

Udana VI.2

Jatila Sutta

Ascetics

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Know him well is to know Him

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying in Savatthi at the Eastern Monastery, the palace of Migara's mother. Now at that time the Blessed One, having emerged from his seclusion in the late afternoon, was sitting outside the doorway. Then King Pasenadi Kosala went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. Then seven coiled-hair ascetics, seven Jain ascetics, seven naked ascetics, seven one-cloth ascetics, and seven wanderers -- their nails grown long, their body-hair grown long -- walked past not far from the Blessed One.

- King Pasenadi Kosala saw
- the seven coiled-hair ascetics,
- seven Jain ascetics,
- seven naked ascetics,
- seven one-cloth ascetics, and
- seven wanderers -- their nails grown long, their body-hair grown long

-- walking past not far from the Blessed One. On seeing them, he arranged his upper robe over one shoulder, knelt down with his right knee on the ground, saluted the ascetics with his hands before his heart, and announced his name to them three times: "I am the king, venerable sirs, Pasenadi Kosala. I am the king, venerable sirs, Pasenadi Kosala. I am the king, venerable sirs, Pasenadi Kosala." Then not long after the ascetics had passed, he returned to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One, "Of those in the world who are arahants or on the path to arahantship, are these among them?"

"Your majesty, as a layman

- enjoying sensual pleasures;
- living crowded with wives and children;
- using Kasi fabrics and sandalwood;
- wearing garlands, scents, and creams;
- handling gold and silver,

It is hard for you to know whether these are arahants or on the path to arahantship.

"It is through living together that a person's virtue may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning. "

"It is through dealing with a person that his purity may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

"It is through adversity that a person's endurance may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

"It is through discussion that a person's discernment may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning."

"How amazing, lord! How awesome! How well that was put by the Blessed One! 'Your majesty, as a layman enjoying sensual pleasures; living crowded with wives and children; using Kasi fabrics and sandalwood; wearing garlands, scents, and creams; handling gold and silver, it is hard for you to know whether these are arahants or on the path to arahantship.

"It is through living together that a person's virtue may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

"It is through dealing with a person that his purity may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

"It is through adversity that a person's endurance may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning.

"It is through discussion that a person's discernment may be known, and then only after a long period, not a short period; by one who is attentive, not by one who is inattentive; by one who is discerning, not by one who is not discerning."

"These men, lord, are my spies, my scouts, returning after going out through the countryside. They go out first, and then I go. Now, when they have scrubbed off the dirt and mud, are well-bathed and well-perfumed, have trimmed their hair and beards, and have put on white clothes, they will go about endowed and provided with the five cords of sensuality."

Then, on realizing the significance of that, the Blessed One on that occasion exclaimed:

One should not make an effort everywhere.

One should not be another's hireling.

One should not live dependent on another.

One should not make the Dhamma a trade.

Note: For another presentation of the same topic, see [AN IV.192](#).