

# Apaṇṇaka Sutta Cūla Māluṅkya Sutta Upāli Sutta

Three Discourses  
from the Majjhima Nikāya

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The three Discourses reproduced here appeared first in 1925 in the periodical *The Blessing*, published by “The Servants of the Buddha”, Colombo. The introductions, and the notes partly, were written by the then President of that Society, Dr. Cassius A. Pereira (the late Venerable Kassapa Thera). In this reprint, a few alterations have been made in the text and notes, and additions to the latter.

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# Contents

Introduction to the Aparaṇṇaka Sutta.....	3
Aparaṇṇaka Sutta.....	4
Introduction to the Cūla Māluṅkya Sutta.....	17
Cūla Māluṅkya Sutta.....	17
Introduction to the Upāli Sutta.....	21
Upāli Sutta.....	22

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# Introduction to the Apanṇaka Sutta

(*Majjhima Nikāya No. 60*)

During his uninterrupted ministry of forty-five years, the Blessed One had occasion to address all sorts and conditions of people, from the humble outcast to the boastful *Brahmin* and arrogant *Kshatriya*. And the Buddha adapted each discourse to the needs of the people immediately concerned and to the occasion. Each sermon is a special prescription, intended to meet the requirements of a particular disease.

To us, who today read these “prescriptions” of the Great Physician, it sometimes seems that contradictory remedies are advised and sometimes that a certain inconstancy of behaviour characterized the Master.

Why does the Buddha at times exalt the household life calling it “a high blessing” and again stigmatize it as “a den of strife”? Why to the self-same question does the Master sometimes vouchsafe an answer, sometimes remain silent, and sometimes even administer a rebuke?

The solution to these puzzles is clear only to him who sees the whole picture of the Buddha *Dhamma*. To one who studies that Dhamma sympathetically, earnestly and deeply, never forgetting that the *Suttas* are but prescriptions for diverse maladies, there comes the understanding to patch up the immense picture, putting each seemingly irregular fragment in its proper place till a vast panorama of harmonious adjustment rewards the patient toil.

In this Discourse the Blessed One reveals the Incontrovertible Doctrine to the *Brahmins* of a Kosalan township who come to him for instruction. It is a most interesting sermon in that it deals with the five popular philosophical opinions of that time:

1. The annihilationist doctrine taught by Ajita of the hair-blanket (*Ajita Kesakambalī*), which denied that action, good or evil, brought about any result or fruit. “Do as you please,” said Ajita, in effect, “for there is no happiness to be derived by being virtuous, and no pain to fear through being evil”. According to this belief man is built up of the four elements. When he dies, what in him is earthy returns to earth, fluid returns to water, heat to fire, gases to air, and his six senses (with mind as sixth) vanish in space—and there is an end of the matter.
2. The school of *Purāṇa Kassapa* believed in non-action. Kassapa held that no special merit resulted from liberality, meditation, self-control and truth on the one hand, or demerit from robbery, rape and murder on the other. Action was to him a thing which was, far from being meritorious or de-meritorious, empty and void, for the good reason that there was no such thing as action, though people imagined they acted in this way or that.
3. *Makkhali Gosāla* preached a variety of fatalism. Everything that happened was independent of a cause, here or elsewhere, present, past or future. We go blundering through existence and as a ball of string will one day somehow unwind itself, so someday “fools and wise alike, wandering in existence for an allotted space, shall make an end of pain.” There is no hurrying or delaying of an inexorable fate. All action, one way or another, is vain, for action has no result and fate rules our wanderings and the termination.
4. Then there was a school which denied that such a state as a “formless realm” existed, on the ground that they had no proof of it.

5. The last class denied such a thing as a final salvation, a *Nibbāna*, when ceases all life's turmoil and woe.

The whole discourse is extremely interesting and should be read in conjunction with the *Kandaraka Sutta*, which was published in an earlier number of The Wheel Series (No. 79). Particularly would we draw the reader's attention to the Buddha's earnest affirmation, as one who knows, from first-hand knowledge: "Indeed there is a world beyond; another world exists, that there is none, is to speak falsely and deny the word of those worthy ones who know there is another world." May the reader profit by this assurance, for it is certain that, more than our acts of foolish commission or omission is the mental attitude of scoffing scepticism, and mulish refusal to face unpalatable facts, that sways the minds of this generation.

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## Apaṇṇaka Sutta

### *The Incontrovertible Doctrine*

Thus have I heard:

Once, when the Blessed One was wandering from place to place in the land of Kosala, accompanied by a large company of Bhikkhus, he arrived at a Brahmin village named Sālā.

Now the Brahmin householders of Sālā heard, "Verily, the Venerable Samaṇa Gotama, scion of the Sākya, ordained from a Sākya family, is wandering from place to place in the land of Kosala with a large company of Bhikkhus, and has arrived at Sālā. Thus have the good tidings of the fame of that glorious Gotama gone forth: 'Such indeed is that Blessed One. Holy, fully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and virtue, who has achieved the Goal, Knower of the worlds, an incomparable Guide for the training of men, a Teacher of gods and humans, enlightened and blessed. He has fathomed by his own intuitive wisdom, this world together with the worlds of the gods, of the *Māras* and the *Brahmas*, including the communities of recluses and Brahmins, gods and men, and makes known the same. He expounds the Truth, excellent in the beginning, excellent in the middle, excellent in the end, both in the spirit and the letter. He proclaims the Holy Life, altogether perfect and pure.' Blessed indeed is the sight of such an Exalted One."

Thereupon the Brahmin householders of Sālā went to the Blessed One, and, drawing near, some respectfully saluted him and sat on one side, some exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One and after the customary words of friendship and civility sat aside; some before taking their seats, extended their hands with palms together towards the Blessed One; some announced their names and families to him before sitting down whilst others sat down in silence.

And when they were seated, the Blessed One addressed those Brahmin householders of Sālā as follows. "Is there, householders, any inspiring teacher in whom you have acquired a reasonable faith?"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Commentator states that the village of Sālā was situated at the entrance to a forest where various sects of ascetics and Brahmins, who hold diverse beliefs, resort in the evening after wandering throughout the day. The villagers accord to them a warm welcome and the guests instruct them with their respective religious beliefs. To-day they are given to understand by some that the world is eternal, tomorrow they are taught by some others that the world is non-eternal. Their minds were in this unsettled state when the Buddha put this question to them.

“No, Venerable Sir, there is no inspiring teacher in whom we have acquired a reasonable faith.”

“Not having found an inspiring teacher, householders, this incontrovertible<sup>2</sup> doctrine should be observed and practised by you. For, householders, this incontrovertible doctrine, perfected and observed, will long conduce to your well-being and happiness. And which, householders, is the incontrovertible doctrine? There are, householders, some ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these:

- There is no such thing as alms or sacrifice or offering.<sup>3</sup>
- Neither is there fruit nor result of good or evil deeds.
- There is no such thing as this world or a world beyond.<sup>4</sup>
- There is neither mother nor father<sup>5</sup>, nor beings of spontaneous birth.
- Neither are there in the world any *Samaṇas* or *Brāhmaṇas* who walk rightly (i.e. live a blameless life), conduct themselves well, and who, having comprehended both this world and the next by their own intuitive wisdom, make known the same<sup>6</sup>.

Yet, amongst these same ascetics and Brahmins, O householders, there are some who hold directly opposite views. They say thus:

- There is such a thing as alms, as sacrifice, as offering.
- There is the fruit, the result, of good and evil deeds.
- There exists both this world and a world beyond.
- There is a mother and a father.
- There are beings of spontaneous birth.
- Also, there are in the world *Samaṇas* and *Brāhmaṇas* who walk rightly, conduct themselves well, and who, having comprehended both this world and the world beyond by their own intuitive wisdom, make known the same.”

“What do you think of this, householders? Do not these ascetics and Brahmins hold views in direct opposition to each other?”

“Certainly, Venerable Sir.”

“Therefore, householders, of those ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: ‘There is no such thing as alms or sacrifice or offering ... Neither are there in the world any *Samaṇas* or *Brāhmaṇas* who walk rightly, conduct themselves well, and who having comprehended both this world and the next by their own intuitive wisdom, make known the

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<sup>2</sup> *Apaṇṇaka*.—Explained in the Commentary as *aviruddho*, *advejjhagāmi*, *ekaṃsgāhako*, i.e. not contrary (non-contradictable), doubtless, definitely acceptable. The Commentary to the *Apaṇṇaka Jātaka* (J 1) adds *niyyānika*, “leading out (of *saṃsāra*), leading to salvation.” As further meaning of this difficult and important term we prefer “incontrovertible”, both because it fits the trend of this discourse and agrees with the equivalent, *aviruddha*, of the old Commentary. The term also occurs at A I 113; II 76.

<sup>3</sup> That is, they deny the effects that necessarily follow from them.

<sup>4</sup> That is, there is no ‘this world’ to those who live in another and no world beyond to those who live here. They declare that all beings perish utterly just where they are.

<sup>5</sup> They deny the consequences that result from acting rightly or wrongly towards parents.

<sup>6</sup> That is, they deny the existence of omniscient Buddhas. The above list of ten constitutes the “ten bases of heretical beliefs”. Ajita of the Hair Garment (*Ajita Kesakambalī*), one of the six heretical teachers, was the greatest exponent of this doctrine of nihilism (*natthika vādo*). See the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* (*Dīgha-Nikāya* No. 2).

same', this is to be expected: whatever bodily, verbal and mental evil actions there be, these three meritorious conditions they will entirely avoid; whatever bodily, verbal and mental evil actions there be, these three de-meritorious conditions they will observe and practise.

And for what reason? Because, these good ascetics and Brahmins do not see the evils, vanity and depravity of immoral conditions nor the advantages and the pure side of moral conditions found in renunciation. Assuredly there really is a world beyond. The belief that there is no such world, that is a false view<sup>7</sup>. Undoubtedly, a world beyond really exists. One hopes that there is no such world: that is a false hope<sup>8</sup>. One states that there is no world beyond: that is a false statement<sup>9</sup>. To say of the world beyond, which really exists, that there is no such world beyond, is to contradict those Exalted Ones (*arahanta*) who actually know the world beyond. To make known to others (concerning the world beyond, which assuredly exists) that there is no such world, that is the teaching of a wicked doctrine; and by such wicked doctrine one exalts oneself and despises others.

Thus, because of the aforesaid (wrong views) one's morality is abandoned, and immorality is imminent; for this is a false belief, a false speculation, a false statement, a contradiction of the Noble Ones, the teaching of a wicked doctrine, the exalting of self and the despising of others. Thus, these various evil and unwholesome states arise as a result of false belief.

Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: if there is really no world beyond, then this good individual upon the dissolution of the body, will be safe<sup>10</sup>; if however there is a world beyond, then this good individual, upon the dissolution of the body, after death, will be reborn in a state of sorrow, of evil, of torment, and of misery.

Well (for argument's sake), let there be no world beyond, and let the words of those good ascetics and Brahmins be true! But even so this good individual, in this life itself, is contemptible to the wise who hold him to be "an immoral person a heretic, an annihilationist!"

Therefore, if there really exists a world beyond, then this good individual is defeated in both worlds; for in this present life he is contemptible to the wise, and upon the dissolution of the body after death he will be reborn in a state of sorrow, of evil, of torment, and of misery. Thus would the Incontrovertible Doctrine be unskillfully observed; he embraces one aspect (i.e. his own nihilistic view)<sup>11</sup>, but misses the skilful attitude.

Therefore, householders, of those ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: 'there is such a thing as alms, as sacrifice, as offering, ... also, there are in the world ascetics and Brahmanas who walk rightly, conduct themselves well, and who, having comprehended both this world and the world beyond by their own intuitive wisdom, make known the same', this is to be expected: whatever bodily, verbal and mental evil actions there be, these three de-meritorious conditions they will entirely omit; whatever bodily, verbal and mental good actions there be, these three meritorious conditions they will observe and practise.

For what reason? Because, these good ascetics and Brahmins see the evils, vanity and depravity of immoral conditions, and the advantages and the pure side of moral conditions (to be found) in renunciation.

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<sup>7</sup> *Micchā-ditt̥hi*.

<sup>8</sup> *Micchā-saṅkappo*.

<sup>9</sup> *Micchā-vācā*.

<sup>10</sup> *Safe*, that is, with regard to the next world, which if not existent, has no pains in store for him. But in this world, such a being through his evil action is liable to all kinds of misery.

