

**From *In the Buddha's Words* by Bhikkhu Bodhi**

**Ch. III, 1: Not a Secret Doctrine** [AN 3: 129]

**2: No Dogmas or Blind Belief** [*Kālāma Sutta* AN 3: 65]

1. Introduction to the Selected Text

*by Bhikkhu Bodhi*

2. Main Translation of the Selected Text

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*Chatta Saṅgāyana*

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**1. Introduction (to the Selection, Ch III, 1 - 2).**

**By Bhikkhu Bodhi**

One of the most distressing predicaments any earnest, open-minded spiritual seeker might face is the sheer difficulty of choosing from among the bewildering diversity of religious and spiritual teachings available. By their very nature, spiritual teachings make claims upon our allegiance that are absolute and all-encompassing. Adherents of a particular creed are prone to assert that their religion *alone* reveals the final truth about our place in the universe and our ultimate destiny; they boldly propose that their path *alone* offers the sure means to eternal salvation. If we could suspend all belief commitments and compare the competing doctrines impartially, submitting them to empirical tests, we would have a sure-fire method of deciding between them, and then our ordeal would be over. But it isn't that simple. Rival religions all propose-or presuppose-doctrines that we cannot directly validate by personal experience; they advocate tenets that call for some degree of trust. So, as their tenets and practices clash, we run up against the problem of finding some way to decide between them and negotiate their competing claims to truth.

One solution to this problem is to deny that there is any real conflict 'between alternative belief systems. The adherents of this approach, which we might call religious universalism, say that at their core all spiritual traditions teach essentially the same thing. Their formulations may differ but their inner core is the same, expressed differently merely to accord with different sensibilities. What we need to do, the universalist says, when faced with different spiritual traditions, is to extract the kernel of inner truth from the pods of their exoteric creeds. From ground level our goals look different, but from the heights we will find the goal is the same; it is like the view of the moon from different mountain peaks. Universalists in matters of doctrine often endorse eclecticism in practice, holding that we can select whatever practices we prefer and combine them like dishes at a buffet.

This solution to the problem of religious diversity has an immediate appeal to those disillusioned with the exclusive claims of dogmatic religion. Honest critical reflection, however, would show that on the most vital issues the different religions and spiritual traditions take different standpoints. They give us very different answers to our questions concerning the basic grounds and goals of the spiritual quest and often these differences are not merely verbal. To sweep them away as being merely verbal may be an effective way of achieving harmony between followers of different belief systems, but it cannot withstand close examination. In the end, it is as little tenable as saying that, because they have beaks and wings, eagles, sparrows, and chickens are essentially the same type of creature, the differences between them being merely verbal.

It is not only theistic religions that teach doctrines beyond the range of immediate empirical confirmation. The Buddha too taught doctrines that an ordinary person cannot directly confirm by everyday experience, and these doctrines are fundamental to the structure of his teaching. We saw, for example, in the introductions to chapters I and 11, that the Nikayas envisage a universe with many domains of sentient existence spread out in boundless space and time, a universe in which sentient beings roam and wander from life to life on account of their ignorance, craving, and kamma. The Nikayas presuppose that throughout beginningless time, Buddhas without number have arisen and turned the wheel of the Dhamma, and that each Buddha attains enlightenment after cultivating spiritual perfections over long periods of cosmic time. When we approach the Dhamma we are likely to resist such beliefs and feel that they make excessive demands on our capacity for trust. Thus we inevitably run up against the question whether, if we wish to follow the

Buddha's teaching, we must take on board the entire package of classical Buddhist doctrine.

For Early Buddhism, all the problems we face in deciding how far we should go in placing faith can be disposed of at a single stroke. That single stroke involves reverting to direct experience as the ultimate basis for judgment. One of the distinctive features of the Buddha's teaching is the respect it accords to direct experience. The texts of Early Buddhism do not teach a secret doctrine, nor do they leave scope for anything like an esoteric path reserved for an elite of initiates and withheld from others. According to **Text III,1**, secrecy in a religious teaching is the hallmark of wrong views and confused thinking. The teaching of the Buddha shines openly, as radiant and brilliant as the light of the sun and moon. Freedom from the cloak of secrecy is integral to a teaching that gives primacy to direct experience, inviting each individual to test its principles in the crucible of his or her own experience.

This does not mean that an ordinary person can fully validate the Buddha's doctrine by direct experience without special effort. To the contrary, the teaching can only be fully realized through the achievement of certain extraordinary types of experience that are far beyond range of the ordinary person enmeshed in the concerns of mundane life. However, in sharp contrast to revealed religion, the Buddha does not demand that we *begin* our spiritual quest by placing faith in doctrines that lie beyond the range of our immediate experience. Rather than ask us to wrestle with issues that, *for us in our present condition*, no amount of experience can decide, he instead asks us to consider a few simple questions pertaining to our immediate welfare and happiness, questions that we *can* answer on the basis of personal experience. I highlight the expression "for us in our present condition," because the fact that we cannot presently validate such matters does constitute grounds for rejecting them as invalid or even as irrelevant. It only means that we should put them aside for the time being and concern ourselves with issues that come within the range of direct experience.

