MAJJHIMA NIKĀYA

Sutta 75

The Māgaṇḍiya Spell

Translated from the Pāļi by Michael M. Olds



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Buddha Dust

Bits and scraps, crumbs, fine Particles that drift down to Walkers of The Walk. Then: Thanks for that, Far-Seer! Great 'Getter-of-the-Get'n!

May all beings be well and happy
May I act with friendliness in thought, word, and deed
towards all living beings
in whatsoever of the ten directions they may abide
whether far or near
May I sympathize with their pains and sorrows
Empathize with their situations
and be at all times objectively detached.

Majjhima Nikāya

- 2. Majjhimapannāsa
- 3. Paribbājaka Vagga

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Māgaņdiya Suttam

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Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa

In the name of The Lucky Man, Aristocrat, Consummately Self-Awakened One

For my Mother and Father, in gratitude for giving me this life.

To My Teachers
in the order encountered
H.C. Warren, Buddhism in Translations,
The Pali Text Society translators
T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, F.L. Woodward,
E.M. Hare, I.B. Horner,
and all those too little sung heros
that came before
and laid the foundations of today's Dhamma resources.
Ven. Jinamurti
Ven. Mew Fung Chen
Ven. M. Puṇṇaji
Carlos Castaneda

Majjhima Nikāya

- 2. Majjhimapannāsa
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Sutta 75

Māgaņdiya Suttam

The Māgandiya Spell

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I HEAR TELL:

Once Upon a Time, The Lucky Man, Kuruland, come a revisit'n.

Now a market town of the Kurus was named TheWordisMyWork/Pleasure'stheWord and there, in the kiln shed of a Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan, The Lucky Man had spread out a grass matting.

Then The Lucky Man,
rising up in the early pre-dawn,
attending to bowl and robes,
entered Kammassadhamma Town,
and after his beggar's rounds,
after the meal,
having gone deep into the forest,
he sat down at the root (mula) of a tree to spend the afternoon.

At the same time, the bum, Nonose, who was always pacing back and forth and wandering around came upon the kiln shed of the Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan where he saw that grass matting.

"For whom is this grass matting spread, good Bharadvaja?

It is the bedding of some beggar, methinks,

says he to the Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan."

"There is this shaman Gotama, Magandiya,

Son of the Sakkyans,

having broken off from the Sakkyan Clan to become a homeless beggar.

They say this Gotama is the Lucky Man,

The Potter,

The Lightning Bearer,

an Arahant,

The #1-Highest-Self-Awakened-One,

Master of Conduct.

Seer of the Worlds,

The Well-Gone,

None-Better as a Dhamma-Trainer,

Teacher of Gods and Man,

The Buddha,

The Bhaggava.

This is that good Gotama's bedding."

"A low sight indeed,

is this we see,

good Bharadvaja;

this bedding of that bhunahuno wet blanket,

the good Gotama."

"Watch out for your words, Magandiya!

Watch out for your words!

Many are the Wise Nobles,

wise Brahman,

wise Householders,

wise Shaman who have found peace of mind

having been skillfully trained by Gotama

in the methods of this aristocratic Dhamma."

"I'd tell that broke-tooth Gotama straight to his face,

good Bharadvaja,

if I were to see him:

'The Shaman Gotama is a kill-joy.'

How come?

Because this is what an investigation of our suttas would say."

"If you have no objection, good Magandiya,

I would repeat this to the Shaman Gotama."

[&]quot;Feel free, honorable Bharadvaja,

to repeat what I said."

Then, as the afternoon turned into evening,
The Lucky Man,
rising up from his seat at the root of that tree,
emerged from the forest,
returned to the kiln shed
of the Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan,
and sat down on the grass matting he had spread out there,
and a short time later the Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan approached,
gave salutation,
and sat down on a low seat to the side
at a respectful distance.

There, after the exchange of greetings and polite talk, The Lucky Man said:

"There was some conversation between you and the wanderer Magandiya, was there not, Bharadvaja, concerning this spreading of grass?"