<sup>11</sup> *Ekamaṃ pharitoā titt̥hati*: Commentary: he adheres to one side, namely only to his own doctrine (*ekantaṃ ekakoṭṭhāsaṃ sakavādaṃ eva pharitoā adhimuccitoā titt̥hati*). Sub Commentary: "He insists (*avadhārento*) on his own nihilistic view, thinking, 'This only is true, everything else is false,' and does not give room for another view"—Editor.

Certainly there really is a world beyond, the belief that there is such a world is a right view. Assuredly, a world beyond really exists. One hopes that there is such a world: that is a right hope. One states that there is a world beyond; that is a right statement. To say—of the world beyond which really exists—that there is such a world beyond, is not to contradict those Exalted Ones (*arahanta*) who know the world beyond. To make known to others (concerning the world beyond which assuredly exists) that there is such a world, that is the teaching of a sound doctrine. And by such sound doctrine, indeed, one neither exalts oneself nor despises others.

Thus, because of the aforesaid (right views) one's immorality is abandoned, and morality is imminent; for this is a right belief, a right aspiration, a right statement, a confirmation of the Noble Ones, the teaching of a sound doctrine, the non-exalting of self and not despising of others. Thus, these various wholesome states arise as a result of right belief.

Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: If indeed, there is a world beyond, then this good individual upon the dissolution of the body, after death, will be reborn in a happy heavenly world.

Well (for argument's sake), let there be no world beyond, and let the words of those good ascetics and Brahmins be true! But even so this good individual, in this life itself, is praised by the wise who hold him to be "a virtuous person, one having right belief, one who maintains that something is."<sup>12</sup> Therefore, if there really exists a world beyond then this good individual is victorious in both worlds; for, in this present life, he is praised by the wise, and upon the dissolution of the body, after death he will be reborn in a happy heavenly world. Thus would the Incontrovertible Doctrine be skilfully observed; one embraces both aspects<sup>13</sup>, and avoids an unskilful attitude.

There are, householders, some ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: 'No evil is done by him who acts or causes others to act; who mutilates or causes others to mutilate; who torments or causes others to torment; who causes others to grieve; who causes others to suffer; who trembles or causes others to tremble; who kills living creatures; who steals; who breaks into houses; who seizes plunder; who commits burglary; who lies in ambush; who commits adultery; or who lies.

Even if with a wheel edged with razors he should make a shambles, one single mass of flesh, of all the living creatures of this earth, no evil results thereby, there is no acquisition of evil. Even should he go along the southern bank of the Ganges beating, killing, mutilating and causing others to mutilate, tormenting and causing others to torment, no evil results thereby, there is no acquisition of evil. Or should he go along the northern bank of the Ganges giving alms and causing others to give alms, worshipping and causing others to worship, no merit results thereby, there is no acquisition of merit. Neither by giving, by self-control, by asceticism nor by truthfulness, is there merit or acquisition of merit.'

Yet, amongst these same ascetics and Brahmins, householders, there are some who hold directly opposite views. They say thus: 'Evil is done by him who acts or causes others to act; who mutilates or causes others to mutilate; who torments or causes others to torment; who causes others to grieve; who causes others to suffer; who trembles or causes others to tremble; who kills living creatures; who steals; who breaks into houses; who seizes plunder; who commits burglary; who lies in ambush; who commits adultery; or who lies ...

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<sup>12</sup> *Atthika-vādo*, an affirmationist, one who believes in the existence of a world beyond (*atthi paraloko*) and of positive moral values (*atthi dānaṃ*, etc.) as opposed to the *natthika-vādo*, the nihilist or annihilationist—Editor.

<sup>13</sup> That is, he takes into account both possibilities, the existence or non-existence of a world beyond—Editor.

By giving, by self-control, by asceticism and by truthfulness, there is merit; there is acquisition of merit.’

What do you think of this, householders? Do not these ascetics and Brahmins hold doctrines in direct opposition to each other?”

“Certainly Venerable Sir.”

“Therefore, householders, of those ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: ‘No evil is done by him who acts or causes others to act ... Neither by giving, by self-control, by asceticism nor by truthfulness, is there merit or acquisition of merit’, this is to be expected: whatever bodily, verbal and mental good actions there be, these three meritorious conditions they will entirely avoid; whatever bodily, verbal and mental evil actions there be, these three de-meritorious conditions they will observe and practise.

And for what reason? Because these good ascetics and Brahmins do not see the evils, vanity and depravity of immoral conditions, or the advantages and the pure side of moral conditions (to be found) in renunciation.

Assuredly, there really is action<sup>14</sup>; the belief that there is no action, that is a false belief. Undoubtedly, there is action. One hopes there is no action—that is a false hope. One states that there is no action—that is a false statement. To say of action, which really is, that there is no such action is to contradict those Exalted Ones who assert that there is action.

To make known to others, concerning action, which assuredly is, that there is no such action, that is the teaching of a wicked doctrine; and by such wicked propagation one exalts oneself and despises others.

Thus, because of the aforesaid (wrong views) one’s morality is abandoned, and immorality is imminent; for this is a false belief, a false speculation, a false statement, a contradiction of the Noble Ones, the teaching of a wicked doctrine, the exalting of self and the despising of others. Thus these various evil unwholesome states arise as a result of false belief.

Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: ‘If there is really no action, then this good individual, upon the dissolution of the body, will be safe; if, however, there is action, then this good individual upon the dissolution of the body, after death, will be reborn in a state of sorrow, of evil, of torment and of misery.

Well (for argument’s sake), let there be no action, and let the words of those good ascetics and Brahmins be true! But even so this good individual, in this life itself, is despised by the wise who hold him to be “an immoral, person a heretic, a denier of action.”<sup>15</sup>”

Therefore, if there really is action, then this good individual is defeated in both worlds; for in this present life he is despised by the wise, and upon the dissolution of the body, after death, he will be reborn in a state of sorrow, of evil, of torment and of misery. Thus would the Incontrovertible Doctrine be unskillfully observed; he embraces one aspect but misses the skilful attitude.

Therefore, householders, of those ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: ‘Evil is done by him who acts or causes others to act ... By giving, by self-control, by asceticism and by truthfulness, there is merit, there is acquisition of merit’, this is to be expected: Evil actions they will entirely avoid; good actions they will observe and practice, because they see the evils of immoral, and the advantages of moral conditions.

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<sup>14</sup> That is morally efficacious action (*kamma*)—Editor.

<sup>15</sup> *Akiriyaavādo*, a denier of the moral efficacy of action. In DN 2 this view is ascribed to the heretical teacher *Pūraṇa Kassapa*.

Assuredly, there really is action. The belief that there is action is a right view. Such hope is a right aspiration. Such statement is a right statement. What he says does not contradict those Exalted Ones who assert that there is action. His teaching is a sound doctrine by which he neither exalts himself nor despises others.

Thus, because of the aforesaid (right views) immorality is abandoned, and morality is imminent. ... Hence, these various wholesome states arise as a result of right belief.

Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: If there really is action, then this good individual will be reborn in a happy heavenly world. Supposing there be no action, even so he is praised, in this life itself, by the wise, who say, 'a virtuous person; one having right belief; who maintains the view that there is action.' ... Thus would the Incontrovertible Doctrine be skilfully observed; one embraces both aspects and avoids an unskilful attitude.

There are, householders, some ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: 'There is no cause or reason for the depravity of beings. Without reason and without cause they are defiled. Neither is there a cause or reason for the rectitude of beings. Without reason and without cause they are pure. There is no strength, no energy, no manly vigour, no virile might.<sup>16</sup> All animals, all that breathe, all beings, all living things, are powerless, without strength or energy; they are shaped by fate, association and nature<sup>17</sup> and in accordance with the six species of (human) existence<sup>18</sup> they experience happiness and pain.'

Yet, amongst these same ascetics and Brahmins, householders, there are some who hold directly opposite views. They say thus: 'There is a cause and a reason for the depravity of beings. With reason and with cause are they defiled. There is a cause and a reason for the rectitude of beings. With reason and with cause are they pure. There is strength, there is energy, there is manly vigour there is virile might. All animals, all that breathe, all beings, all living things are not powerless, are not without strength or energy; they are not shaped by fate, association and nature and do not experience happiness and pain in accordance with the six species of (human) existence.'

What do you think of this, householders? Do not these ascetics and Brahmins hold doctrines in direct opposition to each other?"

"Certainly, Venerable Sir."

"Therefore, householders, of those ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: There is no cause or reason for the depravity of beings ... they are shaped by fate, association and nature and in accordance with the six species of (human) existence they experience happiness and pain', this is to be expected: Good actions they will entirely avoid; evil actions they will observe and practise because they do not see the evils of immoral, and the advantages of moral conditions.

Assuredly, there really is a cause. The belief that there is no cause, is a false view; such aspiration is false aspiration; such statement is false statement and it contradicts those Exalted Ones (*arahanta*) who assert that there is a cause. Such teaching is a wicked doctrine by which one exalts oneself and despises others.

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<sup>16</sup> Commentary: "There is no strength, no energy ... capable of making beings defiled or pure."—The views in this section are ascribed to Makkhali Gosāla.

<sup>17</sup> *Niyati-saṅgati-sabhāva*.—Saṅgati also means 'chance', 'coincidence'; but the Commentary explains it here as the 'coming together', the contact, between the six species of people (see Note 18), that is the influence of the human environment, the milieu—Editor.

<sup>18</sup> The six species are named according to colour. They are black, dark blue, red, yellow, fair and extremely fair (Commentary.) These six colours are supposed, according to Makkhali Gosāla's theory, to personify beings as they evolve higher and higher. As a "heretic", of course, he placed his own sect of *Ājīvakas*, naked ascetics, highest of all. See Aṅguttara Nikāya, *Chakka Nipāta*, No. 57.

Thus, because of the aforesaid (wrong views) one's morality is abandoned and immorality is imminent... Hence, these various evil, unwholesome states arise as a result of false belief.

Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: 'If there is really no cause, then this good individual will be safe; otherwise he will be reborn in a state of sorrow, evil, torment and misery'.

Supposing there be no cause, even so he is despised, in this life itself, by the wise who say, 'an immoral person, a heretic, one who denies that there is cause'.<sup>19</sup>

Thus would the Incontrovertible Doctrine be unskillfully observed; he embraces one aspect, but misses the skilful attitude.

Therefore, householders, of those ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such views as these: There is a cause and a reason for the depravity of beings ... They are not shaped by fate, association and nature and do not merely experience happiness and pain in accordance with the six species of (human) existence', this is to be expected: Evil actions they will entirely avoid, good actions they will observe and practice, because they see the evils of immoral and the advantages of moral conditions.

Assuredly, there really is a cause. The belief that there is cause, is a right view; such aspiration is right aspiration; such statement is right statement and does not contradict those Exalted Ones who assert that there is a cause. Such teaching is sound doctrine by which one neither exalts oneself nor despises others.

Thus, because of the aforesaid (right views), immorality is abandoned, and morality is imminent.... Hence, these various wholesome states arise as a result of right belief.

Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: If there really is a cause, then this good individual will be reborn in happy heavenly world. Supposing there be no cause, even then he is praised, in this life itself, by the wise, who say 'a virtuous person, one having right belief, who maintains the view that there is cause.' Thus would the Incontrovertible Doctrine be skilfully observed, embracing both aspects and avoiding an unskillful attitude.

There are, householders, some ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such a view as this: 'There is no realm that is formless throughout.'

Yet amongst these same ascetics and Brahmins, householders, there are some who hold a directly opposite view. They say thus: 'There is undoubtedly a realm that is formless throughout.'<sup>20</sup>

What then do you think, O householders? Do not these ascetics and Brahmins hold doctrines in direct opposition to each other?

"Certainly Venerable Sir."

"Therefore, householders, a wise person reflects thus: There are those good ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold this view: 'There is no realm that is formless throughout. We

<sup>19</sup> *Ahetukavādo*. a denier of moral causation; a doctrine attributed to *Makkhali Gosāla*. The preceding three views are called wrong views with mixed results (*niyatā-micchā-ditṭhi*), i.e. (1) nihilism (*natthika-ditṭhi*), (2) moral inefficacy of action (*akiriya-ditṭhi*), (3) denial of moral causality (*ahetuka-ditṭhi*). The tenacious holding of these views excludes, at least for the next existence (but probably for longer), rebirth in a heavenly world and attainment of liberation. See Appendix—Editor.

