

Refuge

BASIC PRINCIPLES

§1. As he was sitting to one side, King Pasenadi Kosala said to the Blessed One: “Just now, lord, while I was alone in seclusion, this train of thought arose in my awareness: ‘Who have themselves protected, and who leave themselves unprotected?’ Then it occurred to me: ‘Those who engage in bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct leave themselves unprotected. Even though a squadron of elephant troops might protect them, a squadron of cavalry troops, a squadron of chariot troops, a squadron of infantry troops might protect them, still they leave themselves unprotected. Why is that? Because that’s an external protection, not an internal one. Therefore they leave themselves unprotected. But those who engage in good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct have themselves protected. Even though neither a squadron of elephant troops, a squadron of cavalry troops, a squadron of chariot troops, nor a squadron of infantry troops might protect them, still they have themselves protected. Why is that? Because that’s an internal protection, not an external one. Therefore they have themselves protected.’”

[The Buddha then confirms the king’s insight, and adds the following verse:]

“Restraint with the body is good,
good is restraint with speech.
Restraint with the heart is good,
good is restraint everywhere.
Restrained everywhere,
conscientious,
one is said to be
protected.” — *SN 3:5*

§2. Whatever an enemy might do
to an enemy,
or a foe to a foe,
the ill-directed mind
can do to you
even worse.

Whatever a mother, father
or other kinsman
might do for you,
the well-directed mind
can do for you
even better. — *Dhp 42–43*

§3. “I don’t envision a single thing that is as quick to reverse itself as the mind—so much so that there’s no satisfactory simile for how quick to reverse itself it is.” — *AN 1:48*

§4. “Monks, have you ever seen a moving-picture show?”

“Yes, lord.”

“That moving-picture show was created by the mind. And this mind is even more variegated than a moving-picture show. Thus one should reflect on one’s mind with every moment: ‘For a long time has this mind been defiled by passion, aversion, & delusion.’ From the defilement of the mind are beings defiled. From the purification of the mind are beings purified.

“Monks, I can imagine no one group of beings more variegated than that of common animals. Common animals are created by mind [i.e., each animal’s body is the result of that animal’s kamma]. And the mind is even more variegated than common animals. Thus one should reflect on one’s mind with every moment: ‘For a long time has this mind been defiled by passion, aversion, & delusion.’ From the defilement of the mind are beings defiled. From the purification of the mind are beings purified.” — *SN 22:100*

§5. “Luminous, monks, is the mind. And it is defiled by incoming defilements. The uninstructed run-of-the-mill person doesn’t discern that as it has come to be, which is why I tell you that—for the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person—there is no development of the mind.”

“Luminous, monks, is the mind. And it is freed from incoming defilements. The well-instructed disciple of the noble ones discerns that as it has come to be, which is why I tell you that—for the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones—there is development of the mind.” — *AN 1:51-52*

§6. “Just as the footprints of all legged animals are encompassed by the footprint of the elephant, and the elephant’s footprint is reckoned the foremost among them in terms of size; in the same way, all skillful qualities are rooted in heedfulness, converge in heedfulness, and heedfulness is reckoned the foremost among them.” — *AN 10:15*

§7. “And what is heedfulness? There is the case where a monk guards his mind with regard to effluents and qualities accompanied by effluents. When his mind is guarded with regard to effluents and qualities accompanied by effluents, the faculty of conviction goes to the culmination of its development. The faculty of persistence... mindfulness... concentration... discernment goes to the culmination of its development.” — *SN 58:56*

§8. “I don’t envision any one quality by which unarisen unskillful qualities arise, and arisen skillful qualities subside, aside from friendship with evil people. When a person is friends with evil people, unarisen unskillful qualities arise, and arisen skillful qualities subside.”

“I don’t envision any one quality by which unarisen skillful qualities arise, and arisen unskillful qualities subside, aside from friendship with admirable people. When a person is friends with admirable people, unarisen skillful qualities arise, and arisen unskillful qualities subside.” — *AN 1:71-72*

§9. They go to many a refuge,
to mountains & forests,
to park & tree shrines:
people threatened with danger.
That’s not the secure refuge,

not the supreme refuge,
 that's not the refuge,
 having gone to which,
 you gain release
 from all suffering & stress.
 But when, having gone
 to the Buddha, Dhamma,
 & Saṅgha for refuge,
 you see with right discernment
 the four noble truths—
 stress,
 the cause of stress,
 the transcending of stress,
 & the noble eightfold path,
 the way to the stilling of stress:
 That's the secure refuge,
 that, the supreme refuge,
 that is the refuge,
 having gone to which,
 you gain release
 from all suffering & stress. — *Dhp 188–192*

§10. Your own self is
 your own protector,
 for who else could your protector be?
 With you yourself well-trained
 you obtain the protector
 hard to obtain. — *Dhp 160*

§11. “And what is kamma that is dark with dark result? There is the case where a certain person fabricates an injurious bodily fabrication, fabricates an injurious verbal fabrication, fabricates an injurious mental fabrication. Having fabricated an injurious bodily fabrication, having fabricated an injurious verbal fabrication, having fabricated an injurious mental fabrication, he rearises in an injurious world. On rearising in an injurious world, he is there touched by injurious contacts. Touched by injurious contacts, he experiences feelings that are exclusively painful, like those of the beings in hell. This is called kamma that is dark with dark result.

