

Readings in Aging, Illness, & Death

“Monks, I lived in refinement, utmost refinement, total refinement. My father even had lotus ponds made in our palace: one where red-lotuses bloomed, one where white lotuses bloomed, one where blue lotuses bloomed, all for my sake. I used no sandalwood that was not from Vārāṇasī. My turban was from Vārāṇasī, as were my tunic, my lower garments, & my outer cloak. A white sunshade was held over me day & night to protect me from cold, heat, dust, dirt, & dew.

“I had three palaces: one for the cold season, one for the hot season, one for the rainy season. During the four months of the rainy season, I was entertained in the rainy-season palace by minstrels without a single man among them, and I did not once come down from the palace. Whereas the servants, workers, & retainers in other people’s homes are fed meals of lentil soup & broken rice, in my father’s home the servants, workers, & retainers were fed wheat, rice, & meat.

“Even though I was endowed with such fortune, such total refinement, the thought occurred to me: ‘When an untaught, run-of-the-mill person, himself subject to aging, not beyond aging, sees another who is aged, he is horrified, humiliated, & disgusted, oblivious to himself that he too is subject to aging, not beyond aging. If I—who am subject to aging, not beyond aging—were to be horrified, humiliated, & disgusted on seeing another person who is aged, that would not be fitting for me.’ As I noticed this, the (typical) young person’s intoxication with youth entirely dropped away.

“Even though I was endowed with such fortune, such total refinement, the thought occurred to me: ‘When an untaught, run-of-the-mill person, himself subject to illness, not beyond illness, sees another who is ill, he is horrified, humiliated, & disgusted, oblivious to himself that he too is subject to illness, not beyond illness. And if I—who am subject to illness, not beyond illness—were to be horrified, humiliated, & disgusted on seeing another person who is ill, that would not be fitting for me.’ As I noticed this, the healthy person’s intoxication with health entirely dropped away.

“Even though I was endowed with such fortune, such total refinement, the thought occurred to me: ‘When an untaught, run-of-the-mill person, himself subject to death, not beyond death, sees another who is dead, he is horrified, humiliated, & disgusted, oblivious to himself that he too is subject to death, not beyond death. And if I—who am subject to death, not beyond death—were to be horrified, humiliated, & disgusted on seeing another person who is dead, that would not be fitting for me.’ As I noticed this, the living person’s intoxication with life entirely dropped away.” — AN 3:39

“I, too, monks, before my self-awakening, when I was still just an unawakened bodhisatta, being subject myself to birth, sought [happiness in] what was likewise subject to birth. Being subject myself to aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, I sought what was likewise subject to aging...

illness... death... sorrow... defilement. The thought occurred to me, ‘Why do I, being subject myself to birth, seek what is likewise subject to birth? Being subject myself to aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, why do I seek what is likewise subject to aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement? What if I, being subject myself to birth, seeing the drawbacks of birth, were to seek the unborn, unexcelled rest from the yoke: unbinding? What if I, being subject myself to aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, seeing the drawbacks of aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, were to seek the aging-less, illness-less, deathless, sorrow-less, unexcelled rest from the yoke: unbinding?’”
— MN 26

“When the mind was thus concentrated [in the fourth jhāna], purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of recollecting my past lives. I recollected my manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two... five, ten... fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many eons of cosmic contraction, many eons of cosmic expansion, many eons of cosmic contraction & expansion: ‘There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose there. There, too, I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-rose here.’ Thus I recollected my manifold past lives in their modes & details.

“This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute....

“When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of the passing away & reappearance of beings. I saw—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma: ‘These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech, & mind, who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the breakup of the body, after death, have re-appeared in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech & mind, who did not revile the noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the breakup of the body, after death, have re-appeared in a good destination, a heavenly world.’ Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—I saw beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

“This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute....

“When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the knowledge of the ending of effluents. I discerned, as it had come to be, that ‘*This is stress*’ ... ‘*This is the origination of stress*’ ... ‘*This is the cessation of stress*’ ... ‘*This is the way leading to the cessation of stress*’ ... ‘*These are effluents*’ ... ‘*This is the origination of effluents*’ ... ‘*This is the cessation of effluents*’ ... ‘*This is the way leading to the cessation of effluents.*’ My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the effluent of sensuality, released from the effluent of becoming, released from the effluent of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, ‘Released.’ I discerned that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’

“This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.” — MN 36

“There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person... doesn’t discern which ideas are fit for attention, or which ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he doesn’t attend to ideas fit for attention, and attends [instead] to ideas unfit for attention. And which are the ideas unfit for attention that he attends to? Whichever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality arises, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality increases; the unarisen fermentation of becoming... the unarisen fermentation of ignorance arises, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance increases.... This is how he attends inappropriately: ‘Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? Having been what, what was I in the past? Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? Having been what, what shall I be in the future?’ Or else he is inwardly perplexed about the immediate present: ‘Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?’

“As he attends inappropriately in this way, one of six kinds of view arises in him: The view *I have a self* arises in him as true & established, or the view *I have no self*... or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self*... or the view *It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self*... or the view *It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self* arises in him as true & established, or else he has a view like this: *This very self of mine—the knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions—is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will endure as long as eternity.* This is called a thicket of views, a wilderness of views, a contortion of views, a writhing of views, a fetter of views. Bound by a fetter of views, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is

not freed from birth, aging, & death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. He is not freed, I tell you, from stress.

“The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones... discerns which ideas are fit for attention, and which ideas are unfit for attention. This being so, he doesn’t attend to ideas unfit for attention, and attends [instead] to ideas fit for attention.... And which are the ideas fit for attention that he attends to? Whichever ideas such that, when he attends to them, the unarisen fermentation of sensuality doesn’t arise, and the arisen fermentation of sensuality is abandoned; the unarisen fermentation of becoming... the unarisen fermentation of ignorance doesn’t arise, and the arisen fermentation of ignorance is abandoned.... He attends appropriately, *This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.* As he attends appropriately in this way, three fetters are abandoned in him: self-identity-view, uncertainty, and grasping at habits & practices.” — MN 2

“It’s just as if a man, traveling along a wilderness track, were to see an ancient path, an ancient road, traveled by people of former times. He would follow it. Following it, he would see an ancient city, an ancient capital inhabited by people of former times, complete with parks, groves, & ponds, walled, delightful. He would go to address the king or the king’s minister, saying, ‘Sire, you should know that while traveling along a wilderness track I saw an ancient path... I followed it... I saw an ancient city, an ancient capital... complete with parks, groves, & ponds, walled, delightful. Sire, rebuild that city!’ The king or king’s minister would rebuild the city, so that at a later date the city would become powerful, rich, & well-populated, fully grown & prosperous.

“In the same way I saw an ancient path, an ancient road, traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones of former times. And what is that ancient path, that ancient road, traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones of former times? Just this noble eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. That is the ancient path, the ancient road, traveled by the Rightly Self-awakened Ones of former times. I followed that path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of aging-&-death, direct knowledge of the origination of aging-&-death, direct knowledge of the cessation of aging-&-death, direct knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of aging-&-death. I followed that path. Following it, I came to direct knowledge of birth... becoming... clinging... craving... feeling... contact... the six sense media... name-&-form... consciousness, direct knowledge of the origination of consciousness, direct knowledge of the cessation of consciousness, direct knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of consciousness. I followed that path.

“Following it, I came to direct knowledge of fabrications, direct knowledge of the origination of fabrications, direct knowledge of the cessation of fabrications, direct knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of fabrications.” — SN

12:65

“Now this, monks, is the noble truth of stress: Birth is stressful, aging is stressful, death is stressful; sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are stressful; association with the unbeloved is stressful, separation from the loved is stressful, not getting what is wanted is stressful. In short, the five clinging-aggregates are stressful.

“And this, monks, is the noble truth of the origination of stress: the craving that makes for further becoming—accompanied by passion & delight, relishing now here & now there—i.e., craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming.

“And this, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of stress: the remainderless fading & cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, & letting go of that very craving.

“And this, monks, is the noble truth of the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress: precisely this noble eightfold path—right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.” — SN 56:11

“Then, monks, being subject myself to birth, seeing the drawbacks of birth, seeking the unborn, unexcelled rest from the yoke—unbinding—I reached the unborn, unexcelled rest from the yoke: unbinding. Being subject myself to aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, seeing the drawbacks of aging... illness... death... sorrow... defilement, seeking the aging-less, illness-less, deathless, sorrow-less, unexcelled rest from the yoke—unbinding—I reached the aging-less, illness-less, deathless, sorrow-less, unexcelled rest from the yoke: unbinding. Knowledge & vision arose in me: ‘Unprovoked is my release. This is the last birth. There is now no further-becoming.’” — MN 26

I have heard that on one occasion, the Blessed One was dwelling near Uruvelā on the bank of the Nerañjarā River at the root of the Bodhi tree—the tree of awakening—newly awakened. And on that occasion he sat at the root of the Bodhi tree for seven days in one session, sensitive to the bliss of release. Then, with the passing of seven days, after emerging from that concentration, in the third watch of the night, he gave close attention to dependent co-arising in forward and reverse order, thus:

When this is, that is.

From the arising of this comes the arising of that.

When this isn't, that isn't.

From the cessation of this comes the cessation of that.

From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.

From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.

From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form.

From name-&-form as a requisite condition come the six sense media.

From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact.

From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.

From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.

From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging/sustenance.

From clinging/sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming.

From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.

From birth as a requisite condition, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of suffering & stress.

Now from the remainderless fading and cessation of that very ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications.

From the cessation of fabrications comes the cessation of consciousness. ...

From the cessation of birth, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of suffering & stress. — *Ud 1:3*

“Suppose that a man were to drop a salt crystal into a small amount of water in a cup. What do you think? Would the water in the cup become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink?”

“Yes, lord. Why is that? There being only a small amount of water in the cup, it would become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink.”

“Now suppose that a man were to drop a salt crystal into the River Ganges. What do you think? Would the water in the River Ganges become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink?”

“No, lord. Why is that? There being a great mass of water in the River Ganges, it would not become salty because of the salt crystal or unfit to drink.”

“In the same way, there is the case where a trifling evil deed done by one individual (the first) takes him to hell; and there is the case where the very same sort of trifling deed done by the other individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.

“Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual takes him to hell? There is the case where a certain individual is undeveloped in body, undeveloped in virtue, undeveloped in mind, undeveloped in discernment: restricted, small-hearted, dwelling with suffering. A trifling evil deed done by this sort of individual takes him to hell.

“Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment? There is the case where a certain individual is developed in body, developed in virtue, developed in mind, developed in discernment: unrestricted, large-hearted, dwelling with the immeasurable. A trifling evil deed done by this sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.” — *AN 3:101*

REFLECTIONS

“There are these five facts that one should reflect on often, whether one is a woman or a man, lay or ordained. Which five?”

“‘I am subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging.’ This is the first fact that one should reflect on often....

“‘I am subject to illness, have not gone beyond illness’....

“‘I am subject to death, have not gone beyond death’....

“‘I will grow different, separate from all that is dear & appealing to me’....

“‘I am the owner of actions [kamma], heir to actions, born of actions, related through actions, and have actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir’....

“These are the five facts that one should reflect on often, whether one is a woman or a man, lay or ordained.

“Now, based on what line of reasoning should one often reflect... that ‘I am subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging’? There are beings who are intoxicated with a (typical) youth’s intoxication with youth. Because of that intoxication with youth, they conduct themselves in a bad way in body... in speech... and in mind. But when they often reflect on that fact, that youth’s intoxication with youth will either be entirely abandoned or grow weaker....

[Similarly with the remaining reflections.]

“Now, a disciple of the noble ones considers this: ‘I am not the only one subject to aging, who has not gone beyond aging. To the extent that there are beings—past & future, passing away & re-arising—all beings are subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging.’ When he/she often reflects on this, the (factors of the) path take birth. He/she sticks with that path, develops it, cultivates it. As he/she sticks with that path, develops it, & cultivates it, the fetters are abandoned, the obsessions destroyed.

[Similarly with the remaining reflections.] — AN 5:57

Then King Pasenadi Kosala went to the Blessed One in the middle of the day and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him: “Well now, great king, where are you coming from in the middle of the day?”

“Just now, lord, I was engaged in the sort of royal affairs typical of head-anointed noble-warrior kings intoxicated with the intoxication of sovereignty, obsessed by greed for sensuality, who have attained stable control in their country, and who rule having conquered a great sphere of territory on earth.”

“What do you think, great king? Suppose a man, trustworthy & reliable, were to come to you from the east and on arrival would say: ‘If it please your majesty, you should know that I come from the east. There I saw a great mountain, as high as the clouds, coming this way, crushing all living beings (in its path). Do whatever you think should be done.’ Then a second man were to come to you from the west... Then a third man were to come to you from the north... Then a fourth man were to come to you from the south and on arrival would say: ‘If it please your majesty, you should know that I come from the south. There I saw a great mountain, as high as the clouds, coming this way, crushing all living beings. Do whatever you think should be done.’ If, your majesty, such a great

peril should arise, such a terrible destruction of human life—the human state being so hard to obtain—what should be done?”

“If, lord, such a great peril should arise, such a terrible destruction of human life—the human state being so hard to obtain—what else should be done but Dhamma-conduct, right conduct, skillful deeds, meritorious deeds?”

“I inform you, great king, I announce to you, great king: Aging & death are rolling in on you. When aging & death are rolling in on you, what should be done?”

“As aging & death are rolling in on me, lord, what else should be done but Dhamma-conduct, right conduct, skillful deeds, meritorious deeds?”