The Buddha says that his teaching is about suffering and the cessation of suffering. This statement does not mean that the Dhamma is concerned *only* with our experience of suffering in the present life, but does imply that we can use our present experience, backed by intelligent observation, as a criterion for determining what is beneficial and what is detrimental to our spiritual progress. Our most insistent existential demand, springing up deep within us, is the need for freedom from harm, sorrow, and distress; or, positively stated, the need to achieve well-being and happiness. However, to avoid harm and to secure our well-being, it is not sufficient for us merely to hope. We first have to understand the conditions on which they depend. According to the Buddha, whatever arises, arises through appropriate causes and conditions, and this applies with equal force to suffering and happiness. Thus we must ascertain the causes and conditions that lead to harm and suffering, and likewise the causes and conditions that lead to wellbeing and happiness. Once we have extracted these two principles the conditions leading to harm and suffering, and the conditions leading to well-being and happiness – we have at our disposal an outline of the entire process that leads to the ultimate goal, final liberation from suffering.

One text offering an excellent example of this approach is a short discourse in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* popularly known as the *Kālāma Sutta*, included as **Text III,2**. The *Kālāmas* were a people living in a remote area of the Ganges plain. Various religious teachers would come to visit them and each would extol his own doctrine and tear down the doctrines of his rivals. Confused and perplexed by this conflict of belief systems, the *Kālāmas* did not know whom to trust. When the Buddha passed through their town, they approached him and asked him to clear away their doubts. Though the text does not specify what particular issues were troubling the *Kālāmas*, the later part of the discourse makes it clear that their perplexities revolved around the questions of rebirth and kamma.

The Buddha began by assuring the *Kālāmas* that under such circumstances it was proper for them to doubt, for the issues that troubled them were indeed common sources of doubt and perplexity. He then told them not to rely on ten sources of belief. Four of these pertain to established scriptural authority (oral tradition, lineage of teaching, hearsay, and collections of texts); four to rational grounds (logic, inferential reasoning, reasoned cogitation, and the acceptance of a view after pondering it); and two to authoritative persons (impressive speakers and respected teachers). This advice is sometimes quoted to prove that the Buddha rejected all external authorities and invited each individual to fashion his or her own personal path to truth. Read in context, however, the message of the *Kālāma Sutta* is quite different. The Buddha is not advising the *Kālāmas* – who, it must be stressed, had at this point not yet become his own disciples – to reject all authoritative guides to spiritual understanding and fall back solely on their personal intuition. Rather, he is offering them a simple and pragmatic outlet from the morass of doubt and perplexity in which they are immersed. By the use of skillful methods of inquiry, he leads them to understand a number of basic principles that they can verify by

their own experience and thereby acquire a sure starting point for further spiritual development.<sup>1</sup>

Always underlying the Buddha's questions and their replies is the tacit premise that people are primarily motivated to act by a concern for their own welfare and happiness. In asking this particular set of questions, the Buddha's purpose is to lead the Kālāmas to see that, even when we suspend all concern with future lives, unwholesome mental states such as greed, hatred, and delusion, and unwholesome actions such as killing and stealing, eventually redound to one's own harm and suffering right here and now. Conversely, wholesome mental states and wholesome actions promote one's long-term welfare and happiness here and now. Once this much is seen, the immediately visible harmful consequences to which unwholesome mental states lead become a sufficient reason for abandoning them, while the visible benefits to which wholesome mental states lead become a sufficient motivation for cultivating them. Then, whether or not there is a life after death, one has adequate reasons *in the present* life to abandon unwholesome mental states and cultivate wholesome mental states. If there is an afterlife, one's recompense is simply that much greater.

## 2. Main Translation of Selected Text

### 1. Not a Secret Doctrine

“These three things, monks, are conducted in secret, not openly. What three? Affairs with women, the mantras of the brahmins, and wrong view.

“But these three things, monks, shine openly, not in secret. What three? The moon, the sun, and the Dhamma and Discipline proclaimed by the Tathagata.”

(AN 3:129; 1282-83)

### 2. No Dogmas or Blind Faith

Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was wandering on tour together with a large Saṅgha of monks when he arrived at a town of the Kālāmas named Kesaputta.<sup>2</sup> Now the Kālāmas of Kesaputta heard: “It is said that the ascetic Gotama, the Sakyān son who went forth from a Sakyān family, has arrived at Kesaputta. Now a good report about that master Gotama has been circulating thus: ‘That Blessed One is an arahant, perfectly enlightened, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, fortunate, knower of the world, unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of devas and humans, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One. Having realized with his own direct knowledge this world with its devas, Mara, and Brahma, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, with its devas and humans, he makes it known to others. He teaches a Dhamma that is good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end, with the right meaning and expression; he reveals a spiritual life that is perfectly complete and purified.’ Now it is good to see such arahants.”<sup>3</sup>

