



THE DISCOURSE TO PRINCE BODHI
BODHIRĀJAKUMĀRASUTTAMĀ (MN 85)

TRANSLATED BY

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The Discourse to Prince Bodhi
Bodhirājakumārasuttaṃ (MN 85)

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(Version 1.1, October, 2016 / 2560)

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Introduction

Recently I published a text and translation of the Ariyapariyesanasutta (MN 26), which is probably the best known of the discourses in which the Buddha discusses his practice as a Bodhisatta, his Awakening and decision to teach.

The remarkable thing in connection with that work was the finding, contrary to popular belief, that the Buddha did not identify Uddaka as a teacher, but only as a friend in the spiritual life, and that therefore the Bodhisatta, on his own account, had only acknowledged one teacher during this period, not two.

That discourse, however, presents an incomplete story, that needs to be supplemented by the information given in the Mahāsaccakasutta (MN 36), which again only tells a partial story, there being information available in MN 26 that is not in MN 36, as well as the other way round.¹

Later, however, in the second collection of 50 discourses (Majjhimapaṇṇāsa) we have a discourse given to Prince Bodhi in which both sections of the story are amalgamated and presented in a clear beginning-to-end narrative.

¹ MN 100, the Discourse to Saṅgārava, contains the same information as Mahāsaccaka, which is again incomplete.

Unfortunately this discourse has not gathered the attention it deserves because it has been so heavily abbreviated in both the text and translation versions,² quite unlike the situation in the traditional Theravāda countries where both have been written out more or less in full.

The text and translation presented here aims to rectify that situation and give a proper picture of both the text and translation, and the important story it contains in full. This introduction though needs to be supplemented by a reading of the important findings contained in the Introduction to the Discourse about the Noble Search.

Here is a synopsis of the story and the sections found in the various discourses discussed above.

Noble Search	Mahāsaccaka	Prince Bodhi
moving to Uruvelā	moving to Uruvelā	moving to Uruvelā
meeting with Āḷāra	meeting with Āḷāra	meeting with Āḷāra
meeting with Uddaka	meeting with Uddaka	meeting with Uddaka
	the three similes	the three similes
	suppression of thought	suppression of thought
	suppression of breath	suppression of breath
	suppression of food	suppression of food
	discovery of the true path	discovery of the true path
	attainment of absorption	attainment of absorption
	attainment of three knowledges	attainment of three knowledges

² The PTS text, and Bhikkhu Nyanamoli's translation both take up a meagre six pages because of this, and refer back to the two discourses in the earlier collection with instruction on how to reassemble the material.

Awakening	Awakening	Awakening
Brahma's request		Brahma's request
deciding who to teach		deciding who to teach
journey to Bārāṇasī, and meeting with Upaka		journey to Bārāṇasī, and meeting with Upaka
meeting with the group-of-five monks		meeting with the group-of-five monks
the group-of-five monks' attainment		the group-of-five monks' attainment

* * *

The discourse here opens with Prince Bodhi's desire to offer a meal to the Buddha and his disciples at his newly built Pink Lotus Palace in the Bhagga country, which was west of Bārāṇasī, somewhere near Kosambī.

There is a curious incident at the beginning of the discourse when the Buddha refuses to enter the Palace until the white cloth that has been spread on the steps is taken up. After the meal, Prince Bodhi tells the Buddha that he had had the following thought: "Happiness is not gained through pleasure, happiness is only gained through pain."

This prompts the Buddha to admit, that he too had had that thought at one time, and he relates the story of his going-forth, his meeting with Āḷāra and Uddaka, his move to Uruvelā and practice of severe austerities, like thought, breath and food control, before his realisation that because his body was unbalanced, his mind was unable to make progress.

I should note here that the section about the three similes must be out of place as it stands, as it is hardly credible that someone who had realised that asceticism, no matter how painful, was irrelevant to the attainment of Awakening, would then go on to practice extreme asceticism for the following six years.

The proper place for the similes, therefore, seems to be at the end of the austerity period, although it is placed at this position by the three discourses which contain it. In the Sanskrit parallel to this discourse found in fragments, the similes are indeed placed after the austerities.³

He then finds the right path by remembering an incident in his childhood in which he had attained absorption (*jhāna*), which though pleasant, was not entangled with sensual desire, and was a way to a higher level of insight.

The discourse then relates the practice through the successive levels of absorption, and with that as basis to the three knowledges and Awakening, followed by his initial hesitation and final decision to teach after being prompted by the Great Brahma.

He then traveled to Isipatana, where he met his former disciples and started his teaching career, which led after one week to all five becoming Arahats. Unfortunately the teachings he gave, now known as the The Discourse that Set the Dhamma Wheel Rolling (*Dhammacakkapavattanasutta*) and the Discourse about the

³ See Ven. Analayo's *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya*, p. 236.

Characteristic of Non-Self (Anattalakkhaṇasutta) are not included, though they evidently form the backdrop to the results recorded here.

At the end of the present discourse, Prince Bodhi asks how long the training under the Lord Buddha may take, who answers with a succession of diminishing periods up to being taught in the evening and realising in the morning, and vica versa, if the disciple is ready and has the necessary qualifications.

Prince Bodhi then confirms his lay discipleship of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, which had first been taken on his behalf by his Mother, while still in the womb, and by his wet-nurse, while dangling him on her hip, and which he now reconfirms.

The interest in the discourse mainly lies in the narrative of his striving, Awakening and decision to teach, and results gained from that, which now form the backbone of the Buddha Legend, and are certainly the most authentic part of it.

Ānandajoti Bhikkhu

June 2014

The Discourse to Prince Bodhi

[1. The Invitation]

Thus I have heard: at one time the Fortunate One was dwelling amongst the Bhaggas⁴ in the Deer Park in Bhesakaḷā's⁵ Wood on the Crocodile Hill.

Then at that time Prince Bodhi's palace named Pink Lotus was not long made, and had not been lived in by any ascetic or brāhmaṇa or human being.

Then Prince Bodhi addressed the student Sañjikāputta, saying: "Go, dear Sañjikāputta, and approach the Fortunate One, and after approaching, worship the Fortunate One's feet with your head in my name, and ask whether he is free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably, and say: 'Prince Bodhi, reverend Sir, worships with his head at the Fortunate One's feet, and asks whether you are free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably.'

And say this: 'May the Fortunate One consent, reverend Sir, to Prince Bodhi offering him a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks.'