“And what is kamma that is bright with bright result? There is the case where a certain person fabricates a non-injurious bodily fabrication ... a non-injurious verbal fabrication ... a non-injurious mental fabrication He rearises in a non-injurious world There he is touched by non-injurious contacts He experiences feelings that are exclusively pleasant, like those of the Beautiful Black Devas. This is called kamma that is bright with bright result.

“And what is kamma that is dark & bright with dark & bright result? There is the case where a certain person fabricates a bodily fabrication that is injurious & non-injurious ... a verbal fabrication that is injurious & non-injurious ... a mental fabrication that is injurious & non-injurious He rearises in an injurious & non-injurious world There he is touched by injurious & non-injurious contacts He experiences injurious &

non-injurious feelings, pleasure mingled with pain, like those of human beings, some devas, and some beings in the lower realms. This is called kamma that is dark & bright with dark & bright result.

“And what is kamma that is neither dark nor bright with neither dark nor bright result, leading to the ending of kamma? Right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This is called kamma that is neither dark nor bright with neither dark nor bright result, leading to the ending of kamma.

“These, monks, are the four types of kamma directly known, verified, & announced by me.” — AN 4:237

THE BUDDHA

‘Indeed, the Blessed One is pure and rightly self-awakened, consummate in knowledge and conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled as a trainer for those people fit to be tamed, the Teacher of devas and human beings, awakened, blessed.’ — AN 10:92

§12. Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “This is half of the holy life, lord: having admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues.”

“Don’t say that, Ānanda. Don’t say that. Having admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues is actually the whole of the holy life. When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, he can be expected to develop & pursue the noble eightfold path.

“And how does a monk who has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, develop & pursue the noble eightfold path? There is the case where a monk develops right view dependent on seclusion, dependent on dispassion, dependent on cessation, resulting in relinquishment. He develops right resolve... right speech... right action... right livelihood... right effort... right mindfulness... right concentration dependent on seclusion, dependent on dispassion, dependent on cessation, resulting in relinquishment. This is how a monk who has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, develops & pursues the noble eightfold path.

“And through this line of reasoning one may know how having admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues is actually the whole of the holy life: It’s in dependence on me as an admirable friend that beings subject to birth have gained release from birth, that beings subject to aging have gained release from aging, that beings subject to death have gained release from death, that beings subject to sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair have gained release from sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair. It is through this line of reasoning that one may know how having admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues is actually the whole of the holy life.” — SN 45:2

§13. As he was sitting there, Asibandhakaputta the headman said to the Blessed One, “Lord, doesn’t the Blessed One dwell with sympathy for the benefit of all beings?”

“Yes, headman, the Tathāgata dwells with sympathy for the benefit of all beings.”

“Then why is it that the Blessed One teaches the Dhamma with full attentiveness to some, and not with full attentiveness to others?”

“Very well then, headman, I will cross-question you on this matter. Answer as you see fit. What do you think? There is the case where a farming householder has three fields: one excellent field, one middling, and one poor—sandy, salty, with bad soil. What do you think? If that farming householder wanted to sow seed, where would he sow the seed first: in the excellent field, in the middling field, or in the poor field—sandy, salty, with bad soil?”

“If that farming householder wanted to sow seed, he would sow the seed first in the excellent field. Having sown it there, he would sow it in the middling field. Having sown it there, he might not sow it in the poor field—sandy, salty, with bad soil—or he might. Why is that? It would at least go toward cattle fodder.”

“In the same way, headman, like the excellent field are the monks & nuns to me. I teach them the Dhamma that is admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end. I expound to them the holy life both in its particulars & in its meaning, entirely complete, surpassingly pure. Why is that? Because they live with me as their island, with me as their cave, with me as their shelter, with me as their refuge.

“Like the middling field are the male & female lay followers to me. I teach them the Dhamma that is admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end. I expound to them the holy life both in its particulars & in its meaning, entirely complete, surpassingly pure. Why is that? Because they live with me as their island, with me as their cave, with me as their shelter, with me as their refuge.

“Like the poor field—sandy, salty, with bad soil—are the followers of other sects to me: contemplatives, brahmans, & wanderers. I teach them the Dhamma that is admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end. I expound to them the holy life both in its particulars & in its meaning, entirely complete, surpassingly pure. Why is that? (I think,) ‘Perhaps they might understand even one sentence. That will be for their long-term benefit & happiness.’” — *SN 42:7*

§14. “This is the way leading to discernment: when visiting a contemplative or brahman, to ask: ‘What is skillful, venerable sir? What is unskillful? What is blameworthy? What is blameless? What should be cultivated? What should not be cultivated? What, having been done by me, will be for my long-term harm & suffering? Or what, having been done by me, will be for my long-term welfare & happiness?’” — *MN 135*

§15. The Buddha: “What do you think, Rāhula? What is a mirror for?”

