewer
brimful with years of filth
for it's hard to clean one full of grime.

7 Mendicants, knowing that someone is like this,
attached to the domestic life,
of corrupt wishes and wicked intent,
of bad behavior and alms-resort,

8 then having gathered in harmony,
you should expel them.
Throw out the trash!
Get rid of the rubbish!

9 And sweep away the scraps—
they're not ascetics, they just think they are.
When you've thrown out those of corrupt wishes,
of bad behavior and alms-resort,

10 dwell in communion, ever mindful,
the pure with the pure.
Then in harmony, alert,
you'll make an end of suffering.

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2.7 — BRAHMANICAL PRINCIPLES

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then several old and well-to-do brahmins of Kosala—elderly and senior, who were advanced in years and had reached the final stage of life—went up to the Buddha, and exchanged greetings with him.

1.2 When the greetings and polite conversation were over, they sat down to one side and said to the Buddha: "Worthy Gotama, are the ancient principles of the brahmins exhibited these days among brahmins?"

1.3 "No, brahmins, they are not." "If you wouldn't mind, Worthy Gotama, please teach us the ancient principles of the brahmins." "Well then, brahmins, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak." "Yes, worthy sir," they replied. The Buddha said this:

2 "The ancient seers used to be
restrained and austere.
Having given up the five sensual stimuli,
they lived for their own true good.

3 Brahmins used to own no cattle,
nor gold coin or grain.
Chanting was their money and grain,
which they guarded as a gift from god.

4 Food was prepared for them
and left beside their doors.
People believed that food prepared in faith
should be given to them.

5 With colorful clothes,
lodgings and houses,
prosperous nations and countries
honored those brahmins.

6 Brahmins used to be inviolable and
invincible, protected by principle.
No one ever turned them away
from the doors of families.

7 For forty-eight years
they led the spiritual life.
The brahmins of old pursued
their quest for knowledge and conduct.

8 Brahmins never transgressed with another,
nor did they purchase a wife.
They lived together in love,
joining together by mutual consent.

9 Brahmins never approached their wives for sex
during the time outside
the fertile phase of the menstrual cycle
after menstruation.

10 They praised chastity and morality,
integrity, tenderness, and fervor,
gentleness and harmlessness,
and also patience.

11 He who was supreme among them,
godlike, staunchly vigorous,
did not engage in sex
even in a dream.

12 Training in line with their duties,
many smart people here
praised chastity and morality,
and also patience.

13 They begged for rice,
bedding, clothes, ghee, and oil.
Having collected them legitimately,
they arranged a sacrifice.

14 But they slew no cows
while serving at the sacrifice.
Like a mother, father, or brother,
or some other relative,
cows are our best friends,
the fonts of medicine.

15 They give food and strength,
and beauty and happiness.
Knowing these benefits,

they slew no cows.

16 The brahmins were delicate and tall,
beautiful and glorious.
They were keen on all the duties
according to their teachings.
So long as they continued in the world,
people flourished happily.

17 But perversion crept into them
little by little when they saw
the transformation of the king
and the ladies in all their finery.

18 Their chariots were harnessed with thoroughbreds,
well-made with bright canopies,
and their homes and houses
were neatly divided section by section.

19 They were lavished with herds of cattle,
and furnished with bevies of lovely ladies.
This extravagant human wealth
was coveted by the brahmins.

20 They compiled hymns to that end,
approached King Okkāka and said,
‘You have plenty of money and grain.
Sacrifice! For you have much treasure.
Sacrifice! For you have much money.’

21 Persuaded by the brahmins,
the king, chief of charioteers, performed
horse sacrifice, human sacrifice,
the sacrifices of the ‘casting of the yoke-pin’, <j>the ‘royal soma drinking’,
and the ‘unimpeded’.
When he had carried out these sacrifices,
he gave riches to the brahmins.

22 There were cattle, bedding, and clothes,
and ladies in all their finery;
chariots harnessed with thoroughbreds,
well-made with bright canopies;

23 and lovely homes,
nicely divided section by section.
Having furnished them with different grains,
he gave riches to the brahmins.

24 When they got hold of that wealth,
they arranged to store it up.
Falling under the sway of desire,
their craving grew and grew.
They compiled hymns to that end,
approached King Okkāka once more and said,

25 ‘Like water and earth,
gold coin, riches, and grain,
are cows for humankind,

as they are essential for creatures.
Sacrifice! For you have much treasure.
Sacrifice! For you have much money.’

26 Persuaded by the brahmins,
the king, chief of charioteers,
had many hundred thousand cows
slain at the sacrifice.

27 Neither with feet nor with horns
do cows harm anyone at all.
Cows meek as lambs
supply buckets of milk.
But taking them by the horns,
the king slew them with a sword.

28 At that the gods and the ancestors,
with Indra, the titans and monsters,
roared out: ‘This is a crime against nature!’
as the sword fell on the cows.

29 There used to be three kinds of illness:
greed, starvation, and old age.
But due to the slaughter of cows,
this grew to be ninety-eight.

30 This crime of the rods
is of ancient descent.
Killing innocent creatures,
the sacrificers forsake righteousness.

31 And that is how this mean old practice
was criticized by sensible people.
Wherever they see such a thing,
folk criticize the sacrificer.

32 With righteousness gone,
peasants and menials were split,
as were many aristocrats,
and wives looked down on their husbands.

33 Aristocrats and brahmins only by kin,
and others protected by their clan,
neglecting their genealogy,
fell under the sway of sensual pleasures."

34 When he had spoken, those well-to-do brahmins said to the Buddha, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! ... From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember us as lay followers who have gone for refuge for life."

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2.8 — THE BOAT

✦

1 If you would learn the teaching from someone,
honor them as the gods honor Indra.
Then they will have confidence in you,
and being learned, they reveal the teaching.

2 Heeding well, an attentive one,
practicing in line with that teaching
grows intelligent, discerning, and subtle
through diligently sticking close to such a person.

3 But associating with a petty fool
who falls short of the goal, jealous,
then unable to discern the teaching in this life,
one proceeds to death still plagued by doubts.

4 It's like a man who has plunged into a river,
a rushing torrent in spate.
As they are swept away downstream,
how could they help others across?

5 Just so, one unable to discern the teaching,
who hasn't studied the meaning under the learned,
not knowing it oneself, still plagued by doubts,
how could they help others to contemplate?

6 But one who has embarked on a strong boat
equipped with rudder and oar,
would bring many others across there
with skill, care, and thoughtfulness.

7 So too one who understands—a knowledge master,
evolved, learned, and unflappable—
can help others to contemplate,
so long as they are prepared to listen carefully.

8 That's why you should spend time with a true person,
intelligent and learned.
Having understood the meaning, <j>putting it into practice,
one who understands the teaching <j>would find happiness.

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2.9 — WHAT MORALITY?

✦

1 “With what morality, what conduct,
fostering what deeds,
would a person lay the foundations right,
and reach the highest goal?”

2 “Honoring elders without jealousy,
they’d know the time to visit their respected teachers.
Treasuring the chance for a Dhamma talk,
they’d listen carefully to the well-spoken words.

3 At the right time, they’d enter <j>the vicinity of their respected teachers
in placid manner, leaving obstinacy behind.
They’d call to mind and put into practice
the meaning, the teaching, self-control, <j>and the spiritual life.

4 Delighting in the teaching, enjoying the teaching,
standing on the teaching, evaluating the teaching,
they’d never say anything that degraded the teaching,
but would be guided by genuine words well-spoken.

5 Giving up mirth, muttered prayer, weeping, ill will,
deceit, fawning, greed, conceit,
aggression, crudeness, stains, and indulgence,
they’d wander free of vanity, steadfast.

6 Understanding is the essence of well-spoken words,
stillness is the essence of learning and understanding.
Wisdom and learning do not flourish
in a hasty and negligent person.

7 Those happy with the teaching <j>proclaimed by the Noble One
are supreme in speech, mind, and deed.
Abiding in peace, gentleness, and stillness,
they've realized the essence of learning and wisdom."

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2.10 — GET UP!

✦

1 Get up and meditate!
What's the point in your sleeping?
How can the afflicted slumber
when inflicted by an arrow strike?

2 Get up and meditate!
Train hard for peace!
The King of Death has caught you heedless—
don't let him fool you under his sway.

3 Needy gods and humans
are held back by clinging:
get over it.
Don't let the moment pass you by.
For if you miss your moment
you'll grieve when sent to hell.

4 Negligence is always dust;
dust follows right behind negligence.
Through diligence and knowledge,
pluck out the dart from yourself.

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2.11 — WITH RĀHULA

✦

1 “Does familiarity breed contempt,
even for the man of wisdom?
Do you honor he who holds aloft
the torch for all humanity?”

2 “Familiarity breeds no contempt
for the man of wisdom.
I always honor he who holds aloft
the torch for all humanity.”

3 “One who’s given up the five sensual stimulations,
so pleasing and delightful,
and who’s left the home life out of faith—
let them make an end to suffering!

4 Mix with spiritual friends,
stay in remote lodgings,
secluded and quiet,
and eat in moderation.

5 Robes, almsfood,
requisites and lodgings:
don’t crave such things;
don’t come back to this world again.

6 Be restrained in the monastic code
and the five sense faculties.
With mindfulness immersed in the body,
be full of disillusionment.

7 Turn away from the sign
that's attractive, provoking lust.
With mind unified and serene,
meditate on the ugly aspects of the body.

8 Meditate on the signless,
give up the tendency to conceit;
and when you comprehend conceit,
you will live at peace."

9 That is how the Buddha regularly advised Venerable Rāhula with these verses.

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2.12 — VAṄGĪSA AND HIS MENTOR NIGRODHAKAPPA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Aḷavī, at Aḷavī's premier shrine. Now at that time it was not long after Venerable Vaṅgīsa's mentor, the senior monk named Nigrodhakappa, had become fully quenched. Then as Vaṅgīsa was in private retreat this thought came to his mind: "Has my mentor become quenched or not?"

1.2 Then in the late afternoon, Venerable Vaṅgīsa came out of retreat and went to the Buddha. He bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him: "Just now, sir, as I was in private retreat this thought came to mind. 'Has my mentor become quenched or not?'"

1.3 Then Venerable Vaṅgīsa rose from his seat, arranged his robe over one shoulder, raised his cupped palms toward the Buddha, and addressed him in verse:

2 "I ask the Teacher unrivaled in wisdom,
who has cut off all doubts in this very life:
a monk has died at Aḷavī's premier shrine,
who was well-known, famous, and quenched.

3 Nigrodhakappa was his name;
it was given to that brahmin by you, Blessed One.
He wandered in your honor, yearning for freedom,
energetic, a resolute Seer of Truth.

4 O Sakyan, All-seer,
we all wish to know about that disciple.
Our ears are eager to hear,
for you are the most excellent teacher.

5 Cut off our doubt, declare this to us;
your wisdom is vast, tell us of his quenching!
All-seer, speak among us,
like the thousand-eyed Sakka <j>in the midst of the gods!

6 Whatever ties there are, or paths to delusion,
or things on the side of unknowing, <j>or that are bases of doubt
vanish on reaching a Realized One,
for his eye is the best of all people's.

7 If no man were ever to disperse corruptions,
like the wind dispersing the stormclouds,
darkness would shroud the whole world;
not even brilliant men would shine.

8 The attentive are bringers of light;
my hero, that is what I think of you.
We've come for your discernment and knowledge:
here in this assembly, declare to us about Kappāyana.

9 Swiftly send forth your sweet, sweet voice,
like a goose stretching its neck, gently honking,
lucid-flowing, with lovely tone:
alert, we all listen to you.

10 You have entirely abandoned birth and death;
curbed and pure, I urge you, speak the Dhamma!
For ordinary people <j>have no wish-granter,
but Realized Ones <j>have a comprehensibility-granter.

11 Your answer is definitive, and we will adopt it,
for you have perfect understanding.
We raise our cupped palms one last time,
one of unrivaled wisdom, <j>don't deliberately confuse us.

12 Knowing the teaching of the noble ones <j>from top to bottom,
one of unrivaled energy, <j>don't deliberately confuse us.
As a man baking in the summer sun <j>would long for water,
I long for your voice, so let the sound rain forth.

13 Surely Kappāyana did not <j>lead the spiritual life in vain?
Did he realize quenching,
or did he still have a residue?
Let us hear what kind of liberation he had!"

14 "He cut off craving for name and form right here,"
said the Buddha, "the river of darkness that had long lain within him.
He has entirely crossed over birth and death."
So declared the Blessed One, the leader of the five.

15 "Now that I have heard your words,
seventh of seers, I am confident.
My question, it seems, was not in vain,
the brahmin did not deceive me.

16 As he said, so he did—
he was a disciple of the Buddha.
He cut the net of death the deceiver,
so extended and strong.

17 Blessed One, Kappāyana saw
the starting point of grasping.
He has indeed gone far beyond
Death's dominion so hard to pass."

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2.13 — THE RIGHT WAY TO WANDER

✦

1 “I ask the sage abounding in wisdom—
crossed-over, gone beyond, quenched, steadfast:
when a mendicant has left home, <j>casting aside sensuality,
what’s the right way to wander the world?”

2 “When they’ve eradicated superstitions,”
said the Buddha, “about celestial portents, dreams, or bodily marks;
with the stain of superstitions left behind,
they’d rightly wander the world.

3 A mendicant ought dispel desire
for pleasures human or heavenly;
with rebirth transcended and truth comprehended,
they’d rightly wander the world.

4 Putting backbiting behind them,
a mendicant gives up anger and stinginess;
with favoring and opposing left behind,
they’d rightly wander the world.

5 When the loved and the unloved are both left behind,
not grasping or dependent on anything;
freed from all things that fetter,
they’d rightly wander the world.

6 Finding no core in attachments,
rid of desire for things they've acquired,
independent, needing no one to guide them,
they'd rightly wander the world.

7 Not hostile in speech, mind, or deed,
they've rightly understood the teaching.
Aspiring to the state of extinguishment,
they'd rightly wander the world.

8 Not gloating that, 'they bow to me';
though reviled, they'd still stay in touch;
not besotted when getting food from others,
they'd rightly wander the world.

9 When greed and craving to live again are cast off,
a mendicant refrains from violence and abduction;
rid of indecision, free of thorns,
they'd rightly wander the world.

10 Knowing what is suitable for themselves,
a mendicant would hurt no one in the world;
understanding the teaching in line with the truth,
they'd rightly wander the world.

11 They have no underlying tendencies at all,
and are rid of unskillful roots;
free of hope, with no need for hope,
they'd rightly wander the world.

12 Defilements ended, conceit given up,
beyond all manner of desire;
tamed, quenched, and steadfast,
they'd rightly wander the world.

13 Faithful, learned, seer of the sure path,
an attentive one joins no faction among sects;
rid of greed, hate, and aversion,
they'd rightly wander the world.

14 A purified victor with veil cast off,
among worldly things master, transcendent, stilled;
expert in knowledge of conditions' cessation,
they'd rightly wander the world.

15 They're over speculating on the future or past,
and understand what it means to be pure;
freed from all the sense fields,
they'd rightly wander the world.

16 The state of peace is understood, <j>the truth is comprehended,
they've openly seen defilements cast off;
and with the ending of all attachments,
they'd rightly wander the world."

17 “Clearly, Blessed One, it is just as you say.
One who lives like this is a tamed mendicant,
passed beyond all fetters and yokes:
they’d rightly wander the world.”

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2.14 — WITH DHAMMIKA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then the lay follower Dhammika, together with five hundred lay followers, went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and addressed him in verse:

2 "I ask you, Gotama, whose wisdom is vast:
what does one do to become a good disciple,
both one who has left the home,
and the lay followers staying at home?

3 For you understand the course and destiny
of the world with all its gods.
There is no equal to you who sees the subtle meaning,
for you are the Buddha most excellent, they say.

4 Having experienced all knowledge,
you reveal the teaching out of sympathy for beings.
All-seer, you have cast off the veil,
and immaculate, you dazzle the whole world.

5 The dragon king Erāvaṇa, <j>hearing you called 'Victor',
came into your presence.
He consulted with you then, <j>having heard your words,
left consoled, saying 'Excellent!'

6 And King Kuvera Vessavaṇa also
approached to ask about the teaching.
You also answered him, O attentive one,
and hearing you he too was consoled.

7 Those monastics of other religions given to debate,
whether Ājīvakas or Jains,
all fail to overtake you in wisdom,
like a standing man next to a sprinter.

8 Those brahmins given to debate,
some of whom are quite senior,
all end up beholden to you for the meaning,
and others too who think themselves debaters.

9 So subtle and pleasant is the teaching
that is well proclaimed by you, Blessed One.
It's all we long to hear. So when asked,
O Best of Buddhas, tell us!

10 All these mendicants have gathered,
and the layfolk too are here to listen.
Let them hear the teaching <j>the immaculate one discovered,
like gods listening to the fine words of Vāsava."

11 "Listen to me, mendicants, I will educate you
in the cleansing teaching; all bear it in mind.
A thoughtful person, seeing the meaning,
would adopt the deportment <j>proper to a renunciate.

12 No way would a mendicant go out at the wrong time;
at the right time, they'd walk the village for alms.
For chains bind one who wanders at the wrong time,
which is why the Buddhas avoid it.

13 Sights, sounds, tastes, smells, and touches,
which drive beings mad—
dispel desire for such things,
and enter for the morning meal at the right time.

14 After receiving alms for the day,
on returning a mendicant would sit in private alone.
Inwardly reflective, they'd curb their mind
from outside things, keeping themselves collected.

15 Should they converse with a disciple,
with anyone else, or with a mendicant,
they'd bring up only the sublime teaching,
not dividing or blaming.

16 For some contend in debate,
but we praise not those of little wisdom.
In place after place they are bound in chains,
for they send their mind over there far away.

17 Alms, a dwelling, a bed and seat,
and water for rinsing the dust from the cloak—
after hearing the teaching of the Holy One,
a disciple of outstanding wisdom <j>would use these after appraisal.

18 That's why, when it comes to alms and lodgings,
and water for rinsing the dust from the cloak,
a mendicant is unsullied in the midst of these things,
like a droplet on a lotus-leaf.

19 Now I shall tell you the householder's duty,
doing which one becomes a good disciple.
For one burdened with possessions <j>does not get to realize
the whole of the mendicant's practice.

20 They'd not kill any creature, nor have them killed,
nor grant permission for others to kill.
They've laid aside violence toward all creatures
frail or firm that there are in the world.

21 Next, a disciple would avoid knowingly
taking anything not given at all,
they'd not get others to do it, <j>nor grant them permission to steal;
they'd avoid all theft.

22 A sensible person would avoid the unchaste life,
like a burning pit of coals.
But if unable to remain chaste,
they'd not transgress with another's partner.

23 In a council or assembly,
or one on one, they would not lie.
They'd not get others to lie, <j>nor grant them permission to lie;
they'd avoid all untruths.

