

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvattḥī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṅḷika's Park. Then, when it was evening, the venerable Puṅḷa rose from meditation and went to the Blessed One. After paying homage to the Blessed One, he sat down at one side and said to him:

2. "Venerable sir, it would be good if the Blessed One would give me brief advice. Having heard the Dhamma from the Blessed One, I will abide alone, withdrawn, diligent, ardent, and resolute."

"Well then, Puṅḷa, listen and attend carefully to what I shall say."

"Yes, venerable sir," the venerable Puṅḷa replied. The Blessed One said this:

3. "Puṅḷa, there are forms cognizable by the eye that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. If a bhikkhu delights in them, welcomes them, and remains holding to them, delight arises in him. With the arising of delight, Puṅḷa, there is the arising of suffering, I say. There are, Puṅḷa, sounds cognizable by the ear...odors cognizable by the nose...flavors cognizable by the tongue...tangibles cognizable by the body...mind-objects cognizable by the mind that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. If a bhikkhu delights in them, welcomes them, and remains holding to them, delight arises in him. With the arising of delight, Puṅḷa, there is the arising of suffering, I say.

4. "Puṅḷa, there are forms cognizable by the eye...sounds cognizable by the ear...odors cognizable by the nose...flavors cognizable by the tongue...tangibles cognizable by the body...mind-objects cognizable by the mind that are wished for, desired, agreeable, and likeable, connected with sensual desire and provocative of lust. If a bhikkhu does not delight in them, welcome them, and remain holding to them, delight ceases in him. With the cessation of delight, Puṅḷa, there is the cessation of suffering, I say.

5. "Now that I have given you this brief advice, Puṅḷa, in which country will you dwell?"

“Venerable sir, now that the Blessed One has given me this brief advice, I am going to dwell in the Sunāparanta country.”

“Puṁṁ a, the people of Sunāparanta are fierce and rough. If they abuse and threaten you, what will you think then?”

“Venerable sir, if the people of Sunāparanta abuse and threaten me, then I shall think: ‘These people of Sunāparanta are kind, truly kind, in that they did not give me a blow with the fist.’ Then I shall think thus, Blessed One; then I shall think thus, Sublime One.”

“But, Puṁṁ a, if the people of Sunāparanta do give you a blow with the fist, what will you think then?”

“Venerable sir, if the people of Sunāparanta do give me a blow with the fist, then I shall think: ‘These people of Sunāparanta are kind, truly kind, in that they did not give me a blow with a clod.’ Then I shall think thus, Blessed One; then I shall think thus, Sublime One.”

“But, Puṁṁ a, if the people of Sunāparanta do give you a blow with a clod, what will you think then?”

“Venerable sir, if the people of Sunāparanta do give me a blow with a clod, then I shall think: ‘These people of Sunāparanta are kind, truly kind, in that they did not give me a blow with a stick.’ Then I shall think thus, Blessed One; then I shall think thus, Sublime One.”

“But, Puṁṁ a, if the people of Sunāparanta do give you a blow with a stick, what will you think then?”

“Venerable sir, if the people of Sunāparanta do give me a blow with a stick, then I shall think: ‘These people of Sunāparanta are kind, truly kind, in that they did not give me a blow with a knife.’ Then I shall think thus, Blessed One; then I shall think thus, Sublime One.”

“But, Puṁṁ a, if the people of Sunāparanta do give you a blow with a knife, what will you think then?”

“Venerable sir, if the people of Sunāparanta do give me a blow with a knife, then I shall think: ‘These people of Sunāparanta are kind, truly kind, in that they have not taken my life with a sharp knife.’ Then I shall think thus, Blessed One; then I shall think thus, Sublime One.”

“But, Puṁṁ a, if the people of Sunāparanta do take your life with a sharp knife, what will you think then?”

“Venerable sir, if the people of Sunāparanta do take my life with a sharp knife, then I shall think thus: ‘There have been disciples of the Blessed One who, being humiliated and disgusted by the body and by life, sought to have their lives deprived by the knife. But I have had my life deprived by the knife without seeking for it.’ Then I shall think thus, Blessed One; then I shall think thus, Sublime One.”

6. “Good, good, Puṁṁ a! Possessing such self-control and peacefulness, you will be able to dwell in the Sunāparanta country. Now, Puṁṁ a, it is time to do as you think fit.”

7. Then, having delighted and rejoiced in the Blessed One’s words, the venerable Puṁṁ a rose from his seat, and after paying homage to the Blessed One, departed keeping him on his right. He then set his resting place in order, took his bowl and outer robe, and set out to wander towards the Sunāparanta country. Wandering by stages, he eventually arrived in the Sunāparanta country, and there he lived. Then, during that Rains, the venerable Puṁṁ a established five hundred men lay followers and five hundred women lay followers in the practice, and he himself realized the three true knowledges. On a later occasion, the venerable Puṁṁ a attained final Nibbāna.

8. Then a number of bhikkhus went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to him, they sat down at one side and told him: “Venerable sir, the clansman Puṁṁ a, who was given brief advice by the Blessed One, has died. What is his destination? What is his future course?”

“Bhikkhus, the clansman Puṇḍa was wise. He practiced in accordance with the Dhamma and did not trouble me in the interpretation of the Dhamma. The clansman Puṇḍa has attained final Nibbāna.”

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

---

Majjhima Nikāya 145

Part Three— The Final Fifty Discourses (Uparipavāsāpāṭi)

The Division of Expositions (Vibhangavagga)

Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

Contributed by Chris Burke