<sup>20</sup> *Āruppa*—Buddhists maintain that there are realms where mind exists without matter. Is this possible? Is it possible for an iron bar to float in the air? The reply to both questions is "Yes". The iron bar "floats" in the air because it has been flung there, and there it will remain so long as it retains any unexpended momentum. The "formless" being appears through being flung into that state by powerful mind-force, and there it will remain till that momentum is expended. It is a temporary separation of mind from matter, which, normally co-exist.

have not perceived it! There are also others who expound and hold this view: 'There is undoubtedly a realm that is formless throughout. This, we have not discerned!' Indeed, though I also neither know nor perceive, ought I to take one side and say 'This alone is true; the other is foolish?' That would not be proper of me.

If the words of those good ascetics and *Brahmins* who expound and hold this view: 'There is no realm that is formless throughout, be true; there is this possibility. My rebirth amongst those deities possessed of forms created by mind<sup>21</sup>, will be certain.'

But, if the words of those good ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold this view: 'There is undoubtedly a realm that is formless throughout be true; there is this possibility: 'Verily my rebirth amongst those formless deities created by perception will be certain.<sup>22</sup> Truly, on account of form, there is manifested the using of sticks and weapons, quarrels, strife, reviling, recrimination, slandering, and lying; but there is naught of this in the formless realm.'

Reflecting thus, he sets himself to the practice which leads to disgust for, to no desire for, to the cessation of forms themselves.

There are, householders, some ascetics and Brahmins who expound and hold such a view as this: 'There is never a Cessation of Existence.'<sup>23</sup>

Yet amongst these same ascetics and Brahmins, householders, there are some who hold a directly opposite doctrine. They say thus: 'There is an entire Cessation of Existence.'

What then do you think, O householders? Do not these ascetics and Brahmins hold doctrines in direct opposition to each other?"

"Certainly Venerable Sir."

"Therefore, O householders, a wise person reflects thus: 'There are those good ascetics and Brahmins who argue and contend thus: "There is never a Cessation of Existence." We have not perceived it!'

There are also others who expound and hold this view: There is an entire Cessation of Existence. This, we have not discerned!'

Indeed, though I also neither know nor perceive, should I take one side and say 'This alone is true; the other is foolish?' That would not be proper of me.

If the words of those good ascetics and Brahmins who argue and contend thus, that there is never a Cessation of Existence', be true, there is this possibility: My rebirth amongst those formless deities created by perception will be certain.

But, if the words of those good ascetics and Brahmins who argue and contend thus, that 'there is an entire Cessation of Existence', be true, there is this possibility: That I shall attain *Nibbāna* in this life itself!

This belief of those good ascetics and Brahmins who argue and contend thus that "there is never a Cessation of Existence" is close to craving, close to the fetters, close to delight, close to cleaving, close to clinging.

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<sup>21</sup> *Mano-maya*. This refers to *jhāna*-consciousness—Commentary.

<sup>22</sup> The perception is the one arising in the formless meditations (Commentary). This person entertains doubts as to the existence of the formless realm because he hears contradictory views regarding the existence of such a realm. He, however, develops the Jhānas and attaining the fourth Jhāna, endeavours to develop the Formless Absorptions (*arūpa-jhāna*) with the object of gaining life in a formless realm. If he fails, he is certain of the "form sphere" (*rūpa-loka*); if he succeeds he is certain of the "formless realm". This is the significance of the phrase "My rebirth there will be certain".

<sup>23</sup> *Bhava-nirodho*, a synonym for *Nibbāna*

But this belief of those good ascetics and Brahmins who argue and contend thus that “there is an entire Cessation of Existence” is close to the freedom from craving, from fetters, from delight, from cleaving and from clinging.

Reflecting thus, he sets himself to the practice which leads to disgust for, to no desire for, to the Cessation of Existence itself.<sup>24</sup>

These four individuals exist, O householders; they are found in the world. Who are the four? Here, O householders, a certain individual is a tormentor of self, is addicted to the practice of self-torment. Here, householders, a certain individual is a tormentor of others, is addicted to the practice of tormenting others. Here, householders, a certain individual is a tormentor of self and others, is addicted to the practice of tormenting self and others. Here, householders, a certain individual is neither a tormentor of self nor of others, is not addicted to the practice of tormenting self or others; he neither torments self nor others; in this life itself he is desireless, quenched (of passions), cool, experiences happiness, lives nobly.

And which individual, O householders, is a tormentor of self, is addicted to the practice of self torment?

Here, O householders, a certain individual is naked; is devoid of social habits; licks his hands (after eating).<sup>25</sup> Thus, in this manner, he lives addicted, in various ways, to the practice of mortifying and tormenting the body. This individual, householders, is said to be a tormentor of self, addicted to the practice of self-torment.

And which individual, O householders, torments others and is addicted to the practice of tormenting others? Here, householders, a certain individual is a butcher; is a pig-killer; or follows any other cruel occupation whatsoever. This individual, householders, is said to be a tormentor of others, addicted to the practice of tormenting others.

And which individual, O householders, is a tormentor of self and others and is addicted to the practice of tormenting self and others? Here householders, a certain individual is an anointed king of the warrior caste. (He fasts and practises austerities himself, and worries his slaves, servants and workmen who, terrified with sticks, driven by fear, with woeful faces and in tears, do the work).<sup>26</sup> This individual, householders, is said to be a tormentor of self and others, addicted to the practice of tormenting self and others.

And which individual, O householders, is neither a tormentor of self nor of others, is not addicted to the practice of tormenting self or others; who, neither tormenting himself nor others, in this life itself is desireless, quenched (of passions), cool, experiences happiness, lives nobly?

Here, householders, an Accomplished One appears in the world, an Exalted One, an Omniscient One. (He expounds the Truth, hearing which a householder acquires confidence in this Blessed One and abandoning his home, goes forth to homelessness. He observes the Bhikkhu life, abstains from evil, and practises meditation.)

Abandoning the five hindrances and by wisdom, having weakened the corruptions of the mind, remote indeed from sense-desires and unskilful conditions, but exercising reflection and

<sup>24</sup> This wise person has developed the eight (meditative) attainments (*attha-samāpatti*) and as such he entertains no doubt with regard to the formless realm. (The eight attainments are the four *rūpa-jhānas* and the four *arūpa-jhānas*). Nevertheless, he doubts that there is a “cessation of existence” (*Nibbāna*) because he has not personally experienced it and because he hears others expressing contrary views with regard to it. He however cultivates Insight (*vipassanā*) with the object of realizing Nibbāna. If he fails, he is certain of being reborn in the formless realm as he possesses the *arūpa-jhānas*. Should he succeed he will attain the Arahant stage and Nibbāna in this life itself.

<sup>25</sup> The details of these practices of self-torment are exactly as in the *Kandaraka Sutta* (See *The Wheel* No. 79, page 8 ff.)

<sup>26</sup> For details see *The Wheel* No. 79, pp.9 ff.

investigation, in the joy and happiness born of seclusion, he lives abiding in the first ecstasy ... in the second ecstasy ... in the third ecstasy ... in the fourth ecstasy.

Thus with thoughts tranquilized, purified, cleansed, free from lust and impurity, pliable, alert, steady and unshakable, he directs his mind to the recollection and cognition of former existences. He recalls his varied lot in former existences, as follows: First one life, then two lives ... Thus he recalls the mode and details of his varied lot in former existences.

Thus with thoughts tranquilized, purified, cleansed, free from lust and impurity, pliable, alert, steady and unshakable, he directs his mind to the perception of the disappearing and reappearing of beings.

With clairvoyant vision, purified and supernatural, he perceives beings disappearing from one state of existence and reappearing in another; he beholds the base and the noble, the beautiful and the ugly; the happy and the miserable, and beings passing on in accordance with their deeds.

Thus with thoughts tranquilized, purified, cleansed, free from lust and impurity, pliable, alert, steady and unshakable, he directs his mind to the comprehension of the cessation of the corruptions. He realizes, in accordance with fact, 'This is Sorrow.' 'This, the Arising of Sorrow.' 'This, the Ceasing of Sorrow.' 'This, the Path leading to the Cessation of Sorrow.'

Likewise, in accordance with fact, he realizes, 'These are the Corruptions.' 'This, the Arising of the Corruptions.' 'This, the Ceasing of the Corruptions.' 'This, the Path leading to the Cessation of the Corruptions.'

Thus cognizing, thus perceiving, his mind is delivered from the Corruption of Sensual Craving, from the Corruption of Craving for Existence, from the Corruption of Ignorance.

Being delivered, he knows: 'Delivered am I' and he realizes: 'Rebirth is ended; fulfilled the holy life; done, what was to be done; there is none other beyond this life.'

This individual, O householders, is said to be neither a tormentor of self nor of others, addicted neither to the practice of tormenting self nor others;

he neither tormenting himself nor others, in this life itself is desireless, quenched (of passions), cool, experiences happiness, lives nobly."

When the Blessed One had thus spoken, the Brahmin householders of *Sālā* said, Excellent, happy *Gotama*, excellent! It is as if, O happy *Gotama*, a man were to set upright that which was overturned. ... We too, take refuge in the noble *Gotama*, the Doctrine, and the Order. May the noble *Gotama* receive us as followers who have taken refuge from this very day to life's end."

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## *Appendix to the Apanṇaka Sutta*

### **Wrong Views with Fixed Result (*niyatā-micchā-diṭṭhi*)**

It is the program of the Sutta editions in this series to furnish, along with faithful translations, relevant exegetical material from the commentarial tradition, which generally will not be accessible to readers unfamiliar with the original Pali. Hence a longer disquisition on Wrong Views with Fixed Results (see above Foot Note 19) has been supplied here from the old Commentary to the Apanṇaka Sutta, supplemented by extracts from the Sub-commentaries to a parallel passage in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta (DN 2).

—Editor, the Wheel.

**Comy:** Commentary to the Apanṇaka Sutta;

**DCy:** Commentary to Dīgha No. 2;

**SCy:** Sub-commentary to Dīgha;

**NSCy:** New Sub-commentary to Dīgha (*Abhinava-ṭīkā*).

**Comy:** Of these three views:

- The nihilistic view (*natthika-ditṭhi*) rejects the result of kamma (*vipāka*) (**SCy:**) because, by asserting that “there is no such thing as alms” any fruit of alms-giving is denied (**DCy:**) and because this view holds that “on the dissolution of the body there is annihilation” (**SCy:**), by which any future rebirth is entirely denied.
- The view of the **moral inefficacy of action** (*akiriya-ditṭhi*) rejects kamma (**DCy:**), because it asserts that ‘no evil is done by him who acts ...’
- The view **denying moral causality** (*ahetuka-ditṭhi*) rejects both kamma and its result (**DCy:**, **SCy:**), because, by asserting that “there is no cause,” any effect of a cause is also denied.

**DCy:** Here, by rejecting kamma (as in the 2<sup>nd</sup> view), its result is likewise rejected; and by excluding kamma-result (as in the 1<sup>st</sup> view), kamma itself is excluded (**SCy:**) because the assumption of kamma is useless if there is no result from it.

**Comy.:** Hence, as all these three doctrines, in fact, reject both kamma and its result, all of them are nihilistic as well as deniers of moral causation and of morally significant action (*iti sabbe p’ete... natṭhikavādā ceva ahetikavādā ca akiriyavādā ca honti*).

But in the case of those who accept their opinions and sit down day and night to study and explore those views, in them wrong mindfulness (*micchā-sati*) becomes established taking as object one of those three views; their mind is concentrated on them, the (active) impulses (of the perceptual series) impel (the thought process in that very direction; *javanāni javanti*)<sup>27</sup>. At the first moment of impulsion, they are still curable, and so up to the sixth moment; but at the seventh, not even the Buddhas can cure them or turn them back; in that they are similar to the monk *Ariṭṭha* and the novice *Kaṇṭhaka* (see *vinaya*).

One person may fall into a single one of the three views, another into two or three. But whether he falls into one or two or all three of them, he becomes a “believer in false views with fixed result” (*niyatā-micchā-ditṭhika*). He has thereby come to the point where the way to heavenly rebirth and the way to liberation are closed to him. In his next existence he is unable to reach a heavenly world, to say nothing about his attaining liberation. Such a being is called a “stump in saṃsāra” (*vaṭṭa-khaṇuka*)<sup>28</sup>, a “watcher of the earth” (*pathavī-gopaka*)<sup>29</sup>.

One may question here: How is it? Is he (in his future destiny) ‘fixed’ (*niyata*) only for one single existence (the next one), or also for other (lives)? The result is fixed only for one existence. But due to habit, that person will approve of his respective view also in another existence (*āsevanavasena pana bhavantare pi taṃ taṃ ditṭhihi roceti evā’ti*). Hence, for such a person, there is generally no transcending of existence.

