

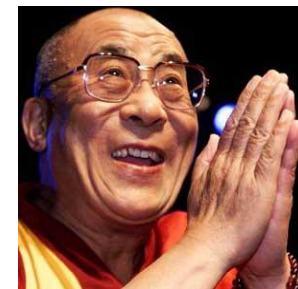
BANDAR UTAMA BUDDHIST SOCIETY



Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda Sutta, MN 61



Four Reliances



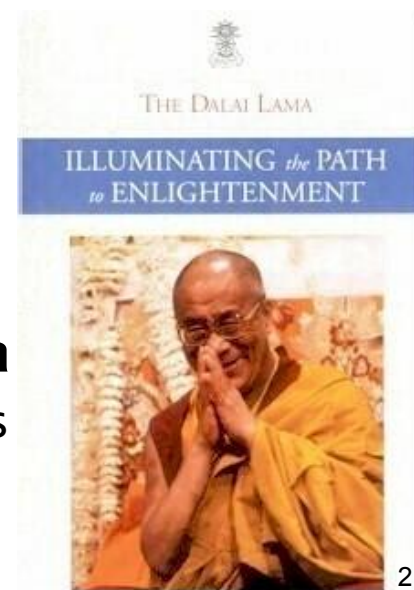
Rely not on the person but the words.

Rely not on the words but on their meaning.

Rely not on the provisional meaning but the definitive meaning of the word.

Rely not on intellectual understanding of the definitive meaning, but on direct, non-conceptual experience of it.

Abhisamaya-alaṅkāra
Ornament of Clear Realizations



TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

The
Middle Length
Discourses
of the
Buddha



A Translation of the
Majjhima Nikāya



Translated by
Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli *and* Bhikkhu Bodhi



Background



Rāhula was the Buddha's only son, born on the day his father left the world to seek awakening. When the Buddha first returned to Kapilavatthu after his awakening, Rāhula approached him and asked for his "inheritance". So at the age of 7, he was initiated into the Order as a novice by Sāriputta.



Rock Edits

The Sutta is mentioned in the Bhabru Rock Edit of Asoka (273-236 BCE) as among those that all monastics and laity should often listen to and reflect upon. It is a good example of using an “object lesson” in teaching Dharma to the young. The Sutta structure is simple and systematic.



Rāhula Suttas



1. Dhatu Rāhula Sutta, AN 4.177
2. Mahā Rāhulovada Sutta, MN 62
3. Anusaya Rāhula Sutta, SN 22.91
4. Apagata Rāhula Sutta, SN 22.92
5. Kalyāṇamitta Rāhula Sutta, Sn 2.11
6. Cūḷa Rāhulovāda Sutta, MN 147



