

The Arahant and the Four Truths in Early Buddhist Discourse

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lecture 3

MĀ 24 – Discourse on the Lion's Roar

(Parallel to the *Sīhanāda-sutta* AN 9.11 / AN IV 373)

The venerable Sāriputta said: "Blessed One, someone who lacks mindfulness of the body in regard to the body might well slight a companion in the holy life just before setting out to journey among the people.

"I, however, am well equipped with mindfulness of the body in regard to the body. How could I slight a companion in the holy life just before setting out to journey among the people?

1) "Blessed One, it is just as a de-horned ox that is patient and docile, being thoroughly tamed, causes no harm wherever it goes, whether from village to village or from street to street.

"Blessed One, I am like this, having a mind like a de-horned ox. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

2) "... Blessed One, it is just as a son of an outcaste whose two hands have been cut off, being utterly humbled, causes no harm wherever he goes, whether from village to village or from town to town.

"Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like the son of an outcaste whose two hands have been cut off. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

3) "... Blessed One, it is just as the earth receives what is pure and what is impure, excrement, urine, snot, and spittle, without for this

reason hating it or liking it, without feeling embarrassed, ashamed, or humiliated.

"Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like the earth. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

4) "... Blessed One, it is just as water washes away what is pure and what is impure, excrement, urine, snot, and spittle, without for this reason hating it or liking it, without feeling embarrassed, ashamed, or humiliated.

"Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like that water. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

5) "... Blessed One, it is just as fire burns up what is pure and what is impure, excrement, urine, snot, and spittle, without for this reason hating it or liking it, without feeling embarrassed, ashamed, or humiliated. Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like that fire. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

6) "... Blessed One, it is just as the wind blows away what is pure and what is impure, excrement, urine, snot, and spittle, without for this reason hating it or liking it, without feeling embarrassed, ashamed, or humiliated.

Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like the wind. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

7) "... Blessed One, it is just as a broom sweeps away what is pure and what is impure, excrement, urine, snot, and spittle, without for this reason hating it or liking it, without feeling embarrassed, ashamed, or humiliated.

Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like a broom. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

8) "... Blessed One, it is just as a cleaning rag wipes away what is pure and what is impure, excrement, urine, snot, and spittle, without for this reason hating it or liking it, without feeling ashamed, or humiliated.

"Blessed One, I am like this; my mind is like a cleaning rag. Free from fetters or resentment, without ill-will or quarrel, I dwell pervading the entire world [with a mind] boundless, exalted, immeasurable and well-cultivated.

9) "... Blessed One, it is just as, when a jug with many cracks has been filled to the brim with grease and placed in the sun, the grease leaks and oozes out everywhere. If a man with [good] eyesight comes and stands beside it, he sees this jug of grease with many cracks, which has been filled to the brim and placed in the sun; and he sees the grease leaking and oozing out everywhere.

"Blessed One, I too, am like this. I constantly contemplate the impurity of this body with its nine orifices leaking and oozing out everywhere.

10) "... Blessed One, it is just as a joyful youth might bathe and perfume himself with fragrances, put on white, clean clothes, and adorn himself with jewels; and having shaved his beard and arranged his hair, might place flowers on his head. Suppose that three kinds of corpse are then garlanded around his neck — a dead snake, a dead dog, and a dead human being, discolored, bloated, foul-smelling, rotten, and oozing putrid fluids. That youth would feel embarrassed and ashamed and filled with utter disgust.

"Blessed One, I am like this. As I constantly contemplate the foul and impure parts of this body, my mind is embarrassed and ashamed and filled with utter disgust.

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similes in MĀ 24:

- 1) de-horned ox
- 2) outcast with hands cut off
- 3) earth
- 4) water
- 5) fire
- 6) wind
- 7) broom
- 8) cleaning rag**
- 9) jug with cracks
- 10) youth with corpse around neck

similes in AN 9.11:

- 1) earth (= 3 in MĀ)
- 2) water (= 4 in MĀ)
- 3) fire (= 5 in MĀ)
- 4) wind (= 6 in MĀ)
- 5) broom (= 7 in MĀ)
- 6) outcast girl (\approx 2 in MĀ)
- 7) de-horned ox (= 1 in MĀ)
- 8) youth with corpse around neck (= 10 in MĀ)
- 9) jug with cracks (= 9 in MĀ)

basic pattern in Sāriputta's reply:

similes that illustrate his boundless mental attitude

the relation to the boundless mind is no longer found in the case of the last two similes in both MĀ 24 and AN 9.11

simile of corpse around neck in AN 9.11 at AN IV 377 describes Sāriputta's attitude to his own body like this:

evam eva kho ahaṃ, bhante, iminā pūtikāyena aṭṭiyāmi harāyāmi jigucchāmi, "in the same way, venerable sir, I am repelled, horrified and disgusted with this putrid body."

In MĀ 24 Sāriputta states:

"I constantly contemplate the foul and impure parts of this body, my mind is embarrassed and ashamed and filled with utter disgust"

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main points:

how to react to false accusation:

- 1) on being asked, one should clarify what has really happened, ideally doing this in a way that does not involve a direct attack of the other
- 2) maintain an attitude of humility and patience, just as
 - an ox without horns
 - the four elements
 - a broom
 - etc.

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MĀ 25 – Discourse on Water Similes

(Parallel to the *Dutiya-āghātaṭṭivinaṇṇa-sutta* AN 5.162/AN III 186)

Sāriputta addressed the monks: "Venerable friends, I shall explain to you five methods for overcoming resentment ...