“There are, lord, elephant battles (fought by) head-anointed noble-warrior kings intoxicated with the intoxication of sovereignty, obsessed by greed for sensuality, who have attained stable control in their country, and who rule having conquered a great sphere of territory on earth; but there is no use for those elephant battles, no scope for them, when aging & death are rolling in. There are cavalry battles... chariot battles... infantry battles... but there is no use for those infantry battles, no scope for them, when aging & death are rolling in. In this royal court there are counselors who, when the enemies arrive, are capable of dividing them by their wits; but there is no use for those battles of wits, no scope for them, when aging & death are rolling in. In this royal court there is abundant bullion & gold stored in vaults & depositories, and with such wealth we are capable of buying off enemies when they come; but there is no use for those battles of wealth, no scope for them, when aging & death are rolling in. As aging & death are rolling in on me, lord, what else should be done but Dhamma-conduct, right conduct, skillful deeds, meritorious deeds?”

“So it is, great king! So it is, great king! As aging & death are rolling in on you, what else should be done but Dhamma-conduct, right conduct, skillful deeds, meritorious deeds?” — *SN 3:25*

So King Koravya sat down on the seat prepared. As he was sitting there, he said to Ven. Raṭṭhapāla, “There are cases where, having suffered these four kinds of loss, men shave off their hair & beard, put on the ochre robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness. Which four? Loss through aging, loss through illness, loss of wealth, & loss of relatives.... But Master Raṭṭhapāla has suffered none of these. What did he know or see or hear that Master Raṭṭhapāla went forth from the home life into homelessness?”

“Great king, there are four Dhamma summaries stated by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. Having known & seen & heard them, I went forth from the home life into homelessness. Which four?”

“‘The world is swept away. It does not endure’: This is the first Dhamma summary stated by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. Having known & seen & heard it, I went forth from the home life into homelessness.

“‘The world is without shelter, without protector’: This is the second Dhamma summary....

“‘The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind’: This is the third Dhamma summary....

“‘The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving’: This is the fourth Dhamma summary....

“These, great king, are the four Dhamma summaries stated by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened. Having known & seen & heard them, I went forth from the home life into homelessness.”

“Master Raṭṭhapāla, you say, ‘The world is swept away. It does not endure.’ Now how is the meaning of this statement to be understood?”

“What do you think, great king? When you were twenty or twenty-five years old—an expert elephant rider, an expert horseman, an expert charioteer, an expert archer, an expert swordsman—were you strong in arm & strong in thigh, fit, & seasoned in warfare?”

“Yes, Master Raṭṭhapāla, when I was twenty or twenty-five years old... I was strong in arm & strong in thigh, fit, & seasoned in warfare. It was as if I had supernormal power. I do not see anyone who was my equal in strength.”

“And what do you think, great king? Are you even now as strong in arm & strong in thigh, as fit, & as seasoned in warfare?”

“Not at all, Master Raṭṭhapāla. I’m now aged, old, elderly, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life, 80 years old. Sometimes, thinking, ‘I will place my foot here,’ I place it somewhere else.”

“It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: ‘The world is swept away. It does not endure.’ Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness.”

“It’s amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It’s astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: ‘The world is swept away. It does not endure.’ For the world really is swept away, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It does not endure.

“Now, in this royal court there are elephant troops & cavalry & chariot troops & infantry that will serve to defend us from dangers. And yet you say, ‘The world is without shelter, without protector.’ How is the meaning of this statement to be understood?”

“What do you think, great king? Do you have any recurring illness?”

“Yes, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I have a recurring wind-illness. Sometimes my friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen, stand around me saying, ‘This time King Koravya will die. This time King Koravya will die.’”

“And what do you think, great king? Can you say to your friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen, ‘My friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen are commanded: all of you who are present, share out this pain so that I may feel less pain’? Or do you have to feel that pain all alone?”

“Oh, no, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I can’t say to my friends & advisors, relatives & blood-kinsmen, ‘All of you who are present, share out this pain so that I may feel less pain.’ I have to feel that pain all alone.”

“It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: ‘The world is without shelter, without protector.’ Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness.”

“It’s amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It’s astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: ‘The world is without shelter, without protector.’ For the world really is without shelter, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It is without protector.

“Now, in this royal court there is a great deal of gold & silver stashed away underground & in attic vaults. And yet you say, ‘The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.’ How is the meaning of this statement to be understood?”

“What do you think, great king? As you now enjoy yourself endowed & replete with the pleasures of the five senses, can you say, ‘Even in the afterlife I will enjoy myself in the same way, endowed & replete with the very same pleasures of the five senses’? Or will this wealth fall to others, while you pass on in accordance with your kamma?”

“Oh, no, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I can’t say, ‘Even in the afterlife I will enjoy myself in the same way, endowed & replete with the very same pleasures of the five senses.’ This wealth will fall to others, while I pass on in accordance with my kamma.”

“It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: ‘The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.’ Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness.”

“It’s amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It’s astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: ‘The world is without ownership. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.’ For the world really is without ownership, Master Raṭṭhapāla. One has to pass on, leaving everything behind.

“Now, Master Raṭṭhapāla, you say, ‘The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving.’ How is the meaning of this statement to be understood?”

“What do you think, great king? Do you now rule over the prosperous country of Kuru?”

“That is so, Master Raṭṭhapāla. I rule over the prosperous country of Kuru.”

“What do you think, great king? Suppose a trustworthy, reliable man of yours were to come to you from the east. On arrival he would say to you, ‘May it please your majesty to know, I have come from the east. There I saw a great country, powerful & prosperous, populous & crowded with people. Plenty are the elephant troops there, plenty the cavalry troops, chariot troops, & infantry troops. Plenty is the ivory-work there, plenty the gold & silver, both worked &

unworked. Plenty are the women for the taking. It is possible, with the forces you now have, to conquer it. Conquer it, great king! What would you do?"

"Having conquered it, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I would rule over it."

"Now what do you think, great king? Suppose a trustworthy, reliable man of yours were to come to you from the west... the north... the south... the other side of the ocean. On arrival he would say to you, 'May it please your majesty to know, I have come from the other side of the ocean. There I saw a great country, powerful & prosperous, populous & crowded with people. Plenty are the elephant troops there, plenty the cavalry troops, chariot troops, & infantry troops. Plenty is the ivory-work there, plenty the gold & silver, both worked & unworked. Plenty are the women for the taking. It is possible, with the forces you now have, to conquer it. Conquer it, great king! What would you do?"

"Having conquered it, Master Raṭṭhapāla, I would rule over it, too."

"It was in reference to this, great king, that the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened, said: 'The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving.' Having known & seen & heard this, I went forth from the home life into homelessness."

"It's amazing, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's astounding, how well that has been said by the Blessed One who knows & sees, worthy & rightly self-awakened: 'The world is insufficient, insatiable, a slave to craving.' For the world really is insufficient, Master Raṭṭhapāla. It's insatiable, a slave to craving." — *MN 82*

AGING

"Just as if there were a beautiful beryl gem of the purest water—eight faceted, well polished, clear, limpid, consummate in all its aspects, and going through the middle of it was a blue, yellow, red, white, or brown thread—and a man with good eyesight, taking it in his hand, were to reflect on it thus: 'This is a beautiful beryl gem of the purest water, eight faceted, well polished, clear, limpid, consummate in all its aspects. And this, going through the middle of it, is a blue, yellow, red, white, or brown thread.' In the same way—with his mind thus concentrated, purified, & bright, unblemished, free from defects, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability [in the fourth jhāna]—the monk directs & inclines it to knowledge & vision. He discerns: 'This body of mine is endowed with form, composed of the four primary elements, born from mother & father, nourished with rice & porridge, subject to inconstancy, rubbing, pressing, dissolution, & dispersion. And this consciousness of mine is supported here and bound up here.'" — *DN 2*

Then two brahmins—feeble old men, aged, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life, 120 years old—went to the Blessed One. On arrival, they exchanged courteous greetings with him and, after an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, sat to one side. As they were sitting there they said to him: "Master Gotama, we are brahmins—feeble old men, aged, advanced in

years, having come to the last stage of life, 120 years old. And we have done no admirable deeds, no skillful deeds, no deeds that allay our fears. Teach us, Master Gotama. Instruct us, Master Gotama, for our long-term benefit & happiness.”

“Indeed, brahmans, you are feeble old men, aged, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life, 120 years old. And you have done no admirable deeds, no skillful deeds, no deeds that allay your fears. This world is on fire with aging, illness, & death. With the world thus on fire with aging, illness, & death, any restraint of body, speech, & intellect practiced here will be one’s shelter, cave, island, & refuge after death in the world beyond.”

When a house is aflame,
the vessel salvaged
is the one that will be of use,
not the one left there to burn.

So when the world is on fire
with aging & death,
you should salvage (your wealth) by giving:
What’s given is well salvaged.

When you’re restrained here
in body, speech, & awareness;
when you make merit while still alive:
That will be for your bliss after death. — AN 3:53

“Monks, there are these five strengths. Which five? The strength of conviction, the strength of persistence, the strength of mindfulness, the strength of concentration, the strength of discernment.” — SN 50:1 [*These five strengths = the five faculties*]

“Now what is the faculty of conviction? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, has conviction, is convinced of the Tathāgata’s awakening: ‘Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed.’ This is called the faculty of conviction.

“And what is the faculty of persistence? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, keeps his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful mental qualities and taking on skillful mental qualities. He is steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful mental qualities. He generates desire, endeavors, arouses persistence, upholds & exerts his intent for the sake of the non-arising of evil, unskillful qualities that have not yet arisen... for the sake of the abandoning of evil, unskillful qualities that have arisen... for the sake of the arising of skillful qualities that have not yet arisen... (and) for the maintenance, non-confusion, increase, plenitude, development, &

culmination of skillful qualities that have arisen. This is called the faculty of persistence.

“And what is the faculty of mindfulness? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, is mindful, is endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & able to call to mind even things that were done & said long ago. He remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves... the mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. This is called the faculty of mindfulness.

“And what is the faculty of concentration? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, making it his object to let go, attains concentration, attains singleness of mind. Quite secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities—he enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture, he remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, and senses pleasure with the body. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding.’ With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is called the faculty of concentration.

“And what is the faculty of discernment? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. He discerns, as it has come to be: ‘This is stress... This is the origination of stress... This is the cessation of stress... This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress.’ This is called the faculty of discernment.” — *SN 48:10*

“Monks, there are these five strengths for one in training. Which five? Strength of conviction, strength of a sense of shame, strength of a sense of compunction, strength of persistence, & strength of discernment.

“And what is strength of conviction? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, has conviction, is convinced of the Tathāgata’s awakening: ‘Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed.’ This, monks, is called the strength of conviction.

“And what is the strength of a sense of shame? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones feels shame at (the thought of engaging in) bodily

misconduct, verbal misconduct, mental misconduct. He feels shame at falling into evil, unskillful actions. This is called the strength of a sense of shame.

“And what is the strength of a sense of compunction? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones feels compunction at (the suffering that would result from) bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, mental misconduct. He feels compunction at falling into evil, unskillful actions. This is called the strength of a sense of compunction.

“And what is the strength of persistence? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, keeps his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful qualities and taking on skillful qualities. He is steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful qualities. This is called the strength of persistence.

“And what is the strength of discernment? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. This is called the strength of discernment.

“These, monks, are the five strengths of one in training. Thus you should train yourselves, ‘We will be endowed with the strength of conviction that is the strength of one in training; with the strength of a sense of shame... the strength of a sense of compunction... the strength of persistence... the strength of discernment that is the strength of one in training.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” — *AN 5:2*

“There are some contemplatives & brahmans with this doctrine, this view: ‘As long as this good man is young, youthful, with fully black hair, endowed with the blessing of youth & the first stage of life, he is endowed with the foremost keenness of discernment. But when this good man becomes aged, old, elderly, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life, 80 years old, 90 years old, or 100 years old in this birth, then because of that, his keenness of discernment diminishes. Sāriputta, it shouldn’t be seen that way.

“At this time, I am aged, old, elderly, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life. My age has come to 80 years.

“Sāriputta, suppose that I had four disciples with a 100-year life span, living for 100 years, and endowed with excellent mindfulness, retention, recall, & keenness of discernment. Just as an archer with a good bow—trained, dexterous, & practiced—could easily shoot a light arrow across the shadow of a palmyra tree, they—endowed with that great an extent of mindfulness, that great an extent of retention, that great an extent of recall, & that keenness of discernment—would ask me one question after another on the four establishings of mindfulness. And I, asked again & again, would answer. Answered, they would remember what I had answered, and they wouldn’t counter-question me about it a second time. Aside from eating, drinking, chewing, & savoring, aside from urinating & defecating, aside from relieving sleepiness & weariness, there would be no ending of the Tathāgata’s Dhamma teaching, there would be no

ending of the Tathāgata’s phrasing of Dhamma statements, there would be no ending of the Tathāgata’s quick-wittedness (in answering) questions; but those four disciples of mine, with their 100-year life span, living for 100 years, would die with the passing of 100 years.

“Even if you carried me around on a bed, there would be no alteration in the Tathāgata’s keenness of discernment.” — *MN 12*

“I am now aged, Ānanda: old, elderly, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life, 80 years old. Just as an old cart is kept going with the help of bamboo strips, the Tathāgata’s body is kept going with the help of bamboo strips, as it were. When the Tathāgata—not attending to any theme at all, and with the cessation of certain feelings—enters & remains in the theme-less concentration of awareness, that is when his body is more at ease.

“So, Ānanda, you should all live with yourselves as your island, yourselves as your refuge, with no other as your refuge; with the Dhamma as your island, the Dhamma as your refuge, with no other as your refuge. And how does a monk live with himself as his island, himself as his refuge, with no other as his refuge; with the Dhamma as his island, the Dhamma as his refuge, with no other as his refuge? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves... mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. This is how a monk lives with himself as his island, himself as his refuge, with no other as his refuge; with the Dhamma as his island, the Dhamma as his refuge, with no other as his refuge. For those who, now or when I am gone, live with themselves as their island, themselves as their refuge, with no other as their refuge; with the Dhamma as their island, the Dhamma as their refuge, not with another as their refuge, will be my foremost monks: those who are desirous of training.” — *DN 16*

“And what constitutes a monk’s beauty? There is the case where a monk is virtuous. He dwells restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in his behavior & sphere of activity. He trains himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults. This constitutes a monk’s beauty.” — *DN 26*

A blessing into old age is virtue. — *Dhp 133*

ILLNESS

“There are these three types of sick people to be found existing in the world. Which three?

