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Māra Tajjanīya Sutta

The Discourse on the Rebuking of Māra | M 50/1:332-338

Theme: Moggallāna's past life as Māra Dūsī

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1 Sutta summary & highlights

The discourse opens with Moggallāna, while engaged in walking meditation, is assaulted by Māra who enters his bowels, making him feel uncomfortably drowsy so that he has to go into his lodging and lies down to rest [§§1-2]. Having ascertained that it is Māra who has caused his discomfort, he instructs him to leave his body. Māra leaves Moggallāna's body, but does not believe that Moggallāna could recognize him so quickly [§§3-4]. Moggallāna convinces Māra that he knows his every move [§§6-7].

Moggallāna then admonishes Māra by way of recounting how he himself had been **Māra Dūsī** in the time of the Buddha Kakusandha, and that he was Māra's uncle [§8]. The origins of the names of Kakusandha's two chief disciples follow [§§9-11]. Understandably, this story is to remind Māra of Moggallāna's own present position, alongside Sāriputta, as our Buddha's chief disciples, and also to impress on Māra, the extent of their spiritual powers.

Moggallāna goes on to tell Māra how Māra Dūsī takes possession of some people and have them revile the monks and vilify their meditation [§§12-13]. Kakusandha Buddha, knowing that Māra is behind all this, instructs the monks to go into retreat to cultivate the four divine abodes [§§14-15].

Failing to distract the monks, Māra then changes his tactic and have the people shower them with flattery. The Buddha then instructs the monks to practise another set of meditations to neutralize Māra's efforts [§§16-19]. Apparently, all this occur over a considerable duration, as we are told that those people who reviled the monks were reborn in the hells in due course, while those who showered praises on them were reborn in the heavens.

Māra, in desperation, then makes a boy hurl a stone at Kakusandha's right hand disciple, Vidhura, who is following him on his alms-round. Vidhura's head bleeds but he calmly keeps his pace. The Buddha, knowing this, then turns around and looks at Māra in his face as a gesture of disapproval. Māra is clearly shaken by the Buddha's action, dies right there and falls into a terrible hell [§§20-21]. The Commentary explains that Māra Dūsī's fate is the result of the fruiting of his own evil karma (MA 2:420 f). After all, Māra's relentless assaults on the monks now climaxes in drawing blood from an arhat.

Moggallāna then describes to Māra the terrible hellish form he assumes and the protracted sufferings in his hell [§§22-24]. The Sutta then switches to verses, namely, a long excerpt from **the Moggallāna Thera, gātha** (Tha 1187-1208). These verses recount Moggallāna's famous psychic powers, by way of knowledge of celestial life in the oceans [§25], by way of shaking the foundations of a monastic dwelling to discipline some wayward monks [§26], by way of doing the same to Shakra's celestial palace, and then admonishing him [§§27-28], by way of creating a radiance in Brahmā Baka's realm surpassing that heaven's own radiance [§29], by way of his ability to rise even above Neru, the cosmic mountain, and taming the fierce naga, Nandōpananda.¹

The point of all this litany of psychic victories of Moggallāna is to literally warn Māra that he does not know who he is dealing with! By the end of the discourse, we are told that Māra does learn his lesson, so that, "dejected," he disappears right there.

2 Significance of the Sutta

2.0 The Māra Tajjanīya Sutta is one of the most interesting and important of the canonical accounts in the mythology of evil in early Buddhism. It is an interesting story of an encounter between a prominent disciple of the Buddha and the Buddhist embodiment of pure evil, Māra. It is a very significant account in that it raises a few interesting questions, such as whether Māra is a historical ("real") person, or a psycho-

¹ MA 2:423; ThaA 3:177; Vism 12.103-120/398-402.

logical state, or merely a “myth” (a pious story). We will only briefly examine these points here in connection with the Sutta, as a more detailed study on Māra is found elsewhere (SD 61.8).

2.1 HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE. Historically, we know Moggallāna to be the Buddha’s left-hand monk, one of the two chief disciples, the other being Sāriputta, the Buddha’s right-hand monk.² Before his awakening, Moggallāna often faces drowsiness in his meditations.³ We learn from the Māra Tajjanīya Sutta that he has a bad attack of abdominal discomfort, as if it were filled with soaked beans [§2]. Evidently, Moggallāna still suffers from drowsiness and it still affects him physically (that is, it tires him), but since he is an arhat, it does not affect him mentally. His body may be unwell, but his mind is fully well.⁴

The Commentaries explain that Moggallāna feels that his belly is stiff, as if it were a heap of rocks (*thaddho pāsāṇa, puñja, sadiso*, MA 2:416). Elsewhere, this feeling is said to be like “wet (or soaked) beans” (*tinta, māso*).⁵ Moggallāna then, says the Māra Tajjanīya Sutta, “descended from the walkway, entered his dwelling and sat on the prepared seat” to rest and examine his condition.

From the Sutta, we can take the whole episode as that of Moggallāna experiencing the fruiting of a past karma. In the past, he was Dūsī Māra who had attacked Kakusandha Buddha’s disciples. This bad karma still produces some painful results when the conditions are right. Apparently, such an occasion is the one that is recorded in the Māra Tajjanīya Sutta.

The Suttas goes on to relate how Moggallāna discovers that it is Māra who has entered his body and is causing him abdominal discomfort. Even if we accept Māra as a real being, we know very well that Māra has no power over awakened beings, that is, the Buddha and the arhats, and those experiencing dhyana.⁶ And Moggallāna is an arhat, so that Māra has no power over his mind. However, apparently, Māra still is capable of hurting his body in some limited manner.

This much we can say in a historical manner, if we are only interested in the “facts” of the case. Historically, we can only ask whether this event really occurred or not. The fact is that Moggallāna feels a great discomfort in his belly, and could stop there without learning anything more. However, it is more interesting, even beneficial, if we are to examine this story from a psychological [2.2] and mythical angle [2.3], because then we can relate to Moggallāna’s experience in a spiritual way, that is, it helps our own self-understanding and personal development, and also something about the early Buddhist conception of evil.

2.2 PSYCHOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE. As we have noted, a psychological examination and mythical reflection on Māra’s attack on Moggallāna as related in the Māra Tajjanīya Sutta can be very beneficial in terms of our own self-understanding and personal development. Psychologically, we can say that Moggallāna deals with his pain by “not owning” it,⁷ by saying, “Come out, evil one! Come out, evil one! Trouble not the Tathagata, nor a disciple of the Tathagata. Bring not harm and suffering upon yourself for a long time.” [§3]

If we are meditating and some unwholesome mental state or distraction arises in us, we could well similarly deal with it by reflecting, “This distraction is not mine! Let go of the distraction!” In Moggallāna’s case, we could say that he is personifying the pain, that is, it is Māra who is causing it, and addressing the pain in an apostrophic manner (that is, addressing an absent person). This psychological explanation helps if we do not believe in Māra as a real existing being, like the devil of theistic religions.

² For their story, see DhA 1.8/1:83-114; also J 1:2-85; Mv 1.23 f = V 1:39-43; also Piya Tan, *The Buddha & His Disciples*, 2004: ch 5.

³ See esp **Pacalā S** (A 7.58/4:85-91) = SD 4.11, where the Buddha advises on how to overcome it.

⁴ See esp **Nakula, pitā S** (S 22.1/3:1-5) = SD 5.4.

⁵ DA 3:1044; MA 2:416; AA 4:157; VbhA 510.

⁶ For one in dhyana, “Māra is made blind, finds no foothold” (*andham akāsi māraṃ apadam*). ie, he is free (at least temporarily) from Māra’s power or influence (M 25.11-12/1:159 f, 26.34-42/174 f).