⁴ The Bhaggas had a small republic to the west of Bārāṇasī.

⁵ According to the Saṃyutta Comm. this was the name of a yakkhinī.

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“Very well, dear Sir,” said the student Sañjikāputta, and after replying to Prince Bodhi, he approached the Fortunate One, and after approaching he exchanged greetings with the Fortunate One, and after exchanging courteous talk and greetings, he sat down on one side.

While sitting on one side the student Sañjikāputta said this to the Fortunate One: “Prince Bodhi, dear Gotama, worships with his head at dear Gotama’s feet, and asks whether you are free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably.

And he says this: ‘May the venerable Gotama consent to Prince Bodhi offering him a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks.’”

The Fortunate One consented by maintaining silence.

Then the student Sañjikāputta, having understood the Fortunate One’s consent, after rising from his seat approached Prince Bodhi, and after approaching, he said this to Prince Bodhi: “We spoke your words to dear Gotama, saying: ‘Prince Bodhi, dear Gotama, worships with his head at dear Gotama’s feet, and asks whether you are free from sickness, free from illness, in good health, and living comfortably. And he says this: “May the venerable Gotama consent to Prince Bodhi offering him a meal on the morrow, together with the Community of monks”.’ and the Fortunate One consented.”

[2. At the Palace]

Then Prince Bodhi, after the night had passed, having had excellent foodstuffs made ready in his own residence, and after covering the Pink Lotus palace with white cloth up to the last step, addressed the student Sañjikāputta: saying: “Go, dear Sañjikāputta, and approach the Fortunate One, and after approaching announce the time to the Fortunate One, saying: ‘It is time, dear Gotama, the meal is ready.’ ”

“Very well, dear Sir,” said the student Sañjikāputta, and after replying to Prince Bodhi, he approached the Fortunate One, and after approaching he announced the time to the Fortunate One, saying: “It is time, dear Gotama, the meal is ready.”

Then the Fortunate One, after dressing in the morning time, and picking up his bowl and robe, approached Prince Bodhi’s residence. Then at that time Prince Bodhi was standing outside the doorway waiting for the Fortunate One.

Prince Bodhi saw the Fortunate One approaching from afar, and after seeing him, and coming out, worshipping, and putting the Fortunate One in front, he approached the Pink Lotus palace.

Then the Fortunate One stood near the last step on the staircase. Then Prince Bodhi said this to the Fortunate One: “May the Fortunate One ascend the cloth, reverend Sir, may the Happy One ascend the cloth, that for a long time will be for my benefit and happiness.”

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When this was said, the Fortunate One remained silent.

Then for a second time Prince Bodhi said this to the Fortunate One: “May the Fortunate One ascend the cloth, reverend Sir, may the Happy One ascend the cloth, that for a long time will be for my benefit and happiness.”

Then for a second time the Fortunate One remained silent.

Then for a third time Prince Bodhi said this to the Fortunate One: “May the Fortunate One ascend the cloth, reverend Sir, may the Happy One ascend the cloth, that for a long time will be for my benefit and happiness.”

Then the Fortunate One looked at venerable Ānanda.

Then venerable Ānanda said this to Prince Bodhi: “Fold up the cloth, Prince, the Fortunate One does not walk on cloth coverings. The Realised One looks to people in the future.”

Then Prince Bodhi, after folding up the cloth, prepared the seats on the Pink Lotus palace.

Then the Fortunate One, having ascended the Pink Lotus palace, sat down on the prepared seat, together with the Community of monks. Then Prince Bodhi served and satisfied with his own hand the

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Community of monks with the Buddha at its head with excellent food and drinks.

Then Prince Bodhi, when the Fortunate One had eaten and washed his hand and bowl, after taking a low seat, sat down on one side.

While seated on one side Prince Bodhi said this to the Fortunate One: “Reverend Sir, this occurred to me: ‘Happiness is not gained through pleasure, happiness is only gained through pain.’”

“To me also, Prince, before the Awakening, while still an unawakened Bodhisatta this thought occurred: ‘Happiness is not gained through pleasure, happiness is only gained through pain.’”

[3. The Meeting with Āḷāra Kālāma]

Then at another time, Prince, while still a youth, having beautiful black hair, endowed with auspicious youthfulness, in the prime of life, though my Mother and Father didn’t like it, and were crying with tearful faces, after shaving off my hair and beard, and donning brown garments, I went forth from the home to the homeless life.

When I had gone forth thus, searching for what was wholesome, the unsurpassed, noble and peaceful state, I approached Āḷāra Kālāma,

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and after approaching, I said this to Āḷāra Kālāma: “I desire, friend Kālāma, to lead the spiritual life in this Dhamma and Discipline.”⁶

When this was said, Prince, Āḷāra Kālāma said this to me: “Live here, venerable, this Dhamma is such that a wise man in no long time, having deep knowledge himself of what comes from his own teacher, can live, having directly experienced and attained it.”

Then, Prince, in no long time I had soon mastered that Dhamma.

Then, Prince, after a little time, merely through beating my lips, merely through repeating the prattling, I spoke knowingly about that teaching and confidently about that teaching, claiming: ‘I know, I see.’

Both I and others also.

Then this occurred to me, monks: ‘Āḷāra Kālāma did not declare: “Through mere faith in this Dhamma alone, I have deep knowledge of it myself, I live, having directly experienced and attained it,” for sure Āḷāra Kālāma lives knowing and seeing this Dhamma.’

Then, Prince, I approached Āḷāra Kālāma, and after approaching, I said this to Āḷāra Kālāma: “In what way, friend Kālāma, do you

⁶ It is worth noting the *Dhammavinaya* may have been a general term for any ascetic’s teachings regarding theory and conduct, before being adopted by the Buddha himself for his own teaching on these subjects.

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declare: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it?”

When this was said, Prince, Āḷāra Kālāma declared the Sphere of Nothingness.⁷

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘There is not faith for Āḷāra Kālāma alone, for me also there is faith, there is not energy for Āḷāra Kālāma alone, for me also there is energy, there is not mindfulness for Āḷāra Kālāma alone, for me also there is mindfulness, there is not concentration for Āḷāra Kālāma alone, for me also there is concentration, there is not wisdom for Āḷāra Kālāma alone, for me also there is wisdom.

What if, in regard to the Dhamma that Āḷāra Kālāma declares: “I have deep knowledge of it myself, I live, having directly experienced and attained it,” I were to strive to realise that Dhamma?’