“Therefore a discerning monk, wishing for progress, should shun ignoble people from afar, like vipers.”

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<sup>27</sup> Within a complete series of 17 thought-moments required for an act of perception, it is the phase of impulsion (*javana*) where kamma is performed. This phase of impulsion normally consists of seven moments of consciousness to which the text above refers.

<sup>28</sup> This figurative expression may refer to one who remains firmly rooted in *samsāric* existence.

<sup>29</sup> This may mean that, like a watcher, he remains when others have left.

[The following are further glosses from the Sub-commentaries to phrases in the above commentarial passage.]

NSCy: “Wrong mindfulness becomes established”. It is ‘craving (*taṇhā*)’, associated with that erroneous opinion which is called here ‘wrong mindfulness’. That opinion, for instance, “He who acts thus, does not do anything evil”, is first accepted in its general meaning as a tradition; later, by reasoning and reflecting about it, it appears to the mind as vividly as if it had assumed visible form; then, by getting familiar with these ideas for a long time, one derives satisfaction from contemplating them (*nijjhānakkhamabhāvūpagamena*). Through the wrong way of thinking, which is formed in one who habitually and repeatedly conceives things in that light, and by thus gaining support from preceding ‘wrong effort (*micchā-vāyāma*)’, it finally becomes an avowed opinion by which one takes to be true what is actually false. It is ‘craving’, associated with such opinionatedness (*laddhi*) that, under the name of ‘wrong mindfulness’, is spoken of here as becoming established in the mind of such a person.

NSCy: “The mind is concentrated on them”. Under the key word ‘mind’ ‘wrong concentration’ (*micchā-samādhi*) is spoken of here. Under the conditions described, this ‘wrong concentration’ obtains ‘strength-by-development (*laddha-bhāvanā-balo*) and fulfils the function of concentrating the mind as applicable in this case, just as (concentration is required for instance) when shooting game.

“The impulses Impel”. (SCy:) When preceding serial processes of impulsion have occurred many times in the same way, then in the very last series of impulsion (NSCy: where a definite conclusion is formed), seven thought moments of impulsion impel (the mind process).

“At the first, up to the sixth moment, of impulsion they are still curable.” (SCy:) This passage is merely for showing the characteristic nature of the *dhammas* (i.e. thought processes; *Dhamma-sabhāvadassanam-ev’ etaṃ*), (NSCy:) It shows that at that (sixth) moment, impulsion on one can effect a ‘cure’ of these (thought moments) because one cannot, stopping at that stage, prevent the arising of the seventh moment of impulsion which must arise by necessity; also, because a cure by way of advice or instruction is impossible in a thought series of such fast movement.

“A stump in *saṃsāra*”. NSCy: This is a figurative expression (for “fixation” in *saṃsāra*).

‘Karmically’, unwholesome consciousness (*akusala*) is weak, is without strength; it is not powerful and strong like ‘karmically’ wholesome consciousness (*kusala*). Hence it is said that there is fixity (of result) for one existence only. Otherwise the result, fixation of ‘wrongfulness’ (*micchatta-niyāma*) would be as final (*accantika*) as that of righteousness (*sammatta-niyāma*; i.e. the four Paths of Sanctity); but the former is *not* final.

If this is so how does the expression “*saṃsāra-stump*” fit (which signifies, as it were, a permanent “fixture”)? Answering that, it was said above (in the Commentary): “But due to habit, that person will approve of his respective view also in another existence”. Just as (in the Sevens of the *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*), the fool is spoken of as “once submerged he remains submerged” (*sakiṃ nimuggo pi nimuggo eva bālo*), in the same way the expression “*saṃsāra stump*” has to be understood. If someone has fallen into those views influenced by certain conditions, one cannot say that he will never be able to raise his head above them, under different conditions. Therefore, in the commentarial passage, the word “generally” (*yebhūyyena*) was inserted: “For such there is generally no transcending of existence”. But as, on account of habituation, he will indulge in the respective wrong view also in another existence, it has been said that ‘generally there is no transcending (of *saṃsāra*) for him’, and he has been called a “*stump in saṃsāra*”, but not on account of any finality in the fixed results of the States of Wrongfulness (*micchatta*).

# Introduction to the Cūla Māluṅkya Sutta

*(Majjhima-Nikāya No. 63)*

Buddhism does not profess to provide an explanation of each and every problem that perplexes the human mind. It has a practical and specific purpose—the cessation of sorrow. With that supreme Goal kept constantly in view, all side-issues that tend to obscure or hinder the attainment of the main object are completely ignored. Nevertheless it undoubtedly encourages—no—most emphatically insists upon keen personal investigation into the real nature of life, while strongly deprecating idle speculation and mere theorizing.

The profound insight of wisdom is not the outcome of vain excogitation but of realization; and for realization is required a special line of penetrative thought that is more than a mere ratiocinative process. A brilliant intellect is not uncommonly combined with a bad character, but true wisdom cannot be found apart from morality. For this reason Buddhism demands, together with a life of purity, a ruthless analysis of facts, and the consequent discarding of all fond fancies and illusions. Morality, to be genuine, must be based on fact, not fiction, no matter how pious or consoling the latter may be.

In the following Sutta, a certain bhikkhu, Māluṅkyaputta, not content to tread the Path patiently in accordance with the Buddha's instructions and thus attain by degrees the perfect wisdom, desires, impatiently desires, an immediate solution of certain speculative problems, on the threat of discarding the robe forthwith.

Calmly, and in a few words, the Buddha elicits from the bhikkhu that his adoption of the holy life was in no way conditional upon the solution of such problems. Proceeding, the Buddha points out that to waste time over such idle speculations is not merely a hindrance to progress on the Path, but is actually inimical to the very existence of the holy life.

Finally, he lays emphasis on what has really been revealed by him, and why: the Four Noble Truths, encompassing that sorrow which life brings home, sooner or later, to every living creature; and, likewise, making possible the cessation of that sorrow, even in this life itself.

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## Cūla Māluṅkya Sutta

### *The Short Discourse to Māluṅkyaputta*

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at the monastery of Anāthapiṇḍika in the Jeta Grove, near Sāvattihī, when the following thought arose in the mind of the Venerable Māluṅkyaputta whilst meditating in solitude:

“These theories have not been elucidated, and/or have been set aside and/or rejected by the Blessed One—whether

- the world is eternal or not eternal;
- the world is finite or infinite;

- the life principle<sup>30</sup> and the body are identical;
- the life principle is one thing and the body another;
- the Tathāgata<sup>31</sup> exists or does not exist after death;
- the Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death; and/or
- the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death<sup>32</sup>—these the Blessed One does not elucidate to me.

The fact that he does not elucidate these to me does not please me, nor do I approve of it. Therefore I will go to the Blessed One and inquire after this matter. If the Blessed One will elucidate these questions to me, then I will lead the holy life under him. If he will not, then I will abandon the precepts<sup>33</sup> and return to the lay life.”

And at eventide the Venerable Māluṅkyaputta, having risen from meditation, approached the Blessed One, and respectfully saluting him sat on one side. Seated thus, the Venerable Māluṅkyaputta addressed the Blessed One as follows:

“Behold, Venerable Sir, whilst meditating in solitude, the following thought occurred to me. These theories have not been elucidated, set aside and/or ejected by the Blessed One. i.e. whether the world is eternal or not eternal and/or the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death. These the Blessed One does not elucidate to me. The fact that he does not elucidate these to me does not please me, nor do I approve of it. Therefore I will go to the Blessed One and inquire after this matter. If the Blessed One will elucidate these questions to me, then I will lead the holy life under him. If he will not, then I will abandon the precepts and return to the lay life. If the Blessed One knows that the world is eternal, let the Blessed One elucidate to me that the world is eternal. If the Blessed One knows that the world is not eternal, let the Blessed One elucidate to me that it is not eternal. If the Blessed One does not know whether the world is eternal or not—in that case, certainly, for one who does not know and lacks the insight, the only upright thing is to say, ‘I do not know. I do not have the insight.’ If the Blessed One knows, that the world is finite, ... that the life principle and the body are identical, ... that the Tathāgata exists after death, ... whether the Tathāgata does not exist after death, ... whether the Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death, ... whether the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death, let the Blessed One elucidate to me that the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death, if the Blessed One does not know whether the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death—in that case, certainly, for one who does not know and lacks the insight, the only upright thing is to say: ‘I do not know; I do not have the insight.’

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<sup>30</sup> *Jīva*, ‘life’.

<sup>31</sup> According to the Commentary to Majjhima Nikāya 22, “the term *tathāgato* (lit.: ‘thus-gone’ or ‘thus-come’) may refer either to a being in general (*satto*), or to the Greatest Man (*uttamo puriso*, i.e., the Buddha), and/or to a taint-free saint (*khiṇṇāsavo*, i.e. an Arahant)”. The term is often translated as “the Perfect One”. See the Wheel 48/49 *Snake Simile*, Majjhima Nikāya 22, p. 35—Editor.

<sup>32</sup> The Arahant Nāgasena’s explanation as to why these were not elucidated by the Buddha, will be found in *Questions of Milinda*, translated by T. W. Rhys Davids, Part I, p. 204, *Milinda’s Questions*, translated by I. B. Horner, Vol. I, p. 201 —Translators.

He (Nāgasena) says that they belong to a type of questions that have ‘to be set aside’ (*ṭhapanīya*); on the latter, see K. N. Jayatilleke—*Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge* (London 1963. Allen & Unwin), Section 469 ff., page 814; on the “unanswered” (or unrevealed) questions see *ibid.* Sec. 807ff; on the four logical alternatives, see K. N. Jayatilleke—“*The Buddhist Conception of Truth*” in *Knowledge and Conduct* (The Wheel No. 50), p. 32 ff—Editor.

<sup>33</sup> *Sikkham paccakkhāya*—the formal renunciation of the Order. See *Vinaya*, S.B.E., Vol. XIII, p. 275, notes 2 and 3 —Translators.

“What, Māluṅkyaputta, did I say to you, ‘Come, Māluṅkyaputta, lead the holy life under me. I will elucidate to you whether the world is eternal or not eternal, the world is finite or infinite, the life principle and the body are identical, and/or the life principle is one thing and the body another, the Tathāgata exists or does not exist after death, the Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death and/or the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death?’”

“Certainly not Venerable Sir.”

“Or else did you say to me, ‘Venerable Sir, I will lead the holy life under the Blessed One, (on condition that) the Blessed One will elucidate to me whether, the world is eternal or not eternal, ... and/or the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not after death?’”

“Certainly not, Venerable Sir.”

“So you admit, Māluṅkyaputta, that neither did I say, ‘Come, Māluṅkyaputta, lead the holy life under me and I will elucidate these questions to you’; nor did you say, ‘Venerable Sir, I will lead the holy life under the Blessed One, because he will elucidate these questions to me.’

Such being the case, foolish one, what is your position, and what do you repudiate?<sup>34</sup>

Whoever, Māluṅkyaputta, should say: ‘I will not lead the holy life under the Blessed One until the Blessed One elucidates these questions to me’, that person would die before these questions had ever been elucidated by the Accomplished One.

It is as if, Māluṅkyaputta, a person was pierced by an arrow thickly smeared with poison, and his friends and companions, relatives and kinsmen, were to procure a physician and surgeon and then he were to say, ‘I will not have this arrow taken out until I know whether that person by whom I was wounded is of the warrior caste, or the Brahmin, or the merchant, or of the menial caste’.

Or again he were to say: ‘I will not have this arrow taken out until I know the name and family of that person by whom I was wounded, ... or until I know whether he is tall, or short, or of medium height or, until I knew whether he is black, or dusky, or of golden-brown<sup>35</sup> skin, ... or until I know whether he is from such and such a village, town, or city.’

Or again he were to say: ‘I will not have this arrow taken out until I know whether the bow with which I was wounded is a long-bow or a cross-bow, ... or until I know whether the bow-string with which I was wounded is of swallow-won, bamboo-strips, sinew, *māruvā*-hemp, or milk-weed, ... or until I know whether the shaft with which I was wounded is a marsh reed or a cultivated reed, ... or until I know whether the shaft is feathered from the wings of a vulture, heron, hawk, peacock, or “loose-jaw” bird, ... or until I know whether the shaft is wound round with the sinews of an ox, buffalo, Ruru deer, or monkey.’

Or again he were to say: ‘I will not have this arrow taken out until I know whether the arrow with which I was wounded is an ordinary arrow, a claw-headed arrow, a *vekaṇḍa*-arrow, an iron arrow, a calf-tooth arrow, or a “*karavīra*-leaf” arrow.’