⁷ On not owning a pain, see eg **Amba, laṭṭhika Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 61.17/1:419) = SD 3.10.

2.2 MYTHICAL SIGNIFICANCE. On a mythical level,⁸ we can see Māra as a powerful evil being like the theistic devil or some mythical trickster.⁹ In the Māra Tajjanīya Sutta, we see Māra going into the belly of Moggallāna, who is walking in meditation, so that he is distracted from his practice, and has stopped his meditation to have a rest. Māra’s primary desire to ensure we remain in the samsaric world of the senses, over which Māra is said to have powerful influence.

Even though Māra has no real power over the Buddha and the arhats, he would still attempt to distract them in some way simply out of ingrained habit (that is, he is rooted in craving). Moreover, Māra, in his ignorance, does not know for certain that the arhats are totally immune to him. As recorded in the suttas of the Māra Saṃyutta (S 4)¹⁰ and the Bhikkhuṇī Saṃyutta (S 5),¹¹ for example, the saints always find Māra out, and so defeat him. The Māra Tajjanīya Sutta is one of the longest accounts of how a disciple of the Buddha deals with such a mischief of Māra’s.

Māra is always there ready to distract us when we aspire or plan to do something good or selfless, and each time we think a negative thought or commit a bad action, we are simply sending a message to Māra, as it were, that we are on his side. Māra resides in the Paranimitta,vasavattī heaven, the highest of the heavens of the sense-world, and where he is known as **Vasavatti**¹² (MA 1:33 f). In short, as long as we are unawakened, we carry around with us an existential monitoring device (like the one that prisoners or probationers wear), or some kind of lightning-rod, ready to attract and conduct Māra to take over our lives.¹³

That monitoring device, that lightning-rod, is, of course, our minds, especially when they are deficient or distracted. Māra lives amongst our thoughts, feeding on them and feeding them, like a hydra that grows by splitting itself up, and so proliferating themselves. We must therefore handle our thoughts with careful attention (*yoniso manasikāra*), regarding them as impermanent, unsatisfactory and not-self. To that extent, at least, Māra might lurk at our door, but the latch is well fastened.

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The Discourse on the Rebuking of Māra

M 50/1:332-338

1 [332] Thus have I heard.

Māra enters Moggallāna

At one time the venerable Mahā Moggallāna was dwelling in the deer park in the Bhesakaḷā forest in Bhagga country.

2 Now at that time, the venerable Mahā Moggallāna was walking up and down in the open.

At that time, too, Māra the evil one went into his belly and occupied the pit of his stomach.¹⁴

Then it occurred to the venerable Mahā Moggallāna,

“Now how is it that my belly feels so heavy, I feel as if it were filled with beans?”¹⁵

⁸ For a study on the significance of this, see **Buddhism as myth** = SD 36.1.

⁹ A famous example is that of Loki, the Norse god of evil and mischief: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Loki_b. See also **Māra** = SD 61.8.

¹⁰ S 4.1-25/1:103-127.

¹¹ S 5.1-10/1:128-135.

¹² The devaputra Vasavatti Māra attacks the Bodhisattva under the Bodhi tree just before the Great Awakening, in an attempt to prevent him from becoming Buddha (BA 287 f).

¹³ On how Māra’s power extends over the whole three-world universe, see **Brahma Nimantanika S** (M 49) @ SD 11.7(8.2).

¹⁴ Comy says that Māra, having entered his belly, went into his bowels, and sat inside the pit of the stomach (*kuchim pavisitvā antānam anto anupaviṭṭho pakkāsaya-t,ṭhāne nisinno*) (MA 2:416).

Then he descended from the walkway, entered his dwelling and sat on the prepared seat.

3 Having sat down, the venerable Mahā Moggallāna carefully directed his attention to himself.

The venerable Mahā Moggallāna saw that Māra the evil one had gone into his belly and occupied the pit of his stomach.

Seeing Māra the evil one, he said this to him,

“Come out, evil one! Come out, evil one! Trouble not the Tathagata, nor a disciple of the Tathagata. Bring not harm and suffering upon yourself for a long time.”

4 Then this occurred to Māra the evil one,

“This recluse does not know me at all. He does not see me when he says thus, ‘Come out, evil one! Come out, evil one! Trouble not the Tathagata, nor a disciple of the Tathagata. Bring not harm and suffering upon yourself for a long time.’

Even his teacher does not know me so fast. How can this disciple of his know me?”

Moggallāna knows Māra

5 Then the venerable Mahā Moggallāna said this to Māra the evil one,

“Even so, evil one, I know you. Do not think thus, ‘He does not know me.’

You are Māra the evil one. You, evil one, were thinking thus: ‘This recluse does not see me. He does not even know me when he says thus,

‘This recluse does not see me. He does not even know me when he says thus, ‘Come out, evil one! Come out, evil one! Trouble the Tathagata, nor a disciple of the Tathagata. Let not harm and suffering be upon yourself for a long time.’ Even his teacher does not know me so fast. How can this disciple of his know me?’”

6 Then this occurred to Māra the evil one,

“This recluse actually *knows* me. He saw me when he says thus, ‘Come out, evil one! Come out, evil one! Trouble the Tathagata,¹⁶ nor a disciple of the Tathagata. Let not harm and suffering be upon yourself for a long time.’”

Then, Māra the evil one [333] exited through the mouth of the venerable Mahā Moggallāna and stood against the door [with his throat stuck].¹⁷

7 The venerable Mahā Moggallāna saw Māra the evil one standing against the door [with his throat stuck]. Seeing Māra the evil one, he said this to the evil one:

“I see you there, too, evil one! Do not think, ‘He does not see me.’ You, evil one, are standing against the door [with his throat stuck].

¹⁵ “I feel as if it were filled with beans” (*mās’ācitaṃ maññe*, lit “it seems like a pile of beans”; *mās’ācita* = *māsa*, “beans” + *ācita*, “piled up”) (D 3:256, 287; A 8.80.7/4:333; Vbh 386,26), as describing one of the 8 types of indolence. Comys: His belly felt stiff, as if it were a heap of rocks (*thaddho pāsāṇa, puñja, sadiso*, MA 2:416); like “wet (or soaked) beans” (*tinta, māso*) (DA 3:1044; MA 2:416; AA 4:157; VbhA 510).

¹⁶ Comy: As he is the Buddha’s disciple, troubling him would be like troubling the Teacher himself (MA 2:416).

¹⁷ “Stood against the door [with the throat stuck],” *paccaggaḷe aṭṭhāsi*, which PED tr as “stuck in his throat,” resolving *paccaggaḷe* as *pratyak* (turn backward) + *gaḷa* (throat), which, I take as meaning “tongue-tied, at a loss for words,” as in the stock, “(sat) silent, dismayed, his shoulders drooping, hanging his head, glum, unable to speak [at a loss for words]” *tunhī, bhūtaṃ maṅku, bhūtaṃ patta-k, khandham adho, mukham pajjhāyantam appaṭibhānam viditvā*, D 3:53,26 = M 1:132,34 = 234,4 = 258,31 = 2:154,27 = 3:298,23 ≠ A 3:57,13 (*dukkhīm dumanam patta-k, khandham* +): see eg **Alagaddūpama S** (M 22.7/1:132) n = SD 3.13. Comy however glosses it as “stood against the door; *aggaḷa* means “door panel (or simply, door)” (*paṭi-aggaḷe aṭṭhasi, aggaḷam vuccati kavāṭa*), adding that Māra, “having gone outside, stood outside the leaf-hut, leaning on the door-panel” (*nikkhamitvā bahi, paṇṇa, sālāyam kavāṭam nissāya aṭṭhāsi*) (MA 2:416). *Kavāṭa* refers to the door itself, not the opening (which is usu *dvāra*). On *aggaḷa* and *kavāṭa*, see CPD svv.