Then the Kālāmas of Kesaputta approached the Blessed One. Some paid homage to him and sat down to one side; some exchanged greetings with him and, after their greetings and cordial talk, sat down to one side; some saluted him reverentially and sat down to one side; some remained silent and sat down to one side. Then the Kālāmas said to the Blessed One:

“Venerable sir, some ascetics and brahmins who come to Kesaputta explain and elucidate their own doctrines, but disparage, debunk, revile, and vilify the doctrines of others. But then some other ascetics and brahmins come to

1. Among the criteria he proposes is the opinion of the wise, which shows that far from rejecting the opinions of others, the Buddha includes the opinions of the right sort of person among the standards for determining proper conduct. Other suttas tell us how we can judge who is truly wise; see **Text III, 4** and **Text III, 5**.
2. P explains that his town was located at the edge of a forest. Various groups of wanderers and ascetics would stop there to spend the night before crossing the forest. During their stay they would give talks to the Kālāmas, and the Kālāmas were thus exposed to a wide range of philosophical theories. The conflicts between the different views caused them doubt and perplexity.
3. The above is a stock phrase in the Nikāyas

Kesaputta, and they too explain and elucidate their own doctrines, but disparage, debunk, revile, and vilify the doctrines of the others. For us, venerable sir, there is perplexity and doubt as to which of these good ascetics speak truth and which speak falsehood.”

“It is fitting for you to be perplexed, O Kālāmas, it is fitting for you to be in doubt. Doubt has arisen in you about a perplexing matter. Come, Kālāmas. Do not go by oral tradition, by lineage of teaching, by hearsay, by a collection of texts, by logic, by inferential reasoning, by reasoned cogitation, by the acceptance of a view after pondering it, by the seeming competence of a speaker, or because you think, ‘The ascetic is our teacher.’<sup>4</sup> But when you know for yourselves, ‘These things are unwholesome; these things are blamable; these things are censured by the wise; these things, if undertaken and practiced, lead to harm and suffering,’ then you should abandon them.

“What do you think, Kālāmas? When greed, hatred, and delusion arise in a person, is it for his welfare or harm?”<sup>5</sup> – “For his harm, venerable sir.” – “Kālāmas, a person who is greedy, hating, and deluded, overpowered by greed, hatred, and delusion, his thoughts controlled by them, will destroy life, take what is not given, engage in sexual misconduct, and tell lies; he will also prompt others to do likewise. Will that conduce to his harm and suffering for a long time?” – “Yes, venerable sir.”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Are these things wholesome or unwholesome?” – “Unwholesome, venerable sir.” – “Blamable or blameless?” – “Blamable, venerable sir.” – “Censured or praised by the wise?” – “Censured, venerable sir.” – “Undertaken and practiced, do they lead to harm and suffering or not, or how is it in this case?” – “Undertaken and practiced, these things lead to harm and suffering. So it appears to us in this case.”

“It was for this reason, Kālāmas, that we said: Do not go by oral tradition....

“Come, Kālāmas. Do not go by oral tradition, by lineage of teaching, by hearsay, by a collection of texts, by logic, by inferential reasoning, by reasoned cogitation, by the acceptance of a view after pondering it, by the seeming competence of a speaker, or because you think, ‘The ascetic is our teacher.’ But when you know for yourselves, ‘These things are wholesome; these things are blameless; these things are praised by the wise; these things, if undertaken and practiced, lead to welfare and happiness,’ then you should engage in them.

“What do you think, Kālāmas? When nongreed, nonhatred, and nondelusion arise in a person, is it for his welfare or harm?” – “For his welfare, venerable sir.” – “Kālāmas, a person who is without greed, without hatred, without delusion, not overpowered by greed, hatred, and delusion, his thoughts not controlled by them, will abstain from the destruction of life, from taking what is not given, from sexual misconduct, and from false speech; he will also prompt others to do likewise. Will that conduce to his welfare and happiness for a long time?” – “Yes, venerable sir.”

“What do you think, Kālāmas? Are these things wholesome or unwholesome?” – “Wholesome, venerable sir.” – “Blamable or blameless?” – “Blameless, venerable sir.” – “Censured or praised by the wise?” – “Praised, venerable sir.” – “Undertaken and practiced, do they lead to welfare and happiness or not, or how is it in this case?” – “Undertaken and practiced, these things lead to welfare and happiness. So it appears to us in this case.”

“It was for this reason, Kālāmas, that we said: Do not go upon oral tradition....