Well, Bharadvaja was flabbergasted!

"Why, that was the very thing I had come to discuss with you, Good Gotama!" says he.

"You must have read my mind!"

But before they could get into that, this conversation was interrupted by the arrival of the wanderer Magandiya who, always pacing back and forth and wandering around had returned once again to the kiln shed of the Brahman of the Bharadvaja clan.

There he too gave salutation and exchanged greetings and polite talk and sat down on a low seat to the side at a respectful distance.

And this is the exchange that followed:

"The Eye, Magandiya, enjoys formed material, loves formed material, delights in formed material; so the Tathāgata gets it by the teeth, puts a guard over it, watches over it and teaches Dhamma for it's restraint.

Is this what you intended, Magandiya, when you said:

'The Shaman Gotama is a bhunahu, life-stiffler?'''

"This is it!

Good Gotama, it was just because of this that I said:

'The Shaman Gotama is a life-stiffler.'

How come?

Because this is what an investigation of our suttas would say."

"The Ear,

Nose,

Tongue,

Body

and Mind, Magandiya,
enjoy their respective objects of sense,
love their respective objects of sense,
delight in their respective objects of sense,
so the Tathāgata gets them by the teeth,
puts a guard over them,
watches over them
and teaches Dhamma for their restraint.

Is this what you intended, Magandiya, when you said:

'The Shaman Gotama is a life-stiffler?'"

"This is it!

Good Gotama, it was just because of this that I said:

'The Shaman Gotama is a life-stiffler.'

How come?

Because this is what an investigation of our suttas would say."

"What do you think, Magandiya?

Here someone thoroughly indulges eye-consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished,

pleasing, liked, that which carries pleasure.

Then, after a time, having discovered, as it really is, the origins of, subsidence of, taste of, wretchedness of and escape from formed materials, he lets go of hunger for formed materials, consuming passion for formed materials, and, with thirst gone, he lives subjectively at peace in heart.

What do you think about sucha one as suchas this, Magandiya?"

"Not a thing, Good Gotama."

"What do you think, Magandiya?

Here someone thoroughly indulges ear, nose,

tongue,

taste

and mental consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing,

liked,

that which carries pleasure.

Then, after a time, having discovered, as it really is, the origins of, subsidence of, taste of, wretchedness of and escape from sounds, scents, tastes, touches and mental objects,

and, with thirst gone,

he lives subjectively at peace in heart.

What do you think about sucha one as suchas this, Magandiya?"

"Not a thing, Good Gotama."

"Even so, Magandiya, in a similar way, I once lived in a house provided with the five pleasure-cords; hemmed in by, thoroughly indulging in eye-consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked, that which carries pleasure; thoroughly indulging ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked. that which carries pleasure."

"I had three palaces, Magandiya; one for the summer, one for the winter and one for the rains.

During the four months of the rains, I lived in that palace surrounded by female entertainers, and not once during the four months would I descend from that palace."

"Then, after a time,
having discovered, as it really is,
the origins of,
subsidence of,
taste of,
wretchedness of
and escape from sense pleasures,
with thirst gone,
I lived subjectively at peace in heart."

"Then, seeing other beings

not free from lust for pleasures, hungry for pleasures, being eaten away by pleasures, being burnt up by pleasures, thoroughly indulging in sense pleasures, I neither partook of those delights nor experienced envy of those who did."

"How come?"

"Because there is, Magandiya, happiness other than sensual pleasure, other than unskillful ways, the sweet, godlike pleasure to be had by getting high.

Finding happiness in this happiness I have no thirst for and do not partake in what has been left behind."

"In the same way, Magandiya, as it might be that a rich householder or householder's son, a man of wealth and possessions provided with the five pleasure-cords who, thoroughly indulging in eye-consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked. that which carries pleasure; thoroughly indulging ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked, that which carries pleasure; but a man well behaved in body, well behaved in speech, well behaved in thought,

at the break-up of the elements

at the death of the body might find consciousness again in a good birth, a heavenly location, the company of the Gods of the Three and Thirty.