Then, Prince, in no long time, soon having deep knowledge of that Dhamma myself, I lived, having directly experienced and attained it.

Then, Prince, I approached Āḷāra Kālāma, and after approaching, I said this to Āḷāra Kālāma: “Is it in this way, friend Kālāma, that you declare: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it?”

⁷ The penultimate level in the thirty-one Realms of Existence.

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“In this way, friend, I do declare: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it.”

“In this way I also, friend, say: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, I live, having directly experienced and attained it.”

“It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us, friend, that we see such a venerable with us in the spiritual life.

Thus I declare I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it, and you have deep knowledge of this Dhamma yourself, and live, having directly experienced and attained it.⁸

You have deep knowledge of this Dhamma yourself, and live, having directly experienced and attained it, and I declare I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it.

⁸ Notice a contrast is set up here, between Āḷāra’s declaring (*pavedemi*) he has the attainment, as though it was unverified, and the Bodhisatta living (*viharasi*) with the attainment.

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Thus the Dhamma I know is the Dhamma you know, the Dhamma you know is the Dhamma I know. Thus as I am, so are you, as you are, so am I. Come now, friend, the two of us will look after this group.”

“Thus my teacher Āḷāra Kālāma, Prince, placed me, the pupil, as equal, and in the very same position as himself, and worshipped me with the highest worship.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to deep knowledge, to Complete Awakening, to Nibbāna, but only as far as rebirth in the Sphere of Nothingness.’

Then, Prince, having not found satisfaction in that Dhamma, I was therefore disgusted with that Dhamma and went away.

[4. The Meeting with Uddaka Rāmaputta]

Then, Prince, still searching for what was wholesome, the unsurpassed, noble and peaceful state, I approached Uddaka Rāmaputta, and after approaching, I said this to Uddaka Rāmaputta: “I desire, friend, to lead the spiritual life in this Dhamma and Discipline.”

When this was said, Prince, Uddaka Rāmaputta said this to me: “Live here, venerable, this Dhamma is such that a wise man in no

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long time, having deep knowledge himself of what comes from his own teacher, can live, having directly experienced and attained it.”

Then in no long time, Prince, soon I had mastered that Dhamma.

Then, Prince, after a little time I indeed, merely through beating my lips, merely through repeating the prattling, spoke knowingly about that teaching and confidently about that teaching, claiming: ‘I know, I see.’

Both I and others also.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘Rāma did not declare: “Through mere faith in this Dhamma alone, having knowledge of it myself, I live, having directly experienced and attained it,” for sure Rāma lived knowing and seeing this Dhamma.’

Then, Prince, I approached Uddaka Rāmaputta, and after approaching, I said this to Uddaka Rāmaputta: “In what way, friend, did Rāma declare: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it?”

When this was said, Prince, Uddaka Rāmaputta declared the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception.⁹

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Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘There was not faith for Rāma alone, for me also there is faith, there was not energy for Rāma alone, for me also there is energy, there was not mindfulness for Rāma alone, for me also there is mindfulness, there was not concentration for Rāma alone, for me also there is concentration, there was not wisdom for Rāma alone, for me also there is wisdom.

What if, in regard to the Dhamma that Rāma declared: I have deep knowledge of it myself, I live, having directly experienced and attained it, I were to strive to realise that Dhamma?’

Then, Prince, in no long time, soon having deep knowledge of that Dhamma myself, I lived, having directly experienced and attained it.

Then, Prince, I approached Uddaka Rāmaputta, and after approaching, I said this to Uddaka Rāmaputta: “Is it in this way, friend, that Rāma declared: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, having directly experienced and attained it?”

“In this way, friend, Rāma did declare he had deep knowledge of this Dhamma himself, having directly experienced and attained it.”

“In this way, friend, I also say: I have deep knowledge of this Dhamma myself, I live, having directly experienced and attained it.”

⁹ The very highest level in the thirty-one Realms of Existence. The way this is stated is odd in that we might have expected Uddaka to have claimed this for Rāma, but the way it is written it appears he claims it for himself.

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“It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us, friend, that we see such a venerable with us in the spiritual life. Thus Rāma declared he had deep knowledge of this Dhamma himself, having directly experienced and attained it, and you have deep knowledge of this Dhamma yourself, you live, having directly experienced and attained it.

And that Dhamma you have deep knowledge of yourself, you live, having directly experienced and attained it, that Rāma declared he had deep knowledge of that Dhamma himself, having directly experienced and attained it.

Thus the Dhamma Rāma knew is the Dhamma you know, the Dhamma you know is the Dhamma Rāma knew. Thus as Rāma was, so are you, as you are, so was Rāma. Come now, friend, you will look after this group.”

Thus my friend in the spiritual life, Uddaka Rāmaputta, Prince, placed me in the teacher’s position, and worshipped me with the highest worship.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, or to dispassion, or to cessation, or to peace, or to deep knowledge, or to Complete Awakening, or to Nibbāna, but only as far as rebirth in the Sphere of Neither-Perception-nor-Non-Perception.’

Then, Prince, having not found satisfaction in that Dhamma, I was therefore disgusted with that Dhamma and went away.

[5. The Similes]

Then, Prince, still searching for what was wholesome, the unsurpassed, noble and peaceful state, while walking gradually on walking tour I entered Magadha, and arrived at the Army town at Uruvelā.

There I saw a delightful piece of land, and a pleasing jungle thicket, with a clear river flowing and lovely banks, and nearby a village suitable for collecting alms.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘Delightful is this piece of land, with its pleasing jungle thicket, and a clear river flowing and lovely banks, and it is near a village suitable for collecting alms.

I thought: ‘This is surely enough for the striving of a son of a good family who is seeking to strive.’ Then, Prince, I sat down right there, thinking: ‘This is enough for striving.’

Then, Prince, these three wonderful similes occurred to me, that were unheard of in the past.

Suppose, Prince, there were a green, sappy timber, lying in water, and a man would come with an upper kindling wood, thinking: ‘I will make fire, I will engender heat.’

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What do you think, Prince, would that man with that green, sappy timber, lying in water, through rubbing with the upper kindling wood be able to make fire, to engender heat?”

“Surely not, dear Gotama. What is the reason for that? Because, dear Gotama, it is a green, sappy timber, and it is lying in water. That man would only get a fair share of weariness and vexation.”

