

0.0.1 The Net of Brahma

1. Thus was heard by me. At one time the Auspicious One entered upon the high road between Rajagaha and Nalanda with a large Sangha of bhikkhus, with about five hundred bhikkhus. Suppiya, the wanderer, had also entered upon the high road between Rajagaha and Nalanda with his pupil, the brahmin youth Brahmadata. There, Suppiya the wanderer, in various ways, only spoke in dispraise of the Buddha, spoke in dispraise of the Dhamma, spoke in dispraise of the Sangha. However, Suppiya, the wanderer's pupil, the brahmin youth Brahmadata, in various ways, spoke in praise of the Buddha, spoke in praise of the Dhamma, spoke in praise of the Sangha. Thus indeed, both teacher and pupil spoke directly opposing one another as they followed behind the Auspicious One and the Bhikkhu Sangha.

2. Later on, the Auspicious One entered the King's Cottage at Ambalatthika with the Bhikkhu Sangha to spend one night. Suppiya, the wanderer also entered the King's Cottage at Ambalatthika with his pupil, brahmin youth Brahmadata, to spend one night. There too, Suppiya the wanderer, in various ways, only spoke in dispraise of the Buddha, spoke in dispraise of the Dhamma, spoke in dispraise of the Sangha. However, Suppiya, the wandering ascetic's pupil, the brahmin youth Brahmadata, in various ways, spoke in praise of the Buddha, spoke in praise of the Dhamma, spoke in praise of the Sangha. Thus indeed, both teacher and pupil spoke directly opposing

one another as the dwelled.

3. Then, as the night [turned to] early morning, many bhikkhus having arisen, having assembled at the round pavilion, this topic of conversation arose as they settled: “It is marvellous, O friends. It is unprecedented, O friends, in so far as the Auspicious One who knows and sees, the Arahant, the rightly self-awakened One, has well known the diverse dispositions of beings. Indeed, this Suppiya the wanderer, in various ways, spoke in dispraise of the Buddha, spoke in dispraise of the Dhamma, spoke in dispraise of the Sangha. However, Suppiya the wanderer’s pupil, the brahmin youth Brahmadatta, in various ways, spoke in praise of the Buddha, spoke in praise of the Dhamma, spoke in praise of the Sangha. Thus indeed, both teacher and pupil spoke directly opposing one another as they followed behind the Auspicious One and the Bhikkhu Sangha.”

4. Then the Auspicious One, having known the topic of conversation of those bhikkhus, by which [way led to] the round pavilion, by that way he approached. Having approached, he sat down on a prepared seat. Having sat down, the Auspicious One addressed the bhikkhus: “What form of conversation, O bhikkhus, were you having now as you have settled here, having assembled? And what was the talk underway that was left unfinished by you?” When thus was said, those bhikkhus said this to the Auspicious One: “Here, O Bhante, as the night turned

to early morning, we, having arisen, having assembled at the round pavilion, this topic of conversation arose as we settled: “It is marvellous, O friends. It is unprecedented, O friends, in so far as the Auspicious One who knows and sees, the Arahant, the rightly self-awakened One, has well known the diverse dispositions of beings. Indeed, this Suppiya the wanderer, in various ways, spoke in dispraise of the Buddha, spoke in dispraise of the Dhamma, spoke in dispraise of the Sangha. However, Suppiya the wanderer’s pupil, the brahmin youth Brahmadata, in various ways, spoke in praise of the Buddha, spoke in praise of the Dhamma, spoke in praise of the Sangha. Thus indeed, both teacher and pupil spoke directly opposing one another as they followed behind the Auspicious One and the Bhikkhu Sangha.” This, O Bhante, was the talk underway that was left unfinished by us. Then the Auspicious One arrived.”