And there in Nandana Grove, accompanied by nymphs, he might partake of and enjoy the five pleasure-cords of the gods."

"Then, he might see a householder or householder's son provided with and indulging in the five pleasure-cords of humans."

"What do you think about this, Magandiya?

Would that young god there in Nandana Grove accompanied by nymphs, partaking of and enjoying the five pleasure-cords of the gods envy that householder's or householder's son's enjoyment of the five pleasure-cords of humans?

Would he return to human enjoyments?"

"No, Good Gotama, he would not.

How come?

Because god-like pleasures are way beyond, much higher than human pleasures."

"In the same way, Magandiya, I once lived in a house provided with the five pleasure-cords; hemmed in by, thoroughly indulging in eve-consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked, that which carries pleasure; thoroughly indulging ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked. that which carries pleasure."

"Then, after a time,
having discovered,
as it really is,
the origins of,
subsidence of,
taste of,
wretchedness of
and escape from sense pleasures,
with thirst gone,
I lived subjectively at peace in heart."

"Then, seeing other beings not free from lust for pleasures, hungry for pleasures, being eaten away by pleasures, being burnt up by pleasures, thoroughly indulging in sense pleasures, I neither partook of those delights nor experienced envy of those who did."

"How come?"

"Because there is, Magandiya, happiness other than sensual pleasure, other than unskillful ways, the sweet, godlike pleasure to be had by getting high.

Finding happiness in this happiness I have no thirst for and do not partake in what has been left behind."

"In the same way, Magandiya, as there might be some leper here, his limbs covered in sores, covered in rot, worm-eaten, tearing at the face of his wounds, scratching them open with his nails, burning his body over a charcoal pit."

"Bye and bye this man's friends and acquaintances and blood-relatives set him up with a medicine man and this medicine man makes up an herbal potion and by way of that potion he is completely released from his leprosy, well, and happy, self-reliant, able to come and go as he likes."

"Then he might see another leper, his limbs covered in sores, covered in rot, worm-eaten, tearing at the face of his wounds, scratching them open with his nails, burning his body over a charcoal pit."

"What do you think about this, Magandiya?

Would that man envy that leper's use of a charcoal pit as his medicinal treatment?"

"No, Good Gotama.

How come?

There being sickness, a medicine is needed; there not being sickness, no medicine is needed."

"In the same way, Magandiya, I once lived in a house provided with the five pleasure-cords; hemmed in by, thoroughly indulging in eye-consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked. that which carries pleasure; thoroughly indulging ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousness, enrapt in lust for the wished, pleasing, liked, that which carries pleasure."

"Then, after a time,
having discovered,
as it really is,
the origins of,
subsidence of,
taste of,
wretchedness of
and escape from sense pleasures,
with thirst gone,
I lived subjectively at peace in heart."

"Then, seeing other beings not free from lust for pleasures, hungry for pleasures, being eaten away by pleasures, being burnt up by pleasures, thoroughly indulging in sense pleasures, I neither partook of those delights nor experienced envy of those who did."

"How come?"

"Because there is, Magandiya, happiness other than sensual pleasure, other than unskillful ways, the sweet, god-like pleasure to be had by getting high; finding happiness in this happiness I have no thirst for and do not partake in what has been left behind."

"In the same way, Magandiya, as there might be some leper here, his limbs covered in sores, covered in rot, worm-eaten, tearing at the face of his wounds, scratching them open with his nails, burning his body over a charcoal pit."

"Bye and bye this man's friends a

this man's friends and acquaintances and blood-relatives set him up with a medicine man and this medicine man makes up an herbal potion and by way of that potion he is completely released from his leprosy, well, and happy, self-reliant, able to come and go as he likes."