Vidhura

8 Once upon a time, evil one, I was a Māra named **Dūsī**,¹⁸ and I had a sister named Kālī. You were her son. So you are my nephew.

9a Now at that time, evil one, the Blessed One, **Kakusandha**,¹⁹ the arhat, fully self-awakened one, has arisen in the world.

Now, evil one, the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, had the auspicious pair, Vidhura and Sañjīva, as his two chief disciples.

Evil one, of all disciples of the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, there was none equal to the venerable **Vidhura** in teaching the Dharma. That was how, evil one, in a manner of speaking,²⁰ that ‘Vidhura’ [“unequaled”] arose as a popular name for the venerable Vidhura.²¹

Sañjīva

9b On the other hand, evil one, the venerable **Sañjīva** was one who, resorting to the forest or the foot of a tree or an empty abode,²² without and difficulty attained the cessation of perception and feeling.

10 Once upon a time, evil one, the venerable Sañjīva was sitting at the foot of a certain tree, having attained the cessation of perception and feeling.²³

Some cowherds, shepherds, ploughmen, and travellers saw the venerable Sañjīva sitting at the foot of a certain tree, having attained the cessation of perception and feeling, and seeing him, they thought thus:

‘It is wonderful, sirs! It is marvellous, sirs! This recluse has passed away even while sitting. Come now, let us cremate him.’

Then, evil one, the cowherds, shepherds, ploughmen, and travellers gathered grass, wood and cowdung, piled them up around the body of the venerable Sañjīva, set fire to it, and left.

11 Now, evil one, when the night had passed, the venerable Sañjīva emerged from his attainment.²⁴ At dawn, having shaken his robe, he dressed himself, and taking bowl and robe, entered the village for alms.

¹⁸ Dūsī (Skt *dūṣī*; pp of *dūseti* or *dusseti*, “he corrupts, pollutes, ruins, defames”); hence, it means “the corrupter, the defiler,” or “the corrupted, the defiled.” Just as there is only one Buddha, each universe has only Māra, his anti-thesis; for details, see **Māra** = SD 61.8.

¹⁹ Kakusandha was the first Buddha of the 5 Buddhas to arise in our world cycle, an auspicious one (*bhadda,kappa*), followed by the Buddhas Koṇ’āgamaṇa, Kassapa and our own Buddha, Gotama; the future Buddha is Metteyya who is yet to come: see **The Buddha as myth** = SD 36.2(3.1).

²⁰ “In a manner of speaking,” *pariyāyena*. See **Pariyāya nippariyāya** = SD 68.2.

²¹ *Iminā kho evaṃ, pāpima, pariyāyena āyasmato vidhurassa vidhuro ’t’eva samaññā udapādi. Vidhura* (vi, “with-out” + *dhura*, “burden”) means “burdenless,” meaning “unequaled.” Comy explains it as “whose burden is removed” (*vigata,dhura*), adding that it also means that “he is without peer, unrivalled” (*aññehi saddhim asadiso ti attho*) (MA 2:417). Cf KhpA 128,9 & SnA 201,24 (as Vidhūra at J 495/4:361); or “unequaled” (Sn 996, glossed as *vigata,dhura, appaṭima*, “whose burden is removed, without a counterpart,” SnA 583); “clever, shrewd (of a shop-keeper” (A 3.20/1:116 = SD 69.7, perhaps = *vidura*, spelt *vidhūra*).

²² *Arañña,gato ’pi rukkha,mūla,gato ’pi suññāgāra,gato ’pi*. These are the 3 basic places recommended for forest meditation. A long list of secluded dwellings is “a forest, the foot of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a jungle grove, the open air, a heap of straw” (D 2.67/1:71) = SD 8.10.67. For details, see **Sati’paṭṭhāna S** (M 10.4b/1:56) = SD 13.3 & n.

²³ “The cessation of perception and feeling,” *saññā,vedayita nirodha*, ie, the attainment of cessation (*nirodha,-samāpatti*, S 14.11/2:151). The absolute necessary preconditions to this attainment are said to be the perfect mastery of all the 8 dhyanas as well as the previous attainment of non-return or arhathood. Comys say that this state may last for 7 days or even longer (MA 1:125, 152; AA 1:152; DhA 1:109; BA 163). Immediately at the arising of the state, however, there arises in the non-returner, the fruition of non-return (*anāgāmi,phala*), and in the arhat, the fruition of arhathood (*arahatta,phala*) (PmA 1:41, 321). Only an arhat or a non-returner can experience this cessation (A 5.166/3:193 f; Vism 23.18/702, 23.49/708). On emerging from cessation, they experience the fruit of their respective attainment (Vism 708). See **Ariya,pariyesanā S** (M 26.42/1:175) = SD 1.11 & Intro 4.1 & **Sappurisa S** (M 113) = SD 23.7 Intro (2). See also Brahmavamso, *Mindfulness, Bliss and Beyond*, 2006: 217 f.

Now, evil one, the cowherds, shepherds, ploughmen, and travellers saw the venerable Sañjīva, with bowl and robe, walking on his alms-round. Seeing him, they thought:

‘It is wonderful, sirs! It is marvellous, sirs! This very recluse who had passed away even while sitting has now returned to life!’²⁵ [334] That was how, evil one, in a manner of speaking, that ‘Sañjīva’ [“revived”] arose as a popular name for the venerable Sañjīva.²⁶

Dūsī Māra incites the people against the monks

12 Then, evil one, this occurred to Dūsī Māra:

‘Of these monks, virtuous and good by nature, I know not their comings and goings at all. What now if I were to take possession of the brahmin householders,²⁷ telling them,

“Come now, scold, abuse, revile and vex these monks, virtuous and good by nature.

Perhaps by your scolding, abusing, reviling and vexing, their minds would change, and so Dūsī Māra will find a chance.”²⁸

13a Then, evil one, Māra Dūsī took possession of the brahmins and householders, telling them:

“Come now, scold, abuse, revile and vex these monks, virtuous and good by nature. Perhaps by your scolding, abusing, reviling and vexing, their minds would change, so that Dūsī Māra will find an opportunity.”

Then, evil one, the brahmins and householders, having been possessed by Māra Dūsī, scolded, abused, reviled and vexed the monks, virtuous and good by nature, thus:²⁹

‘But these wretched baldheads, false ascetics, dark menials,³⁰ born of the feet of our Kinsman [Brahmā],³¹ with shoulders drooping, faces cast down, as if drugged [intoxicated],³² think thus:

²⁴ While one is within the attainment of cessation is not subject to injury or death. Visuddhi, magga qu this episode, adding that even his belongings, such as robes and seat are indestructible (Vism 23.37/706).

²⁵ *Acchariyam vata bho, abbhutam vata, bho. Ayaṃ samaṇo nisinnako ’va kālaṅkato, svāyaṃ paṭisañjīvitō ti.*

²⁶ *Iminā kho evaṃ, pāpima, pariyaṇena āyasmato sañjīvassa sañjīvo ’t’eva samaññā udapādi.* The name “Sañjīva” (*sam*, “endowed with, complete with” + *jīva*, “life”) means “endowed with life,” ie one who survives dangers and troubles to live on unaffected or better off (as is the case here). Hence, *sañjīva* has the senses: “revived, resuscitated, resurrected.”

