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Assignment 3 annotations

[*Grouped Sayings on the Truths*] Turning the Wheel of Truth (S V 420–424)\*

This is what I have heard. Once the Blessed One was staying in Benares, at Isipatana in the animal park. 421

There the Blessed One addressed the group of five monks: ‘Monks, there are two extremes that someone who has gone forth should not be involved in. Which two? The pursuit of enjoyment through indulgence in the pleasures of the senses—this is inferior, vulgar, common, ignoble, unbeneficial; and also the pursuit of

422

244 From the *Collection of Grouped Sayings*

physical exhaustion—this is painful, ignoble, unbeneficial. Not approaching either of these two extremes, the Tathāgata has thor- oughly understood that it is the middle way of practice that brings insight and knowledge, that conduces to peace, to direct knowledge, to awakening, to nibbana.

‘And what is this middle way of practice that the Tathāgata has thoroughly understood brings insight and knowledge, conduces to peace, to direct knowledge, to awakening, to nibbana? Just this eightfold path, namely, right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This is the middle way of practice that the Tathāgata has thoroughly understood brings insight and knowledge, conduces to peace, to direct knowledge, to awakening, to nibbana.

‘Monks, this is the noble truth of suffering:\* birth is suffering, old-age is suffering, sickness is suffering, death is suffering, being brought together with things disliked is suffering, separation from things liked is suffering, not to get what one wants is suffering; in sum, the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.

‘Monks, this is the noble truth of the cause of suffering: the craving for further existence that is associated with greed and satisfaction, that takes pleasure in this and that, namely, craving for the objects of the senses, craving for existence, craving for non-existence.

‘Monks, this is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering: the complete cessation and fading away of that very craving—giving it up, letting go, being free, not tied to it.

‘Monks, this is the noble truth of the practice leading to the cessa- tion of suffering: just this eightfold path, namely, right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

‘Monks, insight into things not previously heard came to me— knowledge, understanding, wisdom, light: the noble truth that this was suffering. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, this suffering must be fully understood. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, this suffering has been fully understood.

‘Insight with regard to things not previously heard came to me— knowledge, understanding, wisdom, light: the noble truth that this was the cause of suffering. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, this cause of suffering must be abandoned. Insight . . . came to

From the *Collection of Grouped Sayings* 245

me: as to this noble truth, this cause of suffering has been aban- doned.

‘Insight with regard to things not previously heard came to me— knowledge, understanding, wisdom, light: the noble truth that this was the cessation of suffering. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, this cessation of suffering must be directly experienced. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, this cessation of suffer- ing has been directly experienced.

‘Insight into things not previously heard came to me—knowledge, understanding, wisdom, light: the noble truth that this is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, the practice leading to the cessation of suffering must be cultivated. Insight . . . came to me: as to this noble truth, the practice leading to the cessation of suffering has been cultivated.

‘Monks, as long as my true knowledge and insight into these four noble truths in these three stages and twelve aspects\* was not com- pletely clear, I did not claim that—in this world with its gods and 423 human beings, its Brahmā and Māra, that in this generation with its ascetics and brahmans, its princes and peoples—I was one who had fully understood the unsurpassed perfect awakening. But as soon as my true knowledge and insight into these four noble truths  
in these three stages and twelve aspects was completely clear, then  
I claimed that—in this world with its gods and human beings, its Brahmā and Māra, that in this generation with its ascetics and brah- mans, its princes and peoples—I was one who had fully understood  
the unsurpassed perfect awakening. And the knowledge and insight came to me that my freedom was unshakeable; this was my last birth; there would be no further existence.’

This is what the Blessed One said. Gladdened, the group of five monks felt joy at the Blessed One’s words. And while this explana- tion was being given, there arose in the venerable Kondañña a vision of truth without blemish, untarnished: ‘The nature of everything whose nature it is to arise is to cease.’

And when the Blessed One had turned the wheel of Truth, the Gods of the Earth proclaimed: ‘This wheel of Truth that the Blessed has turned in Benares, at Isipatana in the animal park, no ascetic, nor brahman, nor god, nor Māra, nor Brahmā, nor anyone in the world can stop!’

246 From the *Collection of Grouped Sayings*

And when the Gods of the Four Kings heard their proclamation, they proclaimed: ‘This wheel of Truth that the Blessed One has turned in Benares, at Isipatana in the animal park, no ascetic, nor brahman, nor god, nor Māra, nor Brahmā, nor anyone in the world can stop!’

And when the Gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three . . . the Yāma Gods . . . the Contented Gods . . . the Gods who Delight in Creation . . . the Gods who Master the Creations of Others heard their proclamation, they proclaimed: ‘This wheel of Truth that the Blessed One has turned in Benares, at Isipatana in the animal park, no ascetic, nor brahman, nor god, nor Māra, nor Brahmā, nor anyone in the world can stop!’

Thus, at that moment, that instant, that second the proclamation reached the world of Brahmā, and this ten-thousandfold world system shook, trembled, and quaked. A boundless splendid radiance appeared in the world, surpassing the majesty of the gods.

Then the Blessed One breathed a sigh: ‘Kondañña has under- stood! Kondañña has understood!’

And so it was that the venerable Kondañña was known as ‘Kondañña Understood’.

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