Just so, Prince, whatever ascetics and priests live unsecluded from sensual pleasures with their body and mind, who, in regard to sensual desire for sensual pleasures, love for sensual pleasures, infatuation for sensual pleasures, thirst for sensual pleasures and fever for sensual pleasures, without having completely abandoned them on the inside, without having completely allayed them, even if those good ascetics and priests feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, they are incapable of knowledge and insight into the supreme and complete Awakening, and even if those good ascetics and priests do not feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, still they are incapable of knowledge and insight into the supreme and complete Awakening.

This, Prince, is the first wonderful simile that occurred to me, that was unheard of in the past.

Then, Prince, a second wonderful simile occurred to me, that was unheard of in the past.

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Suppose, Prince, there were a green, sappy timber, far from the water, lying on the ground, and a man would come with an upper kindling wood, thinking: 'I will make fire, I will engender heat.'

What do you think, Prince, would that man with that green, sappy timber, far from the water, lying on the ground, through rubbing with the upper kindling wood be able to make fire, to engender heat?"

"Surely not, dear Gotama. What is the reason for that? Because, dear Gotama, it is still a green, sappy timber, however far it is from the water, lying on the ground. That man would only get a fair share of weariness and vexation."

"Just so, Prince, whatever ascetics and priests live secluded from sensual pleasures with their body and mind, who, in regard to sensual desire for sensual pleasures, love for sensual pleasures, infatuation for sensual pleasures, thirst for sensual pleasures and fever for sensual pleasures, without having completely abandoned them on the inside, without having completely allayed them, even if those good ascetics and priests feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, they are incapable of knowledge and insight into the supreme and complete Awakening; and even if those good ascetics and priests do not feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, still they are incapable of knowledge and insight into the supreme and complete Awakening.

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This, Prince, is the second wonderful simile that occurred to me, that was unheard of in the past.

Then, Prince, a third wonderful simile occurred to me, that was unheard of in the past.

Suppose, Prince, there were a dry, sapless timber, far from the water, lying on the ground, and a man would come with an upper kindling wood, thinking: 'I will make fire, I will engender heat.'

What do you think, Prince, would that man with that dry, sapless timber, far from the water, lying on the ground, through rubbing with the upper kindling wood be able to make fire, to engender heat?"

"Surely, dear Gotama. What is the reason for that? Because, dear Gotama, it is a dry, sapless timber, and it is far from the water, lying on the ground."

"Just so, Prince, whatever ascetics and priests live secluded from sensual pleasures with their body and mind, who, in regard to sensual desire for sensual pleasures, love for sensual pleasures, infatuation for sensual pleasures, thirst for sensual pleasures and fever for sensual pleasures, have completely abandoned them on the inside, completely allayed them, even if those good ascetics and priests feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, they are capable of knowledge and insight into the supreme and complete Awakening; and even if those good ascetics and priests do not feel acute pain,

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sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, still they are capable of knowledge and insight into the supreme and complete Awakening.

This, Prince, is the third wonderful simile that occurred to me, that was unheard of in the past.

These, Prince, are the three wonderful similes that occurred to me, that were unheard of in the past.

[6. Suppressing Thought and Breath]

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘What if I, with teeth clenched against teeth, with the tongue pressing on the palate, were to completely restrain, constrain and suppress one thought with another thought.

Then I, Prince, with teeth clenched against teeth, with the tongue pressing on the palate, did completely restrain, constrain and suppress one thought with another thought.

Then to me, Prince, with teeth clenched against teeth, with the tongue pressing on the palate, with complete restraint, constraint and suppression of one thought with another thought, sweat flowed from my armpits.

Just as a strong man, Prince, after seizing a very weak man by the head, or seizing him by the body, would restrain, constrain and suppress him, just so to me, Prince, with teeth clenched against teeth, with the tongue pressing on the palate, with complete restraint,

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constraint and suppression of one thought with another thought, sweat flowed from my armpits.

But although, Prince, my energy was strenuous and unshaken, and mindfulness was attended to and unconfused, my body was overstressed, not quietened, and therefore the effort I made was overwhelmed by the strain of exertion.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: 'What if I were to meditate on the breathless meditation?'

Then, Prince, I blocked the in-breath and out-breath at the mouth and at the nose.

Then to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose, there was an excessive noise of wind escaping through the ears.

Just as there is an excessive noise from blowing on a smith's bellows, just so to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose, there was an excessive noise of wind escaping through the ears.

But although for me, Prince, energy was strenuous and unshaken, and mindfulness was attended to and unconfused, my body was overstressed, not quietened, and therefore the effort I made was overwhelmed by the strain of exertion.

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Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘What if I were to meditate on the breathless meditation?’

Then, Prince, I blocked the in-breath and out-breath at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears.

Then to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, excessive winds raged inside my head.

Just as though a strong man, Prince, were to cleave inside my head with a sharp pointed sword, just so to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, excessive winds raged inside my head.

But although for me, Prince, energy was strenuous and unshaken, and mindfulness was attended to and unconfused, my body was overstressed, not quietened, and therefore the effort I made was overwhelmed by the strain of exertion.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘What if I were to meditate on the breathless meditation?’

Then, Prince, I blocked the in-breath and out-breath at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears.

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Then to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, there was an excessive headache in my head.

Just as though a strong man, Prince, were to tie a turban on my head with a strong thong of leather, just so to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, there was an excessive headache in my head.

But, Prince, although for me energy was strenuous and unshaken, and mindfulness was attended to and unconfused, my body was overstressed, not quietened, and therefore the effort I made was overwhelmed by the strain of exertion.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘What if I were to meditate on the breathless meditation?’

Then, Prince, I blocked the in-breath and out-breath at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears.

Then to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, excessive winds cut through my stomach.

Just as though, Prince, a butcher or a butcher’s apprentice were to cut through the stomach with a sharp butcher’s knife,¹⁰ just so to me,

¹⁰ Lit: *Cow-knife*.

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Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, excessive winds cut through my stomach.

But although for me, Prince, energy was strenuous and unshaken, and mindfulness was attended to and unconfused, my body was overstressed, not quietened, and therefore the effort I made was overwhelmed by the strain of exertion.

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: 'What if I were to meditate on the breathless meditation?'

Then, Prince, I blocked the in-breath and out-breath at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears.

Then to me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, there was an excessive fever inside the body.

Just as though two strong men, Prince, after seizing a very weak man with their arms, were to burn and scorch him with embers, so for me, Prince, with the in-breath and out-breath blocked at the mouth and at the nose and at the ears, there was an excessive fever inside the body.