"Then come along two strong men who grab him by the limbs and drag him towards that pit of charcoal."

"What do you think about this, Magandiya?

Would that man not twist his body This Way and that?"

"Yes, Good Gotama.

How come?

Contact with Fire is painful, it burns and is very injurious."

"What do you think about this, Magandiya?

In this case
is it only just now
that contact with fire is painful,
burns
and is very injurious,
or was it the case before this
that contact with fire was painful,
burned
and caused injury?"

"Both now and before, Good Gotama, contact with fire is painful, burns and is very injurious.

It is because this leper,
his limbs covered in sores,
covered in rot,
worm-eaten,
tearing at the face of his wounds,
scratching them open with his nails,
is out of control,
that he perceives contact with the painful
as contact with the pleasurable."

[&]quot;In the same way, Magandiya,

in the long distant past contact with sense pleasures was painful, burned and caused injury; in the distant future, too, contact with sense pleasures will be painful. burn. and cause injury; and so too in the present contact with sense pleasures is painful, burns, and causes injury; and those, Magandiya, not free from hunger and thirst for sense pleasures, being eaten away, being burned up by sense pleasures, are out of control and perceive contact with the painful as contact with the pleasurable."

"In the same way, Magandiya, as there might be some leper here, his limbs covered in sores. covered in rot. worm-eaten. tearing at the face of his wounds, scratching them open with his nails, burning his body over a charcoal pit; but the more, Magandiya, this leper here, his limbs covered in sores, covered in rot, worm-eaten, tears at the face of his wounds, scratching them open with his nails, and burns his body over a charcoal pit, the more infected, foul-smelling and rotten his wounds become and sorry is the satisfaction he gets from scratching

and burning his body in that pit of charcoal."

"In the same way, Magandiya, those beings not free from hunger and thirst for sense pleasures, even while being eaten away, being burned up by sense pleasures, pursue sense pleasures, and the more those beings, not free from hunger and thirst for sense pleasures, while being eaten away, being burned up by sense pleasures, pursue sense pleasures, the more their hunger and thirst for sense pleasures grows and the more they are eaten away and burned up by sense pleasures and sorry is the satisfaction they get from the five pleasure-cords."

"What do you think about this, Magandiya?

Have you ever heard of or seen
a King or the Chief Minister of a King
provided with the five pleasure-cords;
hemmed in by,
thoroughly indulging in
the five pleasure-cords,
who, not having let go
of hunger and thirst for sense pleasures,
not having put out the burning
of sense pleasures,
that lived
or lives
with thirst gone,
subjectively at peace in heart?"
"No, Good Gotama."

"That is good, Magandiya, that is good.

Neither have I heard of or seen

a King or the Chief Minister of a King provided with the five pleasure-cords; hemmed in by, thoroughly indulging in the five pleasure-cords, who, not having let go of hunger and thirst for sense pleasures, not having put out the burning of sense pleasures, that lived or lives with thirst gone, subjectively at peace in heart." "But, Magandia, those Shaman and Brahmans who lived. or who are living having let go of hunger and thirst for sense pleasures, having put out the burning of sense pleasures, having discovered, as it really is, the origins of, subsidence of. taste of. wretchedness of and escape from sense pleasures, with thirst gone, live subjectively at peace in heart."|| ||

Non-disease the highest gain
The highest pleasure, Nibbāna
And of Ways, the Eight Dimensioned
A peaceful deathless journey is

"This is wonderful, Good Gotama, this is marvelous!

This is really well spoken, Good Gotama!"

Non-disease the highest gain The highest pleasure, Nibbāna.

[&]quot;We too have this in our tradition

as a saying of the teachers of our teachers."

"But, Magandiya, this saying of the teachers of your teachers that you have heard:

'Non-disease's the highest gain, the highest pleasure, Nibbāna,'

what is your understanding of this 'non-disease', what is your understanding of this 'Nibbāna?'"