Rāhula: “For reflection, sir.”

The Buddha: “In the same way, Rāhula, bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions are to be done with repeated reflection.

“Whenever you want to perform a bodily action, you should reflect on it: ‘This bodily action I want to perform—would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful bodily action, with painful consequences, painful results?’ If, on reflection, you know that it would lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it would be an unskillful bodily action with painful consequences, painful results, then any bodily action of that sort is absolutely unfit for you to do. But if on reflection you know that it would not cause affliction... it would be a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then any bodily action of that sort is fit for you to do. [Similarly with verbal actions and mental actions.]

“While you are performing a bodily action, you should reflect on it: ‘This bodily action I am doing—is it leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is

it an unskillful bodily action, with painful consequences, painful results? If, on reflection, you know that it is leading to self-affliction, to affliction of others, or both... you should give it up. But if on reflection you know that it is not... you may continue with it. [Similarly with verbal actions and mental actions.]

“Having performed a bodily action, you should reflect on it... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful bodily action with painful consequences, painful results, then you should confess it, reveal it, lay it open to the Teacher or to a knowledgeable companion in the holy life. Having confessed it... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed and joyful, training day and night in skillful qualities. [Similarly with verbal actions.]

“Having performed a mental action, you should reflect on it... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful mental action with painful consequences, painful results, then you should feel horrified, humiliated, and disgusted with it. Feeling horrified... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful mental action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed and joyful, training day and night in skillful qualities.

“Rāhula, all the contemplatives & brahmans in the course of the past who purified their bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions, did it through repeated reflection on their bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions in just this way.

“All the contemplatives & brahmans in the course of the future... All the contemplatives & brahmans at present who purify their bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions, do it through repeated reflection on their bodily actions, verbal actions, and mental actions in just this way.

“Therefore, Rāhula, you should train yourself: ‘I will purify my bodily actions through repeated reflection. I will purify my verbal actions through repeated reflection. I will purify my mental actions through repeated reflection.’ That’s how you should train yourself.” — *MN 61*

§16. And on that occasion King Pasenadi Kosala had gone with Queen Mallikā to the upper palace. Then he said to her, “Mallikā, is there anyone dearer to you than yourself?”

“No, great king. There is no one dearer to me than myself. And what about you, great king? Is there anyone dearer to you than yourself?”

“No, Mallikā. There is no one dearer to me than myself.”

Then the king, descending from the palace, went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side [and reported his conversation with Queen Mallikā].

Then, on realizing the significance of that, the Blessed One on that occasion exclaimed:

Searching all directions
with your awareness,
you find no one dearer
than yourself.
In the same way, others
are thickly dear to themselves.

So you shouldn't hurt others
if you love yourself. — *Ud 5:1*

THE DHAMMA

'The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One, to be seen here and now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be realized by the observant for themselves.' — *AN 10:92*

§17. *Ven. Dhammika:*

The Dhamma protects
those who live the Dhamma.
The Dhamma well-practiced
brings bliss.
This—the reward
when the Dhamma's well-practiced:
One who lives the Dhamma
doesn't go to a bad destination.

For Dhamma and non-
don't bear equal results.
Non-Dhamma leads you to hell;
Dhamma, to a good destination.

So you should engender desire
for acts of Dhamma,
rejoicing
in the One Well-gone,
the one who is Such.
Standing firm in the Dhamma,
of the foremost
One Well-gone,
his disciples are guided
—enlightened—
to the foremost
refuge supreme. — *Thag 4:10*

§18. "Monks, there are these three sectarian guilds that—when cross-examined, pressed for reasons, & rebuked by wise people—even though they may explain otherwise, remain stuck in inaction. Which three?"

"There are contemplatives & brahmans who hold this teaching, hold this view: 'Whatever a person experiences—pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful—is all caused by what was done in the past.' There are contemplatives & brahmans who hold this teaching, hold this view: 'Whatever a person experiences—pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful—is all caused by a supreme being's act of creation.' There are contemplatives & brahmans who hold this teaching, hold this view: 'Whatever a person experiences—pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful—is all without cause & without condition.'

“Having approached the contemplatives & brahmans who hold that... ‘Whatever a person experiences... is all caused by what was done in the past,’ I said to them: ‘Is it true that you hold that... whatever a person experiences... is all caused by what was done in the past?’ Thus asked by me, they admitted, ‘Yes.’ Then I said to them, ‘Then in that case, a person is a killer of living beings because of what was done in the past. A person is a thief... unchaste... a liar... a divisive speaker... a harsh speaker... an idle chatterer... greedy... malicious... a holder of wrong views because of what was done in the past.’ When one falls back on what was done in the past as being essential, monks, there is no desire, no effort [at the thought], ‘This should be done. This shouldn’t be done.’ When one can’t pin down as a truth or reality what should & shouldn’t be done, one dwells bewildered & unprotected. One cannot righteously refer to oneself as a contemplative. This was my first righteous refutation of those contemplatives & brahmans who hold to such teachings, such views.