That person would die, Māluṅkyaputta, before this would ever be known by him.

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<sup>34</sup> *Ko santo kaṃ paccacikkhasi?* *Santo* is the present participle of the root *asa*—“to be”. The Buddha did not promise to elucidate such questions, nor did Māluṅkyaputta make their elucidation a condition of his joining the Order. Under these circumstances, the Buddha asks *Ko santo?*—which might be freely translated as “What is your grievance?” or “Where do you stand?” —Translators.

<sup>35</sup> *Maṅguracchavi*—P.T.S. Dictionary, gives ‘of golden colour’; Warren ‘of a yellow skin’. Rhys Davids renders it ‘golden in colour’, and, in a note, adds ‘perhaps of a sallow complexion’ (See Dialogues, p. 258, note 2). According to the commentary on the *Mahā-Saccaka Sutta*, Majjhima Nikāya 36, it is the colour of the fish *maṅgura* (a freshwater fish having whiskers) —Translators.

In exactly the same way, Māluṅkyaputta, whoever should say 'I will not lead the holy life under the Blessed One until the Blessed One elucidates to me whether the world is eternal or not eternal, ... the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death', that person would die, Māluṅkyaputta, before these questions had ever been elucidated by the Accomplished One.

If it be the belief, Māluṅkyaputta, that the world is eternal, will there be observance of the holy life? In such a case—No.

If it be the belief Māluṅkyaputta, that the world is not eternal, will there be observance of the holy life? In that case also—No.

But, Māluṅkyaputta, whether the belief be that the world is eternal or that it is not eternal, undoubtedly there is birth, there is old age, there is death and there are sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair, the extinction of which, in this life itself, I make known.

If it be the belief, Māluṅkyaputta, that the world is finite, ... that the life principle and the body are identical, ... if it be the belief that the Tathāgata exists after death, does not exist after death, both exists and does not exist after death, will there be observance of the holy life? In such a case—No!

If it be the belief that the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death, will there be observance of the holy life? In that case also—No!

But, Māluṅkyaputta, whether the belief be that the Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death, or that he neither exists nor does not exist after death, undoubtedly there is birth, there is old age, there is death and there are sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair, the extinction of which, in this life itself, I make known.

Accordingly, Māluṅkyaputta, that which has not been revealed by me accept as unrevealed, and consider only that revealed which had been revealed by me.

And what, Māluṅkyaputta, has not been revealed by me?

I have not revealed whether the world is external or not external, the world is finite or infinite, the life principle and the body are identical, the life principle is one thing and the body another, the Tathāgata exists or does not exist after death, the Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after death and/or the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death.

And why, Māluṅkyaputta, have I not revealed these? Because, Māluṅkyaputta, these are not profitable, do not concern the bases of holiness and are not conducive to aversion, to passionlessness, to cessation, to tranquillity, to intuitive wisdom, to enlightenment, or to Nibbāna.

Therefore, I have not revealed these.

And what, Māluṅkyaputta, have been revealed by me? Sorrow. This, Māluṅkyaputta has been revealed by me. The cause of sorrow. This has been revealed by me. The Cessation of Sorrow. This has been revealed by me. The Path leading to the Cessation of Sorrow. This has been revealed by me.

And why, Māluṅkyaputta, have I revealed this? Because, Māluṅkyaputta, these are profitable, comprise the bases of holiness and are conducive to aversion, to passionlessness, to cessation, to tranquillity, to intuitive wisdom, to enlightenment and to Nibbāna. Therefore have I revealed them.

Accordingly, Māluṅkyaputta, that which has not been revealed by me accept as unrevealed, and consider only that revealed which has been revealed by me."

Thus spoke the Blessed One. The Venerable Māluṅkyaputta, delighted, applauded his words.



# Introduction to the Upāli Sutta

## (*Majjhima-Nikāya No. 56*)

During the Buddha's life time, the world was particularly fortunate in great teachers. Contemporaneous with him were the great philosophic movements of China, Persia and Greece. There is no doubt that the giant intellects of that period, roughly about 500 B.C., have left an ineradicable stamp on the culture of humanity.

In India, at that time, there appears to have been a general religious awakening. Many were the devout enthusiasts and teachers who, renouncing the world, sought paths of deliverance from suffering. Among these the name of Nātaputta, the founder of the Nigaṇṭhas, is frequently mentioned in our books. This discourse gives some indication of the Nigaṇṭha doctrines and the marked difference of view with regard to the importance and effect of 'mental action,' between Nātaputta and the Blessed One.

We would invite the non-Buddhist reader to note particularly the Buddha's admonition to one ardently eager to be his disciple, to make a thorough investigation before he decides to adopt the new faith. What modern religionist would thus repress a possible convert, especially a highly educated millionaire convert, and a poet of no mean order as his verses (whose beauty is difficult to reproduce in translation) disclose!

This has ever been the triumphant achievement of Buddhism. It sets out to help others to deliver themselves from pain, but its wide tolerance has never permitted it to have and to hold converts merely for the sake of its own prestige. It welcomes criticism and investigation from within and without. It discredits blind faith. It does not forbid the reading of alien religious literature. Indeed, we make bold to claim that Buddhism is the only religion that positively demands the exercise of cold reason and investigation from its converts. No man's freedom of thought is interfered with by the Master, who would guide, but never coerce, into channels of spiritual betterment and uplift. The reason for all this is the Buddhist belief in Kamma.

A good action, mental, verbal or physical, remains a 'good' action whatever the external religious label of the agent. As the word 'agent' may mislead the reader, it is well to insist here that *Buddhism recognizes no 'performer'*.

*There is only a performance; and every 'individual', man, god or animal, is only a 'being,' a becoming, consisting of present fresh performance added to the sum-total of that particular being's past action,—the whole constituting a coherent flux that is conventionally called 'an individual.'*

This absence of a 'thing-in-itself,'—soul, or *attā*, in the Buddha's teaching, at once raises it above the ruck of ordinary religious levels. There is always the possibility that any particular flux, or being, may now or hereafter, in this 'life' or in a future one, purge itself of its errors and work out its salvation. There is every need for him of the tender heart to extend a helping hand. But he of the tender heart must first make sure of his own correctness and stability; for a tender heart without supporting wisdom, may, all unconsciously, mislead and betray where it would only lead and save. In any case there is no need to worry and fret about a possible 'eternal damnation' for those we love. Such a doctrine has no place in Buddhism. Whatever is gained is never lost, though, temporarily, passing clouds of ill may obscure and perplex.

So it has never been the habit of the Buddhist to force, or desire to force, his convictions on those of alien faiths. He is not over-anxious to make converts. Wherever any moral good is contemplated, he bestows his hearty approval, even as his Master did, when advising *Upāli* to

continue bestowing alms on the Nigaṇṭhas, an alien sect. The Buddhist is glad to welcome, as brothers, any truly devout and earnest men, whatever the religion they outwardly profess. What grieves the sincere Buddhist, today, is to observe so few of truly religious bent in the fold of any religion. The West is slave to Mammon and materialism, and the East bids fair to follow suit.

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## Upāli Sutta

### *Upāli, the Householder*

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Nālandā<sup>36</sup> in the mango grove of Pāvārika.<sup>37</sup> Now, Nigaṇṭha<sup>38</sup> Nātaputta was also staying at Nālandā at that time in a large company of naked ascetics. And Dīgha Tapassī,<sup>39</sup> the naked ascetic, having been for alms in Nālandā and returned from his begging round<sup>40</sup>, proceeded, after the meal was over, to the mango grove of Pāvārika where the Blessed One was.<sup>41</sup> Coming into his presence, he exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One, and after the customary words of courtesy remained standing nearby. Standing thus at a little distance, the Blessed One addressed him as follows:

“There are seats, Tapassī. Be seated, if you wish.”

Thereupon Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, took one of the low seats and sat on one side. Then the Blessed One spoke to him thus:

“Well, Tapassī, how many modes of action<sup>42</sup> does Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta declare there are, in doing and perpetrating evil deeds?”

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<sup>36</sup> Nālandā, a town near Rājagaha, afterwards renowned by reason of its famous Buddhist University.

<sup>37</sup> That is, in the monastery erected by the millionaire Pāvārika in his mango grove.

<sup>38</sup> Nigaṇṭha, the name of a sect of naked ascetics who vainly opposed the Buddha and his disciples — Translators. Prof. Hermann Jacobi writes in *Hastings, Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*:

“The canonical books of the Buddhists frequently mention the Jains as a rival sect, under their old name Nigaṇṭha (Sanskrit – *Nigaṇṭha*; Prakrit—*Niggantha*) and their leader in Buddha’s time, Nātaputta (Nāta or Nātiputta, being an epithet of the last prophet of the Jains, Vardhamāna Mahāvira), and they name the place of the latter’s death, Pāvā, in agreement with Jain tradition. On the other hand, the canonical books of the Jains mention as contemporaries of Mahāvira the same kings as reigned during Buddha’s career. Thus it is established that Mahāvira was a contemporary of the Buddha, and probably somewhat older than the latter, who outlived his rival’s decease at Pāvā.”

<sup>39</sup> Lit. “Long Tapassi” probably owing to long limbs or height.

<sup>40</sup> ‘Begging-round’. The Pāli term *piṇḍapāta* means ‘dropping by morsels’. The Bhikkhus go begging to each Buddhist house and stand near the door, bowl in hand, without any other intimation of their presence. Then the inmates come and serve them with rice etc. according to their means. The Bhikkhus say in acknowledgment “*Sukhī hotu*” (May you be happy) and pass on. They live on such morsels dropped into their bowls, and on alms given by generous supporters. Though the identical term is here used with reference to Dīgha Tapassi, the Commentator says that this term is not usually applied to the process of begging as practised by alien orders.

<sup>41</sup> The followers of other sects frequently visited the Buddhist monasteries and the Bhikkhus also visited their monasteries. Often, points of religious controversy were debated at such meetings.

<sup>42</sup> *Kammāni*—“actions.”

“No, Venerable Gotama, ‘action’ is not the word used by Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta in his teaching. ‘Offence,’<sup>43</sup> ‘Offence’ is the word he uses.”

“Well, Tapassī, how many modes of ‘offence’ does he declare there are, in doing and perpetrating evil deeds? “

“Verily, Venerable Gotama, there are three (modes of) ‘offence’, declares Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, in doing and perpetrating evil deeds, namely: ‘Offence’ of body, of word, and of mind.”

“Then, Tapassī, is bodily offence one, verbal offence another, and mental offence still another?”

“Bodily offence, Venerable Gotama, is one, verbal another; and mental still another.”

“Then, Tapassī, these three offences, thus analyzed and differentiated; which offence does Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta declare to be the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds? Is it bodily, verbal or mental offence?”

“Of these three offences, Venerable Gotama, thus analyzed and differentiated; bodily offence, declares Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta is the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds; verbal offence and mental offence are not so (heinous).”<sup>44</sup>

“Bodily offence! you say, Tapassī?”

“Bodily offence! I say, Venerable Gotama.”

“Bodily offence! you say, Tapassī?”

“Bodily offence! I say, Venerable Gotama.”

“Bodily offence! you say, Tapassī?”

“Bodily offence! I say, Venerable Gotama.”

Thus did the Blessed One make Dīgha Tapassī confirm this statement even unto the third time.<sup>45</sup>

Thereupon Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, addressed the Blessed One as follows:

“Well, Venerable Gotama, how many modes of offence do you declare there are, in doing and perpetrating evil deeds?”

“No, Tapassī, the Accomplished One does not use the word ‘offence’ in His Teaching. ‘Action.’ ‘Action’ is what he recognizes.”

“Well, Venerable Gotama, how many modes of ‘action’ do you declare there are, in doing and perpetrating evil deeds?”

“Verily, Tapassī, there are three modes of ‘action’ I declare, in doing and perpetrating evil deeds, namely: ‘Action’ of body, of word, and of mind.”<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> *Daṇḍāni*—Note the distinction between the terms employed. The former merely implies “action,” the latter “punishment” or “offence.”

<sup>44</sup> According to the doctrine of the Nigaṇṭhas bodily offence is considered to be the most heinous. The Commentator states that the Nigaṇṭhas declare the first two to be non-volitional. For instance, when the wind blows, branches are stirred and waters are ruffled. Again the blowing of the wind causes leaves to rustle and waters to give forth sound. In these cases no mind is involved, but there is visible action and audible sound. Therefore they posit that bodily and verbal ‘offences’ are non-volitional, mental offences alone being volitional.