Well, at this Magandiya strokes his limbs and says:

'This is that 'non-disease', Good Gotama, this is that 'Nibbāna,' for I now enjoy the pleasure of perfect health."

"In the same way, Magandiya, as some man here, born blind, unable to distinguish the light from the dark, unable to see deep dark blue shapes or golden shapes, or blood red shapes or bright orange shapes, unable to see what was on the level or what was not on the level, unable to see the stars or the moon and sun, hearing some sighted man say:

'Indeed a well made clean white robe is a pleasurable thing!'

goes around searching for sucha white thing.

But then another person might come along with an 'holy oil and charcoal dust anointed' piece of sturdy-cloth, a Deceiver who says:

'Here you are, my good man, this is a well made clean white robe!'

And he might accept it and taking it and dressing himself in it

and dressed and proud of himself he might, unable to contain his pride in himself burst out saying:

'Indeed a well made clean white robe is a pleasurable thing!'''

"What do you think about that, Magandiya, did that man, born blind, knowing and seeing accept that oily and sooty piece of rough-wear, take it and dressing himself in it and dressed and proud of himself, unable to contain his pride in himself burst out saving:

'Indeed a well made clean white robe is a pleasurable thing!'?

Or was this done out of faith in that sighted man?"

"It was not out of knowing and seeing, that that man, blind from birth accepted that oily and sooty piece of rough wear and dressing himself in it and dressed and proud of himself, unable to contain his pride in himself, burst out saying:

'Indeed a well made clean white robe is a pleasurable thing!'

It was out of faith in that sighted man."

"In the same way, Magandiya, wanderers of other views are blind, without sight,

without knowing non-disease, without seeing Nibbāna, they say:"

'Non-disease's the highest gain, the highest pleasure, Nibbāna.'

"But, Magandiya, it was this that was said by the Arahants and Buddhas of Old:"

'Non-disease the highest gain
The highest pleasure, Nibbāna
And of Ways, the Eight Dimensioned
A peaceful deathless journey is.'

"And here this is come down to the ordinary common man, and you, Magandiya.

And of this body,
which is a living disease,
a living boil,
a living sting,
a living Abyss of Hell,
a living sickness,
of this living disease,
living boil,
living sting,
living Abyss,
living sickness,
you say:

'This is that "non-disease", Good Gotama, this is that "Nibbāna,""

"That Aristocratic Eye does not exist in you, Magandiya, by which you might see with the eyes of an Aristocrat, Non-Disease and Nibbāna."

"I am so inspired, Good Gotama that I believe the Good Gotama could so teach me Dhamma that I might know non-disease, see Nibbāna."

"In the same way, Magandiya,

as there might be some man here, born blind. unable to distinguish the light from the dark, unable to see deep dark blue shapes or golden shapes, or blood red shapes or bright orange shapes, unable to see what was on the level or what was not on the level, unable to see the stars or the moon and sun. and bye and bye this man's friends and acquaintances and blood-relatives set him up with a medicine man and this medicine man makes up an herbal potion, but is unable to clear up his sight, is unable to make him see."

"What do you think about that, Magandiya, would that medicine man, because of this experience fatigue and annoyance?"

"Even so, Good Gotama."

"In the same way, Magandiya, were I to teach you Dhamma, saying:

'Thus is non-disease; thus is Nibbāna,' and you did not understand

'Thus is non-disease; thus is Nibbāna,'

this would fatigue and annoy me."

"I am so inspired, Good Gotama that I believe the Good Gotama could so teach me Dhamma that I might know non-disease, see Nibbāna."

"In the same way, Magandiya, as some man here, born blind, unable to distinguish the light from the dark, unable to see deep dark blue shapes or golden shapes, or blood red shapes or bright orange shapes, unable to see what was on the level or what was not on the level, unable to see the stars or the moon and sun, hearing some sighted man say:

'Indeed a well made clean white robe is a pleasurable thing!'

goes around searching for sucha white thing.