²⁷ *Vrāhmaṇa, gahapatike*, also spelt as *brāhmaṇa, gahapati*, which is invariably a collective term, never an individual, ie, the landed community of the brahmin villages (*brāhmaṇa, gāma*) or fiefs (*brahma, deya*) as a whole. This classification is based on land-ownership (ie their economic function), who nonetheless still identified with the larger priestly class. As such, individually, theu (such as Kūṭa, danta, Caṅkī, etc) are still referred to simply as *brāhmaṇa*. See Chakravarti 1987:72 f.

²⁸ By causing defilements to arise in the monks’ minds, he will prevent them from escaping from samsara (MA 2:417).

²⁹ Comy explains in some detail how Māra, not wishing to create bad karma for himself by taking over the minds of the people, instead makes them see abnormal things and vision (*visabhāga, vatthum visabhāg’ārammaṇaṃ dasseti*). Thus, the brahmins and householders we made to see as if the monks are “committing” improper acts so that they are spurred to abuse the monks. Māra’s intention is to induce the monks to react in anger and dejection. (MA 2:418 f)

³⁰ *Ime pana muṇḍakā samaṇakā ibbhā kiṅhā bandhu, pādāpaccā. Ibbha* (D 1:90, 91; M 1:334; J 6:214), an obscure word: “a member of a king’s entourage; a vassal; dependent; wealthy” (DP).

³¹ “Born of the feet of our Kinsman” (*bandhu, pād’āpacca*): D 1:90; M 2:177; S 4:117. This pejorative alludes to the myth of the “primeval man” or Puruṣa (*puruṣa*), as told in Puruṣa Śūkta (hymn 10.90 of Rg.veda, c 1200 BCE). The brahmins (priests) issued forth from Puruṣa’s mouth, the kshatriya (warrior class) from his arms, the vaiśyas (business class) from his thighs, and the śudras (menial workers class) from his feet (text 13). The lower classes’ duty was to serve and support those classes higher than them. Brahmā is often taken as synonymous with the Puruṣa. Comys refer this brahminical myth on the origin of the 4 classes, and says that recluses were said to arise from Brahma’s soles (DA 254 = MA 2:418).

³² “As if drugged [intoxicated],” *madhuraka, jāta*, here and below only [§§13abcde]; cf Skt *madhula*, “spirituous liquor.” Comy glosses as “slothful, lazy” (*ālasiya, jāta*, MA 2418). Elsewhere, usu ~ *kāya(, gata)*, “the body, as if drugged [intoxicated]”: **D 16.2.14/2:99** = SD 9 (Ānanda’s reaction to the Buddha’s severe illness); **S 22.84/3:106** =

“We are meditators! We are meditators!”—so they meditate,³³ pre-meditate, over-meditate, out-meditate.³⁴

13b THE OWL. Just as an owl on a tree-branch, waiting for a mouse,³⁵ meditates, pre-meditates, over-meditates, out-meditates,

even so, these wretched baldheads, false ascetics, dark menials, born of the feet of our Kinsman [Brahmā], with shoulders drooping, faces cast down, as if drugged [intoxicated], think thus:

“We are meditators! We are meditators!”—so they meditate, pre-meditate, over-meditate, out-meditate.”³⁶

13c THE JACKAL. Just as a jackal [a hawk] seeking fish on a river-bank,³⁷ meditates, pre-meditates, over-meditates, out-meditates,

even so, these wretched baldheads, false ascetics, dark menials, born of the feet of our Kinsman [Brahmā], with shoulders drooping, faces cast down, as if drugged [intoxicated], think thus:

“We are meditators! We are meditators!”—so they meditate, pre-meditate, over-meditate, out-meditate.”

13d THE CAT. Just as a cat, beside a hole or a drain or dust-heap, seeking a rat,³⁸ meditates, pre-meditates, over-meditates, out-meditates,

even so, these wretched baldheads, false ascetics, dark menials, born of the feet of our Kinsman [Brahmā], with shoulders drooping, faces cast down, as if drugged [intoxicated], think thus:

“We are meditators! We are meditators!”—so they meditate, pre-meditate, over-meditate, out-meditate.”

13e THE ASS. Just as an ass unladen, standing beside a junction or a drain or dust-heap,³⁹ meditates, pre-meditates, over-meditates, out-meditates,

SD 32.12 (complaint by Tissa, the Buddha’s cousin, of his dissatisfaction; see S:F 3:90 n2); **A 5.56/3:69**) = SD 3.2 (a certain complains of drowsiness). **Juṅhā S** (U 4.4) records how Sāriputta is struck on his head by a passing yaksha, but on being asked, only says, “but my head hurt a bit” (*api ca me sīsam thokaṃ dukkham*) (U 4.4.5/40) = SD 24.9. Comy remarks: “But my head hurts, as if giddy and intoxicated” (*appamattakam madhuraka.jātakam viya me sīsam dukkhan ti*, UA 246 f).

³³ Comy glosses this as “they are thinking” (*cintayanti*, MA 2:418).

³⁴ *Jhāyino ’smā jhāyino ’smā ti patta,kkhandhā adhomukhā madhuraka,jātā jhāyanti pajjhāyanti nijjhāyanti apajjhāyanti*. Cf (**Dhamma,yogī Jhāyī**) **Mahā Cunda S** (A 6.46): “Meditate, consumed in meditation,” *jhāyanti pajjhāyanti* (A 6.46.2/3:355) = SD 4.6. Although each of these verbs—*jhāyati pajjhāyati nijjhāyati apajjhāyanti*—are not pejorative, they are used so as a phrase: **M 50.13/1:334** = SD 36.4 (pl); **M 108.26-27/3:13 f** = SD 33.5 (of a meditator troubled by mental hindrances); **A 11.10.3/5:323 f** = SD 82.5; Nm 149 f, cf 433. Comy says that the prefixes are meant to give the words increasing emphases (*upasagga,vasena vaḍḍhatāno*, MA 2:418). There is a wordplay on *pajjhāyanti*, “they burn up, are consumed (by grief, etc),” fr *pajjhāyati* (*pa + jhāyati*), (lit) to be in flames, to waste, decay, dry up; (fig) to be consumed or overcome with grief, disappointment or remorse (V 3:19, 4:5; D 2:22-27; A 2:214, 216, 3:57; J 3:534 *pajjhāti* mc); *nijjhāyati*, means “he thinks” in the sense of “being consumed (by thought, sorrow, etc), to fret” (V 1:359*; Nm 433); and *apajjhāyati* means “he is absorbed (in thoughts on account of ‘I am’-conceit).”

³⁵ *Seyyathāpi nāma ulūko rukkha,sākhāyaṃ mūsikaṃ maggayamāno. Uḷuka* means “an owl.” In the next three figures, we find *kotthu* (a jackal), *biḷāra* (a cat), and *gadrabha* (an ass).

³⁶ Comy: It is said that an owl (or a cat) would sit very still, as if profoundly peaceful, but when the time comes, it grabs the mouse violently (*so kira upasantūpasnto viya niccalo tiṭṭhati, sampatta,kāle mūsikaṃ sahasā gaṇhati*, MA 2:418). The import here is the meditators only appear to be still, but their minds are really all worked up, or outside of the meditation, they are excitable and violent people just like anyone else.

³⁷ *Seyyathāpi nāma kotthu nadī,tīre macche maggayamāno*. Comy says that *kotthu* can mean either “jackal” (*sigāla*) or “hawk” (*senā*) (MA 2:418).