Buddha as a Parent



Morality

Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda Sutta

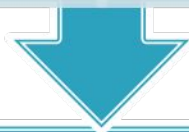
Age 7



Meditation

Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta

Teenager



Wisdom

Cūḷarāhulovāda Sutta

Age 20



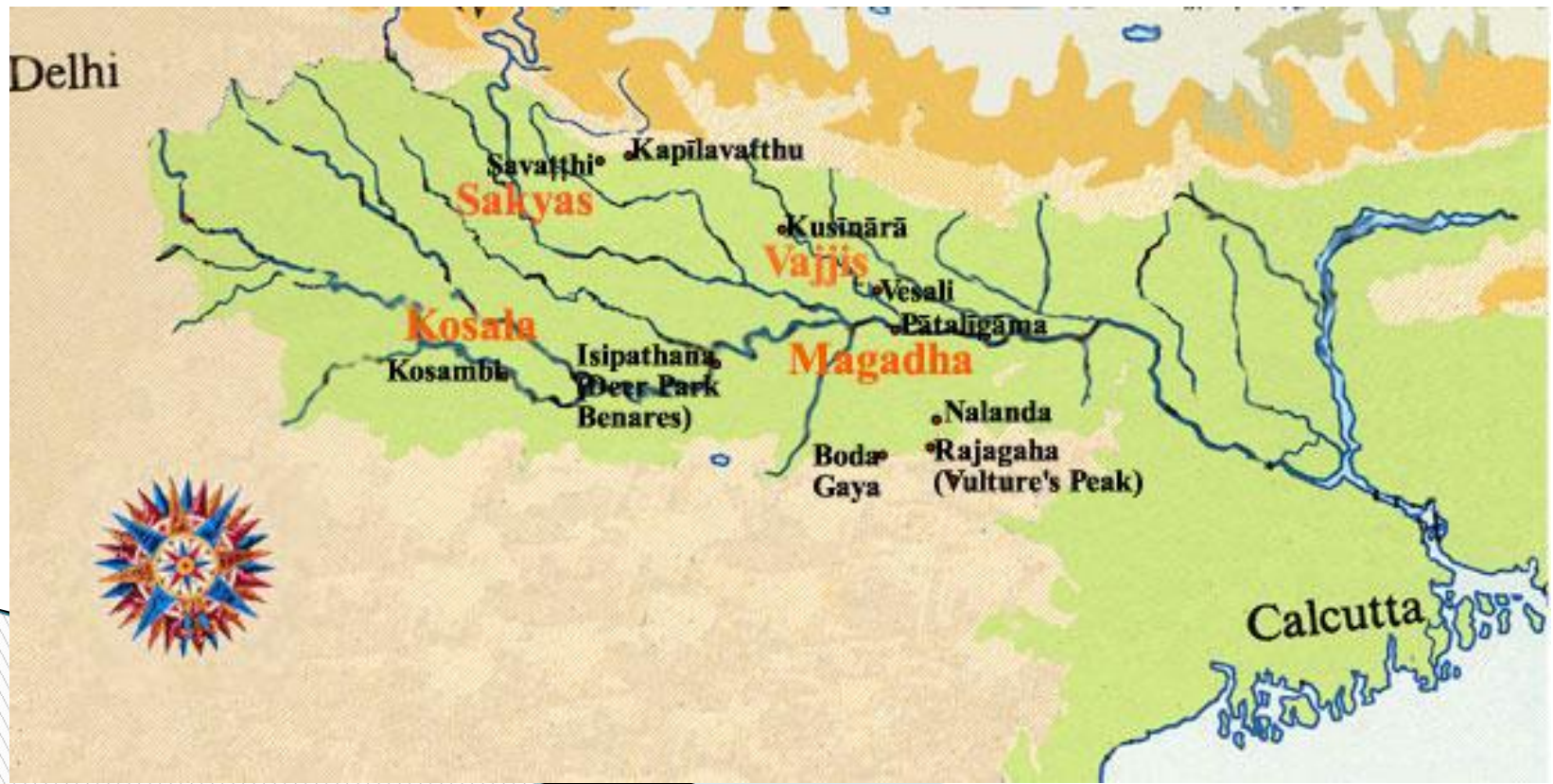
Structure

The Sutta begins with 3 parables – the **water-pot**, the **royal elephant** and the **mirror** – which Buddha impresses on Rāhula the importance of not lying, even in jest. Then Buddha teaches regarding the three doors of action and how one should wisely attend to each before, during, and after the deed.



The Sutta Begins

THUS HAVE I HEARD. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Rajāgaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Sanctuary.





Ven. Rāhula

Rāhula was staying at Ambalaṭṭhika. Then, when it was evening, the Buddha rose from meditation and went to meet Rāhula. He saw the Buddha coming and made a seat ready and set out water for washing the feet. The Buddha then sat down and washed his feet. Rāhula then paid homage to him and sat down at one side.

Para 2



Simile of Water Pot



Having left a bit of water on the water pot, Buddha asks Rāhula if he sees the little bit of water remaining in the pot. When Rāhula answered “yes,” Buddha explained that a spiritual life is very little for someone who tells a deliberate lie.

