

Exploring the ancient path in the Buddha's own words -- Lesson 3.4.7

Tiracchānakathāsuttam

“Mā, bhikkhave, anekavihitam tiracchānakatham¹ katheyyātha, seyyathidaṃ-rājakatham corakatham mahāmatthakatham senākatham, bhayakatham yuddhakatham, annakatham pānakatham vatthakatham sayanakatham mālākatham gandhakatham, ñātikatham yānakatham gāmakatham nigamakatham nagarakatham janapadakatham itthikatham sūrakatham visikhākatham kumbhaṭṭhānakatham², pubbapetakatham nānattakatham, lokakkhāyikam samuddakkhāyikam itibhavābhavakatham iti vā.

Tam kissa hetu? Nesā, bhikkhave, kathā atthasaṃhitā nāḍibrahmacariyakā na nibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattati.

Kathentā ca kho tumhe, bhikkhave, ‘idaṃ dukkhan’ti katheyyātha, ‘ayaṃ dukkhasamudayo’ti katheyyātha, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodho’ti katheyyātha, ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā’ti katheyyātha. Tam kissa hetu? Esā, bhikkhave, kathā atthasaṃhitā, esā āḍibrahmacariyakā, esā nibbidāya virāgāya nirodhāya upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya saṃvattati. Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, ‘idaṃ dukkhan’ti yogo karaṇīyo ...pe... ‘ayaṃ dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā’ti yogo karaṇīyo’ti.”

Saṃyuttanikāyo, Mahāvaggo, Saccasaṃyuttam, Samādhivaggo

anekavihitam
kumbhaṭṭhānakatham
nānattakatham
lokakkhāyikam

aneka + vihita
kumbha + ṭṭhāna +katham
nāna + atta + katham
loka + akkhāyika

not one + arranged: diverse
waterpot + place + speech,
gossip, desultory talk
world + narration

¹ *tiracchānakatha*—lit.: talk not upright, the commentary explains this as ‘horizontal talk’: talk which, because it does not lead to emancipation and runs horizontal compared to the upward leading paths towards heaven and liberation

² *visikhākatham; kumbhaṭṭhānakatham*—‘gossip at the street corner and at the well’. Both describe low talk because they refer to the places where people were exchanging news when meeting and while filling up their waterpots.