24 A householder espousing this teaching
would not consume liquor or drink.
They'd not get others to drink, <j>nor grant them permission to drink;
knowing that ends in intoxication.

25 For drunken fools do bad things,
and encourage other heedless folk.
Shun this field of demerit,
the maddening, deluding frolic of fools.

26 You shouldn't kill living creatures, or steal,
or lie, or drink liquor.
Be chaste, refraining from sex,
and don't eat at night, the wrong time.

27 Not wearing garlands or applying fragrance,
you should sleep on a low bed, <j>or a mat on the ground.
This is the eight-factored sabbath, they say,
revealed by the Buddha, <j>who has gone to suffering's end.

28 Then having rightly undertaken the sabbath
complete in all its eight factors
on the fourteenth, fifteenth, <j>and eighth of the fortnight,
as well as on the fortnightly special displays,

29 at daybreak after the sabbath
a clever person, rejoicing with confident heart,
would distribute food and drink
to the mendicant Saṅgha as is fitting.

30 One should rightfully support one’s parents,
and undertake a legitimate business.
A diligent layperson observing these duties
ascends to the gods named ‘self-radiant’.”

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3.1 — GOING FORTH

✦

1 "I shall extol going forth
with the example of the Clear-eyed One,
the course of inquiry that led to
his choice to go forth.

2 'This life at home is cramped,
a realm of dirt.'
'The life of one gone forth is like an open space.'
Seeing this, he went forth.

3 Having gone forth, he shunned
bad deeds of body.
And leaving verbal misconduct behind,
he purified his livelihood.

4 The Buddha went to Rājagaha,
the Mountainfold of the Magadhans.
He betook himself for alms,
replete with excellent marks.

5 Bimbisāra saw him
while standing atop his longhouse.
Noticing that he was endowed with marks,
he said the following:

6 ‘Pay heed, sirs, to this one,
handsome, majestic, radiant;
accomplished in deportment,
he looks just a plough’s length in front.

7 Eyes downcast, mindful,
unlike one from a low family.
Let the king’s messengers run out,
and find where the mendicant will go.’

8 The messengers sent out
followed right behind, thinking
‘Where will the mendicant go?
Where shall he find a place to stay?’

9 Wandering indiscriminately for alms,
sense doors guarded and well restrained,
aware and mindful,
his bowl was quickly filled.

10 Having wandered for alms,
the sage left the city.
He betook himself to Mount Paṇḍava,
thinking, ‘Here is the place I shall stay.’

11 Seeing that he had arrived at a place to stay,
the messengers withdrew nearby,
but one of them returned
to inform the king.

12 ‘Great king, the mendicant
is on the east flank of Mount Paṇḍava.
There he sits, like a tiger or a bull,
like a lion in a mountain cave.’

13 Hearing the messenger’s report,
the aristocrat set out
hurriedly in his fine chariot
toward Mount Paṇḍava.

14 He went as far as vehicles could go,
then dismounted from his chariot,
approached on foot,
and reaching him, drew near.

15 Seated, the king greeted him
and made polite conversation.
When the courtesies were over,
he said the following:

16 ‘You are young, just a youth,
a lad in the prime of life.
You are endowed with beauty and stature,
like an aristocrat of good birth

17 in glory at the army’s head,
surrounded by a troop of elephants.
I offer you pleasures—enjoy them!
But please tell me of your birth.’

18 ‘Up north, O King,
on the slopes of the Himalayas,
full of wealth and strength, lies the land
of one whose abode is among the Kosalans.

19 Their clan is named for the Sun,
they are Sakyans by birth.
I have gone forth from that family—
I do not yearn for sensual pleasure.

20 Seeing the danger in sensual pleasures,
seeing renunciation as sanctuary,
I shall go on to strive;
that is where my mind delights.’”

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3.2 — STRIVING

✦

1 “During my time of resolute striving
back on the bank of the Nerañjara River,
I was meditating very hard
for the sake of sanctuary from the yoke.

2 Namucī approached,
speaking words of kindness:
‘You’re thin, discolored,
on the verge of death.

3 Death has a thousand parts of you,
one fraction is left to life.
Live, worthy sir! Life is better!
Living, you can make merits.

4 While leading the spiritual life
and serving the sacred flame,
you can pile up abundant merit—
so what will striving do for you?

5 Hard to walk is the path of striving,
hard to do, a hard challenge to win.’”
These are the verses Māra spoke
as he stood beside the Buddha.

6 When Māra had spoken in this way,
the Buddha said this:
“O Wicked One, kinsman of the negligent,
you’re here for your own purpose.

7 I have no need for
the slightest bit of merit.
Those with need for merit
are fit for Māra to address.

8 I have faith and energy too,
and wisdom is found in me.
When I am so resolute,
why do you beg me to live?

9 The rivers and streams
might be dried by the wind,
so why, when I am resolute,
should it not dry up my blood?

10 And while the blood is drying up,
the bile and phlegm dry too.
And as my muscles waste away,
my mind grows more serene.
And all the stronger grow mindfulness
and wisdom and immersion.

11 As I meditate like this,
having attained the supreme feeling,
my mind has no interest in sensual pleasures:

behold a being's purity!

12 Sensual pleasures are your first army,
the second is called discontent,
hunger and thirst are the third,
and the fourth is said to be craving.

13 Your fifth is dullness and drowsiness,
the sixth is said to be cowardice,
your seventh is doubt,
contempt and obstinacy are your eighth.

14 Profit, praise, and honor,
and misbegotten fame;
the extolling of oneself
while scorning others.

15 This is your army, Namucī,
the strike force of the Dark One.
Only a hero can defeat it,
but in victory there lies bliss.

16 Let me gird myself—
curse my life!
I'd rather die in battle
than live on in defeat.

17 Here some ascetics and brahmins
are swallowed up, not to be seen again.
And they do not know the path
traveled by those true to their vows.

18 Seeing Māra ready with his legions,
surrounded by his bannered forces,
I shall meet them in battle—
they'll never make me retreat!

19 That army of yours has never been beaten
by the world with all its gods.
Yet I shall smash it with wisdom,
like an unfired pot with a stone.

20 Having brought my thoughts under control,
and established mindfulness well,
I shall wander from nation to nation,
guiding many disciples.

21 Diligent and resolute,
following my instructions,
they will proceed despite your will,
to where there is no sorrow."

22 "For seven years I followed
step by step behind the Blessed One.
I found no vulnerability
in the mindful Awakened One.

23 A crow once circled a stone
that looked like a lump of fat.
'Perhaps I'll find something tender,' it thought,
'perhaps there's something tasty.'

24 But finding nothing tasty,
the crow left that place.
Like the crow that pecked the stone,
I leave Gotama disappointed.”

25 So stricken with sorrow
that his harp dropped from his armpit,
that spirit, downcast,
vanished right there.

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3.3 — WELL-SPOKEN WORDS

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There the Buddha addressed the mendicants, "Mendicants!" "Venerable sir," they replied. The Buddha said this:

2 "Mendicants, speech that has four factors is well spoken, not poorly spoken. It's blameless and is not criticized by sensible people. What four? It's when a mendicant speaks well, not poorly; their speech is principled, not unprincipled; they speak pleasantly, not unpleasantly; and they speak truthfully, not falsely.

2.2 Speech with these four factors is well spoken, not poorly spoken. It's blameless and is not criticized by sensible people." That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

3 "Good people say well-spoken words are foremost;
second, speech ought be principled, not unprincipled;
third, speak pleasantly, not unpleasantly;
and fourth, speak truthfully, not falsely."

4 Then Venerable Vaṅgīsa rose from his seat, arranged his robe over one shoulder, raised his cupped palms toward the Buddha, and said, "I feel inspired to speak, Blessed One! I feel inspired to speak, Holy One!" "Then speak as you feel inspired," said the Buddha. Then Vaṅgīsa extolled the Buddha in his presence with fitting verses:

5 “Speak only those words
that do not hurt yourself
nor harm others;
such speech is truly well spoken.

6 Speak only pleasing words,
words gladly welcomed.
Pleasing words are those
that bring nothing bad to others.

7 Truth itself is undying speech:
this is an ancient teaching.
Good people say the teaching and meaning
are grounded in truth.

8 The words spoken by the Buddha
for finding the sanctuary, extinguishment,
for making an end of suffering,
this really is the best kind of speech.”

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3.4 — WITH BHĀRADVĀJA OF SUNDARIKĀ ON THE SACRIFICIAL CAKE

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in the Kosalan lands on the bank of the Sundarikā River. Now at that time the brahmin Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā was serving the sacred flame and performing the fire sacrifice on the bank of the Sundarikā. Then he rose from his seat and surveyed the four quarters, wondering, "Now who might eat the leftovers of this oblation?"

1.2 He saw the Buddha meditating at the root of a certain tree with his robe pulled over his head. Taking the leftovers of the oblation in his left hand and a pitcher in the right he approached the Buddha.

2 When he heard Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā's footsteps the Buddha uncovered his head. Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā thought, "This man is shaven, he is shaven!" And he wanted to turn back. But he thought, "Even some brahmins are shaven. Why don't I go to him and ask about his birth?" Then the brahmin Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā went up to the Buddha, and said to him, "Sir, what are you by birth?"

3 Then the Buddha addressed Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā in verse:

4 "I am no brahmin, nor am I a ruler,
nor peasant nor anything else.
Fully understanding the clan of ordinary people,
I wander in the world owning nothing, reflective.

5 Clad in my cloak, I wander without home,
my hair shorn, quenched.
Since I'm unburdened by sons of Manu,
it's inappropriate to ask me about clan."

6 "Actually sir, when brahmins meet they politely
ask each other whether they are brahmins."

7 "Well, if you say that you're a brahmin,
and that I am not,
I shall question you on that Sāvitrī Prayer,
with its three lines and twenty-four syllables."

8 "On what grounds have seers and men,
aristocrats and brahmins here in the world
performed so many different sacrifices to the gods?"

9 "During a sacrifice, should a past-master, <j>a knowledge master,
receive an oblation, it profits the donor, I say."

10 "Then clearly my oblation will be profitable,"
said the brahmin, "since I have met such a knowledge master.
It's because I'd never met anyone like you
that others ate the sacrificial cake."

11 "So then, brahmin, since you have approached me
as a seeker of the good, ask.
Perhaps you may find here someone intelligent,
peaceful, unclouded, untroubled, <j>with no need for hope."

12 “Worthy Gotama, I like to sacrifice
and wish to perform a sacrifice. Please advise me,
for I do not understand
where an oblation is profitable; tell me this.”

13 “Well then, brahmin, listen up, I will teach you the Dhamma.

14 Don’t ask about birth, ask about conduct;
for the fire of Jātaveda is born from sticks.
A steadfast sage, even though from a low class family,
is a thoroughbred checked by conscience.

15 Tamed by truth, fulfilled by taming,
a complete knowledge master <j>who has completed the spiritual journey
—
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

16 Those who have left sensuality behind, <j>wandering homeless,
self-controlled, straight as a shuttle—
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

17 Those freed of greed, with senses stilled,
like the moon released from the eclipse—
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

18 They wander the world unobstructed,
always mindful, calling nothing their own—
that is where a brahmin seeking merit

should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

19 Having left sensuality behind, <j>wandering triumphant,
knowing the end of rebirth and death,
quenched and cool as a lake:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

20 Good among the good, far from the bad,
the Realized One has infinite wisdom.
Unsullied in this life and the next:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

21 In whom dwells no deceit or conceit,
rid of greed, unselfish, <j>with no need for hope,
with anger cast aside, quenched,
a brahmin rid of sorrow's stain:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

22 He has given up the mind's home,
and has no possessions at all.
Not grasping to this life or the next:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

23 Serene, he has crossed the flood,
and has understood the teaching with ultimate view.
With defilements ended, bearing his final body:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

24 In whom desire to be reborn, and caustic speech
are cleared and ended, and are no more;
that knowledge master, everywhere free:

the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

25 He has slipped his chains, he's chained no more,
among those caught in conceit he is free of conceit;
he has fully understood suffering <j>with its field and ground:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

26 Not relying on hope, seeing seclusion,
well past the views proclaimed by others.
In him there are no supporting conditions at all:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

27 He has comprehended all things, high and low,
cleared them and ended them, so they are no more.
Peaceful, freed in the ending of grasping:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

28 He sees the ending of rebirth's fetter,
and has cast aside all manner of desire.
Pure, stainless, immaculate, flawless:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

29 Not seeing himself in terms of a self,
he is stilled, sincere, and steadfast.
Imperturbable, kind, wishless:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake.

30 He harbors no delusions within at all,
he has insight into all things.
He bears his final body,

attained to the state of grace, the supreme awakening.
That's how the purity of a spirit is defined:
the Realized One is worthy of the sacrificial cake."

31 "Let my oblation be a true offering,
since I have found such a knowledge master!
I see divinity in person! <j>Accept my offering, Blessed One:
please eat my sacrificial cake."

32 "Food enchanted by a verse isn't fit for me to eat.
That's not the principle of those who see, brahmin.
The Buddhas cast aside things enchanted with verses.
Since there is such a principle, brahmin, <j>that's how they live.

33 Serve with other food and drink
the consummate one, the great seer,
with defilements ended and remorse stilled.
For he is the field for the seeker of merit."

34 "Please, Blessed One, help me understand:
now that I have found your teaching,
when I look for someone during a sacrifice,
who should eat the <j>religious donation of one like me?"

35 "One who is rid of aggression,
whose mind is unclouded,
who is liberated from sensual pleasures,
and who has cast aside dullness.

36 One who has erased perimeters and limits,
expert in birth and death,
a sage, blessed with sagacity.
When such a person comes to the sacrifice,

37 get rid of your scowl!
Honor them with cupped palms,
and venerate them with food and drink,
and in this way your religious donation will succeed."

38 "The Buddha is worthy of the sacrificial cake,
he is the supreme field of merit,
recipient of gifts from the whole world;
what's given to the worthy one is very fruitful."

39 Then the brahmin Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā said to the Buddha, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! As if he were righting the overturned, or revealing the hidden, or pointing out the path to the lost, or lighting a lamp in the dark so people with clear eyes can see what's there, worthy Gotama has made the teaching clear in many ways.

39.2 I go for refuge to the worthy Gotama, to the teaching, and to the mendicant Saṅgha. May I receive the going forth, the ordination in the worthy Gotama's presence?" And the brahmin Bhāradvāja of Sundarikā received the going forth, the ordination in the Buddha's presence. And soon after, he became one of the perfected.

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3.5 — WITH MĀGHA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha, on the Vulture's Peak Mountain. Then the student Māgha approached the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side, and said to the Buddha:

2 "I'm a giver, worthy Gotama, a donor; I am bountiful and committed to charity. I seek wealth in a principled manner, and with that legitimate wealth I give to one person, to two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred people or even more. Giving and sacrificing like this, worthy Gotama, do I brim with much merit?"

3 "Indeed you do, student. A giver or donor who is bountiful and committed to charity, who seeks wealth in a principled manner, and with that legitimate wealth gives to one person, or up to a hundred people or even more, brims with much merit." Then Māgha addressed the Buddha in verse:

4 "I ask the bountiful Gotama,"
said Māgha, "wearing an ochre robe, wandering homeless.
Suppose a lay donor who is committed to charity
makes a sacrifice seeking merit, looking for merit,
giving food and drink to others here:
how is their offering purified?"

5 “Suppose a lay donor who is committed to charity,”
replied the Buddha, “makes a sacrifice seeking merit, looking for merit,
giving food and drink to others here:
such a one would succeed due to those <j>who are worthy of donations.”

6 “Suppose a lay donor who is committed to charity,”
said Māgha, “makes a sacrifice seeking merit, looking for merit,
giving food and drink to others here:
explain to me who is worthy of donations.”

7 “Those who wander the world unattached,
consummate, self-controlled, owning nothing:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

8 Those who have cut off all fetters and bonds,
tamed, liberated, untroubled, with no need for hope:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

9 Those who are released from all fetters,
tamed, liberated, untroubled, with no need for hope:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

10 Having given up greed, hate, and delusion,
with defilements ended, <j>the spiritual journey completed:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

11 Those in whom dwells no deceit or conceit,
with defilements ended, <j>the spiritual journey completed:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

12 Those rid of greed, unselfish, with no need for hope,
with defilements ended, <j>the spiritual journey completed:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

13 Those not fallen prey to cravings,
who, having crossed the flood, live unselfishly:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

14 Those with no craving at all in the world
for any state of existence in this life or the next:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

15 Those who have left sensuality behind, <j>wandering homeless,
self-controlled, straight as a shuttle:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

16 Those freed of greed, with senses stilled,
like the moon released from the eclipse:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

17 Those assuaged ones free of greed and anger,
for whom there are no destinies, <j>being rid of them in this life:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

18 They've given up rebirth and death completely,
and have gone beyond all indecision:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

19 Those who live as their own island,
everywhere free, owning nothing:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

20 Those here who know this to be true:
'This is my last life, there are no future lives':
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice.

21 A knowledge master, loving absorption, mindful,
who has reached awakening and is a refuge for many:
that is where a brahmin seeking merit
should bestow a timely oblation as sacrifice."

22 "Clearly my questions were not in vain!"
said Māgha, "The Buddha has explained to me <j>who is worthy of donations.
You are the one here who knows this to be true,
for truly you understand this matter.

23 Suppose a lay donor who is committed to charity
makes a sacrifice seeking merit, looking for merit,
giving food and drink to others here:
explain to me how to accomplish the sacrifice."

24 "Sacrifice, and while doing so,"
replied the Buddha, "be clear and confident in every way.
Sacrifice is the ground standing upon which
the sacrificer sheds their flaws.

25 One free of greed, rid of anger,
developing a heart of limitless love,
spreads that limitlessness in every direction,
ever diligent day and night."

26 "Who is purified, freed, awake?
How can one go to the realm of divinity oneself?
I do not know, so please tell me when asked,
for the Buddha is the divinity I see in person today!
To us you are truly the equal of divinity.
Brilliant One, how is one reborn <j>in the realm of divinity?"

27 "One who accomplishes the sacrifice <j>with three modes,"
replied the Buddha, "such a one would succeed <j>due to those who are worthy of donations.
Sacrificing like this, one rightly committed to charity
is reborn in the realm of divinity, I say."

28 When he had spoken, the student Māgha said to the Buddha, “Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! … From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life.”

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3.6 — WITH SABHIYA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground. Now at that time the wanderer Sabhiya had been presented with several questions by a deity who was a former blood relation, saying: "Sabhiya, you should live the spiritual life with whatever ascetic or brahmin answers these questions."

2 Then Sabhiya, after learning those questions in the presence of that deity, approached those ascetics and brahmins who led an order and a community, and taught a community, who were well-known and famous religious founders, deemed holy by many people.