Para 3



Simile of Water Pot



Having thrown away the remaining bit of water in the pot, Buddha asks Rāhula if he sees the water being tossed away. When Rāhula said “yes”, Buddha explained that for someone who tells a deliberate lie, there is no more spiritual life left in him as he has thrown it all away.

Para 4



Simile of Water Pot



Buddha then asks Rāhula if he sees the water pot turned upside down. When Rāhula said “yes”, Buddha explained that if someone tells a deliberate lie without any shame, his spiritual life is turned upside down, just like the pot that is over-turned.

Para 5



Simile of Water Pot

Having turned the water pot right side up, Buddha then asks if Rāhula sees how empty and hollow it is. When Rāhula said “yes”, Buddha explains that if a recluse has no shame in telling a deliberate lie, his spiritual life is empty and hollow in the same way.

Para 6



Simile of Water Pot



Pot has Little
Water

• Spiritual Life is little

All water thrown
away

• Spiritual Life thrown away

Pot Turned
Upside down

• Spiritual Life thrown upside
down

Pot is empty

• Spiritual Life empty and
hollow



Simile of Elephant



Buddha uses the simile of an fighting elephant which will stop at nothing in order to win the war. Buddha then tells Rāhula that for anyone who feels no shame in telling a deliberate lie, there is no evil that he will not do. Buddha then told Rāhula not to utter falsehood even as a joke.

Para 7



Simile of the Mirror



- "Rāhula, What is the purpose of a mirror?"
- "For the purpose of reflection, Bhante."
- "So too, Rāhula, an action with the **body** should be done after repeated reflection; an action by **speech** should be done after repeated reflection; an action by **mind** should be done after repeated reflection.

Para 8



Future Bodily Action



"Rāhula, when you wish to do an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: 'Would this action that ***I wish to do*** with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 9



Future Bodily Action



- When you reflect and know the bodily action will lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both; then it is an unwholesome action with painful results; you should not do it.
- When you reflect and know the bodily action will not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both; then it is a wholesome action with pleasant results; you should do it.

Para 9



Present Bodily Action

"Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus:
'Does this action that ***I am doing*** with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 10



Present Bodily Action



- When you reflect and know the action leads to affliction for oneself, others, and both, it is an unwholesome action with painful results; you should suspend such action.
- When you reflect and know the action did not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both, it is a wholesome action with pleasant results; you may continue such an action.

Para 10



Past Bodily Action



"Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action with the body, you should reflect upon that same bodily action thus: 'Does this action that ***I have done*** with the body lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Was it an unwholesome bodily action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 11



Past Bodily Action

- When you reflected and knew the action done led to affliction for oneself, others, and both, it was an unwholesome action with painful results; Confess to a Teacher or wise friend and then practice restraint for the future.
- When you reflected and knew the action done did not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both, it was a wholesome action with pleasant results; Abide happy and glad, and continue to train on wholesome states.

Para 11



Future Verbal Action



"Rāhula, **when you wish** to do an action by speech, you should reflect upon that same verbal action thus: 'Would this action that ***I wish to do*** with my speech lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome verbal action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 12



Future Verbal Action



- When you reflect and know the verbal action will lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both; then it is an unwholesome action with painful results; you should not do it.
- When you reflect and know the verbal action will not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both; then it is a wholesome action with pleasant results; you should do it.

Para 12



Present Verbal Action

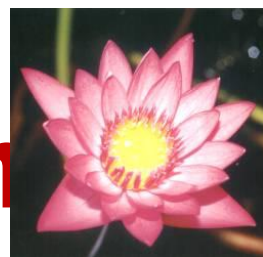


"Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action with the speech, you should reflect upon that same verbal action thus: 'Does this action that ***I am doing*** with the speech lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome verbal action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 13



Present Verbal Action



- When you reflect and know the action leads to affliction for oneself, others, and both, it is an unwholesome action with painful results; you should suspend such action.
- When you reflect and know the action did not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both, it is a wholesome action with pleasant results; you may continue such an action.