³⁸ *Seyyathāpi nāma biḷāro sandhi,samala,saṅka,ḥīre mūsikaṃ maggayamāno*. Comys explains the cpd *sandhi,samala,saṅka,ḥīre* as follows: *sandhi* means “a house crevice (ie a small hole in the wall)” (*sandhi nāma ghara,sandhi*); *samala* means “a dung-heap, or a drain, or a gutter (or drain-pipe)” (*samalaṃ nāma gūtha,rāsi,niddhamana,panāli*); *saṅka,tīra* means “rubbish dump” (*saṅka,ḥīraṃ nāma saṅkāra-t,ṭhānaṃ*) (MA 2:418 = S 2:597). As in **Biḷāra S** (S 20.10.6/2:270) = SD 66.11. This is helpful, but my tr below [§13e] is more contextual.

even so, these wretched baldheads, false ascetics, dark menials, born of the feet of our Kinsman [Brahmā], with shoulders drooping, faces cast down, as if drugged [intoxicated], think thus:

“We are meditators! We are meditators!”—so they meditate, pre-meditate, over-meditate, out-meditate.”

Now, evil one, at that time, most of the humans when they died, with the body’s breaking up, were reborn in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell. [355]

Kakusandha Buddha exhorts the monks

14 Then, evil one, the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, addressed the monks, thus,

‘Bhikshus, these brahmins and householder are possessed by Māra Dūsī, thus:

“Come now, scold, abuse, revile and vex these monks, virtuous and good by nature. Perhaps by your scolding, abusing, reviling and vexing, their minds would change, so that Dūsī Māra will find an opportunity.”

Come now, bhikshus,⁴⁰

(1) with a heart of **lovingkindness**, he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with lovingkindness that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

(2) Then with a heart of **compassion** he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with compassion that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

(3) Then with a heart of **appreciative joy** he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with appreciative joy that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

(4) Then with a heart of **equanimity**, he dwells suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, he dwells suffusing the whole world with equanimity that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

The four divine abodes

15 Then, evil one, those monks, having been admonished thus, instructed thus, by the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty abode,⁴¹

³⁹ *Seyyathāpi nāma gadrabho vaha-c, chinno sandhi, samala, saṅka, fīre maggayamāno*. Here, I take *sandhi* contextually to mean “junction”: see §13d n on *sandhi, samala, saṅka, fīre*.

⁴⁰ This is an abridged “divine abodes” formula; for a fuller stock with similes, see **Te, vijja S** (D 13.76-79/1:250 f) = SD 1.8 (with liberation of mind); **Cūḷa Assa, pura S** (M 40.9-12/1:283) = SD 41.8. This pericope also at: **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.2.4/2:186 f) = SD 36.12; **Mahā Govinda S** (D 19.59/2:250) = SD 63.4; **Udumbarika Siha, nāda S** (D 25.17/3:49 f) = SD 1.4; **Cakka, vatti Siha, nāda S** (D 26.27/3:78) = SD 36.10; **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.1.11(6)/3:-223 f); **Vatthūpama S** (M 7.13-16/1:38) = SD 28.12; **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43.31/1:297) = SD 30.2; **Māra Tajjanīya S** (M 50.14/1:335) = SD 36.4; **Aṭṭhaka, nāgara S** (M 52.9-11/1:351) = SD 41.2 (= A 11.17), with the supramundane 2 fruits; **Jivaka S** (M 55.6/1:369) = SD 43.4; **Mākha, deva S** (M 83.5+7+9/2:76, 78, 82) = SD 60.8; **Dhānañjāni S** (M 97.32-35/2:195) = SD 4.9; **(Brahma, vihāra) Subha S** (M 99.24-27/2:207); **Anuruddha S** (M 127.7/3:-146) = SD 54.10; **Go, datta S** (S 41.6.5/4:296) = SD 60.4; **Saṅkha, dhama S** (S 42.8.17/4:322) = SD 57.9; **Pāṭaliya S** (S 42.13.46-51/4:352-358) = SD 65.1; **Mettā, saḥagata S** (S 46.54.6/5:115-118) = SD 10.11; **Venāga, pura S** (A 3.63.6/1:183) = SD 12.1; **Kesa, puttiya S** (A 3.65.15/1:192) = SD 35.4a; **(Nānā, karaṇa) Mettā S 1** (A 4.125.1-2/-2:129) = SD 33.9; **(Nānā, karaṇa) Mettā S 2** (A 4.126.2/2:130) = SD 33.10; **(Saṅgha) Uposatha S** (A 4.19.4/2:-184) = SD 15.10b; **Doṇa Brāhmaṇa S** (A 5.192.3/3:225) = SD 36.14; **Nav’āṅg’uposatha S** (A 9.18.10/4:390) = SD 59.13; **Dasama Gaha, pati S** (A 11.17.5-6/5:344 f) = SD 41.2 (= M 52), with the supramundane 2 fruits; Vbh 2:72. On the divine abodes with the elements, see **Vuṭṭha Vass’āvāsa S** (A 9.11.4/4:375 f) = SD 28.21. On how the divine abodes limit karma, see **(Karaja, kāya) Brahma, vihāra S** (A 10.206/5:299) = SD 2.10.

(1) dwelled with a heart of lovingkindness, suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, they dwelled suffusing the whole world with lovingkindness that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

(2) Then with a heart of compassion, they dwelled suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, they dwelled suffusing the whole world with compassion that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

(3) Then with a heart of appreciative joy, they dwelled suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, they dwelled suffusing the whole world with appreciative joy that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

(4) Then with a heart of equanimity, they dwelled suffusing one quarter, the second, the third, the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere and to everyone as well as to himself, they dwelled suffusing the whole world with equanimity that is vast, exalted, boundless, without enmity, without ill will.

Māra incite the people to honour the monks

16 Then, evil one, this occurred to Dūsī Māra,

‘Now, even though I am doing all this, I do not know at all the comings and goings of these monks, virtuous and good by nature. What if I now take possession of the brahmins and householders, thus:

‘Come now, honour, respect, esteem, and venerate these monks, virtuous and good by nature.

Perhaps by your honouring, respecting, esteeming, and venerating, their minds would change, so that Dūsī Māra will find an opportunity.’⁴²

17 Then, evil one, the brahmins and householders, having been possessed by Māra Dūsī, honoured, respected, esteemed, and venerated these monks, virtuous and good by nature.

Now, evil one, when it is time, most of the humans when they died, with the body’s breaking up, were reborn in a state of joy, in a happy destination, in heaven.

The four meditations

18 Then, evil one, the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, addressed the monks, thus,

‘Bhikshus, these brahmins and householder are possessed by Māra Dūsī, thus:

‘Now, even though I am doing all this, I do not know at all the comings and goings of these monks, virtuous and good by nature. What if I now take possession of the brahmins and householders, thus:

‘Come now, honour, respect, esteem, and venerate these monks, virtuous and good by nature. Perhaps by your honouring, respecting, esteeming, and venerating, their minds would change, so that Dūsī Māra will find an opportunity.’

Come now, bhikshus, dwell⁴³

- (1) reflecting on the impurities in the body,
- (2) perceiving repulsiveness in food,
- (3) perceiving non-delight in all the world,
- (4) perceiving impermanence in all formations!⁴⁴

⁴¹ The divine abodes are efficacious in warding off and transforming hostilities from others, and also for overcoming our own negative emotions. See **Karaṇīya Metta S** (Khp 9 = Sn 1.8) = SD 38.3.

⁴² Clearly, Māra’s intention here is to make the monks fall under the influence of honour and gains, so that they neglect their training, and would so be criticized by others.