<sup>45</sup> Why did the Buddha make Tapassī confirm his statement thus? The Commentator says that it was because he anticipated the conversion of Upāli who, hearing of this conversation, would be enticed to come personally to hear the Truth from the Buddha.

“Then, Venerable Gotama, is bodily action one, verbal action another and mental action still another?”

“Bodily action, Tapassī, is one, verbal another and mental still another.”

“Then, Venerable Gotama, of these three actions, thus analyzed and differentiated, which action do you declare to be the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds? Is it bodily, or verbal or mental action?”

“Of these three actions, Tapassī, thus analyzed and differentiated, mental action<sup>47</sup>, I declare, is the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds. Bodily action and verbal action are not so (heinous).”

“Mental action! you say, Venerable Gotama?”

“Mental action! say I, Tapassī.”

“Mental action! you say, Venerable Gotama?”

“Mental action! say I, Tapassī.”

“Mental action! you say, Venerable Gotama?”

“Mental action! say I, Tapassī.”

Thus did Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, make the Blessed One confirm this statement for the third time; and rising from his seat he went to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta.

Now Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta was seated at that time with many large companies of laymen, including the villagers of Bālaka<sup>48</sup> headed by Upāli. Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, perceiving Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, coming in the distance addressed him as follows:

“Well, Tapassī, from where do you come in the middle of the day?”

“I come, Venerable Sir, direct from the presence of the Samaṇa Gotama.<sup>49</sup>”

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<sup>46</sup> *Kāya kamma*, *vacī kamma* and *mano kamma* are the terms employed by the Buddha to signify bodily, verbal and mental actions. Here it should be noted that according to Buddhism all ‘actions’ are volitional. Bodily actions are those done by the mind through the instrument of the body. Similarly verbal actions are those done by the mind by means of speech. Purely mental actions have no other instrument but the mind. The Commentator says that bodily and verbal actions, therefore, constitute the twelve types of immoral consciousness and the eight types of moral consciousness that arise through the agency of body and speech. Mental actions constitute all the 29 types of *Kammic* consciousness (i.e. five moral states of consciousness pertaining to the form sphere, four pertaining to the formless sphere, and the above twenty).

As the text refers specifically to evil deeds, the Commentary gives another explanation. Bodily actions are killing, stealing and unlawful sexual intercourse. Verbal actions are lying, slandering, harsh speech and vain talk. Mental actions are covetousness, hatred and false belief.

<sup>47</sup> Actions are moral, immoral or amoral. With respect to immoral actions, bodily deeds and verbal deeds such as matricide, causing schism in the Order etc. are the most heinous. Mental actions, such as ecstasies (*jhānas*) are the most powerful with reference to moral actions.

In this particular instance according to the Commentaries the Buddha’s declaration that mental action is the most heinous refers to ‘wrong Views with fixed results’ (*niyata-micchādiṭṭhi*), which may also be called ‘hardened’ or ‘pernicious wrong views’. On these, see in this publication, the Aṇṇaka Sutta above, Note 19 and Appendix.

<sup>48</sup> Bālaka was a salt-makers’ village. Upāli, the owner of the village, had requested his men to pay a visit to their teacher, Nātaputta—Commentary.

<sup>49</sup> *Samaṇa Gotama*. We prefer to retain the word *samaṇa* for which, unless we create such a word as ‘calmist,’ there is no English equivalent (the restricted meaning allowed to ‘pacifist’ renders it unsuitable). *Samaṇa* is usually rendered ‘ascetic’ or ‘recluse’. Neither fits the case of the Buddha and members of his order. ‘Ascetic’ implies severe abstinence and austerity and ‘recluse’ involves isolated seclusion. Neither

“Had you any conversation, then, with the Samaṇa Gotama?”

“Indeed, Venerable Sir, I had some conversation with the Samaṇa Gotama.

“Well, Tapassī, what was the trend of the conversation you had with the Samaṇa Gotama?”

Thereupon Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, told Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta everything, the exact conversation he had with the Blessed One.

When he had finished, Nātaputta said to him:

“Excellent, excellent, Tapassī! As by a learned disciple who knows the doctrine of his teacher perfectly, even so by Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, was it explained to the Samaṇa Gotama. Of what avail is the insignificant<sup>50</sup> mental offence when compared with the gross bodily offence? Hence, bodily offence is the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds; verbal offence and mental offence are not so (heinous).”

Thereupon Upāli, the householder, addressed Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta as follows:

“Excellent, excellent, Venerable Sir, [on the part of] Dīgha Tapassī! As by a learned disciple has it been expounded to the Samaṇa Gotama, by the Venerable Sir Tapassī, that bodily offence is the most heinous, whereas verbal offence and mental offence are not so (heinous).

“Well, Venerable Sir, I shall go and refute the Samaṇa Gotama on this matter. If the Samaṇa Gotama should affirm likewise to me as he was made to affirm by the venerable Tapassī, then, just as a strong man would seize a long-haired ram by its fleece and pull it along, draw it towards him, and drag it hither and thither, even so will I pull up, draw towards, me, and drag the Samaṇa Gotama hither and thither in the debate. Or, just as a sturdy distillery-man would fling a huge distillery strainer into a deep vat and holding the rim pull it up, draw it towards him, and drag it hither and thither ... or, just as a strong distillery labourer would grip the sieve by the rim and turn it over, turn it back, and shake it to and fro ... or, just as an elephant of sixty years plunges into a deep lake and plays a kind of game called ‘the washing of hemp’,<sup>51</sup> even so will I sport, as it were, with the Samaṇa Gotama. Well, Venerable Sir, I shall go and refute the Samaṇa Gotama on this matter.”

“Go, householder, and refute the Samaṇa Gotama on this matter; for either I or Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, or you should refute the Samaṇa Gotama.”

When he had spoken thus, Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, addressed Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta as follows:

“Really, Venerable Sir, it does not please me that Upāli, the householder, should engage the Samaṇa Gotama in debate; for the Samaṇa Gotama, Venerable Sir, is a magician; he knows an enticing spell by which he lures the disciples of other religions.”

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word can be applied to the Buddha, who taught and trod the Middle Path, rejecting asceticism just as much as self-indulgence, and was always accessible to all men.

*Samaṇa* (from the root *Samu* = to calm, to pacify, to appease). A general designation for one who renounced the world, became a Buddhist technical term with a specialized meaning and was afterwards applied only to members of the Sangha —Translators.

<sup>50</sup> *Chavo* = *lāmaka*—low, mean.—Commentary. Also: dead, non-effective.

<sup>51</sup> I.e. the elephant playfully splashes the water right and left, with his trunk, reminding one of the beatings and combing of hemp.

“It is absolutely impossible<sup>52</sup>, Tapassī; it can never happen that Upāli, the householder, should become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama; but there is certainly a possibility of this—that the Samaṇa Gotama might become a disciple of Upāli, the householder! Go, householder, and refute the Samaṇa Gotama on this matter; for Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, or you or I should refute the Samaṇa Gotama.”

For a second and a third time did Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, address Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta thus:

“Really, Venerable Sir, it does not please me that *Upāli* should engage the Samaṇa Gotama in debate. The Samaṇa Gotama lures the disciples of the other religions.”

“It is absolutely impossible, Tapassī, (that Upāli should be converted). One of us should refute the Samaṇa Gotama.”

“Certainly, Venerable Sir,” said Upāli, the householder, in response; and rising from his seat he respectfully saluted Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, passed round him to the right<sup>53</sup> and proceeded to the mango grove of Pāvārika where the Blessed One was. Approaching the Blessed One, he respectfully saluted<sup>54</sup> him and sat on one side. Thus seated, Upāli, the householder, addressed the Blessed One as follows:

“Venerable Sir, did Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, come this way?”

“He came this way, householder.”

“Had you, Venerable Sir, any conversation with him?”

“Certainly, householder, I had some conversation with him.”

“What then, Venerable Sir, was the trend of the conversation you had with him?”

Thereupon the Blessed One told him everything, the exact conversation he had with Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic.

When he had finished, Upāli, the householder, said to the Blessed One,

“Excellent, excellent, Venerable Sir, [on the part of] Dīgha Tapassī! As by a learned disciple who knows the doctrine of his teacher perfectly, even so by Dīgha Tapassī the naked ascetic, was it explained to the Blessed One. Of what avail is the insignificant mental offence when compared with the gross bodily offence? Hence, bodily offence is the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds; verbal offence and mental offence are not so (heinous).”

“If you, O householder, holding fast to the truth, would debate, then, we may have a conversation on this matter.”

“I, holding fast to the truth, Venerable Sir, will debate. Let us have a talk on this matter.”

“What then do you think, householder? Suppose there was a naked ascetic here, afflicted with disease, suffering, seriously ill, who refused cold water<sup>55</sup> and lived on hot water. He, not

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<sup>52</sup> Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta had not yet met the Buddha, and was consequently in ignorance of the Buddha’s personality and the sublimity of his Teachings. Dīgha Tapassī, on the other hand, used to frequent the Buddha’s monastery and discuss the Dhamma. He was fully aware that Upāli would be impressed by the personality of the Buddha and would most probably become a convert to his Teaching. The Nigaṇṭhas would thereby lose one of their staunchest supporters—Commentary.

<sup>53</sup> To present the left shoulder to a superior was considered disrespectful.

<sup>54</sup> Some salute the Buddha impressed by the dignity of his appearance, others thinking that he is worthy of salutation as he comes of a noble family. On this occasion Upāli, the staunch follower of an alien teacher, was so impressed by the Buddha’s noble bearing that he respectfully saluted him, despite his former intention of deriding him.

taking cold water, would die. Now, householder, where does Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta hold that he would be reborn?"

"There are, Venerable Sir, deities known as 'mind-attached'; there is he reborn—and for what reason? Because, Venerable Sir, he dies with mental attachment."

"Householder, householder, think carefully, before you reply. The latter does not agree with your former (statement), nor the former with the latter;<sup>56</sup> and these, householder, were the words spoken by you: 'I holding fast to the truth, Venerable Sir, will debate; let us have a talk on this matter'."

"Although, Venerable Sir, the Blessed One speaks thus, nevertheless, Venerable Sir, bodily offence is certainly the most heinous in doing and perpetrating evil deeds; verbal offence and mental offence not being so (heinous)."

"What then do you think, householder? Suppose there was a naked ascetic here restrained with the four kinds of restraint: He is restrained as regards all evil; is devoted to restraint as regards all evil;<sup>57</sup> has shaken off all evil; is pervaded with restraint<sup>58</sup> as regards all evil; he, whilst walking up and down, inflicts destruction upon many tiny creatures. Now, householder, what does Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta declare is the result of this?"

"Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, Venerable Sir, declares that what is unintentional is not heinous."

"But, householder, if it is intentional?"

"Then, Venerable Sir, it is heinous."

"In which (offence), O householder, does Nātaputta recognize intention<sup>59</sup>?"

"In mental offence, Venerable Sir."

"Householder, householder, think carefully before you reply. This latter does not agree with your former statement ..."

"Although, Venerable Sir, the Blessed One speaks thus, nevertheless bodily offence is certainly the most heinous."

"What then do you think of this, householder? This (town of) Nālandā has flourished and prospered, has a vast population, and is crowded with men?"

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<sup>55</sup> As the Nigaṇṭhas believe there is life in water.—Commentary. The Buddhist standpoint is eminently practical. Water itself has no life; but if it contains living beings, it should be filtered before drinking. Bhikkhus always filter their drinking water.

<sup>56</sup> The Buddha made Upāli admit that mental offence is the most heinous. The Nigaṇṭha, in the imaginary proposition, is ill with a bilious derangement which requires the use of cold water. Mentally he craves for water, cold water; but fearing to commit either a bodily or a verbal offence he refrains from it, thereby guarding these two doors. But he commits a mental offence and is therefore reborn among the deities known as 'mind-attached'—Commentary.

<sup>57</sup> The four forms of Nigaṇṭha 'restraint' are referred to, by Rhys Davids in *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, Vol. II, p. 74, but the rendering is inaccurate.

<sup>58</sup> The Commentary gives the following four 'forms of restraint':

He neither kills, causes to kill, nor consents to killing;

He neither steals, causes to steal, nor consents to stealing;

He neither lies, causes to lie, nor consents to lying;

He neither craves sensual pleasure, nor causes others to crave, nor approves of others craving for such pleasure.

<sup>59</sup> *Cetanā*. Usually rendered 'volition', which is better than 'will.' Buddhism recognizes no such entity *per se* as 'will'; but the exercise of willing, an all-important activity, is considered to be the basis of the perpetuation of sorrow.