Para 13



Past Verbal Action



"Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action with the speech, you should reflect upon that same verbal action thus: 'Does this action that ***I have done*** with the speech lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Was it an unwholesome verbal action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 14



Past Verbal Action

- When you reflected and knew the action done led to affliction for oneself, others, and both, it was an unwholesome action with painful results; Confess to a Teacher or wise friend and then practice restraint for the future.
- When you reflected and knew the action done did not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both, it was a wholesome action with pleasant results; Abide happy and glad, and continue to train on wholesome states.

Para 14



Future Mental Action



"Rāhula, **when you wish** to do an action by mind, you should reflect upon that same mental action thus: 'Would this action that ***I wish to do*** with my mind lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome mental action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 15



Future Mental Action



- When you reflect and know the mental action will lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both; then it is an unwholesome action with painful results; you should not do it.
- When you reflect and know the mental action will not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both; then it is a wholesome action with pleasant results; you should do it.

Para 15



Present Mental Action

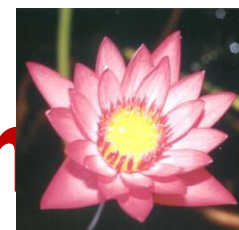


"Also, Rāhula, while you are doing an action with the mind, you should reflect upon that same mental action thus: 'Does this action that ***I am doing*** with the mind lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Is it an unwholesome mental action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 16



Present Mental Action



- When you reflect and know the mental action leads to affliction for oneself, others, and both, it is an unwholesome action with painful results; you should suspend such action.
- When you reflect and know the mental action does not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both, it is a wholesome action with pleasant results; you may continue such an action.

Para 16



Past Mental Action

"Also, Rāhula, after you have done an action with the mind, you should reflect upon that same mental action thus:
'Does this action that ***I have done*** with the mind lead to my own affliction, or to the affliction of others, or to the affliction of both? Was it an unwholesome mental action with painful consequences, with painful results?'

Para 17



Past Mental Action



- When you reflected and knew the action done led to affliction for oneself, others, and both, it was an unwholesome action with painful results; Confess to a Teacher or wise friend and practice future restraint.
- When you reflected and knew the action done did not lead to affliction for oneself, others, or both, it was a wholesome action with pleasant results; Abide happy & glad, and continue to train on wholesome states.

Para 17



Reflect



Will this mental, verbal,
bodily action cause harm
to me and others?

FUTURE

If YES, then
DON'T DO IT!

If NO, then
CARRY ON!



Assess

Is this mental, verbal,
bodily action causing
harm to me and others?

↕
PRESENT
↕

If YES, then
**STOP DOING IT
NOW**



If NO, then
CARRY ON!



Review



Did this mental, verbal,
bodily action cause harm
to me and others?

↕
PAST
↕

If YES, then
**DON'T DO IT
AGAIN!**



If NO, then
**IT'S A WISE
ACTION**



Purity of 3 Doors



"Rāhula, whatever recluses and brahmins in the *past* purified their bodily, verbal, and mental action, all did so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Whatever recluses and brahmins in the *future* will purify their bodily, verbal, and mental action, all will do so by repeatedly reflecting thus. Whatever recluses and brahmins in the *present* are purifying their bodily, verbal, and mental action, all are doing so by repeatedly reflecting thus.

Para 18



Conclusion

- Therefore, Rāhula, you should train thus: 'We will purify our bodily action, verbal action, and mental action by repeatedly reflecting upon them.'
- That is what the Blessed One said. The Ven. Rāhula was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

Para 18



Prayer on Four Sublime States



- ▣ **May all sentient beings have happiness and its causes,**
- ▣ **May all sentient beings be free of suffering and its causes,**
- ▣ **May all sentient beings never be separated from bliss without suffering,**
- ▣ **May all sentient beings be in equanimity, free of bias, attachment and anger.**