But then another person might come along with an oily and sooty piece of rough-wear, a Deceiver who says:

'Here you are, my good man, this is a well made clean white robe!'

And he might accept it and taking it he might dress himself in it.

Then bye and bye
this man's friends and acquaintances and blood-relatives
set him up with a medicine man
and this medicine man makes up an herbal potion,
administers emetics and purgatives,
satisfy his eyes
by dropping medicinal oils into them,
administers drugs through the nose
applies collyrium to the eyes,
and because of this
he might be able to make him see,
clear up his sight.

With the clearing up of his sight, that man might let go his longing and love for that oily and sooty piece of rough-wear, but react with anger to that man that deceived him with the oily and sooty piece of rough cloth saying:

'Here you are, my good man, this is a well made clean white robe!' considering him as no friend, considering him an enemy, he might even take his life.''

"In the same way, Magandiya, were I to teach you Dhamma, saying:

'Thus is non-disease; thus is Nibbāna,' you might understand

'Thus is non-disease; thus is Nibbāna.'

With the clearing up of your sight you might let go of your longing and love for the five stockpiled piles of Dukkha, but you might think:

'For a long time I have been done in, deceived, cheated by my mind, for, of a mind to get forms, I grasped, of a mind to get sense experience, I grasped, of a mind to get perception, I grasped, of a mind to get a personalized world, I grasped, of a mind to get consciousness, I grasped; grasping rebounded in living; living rebounded in birth; birth rebounded in old age and death, grief and lamentation, pain and misery and despair.

Such was the origin of this whole mess of pain."

[&]quot;I am so inspired, Good Gotama

that I believe the Good Gotama could so teach me Dhamma that I could hope to rise above such murk."

"In this case then, Magandiya, make friends with good men; from making friends with good men, Magandiva comes hearing True Dhamma; from hearing True Dhamma, Magandiya, comes taking up the Dhamma within the Dhamma; from taking up the Dhamma within the Dhamma will come knowing for yourself, will come seeing for yourself that these are a disease, a boil, a sting but that here this disease, this boil. this sting can be uprooted absolutely.

From the eradication of grasping, the eradication of living; from the eradication of living, the eradication of birth; from the eradication of birth, the eradication of aging and death, grief and lamentation, pain and misery and despair.

Such is the eradication of this whole mess of pain."

"Most Excellent, Good Gotama!

Most Excellent!"

"In the same way
as if someone had turned the upside down upright;
or had opened the closed;
or explained The Way
to someone who was lost;
or brought an oil lamp into the dark
so that those with eyes in their heads that could see
could see material shapes;

in the same way the Good Gotama has set up, opened up, explained, and illuminated Dhamma in a multiplicity of ways."

"I take refuge in the venerable Gotama, in the Dhamma, in the Order of Beggars."

"May I gain the going forth under the good Gotama, may I gain ordination."

"He who, of other views wishes for the going forth in this Dhamma/Vinaya, Magandiya, is given probation for four months.

At the end of four months the Bhikkhus, approving of him, may allow the going forth, may grant him ordination.

Nevertheless here I see room to allow for differences in individuals.

If, Good Gotama, those of other views who wish for the going forth in this Dhamma/Vinaya are given probation for four months, and at the end of four months the Bhikkhus, approving of him, may allow the going forth, may grant him ordination, I will undergo probation for four years, and at the end of four years the Bhikkhus, approving of me, may allow the going forth, may grant me ordination.

But as I hear tell,

The Beggar Magandiya received orders at that time at the hands of the Buddha himself, and living by himself, above it all, APPAMATTA, carefully, energetically, resolutely, shortly realized and attained for himself by his own higher powers that goal which justifies even young men of good families giving up the household life for homelessness, and so living he knew for himself:

'Left Behind is birth, lived is the Best of Lives, done is Duty's doing, no more this side or that, no more being any kind of an It in any place of Atness for me!'

And that is how Magandiya became one who was numbered among the Arahants.