“Yes, Venerable Sir, this (town of) Nālandā, it is true, has flourished and prospered, has a vast population, and is crowded with men.”

“And what then do you think, householder? Suppose someone were to come here with uplifted sword and say: ‘In one moment—no, in an instant, I will make a shambles—one single mass of flesh, of every living creature in this (town of) Nālandā.’

Do you think, householder, that it is really possible for that individual in one moment—no, in an instant, to make a shambles—one single mass of flesh, of every living creature in this (town of) Nālandā?”

“Even ten persons, Venerable Sir—no, twenty, thirty, forty, or even fifty persons, will not suffice! Then of what avail is one insignificant person.”

“What then do you think, householder? Suppose a Samaṇa or Brahmin, possessed of supernormal psychic powers and mastery of mind were to come here and say: ‘This (town of) Nālandā will I reduce to ashes by one thought of intense hatred.’

Do you think, householder, that it is really possible for such a one to reduce this *Nālandā* to ashes by one thought of intense hatred?”

“Even ten Nālandās, Venerable Sir—no, twenty, thirty, forty, or even fifty Nālandās, is that Samaṇa or Brahmin, possessed of supernormal psychic powers and mastery of mind, able to reduce to ashes by one thought of intense hatred! What, then, does one insignificant Nālandā avail?”

“Householder, householder, think carefully before you reply. This does not agree with your earlier views.”

“Nevertheless, Venerable Sir, bodily offence is the most heinous; verbal and mental offence not being so (heinous).”

“What then do you think of this, householder? You have heard of the forests—Daṇḍaka, Kālinga, Mejjha and Mātāṅga—and how they became forests?”

“Yes, Venerable Sir, I have heard of them, and of how they became forests.”

“And what do you think (of them), householder? What have you heard? By what means did they become forests? “

“This is what I have heard, Venerable Sir: It was by a mental act of intense hatred of the ascetics<sup>60</sup> that they became forests!”

“Householder, householder, think carefully before you reply ... The latter does not agree with your former (statement), nor the former with the latter; and verily these, householder, were the words spoken by you: ‘I, holding fast to the truth, Venerable Sir, will debate; let us have a talk on this matter.’”

“With the very first illustration, Venerable Sir, I was satisfied and delighted with the Blessed One. Nevertheless, as I wished to hear the Blessed One’s beautiful expositions of these problems, I thought of contradicting the Blessed One.

Excellent, Venerable Sir, excellent! It is, Venerable Sir, as if a man were to set upright that which was overturned, or were to reveal that which was hidden, or were to point the way to one who had gone astray, or were to hold a lamp amidst the darkness, so that those who have eyes may see.

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<sup>60</sup> *Isinam manopadosena*. The Commentary says that the gods, annoyed at maltreatment of the sages who dwelt in these once populous sites, destroyed the cities there so utterly that only a waste remained which, later, became forests. But popular belief was that they were destroyed by the ascetics themselves.

Even so has the doctrine been expounded in various ways by the Blessed One.

I, too, Venerable Sir, take refuge in the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order. May the Blessed One receive me a follower, as one who has taken refuge from this very day to life's end."

"Householder, make a thorough investigation! It is good for a distinguished man like you to (first) make a thorough investigation."

"Venerable Sir, I am still more satisfied and delighted with the Blessed One because he cautions me thus: 'Householder, make a thorough investigation! It is well for a distinguished man like you to (first) make a thorough investigation.' For, Venerable Sir, other religious bodies having acquired me as a disciple, would carry banners round the whole of Nālandā, saying, 'Upāli, the householder, has become a disciple of ours!' The Blessed One, on the contrary, admonishes me to (first) make a thorough investigation. For the second time, Venerable Sir, I take refuge in the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order."

"For a long time now, householder, your family has been like a fountain to the naked ascetics. Hence, you must bear in mind that alms should be given to those who come."

"Such words, Venerable Sir, make me still more satisfied and delighted with the Blessed One.

I have heard, Venerable Sir, that the Samaṇa Gotama speaks thus: 'To me alone should alms be given, not to others; to my disciples alone should alms be given, not to the disciples of others. Alms given to me alone is productive of much fruit, not so the alms given to others; alms given to my disciples alone is productive of much fruit, not so the alms given to the disciples of others,'

But, on the contrary, the Blessed One advises me to bestow alms on the naked ascetics also! Well, Venerable Sir, we shall know when that is suitable.

For the third time, Venerable Sir, I take refuge in the Buddha, the Doctrine, and the Order.

May the Blessed One receive me as a follower; as one who has taken refuge from this very day to life's end."

Then the Blessed One discoursed to him a graduated sermon<sup>61</sup>, that is to say, he spoke on the subjects of liberality, virtue, the heavens, on the evil consequences, the vanity and the depravity of sensual pleasures, and on the advantages of renunciation.<sup>62</sup>

When the Blessed One perceived that the mind of Upāli, the householder, was prepared, pliant, free from obstacles, elevated and lucid<sup>63</sup>, then he revealed to him that exalted doctrine<sup>64</sup> of the Buddhas, viz. Suffering, its Cause, its Ceasing and the Path.

Just as a clean cloth, free from stain, would take the dye perfectly, even so, to Upāli, the householder, whilst seated in that place, there arose (in him) the spotless, stainless vision of Truth.<sup>65</sup> He knew: Whatsoever has causally arisen must inevitably pass utterly away.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> *Ānupubbikathaṃ*—‘a graduated discourse’ All Buddhas teach in this methodical manner. Although their special message is the Four Noble Truths, they do not propound this advanced teaching until the pupil is clearly ready to appreciate its sublimity. In order to prepare the seeker, the Buddhas commence with exposition and extolling of elementary virtues. Liberality is the foremost virtue to be practiced, for it strikes at the root of that deep-seated vice, ‘Greed’, which holds sway over all. Then they explain the importance of Morality or regulated clean behaviour, which is the second step on the path of spiritual progress. But no ordinary man is content to do good merely for its own sake. He expects rewards. Therefore the Buddhas next tell him of happier planes, heavenly bliss, only to be obtained as the result of good action performed here and now. This is the only stimulus to virtue that the masses perceive. When the Buddhas know that a seeker is above the average, one wise and brave enough to look deeper, then the trend of the discourse undergoes a profound change. To such a fortunate one, the Buddhas explain the utter vanity of all cosmic pleasure, human and divine. From its unstable complexity comes only pain and woe. “All that is, when clung to, fails.” Understanding this, at last, the seeker is ripe enough to hear the doctrine of complete renunciation.

But the mission of the Buddhas is not merely this. Any great spiritual teacher may enlighten a less fortunate brother on these (to a Buddhist) elementary lines. Far loftier is the message of the Buddhas, who come to point out to those who have eyes to see, the Path to Final Deliverance. The Buddhas gain their Supreme Enlightenment only to give this precious Panacea that alone has the power to eradicate the universal sickness of whatever lives and thinks. Yet, as it is only a man who realizes his sickness that seeks a physician and a remedy, so it is only such as are fortunate to know their urgent need that seek the balm offered by those incomparable healers, the Buddhas. To such suffering seekers, the Buddhas speak in their own tongue. None but they, who ‘see things as they really are,’ can realize the final Truth—that all conditioned things, without exception, are transient, painful, and soulless. Simultaneous is such realization with the final destruction of all the fetters of existence, absolute insight into the Four Noble Truths, including the glimpse of that Nibbāna, which already in this life won, delivers, at his death, the Arahant, with a Final Deliverance that heals for evermore.

<sup>62</sup> *Nekkhamma*:—renunciation is five-fold, viz.

1. Ordination (*pabbajjā*) being the renunciation of household life.
2. The first ecstasy (*paṭhama jhāna*) being inhibition of the five hindrances.
3. *Nibbāna*, the renunciation of everything cosmic.
4. Insight (*vipassanā*), the getting rid of the conceptions of permanence, happiness and soul.
5. The adoption of all moral conditions and opposition to all immoral states.

In this instance the Buddha is referring to the renunciation of sensual pleasures—a variation of the last division.

<sup>63</sup> An oft-recurring sequence of technical words used to describe the mind of one who is ready to comprehend the Truth.

<sup>64</sup> *Buddhānaṃ sāmukkaṃsika dhammadesanā*, the teaching particular to Buddhas, i.e. the Four Noble Truths, which a Buddha discovers by himself and understands by self-won knowledge, which he has not in common with others.

<sup>65</sup> *Dhamma-cakkhu*. The Vision of Truth. Sometimes this phrase is applied to the First Three Paths, at others times to the Arahant Path only. Here it is applied to the *sotāpatti* Path (first stage of Sainthood)—Commentary.

Then Upāli, the householder, having thus, in the Dispensation<sup>67</sup> of the Exalted One seen<sup>68</sup> the Truth<sup>69</sup>; attained to the Truth; comprehended the Truth, penetrated the Truth, overcome doubt;<sup>70</sup> cast off uncertainty<sup>71</sup> and gained full confidence<sup>72</sup> without dependence on another<sup>73</sup>, said to the Blessed One:

“Well, Venerable Sir, we must be going now. We have much to do.”

“You, householder, are aware of the hour.”

Thereupon Upāli, the householder, delighted with the words of the Blessed One, having expressed his gratitude, rose from his seat, saluted the Blessed One respectfully, passed round him to the right, and proceeded to his residence.

Reaching home, he summoned his gate-keeper: “From today, my good gate-keeper, to naked ascetics, male and female, my gates are shut; but wide open are they to Bhikkhus and Bhikkhunis, male and female lay disciples of the Blessed One. If any naked ascetic comes, you should say to him: ‘Halt, Venerable Sir do not enter. Henceforth Upāli, the householder, having become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama shuts the gate against the naked ascetics, male and female, but open are they to the Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhunis, and to the male and female lay disciples of the Blessed One. If, Venerable Sir, you are in need of alms, stand just here; they will bring it here to you.’”

“Very good, Venerable Sir,” said the gate-keeper, in response to Upāli, the householder.

Now *Dīgha Tapassī*, the naked ascetic, heard that *Upāli*, the householder, had become a disciple of the *Samaṇa Gotama*. So he went to *Niḡaṇṭha Nātaputta* and said:

“I am given to understand Venerable Sir, that *Upāli* has become a disciple of the *Samaṇa Gotama*.”

“It is absolutely impossible, *Tapassī*, it can never happen that *Upāli*, the householder, should become a disciple of the *Samaṇa Gotama*; but there is certainly a possibility of this—that the *Samaṇa Gotama* might become a disciple of *Upāli*, the householder!”

A second and third time did *Dīgha Tapassī*, the naked ascetic, address *Nātaputta* thus:

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<sup>66</sup> That is, he realized the Truth of Transience (*anicca*).

<sup>67</sup> *Satthūsāsane*. The word *sāsana* has no closer English equivalent than ‘dispensation.’ The Buddha’s *Sāsana* is his system of the highest Truth. Beginning with the cosmic, it soon transcends this and reaches the hyper-cosmic. Any Buddha’s *Sāsana* includes:

his message,  
the guiding rules he promulgates,  
the relationship he reveals between bondage and deliverance,  
the Holy Order of Saints and even the wordlings who follow His Path.

<sup>68</sup> What follows is another formula describing the first stage of sainthood.

<sup>69</sup> I.e. the Four Noble Truths.

<sup>70</sup> It is only when one attains to the first stage of Sainthood that all doubts with respect to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha are absolutely discarded. Prior to this attainment one does not possess the ‘steadfast confidence’ (*acala saddhā*) of the Saint. Then only is one fully entitled to be ‘called’ *‘Sammā Diṭṭhika’*, a right believer.

<sup>71</sup> *Vigatakathāṅkatho*, lit. “He who has cast off saying how, how?,” i.e. having shed all indecision and uncertainty with regard to his past, present and future.

<sup>72</sup> *Vesārajjapatto*, i.e. free from timidity; having gained personal realization; wise; skilled.

<sup>73</sup> *Aparappaccayo*, i.e. his attainment was absolutely a personal experience, and not the gift of another. Even a Buddha cannot make a thoroughly bad man good, leaving alone making the gift of Sainthood. The Buddhas only ‘point out the way.’

“I am given to understand Venerable Sir that Upāli has become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama.”

“It is absolutely impossible, Tapassī, but the Samaṇa Gotama may have become a disciple of Upāli, the householder!”

“Yet, Venerable Sir, I am going to find out whether Upāli has become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama or not.”

“Go, Tapassī, and find out whether Upāli has become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama or not.”