2.2 That is, Pūraṇa Kassapa, the bamboo-staffed ascetic Gosāla, Ajita of the hair blanket, Pakudha Kaccāyana, Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, and the Jain ascetic of the Ñātika clan. And he asked them those questions, but they were stumped by them. Displaying annoyance, hate, and bitterness, they questioned Sabhiya in return.

3 Then Sabhiya thought, "Those famous ascetics and brahmins were stumped by my questions. Displaying annoyance, hate, and bitterness, they questioned me in return on that matter. Why don't I return to a lesser life so I can enjoy sensual pleasures?"

4 Then Sabhiya thought, "This ascetic Gotama also leads an order and a community, and tutors a community. He's a well-known and famous religious founder, deemed holy by many people. Why don't I ask him these questions?"

5 Then he thought, “Even those ascetics and brahmins who are elderly and senior, who are advanced in years and have reached the final stage of life; who are senior, long standing, long gone forth; who lead an order and a community, and tutor a community; who are well-known and famous religious founders, deemed holy by many people—that is Pūraṇa Kassapa and the rest— were stumped by my questions. They displayed annoyance, hate, and bitterness, and even questioned me in return. How can the ascetic Gotama possibly answer my questions, since he is so young in age and newly gone forth?”

6 Then he thought, “An ascetic should not be looked down upon or disparaged because they are young. Though young, the ascetic Gotama has great psychic power and might. Why don’t I ask him these questions?”

7 Then Sabhiya set out for Rājagaha. Traveling stage by stage, he came to Rājagaha, the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels’ feeding ground. He went up to the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side, and addressed the Buddha in verse:

8 “I’ve come full of doubts and uncertainties,”
said Sabhiya, “wishing to ask some questions.
Please solve them for me.
Answer my questions in turn, <j>in accordance with the truth.”

9 “You have come from afar, Sabhiya,”
said the Buddha, “wishing to ask some questions.
I shall solve them for you,
answering your questions in turn, <j>in accordance with the truth.

10 Ask me your question, Sabhiya,
whatever you want.
I'll solve each and every
question you have."

11 Then Sabhiya thought, "Oh lord, how incredible, how amazing! Where those other ascetics and brahmins didn't even give me a chance, the Buddha has invited me." Uplifted and elated, full of rapture and happiness, he asked this question.

12 "What must one attain to be called a mendicant?"
said Sabhiya, "How is one 'gentle', how said to be 'tamed'?
How is one declared to be 'awakened'?
May the Buddha please answer my question."

13 "When by the path they have walked themselves,"
said the Buddha to Sabhiya, "they reach extinguishment, with doubt overcome;
giving up desire for existence or nonexistence,
their journey complete, their rebirths ended: <j>that is a mendicant.

14 Equanimous toward everything, mindful,
they don't harm anyone in the world.
An ascetic who has crossed over, unclouded,
who has no pretensions, is gentle.

15 Their faculties have been developed
inside and out in the whole world.
Having pierced through this world and the next,
tamed, they await their time.

16 They have examined the eons in their entirety,
and both sides of transmigration—<j>passing away and rebirth.
Rid of dust, unblemished, purified:
the one they call ‘awakened’ has attained <j>the end of rebirth.”

17 And then, having approved and agreed with what the Buddha said, uplifted and elated, full of rapture and happiness, Sabhiya asked another question:

18 “What must one attain to be called ‘brahmin’?”
said Sabhiya. “Why is one an ‘ascetic’, and how a ‘bathed initiate’?
How is one declared to be a ‘giant’?
May the Buddha please answer my question.”

19 “Having banished all bad things,”
said the Buddha to Sabhiya, “immaculate, well-composed, steadfast,
consummate, they’ve left transmigration behind:
unattached, one such is called ‘brahmin’.

20 An assuaged one who has given up good and evil,
stainless, understanding this world and the next,
gone beyond rebirth and death:
one such is rightly called ‘ascetic’.

21 Having washed off all bad things
inside and out in the whole world,
among gods and humans bound to creations,
the one they call ‘washed’ does not return to creation.

22 They do nothing monstrous at all in the world,
discarding all yokes and bonds,
everywhere not stuck, freed:
one such is rightly called ‘giant’.”

23 And then Sabhiya asked another question:

24 “Who is a ‘field-victor’ according to the Buddhas?”
said Sabhiya, “Why is one ‘skillful’, and how ‘an astute scholar’?
How is one declared to be a ‘sage’?
May the Buddha please answer my question.”

25 “They are victors on the fields of deeds in their entirety,”
said the Buddha to Sabhiya, “the fields of gods, humans, and divinities;
released from the root bondage to all fields:
one such is rightly called ‘field-victor’.

26 They have examined the coffers in their entirety,
the coffers of gods, humans, and divinities;
released from the root bondage to all coffers:
one such is rightly called ‘skillful’.

27 They have examined whiteness
both inside and out; understanding purity,
they have left dark and bright behind:
one such is rightly called ‘an astute scholar’.

28 Understanding the nature of the bad and the good
inside and out in the whole world;
one worthy of honor by gods and humans,
who has escaped from the net and the chain: <j>that is a sage.”

29 And then Sabhiya asked another question:

30 “What must one attain <j>to be called ‘knowledge master’?”
said Sabhiya, “Why is one ‘studied’, and how is one ‘heroic’?
How to gain the name ‘thoroughbred’?
May the Buddha please answer my question.”

31 “They have examined knowledges in their entirety,”
said the Buddha to Sabhiya, “those that are current among ascetics and brahmins;
rid of greed for all feelings,
having left all knowledges behind: <j>that is a knowledge master.

32 Having studied proliferation and name & form
inside and out—the root of disease;
released from the root bondage to all disease:
one such is rightly called ‘studied’.

33 Refraining from all evil here,
heroic, he escapes from the suffering of hell;
he is heroic and energetic:
one such is rightly called ‘hero’.

34 Whoever’s bonds are cut,
the root of clinging inside and out;
released from the root bondage to all clinging:
one such is rightly called ‘thoroughbred’.”

35 And then Sabhiya asked another question:

36 “What must one attain to be called ‘scholar’?”
said Sabhiya, “Why is one ‘noble’, and how is one ‘well conducted’?
How to gain the name ‘wanderer’?
May the Buddha please answer my question.”

37 “One who has learned every teaching,”
said the Buddha to Sabhiya, “and has known for themselves what in the world <j>is blameworthy and blameless;
a vanquisher, decided, liberated,
untroubled everywhere: they call them ‘scholar’.

38 Having cut off defilements and clingings,
being wise, they enter no womb.
They’ve cast aside the bog of the three perceptions,
the one they call ‘noble’ does not return to creation.

39 One here who is accomplished <j>and skillful in all forms of good conduct;
always understanding the teaching,
everywhere not stuck, freed in mind,
who has no aversion: they are ‘well-conducted’.

40 They wander full of wisdom,
having banished any deed that results in suffering,
deceit and conceit, as well as greed and anger,
above, below, all round, between.
They have made a limit on name and form;
the one they call a ‘wanderer’ <j>has reached their destination.”

41 And then, having approved and agreed with what the Buddha said, uplifted and elated, full of rapture and happiness, Sabhiya rose from his seat, arranged his robe over one shoulder, raised his cupped palms toward the Buddha, and extolled the Buddha in his presence with fitting verses:

42 “O one of vast wisdom, <j>there are three and sixty opinions
based on the doctrines of ascetics:
they are expressions of perception, <j>based on perception.
Having dispelled them all, <j>you passed over the dark flood.

43 You have gone to the end, gone beyond suffering,
you are perfected, a fully awakened Buddha; <j>I think you have ended defilements.
Brilliant, thoughtful, abounding in wisdom,
ender of suffering—you brought me across!

44 When you understood my uncertainty,
you brought me beyond doubt—homage to you!
A sage, accomplished in the ways of sagacity,
you are gentle, not hardhearted, <j>O Kinsman of the Sun.

45 Any doubts that I once had,
you have answered for me, O Clear-eyed One.
Clearly you are a sage, an Awakened One,
there are no hindrances in you.

46 All your distress
is blown away and mown down.
Cooled, tamed, steadfast:
truth is your strength.

47 O giant among giants, O great hero,
when you are speaking
all the gods rejoice,
including both Nārada and Pabbata.

48 Homage to you, O thoroughbred!
Homage to you, supreme among men!
In the world with its gods,
you have no rival.

49 You are the Buddha, you are the Teacher,
you are the sage who has overcome Māra;
you have cut off the underlying tendencies,
you've crossed over, and you bring humanity across.

50 You have transcended attachments,
your defilements are shattered;
you are a lion free of grasping,
with fear and dread given up.

51 Like a graceful lotus
to which water does not stick,
so both good and evil
do not stick to you.
Stretch out your feet, great hero:
Sabhiya bows to the Teacher."

52 Then the wanderer Sabhiya bowed with his head to the Buddha's feet and said, "Excellent, sir! Excellent! ... I go for refuge to the Buddha, to the teaching, and to the mendicant Saṅgha. Sir, may I receive the going forth,

the ordination in the Buddha's presence?"

53 "Sabhiya, if someone formerly ordained in another sect wishes to take the going forth, the ordination in this teaching and training, they must spend four months on probation. When four months have passed, if the mendicants are satisfied, they'll give the going forth, the ordination into monkhood. However, I recognize individual differences in this matter."

54 "Sir, if four months probation are required in such a case, I'll spend four years on probation. When four years have passed, if the mendicants are satisfied, let them give me the going forth, the ordination into monkhood." And the wanderer Sabhiya received the going forth, the ordination in the Buddha's presence. And Venerable Sabhiya became one of the perfected.

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3.7 — WITH SELA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was wandering together with a large Saṅgha of 1,250 mendicants in the land of the Aṅguttarāpans when he arrived at a town of theirs named Āpaṇa. The matted-hair ascetic Keṇiya heard: "It seems the ascetic Gotama—a Sakyan, gone forth from a Sakyan family—has arrived at Āpaṇa, together with a large Saṅgha of 1,250 mendicants. He has this good reputation: 'That Blessed One is perfected, a fully awakened Buddha, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, holy, knower of the world, supreme guide for those fit for training, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.'

1.2 He has realized with his own insight this world—with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, gods and humans—and he makes it known to others. He teaches Dhamma that's good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, meaningful and well-phrased. And he reveals a spiritual practice that's entirely full and pure. It's good to see such perfected ones."

2 So Keṇiya approached the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side. The Buddha educated, encouraged, fired up, and inspired him with a Dhamma talk. Then he said to the Buddha, "Would Worthy Gotama together with the mendicant Saṅgha please accept tomorrow's meal from me?" When he said this, the Buddha said to him, "The Saṅgha is large, Keṇiya; there are 1,250 mendicants. And you are devoted to the brahmins."

3 For a second time, Keṇiya asked the Buddha to accept a meal offering. "Never mind that the Saṅgha is large, with 1,250 mendicants, and that I am devoted to the brahmins. Would Worthy Gotama together with the mendicant Saṅgha please accept tomorrow's meal from me?" And for a second time, the Buddha gave the same reply.

4 For a third time, Keṇiya asked the Buddha to accept a meal offering. "Never mind that the Saṅgha is large, with 1,250 mendicants, and that I am devoted to the brahmins. Would Worthy Gotama together with the mendicant Saṅgha please accept tomorrow's meal from me?" The Buddha consented with silence.

4.2 Then, knowing that the Buddha had consented, Keṇiya rose from his seat and went to his own hermitage. There he addressed his friends and colleagues, relatives and kin, "My friends and colleagues, relatives and kin: please listen! The ascetic Gotama together with the mendicant Saṅgha has been invited by me for tomorrow's meal. Please help me out with the manual preparations."

4.3 "Yes, worthy sir," they replied. Some dug ovens, some chopped wood, some washed dishes, some set up a water jar, and some spread out seats. Meanwhile, Keṇiya set up the pavilion himself.

5 Now at that time the brahmin Sela was residing in Āpaṇa. He had mastered the three Vedas, together with their vocabularies and ritual performance, their phonology and word classification, and the testaments as fifth. He knew them word-by-word, and their grammar. He was well versed in cosmology and the marks of a great man. And he was teaching three hundred young students to recite the hymns.

6 And at that time Keṇiya was devoted to Sela. Then Sela, while going for a walk escorted by the three hundred young students, approached Keṇiya's hermitage. He saw the preparations going on, and said to Keṇiya, "Worthy Keṇiya, is your son or daughter being married? Or are you setting up a grand sacrifice? Or has King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha been invited for tomorrow's meal?"

7 "There is no marriage, Worthy Sela, and the king is not coming. Rather, I am setting up a grand sacrifice. The ascetic Gotama has arrived at Āpaṇa, together with a large Saṅgha of 1,250 mendicants. He has this good reputation: 'That Blessed One is perfected, a fully awakened Buddha, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, holy, knower of the world, supreme guide for those fit for training, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.' He has been invited by me for tomorrow's meal together with the mendicant Saṅgha."

7.2 "Did you say 'the awakened one'?" "I said 'the awakened one'." "Did you say 'the awakened one'?" "I said 'the awakened one'."

8 Then Sela thought: "It's hard to even find the word 'awakened one' in the world. The thirty-two marks of a great man have been handed down in our hymns. A great man who possesses these has only two possible destinies, no other. If he stays at home he becomes a king, a wheel-turning monarch, a just and principled king.

8.2 His dominion extends to all four sides, he achieves stability in the country, and he possesses the seven treasures. He has the following seven treasures: the wheel, the elephant, the horse, the jewel, the woman, the

householder, and the commander as the seventh treasure. He has over a thousand sons who are valiant and heroic, crushing the armies of his enemies.

8.3 After conquering this land girt by sea, he reigns by principle, without rod or sword. But if he goes forth from the lay life to homelessness, he becomes a perfected one, a fully awakened Buddha, who has cast off the world's veil." He said, "But Keṇiya, where is the Blessed One at present, the perfected one, the fully awakened Buddha?"

9 When he said this, Keṇiya pointed with his right arm and said, "There, worthy Sela, at that line of blue forest." Then Sela, together with his young students, approached the Buddha. He said to his young students, "Come quietly, gentlemen, tread gently. For the Buddhas are intimidating, like a lion living alone. When I'm consulting with the ascetic Gotama, don't interrupt. Wait until I've finished speaking."

10 Then Sela went up to the Buddha, and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side, and scrutinized the Buddha's body for the thirty-two marks of a great man. He saw all of them except two, which he had doubts about: whether the private parts were sheathed in a foreskin, and the largeness of the tongue.

11 Then it occurred to the Buddha, "Sela sees all the marks except two, which he has doubts about: whether the private parts are sheathed in a foreskin, and the largeness of the tongue." The Buddha used his psychic power to will that Sela would see his private parts sheathed in a foreskin. And he stuck out his tongue and stroked back and forth on his ear holes and nostrils, and covered his entire forehead with his tongue.

12 Then Sela thought, “The ascetic Gotama possesses the thirty-two marks completely, lacking none. But I don’t know whether or not he is an awakened one. I have heard that brahmins of the past who were elderly and senior, the tutors of tutors, said, ‘Those who are perfected ones, fully awakened Buddhas reveal themselves when praised.’ Why don’t I extoll him in his presence with fitting verses?” Then Sela extolled the Buddha in his presence with fitting verses:

13 “O Blessed One, your body’s perfect,
you’re radiant, handsome, lovely to behold;
golden colored,
with teeth so white; you’re strong.

14 The characteristics
of a handsome man,
the marks of a great man,
are all found on your body.

15 Your eyes are clear, your face is fair,
you’re formidable, upright, majestic.
In the midst of the Saṅgha of ascetics,
you dazzle like the sun.

16 You’re a mendicant fine to see,
with skin that shines like lustrous gold.
But with such excellent appearance,
what do you want with the ascetic life?

17 You're fit to be a king,
a wheel-turning monarch, chief of charioteers,
victorious in the four quarters,
lord of the Black Plum Tree Land.

18 Aristocrats, nobles, and kings
ought follow your rule.
Gotama, may you reign
as king of kings, lord of mankind!"

19 "I am a king, Sela",
said the Buddha, "the supreme king of the teaching.
By the teaching I roll forth the wheel
which cannot be rolled back."

20 "You claim to be awakened,"
said Sela the brahmin, "the supreme king of the teaching.
'I roll forth the teaching':
so you say, Gotama.

21 Then who is your general,
the disciple who follows the Teacher's way?
Who keeps rolling the wheel
of the teaching you rolled forth?"

22 "By me the wheel was rolled forth,"
said the Buddha, "the supreme wheel of the teaching.
Sāriputta, taking after the Realized One,
keeps it rolling on.

23 I have known what should be known,
and developed what should be developed,
and given up what should be given up:
and so, brahmin, I am a Buddha.

24 Dispel your doubt in me—
make up your mind, brahmin!
The sight of a Buddha
is hard to find again.

25 I am a Buddha, brahmin,
the supreme surgeon,
one of those whose appearance in the world
is hard to find again.

26 A manifestation of divinity, unequaled,
crusher of Māra's army;
having subdued all my opponents,
I rejoice, fearing nothing from any quarter."

27 "Pay heed, good fellows, to what
is spoken by the Clear-eyed One.
The surgeon, the great hero,
roars like a lion in the jungle.

28 A manifestation of divinity, unequaled,
crusher of Māra's army;
who would not be inspired by him,
even one born in a dark class?

29 Those who wish may follow me;
those who don't may go.
Right here, I'll go forth in his presence,
the one of such outstanding wisdom."

30 "Sir, if you endorse
the teaching of the Buddha,
we'll also go forth in his presence,
the one of such outstanding wisdom."

31 "These three hundred brahmins
with cupped palms held up, ask:
'May we lead the spiritual life
in your presence, Blessed One?'"

32 "The spiritual life is well explained,"
said the Buddha, "apparent in the present life, immediately effective.
Here the going forth isn't in vain
for one who trains with diligence."

33 And the brahmin Sela together with his assembly received the going forth, the ordination in the Buddha's presence. And when the night had passed Keṇiya had delicious fresh and cooked foods prepared in his own hermitage. Then he had the Buddha informed of the time, saying, "It's time, worthy Gotama, the meal is ready." Then the Buddha robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, went to Keṇiya's hermitage, where he sat down on the seat spread out together with the Saṅgha of mendicants.

34 Then Keṇiya served and satisfied the mendicant Saṅgha headed by the Buddha with his own hands with delicious fresh and cooked foods. When the Buddha had eaten and washed his hand and bowl, Keṇiya took a low seat and sat to one side. The Buddha expressed his appreciation with these verses:

35 “The foremost of sacrifices <j>is the offering to the sacred flame;
the Sāvitrī is the foremost of prayer;
of humans, the king is the foremost;
the ocean’s the foremost of rivers;

36 the foremost of stars is the moon;
the sun is the foremost of blazes;
for those who sacrifice seeking merit,
the Saṅgha is the foremost.”