5. “Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in dispraise of me, or should speak in dispraise of the Dhamma, or should speak in dispraise of the Sangha, no malice, no discontentment, no resentment in the mind is to be done by you. Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in dispraise of me, or should speak in dispraise of the Dhamma, or should speak in dispraise of the Sangha. Therein if there is annoyance or displeasure in you, that is a hindrance for only you. Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in dispraise of me, or should speak in dispraise of the Dhamma, or should speak

in dispraise of the Sangha. Therein if there is annoyance or displeasure in you, would you understand of others [what is] well-spoken and badly-spoken?" "Certainly not, Bhante." Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in dispraise of me, or should speak in dispraise of the Dhamma, or should speak in dispraise of the Sangha. Therein, you should unravel the false from the false: "Such as this is false. Such as this is untrue. But there is not this in us. On the contrary, this is not to be found in us."

6. "Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in praise of me, or should speak in praise of the Dhamma, or should speak in praise of the Sangha, no rejoicing, no mental pleasure, no elation in the mind is to be done. Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in praise of me, or should speak in praise of the Dhamma, or should speak in praise of the Sangha. Therein if there is rejoicing or gladness in you, that is a hindrance for only you. Let this not be, O bhikkhus, if others should speak in praise of me, or should speak in praise of the Dhamma, or should speak in praise of the Sangha. Therein, you should acknowledge the truth from the truth: "Such as this is true. Such as this is correct. And there is this in us. And still, this is to be found in us."

7. "But this, O bhikkhus, is a trifling, insignificant, mere virtue, by which one who is a puthujjana might say when speaking in praise of the Tathagata." "And which, O

bhikkhus, is that trifling, insignificant, mere virtue by which one who is a puthujjana might say when speaking in praise of the Tathagata?”

8. “Having abandoned the killing of living beings, the samana Gotama abstains from the killing of living beings. Having buried the rod, having buried the sword, he dwells conscientious, with kindness and sympathy, compassionate for the welfare for all living beings.” It is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

9. “Having abandoned the taking of what is not given, the samana Gotama abstains from taking what is not given, accepting what is given, expecting what is given. By not theiving, he dwells having become pure himself.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

10. “Having abandoned unchastity, the samana Gotama is a celibate one, living apart, abstaining from sexual intercourse, the villager’s conduct.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

11. “Having abandoned false speech, the samana Gotama abstains from false speech. He speaks the truth, he is dependable, reliable, trustworthy, not a deceiver

of the world.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

12. “Having abandoned divisive speech, the samana Gotama abstains from divisive speech. Having heard from here, he does not tell there to divide these [from those], or having heard from there, he does not tell here to divide those [from these]. Thus is he, a reconciler of the divided, a bestower of togetherness. He delights in harmony, is delighted with harmony, rejoices in harmony, utters speech that creates harmony.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

13. “Having abandoned harsh speech, the samana Gotama abstains from harsh speech. That speech which is gentle, pleasant to the ear, endearing, heartwarming, polite, pleasing to many, agreeable to many, that form of speech he utters.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

14. “Having abandoned senseless prattle, the samana Gotama, abstains from senseless prattle. He speaks at the proper time, [speech that is] truthful, meaningful, in accordance with the Dhamma, in accordance with the Vinaya, speech worth treasuring, at the proper time he

utters speech that is reasonable, speech worth remembering, speech connected with profit.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

15. “The samana Gotama abstains from injuring seed life and vegetation. The samana Gotama eats his meal in one sitting, refraining from eating in the evening, abstaining from eating outside the proper time. The samana Gotama abstains from dancing, singing, music and watching shows. The samana Gotama abstains from the establishment of wearing adornments and decorations with garlands, fragrances and ointments. The samana Gotama abstains from high and large beds and seats. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting gold and silver. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting uncooked grains. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting uncooked meat. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting women and girls. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting male and female slaves. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting goat and sheep. The samana Gotama abstains from accepting chicken and pigs. The samana Gotama abstains from the acquisition of elephants, cows, horses and mares. The samana Gotama abstains from the acquisition of fields and lands. The samana Gotama abstains from the practice of going on errands and going as a messenger. The samana Gotama abstains from buying and selling. The samana Gotama abstains from dealing in false weighing, dealing

in fake metals, dealing in false measures, bribery, cheating and fraud. The samana Gotama abstains from the crooked ways of slaughtering, imprisoning, execution and robbery. The samana Gotama abstains from plunder and violence.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

16. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of injuring seed life and vegetation, such as: root seeds, stem seeds, joint seeds, bud seeds and actual seeds as the fifth. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of injuring seed life and vegetation.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

17. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of storing up things for use , such as: storing up boiled rice; storing up drinks; storing up cloths; storing up vehicles; storing up beds; storing up fragrances; storing up meats. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of storing up things for use.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

8. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in

such forms of the watching of shows , such as: dancing; singing; music; theatrical performances; story telling; instrumentals; pictured houses; drumming; shows of the heavenly musicians; acrobatic performances by Candalas; elephant battles; horse battles; stick fights; fist fights; wrestling; sham fights; battle arrays; army battles and regimental reviews. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of the watching of shows.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

19. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of indulging in gambling that are the bases for negligence , such as: eight-row chess; ten-row chess; checkers in the air; hopscotch; spillikins; board-games; tip-cat; drawing straws; dice; leaf-flutes; toy plows; somersaults; pinwheels; toy measures; toy carts; toy bows; guessing words from syllables; and guessing another’s thoughts. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of indulging in gambling that are the bases for negligence.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

20. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of high and large beds and seats , such as: spacious couches; thrones with animal figures carved

on the supports; long-haired coverlets; multi-coloured patchwork coverlets; white woollen coverlets; woollen coverlets embroidered with flowers; quilts stuffed with cotton; woollen coverlets embroidered with animal figures; woollen coverlets with hair on both sides or on one side; bedspreads embroidered with gems; silk coverlets; dance-hall carpets; elephant, horse or chariot rugs; rugs of antelope-skins; choice spreads made of kadali-deer hides; spreads with red awnings overhead; couches with red cushions for the head and feet. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of high and large beds and seats.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

21. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of indulging in the establishment of wearings, decorations and adornments , such as: rubbing fragrances on the body; massaging with oils; being bathed by others; kneading the limbs; using mirrors; collyrium (for the eyes); garlands; scents; unguents; face-powders; make-up; bracelets; head-bands; decorated walking sticks; ornamented medicine-tubes; rapiers; sunshades; embroidered sandals; turbans; diadems; yaktail whisks; and long-fringed white robes. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of indulging in the establishment of wearings, decorations and adornments.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in

praise of the Tathagata might say.

22. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of animal talks , such as: talk about kings, talk about thieves, talk about ministers, talk about armies, talk about dangers, talk about battles, talk about food, talk about drinks, talk about garments, talk about lodgings, talk about garlands, talk about perfumes, talk about lineages, talk about vehicles, talk about villages, talk about towns, talk about cities, talk about countries, talk about women, talk about heroes, talk about streets, talk about wells, talk about those of former days who are dead, talk about diverse topics, speculate about the world, speculate about the sea, talk about being or non-being as such. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of animal talks.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

23. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of quarrelsome talk , such as: “You don’t understand this dhamma and discipline. I understand this dhamma and discipline. How can you understand this dhamma and discipline? You have entered the wrong path. I have entered the right path. I’m consistent. You are inconsistent. What should have been said first, you said last, what should have been said last, you said first.

That practice of yours has been overturned. Your doctrine has been invalidated. You are defeated. Go on and save your doctrine, or disentangle yourself now if you can.” The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of quarrelsome talk.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

24. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, dwell engaged in such forms of the practice of going on errands and going as a messenger, such as: running errands for kings, king’s ministers, khattiyas, brahmins, householders, or young men who say: “Go here, go to such and such a place. Take this, bring that from such and such a place.” The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of practice of going on errands and going as a messenger.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

25. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, having strong desires, hint, mutter holy words for pay, do fortune-telling, belittle others good qualities, and pursue gain with gain. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of hinting and flattering.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

26. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: [interpreting] signs on limbs, [interpreting] unusual events, [interpreting] dreams, [interpreting] characteristic marks, [interpreting] cloths gnawed by mice; offering: fire oblations, oblations from a ladle, grain husk oblations, broken rice oblations, rice-grain oblations, ghee oblations, oil oblations, oblations from the mouth, blood oblations; palmistry, the science of identifying auspicious sites for building, the science of identifying auspicious fields, the science of interpreting the cries of jackals, the science of exorcism, the science of earthen house, the science of snakes, the science of poisons, the science of scorpions, the science of rats, the science of birds, the science of crows, predicting the number of years left to live, protective charms against arrows, commanding animals. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

27. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: telling a person’s fortune from the characteristics of gems, characteristics of a walking sticks, characteristics of a garments, characteristics of a sword, characteristics of an arrow, characteristics of a bow, characteristics of

a weapon, characteristics of a woman, characteristics of a man, characteristics of a boy, characteristics of a girl, characteristics of a male slave, characteristics of a female slave, characteristics of an elephant, characteristics of a horse, characteristics of a buffalo, characteristics of a bull, characteristics of a cow, characteristics of a goat, characteristics of a sheep, characteristics of a cock, characteristics of a quail, characteristics of an iguana, characteristics of a rabbit, characteristics of a turtle, characteristics of a deer. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

28. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: the king will march forth; the king will not march forth; our king will attack and the foreign king will retreat; the foreign king will attack and our king will retreat; our king will triumph and the foreign king will be defeated; the foreign king will triumph and our king will be defeated; thus there will be victory for one and defeat for the other. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

29. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: there will be an eclipse of the moon, there will be an eclipse of the sun, there will be an eclipse of a constellation; the sun and the moon will stay on their proper courses; the sun and the moon will deviate from their proper courses; the constellations will stay on their proper courses; the constellations will deviate from their proper courses; there will be a fall of meteors; there will be a blaze in the quarters; there will be an earthquake; there will be an earth-tremor; there will be a thundering of the [rain] devas; there will be a rising and setting, a darkening and brightening, of the moon, sun, and constellations; such will be the results of an eclipse of the moon, such will be the results of an eclipse of the sun, such will be the results of an eclipse of a constellation; such will be the results of the sun and the moon staying on their proper courses; such will be the results of the sun and the moon deviating from their proper courses; such will be the results of the constellations staying on their proper courses; such will be the results of the constellations deviating from their proper courses; such will be the results of a fall of meteors; such will be the results of a blaze in the quarters; such will be the results of an earthquake; such will be the results of an earth-tremor; such will be the results of a thundering of the [rain] devas; such will be the results of a rising and setting, a darkening and brightening, of the moon, sun, and constellations. The samana Gotama abstains from such or

such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

30. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: there will be abundant rain; there will be a drought; there will be abundant food; there will be a famine; there will be security; there will be danger; there will be sickness; there will be health; or they earn their living by accounting, computation, calculation, the composing of poetry, and moral philosophy. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

31. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: getting a wife for a young man; getting a husband for a young woman; arranging engagements; arranging divorces; advising on times for savings; advising on times for spending; invoking good luck; invoking bad luck; reviving fetuses; incantations to bind the tongue; incantations to cause dumbness; incantations to cause vomiting; incantations to bind the jaw; whispering in the ear; questioning a mirror as an oracle; questioning a girl as an oracle; questioning a deva as an oracle; worshipping

the sun; worshiping the Great Brahma; spitting out fire; invoking the goddess of luck. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

32. “Whereas some honorable samanas and brahmanas, having eating food offered in faith, they earn their living by such forms of wrong livelihood of animal sciences such as: rituals for peace, rituals for aspirations, rituals for wisdom, rituals for rainfall, rituals for infertility, rituals for sites, ceremonies for sites, consecration of sites, ceremonial rinsing of the mouth, ceremonial bathing, offering of sacrifices, administering emetics, administering purgatives, administering up-going purgatives, administering down-going purgatives, administering head purgatives, administering ear ointments, administering eye restoratives, administering nasal medicine, administering ointments and counter-ointments; practising fine surgery; practising general surgery; practising as a children’s doctor; the application of medicinal roots; the binding on of medicinal herbs and remedies. The samana Gotama abstains from such or such forms of wrong livelihood.” Or it is indeed thus, O bhikkhus, that a puthujjana speaking in praise of the Tathagata might say.

33. This, O bhikkhus, is the trifling, insignificant, mere virtues, by which one who is a puthujjana might say when speaking in praise of the Tathagata.