“There is the case of the sick person who—regardless of whether he does or does not receive amenable food, regardless of whether he does or does not

receive amenable medicine, regardless of whether he does or does not receive proper nursing—will not recover from that illness. There is the case of the sick person who—regardless of whether he does or does not receive amenable food, regardless of whether he does or does not receive amenable medicine, regardless of whether he does or does not receive proper nursing—will recover from that illness. There is the case of the sick person who will recover from that illness if he receives amenable food, amenable medicine, & proper nursing, but not if he doesn't.

“Now, it is because of the sick person who will recover from that illness if he receives amenable food, amenable medicine, & proper nursing—but not if he doesn't—that food for the sick has been allowed, medicine for the sick has been allowed, nursing for the sick has been allowed. And it is because there is this sort of sick person that the other sorts of sick persons are to be nursed as well [on the chance that they may actually turn out to need and benefit from such nursing].

“These are the three types of sick people to be found existing in the world.”
— *AN 3:22*

Moliyasivaka: “There are some contemplatives & brahmins who are of this doctrine, this view: ‘Whatever an individual feels—pleasure, pain, neither-pleasure-nor-pain—is entirely caused by what was done before.’ Now what does Master Gotama say to that?”

The Buddha: “There are cases where some feelings arise based on bile [i.e., diseases and pains that come from a malfunctioning gall bladder]. You yourself should know how some feelings arise based on bile. Even the world is agreed on how some feelings arise based on bile. So any contemplatives & brahmins who are of the doctrine & view that whatever an individual feels—pleasure, pain, neither-pleasure-nor-pain—is entirely caused by what was done before—slip past what they themselves know, slip past what is agreed on by the world. Therefore I say that those contemplatives & brahmins are wrong.

“There are cases where some feelings arise based on phlegm... based on internal winds... based on a combination of bodily humors... from the change of the seasons... from uneven [‘out-of-tune’] care of the body... from attacks... from the result of kamma. You yourself should know how some feelings arise from the result of kamma. Even the world is agreed on how some feelings arise from the result of kamma. So any contemplatives & brahmins who are of the doctrine & view that whatever an individual feels—pleasure, pain, neither pleasure-nor-pain—is entirely caused by what was done before—slip past what they themselves know, slip past what is agreed on by the world. Therefore I say that those contemplatives & brahmins are wrong.” — *SN 36:21*

“What, monks, is old kamma? The eye is to be seen as old kamma, fabricated & willed, capable of being felt. The ear... The nose... The tongue... The body... The intellect is to be seen as old kamma, fabricated & willed, capable of being felt. This is called old kamma.

“And what is new kamma? Whatever kamma one does now with the body, with speech, or with the intellect. This is called new kamma.

“And what is the cessation of kamma? Whoever touches the release that comes from the cessation of bodily kamma, verbal kamma, & mental kamma. That is called the cessation of kamma.

“And what is the path of practice leading to the cessation of kamma? Just this noble eightfold path.... This is called the path of practice leading to the cessation of kamma.” — *SN 35:145*

“There is the case where a woman or man is one who harms beings with his/her fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a plane of deprivation... If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is sickly wherever reborn. This is the way leading to sickness: to be one who harms beings with one’s fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives.

“But then there is the case where a woman or man is not one who harms beings with his/her fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives. Through having adopted & carried out such actions, on the break-up of the body, after death, he/she reappears in a good destination... If instead he/she comes to the human state, then he/she is healthy wherever reborn. This is the way leading to health: not to be one who harms beings with one’s fists, with clods, with sticks, or with knives.” — *MN 135*

Hunger: the foremost illness.
 Fabrications: the foremost pain.
 For one knowing this truth
 as it has come to be,
 unbinding
 is the foremost ease. — *Dhp 203*

Then the householder Nakulapitar... went to Ven. Sāriputta and on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, Ven. Sāriputta said to him, “Your faculties are clear & calm, householder, your complexion pure. Have you had the opportunity of listening to a Dhamma talk in the presence of the Blessed One today?”

“How could it be otherwise, venerable sir? I have just now been sprinkled by the Blessed One with the deathless ambrosia of a Dhamma talk.”

“And how were you sprinkled by the Blessed One with the deathless ambrosia of a Dhamma talk?”

“Just now I went to the Blessed One and on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As I was sitting there I said to him, ‘Lord, I am a feeble old man, aged, advanced in years, having come to the last stage of life. I am afflicted in body & ailing with every moment. And it is only rarely that I get to see the

Blessed One & the monks who nourish the heart. May the Blessed One teach me, may the Blessed One instruct me, for my long-term benefit & happiness.’

“When this was said, the Blessed One said to me, ‘So it is, householder. So it is. The body is afflicted, weak, & encumbered. For who, looking after this body, would claim even a moment of true health, except through sheer foolishness? So you should train yourself: “Even though I may be afflicted in body, my mind will be unafflicted.” That is how you should train yourself.’ That’s how I was sprinkled by the Blessed One with the deathless ambrosia of a Dhamma talk.”

“But why didn’t it occur to you to question the Blessed One further: ‘In what way is one afflicted in body & afflicted in mind? And in what way is one afflicted in body but unafflicted in mind?’

“I would come from a long way away to hear the explication of these words in Ven. Sāriputta’s presence. It would be good if Ven. Sāriputta himself would enlighten me as to their meaning.”

“Then in that case, householder, listen & pay close attention. I will speak.”

“As you say, venerable sir,” the householder Nakulapitar responded to him.

Ven. Sāriputta said: “Now, how is one afflicted in body & afflicted in mind?”

“There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for people of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—assumes form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He is seized with the idea that ‘I am form’ or ‘Form is mine.’ As he is seized with these ideas, that form changes & alters. From the change & alteration in his form, there arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“He assumes feeling to be the self, or the self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in the self, or the self as in feeling. He is seized with the idea that ‘I am feeling’ or ‘Feeling is mine.’ As he is seized with these ideas, that feeling changes & alters. From the change & alteration in the feeling, there arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“He assumes perception to be the self, or the self as possessing perception, or perception as in the self, or the self as in perception. He is seized with the idea that ‘I am perception’ or ‘Perception is mine.’ As he is seized with these ideas, that perception changes & alters. From the change & alteration in the perception, there arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“He assumes fabrications to be the self, or the self as possessing fabrications, or fabrications as in the self, or the self as in fabrications. He is seized with the idea that ‘I am fabrications’ or ‘Fabrications are mine.’ As he is seized with these ideas, those fabrications change & alter. From the change & alteration in the fabrications, there arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“He assumes consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. He is seized with the idea that ‘I am consciousness’ or ‘Consciousness is mine.’ As he is seized with these ideas, that consciousness changes & alters. From the change

& alteration in the consciousness, there arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“This, householder, is how one is afflicted in body and afflicted in mind.

“And how is one afflicted in body but unafflicted in mind? There is the case where a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—who has regard for noble ones, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma; who has regard for people of integrity, is well-versed & disciplined in their Dhamma—doesn’t assume form to be the self, or the self as possessing form, or form as in the self, or the self as in form. He is not seized with the idea that ‘I am form’ or ‘Form is mine.’ As he is not seized with these ideas, that form changes & alters. From the change & alteration in the form, there do not arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“He doesn’t assume feeling to be the self....

“He doesn’t assume perception to be the self....

“He doesn’t assume fabrications to be the self....

“He doesn’t assume consciousness to be the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in the self, or the self as in consciousness. He is not seized with the idea that ‘I am consciousness’ or ‘Consciousness is mine.’ As he is not seized with these ideas, that consciousness changes & alters. From the change & alteration in the consciousness, there do not arise in him sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair.

“This, householder, is how one is afflicted in body but unafflicted in mind.”

That is what Ven. Sāriputta said. Gratified, the householder Nakulapitar delighted in Ven. Sāriputta’s words. — *SN 22:1*

“[5] One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe in sensitive to rapture.’ One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe out sensitive to rapture.’ [6] One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe in sensitive to pleasure.’ One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe out sensitive to pleasure.’ [7] One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe in sensitive to mental fabrication.’ One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe out sensitive to mental fabrication.’ [8] One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe in calming mental fabrication.’ One trains oneself, ‘I will breathe out calming mental fabrication.’” — *MN 118*

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Forest, the Squirrels’ Sanctuary. And on that occasion Ven. Mahā Kassapa was staying in the Pepper Tree Cave: diseased, in pain, severely ill. Then the Blessed One, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to Ven. Mahā Kassapa and, on arrival, sat down on a seat made ready. Having sat down, he said to Ven. Mahā Kassapa, “I hope you are getting better, Kassapa. I hope you are comfortable. I hope that your pains are lessening and not increasing. I hope that there are signs of their lessening, and not of their increasing.”

“I am not getting better, lord. I am not comfortable. My extreme pains are increasing, not lessening. There are signs of their increasing, and not of their lessening.”

“Kassapa, these seven factors for awakening rightly taught by me, when developed & pursued, lead to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to unbinding. Which seven?”

“Mindfulness as a factor for awakening rightly taught by me, when developed & pursued, leads to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to unbinding.

“Analysis of qualities as a factor for awakening, rightly taught by me, when developed and pursued, leads to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to unbinding.

“Persistence as a factor for awakening....

“Rapture as a factor for awakening....

“Calm as a factor for awakening....

“Concentration as a factor for awakening....

“Equanimity as a factor for awakening rightly taught by me, when developed & pursued, leads to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to unbinding.

“Kassapa, these are the seven factors for awakening rightly taught by me that—when developed & pursued—lead to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to unbinding.”

“They are indeed factors for awakening, O Blessed One. They are indeed factors for awakening, O One Well-Gone.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Mahā Kassapa delighted in the Blessed One’s words. And Ven. Mahā Kassapa recovered from his disease. That was how Ven. Mahā Kassapa’s disease was abandoned. — *SN 46:14*

Then in the Blessed One, when he had entered the Rains retreat, there arose a severe disease with intense pains & deadly. But the Blessed One endured it—mindful, alert, & not struck down by it. The thought occurred to him, “It would not be proper for me to totally unbind without having addressed my attendants or taken leave of the Saṅgha of monks. Why don’t I, bending back this disease with persistence, keep determining the fabrications of life?” So the Blessed One, bending back the disease with persistence, kept determining the fabrications of life. And his disease calmed down. — *DN 16*

APPROACHING DEATH

“I designate the rebirth of one who has sustenance, Vaccha, and not of one without sustenance. Just as a fire burns with sustenance and not without sustenance, even so I designate the rebirth of one who has sustenance and not of one without sustenance.”

“But, Master Gotama, at the moment a flame is being swept on by the wind and goes a far distance, what do you designate as its sustenance then?”

“Vaccha, when a flame is being swept on by the wind and goes a far distance, I designate it as wind-sustained, for the wind is its sustenance at that time.”

“And at the moment when a being sets this body aside and is not yet reborn in another body, what do you designate as its sustenance then?”

“Vaccha, when a being sets this body aside and is not yet reborn in another body, I designate it as craving-sustained, for craving is its sustenance at that time.” — SN 44:9

“Now, Ānanda, in the case of the person who takes life, takes what is not given [steals], engages in illicit sex, lies, speaks divisively, speaks abusively, engages in idle chatter; is covetous, malevolent, & holds wrong view, and, with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell: Either earlier he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or later he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out wrong view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. And as for the results of taking life... holding wrong view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.

“In the case of the person who takes life... & holds wrong view (yet), with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world: Either earlier he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or later he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out right view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world. But as for the results of taking life... holding wrong view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.

“In the case of the person who abstains from taking life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from illicit sex, abstains from lying, abstains from speaking divisively, abstains from speaking abusively, abstains from idle chatter, is not covetous, not malevolent, & holds right view, and, with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world: Either earlier he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or later he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out right view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world. And as for the results of abstaining from taking life... holding right view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.”

“In the case of the person who abstains from taking life... & holds right view (yet) with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell: Either earlier he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or later he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out wrong view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a

plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. But as for the results of abstaining from taking life... holding right view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.

“Thus, Ānanda, there is action that is ineffectual and apparently ineffectual. There is action that is ineffectual but apparently effectual. There is action that is both effectual and apparently effectual. There is action that is effectual but apparently ineffectual.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Ānanda delighted in the Blessed One’s words. — *MN 136*

“There are these four qualities that lead to a lay person’s happiness and well-being in lives to come. Which four? Being consummate in conviction, being consummate in virtue, being consummate in generosity, being consummate in discernment.

“And what does it mean to be consummate in conviction? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones has conviction, is convinced of the Tathāgata’s awakening: ‘Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed.’ This is called being consummate in conviction.

“And what does it mean to be consummate in virtue? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking life, abstains from stealing, abstains from sexual misconduct, abstains from lying, abstains from taking intoxicants that cause heedlessness. This is called being consummate in virtue.

“And what does it mean to be consummate in generosity? There is the case of a disciple of the noble ones, his awareness cleansed of the stain of miserliness, living at home, freely generous, openhanded, delighting in being magnanimous, responsive to requests, delighting in the distribution of alms. This is called being consummate in generosity.

“And what does it mean to be consummate in discernment? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising and passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. This is called being consummate in discernment.” — *AN 8:54*

“There is the case where the disciple of the noble ones recollects the devas, thus: ‘There are the Devas of the Four Great Kings, the Devas of the Thirty-three, the Devas of the Hours, the Contented Devas, the Devas Delighting in Creation, the Devas [Muses?] Wielding Power over the Creations of Others, the Devas of Brahmā’s retinue, the devas beyond them. Whatever *conviction* they were endowed with that—when falling away from this life—they re-arose there, the same sort of conviction is present in me as well.