“Then, Kālāmas, that noble disciple—devoid of covetousness, devoid of ill will, unconfused, clearly comprehending, ever mindful dwells pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, likewise the

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4. These ten inadequate criteria of truth can be grouped into three classes: (1) The *first* comprises the first four criteria, all positions based on reverence for tradition. Of these, (i) “oral tradition” (*anussava*) refers to the Vedic tradition, which according to the brahmins, had originated with the primal deity and came down orally through successive generations. (ii) “Lineage” (*paramparā*) signifies an unbroken succession of teachings or teachers. (iii) Hearsay” (or “report” *itikirā*) may mean popular opinion or general consensus. And (iv) “a collection of texts” (*piṭakasampadā*) refers to religious texts regarded as infallible. (2) The *second* set, also made up of four terms is comprised of four types of reasoning recognized by thinkers in the Buddha’s age; their differences need not detain us here. (3) The *third* set made up of the last two terms, refers to two types of personal authority: (i) the personal charisma of the speaker (perhaps including his external qualifications, e.g. that he is highly educated, has a large following, is respected by the king, etc), and (ii) the speaker’s status as one’s own personal teacher (the Pali word *garu* is identical with the Sanskrit *guru*). For a detailed analysis see Jayatilak2. *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, pp. 175-202, 271-75.

5. Greed, hatred and delusion are the three unwholesome roots. The aim of the Buddha’s teaching, Nibbāna, is defined as the destruction of greed (or lust), hatred and delusion. Thus the Buddha is guiding the Kālāmas towards the heart of his teaching.

second quarter, the third, and the fourth.<sup>6</sup> Thus above, below, across, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he dwells pervading the entire world with a mind imbued with loving-kindness, vast, exalted, measureless, without hostility and without ill will.

“He dwells pervading one quarter with a mind imbued with compassion ... with altruistic joy ... with equanimity, likewise the second quarter, the third, and the fourth. Thus above, below, across, and everywhere, and to all as to himself, he dwells pervading the entire world with a mind imbued with equanimity, vast, exalted, measureless, without hostility and without ill will.

“When, Kālāmas, this noble disciple has thus made his mind free of enmity, free of ill will, uncorrupted and pure, he has won four assurances in this very life.

“The first assurance he has won is this: ‘If there is another world, and if good and bad deeds bear fruit and yield results, it is possible that with the breakup of the body, after death, I shall arise in a good destination, in a heavenly world.’

“The second assurance he has won is this: ‘If there is no other world, and if good and bad deeds do not bear fruit and yield results, still right here, in this very life, I live happily, free of enmity and ill will.

“The third assurance he has won is this: ‘Suppose evil befalls the evil-doer. Then, as I do not intend evil for anyone, how can suffering afflict me, one who does no evil deed?’

“The fourth assurance he has won is this: ‘Suppose evil does not befall the evil-doer. Then right here I see myself purified in both respects.’<sup>7</sup>

“When, Kālāmas, this noble disciple has thus made his mind free of enmity, free of ill will, uncorrupted, and pure, he has won these four assurances in this very life.”

“So it is, Blessed One! So it is, Fortunate One! When this noble disciple has thus made his mind free of enmity, free of ill will, uncorrupted and pure, he has won these four assurances in this very life.

“Magnificent, venerable sir! Magnificent, venerable sir! The Blessed One has made the Dhamma clear in many ways, as though he were turning upright what had been overthrown, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the darkness so those with good eyesight can see forms. We now go for refuge to the Blessed One, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. Let the Blessed One accept us as lay followers who have gone for refuge from today until life’s end.”<sup>8</sup>

(AN 3:65;1188-93)

### 3. Pali Text Society Translations

Translated by F. L. Woodward

#### 1. Secrets (Not a Secret Doctrine)

‘Monks, there these three things which are practised in secret, not openly. What are they?

The ways of womenfolk are secret, not open. Brāhmins practise their chants in secret, not openly. Those of perverse views hold their views secretly, not openly. These are the three things.

Monks, there are these three things which shine forth for all to see, which are not hidden. What three?

The disc of the moon shines for all to see: it is not hidden. The disc of the sun does likewise. The Dhamma-Discipline of a Tathāgata shines for all to see: it is not hidden. These are the three things.’

#### 2. Those of Kesaputta (No Dogmas or Blind Faith)

1. Thus have I heard: On a certain occasion the Exalted One, while going his rounds among the Kosalans with

6. Here the Buddha introduces the four divine abodes (brahmavihāra) boundless loving-kindness, compassion, altruistic joy, and equanimity.

7. Mp: Because he does no evil and because no evil (i.e., suffering) will come to him.

8. This is a stock passage. “Going for refuge” by which a new convert acknowledges the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha as guiding ideals. In Buddhist tradition, it has become the procedure by which one formally declares himself a Buddhist.

a great company of monks, came to Kesaputta,<sup>9</sup> a district of the Kosalans.

Now the Kālāmas of Kesaputta heard it said that Gotama the recluse, the Sakyans' son who went forth as a wanderer from the Sakyan clan, had reached Kesaputta.

And this good report was noised abroad about Gotama, that Exalted One, thus: He it is, the Exalted One, Arahant, a Fully Enlightened One, perfect in knowledge and practice, and so forth.... It were indeed a good thing to get sight of such arahants !

