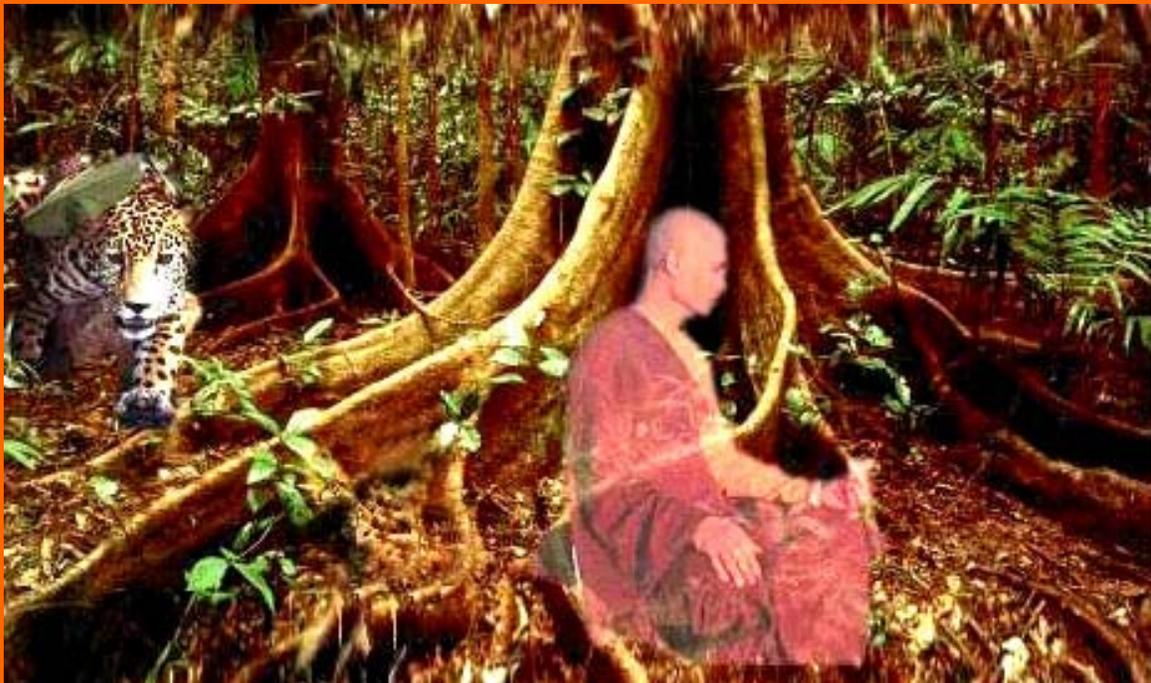


The Fear & Terror to A Forest Monk

“Bhaya-bherava Sutta”

Fear and Terror

Majjhima Nikaya 4



**Attainment of Enlightenment
In
Forest Seclusion**

**Compiled for the Serene Joys and Emotion of the Pious
A Gift of Dhamma**

Bhaya-bherava Sutta

Fear and Terror

Preface

Thus have I heard, in this discourse that: Buddha has set an example for his Sanghas to follow his example by seeking the forest seclusion to gain enlightenment. This was what he said in this discourse delivered to the *Janussoni* the Brahman:

- *Is Master Gotama their leader?*
- *Is Master Gotama their helper?*
- *Is Master Gotama their inspirer?*
- *Do they take Master Gotama as their example?"*

Yes, the Buddha said. It is not easy to live a secluded life in isolation, alone in the forest:

- *'It's not easy to maintain seclusion,*
- *not easy to enjoy being alone.*
- *The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration.'*

However, Buddha said: "*Seeing in myself this purity of bodily activities, I felt even more unconcerned about staying in the wilderness.* Our Lord Buddha said, he is the setting the example for all his Sanghas to follow his example and get inspiration from his action and example. He seeks out the forest seclusion to gain enlightenment; so also he expects his Sanghas (*Bhikkhu & Bhikkhuni*) to follow his example.

Looking at today's Sangha, many are seeking for fame and fortune; they all seek out to live in crowded metropolitan urban area and city dwelling; they charge a hefty amount of fees for a meditation retreat unlike the days of the Buddha; Buddha will seek out for the right people for the right time for kamma fruition. All Buddha teachings and his Dhamma were given free of charge – for the good and happiness of Gods and humankind.

Times have changed; and the Buddha dispensation must be on the decline, as Buddha had predicted? When Buddha said, his dispensation will last for 1,000 years with the eight special conditions called "*attha garudhamma*" in establishing the Bhikkhuni Sasana. Since Bhikkhuni sasana had been defunct for over 1,000 years in Theravada, is this a sign of disappearance of true Buddha sasana in Theravada, as Mahayana still has Bhikkhuni Sasana to this day?.(See Mahaparinibbana sutta for defining the Buddha's sasana).