“Whatever *virtue* they were endowed with...

“Whatever *learning* they were endowed with ...

“Whatever *generosity* they were endowed with ...

“Whatever *discernment* they were endowed with that—when falling away from this life—they re-rose there, the same sort of discernment is present in me as well.’ As he is recollecting the devas, his mind is calmed, and joy arises; the defilements of his mind are abandoned, just as when gold is cleansed through the proper technique.” — AN 3:71

“And what is the treasure of learning? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones has heard much, has retained what he/she has heard, has stored what he/she has heard. Whatever teachings are admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end, that—in their meaning & expression—proclaim the holy life that is entirely perfect, surpassingly pure: Those he/she has listened to often, retained, discussed, accumulated, examined with his/her mind, and well-penetrated in terms of his/her views. This is called the treasure of learning.” — AN 7:6

“Monks, don’t be afraid of acts of merit. This is a synonym for what is blissful, desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming—i.e., acts of merit. I directly know that, having long performed meritorious deeds, I long experienced desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming results. Having developed a mind of goodwill for seven years, then for seven eons of contraction & expansion I didn’t return to this world. Whenever the eon was contracting, I entered the [realm of] Radiance. Whenever the eon was expanding, I reappeared in an empty Brahma-abode. There I was Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Unconquered Conqueror, Total Seer, Wielder of Power. Then for thirty-six times I was Sakka, ruler of the devas. For many hundreds of times I was a king, a wheel-turning emperor, a righteous king of Dhamma, conqueror of the four corners of the earth, maintaining stable control over the countryside, endowed with the seven treasures—to say nothing of the times I was a local king. The thought occurred to me, ‘Of what action of mine is this the fruit, of what action the result, that I now have such great power & might?’ Then the thought occurred to me, ‘This is the fruit of my three [types of] action, the result of three types of action, that I now have such great power & might: i.e., generosity, self-control, & restraint.’”

Train in acts of merit
 that yield the foremost profit of bliss—
 develop generosity,
 a life in tune,
 a mind of goodwill.
 Developing these
 three things
 that bring about bliss,
 the wise reappear
 in a world of bliss

unalloyed.

— *Iti 22*

Then Ven. Sāriputta, together with the lay followers from Campā, went to the Blessed One and on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: “Might there be the case where a person gives a gift of a certain sort and it does not bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort and it bears great fruit and great benefit?”

“Yes, Sāriputta, there would be the case where a person gives a gift of a certain sort and it does not bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort and it bears great fruit and great benefit.”

“Lord, what is the cause, what is the reason, why a person gives a gift of a certain sort and it does not bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort and it bears great fruit and great benefit?”

“Sāriputta, there is the case where a person gives a gift seeking his own profit, with a mind attached (to the reward), seeking to store up for himself (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death.’ He gives his gift—food, drink, clothing, a vehicle; a garland, perfume, & ointment; bedding, shelter, & a lamp—to a contemplative or a brahman. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might a person give such a gift as this?”

“Yes, lord.”

“Having given this gift seeking his own profit—with a mind attached (to the reward), seeking to store up for himself, (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death’—on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Four Great Kings. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Then there is the case of a person who gives a gift not seeking his own profit, not with a mind attached (to the reward), not seeking to store up for himself, nor (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death.’ Instead, he gives a gift with the thought, ‘Giving is good.’ He gives his gift—food, drink, clothing, a vehicle; a garland, perfume, & ointment; bedding, shelter, & a lamp—to a contemplative or a brahman. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might a person give such a gift as this?”

“Yes, lord.”

“Having given this gift with the thought, ‘Giving is good,’ on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Devas of the Thirty-three. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Or, instead of thinking, ‘Giving is good,’ he gives a gift with the thought, ‘This was given in the past, done in the past, by my father & grandfather. It would not be right for me to let this old family custom be discontinued’... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Devas of the Hours. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Or, instead... he gives a gift with the thought, ‘I am well-off. These are not well-off. It would not be right for me, being well-off, not to give a gift to those who are not well-off’ ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Contented Devas. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Or, instead... he gives a gift with the thought, ‘Just as there were the great sacrifices of the sages of the past—Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamadaggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, & Bhagu—in the same way will this be my distribution of gifts’ ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Devas who Delight in Creation. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Or, instead... he gives a gift with the thought, ‘When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise’ ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Devas Wielding Power over the Creations of Others. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Or, instead of thinking, ‘When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise,’ he gives a gift with the thought, ‘This is an ornament for the mind, a support for the mind.’ He gives his gift—food, drink, clothing, a vehicle; a garland, perfume, & ointment; bedding, shelter, & a lamp—to a contemplative or a brahman. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might a person give such a gift as this?”

“Yes, lord.”

“Having given this, not seeking his own profit, not with a mind attached (to the reward), not seeking to store up for himself, nor (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death,’

—nor with the thought, ‘Giving is good,’

—nor with the thought, ‘This was given in the past, done in the past, by my father & grandfather. It would not be right for me to let this old family custom be discontinued,’

—nor with the thought, ‘I am well-off. These are not well-off. It would not be right for me, being well-off, not to give a gift to those who are not well-off,’

—nor with the thought, ‘Just as there were the great sacrifices of the sages of the past—Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamadaggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, & Bhagu—in the same way this will be my distribution of gifts,’

—nor with the thought, ‘When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise,’

—but with the thought, ‘This is an ornament for the mind, a support for the mind’—on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of Brahmā’s Retinue. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a non-returner. He does not come back to this world.

“This, Sāriputta, is the cause, this is the reason, why a person gives a gift of a certain sort and it does not bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort and it bears great fruit and great benefit.” — AN 7:49

“Monks, there are these four types of individuals to be found existing in the world. Which four?

“There is the case where an individual keeps pervading the first direction [the east]—as well as the second direction, the third, & the fourth—with an awareness imbued with goodwill. Thus he keeps pervading above, below, & all around, everywhere & in every respect the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with goodwill: abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will. He savors that, longs for that, finds satisfaction through that. Staying there—fixed on that, dwelling there often, not falling away from that—then when he dies he reappears in conjunction with the devas of Brahmā’s retinue. The devas of Brahmā’s retinue, monks, have a lifespan of an eon. A run-of-the-mill person having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, goes to hell, to the animal womb, to the state of the hungry ghosts. But a disciple of the Blessed One, having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, is unbound right in that state of being. This, monks, is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor, between an educated disciple of the noble ones and an uneducated run-of-the-mill person, when there is a destination, a reappearing.

“And further, there is the case where an individual keeps pervading the first direction [the east]—as well as the second direction, the third, & the fourth—with an awareness imbued with compassion. Thus he keeps pervading above, below, & all around, everywhere & in every respect the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with compassion: abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will. He savors that, longs for that, finds satisfaction through that. Staying there—fixed on that, dwelling there often, not falling away from that—then when he dies he reappears in conjunction with the Ābhassara [Radiant] devas.¹ The Ābhassara devas, monks, have a lifespan of two eons. A run-of-the-mill person having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, goes to hell, to the animal womb, to the state of the hungry ghosts. But a disciple of the Blessed One, having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, is unbound right in that state of being. This, monks, is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor, between an educated disciple of the noble ones and an uneducated run-of-the-mill person, when there is a destination, a reappearing.²

“And further, there is the case where an individual keeps pervading the first direction [the east]—as well as the second direction, the third, & the fourth—with an awareness imbued with empathetic joy. Thus he keeps pervading above, below, & all around, everywhere & in every respect the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with empathetic joy: abundant, expansive,

immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will. He savors that, longs for that, finds satisfaction through that. Staying there—fixed on that, dwelling there often, not falling away from that—then when he dies he reappears in conjunction with the Subhakiṇha [Beautiful Black] devas. The Subhakiṇha devas, monks, have a lifespan of four eons. A run-of-the-mill person having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, goes to hell, to the animal womb, to the state of the hungry ghosts. But a disciple of the Blessed One, having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, is unbound right in that state of being. This, monks, is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor, between an educated disciple of the noble ones and an uneducated run-of-the-mill person, when there is a destination, a reappearing.

“And further, there is the case where an individual keeps pervading the first direction [the east]—as well as the second direction, the third, & the fourth—with an awareness imbued with equanimity. Thus he keeps pervading above, below, & all around, everywhere & in every respect the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with equanimity: abundant, expansive, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will. He savors that, longs for that, finds satisfaction through that. Staying there—fixed on that, dwelling there often, not falling away from that—then when he dies he reappears in conjunction with the Vehapphala [Sky-fruit] devas. The Vehapphala devas, monks, have a lifespan of 500 eons. A run-of-the-mill person having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, goes to hell, to the animal womb, to the state of the hungry ghosts. But a disciple of the Blessed One, having stayed there, having used up all the lifespan of those devas, is unbound right in that state of being. This, monks, is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor, between an educated disciple of the noble ones and an uneducated run-of-the-mill person, when there is a destination, a reappearing.

“These are four types of individuals to be found existing in the world.” — *AN 4:125*

I have heard that at one time the Blessed One was staying near Nāḍika in the Brick Hall. There he addressed the monks, “Monks!”

“Yes, lord,” the monks responded to him.

The Blessed One said, “Mindfulness of death, when developed & pursued, is of great fruit & great benefit. It gains a footing in the deathless, has the deathless as its final end. Therefore you should develop mindfulness of death.”

When this was said, a certain monk addressed the Blessed One, “I already develop mindfulness of death.”

“And how do you develop mindfulness of death?”

“I think, ‘O, that I might live for a day & night, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal.’ This is how I develop mindfulness of death.”

Then another monk addressed the Blessed One, “I, too, already develop mindfulness of death.”

“And how do you develop mindfulness of death?”

“I think, ‘O, that I might live for a day, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal.’ This is how I develop mindfulness of death.”

Then another monk addressed the Blessed One, “I, too, develop mindfulness of death.”... “I think, ‘O, that I might live for the interval that it takes to eat a meal, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal.’...”

Then another monk addressed the Blessed One, “I, too, develop mindfulness of death.”... “I think, ‘O, that I might live for the interval that it takes to swallow, having chewed up four morsels of food, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal.’...”

Then another monk addressed the Blessed One, “I, too, develop mindfulness of death.”... “I think, ‘O, that I might live for the interval that it takes to swallow, having chewed up one morsel of food, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal.’...”

Then another monk addressed the Blessed One, “I, too, develop mindfulness of death.”... “I think, ‘O, that I might live for the interval that it takes to breathe out after breathing in, or to breathe in after breathing out, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal.’ This is how I develop mindfulness of death.”

When this was said, the Blessed One addressed the monks. “Whoever develops mindfulness of death, thinking, ‘O, that I might live for a day & night... for a day... for the interval that it takes to eat a meal... for the interval that it takes to swallow having chewed up four morsels of food, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal’—they are said to dwell heedlessly. They develop mindfulness of death slowly for the sake of ending the effluents.

“But whoever develops mindfulness of death, thinking, ‘O, that I might live for the interval that it takes to swallow having chewed up one morsel of food... for the interval that it takes to breathe out after breathing in, or to breathe in after breathing out, that I might attend to the Blessed One’s instructions. I would have accomplished a great deal’—they are said to dwell heedfully. They develop mindfulness of death acutely for the sake of ending the effluents.

“Therefore you should train yourselves: ‘We will dwell heedfully. We will develop mindfulness of death acutely for the sake of ending the effluents.’ That is how you should train yourselves.” — *AN 6:19*

I have heard that at one time the Blessed One was staying near Nādika in the Brick Hall. There he addressed the monks, “Monks, mindfulness of death—when developed & pursued—is of great fruit & great benefit. It gains a footing in the deathless, has the deathless as its final end. And how is mindfulness of death developed & pursued so that it is of great fruit & great benefit, gains a footing in the deathless, and has the deathless as its final end?”

“There is the case where a monk, as day departs and night returns, reflects: ‘Many are the (possible) causes of my death. A snake might bite me, a scorpion might sting me, a centipede might bite me. That would be how my death would come about. That would be an obstruction for me. Stumbling, I might fall; my food, digested, might trouble me; my bile might be provoked, my phlegm... piercing wind forces (in the body) might be provoked. That would be how my death would come about. That would be an obstruction for me.’ Then the monk should investigate: ‘Are there any evil, unskillful qualities unabandoned by me that would be an obstruction for me were I to die in the night?’

“If, on reflecting, he realizes that there are evil, unskillful qualities unabandoned by him that would be an obstruction for him were he to die in the night, then he should put forth extra desire, effort, diligence, endeavor, relentlessness, mindfulness, & alertness for the abandoning of those very same evil, unskillful qualities. Just as when a person whose turban or head was on fire would put forth extra desire, effort, diligence, endeavor, relentlessness, mindfulness, & alertness to put out the fire on his turban or head, in the same way the monk should put forth extra desire, effort, diligence, endeavor, relentlessness, mindfulness, & alertness for the abandoning of those very same evil, unskillful qualities.

“But if, on reflecting, he realizes that there are no evil, unskillful qualities unabandoned by him that would be an obstruction for him were he to die in the night, then for that very reason he should dwell in joy & rapture, training himself day & night in skillful qualities.

[Similarly as night departs and day returns.]

“This, monks, is how mindfulness of death is developed & pursued so that it is of great fruit & great benefit, gains a footing in the deathless, and has the deathless as its final end.” — *AN 6:20*

You shouldn't chase after the past
or place expectations on the future.

What is past
is left behind.

The future
is as yet unreached.

Whatever quality is present
you clearly see right there,
right there.

Not taken in,
unshaken,
that's how you develop the heart.

Ardently doing
what should be done today,
for—who knows?— tomorrow
death.