⁴³ *Asubhānupassino kāye viharīmsu, āhāre paṭikūla,saññino, sabba,loke anabhirati,saññino, sabba,saṅkhāresu aniccānupassino*. Comy qu (**Vitthāra**) **Satta Saññā S** (A 7.46) which gives these 4 meditations as the antidotes, respectively, for (1) sexual desire, (2) craving for tastes, (3) attraction to the world, and (4) desire for gain, honour and praise (A 7.46/4:46-53) = SD 15.4. (MA 2:419 f)

19 Then, evil one, those monks, having been admonished thus, instructed thus, by the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty abode,

dwelled reflecting on the impurities in the body, perceiving repulsiveness in food, perceiving non-delight in all the world, perceiving impermanence in all formations.

Māra Dūsī falls into hell

20 Then, evil one, when it was morning, the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, having dressed himself, taking bowl and robe, with the venerable Vidhura as attendant recluse (following him), entered the village for alms.

21 Then, evil one, Dūsī Māra, having possessed a certain boy, picked up a stone, and hit the venerable Vidhura's head so that it was cut.

Then, evil one, the venerable Vidhura, his head bleeding, kept on [337] following close behind the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one.

Then, evil one, the Blessed One, Kakusandha, the arhat, fully self-awakened one turned around with the elephant look,⁴⁵ thinking,

‘This Māra Dūsī indeed knows no bounds!’

And with that look, evil one, the Māra Dūsī fell from that spot and was reborn in the great hell.⁴⁶

22 Now, evil one, there are three names for the great hell, that is:⁴⁷

the six contact-bases, ⁴⁸ or	<i>cha phass'āyataniko iti'pi</i>
piercing with spikes, ⁴⁹ or	<i>saṅku,samāhato iti'pi</i>
that which is (separately) felt for oneself. ⁵⁰	<i>paccatta,vedaniyo iti'pi</i>

Then, evil one, the hell wardens approached me and said,

‘Good sir, when the stake meets stake in your heart, then you will know, “I have been burning in the great hell for a thousand years!”’

23 For many years, evil one, I⁵¹ burned in that great hell, many hundred years, many thousand years.

For ten thousand years, I burned in the Ussada,⁵² suffering the feeling called ‘emerging from being burnt.’⁵³ My body, evil one, was of this form, that is, of a human, but my head was that of a fish.”

⁴⁴ Cf **Saññā S 1** (A 5.61) for 5 similar and related methods (incl perception of death, *marāṇa,saññā*, and of the disadvantages (of formations, DAṬ 3:335), *ādinava,saññā*) (A 5.61/3:79); also **Nibbidā S** (A 5.69/3:83), **Āsavak,khaya S** (A 5.70/3:83), **Gilāna S** (A 5.121/3:142 f), **Satisūpaṭṭhita S** (A 5:122/3:143).

⁴⁵ Comy explains that the “elephant look” (*nāgāpalokita*) refers to how the Buddha, without turning his head, turns his whole body to look. (MA 2:420). In terms of communication, this would be the most direct way to communicate with another, expressing a full openness and acceptance of the audience.

⁴⁶ Comy: Māra Dūsī did not die because of the Buddha's look (which is unheard of), but because the bad karma he had generated in harming a great disciple ripened and cut off his life there and then (MA 2:420 f). Psychologically, this is not difficult to understand, as Māra Dūsī's own passionately evil mind filled him with shock and fear upon seeing the Buddha's calm person. It is just like an overheated glass bowl might crack when it touches cool water.

⁴⁷ The great hell, also called Avīci (“waveless”) is described in great detail in **Deva,dūta S** (M 130.16-19/3:183 f) = SD 2:23.

⁴⁸ On these 6 senses here, see **(Sekha) Deva,daha S** (S 35.134/4:125 f) = SD 73.11.

⁴⁹ One of the tortures mentioned in **Mahā Ummagga J** (J 546/6:453).

⁵⁰ The psychological significance are clear here. We suffer hellish pains (1) on account of our sense-contact (ie our ability to sense things); (2) violently physical tortures and painful deaths are regarded as hellish pains; and (3) we face the full impact of the fruit of our own evil deeds on account of the our mental states and external conditions, ie karma and conditionality working together. On the psychological nature of the hells, see **Myth in Buddhism** = SD 36.1(4.3).

⁵¹ Moggallāna is still relating his personal experience.

⁵² *Ussada* (meaning “swelling”) is an adjunct to the 8 great hells. The J comy mentions 16 Ussada hells: **Mataka,-bhata J** (J 18/1:168, 174); **Āditta J** (J 424/3:473); **Ummadanti J** (J 527/5:226); also J 3:206, 4:3, 405, 493, 5:125, 6:2, 112. It is a place of great suffering (MA 2:422 = ThaA 3:172; J 4:403), where those who reneged on their promise of giving are born (J 4:405). Once, the Bodhisattva suffered in Ussada for 80,000 years for his cruelty as king of

The elder's verses (Tha 1187-1208)

<p>24 <i>Kīdiso nirayo āsi yattha dūsī⁵⁴ apaccatha vidhuraṃ sāvakaṃ āsajja kakusandhañ ca brāhmaṇaṃ Satam āsi ayo,saṅkū sabbe paccatta,vedanā īdiso nirayo āsi yattha dūsī apaccatha vidhuraṃ sāvakaṃ āsajja kakusandhañ ca brāhmaṇaṃ</i></p>	<p>What was the hell like wherein Dūsī burned for striking the disciple Vidhura and the brahmin Kakusandha?⁵⁵</p> <p>Tha 1187</p> <p>A hundred iron stakes there were, each causing its own pain. Like this was that hell⁵⁶ wherein Dūsī burned for striking the disciple Vidhura and the brahmin Kakusandha.</p> <p>Tha 1188</p>
<p><i>Yo etam abhijānāti bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi⁵⁷</i></p>	<p>The one who knows this, that monk who is the Buddha's disciple, that you, having assailed such a monk, dark one,⁵⁸ will go down into suffering.⁵⁹</p> <p>Tha 1189</p>
<p>25 <i>Majjhe sarassa⁶⁰ tiṭṭhanti vimānā kappa-ṭ,ṭhāvino veḷuriya,vaṇṇā rucirā accimanto pabhassarā accharā tattha naccanti puthu nānatta,vaṇṇiyo</i></p>	<p>In the middle of the ocean there stand mansions⁶¹ that last for an aeon, radiant with the beauty of beryl,⁶² shining and blazing bright. There the nymphs dance in crowds, following many a rhythm—</p> <p>Tha 1190</p>
<p><i>Yo etam abhijānāti bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja</i></p>	<p>The one who knows this, that monk who is the Buddha's disciple, that you, having assailed such a monk,</p>

Benares (J 6:2). Beings there have their tongues pierced with glowing hooks and are dragged about on a floor of heated metal (J 6:112). It is said that Revatī was once born into Ussada (VvA 223). See DPPN sv; BHSD: utsaha.

⁵³ *Apaccim vuttānimaṃ nāma vedanaṃ*. Comy says that this feeling, experienced in Ussada, in the great hell, is said to be more painful than in the great hell itself (MA 2:422).

⁵⁴ Tha 1187 has *dussī*.

⁵⁵ The term here is *demythologized* (ie not being born a brahmin based on the Puruṣa Śūkta myth) [§13a n on “Kinsman”] and used in an *ethicized* sense, referring to one who is pure and liberated through his own spiritual development. We see this ethical sense of *brahmin* in **Mahā Assa,pura S** (M 39.24/1:280) = SD 10.13; see also the last canto (26) of **Dhammapada** (Dh 383-423), entitled Brāhmaṇa Vagga.

⁵⁶ Comy here says that this hell is described in **Deva,dūta S** (M 130/3:178-187) = SD 2.23 (MA 2:422); for a briefer version, see **(Yama) Deva,dūta S** (A 3.35/1:138-142) = SD 48.10.