“Having approached the contemplatives & brahmans who hold that... ‘Whatever a person experiences... is all caused by a supreme being’s act of creation,’ I said to them: ‘Is it true that you hold that... whatever a person experiences... is all caused by a supreme being’s act of creation?’ Thus asked by me, they admitted, ‘Yes.’ Then I said to them, ‘Then in that case, a person is a killer of living beings because of a supreme being’s act of creation. A person is a thief... a holder of wrong views because of a supreme being’s act of creation.’ When one falls back on a supreme being’s act of creation as being essential, monks, there is no desire, no effort [at the thought], ‘This should be done. This shouldn’t be done.’ When one can’t pin down as a truth or reality what should & shouldn’t be done, one dwells bewildered & unprotected. One cannot righteously refer to oneself as a contemplative. This was my second righteous refutation of those contemplatives & brahmans who hold to such teachings, such views.

“Having approached the contemplatives & brahmans who hold that... ‘Whatever a person experiences... is all without cause, without condition,’ I said to them: ‘Is it true that you hold that... whatever a person experiences... is all without cause, without condition?’ Thus asked by me, they admitted, ‘Yes.’ Then I said to them, ‘Then in that case, a person is a killer of living beings without cause, without condition. A person is a thief... unchaste... a liar... a divisive speaker... a harsh speaker... an idle chatterer... greedy... malicious... a holder of wrong views without cause, without condition.’ When one falls back on lack of cause and lack of condition as being essential, monks, there is no desire, no effort [at the thought], ‘This should be done. This shouldn’t be done.’ When one can’t pin down as a truth or reality what should & shouldn’t be done, one dwells bewildered & unprotected. One cannot righteously refer to oneself as a contemplative. This was my third righteous refutation of those contemplatives & brahmans who hold to such teachings, such views.

“These are the three sectarian guilds that—when cross-examined, pressed for reasons, & rebuked by wise people—even though they may explain otherwise, remain stuck in inaction.” — *AN 3:62*

§19. I have heard that at one time the Blessed One was staying in Sāvatti at Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s park. Then a certain deva, in the far extreme of the night, her extreme radiance lighting up the entirety of Jeta’s Grove, approached the Blessed One. On approaching, having bowed down to the Blessed One, she stood to one side. As she was standing there, she addressed him with a verse.

“Many devas and humans beings

give thought to protective charms,
 desiring well-being.
 Tell, then, the highest protective charm."

[The Buddha:]

"Not consorting with fools,
 consorting with the wise,
 homage to those deserving of homage:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Living in a civilized land,
 having made merit in the past,
 directing oneself rightly:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Broad knowledge, skill,
 well-mastered discipline,
 well-spoken words:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Support for one's parents,
 assistance to one's wife and children,
 consistency in one's work:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Generosity, living in rectitude,
 assistance to one's relatives,
 deeds that are blameless:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Avoiding, abstaining from evil;
 refraining from intoxicants,
 being heedful of the qualities of the mind:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Respect, humility,
 contentment, gratitude,
 hearing the Dhamma on timely occasions:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Patience, composure,
 seeing contemplatives,
 discussing the Dhamma on timely occasions:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Austerity, celibacy,
 seeing the noble truths,
 realizing Unbinding:
 This is the highest protective charm.

A mind that, when touched
 by the ways of the world,
 is unshaken, sorrowless, dustless, secure:
 This is the highest protective charm.

Everywhere undefeated
when acting in this way,
people go everywhere in well-being:

This is their highest protective charm." — *Sn 2:4*

§20. "Now, there are these five gifts, five great gifts—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—that are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmins. Which five?

"There is the case where a noble disciple, abandoning the taking of life, abstains from taking life. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the first gift, the first great gift—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—that is not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and is unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmins.

"And further, abandoning taking what is not given [stealing], the noble disciple abstains from taking what is not given... This is the second gift, the second great gift....

"And further, abandoning illicit sex, the noble disciple abstains from illicit sex... This is the third gift, the third great gift....

"And further, abandoning lying, the noble disciple abstains from lying... This is the fourth gift, the fourth great gift....

"And further, abandoning the use of intoxicants, the noble disciple abstains from taking intoxicants. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the fifth gift, the fifth great gift—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—that is not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and is unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmins." — *AN 8:39*

§21. "Monks, for anyone who says, 'In whatever way a person makes kamma, that is how it is experienced,' there is no living of the holy life, there is no opportunity for the right ending of stress. But for anyone who says, 'When a person makes kamma to be felt in such & such a way, that is how its result is experienced,' there is the living of the holy life, there is the opportunity for the right ending of stress...