But although for me, Prince, energy was strenuous and unshaken, and mindfulness was attended to and unconfused, my body was overstressed, not quietened, and therefore the effort I made was overwhelmed by the strain of exertion.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 29

Further, Prince, this occurred to the gods after seeing me: ‘The ascetic Gotama has died,’¹¹ this occurred to some gods: ‘The ascetic Gotama has not died, he is dying,’ this occurred to some gods: ‘The ascetic Gotama has not died, he is not dying, the ascetic Gotama is Worthy, it is in this way that the Worthy One lives.’

[7. The Fasting]

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘What if I were to practice with cutting off food entirely?’

Then, Prince, some gods having approached, said this to me: “Do not, Sir, practice with cutting off food entirely. If, Sir, you will practice with cutting off food entirely, we will make you imbibe divine nutrient through the pores of your skin, and you will keep going.”

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘If I were to claim I am entirely without food, and these gods were to make me imbibe divine nutrient through the pores of my skin, and I were to keep going, that would be a falsehood for me.’

Then, Prince, I rejected those gods, saying: “Why should I do that?”

¹¹ Lit: *made (his) time*.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 30

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘What if I were to take food little by little, measure by measure, whether it be mung bean soup, or vetch soup, or chick-pea soup, or pea soup?’

Then, Prince, I took food little by little, measure by measure, whether mung bean soup, or vetch soup, or chick-pea soup, or pea soup.

Then, Prince, as I took food little by little, measure by measure, whether mung bean soup, or vetch soup, or chick-pea soup, or pea soup, this body became excessively emaciated.

Just like vine knots or bamboo knots, so were my limbs both great and small through having so little food.

Just like a camel’s foot, so did my buttocks become through having so little food.

Just like a twisted vine, so did my backbone become twisted through having so little food.

Just like an old hall, in which the main beam is rotten and broken, so did my ribs become rotten and broken through having so little food.

Just like in a deep pool, the stars in the water are seen lying deep and distant, so in the sockets of my eyes, the pupils of my eyes were seen lying deep and distant through having so little food.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 31

Just like a freshly cut bitter gourd will become withered and shrunken through wind and heat, so did the skin on my head become withered and shrunken through having so little food.

Then, Prince, thinking: 'I will touch the skin of my stomach,' I took ahold of my backbone, thinking: 'I will touch my backbone,' I took ahold of the skin of my stomach, so far, Prince, did the skin of my stomach and my backbone stick together through having so little food.

Then, Prince, thinking: 'I will pass excrement or urine,' I fell down face forward right there through having so little food.

Then, Prince, I rubbed this body and my limbs comfortably with my hand.

Then, Prince, as I rubbed my limbs with my hand, hair that was rotten at the root fell out of my body through having so little food.

Further, Prince, this occurred to men after seeing me: 'The ascetic Gotama is black,' and to some men this occurred: 'The ascetic Gotama is not black, the ascetic Gotama is brown,' and to some men this occurred: 'The ascetic Gotama is not black, he is not brown, the ascetic Gotama has golden skin.'

So far, Prince, was the pure and bright colour of my skin spoilt through having so little food.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 32

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘Those ascetics and priests in the past times who felt acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, there is nothing beyond or superior to this.

Those ascetics and priests in the future times who will feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, there is nothing beyond or superior to this.

Those ascetics and priests who now feel acute pain, sharp, harsh, and bitter feelings, there is nothing beyond or superior to this.

But even by undergoing this bitter austerity I did not attain a state beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight.

I wonder is there another path to Awakening?’

[8. Finding the Right Path]

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘But I recall that while my Sakyan Father was at work, while I was sitting in the cool of the shade of the Rose-Apple tree, quite secluded from sense desires, secluded from unwholesome things, having thinking, reflection, and the happiness and rapture born of seclusion, I dwelt having attained the first absorption. I wonder if this is the path to Awakening?’

Then to me, Prince, in conformity with that recollection I became conscious: ‘This is the path to Awakening.’

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 33

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: 'Why am I afraid of that pleasure? That pleasure is one thing, and unwholesome sensual pleasures are another thing.'

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: 'I am not afraid of that pleasure. That pleasure is one thing, and unwholesome sensual pleasures are another thing.'

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: 'It is not easy to attain that pleasure with the body so excessively emaciated, what if I were to take gross food, boiled rice and milk?'

Then, Prince, I took gross food, boiled rice and milk. But at that time, Prince, the group-of-five monks were present, thinking: 'This ascetic Gotama will attain Dhamma, and he will inform us.'

When, Prince, I took gross food, boiled rice and milk, then the group-of-five monks being disgusted, left me, thinking: 'This ascetic Gotama is given to luxury, he has forsaken the striving, he has gone back to luxury.'

Then, Prince, having taken gross food and regained strength, quite secluded from sense desires, secluded from unwholesome things, having thinking, reflection, and the happiness and rapture born of seclusion, I dwelt having attained the first absorption.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 34

With the ending of thinking, and reflection, with internal clarity, and one-pointedness of mind, being without thinking, without reflection, having the happiness and rapture born of concentration, I dwelt having attained the second absorption.

With the fading away of rapture I dwelt equanimous, mindful, clearly knowing, experiencing happiness through the body, about which the Noble Ones declare: “He lives pleasantly, mindful, and equanimous,” thus I dwelt having attained the third absorption.

Having given up pleasure, given up pain, and with the previous disappearance of mental well-being and sorrow, without pain, without pleasure, and with complete purity of mindfulness owing to equanimity, I dwelt having attained the fourth absorption.

Then with a mind well-concentrated, and complete purity that comes from a cleansed mind, being passionless, free of defilements, malleable, workable, steady, imperturbable, I directed my mind to knowledge and recall of previous existences.

I recollected various previous existences, such as: one life, two lives, three lives, four lives, five lives, ten lives, twenty lives, thirty lives, forty lives, fifty lives, a hundred lives, a thousand lives, a hundred thousand lives, innumerable aeons of devolution, innumerable aeons of evolution, innumerable aeons of devolution and evolution: in such and such a place I had this name, this family, this class, this food, this experience of pleasure and pain, this life term; passing away from there I arose in another state of existence, and in that place I had this

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 35

name, this family, this class, this food, this experience of pleasure and pain, this life term, and passing away from there I arose here, and so with their characteristics and with their details I recollected my various previous existences.

This to me, Prince, in the first watch of the night, was the first knowledge I attained, ignorance was abandoned, knowledge arose, darkness was abandoned, light arose, as I was living heedful, ardent, and resolute in this way.