⁵⁷ On *nigacchasi* as future form, see Tha:N 123 n14.

⁵⁸ *Kaṇha* (Skt *kr̥ṣṇa*, “dark, black”) is an ancient epithet for Māra. After the Buddha, this epithet became the name of one of Hinduism's most popular gods, Krishna, said to be the 8th avatar of Vishnu. He appears prominently in Mahābharata (esp in the late adjunct, Hari,vaṃsa, 1st-2nd cent BCE), and became fully divinized in Bhagavad.gītā (5th-2nd cent BCE). See **Myth in Buddhism** = SD 36.1(1.7.1) & **Māra** = SD 61.8.

⁵⁹ As at Tha 25ab.

⁶⁰ Be Ce Ee *majjhe sarassa*; Tha:E *majjhe sāgarasmim*; Tha:Be *majjhe sarasmim*. Norman suggests preference for *majjhe sarasmim*: see Tha:N 286 n1190.

⁶¹ Comy says they are to be understood as in **Vimāna,vatthu** and **Peta,vatthu** (MA 2:422): see **Buddha as Myth** = SD 36.2(4.4).

⁶² “Beryl” (*veḷuriya*), or lapis lazuli, said to emit radiance: see eg **Saṅkhār'upapatti S** (M 120.17/3:102) = SD 3.4.

- kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi* dark one, will go down into suffering. Tha 1191
- 26** *Yo ve buddhena codito
bhikkhu,saṅghassa pekkhato
migāra,mātu,pāsādam
pād'aṅguṭṭhena kampayi*⁶⁵ Indeed, urged on by the Buddha,
as the community of monks watched,⁶³
the palace of Migāra's mother⁶⁴
he shook with his big toe— Tha 1192
- Yo etam abhijānāti
bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako
tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja
kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi* The one who knows this,
that monk who is the Buddha's disciple,
that you, having assailed such a monk,
dark one, will go down into suffering. Tha 1193
- 27** *Yo vejayantaṃ pāsādam
pād'aṅguṭṭhena kampayi
iddhi,balen'upatthaddho
saṃvejesi ca devatā* [338] Who, the Vejayanta palace,
shook with his great toe,
stiff with the psychic power,
arousing urgency in the deities⁶⁶ — Tha 1194
- Yo etam abhijānāti
bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako
tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja
kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi* The one who knows this,
that monk who is the Buddha's disciple,
that you, having assailed such a monk,
dark one, will go down into suffering. Tha 1195
- 28** *Yo vejayanta,pāsāde
sakkaṃ so paripucchati
api vāsava*⁶⁷ *jānāsi
taṇhā-k,khaya,vimuttiyo
tassa sakko viyākāsi
pañhaṃ puṭṭho yathā,tathaṃ* In the Vejayanta palace,
he asked Shakra:
“But, Vāsava, do you know of
the liberations through craving's end?”⁶⁸
Shakra answered him
truthfully the question he was asked⁶⁹ — Tha 1196
- Yo etam abhijānāti
bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako
tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja
kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi* The one who knows this,
that monk who is the Buddha's disciple,
that you, having assailed such a monk,
dark one, will go down into suffering. Tha 1197
- 29** *Yo brahmaṃ paripucchati
sudhammāyābhito sabhaṃ
ajjāpi ty-āvuso diṭṭhi*⁷¹ He who asked that Brahmā
before the assembly in Sudhamma Hall,⁷⁰
“Do you, avuso, even today have the view,

⁶³ This is an allusion to **(Pasāda,kampana) Moggallāna S** (S 51.14/5:269-271) = SD 27.8; also at Tha 1164, in different words. The incident is cited at SnA 337, in the introductory story to **Uṭṭhāna S** (Sn 332-334).

⁶⁴ See prec b.

⁶⁵ M & Tha so; ThaA reads *kampayi* text but gives *kampyim* in lemma, and explains it as *kampesim*.

⁶⁶ See **Cūla Taṇhā,saṅkhaya S** (M 37.11-12/1:253 f) = SD 54.8; cf **Gahaṭṭha Vandanā S** (S 11.18/1:234) = SD 86.2 & **Satthāra Vandanā S** (S 11.19/1:235) = SD 86.3.

⁶⁷ Be *vāsava*; Ce Ee Se *āvuso*.

⁶⁸ **Cūla Taṇhā,saṅkhaya S** (M 37.11-12/1:254 f) = SD 54.8.

⁶⁹ See **Cūla Taṇhā,saṅkhaya S** (M 37.12/1:254 f) = SD 54.8. See also Tha:N 287 n1196.

⁷⁰ Comy cites “Baka Brahma S” (MA 2:423) which some have misidentified with **Brahma Nimantanika S** (M 49/1:326-331). It actually refers to **Brahmā Baka S** (S 6.4/1:142-144) = SD 11.6. The question and answer are found in the sutta foll it, ie, **Aññatara Brahma S** (S 6.5), with the false view attr to Baka (S 6.5/1:145) = SD 54.3. Comy adds that the Sudhamma Hall here is that in the Brahma world, not in Tāvātimsa. Every deva-world has its own Sudhamma Hall. Furthermore, the whole Brahma-world is one glorious radiance. (MA 2:422 f)

<p><i>yā te diṭṭhi pure ahū</i> <i>passasi vītivattantaṃ</i> <i>brahma,loke pabhassaraṃ</i></p>	<p>the view that you held before? Do you see a surpassing radiance⁷² in the Brahmā world?"</p>	<p>Tha 1198</p>
<p><i>Tassa brahmā viyākāsi</i> <i>anupubbaṃ</i>⁷³ <i>yathā,tathaṃ</i> <i>na me mārisa sā diṭṭhi</i> <i>yā me diṭṭhi pure ahū</i></p>	<p>To that Brahmā answered one by one and truthfully,⁷⁴ “No such view do I hold, sir, the view that I held before.</p>	<p>Tha 1199</p>
<p><i>Passāmi vītivattantaṃ</i> <i>brahma,loke pabhassaraṃ</i> <i>so ’haṃ ajja kathaṃ vajjaṃ</i> <i>ahaṃ nicco ’mhi sassato</i></p>	<p>I do see the radiance in the Brahmā world passing away. How could I today say that I am permanent, eternal?”⁷⁵—</p>	<p>Tha 1200</p>
<p><i>Yo etam abhijānāti</i> <i>bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako</i> <i>tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja</i> <i>kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi</i></p>	<p>The one who knows this, that monk who is the Buddha’s disciple, that you, having assailed such a monk, dark one, will go down into suffering.</p>	<p>Tha 1201</p>
<p>30 <i>Yo mahā,neruno</i>⁷⁶ <i>kūtaṃ</i> <i>vimokkhena aphassayi</i>⁷⁸ <i>vanaṃ pubba,videhānaṃ</i></p>	<p>Who the great Neru’s peak⁷⁷ has touched by way of liberation,⁷⁹ the forest⁸⁰ of Pubba, videha,⁸¹</p>	

⁷¹ Tha 1198c has *ajjāpi te āvuso sā diṭṭhi* with syllables, but Be & M 50/1:338 as above. Norman suggests that “the *pāda* could be normalized by reading *kim* for *ajjāpi*, and assuming that *ajjāpi* was introduced to contrast with *pure*.” (Tha:N 287 n1198).

⁷² Comy says this refers to the effulgence of arhats like Sāriputta, Moggallāna, and Mahā Kassapa, as they are sitting in the Buddha’s own radiance in the Brahma-world, all having attained to the fire-element meditation (MA 2:-423); see **Aññātara Brahmā S** (S 6.5/1:145) = SD 54.3. In this context, *vītivattanta* is better rendered as “surpassing” rather than its usual sense of “passing away.”