37 When the Buddha had expressed his appreciation to Keṇiya the matted-hair ascetic with these verses, he rose from his seat and left. Then Venerable Sela and his assembly, living alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute, soon realized the supreme culmination of the spiritual path in this very life. They lived having achieved with their own insight the goal for which gentlemen rightly go forth from the lay life to homelessness. And Venerable Sela together with his assembly became perfected.

38 Then Sela with his assembly went to the Buddha. He arranged his robe over one shoulder, raised his joined palms toward the Buddha, and said:

39 “This is the eighth day since
we went for refuge, O Clear-eyed One.
In these seven days, Blessed One,

we've become tamed in your teaching.

40 You are the Buddha, you are the Teacher,
you are the sage who has overcome Māra;
you have cut off the underlying tendencies,
you've crossed over, and you bring humanity across.

41 You have transcended attachments,
your defilements are shattered;
you are a lion free of grasping,
with fear and dread given up.

42 These three hundred mendicants
stand with cupped palms raised.
Stretch out your feet, great hero:
let these giants bow to the Teacher."

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3.8 — THE DART

✦

1 Unforeseen and unknown
is the extent of this mortal life—
hard and short
and bound to pain.

2 There is no way that
those born will not die.
On reaching old age death follows:
such is the nature of living creatures.

3 As ripe fruit
are always in danger of falling,
so mortals once born
are always in danger of death.

4 As clay pots
made by a potter
all end up being broken,
so is the life of mortals.

5 Young and old,
foolish and wise—
all go under the sway of death;
all are destined to die.

6 When those overcome by death
leave this world for the next,
a father cannot protect his son,
nor relatives their kin.

7 See how, while relatives look on,
wailing profusely,
mortals are led away one by one,
like a cow to the slaughter.

8 And so the world is stricken
by old age and by death.
That is why the attentive do not grieve,
for they understand the way of the world.

9 For one whose path you do not know—
not whence they came nor where they went—
you lament in vain,
seeing neither end.

10 If a bewildered person,
lamenting and self-harming,
could extract any good from that,
then those who see clearly would do the same.

11 For not by weeping and wailing
will you find peace of heart.
It just gives rise to more suffering,
and distresses your body.

12 Growing thin and pale,
you hurt yourself.
It does nothing to help the dead:
your lamentation is in vain.

13 Unless a personage gives up grief,
they fall into suffering all the more.
Bewailing those whose time has come,
you fall under the sway of grief.

14 See, too, other folk departing,
passing on according to their deeds;
fallen under the sway of death,
beings flounder while still here.

15 For however they imagine it,
it turns out to be something else.
Such is separation:
see the way of the world!

16 Even if a human lives
a hundred years or more,
they are parted from their family circle,
they leave this life behind.

17 Therefore, having learned from the Perfected One,
dispel lamentation.
Seeing the dead and departed, think:
“I cannot escape this.”

18 As one would extinguish
a blazing refuge with water,
so too an attentive one—a wise,
astute, and skilled person—
would swiftly blow away grief that comes up,
like the wind a tuft of cotton.

19 One who seeks their own happiness
would pluck out the dart from themselves—
the wailing and praying,
and sadness inside.

20 With dart plucked out, unattached,
having found peace of mind,
overcoming all sorrow,
one is sorrowless and quenched.

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3.9 — WITH VĀSEṬṬHA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in a forest near Icchānaṅgala. Now at that time several very well-known well-to-do brahmins were residing in Icchānaṅgala. They included the brahmins Caṅkī, Tārukkha, Pokkharasāti, Jānussoṇi, Todeyya, and others. Then as the students Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were going for a walk they began to discuss the question: "How do you become a brahmin?"

2 Bhāradvāja said this: "When you're well born on both your mother's and father's side, stemming from a clean vessel, with irrefutable and impeccable genealogy back to the seventh paternal generation— then you're a brahmin."

3 Vāseṭṭha said this: "When you're ethical and accomplished in doing your duties— then you're a brahmin." But neither was able to persuade the other.

4 So Vāseṭṭha said to Bhāradvāja, "Worthy Bhāradvāja, the ascetic Gotama —a Sakyan, gone forth from a Sakyan family—is staying in a forest near Icchānaṅgala. He has this good reputation: 'That Blessed One is perfected, a fully awakened Buddha, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, holy, knower of the world, supreme guide for those fit for training, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.' Come, let's go to see him and ask him about this matter. As he answers, so we'll remember it." "Yes, worthy sir," replied Bhāradvāja.

5 So they went to the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, they sat down to one side, and Vāseṭṭha addressed the Buddha in verse:

6 "We're both authorized masters
of the three Vedas.
I'm a student of Pokkharasāti,
and he of Tārukkha.

7 We're fully qualified
in all the Vedic experts teach.
As philologists and grammarians,
we match our tutors in recitation.

8 We have a dispute
regarding genealogy.
For Bhāradvāja says that
one is a brahmin due to birth,
but I declare it's because of one's deeds.
Oh Clear-eyed One, know this as our debate.

9 Since neither of us was able
to convince the other,
we've come to ask you, sir,
renowned as the awakened one.

10 As people honor with cupped palms
the moon on the cusp of waxing,
bowing, they revere
Gotama in the world.

11 We ask this of Gotama,
the Eye arisen in the world:
is one a brahmin due to birth,
or else because of deeds?
We don't know, please tell us,
so we can recognize a brahmin."

12 "I shall explain to you,"
said the Buddha, "accurately and in sequence,
the taxonomy of living creatures,
for species are indeed diverse.

13 Know the grass and trees,
though they lack self-awareness.
They're defined by birth,
for species are indeed diverse.

14 Next there are bugs that crawl or fly,
and so on, to ants and termites.
They're defined by birth,
for species are indeed diverse.

15 Know the quadrupeds, too,
both small and large.
They're defined by birth,
for species are indeed diverse.

16 Know, too, the long-backed snakes,
crawling on their bellies.
They're defined by birth,

for species are indeed diverse.

17 Next know the fish,
whose habitat is the water.
They're defined by birth,
for species are indeed diverse.

18 Next know the birds,
winged chariots in flight.
They're defined by birth,
for species are indeed diverse.

19 While the differences between these species
are defined by birth,
the differences between humans
are not defined by birth.

20 Not by hair nor by head,
not by ear nor by eye,
not by mouth nor by nose,
not by lips nor by eyebrow,

21 not by shoulder nor by neck,
not by belly nor by back,
not by buttocks nor by breast,
not by groin nor by genitals,

22 not by hands nor by feet,
not by fingers nor by nails,
not by knees nor by thighs,

not by color nor by voice:
none of these are defined by birth
as it is for other species.

23 In specific human bodies
you can't find such distinctions.
The distinctions among humans
are spoken of by convention.

24 Anyone among humans
who lives off keeping cattle:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a farmer, not a brahmin.

25 Anyone among humans
who lives off various professions:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a professional, not a brahmin.

26 Anyone among humans
who lives off trade:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a trader, not a brahmin.

27 Anyone among humans
who lives off serving others:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a servant, not a brahmin.

28 Anyone among humans
who lives off stealing:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a bandit, not a brahmin.

29 Anyone among humans
who lives off archery:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a warrior, not a brahmin.

30 Anyone among humans
who lives off priesthood:
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a sacrificer, not a brahmin.

31 Anyone among humans
who taxes village and nation,
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as a ruler, not a brahmin.

32 I don't call someone a brahmin
after the mother's womb they're born from.
If they still have attachments,
they're just someone who says 'worthy'.
Having nothing, taking nothing:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

33 Having cut off all fetters
they have no anxiety;
they've slipped their chains and are detached:

that's who I declare a brahmin.

34 They've cut the strap and harness,
the halter and bridle too;
with cross-bar lifted, they're awakened:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

35 Abuse, killing, caging:
they endure these without anger.
Patience is their powerful army:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

36 Not irritable or pretentious,
dutiful in precepts and observances,
tamed, bearing their final body:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

37 Like water from a lotus leaf,
like a mustard seed off the point of a pin,
sensual pleasures slip off them:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

38 They understand for themselves
the end of suffering in this life;
with burden put down, detached:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

39 Deep in wisdom, intelligent,
expert in the path and what is not the path;
arrived at the highest goal:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

40 Mixing with neither
householders nor the homeless;
a migrant with no bastion, few in wishes:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

41 They've laid aside violence
against creatures firm and frail;
not killing or making others kill:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

42 Not fighting among those who fight,
quenched among those who have taken up arms,
not grasping among those who grasp:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

43 They've discarded greed and hate,
along with conceit and contempt,
like a mustard seed off the point of a pin:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

44 The words they utter
are polished, informative, and true,
and don't offend anyone:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

45 They don't steal anything in the world,
long or short,
tiny or huge, beautiful or ugly:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

46 They have no hope
for this world or the next;
with no need for hope, detached:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

47 They have no clinging,
knowledge has freed them of indecision,
they've arrived at the objective, freedom from death:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

48 They've escaped clinging
to both good and bad deeds;
sorrowless, stainless, pure:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

49 Pure as the spotless moon,
clear and unclouded,
they've ended relish for rebirth:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

50 They've got past this grueling swamp
of delusion, transmigration.
Meditating in stillness, free of indecision,
they have crossed over to the far shore.
They're quenched by not grasping:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

51 They've given up sensual pleasures,
and have gone forth from lay life;
they've ended rebirth in the sensual realm:

that's who I declare a brahmin.

52 They've given up craving,
and have gone forth from lay life;
they've ended craving to be reborn:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

53 They've thrown off the human yoke,
and slipped out of the heavenly yoke;
unyoked from all yokes:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

54 Giving up desire and discontent,
they're cooled and free of attachments;
a hero, master of the whole world:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

55 They know the passing away
and rebirth of all beings;
unattached, holy, awakened:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

56 Gods, centaurs, and humans
don't know their destiny;
the perfected ones with defilements ended:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

57 They have nothing before or after,
or even in between.
Having nothing, taking nothing:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

58 Captain of the herd, excellent hero,
great seer and victor;
unstirred, washed, awakened:
that's who I declare a brahmin.

59 They who know their past lives,
see heaven and places of loss,
and have attained the ending of rebirth,
that's who I declare a brahmin.

60 For name and clan are formulated
as mere convention in the world.
Produced by mutual agreement,
they're formulated in each case.

61 For a long time this misconception
has prejudiced those who don't understand.
Ignorant, they declare
that one is a brahmin by birth.

62 You're not a brahmin by birth,
nor by birth a non-brahmin.
You're a brahmin by your deeds,
and by deeds a non-brahmin.

63 You're a farmer by your deeds,
by deeds you're a professional;
you're a trader by your deeds,
by deeds are you a servant;

64 you're a bandit by your deeds,
by deeds you're a warrior;
you're a sacrificer by your deeds,
by deeds you're a ruler.

65 In this way the astute regard deeds
in accord with truth.
Seeing dependent origination,
they're expert in deeds and their results.

66 Deeds make the world go on,
deeds make people go on;
sentient beings are bound by deeds,
like a moving chariot's linchpin.

67 By fervor and spiritual practice,
by restraint and by self-control:
that's how to become a brahmin,
this is the supreme brahmin.

68 Accomplished in the three knowledges,
peaceful, with rebirth ended,
know them, Vāseṭṭha,
as the Divinity and Sakka to the wise."

69 When he had spoken, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja said to him, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! ... From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember us as lay followers who have gone for refuge for life."

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3.10 — WITH KOKĀLIKA

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then the mendicant Kokālika went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him, "Sir, Sāriputta and Moggallāna have corrupt wishes. They've fallen under the sway of corrupt wishes."

2 When this was said, the Buddha said to Kokālika, "Don't say that, Kokālika! Don't say that, Kokālika! Have confidence in Sāriputta and Moggallāna, they're good monks."

3 For a second time ... For a third time Kokālika said to the Buddha, "Despite my faith and trust in the Buddha, Sāriputta and Moggallāna have corrupt wishes. They've fallen under the sway of corrupt wishes." For a third time, the Buddha said to Kokālika, "Don't say that, Kokālika! Don't say that, Kokālika! Have confidence in Sāriputta and Moggallāna, they're good monks."

4 Then Kokālika rose from his seat, bowed, and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before leaving. Not long after he left his body erupted with boils the size of mustard seeds. The boils grew to the size of mung beans, then chickpeas, then jujube seeds, then jujubes, then myrobalans, then unripe wood-apples, then ripe wood-apples.

4.2 Finally they burst open, and pus and blood oozed out. Then the mendicant Kokālika died of that illness. He was reborn in the Pink Lotus hell because of his resentment for Sāriputta and Moggallāna.

5 Then, late at night, the glorious divinity Sahampati, lighting up the entire Jeta's Grove, went up to the Buddha, bowed, stood to one side, and said to him, "Sir, the mendicant Kokālika has passed away. He was reborn in the Pink Lotus hell because of his resentment for Sāriputta and Moggallāna." That is what the divinity Sahampati said. Then he bowed and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before vanishing right there.

6 Then, when the night had passed, the Buddha told the mendicants all that had happened.

7 When he said this, one of the mendicants said to the Buddha, "Sir, how long is the lifespan in the Pink Lotus hell?" "It's long, mendicant. It's not easy to calculate how many years, how many hundreds or thousands or hundreds of thousands of years it lasts." "But sir, is it possible to give a simile?" "It's possible," said the Buddha.

8 "Suppose there was a Kosalan load of twenty packs of sesame seed. And at the end of every hundred years someone would remove a single seed from it. By this means the Kosalan load of twenty packs of sesame seed would run out faster than a single lifetime in the Abbuda hell. Now, twenty lifetimes in the Abbuda hell equal one lifetime in the Nirabbuda hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Nirabbuda hell equal one lifetime in the Ababa hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Ababa hell equal one lifetime in the Aṭaṭa hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Aṭaṭa hell equal one lifetime in the Ahaha hell.

8.2 Twenty lifetimes in the Ahaha hell equal one lifetime in the Yellow Lotus hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Yellow Lotus hell equal one lifetime in the Fragrant Water Lily hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Fragrant Water Lily

hell equal one lifetime in the Blue Water Lily hell. Twenty lifetimes in the Blue Water Lily hell equal one lifetime in the White Lotus hell. Twenty lifetimes in the White Lotus hell equal one lifetime in the Pink Lotus hell. The mendicant Kokālika has been reborn in the Pink Lotus hell because of his resentment for Sāriputta and Moggallāna." That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

9 "A person is born
with an axe in their mouth.
A fool cuts themselves with it
when they say bad words.

10 When you praise someone worthy of criticism,
or criticize someone worthy of praise,
you choose a losing hand with your own mouth:
you'll never find happiness that way.

11 A losing hand at dice is a trivial thing,
if all you lose is your money
and all you own, even yourself.
What's a really terrible hand
is to hate the holy ones.

12 For a hundred thousand times a hundred million,
times five hundred and thirty-six times <j>a thousand times ten million years
a slanderer of noble ones goes to hell,
having aimed bad words and thoughts at them.

13 A liar goes to hell,
as does one who denies what they did.
Both are equal in the hereafter,
those men of base deeds.

14 Whoever wrongs a man who has done no wrong,
a pure man who has not a blemish,
the evil backfires on the fool,
like fine dust thrown upwind.

15 One addicted to the way of greed,
abuses others with their speech,
faithless, miserly, uncharitable,
stingy, addicted to backbiting.

16 Foul-mouthed, divisive, ignoble,
a baby-killer, wicked, wrongdoer,
worst of men, cursed, base-born—
quiet now, for you are bound for hell.

17 You stir up dust, causing harm,
when you, sinner, malign the good.
Having done many bad deeds,
you'll go to the pit for a long time.

18 For no one's deeds are ever lost,
they return to their owner.
In the next life that stupid sinner
sees suffering in themselves.

19 They approach the place of impalement,
with its iron spikes, sharp blades, and iron stakes.
Then there is the food, which appropriately,
is like a red-hot iron ball.

20 For the speakers speak not sweetly,
they don't hurry there, or find shelter.
They lie upon a spread of coals,
they enter a blazing mass of fire.

21 Wrapping them in a net,
they strike them there with iron hammers.
They come to blinding darkness,
which spreads about them like a fog.

22 Next they enter a copper pot,
a blazing mass of fire.
There they roast for a long time,
writhing in the masses of fire.

23 Then the sinner roasts there
in a mixture of pus and blood.
No matter where they settle,
everything they touch there hurts them.

24 The sinner roasts in
worm-infested water.
There's not even a shore to go to,
for all around are the same kind of pots.

25 They enter the Sword-Leaf Forest,
so sharp they cut their body to pieces.
Having grabbed the tongue with a hook,
they stab it, slashing back and forth.

26 Then they approach the impassable Vetaraṇī River,
with its sharp blades, its razor blades.
Dullards fall into it,
the wicked who have done wicked deeds.

27 There dogs all brown and spotted,
and raven flocks, and greedy jackals
devour them as they wail,
while hawks and crows attack them.

28 Hard, alas, is the life here
that sinners endure.
That's why for the rest of this life
a person ought do their duty without fail.

29 Experts have counted the loads of sesame
as compared to the Pink Lotus hell.
For there are five times ten thousand times ten million,
plus another twelve hundred times ten million years—

30 as painful as life is said to be in hell,
that's how long one must dwell there.
That's why, for those who are pure, well-behaved, <j>full of good qualities,
one should always guard one's speech and mind."

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3.11 — ABOUT NĀLAKA

✦

1 The seer Asita in his daily meditation
saw the bright-clad gods of the host of Thirty
and their lord Sakka joyfully celebrating,
waving streamers in exuberant exaltation.

2 Seeing the gods rejoicing, elated,
he paid respects and said this there:
"Why is the community of gods <j>in such excellent spirits?
Why take up streamers and whirl them about?

3 Even in the war with the titans,
when gods were victorious and titans defeated,
there was no such excitement.
What marvel have the celestials seen <j>that they so rejoice?

4 Shouting and singing and playing music,
they clap their hands and dance.
I ask you, dwellers on Mount Meru's peak,
quickly dispel my doubt, good fellows!"

5 "The being intent on awakening, a peerless gem,
has been born in the human realm <j>for the sake of welfare and happiness,
in Lumbinī, a village in the Sakyan land.
That's why we're so happy, in such excellent spirits.

6 He is supreme among all beings, the peak individual,
captain of men, supreme among all creatures.
He will roll forth the wheel in the grove of the seers,
roaring like a mighty lion, lord of beasts."

7 Hearing this, he swiftly descended
and right away approached Suddhodana's home.
Seated there he said this to the Sakyans,
"Where is the boy? I too wish to see him!"

8 Then the Sakyans showed their son <j>to the one named Asita—
the boy shone like burning gold
well-wrought in the forge;
dazzling with glory, of peerless beauty.

