

0.0.1 Hair of the Tail

1. At one time the Auspicious One dwelled at Vesali, in the Great Wood, at the Hall with the Peaked Roof. It so happened that in the morning, the venerable Ananda, having dressed, having taken bowl and robe, entered Vesali for alms food. The venerable Ananda saw many Licchavi boys in the training hall practicing archery, shooting arrows from afar through a very tiny hole, [the distance of] a palm tree, shot after shot without missing. Having seen this, it occurred to him: “Indeed these Licchavi boys are well-trained. Indeed these Licchavi boys are well-trained, in as much as they shoot arrows from afar through a very tiny hole, [at the distance of] a palm tree, shot after shot without missing.”

vālasuttam

ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā vesāliyaṃ viharati mahāvane kūṭāgārasālāyaṃ. atha kho āyasmā ānando pubbaṇhasamayaṃ nivāsetvā pattacīvaramā-dāya vesāliṃ¹ piṇḍāya pāvisi. addasā kho āyasmā ānando sambahule licchavikumārake santhāgāre upāsanaṃ karonte dūratova sukhumena tālacchiggalena asanaṃ atipāteṇte poṇkhānu-poṇkhaṃ² avirādhitam, disvānassa etadahosi: "sikkhitāva-time licchavikumārakā susikkhitā va-time licchavikumārakā. yatra hi nāma

¹vesāliyaṃ-sī 1, syā.

²pokhānupokhaṃ-syā.

2. Then the venerable Ananda, having wandered in Vesali for alms food, after his meal, having gone back after alms gathering, visited with the Auspicious One. Upon arrival, he bowed down to the Auspicious One and sat down to one side. Having sat down to one side, the venerable Ananda said this to the Auspicious One: "Here I, O Bhante, in the morning, having taken bowl and robe, entered Vesali for alms food. I, O Bhante, saw many Licchavi boys in the training hall practicing archery, shooting arrows from afar through a very tiny hole, [the distance of] a palm tree, shot after shot without missing. Having seen this, it occurred to me: "Indeed

dūratova sukhumena
tālacchiggalena asana-
naṃ atipāteṣṣanti
poṇkhānupoṇkhāṃ
avirādhanti. "

atha kho āyasmā
ānando vesāliyaṃ
piṇḍaya caritvā pac-
chābhantaṃ piṇḍa-
pātaṇṭikānto yena
bhagavā tenupasaṃ-
kami. upasaṃkami-
tvā bhagavantaṃ
abhivādetvā eka-
mantaṃ nisīdi. eka-
mantaṃ nisinno kho
āyasmā ānando bha-
gavantaṃ etadavoca:
"idhāhaṃ bhante,
pubbaṇhasamayāṃ
nivāsetvā pattaṇṭi-
vamaḍḍaya vesā-
liyaṃ piṇḍaya pāvisiṃ.
addasaṃ khvāhaṃ
bhante, sambahule
licchavikumārake
santhāgāre upāsa-

these Licchavi boys are well-trained. Indeed these Licchavi boys are well-trained, in as much as they shoot arrows from afar through a very tiny hole [at the distance of] a palm tree, shot after shot without missing.”

3. “So what do you think? O Ananda, which is more difficult or harder to achieve, shooting arrows from afar through a very tiny hole [at the distance of] a palm tree, shot after shot without missing, or that one might pierce the tip of a hair split into a hundred strands [with an arrow] tip?” Just this, O

naṃ karonte. dūratova sukhumena tālacchiggalena asanaṃ atipātente poṇkhānupōṇkhaṃ avirādhitam. disvāna me etadahosi, sukhitā vatime licchavi kumārakā. susikhitā vatime licchavikumārakā. yatra hi nāma dūrato va sukhumena tālacchiggalena asanaṃ atipātessanti poṇkhānupōṇkhaṃ avirādhitanti”.

taṃ kiṃ maññasi ānanda, katamaṃ nukho dukkarataraṃ vā durabhisambhavataraṃ vā, yo ca dūratova sukhumena tālacchiggalena asanaṃ atipāteyya poṇkhānupōṇkhaṃ avirādhitam. yo vā sa-

Bhante, is clearly more difficult and harder to achieve: that one might pierce the tip of a hair split into a hundred strands [with an arrow] tip." Now, O Ananda, they pierce what is harder to pierce, those who pierce as it has come to be: "This is suffering"; who pierce as it has come to be: "This is the origination of suffering"; who pierce as it has come to be: "This is the cessation of suffering"; who pierce as it has come to be: "This is the path leading to the cessation of suffering."

4. Therefore, O Ananda, an endeavour should be made [to realize]: "This is suffering." An endeavour should

tadhā³ bhinnassa vā-
lassa koṭiyā koṭim
paṭivijjhayyāti? eta-
deva bhante, dukka-
rataram ceva dura-
bhisambhavataram
ca yo vā satadhā
bhinnassa vālassa
koṭiyā koṭim paṭivij-
jhayyāti. atha kho
te ānanda⁴ duppa-
ṭivijjhataram paṭi-
vijjhanti ye⁵ "idaṃ
dukkha"nti yathā-
bhūtaṃ paṭivijjhanti⁶
"ayaṃ dukkhasamu-
dayoti" yathābhūtaṃ
paṭivijjhanti "ayaṃ duk-
khanirodhagāminī
paṭipadā"ti, yathā-
bhūtaṃ paṭivijjhanti.

³sattadhā-machasaṃ, syā,
aṭṭhakathā. ■

⁴atha kho ānanda-machasaṃ. ■

⁵yo-syā, sī 1, 2. ■

⁶paṭivijjhanti-syā, sī 1, 2. ■

be made [to realize]: “This is the origination of suffering.” An endeavour should be made [to realize]: “This is the cessation of suffering.” An endeavour should be made [to realize]: “This is the path leading to the cessation of suffering.”

tasmātiha ānanda,
 "idaṃ dukkha"nti
 yogo karaṇīyo "ayaṃ
 dukkhasamudayoti"yogo
 karaṇīyo "ayaṃ duk-
 khaṇirodhoti" yogo
 karaṇīyo "ayaṃ duk-
 khaṇirodhagāminī
 paṭipadā"ti yogo ka-
 raṇīyoti.

