

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Samma Sambuddhassa !

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Supremely Enlightened One !

THE MIDDLE LENGTH DISCOURSES OF THE BUDDHA.

Kakachupama Sutta - The Simile Of The Saw

“Formerly, bhikkhus, in this same Savatthi there was a housewife named Vedehika. And a good report about Mistress Vedehika had spread thus: ‘Mistress Vedehika is gentle, Mistress Vedehika is meek, Mistress Vedehika is peaceful.’ Now Mistress Vedehika had a maid named Kaali, who was clever, nimble, and neat in her work. The maid Kaali thought: ‘A good report about my lady has spread. How is it now, while she does not show anger, is it nevertheless actually present in her or is it absent? Or else is it just because my work is neat that my lady shows no anger though it is actually present in her? Suppose I test my lady.’

“So the maid Kaali got up late. Then Mistress Vedehika said: ‘Hey, Kaali!’ — ‘What is it, madam?’ — ‘What is the matter that you get up so late?’ — ‘Nothing is the matter, madam.’ — ‘Nothing is the matter, you wicked girl, yet you get up so late!’ and she was angry and displeased, and she scowled. Then the maid Kaali thought: ‘The fact is that while my lady does not show anger, it is actually present in her, not absent; and it is just because my work is neat that my lady shows no anger though it is actually present in her, not absent. Suppose I test my lady a little more.’

“So the maid Kaali got up later in the day..., Then Mistress Vedehika was angry and displeased, and she spoke words of displeasure.

“So the maid Kaali got up still later in the day. Then Mistress Vedehika said: ‘Hey, Kaali!’ — ‘What is it, madam?’ — ‘What is the matter that you get up still later in the day?’ — ‘Nothing is the matter, madam.’ — ‘Nothing is the matter, you wicked girl, yet you get up still later in the day!’ and she was angry and displeased, and she took a rolling-pin, gave her a blow on the head, and cut her head.

“Then the maid Kaali, with blood running from her cut head, denounced her mistress to the neighbours: ‘See, ladies, the gentle lady's work! See, ladies, the meek lady's work! See, ladies, the peaceful lady's work! How can she become angry and displeased with her only maid for getting up late? How can she take a rolling-pin, give her a blow on the head, and cut her head?’ Then later on a bad report about Mistress Vedehika spread thus: ‘Mistress Vedehika is rough, Mistress Vedehika is violent, Mistress Vedehika is merciless.’

"So too, bhikkhus, some bhikkhu is extremely gentle, extremely meek, extremely peaceful, so long as disagreeable courses of speech do not touch him. But it is when disagreeable courses of speech touch him that it can be understood whether that bhikkhu is really kind, gentle, and peaceful.

"Bhikkhus, there are these five courses of speech that others may use when they address you: their speech may be **timely or untimely, true or untrue, gentle or harsh, connected with good or with harm, spoken with a mind of loving-kindness or with inner hate**. When others address you these ways, herein, bhikkhus, you should train thus: **'Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading that person with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, and starting with him, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.'** That is how you should train, bhikkhus.

"Bhikkhus, even if bandits were to sever you savagely limb by limb with a two-handled saw, he who gave rise to a mind of hate towards them would not be carrying out my teaching. Herein, bhikkhus, you should train thus: **'Our minds will remain unaffected, and we shall utter no evil words; we shall abide compassionate for their welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. We shall abide pervading them with a mind imbued with loving-kindness; and starting with them, we shall abide pervading the all-encompassing world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, abundant, exalted, immeasurable, without hostility and without ill will.'** That is how you should train, bhikkhus.

"Bhikkhus, if you keep this advice on the simile of the saw constantly in mind, do you see any course of speech, trivial or gross, that you could not endure?"—"No, venerable sir."—"Therefore, bhikkhus, you should keep this advice on the simile of the saw constantly in mind. That will lead to your welfare and happiness for a long time."

(The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha, (217 p.) Translated by Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom Publications)

Sādhu ! Sādhu !! Sādhu !!! (Excellent)

Namo Buddhaya!

(Homage to the Supreme Buddha !)