9 The boy beamed like crested flame,
pure as the moon, lord of stars traversing the sky,
blazing like the sun free of stormclouds <j>after the rains;
seeing him, he was joyful, brimming with happiness.

10 The celestials held up a parasol in the sky,
many-ribbed and thousand-circled;
and golden-handled chowries waved—
but none could see who held <j>the chowries or the parasols.

11 When the matted hair seer named "Dark Splendor"
had seen the boy like a gold ingot on a cream rug
with a white parasol held over his head,
he received him, elated and happy.

12 Having received the Sakyan bull,
the seeker, master of marks and hymns,
lifted up his voice with confident heart:
“He is supreme, the best of men!”

13 But then, remembering he would depart this world,
his spirits fell and his tears flowed.
Seeing the weeping seer, the Sakyans said,
“Surely there will be no threat to the boy?”

14 Seeing the crestfallen Sakyans, the seer said,
“I do not forsee harm befall the boy,
and there will be no threat to him,
not in the least; set your minds at ease.

15 This boy shall reach the highest awakening.
As one of perfectly purified vision, <j>compassionate for the welfare of the many,
he shall roll forth the wheel of the teaching;
his spiritual path will become widespread.

16 But I have not long left in this life,
I shall die before then.
I will never hear the teaching of the one <j>who bore the unequaled burden.
That’s why I’m so upset and distraught—<j>it’s a disaster for me!”

17 Having brought abundant happiness to the Sakyans,
the spiritual seeker left the royal compound.
He had a nephew; and out of sympathy

he encouraged him in the teaching <j>of the one who bore the unequaled burden.

18 “When you hear the voice of another saying <j>‘Buddha’—
one who has attained awakening <j>and who reveals the foremost teaching —
go there and ask about his breakthrough;
lead the spiritual life under that Blessed One.”

19 Now, that Nālaka had a store of accumulated merit;
so when instructed by one of such kindly intent,
with perfectly purified vision of the future,
he waited anticipating the Victor, <j>guarding his senses.

20 When he heard of the Victor rolling forth <j>the excellent wheel he went to him,
and seeing the boss seer, he became confident.
The time of Asita’s instruction had arrived;
so he asked the excellent sage <j>about the highest sagacity.

21 The introductory verses are finished.

22 “I now know that Asita’s words
have turned out to be true.
I ask you this, Gotama,
who has gone beyond all things:

23 For one who has entered the homeless life,
seeking food on alms round,
when questioned, O sage, please tell me
of sagacity, the ultimate state.”

24 “I shall school you in sagacity,”
said the Buddha, “so difficult and challenging.
Come, I shall tell you all about it.
Brace yourself; stay strong!

25 In the village, keep the same attitude
no matter if reviled or praised.
Guard against ill-tempered thoughts;
wander peaceful and humble.

26 Many different things come up,
like tongues of fire in a forest.
Women try to seduce a sage—
let them not seduce you!

27 Refraining from sex,
having left behind sensual pleasures high and low,
don’t be hostile or attached
to living creatures firm or frail.

28 ‘As am I, so are they;
as are they, so am I’—
Treating others like oneself,
neither kill nor incite to kill.

29 Leaving behind desire and greed
for what ordinary people are attached to,
one whose eye is clear would set out to practice,
they’d cross over this abyss.

30 With empty stomach, taking limited food,
few in wishes, not greedy;
truly hungerless regarding all desires,
desireless, one is quenched.

31 Having wandered for alms,
they'd take themselves into the forest;
and nearing the foot of a tree,
the sage would take their seat.

32 That attentive one intent on absorption,
would delight within the forest.
They'd practice absorption at the foot of a tree,
filling themselves with bliss.

33 Then, at the end of the night,
they'd take themselves into a village.
They'd not welcome being called,
nor offerings brought from the village.

34 A sage who has come to a village
would not walk hastily among the families.
They'd not discuss their search for food,
nor would they speak suggestively.

35 'I got something, that's good.
I got nothing, that's fine.'
Unaffected in both cases,
they return right to the tree.

36 Wandering with bowl in hand,
not dumb, but thought to be dumb,
they wouldn't scorn a tiny gift,
nor look down upon the giver.

37 For the practice has many aspects,
as revealed by the Ascetic.
They do not go to the far shore twice,
nor having gone once do they fall away.

38 When a mendicant has no creeping,
and has cut the stream of craving,
and given up all the various duties,
no fever is found in them.

39 I shall school you in sagacity.
Practice as if you were licking a razor's edge.
With tongue pressed against the roof of your mouth,
be restrained regarding your stomach.

40 Don't be sluggish in mind,
nor think overly much.
Be free of putrefaction and unattached,
committed to the spiritual life.

41 Train in a lonely seat,
attending closely to ascetics;
solitude is sagacity, they say.
If you welcome solitude,
you'll light up the ten directions.

42 Having heard the words of the attentive,
the meditators who've given up sensual desires,
a follower of mine would develop
conscience and faith all the more.

43 Understand this by the way streams move
in clefts and crevices:
the little creeks flow on resounding,
while silent flow the great rivers.

44 What is lacking, resounds;
what is full is at peace.
The fool is like a half-full pot;
the wise like a brimfull lake.

45 When the Ascetic speaks much
it is relevant and meaningful:
knowing, he teaches the Dhamma;
knowing, he speaks much.

46 But one who, knowing, is self-controlled,
knowing, does not speak much;
that sage is worthy of sagacity,
that sage has achieved sagacity."

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3.12 — CONTEMPLATING PAIRS

✦

1 So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in the stilt longhouse of Migāra's mother in the Eastern Monastery. Now, at that time it was the sabbath—the full moon on the fifteenth day—and the Buddha was sitting in the open surrounded by the Saṅgha of monks. Then the Buddha looked around the Saṅgha of monks, who were so very silent. He addressed them:

2 "Suppose, monks, they questioned you thus: 'There are skillful teachings that are noble, emancipating, and lead to awakening. What is the real reason for listening to such teachings?' You should answer: 'Only so as to truly know the pairs of teachings.' And what pairs do they speak of?

3 'This is suffering; this is the origin of suffering': this is the first contemplation. 'This is the cessation of suffering; this is the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates rightly contemplating a pair of teachings in this way—diligent, keen, and resolute—they can expect one of two results: enlightenment in this very life, or if there's residue left behind, non-return."

4 That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

5 "There are those who don't understand suffering
and suffering's cause,
and where all suffering

ceases no residue left behind.
And they do not know the path
that leads to the stilling of suffering.

6 They lack the heart's release,
as well as the release by wisdom.
Unable to make an end,
they continue to be reborn and grow old.

7 But there are those who understand suffering
and suffering's cause,
and where all suffering
ceases with no residue left behind.
And they understand the path
that leads to the stilling of suffering.

8 They're endowed with the heart's release,
as well as the release by wisdom.
Able to make an end,
they don't continue to be reborn and grow old."

9 "Suppose, monks, they questioned you thus: 'Could there be another way to contemplate the pairs?' You should say, 'There could.' And how could there be? 'All the suffering that originates is caused by attachment': this is one contemplation. 'When attachment has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

10 “Attachment is the source of suffering
in all its countless forms in the world.
When an ignorant person builds up attachments,
that dullard returns to suffering again and again.
So let one who understands <j>not build up attachments,
contemplating the inception of suffering and rebirth.”

11 “Suppose, monks, they questioned you thus: ‘Could there be another way to contemplate the pairs?’ You should say, ‘There could.’ And how could there be? ‘All the suffering that originates is caused by ignorance’: this is one contemplation. ‘When ignorance has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering’: this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return.” Then the Teacher went on to say:

12 “‘Those who journey again and again,
transmigrating through birth and death;
they go from this state to another,
that destination due only to ignorance.

13 For ignorance is the great delusion
because of which we have long transmigrated.
Those beings who have knowledge
do not proceed to a future life.”

14 “‘Could there be another way?’ … And how could there be? ‘All the suffering that originates is caused by choices’: this is one contemplation. ‘When choices has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind,

there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

15 "All the suffering that originates
is caused by choices.
With the cessation of choices,
there is no origination of suffering.

16 Knowing this danger,
that suffering is caused by choices;
through the stilling of all choices,
and the stopping of perceptions,
this is the way suffering ends
when one has known this as it is.

17 Rightly seeing, knowledge masters,
the astute, understanding rightly,
having thrown off Māra's yoke,
do not proceed to a future life."

18 "'Could there be another way?' … And how could there be? 'All the suffering that originates is caused by consciousness': this is one contemplation. 'When consciousness has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

19 “All the suffering that originates
is caused by consciousness.
With the cessation of consciousness,
there is no origination of suffering.

20 Knowing this danger,
that suffering is caused by consciousness,
with the stilling of consciousness a mendicant
is hungerless, quenched.”

21 “‘Could there be another way?’ … And how could there be? ‘All the suffering that originates is caused by contact’: this is one contemplation. ‘When contact has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering’: this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return.” Then the Teacher went on to say:

22 “Those mired in contact,
swept down the stream of lives,
practicing the wrong way,
are far from the ending of fetters.

23 But those who completely understand contact,
who, understanding, delight in peace;
by comprehending contact
they are hungerless, quenched.”

24 “‘Could there be another way?’ … And how could there be? ‘All the suffering that originates is caused by feeling’: this is one contemplation. ‘When feeling has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind,

there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

25 "Whether it's pleasant or painful,
as well as what's neutral,
whatever there is that is felt
internally and externally:

26 having known, 'this is suffering,
deceptive, breaking apart',
seeing feelings vanish with every contact,
that's how they understand them.
With the ending of feelings, a mendicant
is hungerless, quenched."

27 "'Could there be another way?' ... And how could there be? 'All the suffering that originates is caused by craving': this is one contemplation. 'When craving has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

28 "Craving is a person's partner
as they transmigrate on this long journey.
They go from this state to another,
but don't escape transmigration.

29 Knowing this danger,
that craving is the cause of suffering—
rid of craving, free of grasping,
a mendicant would wander mindful."

30 "'Could there be another way?' … And how could there be? 'All the suffering that originates is caused by grasping': this is one contemplation. 'When grasping has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

31 "Grasping is the cause of continued existence;
one who exists falls into suffering.
Death comes to those who are born—
this is the origination of suffering.

32 That's why with the end of grasping,
the astute, understanding rightly,
having directly known the end of rebirth,
do not proceed to a future life."

33 "'Could there be another way?' … And how could there be? 'All the suffering that originates is caused by instigating activity': this is one contemplation. 'When instigation has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

34 “All the suffering that originates
is caused by instigating activity.
With the cessation of instigation,
there is no origination of suffering.

35 Knowing this danger,
that suffering is caused by instigating activity,
having given up all instigation,
one is freed with respects to instigation.

36 For the mendicant with peaceful mind,
who has cut off craving for continued existence,
transmigration through births is finished;
there’ll be no more future lives for them.”

37 “‘Could there be another way?’ … And how could there be? ‘All the suffering that originates is caused by sustenance’: this is one contemplation. ‘When sustenance has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering’: this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return.” Then the Teacher went on to say:

38 “All the suffering that originates
is caused by sustenance.
With the cessation of sustenance,
there is no origination of suffering.

39 Knowing this danger,
that suffering is caused by sustenance,
completely understanding all sustenance,

one is independent of all sustenance.

40 Having rightly understood the state of health,
through the ending of defilements,
one who makes use after appraisal, firm in principle,
a knowledge master cannot be reckoned."

41 "'Could there be another way?' ... And how could there be? 'All the suffering that originates is caused by perturbation': this is one contemplation. 'When perturbation has faded away and ceased with no residue left behind, there is no origination of suffering': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

42 "All the suffering that originates
is caused by perturbation.
With the cessation of perturbation,
there is no origination of suffering.

43 Knowing this danger,
that suffering is caused by perturbation,
that's why, having relinquished perturbation,
and stopped making karmic choices,
imperturbable, free of grasping,
a mendicant would wander mindful."

44 "'Could there be another way?' ... And how could there be? 'For the dependent there is quivering': this is the first contemplation. 'For the independent there's no agitation': this is the second contemplation. When a

mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

45 "For the independent there's no agitation.
The dependent, grasping,
goes from this state to another,
without escaping transmigration.

46 Knowing this danger,
the great fear in dependencies,
independent, free of grasping,
a mendicant would wander mindful."

47 "'Could there be another way?' ... And how could there be? 'Formless states are more peaceful than states of form': this is the first contemplation. 'Cessation is more peaceful than formless states': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

48 "There are beings in the realm of luminous form,
and others stuck in the formless.
Not understanding cessation,
they return in future lives.

49 But the people who completely understand form,
not stuck in the formless,
released in cessation—
they are conquerors of death."

50 "'Could there be another way?' … And how could there be? 'What this world—with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans—focuses on as true, the noble ones have clearly seen with right wisdom to be actually false': this is the first contemplation. 'What this world focuses on as false, the noble ones have clearly seen with right wisdom to be actually true': this is the second contemplation. When a mendicant meditates in this way they can expect enlightenment or non-return." Then the Teacher went on to say:

51 "See how the world with its gods
imagines not-self to be self;
habituated to name and form,
imagining this is truth.

52 For however they imagine it,
it turns out to be something else.
And that is what is false in it,
for the ephemeral is deceptive by nature.

53 Extinguishment has an undeceptive nature,
the noble ones know it as truth.
Having comprehended the truth,
they are hungerless, quenched."

54 "Suppose, monks, they questioned you thus: 'Could there be another way to contemplate the pairs?' You should say, 'There could.' And how could there be? 'What this world—with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans—focuses on as happiness, the noble ones have clearly seen with right wisdom

to be actually suffering': this is the first contemplation. 'What this world focuses on as suffering, the noble ones have clearly seen with right wisdom to be actually happiness': this is the second contemplation.

54.2 When a mendicant meditates rightly contemplating a pair of teachings in this way—diligent, keen, and resolute—they can expect one of two results: enlightenment in this very life, or if there's residue left behind, non-return." That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

55 "Sights, sounds, tastes, smells,
touches, and ideas, the lot of them—
they're likable, desirable, and pleasurable
as long as you can say that they exist.

56 For all the world with its gods,
this is what they deem happiness.
And where they cease
is deemed as suffering for them.

57 The noble ones have seen as happiness
the ceasing of substantial reality.
This insight by those who see
contradicts the whole world.

58 What others say is happiness
the noble ones say is suffering.
What others say is suffering
the noble ones know as happiness.

59 See, this teaching is hard to understand,
it confuses the ignorant.
There is darkness for the shrouded;
blackness for those who don't see.

60 But the good are open;
like light for those who see.
Though close, they do not understand,
those fools inexpert in the teaching.

61 They're mired in desire for continued existence,
flowing along the stream of lives,
mired in Māra's dominion:
this teaching isn't easy for them to understand.

62 Who, apart from the noble ones,
is qualified to understand this state?
Having rightly understood this state,
the undefiled are fully extinguished."

63 That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, the monks approved what the Buddha said. And while this discourse was being spoken, the minds of sixty monks were freed from defilements by not grasping.

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4.1 — SENSUAL PLEASURES

✦

1 If a mortal desires sensual pleasure
and their desire succeeds,
they definitely become elated,
having got what they want.

2 But for that personage in the throes of pleasure,
aroused by desire,
when those pleasures fade,
it inflicts them like an arrow strike.

3 One who, being mindful,
avoids sensual pleasures
like side-stepping a snake's head,
transcends attachment to the world.

4 There are many objects of sensual desire:
fields, lands, and gold; cattle and horses;
slaves and servants; women and relatives.
When a man lusts over these,

5 the weak overpower him
and adversities crush him.
Suffering follows him
like water in a leaky boat.

6 That's why a personage, ever mindful,
should avoid sensual pleasures.
Give them up and cross the flood,
as a bailed-out boat reaches the far shore.

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4.2 — EIGHT ON THE CAVE

✦

1 Trapped in a cave, thickly overspread,
sunk in delusion they stay.
That sort is far from seclusion,
for sensual pleasures in the world <j>are not easy to give up.

2 The chains of desire, the bonds of life's pleasures
are hard to escape, for one cannot free another.
Looking to the past or the future,
they pray for these pleasures or former ones.

3 Greedy, fixated, infatuated by sensual pleasures,
they are incorrigible, habitually immoral.
When led to suffering they lament,
"What will become of us <j>when we pass away from here?"

4 That's why a personage should train in this life:
should you know that anything in the world is wrong,
don't act wrongly on account of that;
for the attentive say this life is short.

5 I see the world's population floundering,
given to craving for future lives.
Base men wail in the jaws of death,
not rid of craving for life after life.

6 See them flounder over belongings,
like fish in puddles of a dried-up stream.
Seeing this, live unselfishly,
forming no attachment to future lives.

7 Rid of desire for both ends,
having completely understood contact, free of greed,
doing nothing for which they'd blame themselves,
the attentive don't cling to the seen and the heard.

8 Having completely understood perception <j>and having crossed the flood,
the sage, not clinging to possessions,
with dart plucked out, living diligently,
does not hope for this world or the next.

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4.3 — EIGHT ON MALICE

✦

1 Some speak with malicious intent,
while others speak set on truth.
When disputes come up <j>a sage does not get involved,
which is why they've no barrenness at all.

2 How can you transcend your own view
when you're led by preference, dogmatic in belief?
Inventing your own undertakings,
you'd speak according to your notion.

3 Some personages, unasked, tell others
of their own precepts and vows.
They have an ignoble nature, <j>say those who are skilled,
since they speak on themselves of their own accord.

4 A mendicant, peaceful, quenched,
never boasts "thus am I" of their precepts.
They have a noble nature, say those who are skilled,
who have no pretensions <j>about anything in the world.

5 For one who formulates and creates teachings,
and promotes them despite their defects,
if they see an advantage for themselves,
they become dependent on that, <j>relying on unstable peace.

6 It's not easy to get over dogmatic views
adopted after judging among the teachings.
That's why, among all these dogmas, a person
ditches one teaching and takes up another.

7 The cleansed one has no formulated view
at all in the world about the different realms.
Having given up illusion and conceit,
by what path would they go? They are not involved.

8 For one who gets involved <j>is embroiled in disputes about teachings
—
but how to dispute with the uninvolved? <j>About what?
For picking up and putting down <j>is not what they do;
they have shaken off all views in this very life.

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4.4 — EIGHT ON THE PURE

✦

1 “I see someone pure, perfectly healthy;
it is vision that grants a person purity.”
Recalling this notion of the ultimate,
they believe in the notion <j>that there is one who observes purity.

2 If a person were granted purity through what is seen,
or if by a notion they could give up suffering,
then one with attachments is purified by another:
their view betrays them as one who asserts thus.

3 The brahmin speaks not of purity from another
in terms of what has been seen, heard, or thought; <j>or by precepts or vows.
They are unsullied in the midst of good and evil,
letting go what was picked up, <j>without creating anything new here.

