

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvattḥī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. There he addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Bhikkhus." "Venerable sir," they replied. The Blessed One said this:

2. "Bhikkhus, I shall teach you the character of a true man and the character of an untrue man. Listen and attend closely to what I shall say." "Yes, venerable sir," The bhikkhus replied. The Blessed One said this:

3. "Bhikkhus, what is the character of an untrue man? Here an untrue man who has gone forth from an aristocratic family considers thus: 'I have gone forth from an aristocratic family; but these other bhikkhus have not gone forth from aristocratic families.' So he lauds himself and disparages others because of his aristocratic family. This is the character of an untrue man.

"But a true man considers thus: 'It is not because of one's aristocratic family that states of greed, hatred, or delusion are destroyed. Even though someone may not have gone forth from an aristocratic family, yet if he has entered upon the way that accords with the Dhamma, entered upon the proper way, and conducts himself according to the Dhamma, he should be honored for that, he should be praised for that.' So, putting the practice of the way first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of his aristocratic family. This is the character of a true man.

4-6. "Moreover, an untrue man who has gone forth from a great family...from a wealthy family...from an influential family considers thus: 'I have gone forth from an influential family; but these other bhikkhus have not gone forth from influential families.' So he lauds himself and disparages others because of his influential family. This too is the character of an untrue man.

"But a true man considers thus: 'It is not because of one's influential family that states of greed, hatred, or delusion are destroyed. Even though someone may not have gone forth from an influential family, yet if he has entered upon the way that accords with the Dhamma, entered upon the proper way, and conducts himself according to the Dhamma, he should be honored for that, he should be praised for that.' So, putting the practice of the way first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of his influential family. This too is the character of a true man.

7. “Moreover, an untrue man who is well known and famous considers thus: ‘I am well known and famous; but these other bhikkhus are unknown and of no account.’ So he lauds himself and disparages others because of his renown. This too is the character of an untrue man.

“But a true man considers thus: ‘It is not because of one’s renown that states of greed, hatred, or delusion are destroyed. Even though someone may not be well known and famous, yet if he has entered upon the way that accords with the Dhamma, entered upon the proper way, and conducts himself according to the Dhamma, he should be honored for that, he should be praised for that.’ So, putting the practice of the way first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of his renown. This too is the character of a true man.

8. “Moreover, an untrue man who gains robes, almsfood, resting places, and requisites of medicine considers thus: ‘I gain robes, almsfood, resting places, and requisites of medicine; but these other bhikkhus do not gain these things.’ So he lauds himself and disparages others because of gain. This too is the character of an untrue man.

“But a true man considers thus: ‘It is not because of gain that states of greed, hatred, or delusion are destroyed. Even though someone has no gain, yet if he has entered upon the way that accords with the Dhamma, entered upon the proper way, and conducts himself according to the Dhamma, he should be honored for that, he should be praised for that.’ So, putting the practice of the way first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of gain. This too is the character of a true man.

9-20. “Moreover, an untrue man who is learned...who is expert in the Discipline...who is a preacher of the Dhamma...who is a forest dweller...who is a refuse-rag wearer...an almsfood eater...a tree-root dweller...a charnel-ground dweller...an open-air dweller...a continual sitter...an any-bed user...a one-session eater considers thus: ‘I am a one-session eater; but these other bhikkhus are not one-session eaters.’ So he lauds himself and disparages others because of his being a one-session eater. This too is the character of an untrue man.

“But a true man considers thus: ‘It is not because of being a one-session eater that states of greed, hatred, or delusion are destroyed. Even though someone may not be a one-session eater, yet if he has entered upon the way that accords with the Dhamma, entered upon the proper way, and conducts himself according to the Dhamma, he should be honored for that, he

should be praised for that.' So, putting the practice of the way first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of his being a one-session eater. This too is the character of a true man.

21. "Moreover, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, an untrue man enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. He considers thus: 'I have gained the attainment of the first jhāna; but these other bhikkhus have not gained the attainment of the first jhāna.' So he lauds himself and disparages others because of his attainment of the first jhāna. This too is the character of an untrue man.

"But a true man considers thus: 'Non-identification even with the attainment of the first jhāna has been declared by the Blessed One; for in whatever way they conceive, the fact is ever other than that.' So, putting non-identification first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of his attainment of the first jhāna. This too is the character of a true man.

22-24. "Moreover, with the stilling of applied and sustained thought, an untrue man enters upon and abides in the second jhāna...With the fading away as well of rapture...he enters upon and abides in the third jhāna...With the abandoning of pleasure and pain...he enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna...

25. "Moreover, with the complete surmounting of perceptions of form, with the disappearance of perceptions of sensory impact, with non-attention to perceptions of diversity, aware that 'space is infinite,' an untrue man enters upon and abides in the base of infinite space...

26. "Moreover, by completely surmounting the base of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite', an untrue man enters upon and abides in the base of infinite consciousness...

27. "Moreover, by completely surmounting the base of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing,' an untrue man enters upon and abides in the base of nothingness...

28. "Moreover, by completely surmounting the base of nothingness, an untrue man enters upon

and abides in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. He considers thus: ‘I have gained the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; but these other bhikkhus have not gained the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.’ So he lauds himself and disparages others because of his attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This too is the character of an untrue man.

“But a true man considers thus: ‘Non-identification even with the attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception has been declared by the Blessed One; for in whatever way they conceive, the fact is ever other than that.’ So, putting non-identification first, he neither lauds himself nor disparages others because of his attainment of the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. This too is the character of a true man.

29. “Moreover, by completely surmounting the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a true man enters upon and abides in the cessation of perception and feeling. And his taints are destroyed by his seeing with wisdom. This bhikkhu does not conceive anything, he does not conceive in regard to anything, he does not conceive in any way.”

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

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Majjhima Nikāya 113

Part Three— The Final Fifty Discourses (Uparipavāsaṅgāya)

The Division at Devadaha (Devadahavagga)

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