1) "Suppose there is a forest-dwelling monk, a wearer of rag-robles, who sees a discarded piece of cloth in a cesspool, stained by excrement, urine, snot, spittle, and other impurities.

"On seeing it, he holds it with his left hand, and spreads it out with his right hand; and wherever he sees portions that are not stained by

excrement, urine, snot, spittle, or other impurities, and that are without holes, he tears them off and takes them [to make a rag-robe]. "Similarly, venerable friends, if there is someone whose bodily actions are not pure, but whose verbal actions are pure, one should not pay attention to his impure bodily actions, but pay attention only to his pure verbal actions.

"This is how a wise person who, on seeing [such an individual], is aroused to resentment, ought to rid himself of [that resentment]."

2) "Suppose that, not far from a village, there is a deep pool [whose surface is] covered with water plants; and suppose that a man comes along who is oppressed by extreme heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion, caused by a hot wind.

"On arriving at the pool, he takes off his clothes, puts them on the bank, and enters the pool, pushing aside the water plants with both hands.

"He enjoys a pleasant bath, and rids himself of the oppression by heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion.

"Similarly, venerable friends, if there is someone whose verbal actions are not pure, but whose bodily actions are pure, one should not pay attention to his impure verbal actions, but should pay attention only to his pure bodily actions."

"This is how a wise person who, on seeing [such an individual], is aroused to resentment, ought to rid himself of [that resentment]."

3) "Suppose that, at a crossroads, there is a puddle of water in the depression made by an ox's hoof; and suppose that a man comes along who is oppressed by extreme heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion, caused by a hot wind.

"He thinks to himself: 'This ox's hoof print at the crossroads contains a little water. If I were to scoop it up with my hand or with a leaf, the water would become muddied, and I would not be able to rid myself of the oppression by heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion.

"Let me kneel down, with hands and knees on the ground, and suck up the water directly with my mouth.' He then kneels down, with hands and knees on the ground, and sucks up the water directly with

his mouth, and so is able to rid himself of the oppression by heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion.

"Similarly, venerable friends, if there is someone whose bodily and verbal actions are impure, but whose mind is pure to a small extent, one should not pay attention to his impure bodily and verbal actions, but should pay attention only to his mind, which is pure to a small extent."

"This is how a wise person who, on seeing [such an individual], is aroused to resentment, ought to rid himself of [that resentment]."

4) "Suppose a person is on a long journey and, having become ill on the way, is suffering greatly and exhausted. He is alone, without companion; the village behind him is far away and the village ahead has not yet been reached.

"Suppose [also] that a second person comes along and, standing to one side, looks at this first person ... And suppose that he helps [that sick traveler] to get through the wilderness and reach the [next] village, and there gives him excellent medicine and good, sustaining food, caring for him well.

"In that case, that person's illness would most certainly subside. That is to say, the second person is extremely compassionate toward the sick person, having a heart full of loving-kindness.

"Similarly, venerable friends, if there is a person whose bodily, verbal, and mental actions are all impure, then a wise person, on seeing him, thinks:

"This person's bodily, verbal, and mental actions are all impure; [but] let him not, on the breaking up of the body at death, go to a bad realm of existence and be reborn in hell, as a consequence of his impure bodily, verbal, and mental actions.

"If this [impure] person encounters a good friend, [he may] give up his impure bodily, verbal, and mental actions, and cultivate pure bodily, verbal, and mental actions.'

"In that case, through cultivating pure bodily, verbal, and mental actions, this [reformed] person will, on the breaking up of the body at death, go to a good realm of existence, be reborn in a heavenly realm. That is to say, this [wise] person is extremely compassionate toward that [impure] person, having a heart full of loving-kindness.

"This is how a wise person who, on seeing [such an individual], is aroused to resentment, ought to rid himself of [that resentment]."

5) "Suppose that, not far from a village, there is a pool, full to the brim with clear, beautiful water, its banks covered with verdant grass, and surrounded by flowering trees.

"Suppose that a man comes along who is oppressed by extreme heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion, caused by a hot wind. On arriving at the pool, he takes off his clothes, puts them on the bank, and enters the water. He enjoys a pleasant bath, and rids himself of the oppression by heat, hunger, thirst, and exhaustion.

"Similarly, venerable friends, if there is someone whose bodily, verbal, and mental actions are all pure, then one should constantly pay attention to his pure bodily, verbal, and mental actions.

"This is how a wise person who, on seeing [such an individual], is aroused to resentment, ought to rid himself of [that resentment]."

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similes in MĀ 25 and AN 5.162

- 1) bodily impurity: like dirty cloth, just take only what is clean
- 2) verbal impurity: like plants on water surface, just put it aside
- 3) bodily and verbal impurity: like water in the hoof of an ox, kneeling down take whatever little you can get from it
- 4) bodily, verbal and mental impurity: like sick person alone in wilderness: be compassionate
- 5) no impurity: like beautiful pool, enjoy

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main points:

- counter resentment by paying attention to what is positive in the other, instead of focusing on the negative
like taking clean parts from a dirty cloth

like moving away plants from the surface of water

like kneeling down to drink from the water in the hoof of an ox

- if nothing positive can be found, then this is an excellent opportunity for the development of compassion
- if nothing negative can be found, rejoice in the positive