Bhaya-bherava Sutta

Fear and Terror

(Sathadevamanusssanam)

He is the teacher of Gods and Humankind

"iti pi so bhagava araham sammāsambuddho
vijjācharana sampanno sugato lokavidu anuttaro
purisa dhamma sarati satta deva manussanam
buddho bhagava ti".

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa

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Bhaya-bherava Sutta

Fear and Terror

Majjhima Nikaya 4

Translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near *Savatthi* at *Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's monastery*. Then *Janussoni* the brahman went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings and courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said to the Blessed One,

"Master Gotama, the sons of good families who have gone forth from the home life into homelessness out of conviction in Master Gotama:

- *Is Master Gotama their leader?*
- *Is Master Gotama their helper?*
- *Is Master Gotama their inspirer?*
- *Do they take Master Gotama as their example?"*

"Yes, brahman, so it is. The sons of good families who have gone forth from the home life into homelessness out of conviction in me: I am their leader. I am their helper. I am their inspirer. They take me as their example."

1.1. Can Monk endure the isolated forest life?

"But, Master Gotama, it's not easy to endure isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. It's not easy to maintain seclusion, not easy to enjoy being alone. The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration."

"Yes, brahman, so it is. It's not easy to endure isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. It's not easy to maintain seclusion, not easy to enjoy being alone. The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration. Before my awakening, when I was still an unawakened Bodhisatta, the thought occurred to me as well:

- *It's not easy to maintain seclusion,*

- *not easy to enjoy being alone.*
- *The forests, as it were, plunder the mind of a monk who has not attained concentration.'*

"The thought occurred to me: 'When monks or contemplatives who are unpurified in their bodily activities resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings, it's the fault of their unpurified bodily activities that they give rise to unskillful fear and terror. But it's not the case that I am unpurified in my bodily activities when I resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. I am purified in my bodily activities. I am one of those noble ones who are purified in their bodily activities when they resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings.

'Seeing in myself this purity of bodily activities, I felt even more unconcerned about staying in the wilderness.

"The thought occurred to me: 'When monks or contemplatives who are unpurified in their verbal activities...unpurified in their mental activities...unpurified in their livelihood resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings, it's the fault of their unpurified livelihood that they give rise to unskillful fear and terror. But it's not the case that I am unpurified in my livelihood when I resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. I am purified in my livelihood. I am one of those noble ones who are purified in their livelihood when they resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings.' Seeing in myself this purity of livelihood, I felt even more unconcerned about staying in the wilderness.

1.2. Monk who are fiercely passionate of sensual pleasure

"The thought occurred to me: 'When monks or contemplatives who are covetous and fiercely passionate for sensual pleasures...I am not covetous...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who have minds of ill will*, with destructive attitudes...I have a mind of good will...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives who are overcome by *torpor and lethargy*...I am devoid of torpor and lethargy...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives who are *restless and with an unstill mind*...I have a still mind...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who are uncertain and doubting*...I have gone beyond uncertainty...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who are given to praising themselves* and disparaging others...I do not praise myself or disparage others...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who tend toward panic and dread*...I have gone beyond horripilation...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who are desirous of gains*, offerings, and fame...I have few wants...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who are lazy and lacking in persistence*...My persistence is aroused...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who are muddled in their mindfulness and unalert*...I have mindfulness established...!....

"...'When monks or contemplatives *who are unconcentrated, with straying mind*...I am consummate in concentration...!....

"The thought occurred to me: 'When monks or contemplatives *who are drooling idiots, resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings, it's the fault of their drooling idiocy that they give rise to unskillful fear and terror*.

But it's not the case that I am a drooling idiot, when I resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings. I am consummate in discernment. I am one of those noble ones who are consummate in discernment when they resort to isolated forest or wilderness dwellings.' Seeing in myself this consummate discernment, I felt even more unconcerned about staying in the wilderness.

1.3. Places in the forest that are awe-inspiring

"The thought occurred to me: 'What if -- on recognized, designated nights such as the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the lunar fortnight -- I were to stay in the sort of places that are awe-inspiring and make your hair stand on end,

- such as park-shrines,
- forest-shrines, and
- tree-shrines?

Perhaps I would get to see that fear and terror.' So at a later time -- on recognized, designated nights such as the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth of the lunar fortnight -- I stayed in the sort of places that are awe-inspiring and make your hair stand on end, such as park-shrines, forest-shrines, and tree-shrines. And while I was staying there a wild animal would come, or a bird would make a twig fall, or wind would rustle the fallen leaves. The thought would occur to me:

'Is this that fear and terror coming?'