So the Kālāmas of Kesaputta came to see the Exalted One. On reaching him, some saluted the Exalted One and sat down at one side: some greeted the Exalted One courteously, and after the exchange of greetings and courtesies sat down at one side some raising their joined palms to the Exalted One sat down at one side: some proclaimed their name and clan and did likewise; while others without saying anything just sat down at one side. Then as they thus sat the Kālāmas of Kesaputta said this to the Exalted One:

2. ' Sir, certain recluses and brahmins come to Kesaputta. As to their own view, they proclaim and expound it in full: but as to the view of others, they abuse it, revile it, depreciate and cripple it .<sup>10</sup> Moreover, sir, other recluses and brahmins, on coming to Kesaputta, do likewise. When we listen to them, sir, we have doubt and wavering as to which of these worthies is speaking truth and which speaks falsehood.'

3. 'Yes, Kālāmas , you may well doubt, you may well waver. In a doubtful matter wavering does arise. Now look you, Kālāmas . Be ye not misled by report<sup>11</sup> or tradition or hearsay. Be not misled by proficiency in the collections,<sup>12</sup> nor by mere logic or inference, nor after considering reasons, nor after reflection on and approval of some theory, nor because it fits becoming,<sup>13</sup> nor out of respect for a recluse (who holds it). But, Kālāmas, when you know for yourselves: These things are unprofitable, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the intelligent; these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to loss and sorrow, then indeed do ye reject them, Kālāmas.

4. Now what think ye, Kālāmas ? When greed arises within a man, does it arise to his profit or to his loss ?  
'To his loss, sir.'

' Now, Kālāmas, does not this man, thus become greedy, being overcome by greed and losing control of his mind, does he not kill a living creature, take what is not given, go after another's wife, tell lies and lead another into such a state (*tathattāya samādapeti*) as causes<sup>14</sup> his loss and sorrow for a long time ?'

'He does, sir.'

5. 'Now what think ye, Kālāmas? When malice arises within a man, does it arise to his profit or to his loss ?'  
'To his loss, sir.'

'Now, Kālāmas, does not this man, thus become malicious, being overcome by malice and losing control of his mind, does he not kill a living creature, take what is not given, and the rest, and lead another into such a state as causes his loss and sorrow for a long time ?'

'He does, indeed; sir.'

6. 'Now what think ye, Kālāmas? When illusion arises within a man, does it arise to his profit or to his loss ?'  
'To his loss, sir.'

'And does not this man, thus deluded . . . likewise mislead another to his loss and sorrow for a long time ?'  
'He does, sir.'

7. 'Well then, Kālāmas, what think ye ? Are these things profitable or unprofitable ?'

' Unprofitable, sir.'

'Are they blameworthy or not ?'

'Blameworthy, sir.'

'Are they censured by the intelligent or not ?'

'They are censured, sir.'

'If performed and undertaken, do they conduce to loss and sorrow or not ?'

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9. I have not met this name elsewhere.

10. *Opakkhiṃ karoti*, lit. deprive it of its wings. Text and Corny. *opapakkhiṃ*.

11. *Of. A. ii*, 191, where the same advice is given to Bhaddiya of the Licchavi; also *S.ii*, 115; *Nidd*, § 151; *Gotama the Man*, 274.

12. *Piṭaka-sampādanena*, gen. trans. 'on the authority of the Scriptures,' probably not yet written down, but memorialized and constantly added to. Comy. *piṭaka-tantiyā*.

13. *Bhavya-rūpatāya*. Comy. takes it as *bhabba-*.

14. Text *yaṃ as hoti*. This, says Comy., = *yaṃ assa hoti* (*yaṃ kāraṇaṃ tassa puggalassa hoti*).

‘They conduce to loss and sorrow, sir. It is just so, methinks.’

8. ‘So then, Kālāmas, as to my words to you just now: “ Be ye not misled by report or tradition or hearsay. Be not misled by proficiency in the collections, nor by mere logic or inference, nor after considering reasons, nor after reflection on and approval of some theory, nor because it fits becoming, nor out of respect for a recluse (who holds it). But, Kālāmas, when you know for yourselves: These things are unprofitable, these things are blameworthy, these things are censured by the intelligent, these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to loss and sorrow,-then indeed do ye reject them,” such was my reason for uttering those words.

9. Come now, Kālāmas, be ye not . . . so misled. But if at any time ye know of yourselves: These things are profitable, they are blameless, they are praised by the intelligent these things, when performed and undertaken, conduce to profit and happiness, – then, Kālāmas, do ye, having undertaken them, abide therein.

10. Now what think ye, Kālāmas ? When freedom from greed arises in a man, does it arise to his, profit or his loss ?’

‘To his profit, sir.’

‘ Does not this man, not being greedy, not overcome by greed, having his mind under control,— does he not cease to slay and so forth: does he not cease to mislead another into a state that shall be to his loss and sorrow for a long time ?’

‘He does, sir.’

11. ‘Now what think ye, Kālāmas ? When freedom from malice arises within a man, does it Arise to his profit or his loss ?’

‘To his profit; sir.’

‘ Does not this man, not being malicious, not being overcome by malice, but having his mind under control,-does he not cease to slay and so forth ? Does he not lead another into such a state as causes his profit and happiness for a long time ?’