4 Having let go the last they lay hold of the next;
following impulse, they don’t pass the chain.
They grab on and let loose like a monkey
grabbing and releasing a branch.

5 Having undertaken their own vows, a personage
visits various teachers, <j>being attached to perception.
One who knows, having comprehended the truth <j>through the knowledges,
does not visit various teachers, being of vast wisdom.

6 They are remote from all things
seen, heard, or thought.
Seeing them living openly,
how could anyone in this world judge them?

7 They don't make things up or promote them,
or speak of the uttermost purity.
After untying the tight knot of grasping
they long for nothing in the world.

8 The brahmin has stepped over the perimeter;
knowing and seeing, they adopt nothing.
Neither in love with passion <j>nor besotted by dispassion,
there is nothing here they adopt as the ultimate.

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4.5 — EIGHT ON THE ULTIMATE

✦

1 If, maintaining that theirs is the “ultimate” view,
a personage makes it out to be highest in the world;
then they declare all others are “lesser”;
that’s why they’re not beyond disputes.

2 If they see an advantage for themselves
in what’s seen, heard, or thought; <j>or in precepts or vows,
in that case, having adopted that one alone,
they see all others as inferior.

3 Those who are skilled say that, too, is a knot,
relying on which people see others as lesser.
That’s why a mendicant ought not rely
on what’s seen, heard, or thought, <j>or on precepts and vows.

4 Nor would they form a view about the world
through a notion or through precepts and vows.
They would never represent themselves as “equal”,
nor conceive themselves “worse” or “better”.

5 What was picked up has been set down <j>and is not grasped again;
they form no dependency even on notions.
They follow no side among the factions,
and believe in no view at all.

6 One here who has no wish for either end—
for any state of existence in this life or the next—
has adopted no dogma at all
after judging among the teachings.

7 For them not even the tiniest idea is formulated here
regarding what is seen, heard, or thought.
That brahmin does not grasp any view—
how could anyone in this world judge them?

8 They don't make things up or promote them,
and don't subscribe to any of the doctrines.
The brahmin has no need to be led by precept or vow;
gone to the far shore, one such does not return.

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4.6 — OLD AGE

✦

1 Short, alas, is this life;
you die before a hundred years.
Even if you live a little longer,
you still die of old age.

2 People grieve over belongings,
yet there is no such thing as permanent possessions.
Separation is a fact of life; when you see this,
you wouldn't stay living at home.

3 Whatever a person thinks of as belonging to them,
that too is given up when they die.
Knowing this, an astute follower of mine
would not be bent on ownership.

4 Just as, upon awakening, a person does not see
what they encountered in a dream;
so too you do not see your loved ones
when they are dead and gone.

5 You used to see and hear those folk,
and call them by their name.
Yet the name is all that's left to tell
of a personage when they're gone.

6 Those who are greedy for belongings
don't give up sorrow, lamentation, and stinginess.
That's why the sages, seers of sanctuary,
left possessions behind and wandered.

7 For a mendicant who lives withdrawn,
frequenting a secluded seat,
they say it's fitting
to not show themselves in a home.

8 The sage is independent everywhere,
they don't form likes or dislikes.
Lamentation and stinginess
slip off them like water from a leaf.

9 Like a droplet slips from a lotus-leaf,
like water from a lotus flower;
the sage doesn't cling to that
which is seen or heard or thought.

10 For the one who is cleansed does not conceive
in terms of things seen, heard, or thought.
They do not wish to be purified by another;
they are neither passionate <j>nor growing dispassioned.

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4.7 — WITH TISSAMETTEYYA

✦

1 “When someone indulges in sex,”
said Venerable Tissametteyya, “tell us, good fellow: what trouble befalls them?
After hearing your instruction,
we shall train in seclusion.”

2 “When someone indulges in sex,”
replied the Buddha, “they forget their instructions
and go the wrong way—
that is something ignoble in them.

3 Someone who formerly lived alone
and then resorts to sex
is like a chariot careening off-track;
in the world they call them a low, ordinary person.

4 Their former fame and reputation
also fall away.
Seeing this, they’d train
to give up sex.

5 Oppressed by thoughts,
they brood like a wretch.
When they hear what others are saying,
that sort is embarrassed.

6 Then they lash out with verbal daggers
when reproached by others.
This is their great blind spot;
they sink to lies.

7 They once were considered astute,
committed to the solitary life.
But then they indulged in sex,
dragged along by desire like a dullard.

8 Knowing this danger
in falling from a former state here,
a sage would firmly resolve to wander alone,
and would not resort to sex.

9 They'd train themselves only in seclusion;
this, for the noble ones, is highest.
One who'd not think themselves 'best' due to that
has truly drawn near to extinguishment.

10 People tied to sensual pleasures envy them:
the isolated, wandering sage
who has crossed the flood,
unconcerned for sensual pleasures."

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4.8 — WITH PASŪRA

✦

1 “Here alone is purity,” they say,
denying that there is purification in other teachings.
Speaking of the beauty <j>in that which they depend on,
each one is dogmatic about <j>their own idiosyncratic interpretation.

2 Desiring debate, they plunge into an assembly,
where each takes the other as a fool.
Relying on others they state their contention,
desiring praise while claiming to be skilled.

3 Addicted to debating in the midst of the assembly,
their need for praise makes them nervous.
But when they’re repudiated they get embarrassed;
upset at criticism, they find fault in others.

4 If their doctrine is said to be weak,
and judges declare it repudiated,
the loser weeps and wails,
moaning, “They beat me.”

5 When these disputes come up among ascetics,
they get excited or dejected.
Seeing this, refrain from contention,
for the only purpose is praise and profit.

6 But if, having declared their doctrine,
they are praised there in the midst of the assembly,
they laugh and gloat because of it,
having got what they wanted.

7 Their pride is their downfall,
yet they speak from conceit and arrogance.
Seeing this, one ought not dispute,
for those who are skilled say this is no way to purity.

8 As a warrior, after feasting on royal food,
goes roaring, looking for someone to fight—
go off and find an opponent, Sūra,
for here, as before, there is no one to combat.

9 When someone disputes about a view they've adopted,
saying, "This is the only truth,"
say to them, "Here you'll have no adversary
when a dispute has come up."

10 There are those who live far from the crowd,
not countering views with view.
Who is there to argue with you, Pasūra,
among those who grasp nothing here as the highest?

11 And so you come along speculating,
thinking up theories in your mind.
Now that you've challenged <j>someone who is cleansed,
you'll not be able to respond.

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4.9 — WITH MĀGAṆḌIYA

✦

1 “Even when I saw the sirens <j>Craving, Malignancy, and Lust,
I had no desire for sex.
What is this body full of piss and shit?
I wouldn’t even want to touch it with my foot.”

2 “If you do not want a gem such as this,
a lady desired by many lords of men,
then what manner of theory, <j>precepts and vows, livelihood,
and rebirth in a new life do you assert?”

3 “After judging among the teachings,”
said the Buddha to Māgaṇḍiya, “none have been adopted thinking, ‘I assert this.’
Seeing views without adopting any,
searching, I saw inner peace.”

4 “O sage, you speak of judgments you have formed,”
said Māgaṇḍiya, “without having adopted any of those views.
As to that matter of ‘inner peace’—
how is that described by the attentive?”

5 “Purity is spoken of not as due to view,”
said the Buddha to Māgaṇḍiya, “learning, knowledge, or precepts and vows;
nor without view, learning,

knowledge, or precepts and vows.
Having relinquished these, not adopting them,
peaceful, independent, one would not pray <j>for another life."

6 "It seems purity is spoken of not as due to view,"
said Māgaṇḍiya, "learning, knowledge, or precepts and vows;
nor without view, learning,
knowledge, or precepts and vows.
If so, I think this teaching is sheer folly;
some believe that purity comes from view."

7 "Continuing to question while relying on a view,"
said the Buddha to Māgaṇḍiya, "you've become confused by all you've adopted.
From this you've not glimpsed the slightest idea,
which is why you consider the teaching folly.

8 If you think that 'I'm equal,
special, or worse', you'll dispute about that.
Not wavering due to the three discriminations,
they have no thought, 'I'm equal or special'.

9 Why would that brahmin say, 'It's true',
or with whom would they dispute, 'It's false'?
There is no equal or unequal in them,
so who would they take on in debate?

10 After leaving their bastion to migrate without abode,
a sage doesn't get close to anyone in town.
Rid of sensual pleasures, not expecting,

they wouldn't get in arguments with people.

11 A spiritual giant would not take up for debate
the things in the world from which they live secluded.
As a prickly lotus born in the water
is unsullied by water and mud,
so the greedless sage, proponent of peace,
is unsmeared by sensuality and the world.

12 A knowledge master does not become conceited
due to view or thought, <j>for they are not determined by that.
They've no need for deeds or learning,
they're not indoctrinated in dogmas.

13 There are no ties for one detached from ideas;
there are no delusions for one freed by wisdom.
But those who have adopted ideas and views
wander the world causing conflict."

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4.10 — BEFORE THE BREAKUP

✦

1 “Seeing how, behaving how,
is one said to be at peace?
When asked, Gotama, please tell me
about the ultimate person.”

2 “Rid of craving before the breakup,”
said the Buddha, “not dependent on the first beginning,
unfathomable in the middle,
they are not governed by anything.

3 Unangry, unafraid,
not boastful or regretful,
thoughtful in counsel, not restless—
truly that sage is controlled in speech.

4 Rid of attachment to the future,
they don’t grieve for the past.
A seer of seclusion in the midst of contacts
is not led astray among views.

5 Withdrawn, free of deceit,
they’re not envious or stingy,
nor rude or disgusting,
or given to slander.

6 Not swept up in pleasures,
or given to arrogance,
they're gentle and articulate,
neither hungering nor growing dispassionate.

7 Not training for desire for profit,
nor getting annoyed at lack of profit;
they are not hostile due to craving,
for they are not greedy for flavors.

8 Equanimous, ever mindful,
they never conceive themselves in the world
as equal, special, or less than;
they have no pretensions.

9 They have no dependencies,
understanding the teaching, they are independent.
No craving is found in them
to continue existence or to end it.

10 I declare them to be at peace,
unconcerned for sensual pleasures.
No ties are found in them,
they have crossed over clinging.

11 They have no children or livestock,
nor possess fields or lands.
No picking up or putting down
is found in them.

12 That by which one might describe
an ordinary person or ascetics and brahmins
has no importance to them,
which is why they're unperturbed by words.

13 Freed of greed, not stingy,
a sage doesn't speak of themselves as being
among superiors, inferiors, or equals.
One not prone to creation <j>does not return to creation.

14 They who have nothing in the world of their own
do not grieve for that which is not,
or drift among the teachings;
that's who is said to be at peace."

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4.11 — QUARRELS AND DISPUTES

✦

1 “Where do quarrels and disputes come from?
And lamentation and sorrow, and stinginess?
What of conceit and arrogance, and slander too—
tell me please, where do they come from?”

2 “Quarrels and disputes come from what we hold dear,
as do lamentation and sorrow, stinginess,
conceit and arrogance.
Quarrels and disputes are linked to stinginess,
and when disputes have arisen there is slander.”

3 “So where do things held dear <j>in the world spring from?
And the lusts that are loose in the world?
Where spring the hopes and aims
a man has for lives to come?”

4 “What we hold dear in the world spring from desire,
as do the lusts that are loose in the world.
From there spring the hopes and aims
a man has for lives to come.”

5 “So where does desire in the world spring from?
And evaluations, too, where do they come from?
And anger, lies, and indecision,
and other things spoken of by the Ascetic?”

6 “What they call pleasure and pain in the world—
based on that, desire comes about.
Seeing the manifestation and vanishing of forms,
a personage makes evaluations in the world.

7 Anger, lies, and indecision—
these things are, too, when that pair is present.
One who is indecisive should train <j>in the path of knowledge;
it is from knowledge <j>that the Ascetic speaks of these things.”

8 “Where do pleasure and pain spring from?
When what is absent do these things not occur?
And also, on the topic of <j>manifesting and vanishing—
tell me where they spring from.”

9 “Pleasure and pain spring from contact;
when contact is absent they do not occur.
And on the topic of <j>manifesting and vanishing—
I tell you they spring from there.”

10 “So where does contact in the world spring from?
And possessions, too, where do they come from?
When what is absent is there no possessiveness?
When what vanishes do contacts not strike?”

11 “Name and form cause contact;
possessions spring from wishing;
when wishing is absent there is no possessiveness;
when form vanishes, contacts don’t strike.”

12 “Form vanishes for one proceeding how?
And how do happiness and suffering vanish?
Tell me how they vanish;
I think we ought to know these things.”

13 “Without normal perception <j>or distorted perception;
not lacking perception, <j>nor perceiving what has vanished.
Form vanishes for one proceeding thus;
for judgments due to proliferation <j>spring from perception.”

14 “Whatever I asked you have explained to me.
I ask you once more, please tell me this:
Do some astute folk here say that this <j>is the highest extent
of purity of the spirit?
Or do they say it is something else?”

15 “Some astute folk do say that this <j>is the highest extent
of purity of the spirit.
But some of them, claiming to be experts,
speak of an occasion when there is no residue.

16 Knowing that these states are dependent,
and knowing what they depend on, <j>the inquiring sage,
having understood, is freed, and enters no dispute.
The attentive do not proceed to life after life.”

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4.12 — THE SHORTER DISCOURSE ON ARRAYED FOR BATTLE

✦

1 “Each maintaining their own view,
those who are skilled disagree, arguing:
‘Whoever sees it this way <j>understands the teaching;
those who reject this are inadequate.’

2 So arguing, they dispute,
saying, ‘The other is a fool, an amateur!’
Which of these is a true statement,
for all of them profess to be experts?”

3 “If not accepting another’s teaching
makes you a useless fool lacking wisdom,
then they’re all fools lacking wisdom,
for they all maintain their own view.

4 But if having your own view makes you pristine—
pure in wisdom, expert and thoughtful—
then none of them lack wisdom,
for such is the view they have all embraced.

5 I do not say that it is correct
when they call each other fools.
Each has built up their own view to be the truth,
which is why they take the other as a fool.”

6 “What some say is true and correct,
others say is hollow and false.
So arguing, they dispute;
why don’t ascetics say the same thing?”

7 “The truth is one, there is no second,
understanding which folk would not dispute.
But those ascetics each boast of different truths;
that’s why they don’t say the same thing.”

8 “But why do they speak of different truths,
these proponents who profess to be experts?
Are there really so many different truths,
or do they just follow their own lines of reasoning?”

9 “No, there are not many different truths
that, apart from perception, <j>are lasting in the world.
Having formed their reasoning <j>regarding different views,
they say there are two things: true and false.

10 The seen, heard, or thought, <j>or precepts or vows—
based on these they show disdain.
Standing in judgment, they scoff,
saying, ‘The other is a fool, an amateur!’

11 They take the other as a fool on the same grounds
that they speak of themselves as an expert.
Professing to be expert on their own authority,
they disdain the other while saying the same thing.

12 They are perfect, <j>according to their own extreme view;
drunk on conceit, imagining themselves proficient.
They have anointed themselves in their own mind,
for such is the view they have embraced.

13 If the word of your opponent makes you deficient,
then they too are lacking wisdom.
But if on your own authority <j>you're a knowledge master, an attentive one,
then there are no fools among the ascetics.

14 'Those who proclaim a teaching other than this
have fallen short of purity, and are inadequate':
so say each one of the sectarians,
for they are deeply attached to their own view.

15 'Here alone is purity,' they say,
denying that there is purification in other teachings.
Thus each one of the sectarians, being dogmatic,
speaks forcefully within the context <j>of their own journey.

16 But in that case, so long as they are speaking forcefully <j>of their own journey,
how can they take the other as a fool?
They are the ones who provoke conflict
when they call the other a fool <j>with an impure teaching.

17 Standing in judgment, <j>measuring by their own standard,
they dispute with the world more and more.
But a personage who has given up all judgments

creates no conflict in the world.”

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4.13 — THE LONGER DISCOURSE ON ARRAYED FOR BATTLE

✦

1 “Regarding those who maintain their own view,
disputing that, ‘This is the only truth’:
are all of them subject only to criticism,
or do some also win praise for that?”

2 “That is a small thing, insufficient for peace,
these two fruits of dispute, I say.
Seeing this, one ought not dispute,
looking for sanctuary in the land of no dispute.

3 One who knows does not get involved
with any of the many different conventions.
Why would the uninvolved get involved,
since they do not believe <j>based on the seen or the heard?

4 Those for whom ethics are the highest speak of purity through self-control;
having undertaken a vow, they stick to it:
‘Let us train right here, then we will be pure.’
Professing to be experts, they are led on to future lives.

5 If they fall away from their precepts and vows,
they tremble, having failed in their task.
They pray and long for purity,
like one who has lost their caravan <j>while journeying far from home.

6 But having given up all precepts and vows,
and these deeds blameworthy or blameless;
not longing for ‘purity’ or ‘impurity’,
live detached, fostering peace.

7 Relying on mortification in disgust of sin,
or else on what is seen, heard, or thought,
they moan that purification <j>comes through heading upstream,
not rid of craving for life after life.

8 For one who longs there are muttered prayers,
and trembling too over ideas they have formed.
But one here for whom there is no passing away <j>or reappearing:
why would they tremble? For what would they pray?”

9 “The very same teaching that some say is ‘ultimate’,
others say is inferior.
Which of these statements is true,
for all of them profess to be experts?”

10 “They say their own teaching is perfect,
while the teaching of others is inferior.
So arguing, they dispute,
each saying their own conventions are the truth.

11 If someone else’s disparagement makes you inferior,
no one in any teaching would be distinguished.
For each of them says the other’s teaching is lacking,
while forcefully advocating their own.

12 But if they honor their own teachings
just as they praise their own journeys,
then all doctrines would be equally valid,
and purity would be specific to them.

13 After judging among the teachings, <j>a brahmin has adopted nothing
that requires interpretation by another.
That's why they've gotten over disputes,
for they see no other doctrine as best.

14 Saying, 'I know, I see, that's how it is',
some believe that purity stems from view.
But if they've really seen, <j>what use is that view to them?
Overlooking what matters, <j>they say purity comes from another.

15 When a person sees, they see name and form,
and having seen, they will know just these things.
Gladly let them see much or little,
for those who are skilled say this is no way to purity.

16 It's not easy to educate someone who is dogmatic,
promoting a view they have formulated.
Speaking of the beauty <j>in that on which they depend,
they talk of purity in accord with what they saw there.

17 The brahmin does not get involved <j>with formulating and calculating;
they're not followers of views, <j>nor kinsmen of notions.
Having understood the many different conventions,
they look on when others grasp.

18 Having untied the knots here in the world,
the sage takes no side among disputes.
Peaceful among the peaceless, equanimous,
they don't grasp when others grasp.

19 Having given up former defilements <j>and not making new ones,
not swayed by preference, <j>nor a proponent of dogma,
that attentive one is released from views,
not clinging to the world, <j>nor reproaching themselves.

