

clinging is yet present, the state of Non-returning.

'Because of this was it said: "This is the only way, Bhikkhus, for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the destruction of suffering and grief, for reaching the right path, for the attainment of Nibbana, namely the four Foundations of Mindfulness".'

This the Blessed One said. Satisfied, the Bhikkhus rejoiced at his words.

*(Majjhima Nikaya, Sutta No. 10)*

ADVICE TO SIGALA  
(Domestic and Social Relations)  
*(Sigalovada-sutta)*  
(Abridged)

Thus have I heard. The Blessed One was once staying near Rajagaha at the Squirrels' Feeding-ground in the Bamboo Wood.

Now at this time Sigala, a householder's son, rising early, went out of Rajagaha. With wet hair, wet garments and his clasped hands uplifted, he performed the rite of worship to the several quarters of earth and sky: to the east, south, west, and north, to the nadir and the zenith.<sup>1</sup>

Early that same morning, the Blessed One dressed, took bowl and robe and entered Rajagaha seeking alms. He saw Sigala at his rite of worship and spoke to him thus:

'Why, young householder, do you, rising early and leaving Rajagaha, with your hair and raiment wet, worship the several quarters of earth and sky?'

'Sir, my father, when he was on his death-bed, said to me: "Dear son, you should worship the quarters of earth and sky." So I, sir, honouring my father's word, reverencing, revering,

Performing the rite of worship of the different quarters of the external world, invoking, for protection, the mighty spirits or gods inhabiting them, was an old ritual according to the Vedic tradition. The Buddha, who disapproves and condemns such superstitious, old practices, gives them new meanings and interpretations, according to the persons to whom he speaks. Cf. 'The Parable of the Piece of Cloth' where he speaks to a brahmin of the 'inner bath' instead of 'sacred baths in holy rivers', (p. 108.)

holding it sacred, rise early and, leaving Rajagaha, worship in this way.'

'But in the Discipline of the Arya (Noble One), young householder, the six quarters should not be worshipped in this way.'

'How then, sir, in the Discipline of the Arya, should the six quarters be worshipped? It would be an excellent thing, if the Blessed One would so teach me the way in which according to the Discipline of the Arya, the six quarters should be worshipped.'

'Hear then, young householder, reflect carefully and I will tell you.'

'Yes, sir,' responded young Sigala. And the Blessed One said:

'Just as, young householder, the Aryan disciple has put away the four vices in conduct; just as he does no evil actions from the four motives; just as he does not make towards the six doors of dissipating wealth; avoiding these fourteen evil things, he is a guardian of the six quarters, is on his way to conquer both worlds, is successful both in this world and in the next. At the dissolution of the body, after death, he is reborn to a happy destiny in heaven.

'What are the four vices of conduct that he has put away? The destruction of life, stealing, adultery, and lying. These are the four vices of conduct that he has put away.

'By which four motives does he do no evil actions? Evil actions are done from motives of partiality, enmity, stupidity and fear. But as the Aryan disciple is not led away by these motives he does no evil actions through them.

'And which are the six doors of dissipating wealth? Drink; frequenting the streets at unseemly hours; haunting fairs; gambling; associating with evil friends; idleness.

'There are, young householder, these six dangers of drink: the actual loss of wealth; increase of quarrels; susceptibility to disease; an evil reputation; indecent exposure; ruining one's intelligence.

'Six, young householder, are the perils a man runs through frequenting the streets at unseemly hours: he himself is unguarded or unprotected and so too are his wife and children; so also is his property (wealth); in addition he falls under the suspicion of being responsible for undetected crimes; false

rumours are attached to his name; he goes out to meet many troubles.

'There are six perils in haunting fairs: A man keeps looking about to see where is there dancing? where is there singing? music? recitation? cymbal playing? the beating of tam-tams?

'Six, young householder, are the perils of gambling: if the man wins, he is hated; if he loses, he mourns his lost wealth; waste of wealth; his word has no weight in an assembly (a court of law); he is despised by his friends and companions; he is not sought in marriage, for people will say that a man who is a gambler will never make a good husband.

'There are six perils of associating with evil friends: any gambler, any libertine, any tippler, any cheat, any swindler, any man of violence becomes his friend and companion.

'There are six perils in idleness: A man says, it is too cold, and does no work. He says, it is too hot, and does no work; he says, it is too early . . . too late, and does no work. He says, I am too hungry, and does no work . . . too full, and does no work. And while all that he should do remains undone, he makes no money, and such wealth as he has dwindles away.

'Four persons should be reckoned as foes in the likeness of friends: the rapacious person; the man who pays lip-service only to a friend; the flatterer; the wastrel.

'Of these the first is to be reckoned as a foe in the likeness of a friend on four grounds: he is rapacious; he gives little and expects much; he does what he has to do out of fear; he pursues his own interests.

'On four grounds the man who pays lip-service only to a friend is to be reckoned as a foe in the likeness of a friend: he makes friendly professions as regards the past; he makes friendly professions as regards the future; the only service he renders is by his empty sayings; when the opportunity for service arises he shows his unreliability.

'On four grounds the flatterer is to be reckoned as a foe in the likeness of a friend: he approves your bad deeds, as well as your good deeds; he praises you to your face, and in your absence he speaks ill of you.

'On four grounds the wastrel is to be reckoned as a foe in the

likeness of a friend: he is your companion when you go drinking; when you frequent the streets at untimely hours; when you haunt shows and fairs; when you gamble.

'The friends who should be reckoned as good-hearted (friends) are four: the helper; the friend who is constant in happiness and adversity; the friend of good counsel; the sympathetic friend.