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

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

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

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

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

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

“Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment? There is the case where a certain individual is developed in body [pleasure cannot invade his mind or remain there], developed in virtue, developed in mind [pain cannot invade his mind or remain there], developed in discernment: unrestricted, large-hearted, dwelling with the immeasurable [concentration based on the sublime attitudes]. A trifling evil deed done by this sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.” — *AN 3:101*

§22. “Just as the royal frontier fortress has a foundation post—deeply rooted, well embedded, immovable, & unshakable—for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way a disciple of the noble ones has conviction, is convinced of the Tathāgata’s Awakening: ‘Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy and rightly self-awakened, consummate in knowledge & conduct, well-gone, a knower of the cosmos, an unexcelled trainer of those persons ready to be tamed, teacher of human & divine beings, awakened, blessed.’ With conviction as his foundation post, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has a moat, both deep & wide, for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way, the disciple of the noble ones has a sense of shame. He feels shame at [the thought of engaging in] bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, mental misconduct. He feels shame at falling into evil, unskillful actions. With shame as his moat, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has an encircling road, both high & wide, for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way, the disciple of the noble ones has compunction. He feels compunction about [the idea of engaging in] bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, mental misconduct. He feels compunction about falling into evil, unskillful actions. With compunction as his encircling road, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has many weapons stored, both arrows & things to be hurled, for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way, the disciple of the noble ones has heard much, has retained what he has heard, has stored what he has heard. Whatever teachings are admirable in the beginning,

admirable in the middle, admirable in the end, that—in their meaning & expression—proclaim the holy life that is entirely complete & pure: those he has listened to often, retained, discussed, accumulated, examined with his mind, and well-penetrated in terms of his views. With learning as his weapons, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has a large army stationed within—elephant soldiers, cavalry, charioteers, bowmen, standard-bearers, billeting officers, soldiers of the supply corps, noted princes, commando heroes, infantry, & slaves—for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way a disciple of the noble ones keeps his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful mental qualities and taking on skillful mental qualities, is steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful mental qualities. With persistence as his army, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has a gatekeeper—wise, experienced, intelligent—to keep out those he doesn’t know and to let in those he does, for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way a disciple of the noble ones is mindful, endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & able to call to mind even things that were done & said long ago. With mindfulness as his gatekeeper, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“Just as the royal frontier fortress has ramparts—high & thick & completely covered with plaster—for the protection of those within and to ward off those without; in the same way a disciple of the noble ones is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. With discernment as his covering of plaster, the disciple of the noble ones abandons what is unskillful, develops what is skillful, abandons what is blameworthy, develops what is blameless, and looks after himself with purity....

“These are the seven true qualities with which he is endowed.

“And which are the four jhānas—heightened mental states that provide a pleasant abiding in the here-&-now—that he can obtain at will, without difficulty, without trouble?

“Just as a royal frontier fortress has large stores of grass, timber, & water for the delight, convenience, & comfort of those within, and to ward off those without; in the same way the disciple of the noble ones, quite secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna—rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation—for his own delight, convenience, & comfort, and to alight on Unbinding.

“Just as a royal frontier fortress has large stores of rice & barley for the delight, convenience, & comfort of those within, and to ward off those without; in the same way the disciple of the noble ones, with the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, enters & remains in the second jhāna—rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance—for his own delight, convenience, & comfort, and to alight on Unbinding.

“Just as a royal frontier fortress has large stores of sesame, green gram, & other beans for the delight, convenience, & comfort of those within, and to ward off those without; in the same way the disciple of the noble ones, with the fading of rapture,

remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, and senses pleasure with the body. He enters & remains in the third jhāna—of which the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding’—for his own delight, convenience, & comfort, and to alight on Unbinding.

“Just as a royal frontier fortress has large stores of tonics—ghee, fresh butter, oil, honey, molasses, & salt—for the delight, convenience, & comfort of those within, and to ward off those without; in the same way the disciple of the noble ones, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain, as with the earlier disappearance of joy & distress, enters & remains in the fourth jhāna—purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain—for his own delight, convenience, & comfort, and to alight on Unbinding.

“These are the four jhānas—heightened mental states that provide a pleasant abiding in the here-&-now—that he can obtain at will, without difficulty, without trouble.

“When a disciple of the noble ones is endowed with these seven true qualities and can obtain at will—without difficulty, without trouble—these four jhānas, heightened mental states that provide a pleasant abiding in the here-&-now, he is said to be a disciple of the noble ones who can’t be undone by Mara, can’t be undone by the Evil One.” — AN 7:63

§23. “Live with a protector, monks, and not without a protector. He suffers, one who lives without a protector. And these ten are qualities creating a protector. Which ten?