Then with a mind well-concentrated, and complete purity that comes from a cleansed mind, being passionless, free of defilements, malleable, workable, steady, imperturbable, I directed my mind to knowledge of the passing away and rearing of beings.

With the divine eye which is purified and surpasses that of normal men I saw the passing away and arising of beings, inferior, superior, beautiful, ugly, in a good destiny, in a bad destiny, and I knew beings arise according to their good and bad actions.

Those venerables who are endowed with bad bodily conduct, endowed with bad verbal conduct, endowed with bad mental conduct, who blamed the noble ones, were ones of wrong view, and undertook deeds based on wrong view, at the break-up of the body, after death, arise in the lower world, in an unhappy destiny, in the fall, in the nether regions, and those venerables who are endowed with good bodily conduct, endowed with good verbal conduct, endowed with good mental conduct, who did not blame the noble

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 36

ones, were ones of right view, and undertook deeds based on right view, at the break-up of the body, after death, arise in a good destiny, a heavenly world.

This to me, Prince, in the middle watch of the night, was the second knowledge I attained, ignorance was abandoned, knowledge arose, darkness was abandoned, light arose, as I was living heedful, ardent, and resolute in this way.

Then with a mind well-concentrated, and complete purity that comes from a cleansed mind, being passionless, free of defilements, malleable, workable, steady, imperturbable, I directed my mind to knowledge about the destruction of the pollutants.

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is suffering,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is the arising of suffering,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is the cessation of suffering,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is the practice going to the cessation of suffering,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘These are pollutants,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is the arising of pollutants,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is the cessation of pollutants,’

I knew, as it really is: ‘This is the practice going to the cessation of pollutants,’

Then knowing in this way, seeing in this way, my mind was free from the pollutant of sensuality, my mind was free from the

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 37

pollutant of craving for continued existence, my mind was free from the pollutant of ignorance.

In freedom there was the knowledge: ‘This is freedom,’

‘Destroyed is rebirth,
accomplished is the spiritual life,
done is what ought to be done,
there is no more of this mundane state,’ this I knew.

This to me, Prince, in the last watch of the night, was the third knowledge I attained, ignorance was abandoned, knowledge arose, darkness was abandoned, light arose, as I was living heedful, ardent, and resolute in this way.

[9. The Story about Brahmā’s Request]

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘This Dhamma I have attained is deep, hard to see, hard to understand, peaceful, excellent, beyond the sphere of logic, profound, understandable only by the wise.

But this generation delights in desire, is devoted to desire, gladdened by desire, and for this generation delighting in desire, devoted to desire, gladdened by desire, this thing is hard to see, that is to say: conditionality and conditional origination.

This thing also is hard to see, that is to say: the tranquilising of all processes, the letting go of all bases for cleaving, the end of craving, dispassion, cessation, Nibbāna.

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But if I were to teach the Dhamma and others did not understand me that would be tiring for me, that would be troublesome to me.’

Further, Prince, these truly wonderful verses occurred to me, that were unheard of in the past:

‘Now is it suitable for me to explain what was attained with difficulty?

For those overcome by passion and hatred this Dhamma is not easily understood.

Going against the stream, it is profound, deep, hard to see, subtle.

Those delighting in passion, obstructed by darkness, will not see it.’

Such was my reflection, Prince, and my mind inclined to inaction, not to teaching the Dhamma.

Then, Prince, to Brahmā Sahampati, knowing with his mind the reflection in my mind, this thought occurred: ‘The world is surely going to destruction, the world is surely going to complete destruction, wherever the Realised One, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha’s mind inclines to inaction, not to teaching the Dhamma.’

Then, Prince, Brahmā Sahampati, just as a strong man might stretch out a bent arm, or bend in an outstretched arm, so did he vanish from the Brahmā world and appear in front of me. Then, Prince, Brahmā Sahampati, after arranging his upper robe on one shoulder,

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and raising his hands in respectful salutation, said this to me: “Let the Fortunate One preach the Dhamma, reverend Sir, let the Happy One preach the Dhamma, there are beings with little dust on the eyes who are perishing through not hearing the Dhamma, there will be those who understand the Dhamma.”

Brahmā Sahampati, Prince, said this and after saying this he said something more:

“Formerly there appeared amongst the Magadhans
an impure Dhamma, invented by those still stained,
open the door to the Deathless,
let them hear the Dhamma understood by the Pure One.

As one who is standing on a rock on the top of a mountain
can see the people on all sides,
in the same way, One of Great Wisdom, having ascended
the Palace made from Dhamma, Visionary One,

look down on the people overcome by grief,
One Free of Grief, on those overcome by birth and old-age.
Caravan-Leader, Debtless One, travel through the world.
Rise up, O Hero, Victorious in Battle.

Let the Fortunate One teach the Dhamma, there will be those who understand.”

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Then, Prince, having understood Brahmā's request, out of kindness I looked at beings around the world with my Buddha-eye.

While looking around the world, Prince, with my Buddha-eye, I saw beings having little dust on the eyes, having great dust on the eyes, having sharp faculties, having undeveloped faculties, having good conditions, having poor conditions, easy to instruct, hard to instruct, and only some who dwelt seeing danger in what is blameworthy and in the next world.

Just as with water-lilies or lotuses or white lotuses some of those water-lilies or lotuses or white lotuses, born in the water, flourishing in the water, not rising above water, are nourished from inside the depths; some of those water-lilies or lotuses or white lotuses, born in the water, flourishing in the water, surrounded by water, stand level with the water; some of those water-lilies or lotuses or white lotuses, born in the water, flourishing in the water, stand above the water, and are untouched by the water.

Even so while looking around the world, Prince, with my Buddha-eye, I saw beings having little dust on the eyes, having great dust on the eyes, having sharp faculties, having undeveloped faculties, having good conditions, having poor conditions, easy to instruct, hard to instruct, and only some who dwelt seeing danger in what is blameworthy and in the next world.

Then, Prince, I recited this verse to Brahmā Sahampati:

“Open for you are the doors to the Deathless,

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whoever has ears let them release their faith.

Perceiving trouble, Brahmā, I did not speak amongst humans, about what was hard-learned, the excellent Dhamma!”

Then, Prince, Brahmā Sahampati, thinking: ‘I have obtained consent for the Fortunate One to teach the Dhamma,’ after worshipping and circumambulating me, vanished right there.