1.4. Subdue the fear and terror

Then the thought occurred to me: 'Why do I just keep waiting for fear? What if I were to subdue fear and terror in whatever state they come?' So when fear and terror came while I was walking back and forth, I would not stand or sit or lie down.

I would keep walking back and forth until I had subdued that fear and terror.

When fear and terror came while I was standing, I would not walk or sit or lie down.

I would keep standing until I had subdued that fear and terror.

When fear and terror came while I was sitting, I would not lie down or stand up or walk.

I would keep sitting until I had subdued that fear and terror.

When fear and terror came while I was lying down, I would not sit up or stand or walk.

I would keep lying down until I had subdued that fear and terror.

"There are some monks and contemplatives, brahman, who have the perception of 'day' when it is night, and of 'night' when it is day. This, I tell you, is their being in a dwelling of delusion. As for me, I have the perception of 'day' when it is day, and of 'night' when it is night. If anyone, when speaking rightly, were to say, 'A being not subject to delusion has appeared in the world for the benefit and happiness of many, out of sympathy for the world, for the welfare, benefit, and happiness of human and divine beings,' he would rightly be speaking of me.

"Unflagging persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established.

- *My body was calm and unaroused,*
- *my mind concentrated and single.*
- *Quite withdrawn from sensuality,*
- *withdrawn from unskillful mental qualities,*

1.5. I enter into Jhanas

I entered and remained in the first jhana: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation.

With the stilling of directed thought and evaluation, I entered and remained in the second jhana: rapture and pleasure bore of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation -- internal assurance.

With the fading of rapture I remained in equanimity, mindful and alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. I entered and remained in the third jhana, of which the noble ones declare, 'Equanimous and mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.'

With the abandoning of pleasure and pain -- as with the earlier disappearance of elation and distress -- I entered and remained in the fourth jhana: purity of equanimity and mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain.

1.6. I recollect my many past existences

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of recollecting my past lives*. I recollected my manifold past lives,

i.e., one birth, two...five, ten...fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand,

- *many eons of cosmic contraction,*
- *many eons of cosmic expansion,*
- *many eons of cosmic contraction and expansion:*

'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.' Thus I remembered my manifold past lives in their modes and details.

1.7. The first knowledge I attained through Jhanas

"This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night.

Ignorance was destroyed;

knowledge arose;

darkness was destroyed;

light arose -- as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, and resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability,

I directed it to the *knowledge of the passing away and reappearance of beings*.

1.8. My divine eye

I saw -- by means of the **divine eye**, purified and surpassing the human --

beings passing away and re-appearing, and

I discerned how they are inferior and superior,

beautiful and ugly,

fortunate and unfortunate in accordance with their kamma:

1.9. I see beings re-appeared in hell

'These beings -- who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech and mind, who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views -- with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell.

1.10. I see beings re-appeared in Heaven

But these beings -- who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, and mind, who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views -- with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.'

Thus -- by means of the divine eye, purified and surpassing the human -- I saw beings passing away and re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

1.11. The second knowledge

"This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose -- as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, and resolute.

"When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, and attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations*. I discerned, as it was actually present, that I discovered the fourfold knowledge -- ***the Four Noble truths***:

'This is stress...

This is the origination of stress...

This is the cessation of stress..

.This is the way leading to the cessation of stress...

1.12. Thus I have ended my last existence

These are fermentations...This is the origination of fermentations...This is the cessation of fermentations...This is the way leading to the cessation of fermentations.' My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the fermentation of sensuality, released from the fermentation of becoming, and released from the fermentation of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, 'Released.' I discerned that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'

1.13. My third Knowledge

"This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose -- as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, and resolute.

"Now, brahman, if the thought should occur to you, 'Perhaps Gotama the contemplative is even today not free of passion, not free of aversion, not free of delusion, which is why he resorts to isolated forest and wilderness dwellings,' it should not be seen in that way. It's through seeing two compelling reasons that I resort to isolated forest and wilderness dwellings: seeing a pleasant abiding for myself in the present, and feeling sympathy for future generations."

"How truly future generations have been shown sympathy by Master Gotama in the manner of one who is worthy and rightly self-awakened! Magnificent, Master Gotama!

Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned,

to reveal what was hidden,

to show the way to one who was lost, or

to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms,

in the same way has Master Gotama -- through many lines of reasoning -- made the Dhamma clear.

I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Sangha of monks.

May Master Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life"

Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!