20 They are remote from all things
seen, heard, or thought.
With burden put down, the sage is released:
not formulating, not abstaining, not longing."

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4.14 — SPEEDY

✦

1 “Great seer, I ask you, the Kinsman of the Sun,
about seclusion and the state of peace.
How, having seen, is a mendicant extinguished,
not grasping anything in this world?”

2 “They would cut off the idea, ‘I am the thinker’,”
said the Buddha, “which is the root of all judgments <j>that emerge from proliferation.
Ever mindful, they would train to remove
any internal cravings.

3 Regardless of what things they know,
whether internal or external,
they wouldn’t be proud because of that,
for that is not quenching, say the good.

4 They wouldn’t let that make them conceited,
thinking themselves better or worse or alike.
When questioned in many ways,
they wouldn’t keep justifying themselves.

5 A mendicant would be settled internally,
and not seek peace from another.
For one at peace inside themselves,
there’s no picking up, whence putting down?

6 Just as, in the middle of the ocean,
no waves arise, it stays still;
so too one unstirred is still—
a mendicant would make <j>no pretension regarding anything.”

7 “He whose eyes are open has explained
the truth he witnessed, <j>where adversities are removed.
Please now speak of the practice, sir,
the monastic code and immersion in samādhi.”

8 “With eyes not wanton,
they’d turn their ears from village gossip.
They wouldn’t be greedy for flavors,
nor possessive about anything in the world.

9 Though struck by contacts,
a mendicant would not lament at all.
They wouldn’t pray for another life,
nor tremble in the face of dangers.

10 When they receive food and drink,
edibles and clothes,
they wouldn’t store them up,
nor worry about not getting them.

11 Meditative, not footloose,
they’d avoid remorse and not be negligent.
Then a mendicant would stay
in quiet places to sit and rest.

12 They wouldn't take much sleep,
but, being keen, <j>would apply themselves to wakefulness.
They'd give up sloth, illusion, mirth, and play,
and sex and ornamentation.

13 They wouldn't cast Artharvaṇa spells, <j>interpret dreams
or omens, or practice astrology.
My followers would not study ominous animal cries,
work as a doctor, or treat an impacted fetus.

14 Not shaken by criticism,
a mendicant would not gloat when praised.
They'd cast aside greed and stinginess,
anger, and slander.

15 They'd not stand for buying and selling;
a mendicant would not speak ill at all.
They wouldn't linger in the village,
nor cajole people from desire for profit.

16 A mendicant would be no boaster,
nor would they speak suggestively.
They wouldn't train in impudence,
nor speak argumentatively.

17 They wouldn't be led into lying,
nor be deliberately devious.
And they'd never look down on another
because of livelihood, wisdom, or precepts and vows.

18 Though provoked from hearing much talk
from ascetics saying all different things,
they wouldn't react harshly,
for the virtuous do not retaliate.

19 Having understood this teaching,
inquiring, a mendicant would always train mindfully.
Knowing quenching as peace,
they'd not be negligent in Gotama's bidding.

20 For he is the vanquisher, the unvanquished,
seer of the truth as witness, not by legends—
that's why, being diligent, they would always train
respectfully in the Buddha's teaching."

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4.15 — TAKING UP ARMS

✦

1 Peril stems from those who take up arms—
just look how people conflict!
I shall extol how I came to be
stirred with a sense of urgency.

2 I saw this population flounder,
like a fish in a little puddle.
Seeing them at odds with each other,
fear came upon me.

3 The world around was volatile,
all directions were in turmoil.
Wanting a home for myself,
I saw nowhere unsettled.

4 Yet even in their settlement they were at odds—
seeing that, I grew uneasy.
Then I saw a dart there,
so hard to see, stuck in the heart.

5 When struck by that dart,
you run around in all directions.
But when that same dart has been plucked out,
you neither run around nor sink down.

6 (On that topic, the trainings are recited.)
Whatever attachments there are in the world,
don't pursue them.
Having pierced through sensual pleasures <j>in every way,
train yourself for extinguishment.

7 Be truthful, not rude,
free of deceit, and rid of slander;
without anger, a sage would cross over
the evils of greed and avarice.

8 Prevail over sleepiness, sloth, and drowsiness,
don't abide in negligence,
A person intent on quenching
would not stand for arrogance.

9 Don't be led into lying,
or get caught up in affection for form.
Completely understand conceit,
and desist from hasty conduct.

10 Don't relish the old,
or welcome the new.
Don't grieve for what is running out,
or get attached to things that pull you in.

11 Greed, I say, is the great flood,
and longing is the current—
the basis, the compulsion,
the swamp of sensuality so hard to get past.

12 The sage never strays from the truth;
the brahmin stands on solid ground.
Having given up everything,
they are said to be at peace.

13 They have truly known, they're a knowledge master,
understanding the teaching, they are independent.
They rightly proceed in the world,
not coveting anything here.

14 One who has crossed over sensuality here,
the chain in the world so hard to get past,
grieves not, nor hopes;
they've cut the strings, they're no longer bound.

15 What came before, let wither away,
and after, let there be nothing.
If you don't grasp at the middle,
you will live at peace.

16 One who has no sense of ownership
in the whole realm of name and form,
does not grieve for that which is not,
they suffer no loss in the world.

17 If you don't think of anything
as belonging to yourself or others,
not finding any possessiveness,
you won't grieve, thinking "I don't have it".

18 Not bitter, not fawning,
unstirred, everywhere even;
when asked about one who is unwavering,
I declare that that is the benefit.

19 For the unstirred who understand,
there's no performance of deeds.
Desisting from instigation,
they see sanctuary everywhere.

20 A sage doesn't speak of themselves as being
among superiors, inferiors, or equals.
Peaceful, rid of stinginess,
they are neither ditching nor taking up.

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4.16 — WITH SĀRIPUTTA

✦

1 “Never before have I seen,”
said Venerable Sāriputta, “or heard from anyone
about a teacher of such graceful speech,
come from Tusita heaven to lead a community.

2 To all the world with its gods
he appears as a Clear-eyed One
who has dispelled all darkness,
and alone attained to bliss.

3 On behalf of the many here still bound,
I have come seeking with a question
to that Buddha, unattached and impartial,
free of deceit, come to lead a community.

4 Suppose a mendicant who loathes attachment
frequents a lonely lodging—
the root of a tree, a charnel ground,
on mountains, or in caves.

5 In these many different lodgings,
how many dangers are there
at which a mendicant in their silent lodging
ought not tremble?

6 On their journey to the untrodden place,
how many adversities are there in the world
that must they overcome
in their remote lodging?

7 What ways of speech should they have?
Of what kind is their alms resort?
What precepts and vows
should a resolute mendicant uphold?

8 Having undertaken what training,
unified, alert, and mindful,
would they purge their own stains,
like a smith smelting silver?"

9 "If one who loathes attachment <j>frequents a lonely lodging,"
said the Buddha to Sāriputta, "in their search for awakening—<j>as accords with the teaching—
I shall tell you, as I understand it,
what is comfortable for them.

10 An attentive one, a mindful mendicant <j>living on the periphery
should not be afraid of five perils:
flies, mosquitoes, reptiles,
human contact, or four-legged creatures.

11 Nor should they fear followers of other teachings,
even having seen the many threats they pose.
And then one seeking the good
should overcome any other adversities.

12 Afflicted by illness and hunger,
they should endure cold and excessive heat.
Though afflicted by many such things, <j>the homeless one
should exert energy, firmly striving.

13 They must not steal or lie;
and should touch creatures firm or frail with love.
If they notice any clouding of the mind,
they should dispel it as Māra's ally.

14 They must not fall under the sway <j>of anger or arrogance;
having dug them out by the root, <j>they would stand firm.
Then, faced with likes and dislikes,
they would surely overcome.

15 Putting wisdom in the foremost place, <j>rejoicing in goodness,
they would put an end to those adversities.
They'd vanquish discontent in their remote lodging.
And they'd vanquish the four lamentations:

16 'What will I eat? Where will I eat?
Oh, I slept badly! Where will I sleep?'
The trainee, the migrant without abode,
would dispel these lamentable thoughts.

17 Receiving food and clothes in due season,
they would know moderation <j>for the sake of contentment.
Guarded in these things, <j>walking restrained in the village,
they wouldn't speak harshly even when provoked.

18 Eyes downcast, not footloose,
devoted to absorption, they'd be very wakeful.
Grounded in equanimity, serene,
they should cut off worrisome habits of thought.

19 A mindful one would welcome reproach,
and would dissolve hard-heartedness <j>toward their spiritual companions.
They may utter skillful speech, but not for too long,
and they shouldn't provoke people to blame.

20 And there are five more taints in the world,
for the removal of which <j>the mindful one should train,
vanquishing desire for sights,
sounds, flavors, smells, and touches.

21 Having removed desire for these things,
a mindful mendicant, their heart well freed,
rightly investigating the Dhamma in good time,
at one, would banish the darkness."

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5.1 — INTRODUCTORY VERSES

✦

1 From the fair city of the Kosalans
to the southern region
came a brahmin expert in hymns,
aspiring to nothingness.

2 He settled in a region under the shared dominion
of Assaka and Muḷaka,
where he lived on the bank of the Godāvarī River,
getting by on gleanings and fruit.

3 He was supported
by a prosperous village nearby.
With the revenue earned from there
he performed a great sacrifice.

4 When he had completed the great sacrifice,
he returned to his hermitage once more.
Upon his return,
another brahmin arrived.

5 Foot-sore and thirsty,
with grotty teeth and dusty head,
he approached the other
and asked for five hundred coins.

6 When Bāvari saw him,
he invited him to sit down,
asked of his happiness and well-being,
and said the following.

7 “Whatever I had available to give,
I have already distributed.
Believe me, brahmin,
I don’t have five hundred coins.”

8 “If, good fellow, you do not
give me what I ask,
then on the seventh day,
let your head explode in seven!”

9 After performing a ritual,
that charlatan uttered his dreadful curse.
When he heard these words,
Bāvari became distressed.

10 Not eating, he grew emaciated,
stricken by the dart of sorrow.
And in such a state of mind,
he could not enjoy absorption.

11 Seeing him anxious and distraught,
a goddess wishing to help,
approached Bāvari
and said the following.

12 “That charlatan understands nothing
about the head, he only wants money.
When it comes to heads or head-splitting,
he has no knowledge at all.”

13 “Then you, Madam, must know—
please answer my question.
Let me hear what you say
about heads and head-splitting.”

14 “I too do not know that,
I have no knowledge in that matter.
When it comes to heads or head-splitting,
it is the Victors who have vision.”

15 “So who then,
in all this vast territory,
does know about heads and head-splitting?
Please tell me, goddess.”

16 “From the city of Kapilavatthu
the World Leader has gone forth.
He is a scion of King Okkāka,
a Sakyan, and a beacon.

17 For he, brahmin, is the Awakened One!
He has gone beyond all things;
he has attained to all knowledge and power;

his eye sees clearly in all things,
he has attained the end of all deeds;
he is freed with the ending of attachments.

18 That Buddha, the Blessed One in the world,
the Clear-eyed One, teaches Dhamma.
Go to him and ask—
he will answer you."

19 When he heard the word "Buddha",
Bāvari was elated.
His sorrow faded,
and he was filled to brimming with joy.

20 Uplifted, elated, and inspired,
Bāvari questioned that goddess:
"But in what village or town,
or in what land is the protector of the world,
where we may go and pay respects
to the Awakened One, best of men?"

21 "Near Sāvatthī, home of the Kosalans, <j>is the Victor
abounding in wisdom, vast in intelligence.
That Sakyan is indefatigable, free of defilements,
that captain of men understands head-splitting."

22 Therefore he addressed his acolytes,
brahmins who had mastered the hymns:
"Come, students, I shall speak.
Listen to what I say.

23 Today has arisen in the world
one whose appearance in the world
is hard to find again—
he is renowned as the Awakened One.
Quickly go to Sāvatthī
and see the best of men.”

24 “Brahmin, how then are we to know
the Buddha when we see him?
We don’t know, please tell us,
so we can recognize him.”

25 “The marks of a great man
have been handed down in our hymns.
Thirty-two have been described,
complete and in order.

26 One upon whose body is found
these marks of a great man
has two possible destinies,
there is no third.

27 If he stays at home,
having conquered this land
without rod or sword,
he shall govern by principle.

28 But if he goes forth
from the lay life to homelessness,
he becomes an Awakened One, a perfected one,

with veil cast off, supreme.

29 Ask him about my birth, clan, and marks,
my hymns and acolytes; and further,
about heads and head-splitting—
but do so only in your mind!

30 If he is the Buddha
of unhindered vision,
he will answer with his voice
the questions in your mind."

31 Sixteen brahmin acolytes
heard what Bāvari said:
Ajita, Tissametteyya,
Puṇṇaka and Mettagū,

32 Dhotaka and Upasīva,
Nanda and then Hemaka,
both Todeyya and Kappa,
and Jatukaṇṇī the astute,

33 Bhadrāvudha and Udaya,
and the brahmin Posāla,
Mogharāja the intelligent,
and Piṅgiya the great seer.

34 Each of them had their own following,
they were renowned the whole world over.
Those attentive ones, <j>meditators who love absorption,
were redolent with the potential <j>of their past deeds.

35 Having bowed to Bāvari,
and circled him to his right,
they set out for the north,
with their dreadlocks and hides.

36 First to Patiṭṭhāna of Muḷaka,
then on to the citadel of Māhissatī;
to Ujjenī and Gonaddhā,
and Vedisa, and Vanasa.

37 Then to Kosambī and Sāketa,
and the capital city of Sāvatthī;
on they went to Setavyā and Kapilavatthu,
and the homestead at Kusinārā.

38 To Pāvā they went, and Bhoga City,
and on to Vesālī and the Magadhan city.
Finally they reached the Pāsāṇaka Shrine,
fair and delightful.

39 Like a thirsty person to cool water,
like a merchant to great profit,
like a heat-struck person to shade,
they quickly climbed the mountain.

40 At that time the Buddha,
at the fore of the mendicant Saṅgha,
was teaching the mendicants the Dhamma,
like a lion roaring in the jungle.

41 Ajita saw the Buddha,
like the sun shining with a hundred rays,
like the moon on the fifteenth day
when it has come into its fullness.

42 Then he saw his body,
complete in all features.
Thrilled, he stood to one side
and asked this question in his mind.

43 “Speak about the brahmin’s birth;
of his clan; and his own marks;
what hymns is he proficient in;
and how many he teaches.”

44 “His age is a hundred and twenty.
By clan he is a Bāvari.
There are three marks on his body.
He is a master of the three Vedas,

45 the teachings on the marks, the testaments,
the vocabularies, and the rituals.
He teaches recitation to five hundred,
and has reached proficiency in his own teaching.”

46 “O supreme man, cutter of craving,
please reveal in detail
Bāvari’s marks—
let us doubt no longer!”

47 “He can cover his face with his tongue;
there is a tuft of hair between his eyebrows;
his private parts are sheathed in a foreskin:
know them as this, student.”

48 Hearing the answers
without having heard any questions,
all the people, inspired,
with cupped palms, wondered:

49 “Who is it that asked a question with their mind?
Was it a god or divinity?
Or Indra, Sujā’s husband?
To whom does the Buddha reply?”

50 “Bāvari asks
about heads and head-splitting.
May the Buddha please answer,
and so, O seer, dispel our doubt.”

51 “Know ignorance as the head,
and knowledge as the head-splitter,
when joined with faith, mindfulness, and immersion,
and enthusiasm and energy.”

52 At that, the student,
full of inspiration,
arranged his antelope-skin cloak over one shoulder,
and fell with his head to the Buddha’s feet.

53 “Good fellow, the brahmin Bāvari
together with his acolytes,
elated and happy,
bows to your feet, O Clear-eyed One!”

54 “May the brahmin Bāvari be happy,
together with his acolytes.
And may you, too, be happy!
May you live long, student.

55 To Bāvari and you all
I grant the opportunity to clear up all doubt.
Please ask
whatever you want.”

56 Granted the opportunity by the Buddha,
they sat down with cupped palms.
Ajita asked the Realized One
the first question right there.

57 The introductory verses are finished.

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5.2 — THE QUESTIONS OF AJITA

✦

1 “By what is the world shrouded?”
said Venerable Ajita. “Why does it not shine?
Tell me, what is its sullying?
What is its greatest fear?”

2 “The world is shrouded in ignorance.”
replied the Buddha. “Avarice and negligence make it not shine.
Muttered prayer is its sullying, I say.
Suffering is its greatest fear.”

3 “The streams flow everywhere,”
said Venerable Ajita. “What is there to block them?
And tell me the restraint of streams—
by what are they locked out?”

4 “The streams in the world,”
replied the Buddha, “are blocked by mindfulness.
I tell you the restraint of streams—
they are locked out by wisdom.”

5 “That wisdom and mindfulness,”
said Venerable Ajita, “and that which is name and form, good fellow;
when questioned, please tell me of this:
where does this all cease?”

6 “This question which you have asked,
I shall answer you, Ajita.
Where name and form
cease with no residue left behind—
with the cessation of consciousness,
here they cease.”

7 “There are those who have appraised the teaching,
and many kinds of trainees here.
Now you, being alert, are asked
to tell me their behavior, good fellow.”

8 “Not greedy for sensual pleasures,
their mind would be unclouded.
Skilled in all things,
a mendicant would wander mindful.”

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5.3 — THE QUESTIONS OF TISSAMETTEYYA

✦

1 “Who here in the world is content?”
said Venerable Tissametteyya. “Who has no perturbations?
What thoughtful one, knowing both ends,
is not stuck in the middle?
Who do they say is a great man?
Who here has escaped the seamstress?”

2 “Leading the spiritual life among sensual pleasures,”
replied the Buddha, “rid of craving, ever mindful;
a mendicant who, after appraisal, is quenched:
that’s who has no perturbations.

3 That thoughtful one, knowing both ends,
is not stuck in the middle.
He is a great man, I declare;
he has escaped the seamstress here.”

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5.4 — THE QUESTIONS OF PUṆṆAKA

✦

1 “To the imperturbable, the seer of the root,”
said Venerable Puṇṇaka, “I have come seeking with a question.
On what grounds have seers and men,
aristocrats and brahmins here in the world
performed so many different <j>sacrifices to the gods?
I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this.”

2 “Whatever seers and men,”
replied the Buddha, “aristocrats and brahmins here in the world
have performed so many different <j>sacrifices to the gods:
all performed sacrifices bound to old age,
longing for this place.”

3 “As to those seers and men,”
said Venerable Puṇṇaka, “and aristocrats and brahmins here in the world
who have performed so many different <j>sacrifices to the gods:
being diligent in the technique of sacrifice,
have they crossed over rebirth and old age, good fellow?
I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this.”