‘He does, sir.’

12. ‘And is it not the same with regard to freedom from illusion ?’

‘Yes, sir.’

13. ‘Then, Kālāmas, what think ye ? Are these things profitable or unprofitable ?’

‘Profitable, sir.’

‘Are they blameworthy or not ?’

‘They are not, sir.’

‘Are they censured or praised by the intelligent ?’

‘ They are praised, sir.’

‘When performed and undertaken, do they conduce to happiness or not ?’

‘ They do conduce to happiness, sir. It is just so, methinks.’

14. ‘So then, Kālāmas, as to my words to you just now: “ Be ye not misled . . . but when ye know for yourselves These things are profitable . . . and conduce to happiness . . . do ye undertake them and abide therein,” such was my reason for uttering them.

15. Now, Kālāmas, he who is an Ariyan disciple freed from coveting and malevolence, who is not bewildered but self-controlled and mindful, with a heart possessed by goodwill, by compassion . . . possessed by sympathy, by equanimity (that is widespread, grown great and boundless, free from enmity and oppression), – such an one abides suffusing one quarter of the world therewith, likewise the second, third and fourth quarter of the world.<sup>15</sup> And in like manner above, below, across, everywhere, for all sorts and conditions, he abides suffusing the whole world with a heart possessed by . . . equanimity that is widespread, grown great and boundless, free from enmity and oppression. By that Ariyan disciple whose heart is thus free from enmity, free from oppression, untainted and made pure, by such in this very life four comforts<sup>16</sup> are attained, thus:

16. “ If there be a world beyond, if there be fruit and ripening of deeds done well or ill, then, when body breaks up after death, I shall be reborn in the Happy Lot, in the Heaven World.” This is the first comfort he attains.

“ If, however, there be no world beyond, no fruit and ripening of deeds<sup>17</sup> done well or ill, yet in this very life

15. For these Four ‘Sublime Moods’ cf. supra, text 183; K.S. v, 98 n.

16. *Assāsa*, lit. ‘quiet breathing.’ Cf. K.S. iv, 172.

17. *Dhammānaṃ*.? to read *kammānaṃ* as before.

do I hold myself free from enmity and oppression, sorrowless and well.”<sup>18</sup> This is the second comfort he attains.

“ Though, as result of action (*karoto*), ill be done by me, yet do I plan no ill to anyone. And if I do no ill, how can sorrow touch me ?” This is the third comfort he attains.

“ But if, as result of action, no ill be done by me, then in both ways<sup>19</sup> do I behold myself utterly pure.” This is the fourth comfort he attains.

Thus, Kālāmas, that Ariyan disciple whose heart is free from enmity, free from oppression, untainted and made pure, in this very life attains these four comforts.’

17. ‘So it is, Exalted One. So it is, Wellfarer. That Ariyan disciple . . . in this very life attains these four comforts<sup>20</sup> (*and they repeated all that had been said*).

Excellent, sir! We here do go for refuge to the Exalted One, to Dhamma and to the Order of Monks. May the Exalted One accept us as lay-followers from this day forth so long as life shall last, who have so taken refuge.’

## Pali Text of the Suttas

### 1. Not a Secret Doctrine

#### 9. Paṭicchannasuttaṃ

132. “Tīṇimāni, bhikkhave, paṭicchannāni āvahanti, no vivaṭāni. Katamāni tīṇi? Mātugāmo, bhikkhave, paṭicchanno āvahati, no vivaṭo; brāhmaṇānaṃ, bhikkhave, mantā paṭicchannā āvahanti, no vivaṭā; micchādīṭṭhi, bhikkhave, paṭicchannā āvahati, no vivaṭā. Imāni kho, bhikkhave, tīṇi paṭicchannāni āvahanti, no vivaṭāni.

“Tīṇimāni, bhikkhave, vivaṭāni virocanti, no paṭicchannāni. Katamāni tīṇi? Candamaṇḍalaṃ, bhikkhave, vivaṭaṃ virocati, no paṭicchannaṃ; sūriyamaṇḍalaṃ, bhikkhave, vivaṭaṃ virocati, no paṭicchannaṃ; tathāgatappavedito dhammavinayo, bhikkhave, vivaṭo virocati, no paṭicchanno. Imāni kho, bhikkhave, tīṇi vivaṭāni virocanti, no paṭicchannāni”ti. Navamaṃ.

### 2. No Dogmas or Blind Faith

#### 5. Kesamuttisuttaṃ

66. Evaṃ me suttaṃ—ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā kosalesu cārikaṃ caramāno mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena saddhiṃ yena kesamuttaṃ, nāma kālāmānaṃ nigamo tadavasari. Assosun kho kesamuttiyā kālāmā— “samaṇo khalu, bho, gotamo sakyaputto sakyakulā pabbajito kesamuttaṃ anuppatto. Taṃ kho pana bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ evaṃ kalyāṇo kittisaddo abbhuggato— ‘itipi so bhagavā . . .pe . . . sādhu kho pana tathārūpānaṃ arahataṃ dassanaṃ hotī”ti.