“There is the case where a monk is virtuous. He dwells restrained in accordance with the Paṭimokkha, consummate in his behavior & sphere of activity. He trains himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults. And the fact that he is virtuous... seeing danger in the slightest faults, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk has heard much, has retained what he has heard, has stored what he has heard. Whatever teachings are admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end, that—in their meaning and expression—proclaim the holy life that is entirely complete and pure: those he has listened to often, retained, discussed, accumulated, examined with his mind, & well-penetrated in terms of his views. And the fact that he has heard much... well-penetrated in terms of his views, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk has admirable friends, admirable comrades, admirable companions. And the fact that he has admirable friends, admirable comrades, admirable companions is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk is easy to speak to, endowed with qualities that make him easy to speak to, patient, respectful to instruction. And the fact that he is easy to speak to ... respectful to instruction, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk is adept at the various affairs involving his fellows in the holy life; is vigorous, quick-witted in the techniques involved in them, is up to doing them or arranging to get them done. And the fact that he is adept at... doing them or arranging to get them done is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk is one who desires the Dhamma, endearing in his conversation, greatly rejoicing in the higher Dhamma & higher Discipline. And the fact that he is one who desires the Dhamma, endearing in his conversation, greatly rejoicing in the higher Dhamma & higher Discipline, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk keeps his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful qualities and for taking on skillful qualities. He is steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful qualities. And the fact that he keeps his persistence aroused... not shirking his duties with regard to skillful qualities, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk is content with any old robe cloth at all, any old alms food, any old lodging, any old medicinal requisites for curing sickness at all. And the fact that he is content with any old robe cloth at all, any old alms food, any old lodging, any old medicinal requisites for curing sickness at all, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk is mindful, endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & recollecting what was done & said a long time ago. And the fact that he is mindful, endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & recollecting what was done & said a long time ago, is a quality creating a protector.

“Then again, the monk is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. And the fact that the monk is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress, is a quality creating a protector.

“Live with a protector, monks, and not without a protector. He suffers, one who lives without a protector. These are the ten qualities creating a protector.” — *AN 10:17*

§24. “Monks, for one whose awareness-release through goodwill is cultivated, developed, pursued, given a means of transport, given a grounding, steadied, consolidated, and well-undertaken, eleven rewards can be expected. Which eleven?

“One sleeps easily, wakes easily, dreams no evil dreams. One is dear to human beings, dear to non-human beings. The devas protect one. Neither fire, poison, nor weapons can touch one. One’s mind gains concentration quickly. One’s complexion is bright. One dies unconfused and—if penetrating no higher—is headed for a Brahmā world.” — *AN 11:16*

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

§26 “Suppose, monks, that there were four vipers of intense heat and dreadful venom. Then a man would come along—loving life, hating death, loving pleasure, abhorring

pain—and people would say to him, ‘Look here, good man. These four vipers of intense heat and dreadful venom must be picked up time & again, bathed time & again, fed time & again, and laid down time & again. But whenever any one of these four vipers of intense heat and dreadful venom gets provoked with you, you will meet with death or death-like pain. So do what you think should be done.’

“Then the man, terrified of the four vipers of intense heat & dreadful venom would run away this way or that. Then people would say to him, “Look here, good man. These five murderous adversaries are following right behind you, (thinking,)

“Wherever we see him, we’ll kill him right there.” So do what you think should be done.’

“Then the man, terrified of the four vipers of intense heat & dreadful venom and of the five murderous adversaries would run away this way or that. Then people would say to him, ‘Look here, good man. This sixth murderer, an intimate deceiver, is following right behind you with a raised sword, (thinking,) “Wherever I see him, I will cut off his head right there.” So do what you think should be done.’

“Then the man, terrified of the four vipers of intense heat & dreadful venom, of the five murderous adversaries, and of the sixth murderer, the intimate deceiver with a raised sword, would run away this way or that. He would see an empty village. Whichever house he entered, he would enter what’s just void, enter what’s just hollow, enter what’s just empty. Whichever pot he grabbed hold of, he would grab hold of what’s just void, grab hold of what’s just hollow, grab hold of what’s just empty. Then people would say to him, ‘Look here, good man. Village-attacking bandits are entering this village right now, so do what you think should be done.’

“Then the man, terrified of the four vipers of intense heat & dreadful venom, of the five murderous adversaries, of the sixth murderer, the intimate deceiver with a raised sword, and of the village-attacking bandits, would run away this way or that. He would see a great expanse of water: the near shore, dubious & risky; the further shore, safe & free from risk, but with neither a ferryboat nor a bridge going from this shore to the other.

“The thought would occur to him, “Here is this great expanse of water, with the near shore dubious & risky, the further shore secure & free from risk, but with neither a ferryboat nor a bridge going from this shore to the other. What if I were to gather grass, twigs, branches, & leaves and, having bound them together to make a raft, and making an effort with my hands & feet, were to go to safety on the further shore in dependence on the raft?” Then the man, having gathered grass, twigs, branches, & leaves, having bound them together to make a raft and making an effort with his hands & feet, would go to safety on the further shore in dependence on the raft. Having crossed over to the other side, he would stand on firm ground, a brahman.

“Monks, I have given you this simile to convey a meaning. The meaning is this:

“The four vipers of intense Heat & dreadful venom stand for the four great elements: the earth property, the water property, the fire property, & the wind property.

“The five murderous adversaries stand for the five clinging-aggregates: the form clinging-aggregate, the feeling clinging-aggregate, the perception clinging-aggregate, the fabrications clinging-aggregate, the consciousness clinging-aggregate.

“The sixth murderer—the intimate deceiver with a raised sword—stands for passion & delight.