4 “Hoping, invoking, praying, and worshiping,”
replied the Buddha, “they pray for pleasure derived from profit.
Devoted to sacrifice, besotted by rebirth,
they’ve not crossed over rebirth and old age, <j>I declare.”

5 “If those devoted to sacrifice,”
said Venerable Puṇṇaka, “have not, by sacrificing, <j>crossed over rebirth and old age,
who then in the world of gods and humans
has crossed over rebirth and old age, good fellow?
I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this.”

6 “Having appraised the world high and low,”
replied the Buddha, “there is nothing in the world that disturbs them.
Peaceful, unclouded, untroubled, <j>with no need for hope—
they’ve crossed over rebirth and old age, I declare.”

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5.5 — THE QUESTIONS OF METTAGŪ

✦

1 “I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this,”
said Venerable Mettagū, “for I think you are a knowledge master, evolved.
Where do all these sufferings come from,
in all their countless forms in the world?”

2 “You have rightly asked me of the origin of suffering,”
replied the Buddha, “I shall tell you as I understand it.
Attachment is the source of suffering
in all its countless forms in the world.

3 When an ignorant person builds up attachments,
that dullard returns to suffering again and again.
So let one who understands <j>not build up attachments,
contemplating the inception of suffering and rebirth.”

4 “Whatever I asked you have explained to me.
I ask you once more, please tell me this:
How do the attentive cross the flood
of rebirth, old age, sorrow, and lamenting?
Please, sage, answer me clearly,
for truly you understand this matter.”

5 “I shall extol a teaching to you,”
replied the Buddha, “that is apparent in the present, not relying on legends.

Having understood it, one who lives mindfully
may cross over clinging in the world."

6 "And I rejoice, great seer,
in that supreme teaching,
having understood which, one who lives mindfully
may cross over clinging in the world."

7 "Once you've expelled relishing and dogmatism,"
replied the Buddha, "regarding everything you are aware of—
above, below, all round, between—
having cast aside consciousness, <j>don't continue in existence.

8 A mendicant who wanders meditating like this,
diligent and mindful, calling nothing their own,
would, being wise, give up the suffering
of rebirth, old age, sorrow and lamenting right here."

9 "I rejoice in the words of the great seer!
You have expounded non-attachment well, Gotama.
Clearly the Buddha has given up suffering,
for truly you understand this matter.

10 Surely, sage, those you'd regularly instruct
would also give up suffering.
Having met, I bow especially to you, <j>O spiritual giant;
hopefully the Buddha may regularly instruct me."

11 "Any brahmin recognized as a knowledge master,
who has nothing, unattached to sensual life,
clearly has crossed this flood,

crossed to the far shore, kind, wishless.

12 And a wise person here, a knowledge master,
having untied the bond to life after life,
free of craving, untroubled, with no need for hope,
has crossed over rebirth and old age, I declare.”

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5.6 — THE QUESTIONS OF DHOTAKA

✦

1 “I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this,”
said Venerable Dhotaka, “I long for your voice, great seer.
After hearing your message,
I shall train myself for extinguishment.”

2 “Well then, be keen, alert,”
replied the Buddha, “and mindful right here.
After hearing this message, go on
and train yourself for extinguishment.”

3 “I see in the world of gods and humans
a brahmin traveling with nothing.
I bow especially to you, All-seer:
release me, Sakyan, from my indecisions.”

4 “I am not able to release anyone
in the world who is indecisive, Dhotaka.
But when you understand the best of teachings,
you shall cross this flood.”

5 “Teach me, brahmin, out of compassion,
the principle of seclusion so that I may understand.
I wish to practice right here, peaceful, independent,
unobstructed as space itself.”

6 “I shall extol that peace for you,”
replied the Buddha, “that is apparent in the present, not relying on legends.
Having understood it, one who lives mindfully
may cross over clinging in the world.”

7 “And I rejoice, great seer,
in that supreme peace,
having understood which, one who lives mindfully
may cross over clinging in the world.”

8 “Once you have understood that everything,”
replied the Buddha, “you are aware of in the world—
above, below, all round, between—
is a chain, don’t crave for life after life.”

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5.7 — THE QUESTIONS OF UPASĪVA

✦

1 “Alone and independent, O Sakyan,”
said Venerable Upasīva, “I am not able to cross the great flood.
Tell me a support, All-seer,
depending on which I may cross this flood.”

2 “Mindfully contemplating nothingness,”
replied the Buddha, “depending on the perception ‘there is nothing’, <j>cross the flood.
Giving up sensual pleasures, <j>refraining from chatter,
watch day and night for the ending of craving.”

3 “One who is free of desire for sensual pleasures,”
said Venerable Upasīva, “depending on nothingness, all else left behind,
freed in the ultimate liberation of perception:
might they remain there without traveling on?”

4 “One free of desire for sensual pleasures,”
replied the Buddha, “depending on nothingness, all else left behind,
freed in the ultimate liberation of perception:
they might remain there without traveling on.”

5 “If they were to remain there without traveling on,
even for myriad years, All-seer,
and, being freed, were to grow cool right there,
would the consciousness of that sort pass away?”

6 “As a flame tossed by a gust of wind,”
replied the Buddha, “comes to an end and cannot be reckoned;
so too, a sage freed <j>from the set of mental phenomena
comes to an end and cannot be reckoned.”

7 “One who has disappeared—do they not exist?
Or are they free from disease for eternity?
Please, sage, answer me clearly,
for truly you understand this matter.”

8 “One who has disappeared cannot be defined,”
replied the Buddha. “They have nothing <j>by which others might describe them.
When all things have been eradicated,
eradicated, too, are all ways of speech.”

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5.8 — THE QUESTIONS OF NANDA

✦

1 “People say there are sages in the world,”
said Venerable Nanda, “but how is this the case?
Is someone called a sage because of their knowledge,
or because of their way of life?”

2 “Experts do not speak of a sage in terms of
view, learning, or knowledge.
Those who are sages live far from the crowd, I say,
untroubled, with no need for hope.”

3 “As to those ascetics and brahmins,”
said Venerable Nanda, “who speak of purity in terms of what is seen or heard,
or in terms of precepts and vows,
or in terms of countless different things.
Living self-controlled in that matter,
have they crossed over rebirth and old age, <j>good fellow?
I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this.”

4 “As to those ascetics and brahmins,”
replied the Buddha, “who speak of purity in terms of what is seen or heard,
or in terms of precepts and vows,

or in terms of countless different things.
Even though they live self-controlled in that matter,
they've not crossed over rebirth and old age, <j>I declare."

5 "As to those ascetics and brahmins,"
said Venerable Nanda, "who speak of purity in terms of what is seen or heard,
or in terms of precepts and vows,
or in terms of countless different things.
You say they have not crossed the flood, sage.
So who then in the world of gods and humans
has crossed over rebirth and old age, good fellow?
I ask you, Blessed One; please tell me this."

6 "I don't say that all ascetics and brahmins,"
replied the Buddha, "are shrouded by rebirth and old age.
There are those here who have given up all
that is seen, heard, and thought, <j>and precepts and vows,
who have given up all the countless different things.
Fully understanding craving, <j>they are free of defilements,
those people, I say, have crossed the flood."

7 "I rejoice in the words of the great seer!
You have expounded non-attachment well, Gotama.
There are those here who have given up all
that is seen, heard, and thought, <j>and precepts and vows,

who have given up all the countless different things.
Fully understanding craving, <j>they are free of defilements,
those people, I agree, have crossed the flood.”

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5.9 — THE QUESTIONS OF HEMAKA

✦

1 “Those who have previously answered me,”
said Venerable Hemaka, “before Gotama’s teaching,
said ‘thus it was’ or ‘so it shall be’.
All that was just the testament of hearsay;
all that just fostered speculation:
I found no delight in that.

2 But you, sage, explain to me
the teaching that destroys craving.
Having understood it, one who lives mindfully
may cross over clinging in the world.”

3 “The removal of desire and lust, Hemaka,
for pleasant things
seen, heard, thought, or cognized here
is extinguishment, the state that does not pass.

4 Those who have fully understood this, mindful,
are quenched in this very life.
Always at peace,
they’ve crossed over clinging to the world.”

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5.10 — THE QUESTIONS OF TODEYYA

✦

1 “In whom sensual pleasures do not dwell,”
said Venerable Todeyya, “and for whom there is no craving,
and who has crossed over indecision—
of what kind is their liberation?”

2 “In whom sensual pleasures do not dwell,”
replied the Buddha, “and for whom there is no craving,
and who has crossed over indecision—
there is no liberation that is further.”

3 “Are they free of hope, <j>or are they still in need of hope?
Do they possess wisdom, <j>or are they still forming wisdom?
O Sakyan, elucidate the sage to me,
so that I may understand, All-seer.”

4 “They are free of hope, <j>they are not in need of hope.
They possess wisdom, <j>they are not still forming wisdom.
That, Todeyya, is how to understand a sage,
one who has nothing, unattached to sensual life.”

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5.11 — THE QUESTIONS OF KAPPA

✦

1 “For those overwhelmed by old age and death,”
said Venerable Kappa, “stuck mid-stream
as the terrifying flood arises,
tell me an island, good fellow.
Explain to me an island
so this may occur no further.”

2 “For those overwhelmed by old age and death,”
replied the Buddha, “stuck mid-stream
as the terrifying flood arises,
I shall tell you an island, Kappa.

3 Having nothing, taking nothing:
this is the island with nothing further.
I call it extinguishment,
the ending of old age and death.

4 Those who have fully understood this, mindful,
are quenched in this very life.
They don’t fall under Māra’s sway,
nor are they his footmen.”

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5.12 — THE QUESTIONS OF JATUKAṆṆĪ

✦

1 “Hearing of the hero <j>with no desire for sensual pleasures,”
said Venerable Jatukaṇṇī, “who has passed over the flood, I’ve come
<j>with a question for that desireless one.
Tell me the state of peace, O natural visionary.
Tell me this, Blessed One, as it really is.

2 For, having mastered sensual desires, <j>the Blessed One proceeds,
as the blazing sun shines on the earth.
May you of vast wisdom explain the teaching
to me of little wisdom so that I may understand
the giving up of rebirth and old age here.”

3 “With desire for sensual pleasures dispelled,”
replied the Buddha, “seeing renunciation as sanctuary,
don’t be taking up or putting down
anything at all.

4 What came before, let wither away,
and after, let there be nothing.
If you don’t grasp at the middle,
you will live at peace.

5 One rid of greed, brahmin,
for the whole realm of name and form,
has no defilements by which

they might fall under the sway of Death.”

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5.13 — THE QUESTIONS OF BHADRĀVUDHA

✦

1 “I beseech you, the bastion-leaver, the craving-cutter, the imperturbable,”
said Venerable Bhadrāvudha, “the delight-leaver, the flood-crosser, the freed,
the formulation-leaver, the intelligent.
Different people have gathered <j>from across the nations

2 wishing to hear your word, O hero.
After hearing the spiritual giant <j>they will depart from here.
Please, sage, answer them clearly,
for truly you understand this matter.”

3 “Dispel all craving for attachments,”
replied the Buddha, “above, below, all round, between.
For whatever a personage grasps in the world,
Māra pursues them right there.

4 So let a mindful mendicant who understands
not grasp anything in all the world,
observing that, in clinging to attachments,
these people cling to the domain of death.”

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5.14 — THE QUESTIONS OF UDAYA

✦

1 "To the meditator, rid of hopes,"
said Venerable Udaya, "who has completed the task, is free of defilements,
and has gone beyond all things,
I have come seeking with a question.
Tell me the liberation by enlightenment,
the smashing of ignorance."

2 "The giving up of both"
replied the Buddha, "sensual desires and displeasures;
the casting aside of dullness,
and the prevention of remorse;

3 pure equanimity and mindfulness,
preceded by investigation of principles—
this, I declare, is liberation by enlightenment,
the smashing of ignorance."

4 "What fetters the world?
How does it travel about?
With the giving up of what
is extinguishment spoken of?"

5 "Delight fetters the world.
It travels about by means of thought.
With the giving up of craving
extinguishment is spoken of."

6 “For one living mindfully,
how does consciousness cease?
We’ve come to ask the worthy sir:
let us hear what you say.”

7 “Not taking pleasure in feeling
internally and externally—
for one living mindfully,
that’s how consciousness ceases.”

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5.15 — THE QUESTION OF POSĀLA

✦

1 "To the one who reveals the past,"
said Venerable Posāla, "who is imperturbable, with doubts cut off,
and who has gone beyond all things,
I have come seeking with a question.

2 Consider one who perceives that form has vanished,
who has entirely given up the body,
and who sees nothing at all
internally and externally.
I ask the Sakyan about knowledge for them;
how should that sort be guided?"

3 "The Realized One directly knows,"
said the Buddha, "all planes of consciousness.
And he knows this one who remains,
committed to that as their final goal.

4 Understanding that desire for rebirth
in the dimension of nothingness is a fetter,
and directly knowing what this really means,
one then discerns that matter clearly.
That is their knowledge of truth,
the brahmin who has lived the life."

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5.16 — THE QUESTIONS OF MOGHARĀJA

✦

1 "Twice I have asked the Sakyan,"
said Venerable Mogharāja, "but you haven't answered me, O Clear-eyed One.
I have heard that the divine seer
answers when questioned a third time.

2 Regarding this world, the other world,
and the realm of divinity with its gods,
I'm not familiar with the view
of the renowned Gotama.

3 So I have come seeking with a question
for the one of excellent vision.
How to look upon the world
so the King of Death won't see you?"

4 "Look upon the world as empty,
Mogharāja, ever mindful.
Having uprooted the theory of self,
you may thus cross over death.
That's how to look upon the world
so the King of Death won't see you."

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5.17 — THE QUESTIONS OF PIṄGIYA

✦

1 “I am old, feeble, and pallid,”
said Venerable Piṅgiya, “my eyes unclear, my hearing faint—
don’t let me perish while still confused.
Explain the teaching so that I may understand
the giving up of rebirth and old age here.”

2 “Seeing them being harmed <j>on account of forms,”
replied the Buddha, “those negligent folk are inflicted <j>on account of forms—
therefore, Piṅgiya, being diligent,
give up form so as not to be reborn.”

3 “The four quarters, the intermediate directions,
below, and above: in these ten directions
there’s nothing at all in the world
that you’ve not seen, heard, thought, or cognized.
Explain the teaching so that I may understand
the giving up of rebirth and old age here.”

4 “Observing mankind sunk in craving,”
replied the Buddha, “tormented, mired in old age;
therefore, Piṅgiya, being diligent,
give up craving so as not to be reborn.”

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5.18 — HOMAGE TO THE WAY TO THE FAR SHORE

✦

[1] This was said by the Buddha while staying in the land of the Magadhans at the Pāsāṇaka Shrine. When requested by the sixteen brahmin devotees, he answered their questions one by one. If you understand the meaning and the teaching of each of these questions, and practice in line with the teaching, you may go right to the far shore of old age and death. These teachings are said to lead to the far shore, which is why the name of this exposition of the teaching is "The Way to the Far Shore".

[2] Ajita, Tissametteyya,
Puṇṇaka and Mettagū,
Dhotaka and Upasiva,
Nanda and then Hemaka,

[3] both Todeyya and Kappa,
and Jatukaṇṇī the astute,
Bhadrāvudha and Udaya,
and the brahmin Posāla,
Mogharāja the intelligent,
and Piṅgiya the great seer:

[4] they approached the Buddha,
the seer of consummate conduct.
Asking their subtle questions,
they came to the most excellent Buddha.

5 The Buddha answered their questions
in accordance with truth.
The sage satisfied the brahmins
with his answers to their questions.

6 Those who were satisfied by the Clear-eyed One,
the Buddha, Kinsman of the Sun,
led the spiritual life in his presence,
the one of such outstanding wisdom.

7 If you practice in accordance
with each of these questions
as taught by the Buddha,
you'll go from the near shore to the far.

8 Developing the supreme path,
you'll go from the near shore to the far.
This path is for going to the far shore;
that's why it's called "The Way to the Far Shore".

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5.19 — PRESERVING THE WAY TO THE FAR SHORE

✦

1 “I shall keep reciting the Way to the Far Shore,”
said Venerable Piṅgiya, “which was taught as it was seen
by the immaculate one of vast intelligence.
He is desireless, unentangled, a spiritual giant:
why would he speak falsely?

2 Come, let me extol
in sweet words of praise
the one who’s given up stains and delusions,
conceit and contempt.

3 The Buddha, All-seer, dispeller of darkness,
has gone to world’s end, beyond all rebirths;
he is free of defilements, <j>and has given up all suffering,
the rightly-named one, brahmin, is revered by me.

4 Like a bird that flees a little copse,
to roost in a forest abounding in fruit,
I’ve left the near-sighted behind,
like a swan come to a great river.

5 Those who explained to me previously,
before Gotama’s teaching,
said ‘thus it was’ or ‘so it shall be’.

All that was just the testament of hearsay;
all that just fostered speculation.

6 Alone, the dispeller of darkness
is brilliant, a beacon:
Gotama, vast in wisdom,
Gotama, vast in intelligence.

7 He is the one who taught me Dhamma,
apparent in the present life, immediately effective,
the untroubled, the end of craving,
to which there is no compare."

8 "Why would you dwell apart from him
even for an hour, Piṅgiya?
From Gotama, vast in wisdom,
from Gotama, vast in intelligence?

9 He is the one who taught you Dhamma,
apparent in the present life, immediately effective,
the untroubled, the end of craving,
to which there is no compare."

10 "I never dwell apart from him,
not even for an hour, brahmin.
From Gotama, vast in wisdom,
from Gotama, vast in intelligence.

11 He is the one who taught me Dhamma,
apparent in the present life, immediately effective,
the untroubled, the end of craving,

to which there is no compare.

12 Being diligent, I see him
in my mind's eye day and night.
I spend the night in homage to him,
hence I think I dwell with him.

13 My faith and joy and intent and mindfulness
never stray from Gotama's teaching.
I bow to whatever direction
the one of vast wisdom heads.

14 I'm old and feeble,
so my body cannot go there,
but I always travel in my thoughts,
for my mind, brahmin, is bound to him.

15 Lying floundering in the mud,
I drifted from island to island.
Then I saw the Buddha,
the undefiled one who has crossed the flood."

16 "Just as Vakkali was committed to faith—
Bhadrāvudha and Gotama of Aḷavī too—
so too you should commit to faith.
You will go, Piṅgiya, beyond the domain of death."

17 "My confidence grows
as I hear the word of the sage,
the Buddha with veil cast off,
so kind and eloquent.

18 Having directly known all about the gods,
he understands all top to bottom,
the Teacher who settles all questions
for those who admit their doubts.

19 The unfaltering, the unshakable:
that to which there is no compare.
For sure I will go there, I have no doubt of that.
Remember me as one whose mind is made up.”

43 The Anthology of Discourses is completed.

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