There is no bargaining
 with Mortality & his mighty horde.
 Whoever lives thus ardently,
 relentlessly
 both day & night,
 has truly had an auspicious day:
 So says the Peaceful Sage. — *MN 131*

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Vesāli at the Gabled Hall in the Great Forest. Then, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, he went to the sick ward. On arrival he sat down on a seat made ready. Having sat down, he addressed the monks: “A monk should approach the time of death mindful & alert. This is our instruction to you all.

“And how is a monk mindful? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves... mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—putting aside greed & distress with reference to the world. This is how a monk is mindful.

“And how is a monk alert? When going forward & returning, he makes himself fully alert; when looking toward & looking away... when bending & extending his limbs... when carrying his outer cloak, his upper robe & his bowl... when eating, drinking, chewing, & savoring... when urinating & defecating... when walking, standing, sitting, falling asleep, waking up, talking, & remaining silent, he makes himself fully alert. This is how a monk is alert.

“So a monk should approach the time of death mindful & alert. This is our instruction to you all.

“As a monk is dwelling thus mindful & alert—heedful, ardent, & resolute—a feeling of pleasure arises in him. He discerns that ‘A feeling of pleasure has arisen in me. It’s dependent on a requisite condition, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on this body. Now, this body is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. Being dependent on a body that is inconstant, fabricated, & dependently co-arisen, how can this feeling of pleasure that has arisen be constant?’ He remains focused on inconstancy with regard to the body & to the feeling of pleasure. He remains focused on dissolution... dispassion... cessation... relinquishment with regard to the body & to the feeling of pleasure. As he remains focused on inconstancy... dissolution... dispassion... cessation... relinquishment with regard to the body & to the feeling of pleasure, he abandons any passion-obsession for the body & the feeling of pleasure.

“As he is dwelling thus mindful & alert—heedful, ardent, & resolute—a feeling of pain arises in him. He discerns that ‘A feeling of pain has arisen in me. It’s dependent on a requisite condition, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on this body. Now, this body is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. Being dependent on a body that is inconstant, fabricated, &

dependently co-arisen, how can this feeling of pain that has arisen be constant?' He remains focused on inconstancy with regard to the body & to the feeling of pain. He remains focused on dissolution... dispassion... cessation... relinquishment with regard to the body & to the feeling of pain. As he remains focused on inconstancy... dissolution... dispassion... cessation... relinquishment with regard to the body & to the feeling of pain, he abandons any resistance-obsession for the body & the feeling of pain.

"As he is dwelling thus mindful & alert—heedful, ardent, & resolute—a feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain arises in him. He discerns that 'A feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain has arisen in me. It's dependent on a requisite condition, not independent. Dependent on what? Dependent on this body. Now, this body is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. Being dependent on a body that is inconstant, fabricated, & dependently co-arisen, how can this feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain that has arisen be constant?' He remains focused on inconstancy with regard to the body & to the feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain. He remains focused on dissolution... dispassion... cessation... relinquishment with regard to the body & to the feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain. As he remains focused on inconstancy... dissolution... dispassion... cessation... relinquishment with regard to the body & to the feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain, he abandons any ignorance-obsession for the body & the feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain.

"Sensing a feeling of pleasure, he discerns that it is inconstant, not grasped at, not relished. Sensing a feeling of pain... Sensing a feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain, he discerns that it is inconstant, not grasped at, not relished. Sensing a feeling of pleasure, he senses it disjoined from it. Sensing a feeling of pain... Sensing a feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain, he senses it disjoined from it. When sensing a feeling limited to the body, he discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to the body.' When sensing a feeling limited to life, he discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to life.' He discerns that 'With the break-up of the body, after the termination of life, all that is experienced, not being relished, will grow cold right here.'

"Just as an oil lamp burns in dependence on oil & wick; and from the termination of the oil & wick—and from not being provided any other sustenance—it goes out unnourished; in the same way, when sensing a feeling limited to the body, he discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to the body.' When sensing a feeling limited to life, he discerns that 'I am sensing a feeling limited to life.' He discerns that 'With the break-up of the body, after the termination of life, all that is sensed, not being relished, will grow cold right here.'" — *SN 36:7*

"Just as the royal frontier fortress has a gatekeeper—wise, competent, intelligent—to keep out those he doesn't know and to let in those he does, for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way a disciple of the noble ones is mindful, endowed with excellent proficiency in

mindfulness, remembering & able to call to mind even things that were done & said long ago. With mindfulness as his gatekeeper, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity.”
— AN 7:63

“Once a hawk suddenly swooped down on a quail and seized it. Then the quail, as it was being carried off by the hawk, lamented, ‘O, just my bad luck and lack of merit that I was wandering out of my proper range and into the territory of others! If only I had kept to my proper range today, to my own ancestral territory, this hawk would have been no match for me in battle.’

“‘But what is your proper range?’ the hawk asked. ‘What is your own ancestral territory?’

“‘A newly plowed field with clumps of earth all turned up.’

“So the hawk, without bragging about its own strength, without mentioning its own strength, let go of the quail. ‘Go, quail, but even when you have gone there you won’t escape me.’

“Then the quail, having gone to a newly plowed field with clumps of earth all turned up and climbing up on top of a large clump of earth, stood taunting the hawk, ‘Now come and get me, you hawk! Now come and get me, you hawk!’

“So the hawk, without bragging about its own strength, without mentioning its own strength, folded its two wings and suddenly swooped down toward the quail. When the quail knew, ‘The hawk is coming at me full speed,’ it slipped behind the clump of earth, and right there the hawk shattered its own breast.

“This is what happens to anyone who wanders into what is not his proper range and is the territory of others.

“For this reason, you should not wander into what is not your proper range and is the territory of others. In one who wanders into what is not his proper range and is the territory of others, Māra gains an opening, Māra gains a foothold. And what, for a monk, is not his proper range and is the territory of others? The five strings of sensuality. Which five? Forms cognizable by the eye—agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, enticing, linked with sensual desire. Sounds cognizable by the ear... Aromas cognizable by the nose... Flavors cognizable by the tongue... Tactile sensations cognizable by the body—agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, enticing, linked with sensual desire. These, for a monk, are not his proper range and are the territory of others.

“Wander, monks, in what is your proper range, your own ancestral territory. In one who wanders in what is his proper range, his own ancestral territory, Māra gains no opening, Māra gains no foothold. And what, for a monk, is his proper range, his own ancestral territory? The four establishings of mindfulness. Which four? There is the case where a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves... mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed

& distress with reference to the world. This, for a monk, is his proper range, his own ancestral territory.” — AN 47:6

“And how is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing developed & pursued so as to bring the four establishings of mindfulness to their culmination?

“[1] On whatever occasion a monk breathing in long discerns, ‘I am breathing in long’; or breathing out long, discerns, ‘I am breathing out long’; or breathing in short, discerns, ‘I am breathing in short’; or breathing out short, discerns, ‘I am breathing out short’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&... out sensitive to the entire body’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out calming bodily fabrication’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *body* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—the in-&-out breath—is classed as a body among bodies, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[2] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to rapture’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to pleasure’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to mental fabrication’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out calming mental fabrication’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on *feelings* in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I tell you, monks, that this—careful attention to in-&-out breaths—is classed as a feeling among feelings,⁶ which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on feelings in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[3] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out sensitive to the mind’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out gladdening the mind’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out concentrating the mind’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out releasing the mind’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on the *mind* in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. I don’t say that there is mindfulness of in-&-out breathing in one of lapsed mindfulness and no alertness, which is why the monk on that occasion remains focused on the mind in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“[4] On whatever occasion a monk trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on inconstancy’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on dispassion’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on cessation’; trains himself, ‘I will breathe in...&...out focusing on relinquishing’: On that occasion the monk remains focused on *mental qualities* in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He who sees with discernment the abandoning of greed & distress is one who watches carefully with equanimity, which is why the monk on that occasion

remains focused on mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world.

“This is how mindfulness of in-&-out breathing is developed & pursued so as to bring the four establishings of mindfulness to their culmination.” — *MN 118*

“When a monk is intent on the heightened mind, there are five themes he should attend to at the appropriate times. Which five?”

“There is the case where evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—arise in a monk while he is referring to and attending to a particular theme. He should attend to another theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful. When he is attending to this other theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful, then those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a dexterous carpenter or his apprentice would use a small peg to knock out, drive out, and pull out a large one; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—arise in a monk while he is referring to and attending to a particular theme, he should attend to another theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful. When he is attending to this other theme, apart from that one, connected with what is skillful, then those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

“If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to this other theme, connected with what is skillful, he should scrutinize the drawbacks of those thoughts: ‘Really, these thoughts of mine are unskillful, these thoughts of mine are blameworthy, these thoughts of mine result in stress.’ As he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a young woman—or man—fond of adornment, would be horrified, humiliated, and disgusted if the carcass of a snake or a dog or a human being were hung from her neck; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to this other theme, connected with what is skillful, he should scrutinize the drawbacks of those thoughts: ‘Really, these thoughts of mine are unskillful, these thoughts of mine are blameworthy, these thoughts of mine result in stress.’ As he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion, or delusion—are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

“If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, he should pay no mind and pay no attention to those thoughts. As he is paying no mind and paying no attention to them, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a man with good eyes, not wanting to see forms that had come into range, would close his eyes or look away; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts, he should pay no mind and pay no attention to those thoughts. As he is paying no mind and paying no attention to them, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

“If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts, he should attend to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts. As he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as the thought would occur to a man walking quickly, ‘Why am I walking quickly? Why don’t I walk slowly?’ So he walks slowly. The thought occurs to him, ‘Why am I walking slowly? Why don’t I stand?’ So he stands. The thought occurs to him, ‘Why am I standing? Why don’t I sit down?’ So he sits down. The thought occurs to him, ‘Why am I sitting? Why don’t I lie down?’ So he lies down. In this way, giving up the grosser posture, he takes up the more refined one. In the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts, he should attend to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts. As he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

“If evil, unskillful thoughts—connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, then—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he should beat down, constrain, and crush his mind with his awareness. As—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he is beating down, constraining, and crushing his mind with his awareness, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it. Just as a strong man, seizing a weaker man by the head or the throat or the shoulders, would beat him down, constrain, and crush him; in the same way, if evil, unskillful thoughts—

connected with desire, aversion or delusion—still arise in the monk while he is attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts, then—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he should beat down, constrain, and crush his mind with his awareness. As—with his teeth clenched and his tongue pressed against the roof of his mouth—he is beating down, constraining, and crushing his mind with his awareness, those evil, unskillful thoughts are abandoned and subside. With their abandoning, he steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it, and concentrates it.

“Now when a monk... attending to another theme... scrutinizing the drawbacks of those thoughts... paying no mind and paying no attention to those thoughts... attending to the relaxing of thought-fabrication with regard to those thoughts... beating down, constraining and crushing his mind with his awareness... steadies his mind right within, settles it, unifies it and concentrates it: He is then called a monk with mastery over the ways of thought sequences. He thinks whatever thought he wants to, and doesn't think whatever thought he doesn't. He has severed craving, thrown off the fetters, and—through the right penetration of conceit—has made an end of suffering & stress.” — *MN 20*

Once the Blessed One was living among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt. At that time Ven. Mahā Moggallāna [prior to his awakening] sat nodding near the village of Kallavālamutta, in Magadha. The Blessed One, with his purified divine eye, surpassing the human, saw Ven. Mahā Moggallāna as he sat nodding near the village of Kallavālamutta in Magadha. As soon as he saw this—just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm—he disappeared from among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest near Crocodile Haunt and re-appeared near the village of Kallavālamutta in Magadha, right in front of Ven. Mahā Moggallāna. There he sat down on a seat laid out. Seated, the Blessed One said to Ven. Mahā Moggallāna, “Are you nodding, Moggallāna? Are you nodding?”

“Yes, lord.”

“Well then, Moggallāna, whatever perception you have in mind when drowsiness descends on you, don't attend to that perception, don't pursue it. It's possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don't shake off your drowsiness, then recall to your awareness the Dhamma as you have heard & memorized it, re-examine it, & ponder it over in your mind. It's possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don't shake off your drowsiness, then repeat aloud in detail the Dhamma as you have heard & memorized it. It's possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don't shake off your drowsiness, then pull both your earlobes and rub your limbs with your hands. It's possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don’t shake off your drowsiness, then get up from your seat and, after washing your eyes out with water, look around in all directions and upward to the major stars & constellations. It’s possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don’t shake off your drowsiness, then attend to the perception of light, resolve on the perception of daytime, (dwelling) by night as by day, and by day as by night. By means of an awareness thus open & unhampered, develop a brightened mind. It’s possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don’t shake off your drowsiness, then—percipient of what lies in front & behind—set a distance to meditate walking back & forth, your senses inwardly immersed, your mind not straying outwards. It’s possible that by doing this you will shake off your drowsiness.

“But if by doing this you don’t shake off your drowsiness, then—reclining on your right side—take up the lion’s posture, one foot placed on top of the other, mindful, alert, with your mind set on getting up. As soon as you wake up, get up quickly, with the thought, ‘I won’t stay indulging in the pleasure of lying down, the pleasure of reclining, the pleasure of drowsiness.’ That is how you should train yourself.” — *AN 7:58*

“Brahman, there are those who, subject to death, are afraid & in terror of death. And there are those who, subject to death, are not afraid or in terror of death.

“And who is the person who, subject to death, is afraid & in terror of death? There is the case of the person who has not abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for sensuality. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought occurs to him, ‘O, those beloved sensual pleasures will be taken from me, and I will be taken from them!’ He grieves & is tormented, weeps, beats his breast, & grows delirious. This is a person who, subject to death, is afraid & in terror of death.

“Then there is the case of the person who has not abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for the body. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought occurs to him, ‘O, my beloved body will be taken from me, and I will be taken from my body!’ He grieves & is tormented, weeps, beats his breast, & grows delirious. This, too, is a person who, subject to death, is afraid & in terror of death.