“The empty village stands for the six internal sense spheres. For if a wise, competent, intelligent person examines them by way of the eye, they appear void, hollow, empty. If he examines them by way of the ear... nose... tongue... body... intellect, they appear void, hollow, empty.

“The village-attacking bandits stand for the six external sense spheres. The eye is attacked by pleasing & displeasing forms. The ear is attacked by pleasing & displeasing sounds. The nose is attacked by pleasing & displeasing aromas. The tongue is attacked by pleasing & displeasing flavors. The body is attacked by pleasing & displeasing tactile sensations. The intellect is attacked by pleasing & displeasing ideas.

“The great expanse of water stands for the fourfold flood: the flood of sensuality, the flood of becoming, the flood of views, & the flood of ignorance. The near shore, dubious & risky, stands for self-identity. The further shore, safe and free from risk, stands for Unbinding. The raft stands for just this noble eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. Making an effort with hands & feet stands for the arousing of persistence.

“Crossed over to the other side, he stands on firm ground, a brahman’: This stands for the arahant.” — *SN 35:197*

§27. “Whatever is the ending of passion, the ending of aversion, the ending of delusion: That is called—

the unfabricated,
the unbent,
the effluent-free,
the true, the beyond,
the subtle, the very-hard-to-see,
the ageless, permanence, the undecaying,
the surfaceless, non-objectification,
peace, the deathless,
the exquisite, bliss, rest,
the ending of craving,
the amazing, the astounding,
the secure, security,
unbinding,
the unafflicted, dispassion, purity,
release, the attachment-free,
the island, shelter, harbor, refuge,
the ultimate.

“And what is the path going to the unfabricated... the ultimate? The noble eightfold path.

“Thus, monks, I have taught you the unfabricated and the path going to the unfabricated.... I have taught you the ultimate and the path going to the ultimate. Whatever a sympathetic teacher should do—seeking the welfare of his disciples, out of sympathy for them—that have I done for you. Over there are the roots of trees; over there, empty dwellings. Practice jhāna, monks. Don’t be heedless. Don’t later fall into regret. This is our message to you all.” — *SN 43 [excerpt]*

THE SAṄGHA

‘The Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples who have practiced well... who have practiced straight-forwardly... who have practiced methodically... who have practiced masterfully—in

other words, the four types of noble disciples when taken as pairs, the eight when taken as individual types—they are the Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world.’
— AN 10:92

§28. [On the night of his total unbinding,] the Blessed One said to Ven. Ānanda, “Ānanda, the twin sal-trees are in full bloom, even though it’s not the flowering season. They shower, strew, & sprinkle on the Tathāgata’s body in homage to him. Heavenly coral-tree blossoms are falling from the sky.... Heavenly sandalwood powder is falling from the sky.... Heavenly music is playing in the sky.... Heavenly songs are sung in the sky, in homage to the Tathāgata. But it is not to this extent that a Tathāgata is worshipped, honored, respected, venerated, or paid homage to. Rather, the monk, nun, male lay follower, or female lay follower who keeps practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, who keeps practicing masterfully, who lives in accordance with the Dhamma: That is the person who worships, honors, respects, venerates, & pays homage to the Tathāgata with the highest homage. So you should train yourselves: ‘We will keep practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, we will keep practicing masterfully, we will live in accordance with the Dhamma.’ That’s how you should train yourselves.” — DN 16

§29. “For a monk practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, this is what accords with the Dhamma: that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to form, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to feeling, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to perception, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to fabrications, that he keep cultivating disenchantment with regard to consciousness. As he keeps cultivating disenchantment with regard to form... feeling... perception... fabrications... consciousness, he comprehends form... feeling... perception... fabrications... consciousness. As he comprehends form... feeling... perception... fabrications... consciousness, he is totally released from form... feeling... perception... fabrications... consciousness. He is totally released from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs. He is totally released, I tell you, from suffering & stress.” — SN 22:39

§30. “These four traditions of the noble ones—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmins. Which four?

“There is the case where a monk is content with any old robe cloth at all. He speaks in praise of being content with any old robe cloth at all. He doesn’t, for the sake of robe cloth, do anything unseemly or inappropriate. Not getting cloth, he isn’t agitated. Getting cloth, he uses it unattached to it, uninfatuated, guiltless, seeing the drawbacks (of attachment to it), and discerning the escape from them. He doesn’t, on account of his contentment with any old robe cloth at all, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, & mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones. [Similarly with almsfood and lodging.]

“And further, the monk finds pleasure & delight in developing [skillful mental qualities], finds pleasure & delight in abandoning [unskillful mental qualities]. He

doesn't, on account of his pleasure & delight in developing & abandoning, exalt himself or disparage others. In this he is diligent, deft, alert, & mindful. This is said to be a monk standing firm in the ancient, original traditions of the noble ones.

"These are the four traditions of the noble ones—original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning—which are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmans.

"And further, a monk endowed with these four traditions of the noble ones, if he lives in the east, conquers displeasure and is not conquered by displeasure. If he lives in the west... the north... the south, he conquers displeasure and is not conquered by displeasure. Why is that? Because the enlightened one endures both pleasure & displeasure."