Then Dīgha Tapassī proceeded to the residence of Upāli, and the door-keeper, seeing him coming in the distance, said, “Halt Venerable Sir, do not enter. Henceforth Upāli, the householder, having become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama shuts the gate against the naked ascetics, male and female, but open are they to the Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhunīs and to the male and female lay disciples of the Blessed One. If, Venerable Sir, you are in need of alms, stand just here; they will bring it here to you.”

“I am not in need of alms, friend,” said he.

Thereupon turning back, he went to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta and said, “It is only too true Venerable Sir, that Upāli has become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama. I was not heeded by you, Venerable Sir, with regard to my disapproval of his going to refute the Samaṇa Gotama. Undoubtedly, he is enticed from you, Venerable Sir, by the alluring magic of the Samaṇa Gotama.”

“It is absolutely impossible, Tapassī, but the Samaṇa Gotama may have become a disciple of Upāli, the householder!”

For a second and a third time did Dīgha Tapassī, the naked ascetic, address Nātaputta thus:

“It is only too true, Venerable Sir, that Upāli has become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama. I was not heeded by you, Venerable Sir, with regard to my disapproval of his going to refute the Samaṇa Gotama. Undoubtedly he is enticed from you, Venerable Sir, by the alluring magic of the Samaṇa Gotama.”

“It is absolutely impossible, Tapassī, but the Samaṇa Gotama may have become a disciple of Upāli, the householder! Nevertheless, Tapassī, I shall go and find out whether Upāli has become a disciple of the Samaṇa Gotama or not.”

So Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta with a large company of naked ascetics proceeded to the residence of Upāli. Seeing him coming in the distance, the door-keeper said:

“Halt, Venerable Sir, do not enter. If you are in need of alms, stand just here; they will bring it here to you.”

“Well then, my good gate-keeper, go and inform Upāli that Venerable Sir Nigaṇṭha, the son of Nāta, with a large company of naked ascetics, is standing (in the porch) outside the gates and wishes to see him.”

“Very good,” replied the gate-keeper, and going to Upāli, the householder, he informed him to that effect.

“In that case, my good gate-keeper, prepare seats in the central vestibule.<sup>74</sup>”

“Very good, Venerable Sir,” he replied.

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<sup>74</sup> *Majjhimāya dvārasālāya*. Upāli’s residence is said to have had seven enclosing walls, each with its gate. This ‘halt at the mid-gate’ would therefore be at the 4th gate, Upāli evidently wishing to meet his late preceptor Nātaputta halfway and no more.

Having prepared seats in the central vestibule, he went and informed Upāli, “The seats are arranged, Venerable Sir, in the central vestibule. Now (we can proceed), if you consider it is time for it.”

Thereupon Upāli, the householder, went to the central vestibule, and sitting on the highest, finest, greatest, and most valuable<sup>75</sup> seat, he said to the door-keeper:

“Now then, my good door-keeper, go to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta and say: ‘Venerable Sir, Upāli, the householder, says ‘You may enter, Venerable Sir, if you wish.’”

“Very good, Venerable Sir,” replied the door-keeper.

Going to Nātaputta he said: “Venerable Sir, Upāli, the householder, says ‘Enter then, Venerable Sir, if you wish’”

So Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, with the large company of naked ascetics, proceeded to the central vestibule.

Now, on previous occasions, immediately Upāli sees Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta coming in the distance, instantly he goes forward to meet him; and having dusted with his upper garment the highest, finest, greatest, and most valuable seat there, holding (the Nigaṇṭha) lightly (by means of the garment), makes him sit down. But on this occasion, Upāli himself occupied the highest, finest, greatest, and most valuable seat there and spoke thus to Nigaṇṭha,

“There are seats, Venerable Sir, be seated if you wish.”

When he spoke thus, Nigaṇṭha said to Upāli, “Are you mad, or are you stupid, householder! ‘I go, Venerable Sir’ (you said) ‘and I shall refute the Samaṇa Gotama’, but you have returned bound by the great *entanglement* of controversy. It is as if, householder, a gelder were to go and return emasculated himself,<sup>76</sup> or else, as if a person who throws a casting net (for fish) were to go and return with the mesh destroyed. Just so, householder, you went saying that you would refute the Samaṇa Gotama, but you have returned bound by the great entanglement of controversy. Verily, you are caught in the alluring juggling of the Samaṇa Gotama.”

“Excellent, Venerable Sir, is the enticing juggling! Beautiful, Venerable Sir, is the enticing magic! If, Venerable Sir, my beloved kinsmen and blood relatives were caught in this alluring magic, long would it conduce to their well-being and happiness. If, Venerable Sir, all the warriors, Brahmins, merchants, menials<sup>77</sup> were caught in this alluring magic long would it conduce to the well-being and happiness of all. If, Venerable Sir, the world, together with the worlds of the Gods, of Māras, and Brahmas, including the communities of Samaṇas and Brahmins, gods and men, were caught in this alluring magic, long would it conduce to their well-being and happiness. Well then, Venerable Sir, I will give you an illustration, for, in this world, certain intelligent people perceive the meaning of what is said by means of an illustration.

It happened long ago, Venerable Sir, that a certain decrepit hoary old Brahmin had a very young wife who was about to be confined. Then, Venerable Sir, that young woman said to the Brahmin:

‘Go, Brahmin; purchase and bring from the market a young monkey. It will be a plaything for my child.’

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<sup>75</sup> Ordinarily, the follower, however great, would take the meanest seat, or remain standing before his spiritual preceptor. Upāli, by taking the best available seat, signifies, in an unmistakable manner, that he has, under the Buddha, attained a higher spiritual level than his former teacher.

<sup>76</sup> Nātaputta, says the Commentator, was so overcome by grief over the loss of a prominent supporter that he was unmindful of the coarse language he used.

<sup>77</sup> These were the four great castes of those times: the Khattiyas, Brāhmaṇas, Vessas and Suddas.

When she spoke thus, Venerable Sir, he said to her, 'Wait, dear until the advent of your confinement. If, dear, a boy is born to you, I will purchase and bring you from the market a young male monkey, which will be a plaything for him. But, dear, should a girl be born to you, I will purchase and bring you from the market a young female monkey, which will be a plaything for her.'

For a second time she repeated her request, and he again advised her to wait.

For a third time she repeated her request.

Then Venerable Sir, that Brahmin, moved by the powerful bond of love for that young woman, purchased and brought from the market a young male monkey and said to her, 'I have purchased and brought you, dear, this young male monkey from the market. It will be a plaything for your boy.'

When he had spoken thus, that young woman said to the Brahmin, 'Take this young monkey, Brahmin, and go to Rattapāṇi, the son of the laundry-man, and tell him, 'My good Rattapāṇi, I want this young monkey to be dyed the kind of colour known as "Golden Pride"<sup>78</sup> to be pounded and beaten repeatedly (in the dye), and smoothed<sup>79</sup> back and front.'

Then, Venerable Sir, that Brahmin, moved by the mental bond towards the young woman, took that young monkey to Rattapāṇi, the son of the laundry-man and gave him the necessary instructions.

Whereupon Rattapāṇi said to the Brahmin, 'This young monkey of yours, Venerable Sir, can certainly be dyed but it cannot be pounded or smoothed'<sup>80</sup>

In the same way, Venerable Sir, the doctrine of the Nigaṇṭhas can certainly delight foolish people, but not the wise. It cannot be applied or investigated.<sup>81</sup>

Then, Venerable Sir, that Brahmin, on a subsequent occasion, taking a couple of new cloths, went to Rattapāṇi, the son of the laundry-man, and said, 'My good Rattapāṇi, I want this couple of new cloths dyed the kind of colour known as "Golden Pride", to be pounded and turned repeatedly (in the dye) and smoothed back and front.'

Whereupon Rattapāṇi said to the Brahmin, 'Certainly, Venerable Sir, this couple of new cloths of yours can be dyed, and can also be pounded and smoothed.'

In the same way, Venerable Sir, the doctrine of that exalted, fully enlightened Blessed One can delight the wise only, but not the foolish. It can be applied and investigated<sup>82</sup>."

"The people, householder, together with the king, know that you, Upāli, the householder, are a disciple of Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta. But, as whose disciple shall we (now) regard you, householder?"

Thereupon Upāli rose from his seat, covered one shoulder with his upper garment and raising joined hands in reverence in the direction of the Blessed One, said to Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, "Well then Venerable Sir, hear whose disciple I am—

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<sup>78</sup> *Pitāvālepana*, "Golden perfume", apparently a fashionable dye at that time.

<sup>79</sup> I.e. ironed.

<sup>80</sup> This was intended to show Nātaputta that his teaching does not lead to salvation, whereas the Teaching Upāli has now embraced does, as he has personally experienced—Commentary.

<sup>81</sup> "Like searching in the chaff for one grain of rice after threshing" as the Commentator puts it; or, as Shakespeare says "searching for a grain of wheat in a bushel of chaff."

<sup>82</sup> Wherever one plunges into the Buddha Word, it is deep like the great ocean—Commentary.

Of him who is wise, free from ignorance,  
who has destroyed obstinacy, victor over conquerors,<sup>83</sup>  
who is free from suffering, possesses a perfectly impartial mind,  
has developed conduct, possesses excellent wisdom,  
has passed beyond insecurity, is without stain,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who has no perplexities, is content,  
has rejected worldly pleasures, is sympathetic,  
has completed the duties of one who renounces the world,  
is born as man, bears his last body,  
the Man incomparable and without blemish,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who has no doubts, is skilful,  
disciplines others, is an excellent guide,  
unrivalled, whose nature is pure,  
who is free from uncertainty, an Enlightener,  
who has cut off pride and is heroic,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who is supreme, immeasurable,  
profound, has attained to wisdom,  
establishes security, learned, righteous, restrained,  
has overcome passion and is delivered,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who is faultless, abides in seclusion,  
has cast off the fetters, is emancipated,  
possesses the power of wise discussion, sage,  
has done away with his banner (i.e. the fight being over),  
subdued and free from obsessions,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who is the Seventh of the Sages,<sup>84</sup>  
is not a hypocrite, is possessed of the threefold knowledge,<sup>85</sup>  
has attained to supremacy, has washed off impurity,  
skilful in the composition of verses, is tranquilized,  
has comprehended knowledge, gave alms in the past<sup>86</sup> and  
is capable, of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who is noble, is developed,  
has attained to advantage, mindful, intuitive,  
free from like and dislike,  
is devoid of craving and has attained mastery,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

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<sup>83</sup> *Vijitavijayo*, "Conqueror of conquerors." Who are the conquerors (*vijaya*)? They are: Māra whose name is Death; Māra the Passions; and Māra the Deva Tempter. These are called conquerors' because they have conquered, are conquering and shall ever conquer the worldling. The Buddha is 'Victor over conquerors' because these conquerors were vanquished by him.-Commentary.

<sup>84</sup> *Isi-sattama*. The 7 sages are the seven Buddhas reckoned from Vipassī: Vipassī, Sikhī, Vessabhū, Kakusandha, Konāgama, Kassapa, and Gotama.

<sup>85</sup> Reminiscence of previous births, divine eye, and knowledge as to the extinction of passions.

<sup>86</sup> *Purindadassa*. According to Commentary, this term means that the Buddha was the very first who gave the gift of the *Dhamma*.

Of him who has fared well, is absorbed in meditation,  
is independent, is pure, is unattached, is to be abandoned,  
is secluded, has attained to pre-eminence,  
has crossed (the Ocean of Sorrow) and  
causes others to cross,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who is calm, greatly wise, profoundly wise,  
who is devoid of greed, accomplished, exalted,  
unequaled, peerless, is confident and skilful,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.

Of him who has cut off craving, enlightened,  
devoid of fumes (of desire), free from taint,  
worthy of personal offerings, powerful,  
the Highest of Individuals, incomparable,  
worshipful and attained to supreme glory,  
of that Blessed One am I a disciple.<sup>87</sup>

“And when, householder, were these accomplishments of the Samaṇa Gotama gathered thus by you?”

“It is as if, Venerable Sir, there were a huge heap of flowers of many kinds and a skilful garland-maker, or garland-maker’s apprentice, were to make a beautiful garland of it. In the same way, Venerable Sir, many hundreds are the virtues of the Blessed One. Then, Venerable Sir, who will not extol one who is so worthy of praise? ”

Then and there hot blood gushed from the mouth of Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta, who could not endure the homage paid to the Blessed One.

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<sup>87</sup> For a metrical rendering see *Early Buddhist Poetry*, by I. B. Horner (Published by Ānanda Semage, Colombo 11) p. 14.

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