Atha kho kesamuttiyā kālāmā yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkamissa; upasaṅkamtivā appekacce bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce bhagavatā saddhiṃ sammodiṃsu, sammodanīyaṃ kathaṃ sāraṅīyaṃ vītisāretvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce yena bhagavā tenañjaliṃ paṇāmetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce nāmagottaṃ sāvetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu, appekacce tuṅḥbhūtā ekamantaṃ nisīdiṃsu. Ekamantaṃ nisinnā kho te kesamuttiyā kālāmā bhagavantaṃ etadavocun—

“Santi, bhante, eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā kesamuttaṃ āgacchanti. Te sakaṃyeva vādaṃ dīpentī jotenti, parappavādaṃ pana khuṃsenti vambhenti paribhavanti omakkiṃ, karonti. Aparepi, bhante, eke samaṇabrāhmaṇā kesamuttaṃ āgacchanti. Tepi sakaṃyeva vādaṃ dīpentī jotenti, parappavādaṃ pana khuṃsenti vambhenti paribhavanti omakkiṃ karonti. Tesāṃ no, bhante, amhākaṃ hoteva kaṅkhā hoti vicikicchā— ‘ko su nāma imesaṃ bhavataṃ samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ saccaṃ āha, ko musā”ti? “Alañhi vo, kālāmā, kaṅkhituṃ alaṃ vicikicchitūṃ. Kaṅkhanīyeva pana, vo thāne vicikicchā uppannā”.

“Etha tumhe, kālāmā, mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākārparivitakkena (1.0190), mā dīṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, kālāmā, attanāva jāneyyātha— ‘ime dhammā akusalā, ime dhammā sāvajjā, ime dhammā viññugarahitā,

18. Text *sukhiṃ*. Comy. *Sukhaṃ=sukitaṃ*..

19. I.e. whether inadvertently or intelligently.

20. Text 190 should read *sukata* in 1. 2 for *sakata*-.

ime dhammā samattā samādinna , ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantī”ti, atha tumhe, kālāmā, pajaheyyātha.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, lobho purisassa ajjhataṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?

“Ahitāya, bhante”.

“Luddho panāyaṃ, kālāmā, purisapuggalo lobhena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto paṇampi hanati, adinnampi ādiyati, paradārampi gacchati, musāpi bhaṇati, parampi tathattāya , samādapeti, yaṃ sa , hoti dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāya”ti.

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, doso purisassa ajjhataṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?

“Ahitāya, bhante”.

“Duṭṭho panāyaṃ, kālāmā, purisapuggalo dosena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto paṇampi hanati , adinnampi ādiyati, paradārampi gacchati, musāpi bhaṇati, parampi tathattāya samādapeti, yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāya”ti.

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, moho purisassa ajjhataṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?

“Ahitāya, bhante”.

“Mūḷho panāyaṃ, kālāmā, purisapuggalo mohena abhibhūto pariyādinnacitto paṇampi hanati, adinnampi ādiyati, paradārampi gacchati, musāpi bhaṇati, parampi tathattāya samādapeti, yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ ahitāya dukkhāya”ti.

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, ime dhammā kusalā vā akusalā vā”ti?

“Akusalā, bhante”.

“Sāvajjā vā anavajjā vā”ti?

“Sāvajjā, bhante”.

“Viññugarahitā vā viññuppasatthā vā”ti?

“Viññugarahitā, bhante”.

“Samattā samādinna ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattanti, no vā? Kathaṃ vā , ettha hotī”ti (1.0191)?

“Samattā, bhante, samādinna ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantīti. Evaṃ no ettha hotī”ti.

“Iti kho, kālāmā, yaṃ taṃ avocumhā ,– ‘etha tumhe, kālāmā! Mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākārparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe kālāmā attanāva jāneyyātha– ‘ime dhammā akusalā, ime dhammā sāvajjā, ime dhammā viññugarahitā, ime dhammā samattā samādinna ahitāya dukkhāya saṃvattantīti, atha tumhe, kālāmā, pajaheyyāthā’ti, iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ, idametaṃ paṭicca vuttaṃ.

“Ethā tumhe, kālāmā, mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākārparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, kālāmā, attanāva jāneyyātha– ‘ime dhammā kusalā, ime dhammā anavajjā, ime dhammā viññuppasatthā, ime dhammā samattā samādinna hitāya sukhāya saṃvattantīti, atha tumhe, kālāmā, upasampajja vihareyyātha.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, alobho purisassa ajjhataṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati hitāya vā ahitāya vā”ti?

“Hitāya, bhante”.

“Aluddho panāyaṃ, kālāmā, purisapuggalo lobhena anabhibhūto apariyādinnacitto neva paṇaṃ hanati, na adinnaṃ ādiyati, na paradāraṃ gacchati, na musā bhaṇati, na parampi tathattāya samādapeti, yaṃ sa hoti dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāya”ti.