This is what the Blessed One said. Having said this, he said further:

Displeasure doesn't conquer	the enlightened one.
Displeasure doesn't suppress	the enlightened one.
The enlightened one	conquers displeasure
because the enlightened one	endures it.

Having cast away all deeds:

Who could obstruct him?

Like an ornament of finest gold:

Who is fit to find fault with him?

Even the devas praise him.

Even by Brahma he's praised. — AN 4:28

§31. Then Ven. Assaji, arising early in the morning, taking his robe and bowl, entered Rājagaha for alms: gracious in the way he approached and departed, looked forward and behind, drew in and stretched out his arm; his eyes downcast, his every movement consummate. Sāriputta the wanderer saw Ven. Assaji going for alms in Rājagaha: gracious... his eyes downcast, his every movement consummate. On seeing him, the thought occurred to him, "Surely, of those in this world who are arahants or have entered the path to arahantship, this is one. What if I were to approach him and question him: 'On whose account have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Of whose Dhamma do you approve?'"

But then the thought occurred to Sāriputta the wanderer, "This is the wrong time to question him. He is going for alms in the town. What if I were to follow behind this monk who has found the path for those who seek it?"

Then Ven. Assaji, having gone for alms in Rājagaha, left, taking the alms he had received. Sāriputta the wanderer approached him and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings and courtesies, he stood to one side. As he was standing there he said, "Bright are your faculties, my friend, pure and clear your complexion. On whose account have you gone forth? Who is your teacher? Of whose Dhamma do you approve?"

"There is, my friend, the Great Contemplative, a son of the Sakyans, gone forth from a Sakyan family. I have gone forth on account of that Blessed One. That Blessed One is my teacher. It is of that Blessed One's Dhamma that I approve."

"But what is your teacher's teaching? What does he proclaim?"

"I am new, my friend, not long gone forth, only recently come to this doctrine and

discipline. I cannot explain the doctrine in detail, but I can give you the gist in brief.”

Then Sāriputta the wanderer spoke thus to the Ven. Assaji:

“Speak a little or a lot,
but tell me just the gist.
The gist is what I want.
What use is a lot of verbosity?”

Then Ven. Assaji gave this Dhamma exposition to Sāriputta the wanderer:

“Whatever phenomena arise from a cause:
their cause
& their cessation.
Such is the teaching of the Tathāgata,
the Great Contemplative.”

Then to Sāriputta the wanderer, as he heard this Dhamma exposition, there arose the dustless, stainless Dhamma eye: *Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation.*
— *Mv I.23.5*

§32. Ven. Puṇṇa: “Lord, I am going to live in the Sunaparanta country.”

The Buddha: “Puṇṇa, the Sunaparanta people are fierce. They are rough. If they insult and ridicule you, what will you think?”

“...I will think, ‘These Sunaparanta people are civilized, very civilized, in that they don’t hit me with their hands.’ That’s what I will think....”

“But if they hit you with their hands...?”

“...I will think, ‘These Sunaparanta people are civilized, very civilized, in that they don’t hit me with a clod’....”

“But if they hit you with a clod...?”

“...I will think, ‘These Sunaparanta people are civilized, very civilized, in that they don’t hit me with a stick’....”

“But if they hit you with a stick...?”

“...I will think, ‘These Sunaparanta people are civilized, very civilized, in that they don’t hit me with a knife’....”

“But if they hit you with a knife...?”

“...I will think, ‘These Sunaparanta people are civilized, very civilized, in that they don’t take my life with a sharp knife’....”

“But if they take your life with a sharp knife...?”

“...I will think, ‘There are disciples of the Blessed One who—horrified, humiliated, and disgusted by the body and by life—have sought for an assassin, but here I have met my assassin without searching for him.’ That’s what I will think....”

“Good, Puṇṇa, very good. Possessing such calm and self-control you are fit to dwell among the Sunaparantans. Now it is time to do as you see fit.”

Then Ven. Puṇṇa, delighting and rejoicing in the Blessed One’s words, rising from his seat, bowed down to the Blessed One and left, keeping him to his right. Setting his dwelling in order and taking his robe and bowl, he set out for the Sunaparanta country and, after wandering stage by stage, he arrived there. There he lived. During that Rains retreat he established 500 male and 500 female lay followers in the practice, while he realized the three knowledges. Eventually, he attained total (final) Unbinding. — *MN 145*

§33. *Vakkali*:

Stricken by sharp, wind-like pains,
 you, monk, living in the forest grove
 —harsh, with limited range for alms—
 what, what will you do?

Suffusing my body
 with abundant rapture & joy,
 & enduring what's harsh,
 I'll stay in the grove.

Developing the establishings of mindfulness,
 strengths, faculties,
 the factors for awakening,
 I'll stay in the grove.

Reflecting on those who are resolute,
 their persistence aroused,
 constantly firm in their effort,
 united in concord,
 I'll stay in the grove.

Recollecting the One Self-awakened,
 self-tamed & centered,
 untiring both day & night,
 I'll stay
 in the grove. — *Thag 5:8*