“Then there is the case of the person who has not done what is good, has not done what is skillful, has not given protection to those in fear, and instead has done what is evil, savage, & cruel. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought occurs to him, ‘I have not done what is good, have not done what is skillful, have not given protection to those in fear, and instead have done what is evil, savage, & cruel. To the extent that there is a destination for those who have not done what is good, have not done what is skillful, have not given protection to those in fear, and instead have

done what is evil, savage, & cruel, that's where I'm headed after death.' He grieves & is tormented, weeps, beats his breast, & grows delirious. This, too, is a person who, subject to death, is afraid & in terror of death.

"Then there is the case of the person in doubt & perplexity, who has not arrived at certainty with regard to the True Dhamma. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought occurs to him, 'How doubtful & perplexed I am! I have not arrived at any certainty with regard to the True Dhamma!' He grieves & is tormented, weeps, beats his breast, & grows delirious. This, too, is a person who, subject to death, is afraid & in terror of death.

"These, brahman, are four people who, subject to death, are afraid & in terror of death.

"And who is the person who, subject to death, is not afraid or in terror of death?

"There is the case of the person who has abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for sensuality. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought doesn't occur to him, 'O, those beloved sensual pleasures will be taken from me, and I will be taken from them!' He doesn't grieve, isn't tormented; doesn't weep, beat his breast, or grow delirious. This is a person who, subject to death, is not afraid or in terror of death.

"Then there is the case of the person who has abandoned passion, desire, fondness, thirst, fever, & craving for the body. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought doesn't occur to him, 'O, my beloved body will be taken from me, and I will be taken from my body!' He doesn't grieve, isn't tormented; doesn't weep, beat his breast, or grow delirious. This, too, is a person who, subject to death, is not afraid or in terror of death.

"Then there is the case of the person who has done what is good, has done what is skillful, has given protection to those in fear, and has not done what is evil, savage, or cruel. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought occurs to him, 'I have done what is good, have done what is skillful, have given protection to those in fear, and I have not done what is evil, savage, or cruel. To the extent that there is a destination for those who have done what is good, what is skillful, have given protection to those in fear, and have not done what is evil, savage, or cruel, that's where I'm headed after death.' He doesn't grieve, isn't tormented; doesn't weep, beat his breast, or grow delirious. This, too, is a person who, subject to death, is not afraid or in terror of death.

"Then there is the case of the person who has no doubt or perplexity, who has arrived at certainty with regard to the True Dhamma. Then he comes down with a serious disease. As he comes down with a serious disease, the thought occurs to him, 'I have no doubt or perplexity. I have arrived at certainty with regard to the True Dhamma.' He doesn't grieve, isn't tormented; doesn't weep, beat his

breast, or grow delirious. This, too, is a person who, subject to death, is not afraid or in terror of death.

“These, brahman, are four people who, subject to death, are not afraid or in terror of death.” — *AN 4:184*

THE BODY

“And further... just as if a sack with openings at both ends were full of various kinds of grain—wheat, rice, mung beans, kidney beans, sesame seeds, husked rice—and a man with good eyesight, pouring it out, were to reflect, ‘This is wheat. This is rice. These are mung beans. These are kidney beans. These are sesame seeds. This is husked rice,’ in the same way, the monk reflects on this very body from the soles of the feet on up, from the crown of the head on down, surrounded by skin and full of various kinds of unclean things: ‘In this body there are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bones, bone marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, large intestines, small intestines, gorge, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, skin-oil, saliva, mucus, fluid in the joints, urine.’” — *DN 22*

“There is the case where a monk—having gone to the wilderness, to the foot of a tree, or to an empty dwelling—reflects thus: ‘This body has many pains, many drawbacks. In this body many kinds of disease arise, such as: seeing-diseases, hearing-diseases, nose-diseases, tongue-diseases, body-diseases, head-diseases, ear-diseases, mouth-diseases, teeth-diseases, cough, asthma, catarrh, fever, aging, stomach-ache, fainting, dysentery, grippe, cholera, leprosy, boils, ringworm, tuberculosis, epilepsy, skin-diseases, itch, scab, psoriasis, scabies, jaundice, diabetes, hemorrhoids, fistulas, ulcers; diseases arising from bile, from phlegm, from the wind-property, from combinations of bodily humors, from changes in the weather, from uneven care of the body, from attacks, from the result of kamma; cold, heat, hunger, thirst, defecation, urination.’ Thus he remains focused on drawbacks with regard to this body. This is called the perception of drawbacks.” — *AN 10:60*

“And further, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground—one day, two days, three days dead—bloated, livid, & festering, he applies it to this very body, ‘This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.’ ...

“Or again, as if he were to see a corpse cast away in a charnel ground, being chewed by crows, being chewed by vultures, being chewed by hawks, being chewed by dogs, being chewed by hyenas, being chewed by various other creatures... a skeleton smeared with flesh & blood, connected with tendons... a fleshless skeleton smeared with blood, connected with tendons... a skeleton without flesh or blood, connected with tendons... bones detached from their tendons, scattered in all directions—here a hand bone, there a foot bone, here a shin bone, there a thigh bone, here a hip bone, there a back bone, here a rib, there

a chest bone, here a shoulder bone, there a neck bone, here a jaw bone, there a tooth, here a skull... the bones whitened, somewhat like the color of shells... the bones piled up, more than a year old... the bones decomposed into a powder: He applies it to this very body, 'This body, too: Such is its nature, such is its future, such its unavoidable fate.'

"In this way he remains focused internally on the body in & of itself, or externally on the body in & of itself, or both internally & externally on the body in & of itself. Or he remains focused on the phenomenon of origination with regard to the body, on the phenomenon of passing away with regard to the body, or on the phenomenon of origination & passing away with regard to the body. Or his mindfulness that 'There is a body' is maintained to the extent of knowledge & remembrance. And he remains independent, unsustained by [not clinging to] anything in the world. This is how a monk remains focused on the body in & of itself." — DN 22

SENSUALITY

"Suppose a dog, overcome with weakness & hunger, were to come across a slaughterhouse, and there a dexterous butcher or butcher's apprentice were to fling him a chain of bones—thoroughly scraped, without any flesh, smeared with blood. What do you think? Would the dog, gnawing on that chain of bones—thoroughly scraped, without any flesh, smeared with blood—appease its weakness & hunger?"

"No, lord. And why is that? Because the chain of bones is thoroughly scraped, without any flesh, & smeared with blood. The dog would get nothing but its share of weariness & vexation."

"In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: 'The Blessed One has compared sensuality to a chain of bones, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.' Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness, dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.

"Now suppose a vulture, a kite, or a hawk, seizing a lump of flesh, were to take off, and other vultures, kites, or hawks—following right after it—were to tear at it with their beaks & pull at it with their claws. What do you think? If that vulture, kite, or hawk were not quickly to drop that lump of flesh, would it meet with death from that cause, or with death-like pain?"

"Yes, lord."

"In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: 'The Blessed One has compared sensuality to a lump of flesh, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.' Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness,

dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.

“Now suppose a man were to come against the wind, carrying a burning grass torch. What do you think? If he were not quickly to drop that grass torch, would he burn his hand or his arm or some other part of his body, so that he would meet with death from that cause, or with death-like pain?”

“Yes, lord.”

“In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: ‘The Blessed One has compared sensuality to a grass torch, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.’ Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness, dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.

“Now suppose there were a pit of glowing embers, deeper than a man’s height, full of embers that were neither flaming nor smoking, and a man were to come along—loving life, hating death, loving pleasure, abhorring pain—and two strong men, grabbing him with their arms, were to drag him to the pit of embers. What do you think? Wouldn’t the man twist his body this way & that?”

“Yes, lord. And why is that? Because he would realize, ‘If I fall into this pit of glowing embers, I will meet with death from that cause, or with death-like pain.’”

“In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: ‘The Blessed One has compared sensuality to a pit of glowing embers, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.’ Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness, dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.

“Now suppose a man, when dreaming, were to see delightful parks, delightful forests, delightful stretches of land, & delightful lakes, and on awakening were to see nothing. In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: ‘The Blessed One has compared sensuality to a dream, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.’ Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness, dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.

“Now suppose a man having borrowed some goods—a manly carriage, fine jewels, & ear ornaments—were to go into the market preceded & surrounded by his borrowed goods, and people seeing him would say, ‘How wealthy this man is, for this is how the wealthy enjoy their possessions,’ but the actual owners, wherever they might see him, would strip him then & there of what is theirs. What do you think? Should the man rightly be upset?”

“No, lord. And why is that? The owners are stripping him of what is theirs.”

“In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: ‘The Blessed One has compared sensuality to borrowed goods, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.’ Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness, dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.

“Now suppose that, not far from a village or town, there were a dense forest grove, and there in the grove was a tree with delicious fruit, abundant fruit, but with no fruit fallen to the ground. A man would come along, desiring fruit, looking for fruit, searching for fruit. Plunging into the forest grove, he would see the tree... and the thought would occur to him, ‘This is a tree with delicious fruit, abundant fruit, and there is no fruit fallen to the ground, but I know how to climb a tree. Why don’t I climb the tree, eat what I like, and fill my clothes with the fruit?’ So, having climbed the tree, he would eat what he liked and fill his clothes with the fruit. Then a second man would come along, desiring fruit, looking for fruit, searching for fruit and carrying a sharp ax. Plunging into the forest grove, he would see the tree... and the thought would occur to him, ‘This is a tree with delicious fruit, abundant fruit, and there is no fruit fallen to the ground, and I don’t know how to climb a tree. Why don’t I chop down this tree at the root, eat what I like, and fill my clothes with the fruit?’ So he would chop the tree at the root. What do you think? If the first man who climbed the tree didn’t quickly come down, wouldn’t the falling tree crush his hand or foot or some other part of his body, so that he would meet with death from that cause, or with death-like pain?”

“Yes, lord.”

“In the same way, householder, a disciple of the noble ones considers this point: ‘The Blessed One has compared sensuality to the fruits of a tree, of much stress, much despair, & greater drawbacks.’ Seeing this with right discernment, as it has come to be, then avoiding the equanimity coming from multiplicity, dependent on multiplicity, he develops the equanimity coming from singleness, dependent on singleness, where sustenance/clinging for the baits of the world ceases without trace.” — *MN 54*

“Now what, monks, is the allure of sensuality? These five strings of sensuality. Which five? Forms cognizable via the eye—agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, enticing, linked with sensual desire. Sounds cognizable via the ear... Aromas cognizable via the nose... Flavors cognizable via the tongue... Tactile sensations cognizable via the body—agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, enticing, linked with sensual desire. Now whatever pleasure or happiness arises in dependence on these five strands of sensuality, that is the allure of sensuality.

“And what is the drawback of sensuality? There is the case where, on account of the occupation by which a clansman makes a living—whether checking or accounting or calculating or plowing or trading or cattle-tending or archery or as a king’s man, or whatever the occupation may be—he faces cold, he faces heat, being harassed by mosquitoes & flies, wind & sun & creeping things, dying from hunger & thirst.

“Now this drawback in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“If the clansman gains no wealth while thus working & striving & making effort, he sorrows, grieves, & laments, beats his breast, becomes distraught: ‘My work is in vain, my efforts are fruitless!’ Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“If the clansman gains wealth while thus working & striving & making effort, he experiences pain & distress in protecting it: ‘How will neither kings nor thieves make off with my property, nor fire burn it, nor water sweep it away, nor hateful heirs make off with it?’ And as he thus guards and watches over his property, kings or thieves make off with it, or fire burns it, or water sweeps it away, or hateful heirs make off with it. And he sorrows, grieves, & laments, beats his breast, becomes distraught: ‘What was mine is no more!’ Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“Again, it is with sensuality for the reason, sensuality for the source, sensuality for the cause, the reason being simply sensuality, that kings quarrel with kings, nobles with nobles, brahmans with brahmans, householders with householders, mother with child, child with mother, father with child, child with father, brother with brother, sister with sister, brother with sister, sister with brother, friend with friend. And then in their quarrels, brawls, & disputes, they attack one another with fists or with clods or with sticks or with knives, so that they incur death or deadly pain. Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“Again, it is with sensuality for the reason, sensuality for the source... that (men), taking swords & shields and buckling on bows & quivers, charge into battle massed in double array while arrows & spears are flying and swords are flashing; and there they are wounded by arrows & spears, and their heads are cut off by swords, so that they incur death or deadly pain. Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“Again, it is with sensuality for the reason, sensuality for the source... that (men), taking swords & shields and buckling on bows & quivers, charge slippery bastions while arrows & spears are flying and swords are flashing; and there they are splashed with boiling cow dung and crushed under heavy weights, and their heads are cut off by swords, so that they incur death or deadly pain. Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“Again, it is with sensuality for the reason, sensuality for the source... that (men) break into windows, seize plunder, commit burglary, ambush highways, commit adultery, and when they are captured, kings have them tortured in many ways. They flog them with whips, beat them with canes, beat them with clubs; they cut off their hands, cut off their feet, cut off their hands & feet; they cut off their ears, cut off their noses, cut off their ears & noses; they subject them to the ‘porridge pot,’ the ‘polished-shell shave,’ the ‘Rāhu’s mouth,’ the ‘flaming garland,’ the ‘blazing hand,’ the ‘grass-duty (ascetic),’ the ‘bark-dress (ascetic),’ the ‘burning antelope,’ the ‘meat hooks,’ the ‘coin-gouging,’ the ‘lye pickling,’ the ‘pivot on a stake,’ the ‘rolled-up bed’; they have them splashed with boiling oil, devoured by dogs, impaled alive on stakes; they have their heads cut off with swords, so that they incur death or deadly pain. Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress visible here & now, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“Again, it is with sensuality for the reason, sensuality for the source... that (people) engage in bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, mental misconduct. Having engaged in bodily, verbal, and mental misconduct, they—on the break-up of the body, after death—re-appear in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. Now this drawback too in the case of sensuality, this mass of stress in the future life, has sensuality for its reason, sensuality for its source, sensuality for its cause, the reason being simply sensuality.