“Evaṃ, bhante”.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, adoso purisassa ajjhataṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati ... pe... amoho purisassa ajjhataṃ uppajjamāno uppajjati ... pe... hitāya sukhāya”ti.

“Evaṃ bhante”.

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, kālāmā, ime dhammā kusalā vā akusalā vā”ti?

“Kusalā, bhante”.

“Sāvajjā vā anavajjā vā”ti?

“Anavajjā, bhante”.

“Viññugarahitā vā viññuppasatthā vā”ti?

“Viññuppasatthā, bhante”.

“Samattā samādinna (1.0192) hitāya sukhāya saṃvattanti no vā? Kathaṃ vā ettha hotī”ti?

“Samattā, bhante, samādinna hitāya sukhāya saṃvattanti. Evaṃ no ettha hotī”ti.

“Iti kho, kālāmā, yaṃ taṃ avocumhā– ‘ethā tumhe, kālāmā! Mā anussavena, mā paramparāya, mā itikirāya, mā piṭakasampadānena, mā takkahetu, mā nayahetu, mā ākārparivitakkena, mā diṭṭhinijjhānakkhantiyā, mā

bhabbarūpatāya, mā samaṇo no garūti. Yadā tumhe, kālāmā, attanāva jāneyyātha— ime dhammā kusalā, ime dhammā anavajjā, ime dhammā viññuppasatthā, ime dhammā samattā samādinna hitāya sukhāya saṃvattantīti, atha tumhe, kālāmā, upasampajja vihareyyāthā'ti, iti yaṃ taṃ vuttaṃ idametam paṭicca vuttaṃ.

“Sa kho so ,, kālāmā, ariyasāvako evaṃ vigatābhijjho vigatabyāpādo asammūlho sampajāno patissato , mettāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharivā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā tatiyaṃ, tathā catuttham, iti uddhamadho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantam lokam mettāsahagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyāpajjhena pharivā viharati. Karuṇāsahagatena cetasā ...pe... muditāsahagatena cetasā ...pe... upekkhāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharivā viharati, tathā dutiyaṃ, tathā tatiyaṃ, tathā catuttham, iti uddhamadho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantam lokam upekkhāsahagatena cetasā vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena abyāpajjhena pharivā viharati.

“Sa , kho so, kālāmā, ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṃkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭheva dhamme cattāro assāsā adhigatā honti. ‘Sace kho pana atthi paro loko, atthi sukata dukkaṭānaṃ , kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāhaṃ , kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjissāmī'ti, ayamassa paṭhamo assāso adhigato hoti.

“‘Sace (1.0193) kho pana natthi paro loko, natthi sukata dukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāhaṃ , diṭṭheva dhamme averam abyāpajjham anīgham sukhiṃ , attānaṃ pariharāmī'ti, ayamassa dutiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“‘Sace kho pana karoto karīyati pāpaṃ, na kho panāham kassaci pāpaṃ cetemi. Akarontam kho pana mam pāpakammaṃ kuto dukkham phussatī'ti, ayamassa tatiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“‘Sace kho pana karoto na karīyati pāpaṃ, athāham ubhayeneva visuddham attānaṃ samanupassāmī'ti, ayamassa catuttho assāso adhigato hoti.

“Sa kho so, kālāmā, ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṃkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭheva dhamme ime cattāro assāsā adhigatā hontī'ti.

“Evametam, bhagavā, evametam, sugata! Sa kho so, bhante, ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṃkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭheva dhamme cattāro assāsā adhigatā honti. ‘Sace kho pana atthi paro loko, atthi sukata dukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāham kāyassa bhedaṃ paraṃ maraṇā sugatiṃ saggam lokam upapajjissāmī'ti, ayamassa paṭhamo assāso adhigato hoti.

“‘Sace kho pana natthi paro loko, natthi sukata dukkaṭānaṃ kammānaṃ phalaṃ vipāko, athāham diṭṭheva dhamme averam abyāpajjham anīgham sukhiṃ attānaṃ pariharāmī'ti, ayamassa dutiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“‘Sace kho pana karoto karīyati pāpaṃ, na kho panāham— kassaci pāpaṃ cetemi, akarontam kho pana mam pāpakammaṃ kuto dukkham phussatī'ti, ayamassa tatiyo assāso adhigato hoti.

“‘Sace (1.0194) kho pana karoto na karīyati pāpaṃ, athāham ubhayeneva visuddham attānaṃ samanupassāmī'ti, ayamassa catuttho assāso adhigato hoti.

“Sa kho so, bhante, ariyasāvako evaṃ averacitto evaṃ abyāpajjhacitto evaṃ asaṃkiliṭṭhacitto evaṃ visuddhacitto. Tassa diṭṭheva dhamme ime cattāro assāsā adhigatā honti.

“Abhikkantam, bhante ...pe... ete mayam, bhante, bhagavantam saraṇam gacchāma dhammañca bhikkhusaṅghaṇca. Upāsake no, bhante, bhagavā dhāretu ajjatagge paṇupete saraṇam gate'ti. Pañcamam.