⁷³ Tha has *pañhaṃ puṭṭho*, “the question asked.”

⁷⁴ *Anupubbaṃ yathā,tathaṃ*, as at Sn 600, but Tha 1199 (as in prec stanza) *pañhaṃ puṭṭho yathā,tathaṃ*, “(answered) truthfully the question asked.”

⁷⁵ (**Apara,diṭṭhi**) **Aññātara Brahmā Sutta** (S 581/6.5/1:145) = SD 54.3.

⁷⁶ Be *mahā,meruno*; Ce Ee Se Tha 1202 *mahā,neruno*.

⁷⁷ Also called Sineru, Meru, or Sumeru. Geographically, it is a mountain in Himavā (the Himalayas) and is said to be 80.000 yojanas wide (A 7.62.2/4:100) = SD 67.3). (A *yojana* is about 11.25 km or 7 mi; see DhA 2:13. On usage, see SD 12.2(2.2) n.) All birds settling there are said to become golden (J 3:247). It serves as the central mountain around which are the four great continents (*mahā,dīpā*) with their two thousand smaller islands (*dīpa*). Cosmologically, it is the axis mundi, the galactic hub of our universe (VA 206; SnA 2:443; Vism 206; cf Mvst 2:300; Divy 217), and every universe has one (A 3.80.3/1:227 f = SD 53.1, A 10.29.2/5:59 = SD 16.15). However, the two usages are not always distinct, and must be teased out from the context. It is said, eg, to be in itself a universe (*cakka,vāla*) (A 3.80.3/1:227, 10.29.2/5:59). Mythically,* on the top of Sineru is Tāvātimsa (SnA 2:485 f), and at its foot is the abode of the titans (*asura,bhavana*), measuring 10,000 leagues. The asura abode arose by the power of the asuras when they were overthrown by Shakra and the 33 gods from Tāvātimsa (SnA 1:201; DhA 1:272). See DPPN: Kāka,neru, Mahā,neru, Sineru, Meru. *Myth: on its meaning here, see **Myth in Buddhism** = SD 36.1. See also **Buddhist cosmology** = SD 57.10.

⁷⁸ Tha has *apassayi*, “has seen.” See Tha:N 284 n1172.

⁷⁹ Comy says this is liberation through dhyana (*jhāna,vimokkhena*, MA 423).

⁸⁰ Comys say “the forest [grove]” (*vana*) is Jambu,dīpa (India) (MA 2:423), calling it “the lord of the rose-apple forest” (*jambu,saṇḍassa issaro ’ti*) = Tha 822 (ThaA 3:176).

⁸¹ *Pubba,videha*, one of the 4 great continents, located to the east of Mt Neru (Jambu,dīpa or India is located to the south). See **Kosala S 1** (A 10.29) @ SD 16.15(3) & Sadakata 1997:26-38, 63 f.

<i>ye ca bhūmi,sayā narā</i>	and the men who sleep on the ground ⁸² —	Tha 1202
<i>Yo etam abhijānāti bhikkhu buddhassa sāvako tādisaṃ bhikkhum āsajja kaṇha dukkhaṃ nigacchasi</i>	The one who knows this, that monk who is the Buddha’s disciple, that you, having assailed such a monk, dark one, will go down into suffering.	Tha 1203
31 <i>Na ve aggi cetayati, aham bālaṃ ḍahāmī ti bālo ca jalitaṃ aggim āsajja naṃ sa ḍayhati</i>	Truly a fire does not intend: “I shall burn a fool.” It is the fool, having lit a fire, strikes it, who is burnt.	Tha 1204
<i>Evam eva tuvaṃ māra āsajja naṃ tathāgataṃ sayam ḍahissasi attānaṃ bālo aggim ’va samphusaṃ</i>	Even so, you, Māra, have assailed one thus come [the Tathagata], you will yourself burn yourself, just as a fool who touches a fire.	Tha 1205
<i>Apuññaṃ pasavī māro āsajja naṃ tathāgataṃ kiṃ nu maññasi pāpima na me pāpaṃ vipaccati</i>	Māra earns demerit, ⁸³ having assailed one thus come. Do you think, evil one, “My evil does not ripen”? ⁸⁴	Tha 1206
<i>Karoto cīyati pāpaṃ cira,rattāya antaka māra nibbinda buddhamhā āsaṃ mā ’kāsi bhikkhusu</i>	Doing this, you pile up ⁸⁵ evil, end-maker, that lasts for a long time. Māra, keep away from the awakened [the Buddha]. ⁸⁶ have no hopes in the monks.	Tha 1207
<i>Iti māraṃ atajjesi⁸⁷ bhikkhu bhesakaḷā,vane tato so dummano yakkho tatth ’ev ’antaradhāyathā ti</i>	So the monk rebuked Māra in the Bhesakaḷā forest. Then the yaksha, ⁸⁸ dejected, vanished right there. ⁸⁹	Tha 1208

⁸² This verse alludes to Moggallāna’s psychic power of moving through space like a bird (astral travel). On psychic powers, see **Miracles** = SD 27.5a, esp (5.1.8). Comys say that “the men who sleep on the ground” (*bhūmi,sayā narā*) refers to the other two continents, ie Aparā,goyana and Uttara,kuru, and allude to the conversion of the powerful naga-king Nandōpananda (MA 2:423; ThaA 3:177); MA further cites **Nandōpananda Nāga Damana Kathā**, “the talk on the taming of the naga Nandōpananda” (Vism 12.103-120/398-402 for details, which is one of most spectacular miracle stories of a monk (ie Moggallāna).

⁸³ Comy glosses *pasavī* (from *pasavati*, “he brings forth,” S 5:170) as *paṭilabhi*. “obtained” (MA 2:423).

⁸⁴ As in **Piṇḍa S** (S 482/4.18/1:114) = SD 61.13.

⁸⁵ *Karoto cīyati pāpaṃ*; vll *karoto te nijiyati*; *karoto casati*. Tha 1207 has *karoto te miyyate pāpaṃ* (Be read *cīyate* for *miyyate*): see Tha:N 288 n1207.

⁸⁶ “From the awakened,” *buddhamhā*, which (pace M:H 1:403 n8 & Tha:N 288 n1207) can refer to either the Buddha or any arhat. On meaning of *buddha*, see **Buddha as myth** = SD 36.2(2.1). It is more likely, from context, that Moggallāna is referring to himself (after all, whom Māra is harrasing), as noted at ThaA 3:189.

⁸⁷ Be Ce *atajjesi* (Tha 1208); Ee *aghaṭṭesi*; Se *tajjesi*. The preferred reading is *atajjesi*.

⁸⁸ Here *yakkha* is used negatively, and is often used in ref to Māra. Sometimes, it is used positively in ref to the Buddha (M 1:386; Sn 478, 875). The reason for this is the dubious state of the yaksha in the popular mind (similar to the way the Burmese view the nats or tutelary spirits today). See **Buddha as myth** = SD 36.2(5.9): yaksha.

⁸⁹ The last 2 lines are stock: M 1:338; S 1:122; Sn 449; Tha 1208cd; cf V 1:21, 22. The stock *dukkhī dummano tatth ’ev ’antaradhāyī ti* (“sad and dejected, he disappeared right there”) is often said of the exposed or defeated Māra, as in 22 of the 25 suttas of **Māra Saṃyutta** (S 4/1:103-127), ie excepting S 4.5+21+25; all the 10 suttas of **Bhikkhuṇī Saṃy** (S 5/1:128-135); Sn 449cd; V 1:21, 22.

— evaṃ —

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