“And what, monks, is the escape from sensuality? The subduing of desire-passion for sensuality, the abandoning of desire-passion for sensuality: That is the escape from sensuality.” — *MN 13*

ILL WILL

“Monks, even if bandits were to carve you up savagely, limb by limb, with a two-handled saw, he among you who let his heart get angered even at that would not be doing my bidding. Even then you should train yourselves: ‘Our minds will be unaffected and we will say no evil words. We will remain sympathetic, with a mind of goodwill, and with no inner hate. We will keep pervading these people with an awareness imbued with goodwill and, beginning with them, we will keep pervading the all-encompassing world with an

awareness imbued with goodwill—abundant, enlarged, immeasurable, free from hostility, free from ill will.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” — MN 21

A second time... A third time Yodhājīva the headman said: “Venerable sir, I have heard that it has been passed down by the ancient teaching lineage of professional warriors that ‘When a professional warrior strives & exerts himself in battle, if others then strike him down & slay him while he is striving & exerting himself in battle, then with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the company of devas slain in battle.’ What does the Blessed One have to say about that?”

“Apparently, headman, I haven’t been able to get past you by saying, ‘Enough, headman, put that aside. Don’t ask me that.’ So I will simply answer you. When a professional warrior strives & exerts himself in battle, his mind is already seized, debased, & misdirected by the thought: ‘May these beings be struck down or slaughtered or annihilated or destroyed. May they not exist.’ If others then strike him down & slay him while he is thus striving & exerting himself in battle, then with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the hell called the realm of those slain in battle. But if he holds such a view as this: ‘When a professional warrior strives & exerts himself in battle, if others then strike him down & slay him while he is striving & exerting himself in battle, then with the breakup of the body, after death, he is reborn in the company of devas slain in battle,’ that is his wrong view. Now, there are two destinations for a person with wrong view, I tell you: either hell or the animal womb.” — SN 42:3

Think: *Happy, at rest,*
may all beings be happy at heart.
 Whatever beings there may be,
weak or strong, without exception,
long, large,
middling, short,
subtle, gross,
seen & unseen,
living near & far away,
born or seeking birth:
May all beings be happy at heart.
Let no one deceive another
or despise anyone anywhere,
or, through anger or resistance-perception,
wish for another to suffer.

As a mother would risk her life
 to protect her child, her only child,
 even so should one cultivate the heart limitlessly
 with regard to all beings.
 With goodwill for the entire cosmos,

cultivate the heart limitlessly:
 above, below, & all around,
 unobstructed, without hostility or hate.
 Whether standing, walking,
 sitting, or lying down,
 as long as one has banished torpor,
 one should be resolved on this mindfulness.
 This is called a Brahmā abiding
 here. — *Sn 1:8*

“One bears no ill will and is not corrupt in the resolves of one’s heart. (One thinks,) ‘May these beings be free from animosity, free from oppression, free from trouble, and may they look after themselves with ease!’” — *AN 10:165*

RESTLESSNESS & ANXIETY

“There’s the case, headman, where a certain teacher holds this doctrine, holds this view: ‘All those who take life are destined for a plane of deprivation, are destined for hell. All those who steal... All those who indulge in illicit sex... All those who tell lies are destined for a plane of deprivation, are destined for hell.’ A disciple has faith in that teacher, and the thought occurs to him, ‘Our teacher holds this doctrine, holds this view: “All those who take life are destined for a plane of deprivation, are destined for hell.” There are living beings that I have killed. I, too, am destined for a plane of deprivation, am destined for hell.’ He fastens onto that view. If he doesn’t abandon that doctrine, doesn’t abandon that state of mind, doesn’t relinquish that view, then as if he were to be carried off, he would thus be placed in hell.

“(The thought occurs to him,) ‘Our teacher holds this doctrine, holds this view: ‘All those who steal... All those who indulge in illicit sex... All those who tell lies are destined for a plane of deprivation, are destined for hell.’ There are lies that I have told. I, too, am destined for a plane of deprivation, am destined for hell.’ He fastens onto that view. If he doesn’t abandon that doctrine, doesn’t abandon that state of mind, doesn’t relinquish that view, then as if he were to be carried off, he would thus be placed in hell.

“There is the case, headman, where a Tathāgata appears in the world, worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed. He, in various ways, criticizes & censures the taking of life, and says, ‘Abstain from taking life.’ He criticizes & censures stealing, and says, ‘Abstain from stealing.’ He criticizes & censures indulging in illicit sex, and says, ‘Abstain from indulging in illicit sex.’ He criticizes & censures the telling of lies, and says, ‘Abstain from the telling of lies.’

“A disciple has faith in that teacher and reflects: ‘The Blessed One in a variety of ways criticizes & censures the taking of life, and says, “Abstain from taking

life." There are living beings that I have killed, to a greater or lesser extent. That was not right. That was not good. But if I become remorseful for that reason, that evil deed of mine will not be undone.' So, reflecting thus, he abandons right then the taking of life, and in the future refrains from taking life. This is how there comes to be the abandoning of that evil deed. This is how there comes to be the transcending of that evil deed.

"(He reflects:) 'The Blessed One in a variety of ways criticizes & censures stealing... indulging in illicit sex... the telling of lies, and says, "Abstain from the telling of lies." There are lies that I have told, to a greater or lesser extent. That was not right. That was not good. But if I become remorseful for that reason, that evil deed of mine will not be undone.' So, reflecting thus, he abandons right then the telling of lies, and in the future refrains from telling lies. This is how there comes to be the abandoning of that evil deed. This is how there comes to be the transcending of that evil deed.

"Having abandoned the taking of life, he refrains from taking life. Having abandoned stealing, he refrains from stealing. Having abandoned illicit sex, he refrains from illicit sex. Having abandoned lies, he refrains from lies. Having abandoned divisive speech, he refrains from divisive speech. Having abandoned harsh speech, he refrains from harsh speech. Having abandoned idle chatter, he refrains from idle chatter. Having abandoned covetousness, he becomes uncovetous. Having abandoned ill will & anger, he becomes one with a mind of no ill will. Having abandoned wrong views, he becomes one who has right views.

"That disciple of the noble ones, headman—thus devoid of covetousness, devoid of ill will, unbewildered, alert, mindful—keeps pervading the first direction [the east] with an awareness imbued with goodwill, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, & all around, everywhere, in its entirety, he keeps pervading the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with goodwill—abundant, enlarged, immeasurable, without hostility, without ill will. Just as a strong conch-trumpet blower can notify the four directions without any difficulty, in the same way, when the awareness-release through goodwill is thus developed, thus pursued, any deed done to a limited extent no longer remains there, no longer stays there.

"That disciple of the noble ones—thus devoid of covetousness, devoid of ill will, unbewildered, alert, mindful—keeps pervading the first direction with an awareness imbued with compassion... empathetic joy... equanimity, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, & all around, everywhere, in its entirety, he keeps pervading the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with equanimity—abundant, enlarged, immeasurable, without hostility, without ill will. Just as a strong conch-trumpet blower can notify the four directions without any difficulty, in the same way, when the awareness-release through equanimity is thus developed, thus pursued, any deed done to a limited extent no longer remains there, no longer stays there." — SN 42:8

“Monks, there are four instances where heedfulness should be exercised. Which four? Abandon bodily misconduct, develop good bodily conduct: Don’t be heedless there. Abandon verbal misconduct, develop good verbal conduct: Don’t be heedless there. Abandon mental misconduct, develop good mental conduct: Don’t be heedless there. Abandon wrong view, develop right view: Don’t be heedless there.

“When, in a monk, bodily misconduct is abandoned, good bodily conduct is developed; verbal misconduct is abandoned, good verbal conduct is developed; mental misconduct is abandoned, good mental conduct is developed; wrong view is abandoned, right view is developed, then he has no fear of death as it relates to the next life.” — *AN 4:116*

At that time, Nakula’s father [Nakulapitar], the householder, was diseased, in pain, severely ill. Then Nakula’s mother [Nakulamātar] said to him: “Don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized being worried at the time of death.

“Now it may be that you are thinking, ‘Nakula’s mother will not be able to support the children or maintain the household after I’m gone,’ but you shouldn’t see things in that way. I am skilled at spinning cotton, at carding matted wool. I can support the children and maintain the household after you are gone. So don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized being worried at the time of death.

“Now it may be that you are thinking, ‘Nakula’s mother will take another husband after I’m gone,’ but you shouldn’t see things in that way. You know as well as I how my fidelity [literally: householder-celibacy] has been constant for the past sixteen years. So don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized death when one is worried.

“Now it may be that you are thinking, ‘Nakula’s mother will have no desire to go see the Blessed One, to go see the Saṅgha of monks, after I’m gone,’ but you shouldn’t see things in that way. I will have an even greater desire to go see the Blessed One, to go see the Saṅgha of monks, after you are gone. So don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized being worried at the time of death.

“Now it may be that you are thinking, ‘Nakula’s mother will not act fully in accordance with the precepts after I’m gone,’ but you shouldn’t see things in that way. To the extent that the Blessed One has white-clad householder female disciples who act fully in accordance with the precepts, I am one of them. If anyone doubts or denies this, let him go ask the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—who is staying among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt. So don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized being worried at the time of death.

“Now it may be that you are thinking, ‘Nakula’s mother will not attain inner tranquility of awareness after I’m gone,’ but you shouldn’t see things in that way. To the extent that the Blessed One has white-clad householder female disciples who attain inner tranquility of awareness, I am one of them. If anyone doubts or denies this, let him go ask the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—who is staying among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt. So don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized being worried at the time of death.

“Now it may be that you are thinking, ‘Nakula’s mother will not reach firm ground in this Dhamma & Vinaya, will not attain a firm foothold, will not attain consolation, overcome her doubts, dispel her perplexity, reach fearlessness or gain independence from others with regard to the Teacher’s message [a standard description of a stream-winner],’ but you shouldn’t see things in that way. To the extent that the Blessed One has white-clad householder female disciples who reach firm ground in this Dhamma & Vinaya, attain a firm foothold, attain consolation, overcome their doubts, dispel their perplexity, reach fearlessness, & gain independence from others with regard to the Teacher’s message, I am one of them. If anyone doubts or denies this, let him go ask the Blessed One—worthy & rightly self-awakened—who is staying among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt. So don’t be worried as you die, householder. Death is painful for one who is worried. The Blessed One has criticized being worried at the time of death.”

While Nakula’s father the householder was being exhorted by Nakula’s mother with this exhortation, his disease was immediately allayed. And he recovered from his disease. That was how Nakula’s father’s disease was abandoned.

Then, soon after Nakula’s father the householder had recovered from being sick, not long after his recovery from his illness, he went leaning on a stick to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, “It is your gain, your great gain, householder, that you have Nakula’s mother—sympathetic & wishing for your welfare—as your counselor & instructor. To the extent that I have white-clad householder female disciples who act fully in accordance with the precepts, she is one of them. To the extent that I have white-clad householder female disciples who attain inner tranquility of awareness, she is one of them. To the extent that I have white-clad householder female disciples who reach firm ground in this Dhamma & Vinaya, attain a firm foothold, attain consolation, overcome their doubts, dispel their perplexity, reach fearlessness, & gain independence from others with regard to the Teacher’s message, she is one of them. It is your gain, your great gain, householder, that you have Nakula’s mother—sympathetic & wishing for your welfare—as your counselor & instructor.” — *AN 6:16*

UNCERTAINTY

“And what is lack of food for the arising of unarisen *uncertainty*, or for the growth & increase of uncertainty once it has arisen? There are mental qualities that are skillful & unskillful, blameworthy & blameless, gross & refined, siding with darkness & with light. To foster appropriate attention to them: This is lack of food for the arising of unarisen uncertainty, or for the growth & increase of uncertainty once it has arisen.” — *SN 46:51*

ANXIETY & SENSUALITY

“Mahānāma, a discerning lay follower who is diseased, in pain, severely ill should be reassured by another discerning lay follower with four reassurances: ‘Be reassured, friend, that you are endowed with verified confidence in the Awakened One: “Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed.”

“Be reassured, friend, that you have verified confidence in the Dhamma: “The Dhamma is well taught by the Blessed One, to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be experienced by the observant for themselves.”

“Be reassured, friend, that you have verified confidence in the Saṅgha: “The Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples who have practiced well... who have practiced straight-forwardly... who have practiced methodically... who have practiced masterfully—in other words, the four pairs, the eight individuals—they are the Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world.”

“Be reassured, friend, that you have virtues that are appealing to the noble ones: untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the observant, ungrasped at, leading to concentration.’

“Mahānāma, when a discerning lay follower who is diseased, in pain, severely ill has been reassured by another discerning lay follower with these four reassurances, he should be asked: ‘Friend, are you concerned for your mother & father?’ If he should say, ‘I am concerned for my mother & father,’ he should be told, ‘You, my dear friend, are subject to death. If you feel concern for your mother & father, you’re still going to die. If you don’t feel concern for your mother & father, you’re still going to die. It would be good if you abandoned concern for your mother & father.’

“If he should say, “My concern for my mother & father has been abandoned,’ he should be asked, ‘Friend, are you concerned for your wife & children?’ If he should say, ‘I am concerned for my wife & children,’ he should be told, ‘You, my dear friend, are subject to death. If you feel concern for your wife & children, you’re still going to die. If you don’t feel concern for your wife & children, you’re

still going to die. It would be good if you abandoned concern for your wife & children.'

"If he should say, "My concern for my wife & children has been abandoned,' he should be asked, 'Friend, are you concerned for the five strings of human sensuality?' If he should say, 'I am concerned for the five strings of human sensuality,' he should be told, 'Friend, divine sensual pleasures are more splendid & more refined than human sensual pleasures. It would be good if, having raised your mind above human sensual pleasures, you set it on the Devas of the Four Great Kings.'