[10. Deciding Who to Teach]

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will be able to understand the Dhamma quickly?’

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘This Āḷāra Kālāma is wise, learned, intelligent, for a long time he has been one with little dust on his eyes. Now what if I first teach the Dhamma to Āḷāra Kālāma? He will be able to understand the Dhamma quickly.’

Then a god, Prince, having approached, said this to me: “Āḷāra Kālāma died seven days ago, reverend Sir,” and to me knowledge and insight arose: “Āḷāra Kālāma died seven days ago.”

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘Āḷāra Kālāma had great understanding, if he had heard this Dhamma he would have understood it quickly.’

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will be able to understand the Dhamma quickly?’

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Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘This Uddaka Rāmaputta is wise, learned, intelligent, for a long time he has been one with little dust on his eyes. Now, what if I first teach the Dhamma to Uddaka Rāmaputta? He will be able to understand the Dhamma quickly.’

Then, Prince, a god having approached, said this to me: “Uddaka Rāmaputta died yesterday evening, reverend Sir,” and to me knowledge and insight arose: “Uddaka Rāmaputta died yesterday evening.”

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘Uddaka Rāmaputta had great understanding, if he had heard this Dhamma he would have understood it quickly.’

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘To whom should I first teach the Dhamma? Who will be able to understand the Dhamma quickly?’

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘The group-of-five monks were very helpful to me, they attended on me when I was striving resolutely. Now, what if I first teach the Dhamma to the group-of-five monks?’

Then, Prince, this occurred to me: ‘Where are the group-of-five monks dwelling right now?’ I saw with the divine eye, Prince, which is purified and surpasses that of normal men, that the group-of-five monks were dwelling near Bārāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana.

[11. The Abstainer Upaka]

Then, Prince, having dwelt for as long as I liked I left on walking tour for Bārāṇasī.

The Abstainer Upaka saw me, Prince, going along the highway between the Bodhi tree and Gayā, and after seeing me, he said this to me: “Your faculties, friend, are very clear, purified is your skin and bright, on account of whom, friend, did you go forth, or who is your teacher, or what Dhamma do you prefer?”

When this was said, Prince, I addressed the Abstainer Upaka with verses:

“All-Conquering, All-Wise am I,
undefiled in regard to all things,
having given up everything, liberated through the destruction of
craving,
having deep knowledge myself, who should I point to as
Teacher?

There is no Teacher for me, no one like me is found,
there is no person equal to me in the world with its gods.

I am a Worthy One in the world, I am the Unsurpassed Teacher,
I am the One Perfect Sambuddha, cool and passionless.

I go to Kāsī's city to set the Dhamma-Wheel rolling,

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I will beat the drum of the Deathless in a world that is blind.”

“It is as if you declare, friend, you are a Worthy One, an Infinite Victor!”

“There are surely Victors like me, who have attained the destruction of the pollutants.

I have been victorious over all wicked things, therefore, Upaka, I am a Victor.”

When this was said, Prince, the Abstainer Upaka, after saying: “It may be so, friend,” shaking his head, and taking the wrong path, went away.

[12. The Meeting at Isipatana]

Then, Prince, while I was walking gradually on walking tour, I approached Bārāṇasī, Isipatana, the Deer Park, and the group-of-five monks.

The group-of-five monks, Prince, saw me coming from afar, and after seeing me, they resolved among themselves: “This Ascetic Gotama who is coming, friends, is given to luxury, forsaking the striving he has gone back to luxury.

He should certainly not be worshipped or stood up for, nor should his bowl and robe be taken, however, we can prepare a seat, if he wishes he will sit down.”

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As I approached, Prince, the group-of-five monks were unable to continue with their own agreement, and after coming out to meet me, some took my bowl and robe, some prepared the seat, some placed the water for washing the feet.

Then they addressed me by name and with the word 'friend'.

When this was said, Prince, I said this to the group-of-five monks: "Do not address the Fortunate One, monks, by name and by the word 'friend', the Realised One, monks, is a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha. Lend an ear, monks, I will instruct you about the attainment of the Deathless, I will teach the Dhamma, and following the path as it has been preached, after no long time in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, you will dwell having known, experienced, and attained it yourselves in this very life."

When this was said, Prince, the group-of-five monks said this to me:

"But you, friend Gotama, by that ascetic lifestyle, that practice, that difficult way of living, did not attain states beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight.

So how can you now, given to luxury, forsaking the striving, gone back to luxury, attain states beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight?"

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When this was said, Prince, I said this to the group-of-five monks: “The Realised One, monks, is not given to luxury, is not forsaking the striving, and has not gone back to luxury, the Realised One, monks, is a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha. Lend an ear, monks, I will instruct you about the attainment of the Deathless, I will teach the Dhamma, and following the path as it has been preached, after no long time in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, you will dwell having known, experienced, and attained it yourselves in this very life.”

For a second time, Prince, the group-of-five monks said this to me: “But you, friend Gotama, by that ascetic lifestyle, that practice, that difficult way of living, did not attain states beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight.

So how can you now, given to luxury, forsaking the striving, gone back to luxury, attain a state beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight?”

For a second time, Prince, I said this to the group-of-five monks: “The Realised One, monks, is not given to luxury, is not forsaking the striving, and has not gone back to luxury, the Realised One, monks, is a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha. Lend an ear, monks, I will instruct you about the attainment of the Deathless, I will teach the Dhamma, and following the path as it has been preached, after no long time in regard to that good for which young men of good

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family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, you will dwell having known, experienced, and attained it yourselves in this very life.”

For a third time, Prince, the group-of-five monks said this to me: “But you, friend Gotama, by that ascetic lifestyle, that practice, that difficult way of living, did not attain states beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight.

So how can you now, given to luxury, forsaking the striving, gone back to luxury, attain states beyond ordinary human beings, a distinction of what is truly noble knowledge and insight?”

When this was said, Prince, I said this to the group-of-five monks: “Are you aware, monks, of my having spoken to you like this before?”

“Certainly not, reverend Sir.”

“The Realised One, monks, is a Worthy One, a Perfect Sambuddha. Lend an ear, monks, I will instruct you about the attainment of the Deathless, I will teach the Dhamma, and following the path as it has been preached, after no long time in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, you will dwell having known, experienced, and attained it yourselves in this very life,” and I was able, Prince, to persuade the group-of-five monks.

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Then, Prince, I advised two monks and three monks wandered for alms, and the group of six monks subsisted on whatever, after walking for alms-food, the three monks brought them.