'The friend who is a helper is to be reckoned as good-hearted on four grounds: he protects you when you are taken unawares; he protects your property when you are not there to protect it; he is a refuge to you when you are afraid; when you have tasks to perform he provides twice as much help as you may need.

'The friend who is constant in happiness and adversity is to be reckoned as good-hearted on four grounds: he tells you his secrets; he does not betray your secrets; in your troubles he does not forsake you; for your sake he will even lay down his life.

'The friend of good counsel is . . . good-hearted on four grounds: he restrains you from doing wrong; he enjoins you to (do what is) right; from him you learn what you had not learnt before; he shows you the way to heaven.

'The friend who is sympathetic is to be reckoned as good-hearted on four grounds: he does not rejoice over your misfortunes; he rejoices with you in your prosperity; he restrains those who speak ill of you; he commends those who speak well of you.

'And how, young householder, does the Aryan disciple protect (guard) the six quarters?' The following should be looked upon as the six quarters: parents as the east; teachers as the south; wife and children as the west; friends and companions as the north; servants and employees as the nadir; recluses and brahmins (the *religieux*) as the zenith.

'A child should minister to his parents as the eastern quarter

'Now the Buddha explains to Sigala what the six quarters are and how to 'worship' them according to the 'Discipline of the Arya (Noble One)' by way of performing one's duties and obligations towards them, instead of performing the ritual worship according to the old Brahmanic tradition. If the 'six quarters' are 'protected' in this way, they are made safe and secure, and no danger would come from there. Brahmins too worshipped the quarters of the external world to prevent any danger coming from the spirits or gods inhabiting them.

in five ways (saying to himself): Once I was supported by them, now I will be their support; I will perform those duties they have to perform; I will maintain the lineage and tradition of my family; I will look after my inheritance; and I will give alms (perform religious rites) on behalf of them (when they are dead).

'Parents thus ministered to by their children as the eastern quarter, show their love for them in five ways: they restrain them from evil; they direct them towards the good; they train them to a profession; they arrange suitable marriages for them; and in due time, they hand over the inheritance to them.

'In this way the eastern quarter is protected and made safe and secure for him.

'A pupil should minister to his teachers as the southern quarter in five ways: by rising (from his seat, to salute them); by waiting upon them; by his eagerness to learn; by personal service; and by respectfully accepting their teaching.

Teachers, thus ministered to as the southern quarter by their pupil, show their love for their pupil in five ways: they train him well; they make him grasp what he has learnt; they instruct him thoroughly in the lore of every art; they introduce him to their friends and companions; they provide for his security everywhere.

'In this way the southern quarter is protected and made safe and secure for him.

'A wife as western quarter should be ministered to by her husband in five ways: by respecting her; by his courtesy; by being faithful to her; by handing over authority to her; by providing her with adornment (jewellery, etc.).

'The wife, ministered to by her husband as the western quarter, loves him in these five ways: by doing her duty well; by hospitality to attendants, etc.; by her fidelity; by looking after his earnings; and by skill and industry in all her business dealings.

'In this way the western quarter is protected and made safe and secure for him.

'In five ways a member of a family should minister to his friends and companions as the northern quarter: by generosity; by courtesy; by benevolence; by equality (treating them as he treats himself); and by being true to his word.

'Thus ministered to as the northern quarter, his friends and

companions love him in these five ways: they protect him when he is in need of protection; they look after his property when he is unable to; they become a refuge in danger; they do not forsake him in his troubles; and they respect even others related to him.

'In this way the northern quarter is protected and made safe and secure for him.

'A master ministers to his servants and employees as the nadir in five ways: by assigning them work according to their capacity and strength; by supplying them with food and wages; by tending them in sickness; by sharing with them unusual delicacies; and by giving them leave and gifts at suitable times.

'In these ways ministered to by their master, servants and employees love their master in five ways: they wake up before him; they go to bed after him; they take what is given to them; they do their work well; and they speak well of him and give him a good reputation.

'In this way is the nadir protected and made safe and secure for him.

'A member of a family (a layman) should minister to recluses and brahmins (the *religieux*) as the zenith in five ways: by affectionate acts; by affectionate words; by affectionate thoughts; by keeping open house for them; by supplying them with their worldly needs.

'In this way ministered to as the zenith, recluses and brahmins show their love for the members of the family (laymen) in six ways: they keep them from evil; they exhort them to do good; they love them with kindly thoughts; they teach them what they have not learnt; they correct and refine what they have learnt; they reveal to them the way to heaven.

'In this way is the zenith protected and made safe and secure for him.'

When the Blessed One had thus spoken, Sigala the young householder said this: 'Excellent, Sir, excellent! It is as if one should set upright what had been turned upside down, or reveal what had been hidden away, or show the way to a man gone astray, or bring a lamp into darkness so that those with eyes

might see things there. In this manner the Dhamma is expounded by the Blessed One in many ways. And I take refuge in the Blessed One, in the Dhamma and in the Community of Bhikkhus. May the Blessed One receive me as his lay-disciple, as one who has taken his refuge in him from this day forth as long as life endures.'

*(Digha-Nikaya, No. 31)*

## THE WORDS OF TRUTH

Selections from

### THE DHAMMAPADA

1

All (mental) states have mind as their forerunner, mind is their chief, and they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts, with a defiled mind, then suffering follows one even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draught-ox.

2

All (mental) states have mind as their forerunner, mind is their chief, and they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts, with a pure mind, happiness follows one as one's shadow that does not leave one.

3

'He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me': the hatred of those who harbour such thoughts is not appeased.

5

Hatred is never appeased by hatred in this world; it is appeased by love. This is an eternal Law.

24

Whosoever is energetic, mindful, pure in conduct, discriminating, self-restrained, right-living, vigilant, his fame steadily increases.