"If he should say, 'My mind is raised above human sensual pleasures and is set on the Devas of the Four Great Kings,' he should be told, 'Friend, the Devas of the Thirty-three are more splendid & more refined than the Devas of the Four Great Kings. It would be good if, having raised your mind above the Devas of the Four Great Kings, you set it on the Devas of the Thirty-three.'

"If he should say, 'My mind is raised above the Devas of the Four Great Kings and is set on the Devas of the Thirty-three,' he should be told, 'Friend, the Devas of the Hours are more splendid & more refined than the Devas of the Thirty-three. It would be good if, having raised your mind above the Devas of the Thirty-three, you set it on the Devas of the Hours.'

"If he should say, 'My mind is raised above the Devas of the Thirty-three and is set on the Devas of the Hours,' he should be told, 'Friend, the Contented Devas are more splendid & more refined than the Devas of the Hours... the Devas Delighting in Creation are more splendid & more refined than the Contented Devas... the Devas [Muses?] Wielding Power over the Creations of Others are more splendid & more refined than the Devas Delighting in Creation... the Brahmā world is more splendid and more refined than the Devas Wielding Power over the Creations of Others. It would be good if, having raised your mind above the Devas Wielding Power over the Creations of Others, you set it on the Brahmā world.'

"If he should say, 'My mind is raised above the Devas Wielding Power over the Creations of Others and is set on the Brahmā world,' he should be told, 'Friend, even the Brahmā world is inconstant, impermanent, included in self-identity. It would be good if, having raised your mind above the Brahmā world, you brought it to the cessation of self-identity.'

"If he should say, 'My mind is raised above the Brahmā world and is brought to the cessation of self-identity,' then, I tell you, Mahānāma, there is no difference—in terms of release—between the release of that lay follower whose mind is released and the release of a monk whose mind is released." — *SN 55:54*

RELEASE

"Overcome by two viewpoints, monks, some human beings & devas adhere, other human beings & devas slip right past, while those with vision see.

"And how do some adhere? Human beings & devas enjoy becoming, delight in becoming, are satisfied with becoming. When the Dhamma is being taught for

the sake of the cessation of becoming, their minds do not take to it, are not calmed by it, do not settle on it or become resolved on it. This is how some adhere.

“And how do some slip right past? Some, feeling horrified, humiliated, & disgusted with that very becoming, relish non-becoming: ‘When this self, at the break-up of the body, after death, perishes & is destroyed, and does not exist after death, that is peaceful, that is exquisite, that is sufficiency!’ This is how some slip right past.

“And how do those with vision see? There is the case where a monk sees what’s come to be as what’s come to be. Seeing what’s come to be as what’s come to be, he practices for disenchantment with what’s come to be, dispassion toward what’s come to be, cessation of what’s come to be. This is how those with vision see.”

Those, having seen
 what’s come to be
 as what’s come to be,
 and what’s gone beyond
 what’s come to be,
 are released in line
 with what’s come to be,
 through the exhaustion of craving
 for becoming.

If they’ve comprehended
 what’s come to be,
 and are free from the craving
 for becoming & non-,
 with the non-becoming
 of what’s come to be,
 monks come
 to no further becoming. — *Iti 49*

Then a certain monk went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One: “‘The world, the world [*loka*],’ it is said. In what respect does the word ‘world’ apply?”

“Insofar as it disintegrates [*lujjati*], monk, it is called the ‘world.’ Now what disintegrates? The eye disintegrates. Forms disintegrate. Eye-consciousness disintegrates. Eye-contact disintegrates. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on eye-contact—experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—that too disintegrates.

“The ear disintegrates. Sounds disintegrate....

“The nose disintegrates. Aromas disintegrate....

“The tongue disintegrates. Tastes disintegrate....

“The body disintegrates. Tactile sensations disintegrate....

“The intellect disintegrates. Ideas disintegrate. Intellect-consciousness disintegrates. Intellect-contact disintegrates. And whatever there is that arises in dependence on intellect-contact—experienced as pleasure, pain or neither-pleasure-nor-pain—that too disintegrates.

“Insofar as it disintegrates, it is called the ‘world.’” — SN 35:82

Then Ven. Rādhā went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: “‘A being,’ lord. ‘A being,’ it’s said. To what extent is one said to be ‘a being?’”

“Any desire, passion, delight, or craving for form, Rādhā: When one is caught up [*satta*] there, tied up [*visatta*] there, one is said to be ‘a being [*satta*].’

“Any desire, passion, delight, or craving for feeling... perception... fabrications...

“Any desire, passion, delight, or craving for consciousness, Rādhā: When one is caught up there, tied up there, one is said to be ‘a being.’

“Just as when boys or girls are playing with little sand castles [literally: dirt houses]: As long as they are not free from passion, desire, love, thirst, fever, & craving for those little sand castles, that’s how long they have fun with those sand castles, enjoy them, treasure them, feel possessive of them. But when they become free from passion, desire, love, thirst, fever, & craving for those little sand castles, then they smash them, scatter them, demolish them with their hands or feet and make them unfit for play.

“In the same way, Rādhā, you too should smash, scatter, & demolish form, and make it unfit for play. Practice for the ending of craving for form.

“You should smash, scatter, & demolish feeling, and make it unfit for play. Practice for the ending of craving for feeling.

“You should smash, scatter, & demolish perception, and make it unfit for play. Practice for the ending of craving for perception.

“You should smash, scatter, & demolish fabrications, and make them unfit for play. Practice for the ending of craving for fabrications.

“You should smash, scatter, & demolish consciousness and make it unfit for play. Practice for the ending of craving for consciousness—because the ending of craving, Rādhā, is unbinding.” — SN 23:2

Then Ven. Kaccāna Gotta went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: “Lord, ‘Right view, right view,’ it is said. To what extent is there right view?”

“By & large, Kaccāna, this world is supported by [takes as its object] a polarity, that of existence & non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world as it has come to be with right discernment, ‘non-existence’ with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it has come to be with right discernment, ‘existence’ with reference to the world does not occur to one.

“By & large, Kaccāna, this world is in bondage to attachments, clingings [sustenances], & biases. But one such as this does not get involved with or cling to these attachments, clingings, fixations of awareness, biases, or obsessions; nor is he resolved on ‘my self.’ He has no uncertainty or doubt that mere stress, when arising, is arising; stress, when passing away, is passing away. In this, his knowledge is independent of others. It’s to this extent, Kaccāna, that there is right view.

“‘Everything exists’: That is one extreme. ‘Everything doesn’t exist’: That is a second extreme. Avoiding these two extremes, the Tathāgata teaches the Dhamma via the middle: From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.

From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.

From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form.

From name-&-form as a requisite condition come the six sense media.

From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact.

From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.

From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.

From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging/sustenance.

From clinging/sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming.

From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.

From birth as a requisite condition, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress & suffering.

“Now from the remainderless fading & cessation of that very ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications. From the cessation of fabrications comes the cessation of consciousness. From the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of name-&-form. From the cessation of name-&-form comes the cessation of the six sense media. From the cessation of the six sense media comes the cessation of contact. From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling. From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving. From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance. From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming. From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth. From the cessation of birth, then aging-&-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of stress & suffering.” — *SN 12:15*

Then Ven. Sāriputta—having adjusted his under robe and carrying his bowl & outer robe—went to the home of Anāthapiṇḍika the householder with Ven. Ānanda as his attendant. On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready and said to Anāthapiṇḍika the householder: “I hope you are getting better, householder. I hope you are comfortable. I hope that your pains are lessening and not increasing. I hope that there are signs of their lessening, and not of their increasing.”

[Anāthapiṇḍika:] “I am not getting better, venerable sir. I am not comfortable. My extreme pains are increasing, not lessening. There are signs of their increasing, and not of their lessening. Extreme forces slice through my head, just as if a strong man were slicing my head open with a sharp sword.... Extreme pains have arisen in my head, just as if a strong man were tightening a turban made of tough leather straps around my head.... Extreme forces carve up my stomach cavity, just as if a butcher or his apprentice were to carve up the stomach cavity of an ox.... There is an extreme burning in my body, just as if two strong men, grabbing a weaker man by the arms, were to roast and broil him over a pit of hot embers. I am not getting better, venerable sir. I am not comfortable. My extreme pains are increasing, not lessening. There are signs of their increasing, and not of their lessening.”

[Ven. Sāriputta:] “Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: ‘I won’t cling to the eye; my consciousness will not be dependent on the eye.’ That’s how you should train yourself. ‘I won’t cling to the ear... nose... tongue... body; my consciousness will not be dependent on the body.’ ... ‘I won’t cling to the intellect; my consciousness will not be dependent on the intellect.’ That’s how you should train yourself.

“Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: ‘I won’t cling to forms... sounds... smells... tastes... tactile sensations; my consciousness will not be dependent on tactile sensations.’ ... ‘I won’t cling to ideas; my consciousness will not be dependent on ideas.’ That’s how you should train yourself.

“Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: ‘I won’t cling to eye-consciousness... ear-consciousness... nose-consciousness... tongue-consciousness... body-consciousness; my consciousness will not be dependent on body-consciousness.’ ... ‘I won’t cling to intellect-consciousness; my consciousness will not be dependent on intellect-consciousness.’ That’s how you should train yourself.

“Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: ‘I won’t cling to contact at the eye... contact at the ear... contact at the nose... contact at the tongue... contact at the body; my consciousness will not be dependent on contact at the body.’ ... ‘I won’t cling to contact at the intellect; my consciousness will not be dependent on contact at the intellect.’ That’s how you should train yourself.

“Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: ‘I won’t cling to feeling born of contact at the eye... feeling born of contact at the ear... feeling born of contact at the nose... feeling born of contact at the tongue... feeling born of contact at the body; my consciousness will not be dependent on feeling born of contact at the body.’ ... ‘I won’t cling to feeling born of contact at the intellect; my consciousness will not be dependent on feeling born of contact at the intellect.’ That’s how you should train yourself.

“Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: ‘I won’t cling to the earth property... liquid property... fire property... wind property... space property; my consciousness will not be dependent on the space property.’ ... ‘I

won't cling to the consciousness property; my consciousness will not be dependent on the consciousness property.' That's how you should train yourself.

"Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: 'I won't cling to form... feeling... perception... fabrications; my consciousness will not be dependent on fabrications.' ... 'I won't cling to consciousness; my consciousness will not be dependent on consciousness.' That's how you should train yourself.

"Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: 'I won't cling to the dimension of the infinitude of space... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of nothingness; my consciousness will not be dependent on the dimension of nothingness.' ... 'I won't cling to the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception; my consciousness will not be dependent on the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.' That's how you should train yourself.

"Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: 'I won't cling to this world; my consciousness will not be dependent on this world... I won't cling to the world beyond; my consciousness will not be dependent on the world beyond.' That's how you should train yourself.

"Then, householder, you should train yourself in this way: 'I won't cling to what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, attained, sought after, pondered by the intellect; my consciousness will not be dependent on that.' That's how you should train yourself." — *MN 143*

Then a certain monk went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "Lord, in such and such a dwelling a certain monk—newly ordained, not well known—is diseased, in pain, severely ill. It would be good if the Blessed One would visit the monk, out of sympathy for him."

Then the Blessed One, on hearing the word "newly ordained," on hearing the word "diseased," and realizing that the monk was not well known, went to him. The monk saw the Blessed One coming from afar and, on seeing him, stirred in his bed. Then the Blessed One said to him, "Enough, monk. Don't stir in your bed. There are these seats made ready. I will sit down there."

The Blessed One sat down on a seat made ready. Having sat down, he said to the monk, "I hope you are getting better, monk. I hope you are comfortable. I hope that your pains are lessening and not increasing. I hope that there are signs of their lessening, and not of their increasing."

"I am not getting better, lord. I am not comfortable. My extreme pains are increasing, not lessening. There are signs of their increasing, and not of their lessening."

"Then I hope you have no anxiety, monk. I hope you have no remorse."

"Yes, lord, I do have not a small amount of anxiety, not a small amount of remorse."

"I hope you can't fault yourself with regard to your virtue."

"No, lord, I can't fault myself with regard to my virtue."

“Then what are you anxious about? What is your remorse?”

“I understand that the Blessed One has not taught the Dhamma with purity of virtue as its goal.”

“If you understand that I have not taught the Dhamma with purity of virtue as its goal, then for what goal do you understand that I have taught the Dhamma?”

“I understand that the Blessed One has taught the Dhamma with the fading of passion as its goal.”

“Good, good, monk. It’s good that you understand that I have taught the Dhamma with the fading of passion as its goal, for I *have* taught the Dhamma with the fading of passion as its goal.

“What do you think, monk? Is the eye constant or inconstant?”

“Inconstant, lord.”

“And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?”

“Stressful, lord.”

“And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am?’”

“No, lord.”

“... Is the ear constant or inconstant?”—“Inconstant, lord.” ...

“... Is the nose constant or inconstant?”—“Inconstant, lord.” ...

“... Is the tongue constant or inconstant?”—“Inconstant, lord.” ...

“... Is the body constant or inconstant?”—“Inconstant, lord.” ...

“What do you think, monk? Is the intellect constant or inconstant?”

“Inconstant, lord.” “

And is that which is inconstant easeful or stressful?”

“Stressful, lord.” “

And is it fitting to regard what is inconstant, stressful, subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am?’”

“No, lord.”

“Seeing thus, the instructed disciple of the noble ones grows disenchanted with the eye, disenchanted with the ear, disenchanted with the nose, disenchanted with the tongue, disenchanted with the body, disenchanted with the intellect. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is released. With release, there is the knowledge, ‘Released.’ He discerns that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monk delighted in the Blessed One’s words. And while this explanation was being given, there arose for the monk the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye: “Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation.” — SN 35:74

[SN 35:75 tells of a similar situation, in which a monk receives the same teaching from the Buddha and becomes fully awakened.]