Then, Prince, I advised three monks and two monks wandered for alms, and the group of six monks subsisted on whatever, after walking for alms-food, the two monks brought them.

Then, Prince, the group-of-five monks, while being advised by me, while being instructed, after no long time in regard to that good for which young men of good family, rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, dwelt having known, experienced, and attained it themselves in this very life.”

[13. All about Attainments]

When this was said, prince Bodhi said this to the Fortunate One: “How long, reverend Sir, when a monk gains the Realised One as trainer, before he, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself in this very life?”

“Now then, Prince, here I will ask you something in return: as you see fit, so you should answer. What do you think of this, Prince, are you skilled in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad?”

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“Yes, reverend Sir, I am skilled in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad.”

“What do you think of this, Prince, if a man came here thinking: ‘Prince Bodhi is skilled in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad, I will train in his presence in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad.’

But for one without faith he cannot attain what can be attained by one with faith, for one with many afflictions he cannot attain what can be attained by one with few afflictions, for one who is treacherous and deceitful he cannot attain what can be attained by one who is not treacherous and deceitful, for one who is lazy he cannot attain what can be attained by one who is energetic, for one with little wisdom he cannot attain what can be attained by one who is wise.

What do you think of this, Prince, can that man train in your presence in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad?”

“Being endowed with even one of those qualities that man could not train in my presence in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad, what to say about one with all five qualities!”

“What do you think of this, Prince, if a man came here thinking: ‘Prince Bodhi is skilled in the art of training a mounted elephant

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with a goad, I will train in his presence in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad.’

But for one with faith he can attain what can be attained by one with faith, for one with few afflictions he can attain what can be attained by one with few afflictions, for one who is not treacherous and deceitful he can attain what can be attained by one who is not treacherous and deceitful, for one who is energetic he can attain what can be attained by one who is energetic, for one who is wise he can attain what can be attained by one who is wise.

What do you think of this, Prince, can that man train in your presence in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad?”

“Being endowed with even one of those qualities that man could train in my presence in the art of training a mounted elephant with a goad, what to say about one with all five qualities!”

“Thus, Prince, there are these five qualities of striving. Which five? Here, Prince, a monk has faith, he believes in the Realised One’s Awakening thus:

Such is he, the Fortunate One, the Worthy One, the Perfect Sambuddha, the one endowed with understanding and good conduct, the Happy One, the one who understands the worlds, the Teacher of gods and men, the Buddha, the Fortunate One, the unsurpassed guide for those people who need taming.

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He is one with few afflictions and little illness, endowed with good digestion and metabolism, neither too cool nor too hot, but in the middle, and suitable for striving.

He is not treacherous or deceitful and shows himself as he really is to his teachers and his wise spiritual friends.

He lives energetically, giving up unwholesome things, and undertaking wholesome things, steadfast, making strong effort, not abandoning responsibility regarding wholesome things.

He is wise, endowed with wisdom regarding rising and falling, regarding noble penetration, regarding what leads to the complete destruction of suffering.

These, Prince, are the five qualities of striving. Endowed, Prince, with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within seven years.

Let alone seven years, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within six years.

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Let alone six years, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within five years.

Let alone five years, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within four years.

Let alone four years, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within three years.

Let alone three years, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within two years.

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Let alone two years, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within one year.

Let alone one year, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within seven months.

Let alone seven months, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within six months.

Let alone six months, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within five months.

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Let alone five months, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within four months.

Let alone four months, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within three months.

Let alone three months, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within two months.

Let alone two months, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within one month.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 55

Let alone one month, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within half a month.

Let alone half a month, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within seven days and nights.

Let alone within seven days and nights, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within six days and nights.

Let alone within six days and nights, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within five days and nights.

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Let alone within five days and nights, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within four days and nights.

Let alone within four days and nights, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within three days and nights.

Let alone within three days and nights, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within two days and nights.

Let alone within two days and nights, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, in regard to that good for which young men of good family rightly go forth from the home to the homeless life, that unsurpassed conclusion to the spiritual life, he can dwell having known, experienced, and attained it himself within one day and night.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 57

Let alone within one day and night, Prince, endowed with these five qualities, a monk who gains the Realised One as trainer, instructed in the evening can attain distinction by morning, instructed in the morning can attain distinction by evening.”

When this was said, Prince Bodhi said this to the Fortunate One: “Oh, the Buddha, oh the Dhamma, oh the well-taught Dhamma! Indeed, instructed in the evening he can attain distinction by morning, instructed in the morning he can attain distinction by evening!”

When this was said, the student Sañjikāputta said this to Prince Bodhi: “Now this venerable Bodhi says this: ‘Oh, the Buddha, oh the Dhamma, oh the well-taught Dhamma!’ but then he doesn’t go to the reverend Gotama for refuge or to the Dhamma, or to the Saṅgha of monks.”

“Do not say that, dear Sañjikāputta, do not say that, dear Sañjikāputta.

Face-to-face, dear Sañjikāputta, I heard this from my Noble Mother, face-to-face I learned it: At one time, dear Sañjikāputta, the Fortunate One was dwelling near Kosambī, in Ghosita’s Monastery.

Then my Noble Mother, who was pregnant, approached the Fortunate One, and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, she sat down on one side.

The Discourse concerning Prince Bodhi - 58

While sitting on one side my Noble Mother said this to the Fortunate One: ‘Whatever this is, reverend Sir, in my womb, a boy or a girl, he goes to the reverend Gotama for refuge, and to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. Please bear in mind that he is a lay disciple who has gone for refuge from today forward for as long as he has the breath of life.’

At one time, dear Saṅjikāputta, ‘the Fortunate One was dwelling here amongst the Bhaggas in the Deer Park in Bhesakaḷā’s Wood on the Crocodile Hill.

Then my nurse, carrying me on her hip, approached the Fortunate One, and after approaching and worshipping the Fortunate One, she stood on one side.

While standing on one side my nurse said this to the Fortunate One: ‘This Prince Bodhi, reverend Sir, goes to the reverend Gotama for refuge, and to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. Please bear in mind that he is a lay disciple who has gone for refuge from today forward for as long as he has the breath of life.’

Now today, dear Saṅjikāputta, for a third time I go to the reverend Gotama for refuge, and to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks.

Please bear in mind that I am a lay disciple who has gone for refuge from today forward for as long as I have the breath of life.”

The Discourse to Prince Bodhi is Finished