

# AN 7.67: Nagaropama Sutta

## *Like a Citadel*

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

“Monks, when a royal frontier citadel has been well-equipped with seven kinds of citadel-equipment and can easily obtain four kinds of supplies without any trouble or difficulty, then that royal frontier citadel cannot be conquered by external enemies.

“What are the seven kinds of citadel-equipment it has been well-equipped with?

“Here, monks, a royal frontier citadel has support pillars which are deeply rooted, well-grounded, immovable, unshakable. This is the first kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has a moat which is deep and wide. This is the second kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has a watchman’s walkway which is high and wide. This is the third kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of weapons, arrows, and javelins. This is the fourth kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has a large army living in it - elephant-riders, horse-riders, archers, heralds, skirmishers, provisioners, princes, assault troops, veterans, heroes, shield-bearers, and indentured troops. This is the fifth kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has a gatekeeper who is wise, competent, and intelligent, who keeps out those who are unknown and lets in those who are known. This is the sixth kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has a wall which is tall, wide, and solidly mortared. This is the seventh kind of citadel-equipment which allows a royal frontier citadel to protect its residents and repel outsiders.

“These are the seven kinds of citadel-equipment it has been well-equipped with.

“What are the four kinds of supplies which it can easily obtain without any trouble or difficulty?

“Here, monks, a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of grass, wood, and water, so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of rice and grain, so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of seeds, beans, nuts, and legumes, so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders.

“Also, monks, a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of medicines – such as ghee, butter, oil, honey, sugarcane, and salt – so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders.

“Monks, these are the four kinds of supplies which it can easily obtain without any trouble or difficulty.

“Monks, when a royal frontier citadel has been well-equipped with these seven kinds of citadel-equipment and can easily obtain these four kinds of supplies without any trouble or difficulty, then, monks, it is called a royal frontier citadel that cannot be conquered by external enemies.

“In the same way, monks, when a disciple of the noble ones has seven good qualities and can easily attain the four Jhānas – superior mindstates which are visibly pleasant – without any trouble or difficulty, then, monks, they are called a disciple of the noble ones who cannot be affected by Māra, who cannot be affected by the Evil One.

“What are the seven good qualities that they have?

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has support pillars which are deeply rooted, well-grounded, immovable, and unshakable in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones has faith – faith in the Tathāgata’s awakening: ‘He is the Fortunate One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-Awakened One, with perfect knowledge and conduct, the Sublime One, the world-knower, the unsurpassed trainer of trainable people, the teacher of angels and humans, the Awakened One, the Fortunate One.’ Monks, with faith as their pillar, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the first good quality that they have.

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has a moat which is deep and wide in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones has conscience – conscientiously avoiding physical, verbal, and mental misconduct; conscientiously avoiding harmful, unwholesome things. Monks, with conscience as their moat, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the second good quality that they have.

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has a watchman’s walkway which is high and wide in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of

the noble ones has consideration - considerately avoiding physical, verbal, and mental misconduct; considerately avoiding harmful, unwholesome things. Monks, with consideration as their watchman's walkway, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the third good quality that they have.

"Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of weapons, arrows, and javelins in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones has a lot of information, maintains information, stockpiles information; about those teachings which are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in their conclusion, well-worded and well-phrased, proclaiming a completely perfect and pure spiritual life - these are the kinds of teachings which they have a lot of information about, which they have maintained, verbally recited, mentally examined, and well-comprehended with vision. Monks, with information as their weapon, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the fourth good quality that they have.

"Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has a large army living in it - such as elephant-riders, horse-riders, archers, heralds, skirmishers, provisioners, princes, assault troops, veterans, heroes, shield-bearers, and indentured troops - in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones lives with energy for abandoning unwholesome things and for committing to wholesome things; resolute, determined, and unrelenting regarding wholesome things. Monks, with energy as their army, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the fifth good quality that they have.

"Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has a gatekeeper who is wise, competent, and intelligent - who keeps out those who are unknown and lets in those who are known - in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones has mindfulness, the utmost refinement of mindfulness, and remembers even what was done and said long ago. Monks, with mindfulness as their gatekeeper, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the sixth good quality that they have.

"Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has a wall which is tall, wide, and solidly mortared in order to protect its residents and repel outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones has wisdom, the wisdom which knows arising and vanishing, and which leads to the noble breakthrough of the complete elimination of suffering. Monks, with wisdom as their mortar, a disciple of the noble ones abandons the unwholesome and develops the wholesome, abandons what is blameworthy and develops what is blameless, and maintains their own purity. This is the seventh good quality that they have.

"These are the seven good qualities that they have.

“What are the four Jhānas - superior mindstates which are visibly pleasant - which they can easily attain without any trouble or difficulty?”

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of grass, wood, and water, so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones, isolated from sensuality and from unwholesome things, attains and remains in the first Jhāna, which has thought, exploration, and the euphoria and pleasure produced by isolation. This makes them happy, unworried, and comfortable for approaching Nibbāna.

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of rice and grain, so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones, with the pacification of thought and exploration, attains and remains in the second Jhāna, which has internal serenity, mental unification, no thought, no exploration, and has the euphoria and pleasure produced by concentration. This makes them happy, unworried, and comfortable for approaching Nibbāna.

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of seeds, beans, nuts, and legumes, so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones, based on dispassion towards euphoria, remains equanimous, mindful, and aware while experiencing pleasure with the body; they attain and remain in the third Jhāna, which the noble ones describe as ‘An equanimous, mindful, and pleasant dwelling.’ This makes them happy, unworried, and comfortable for approaching Nibbāna.

“Monks, just as a royal frontier citadel has stockpiled a lot of medicines - such as ghee, butter, oil, honey, sugarcane, and salt - so that the residents can be happy, unworried, and comfortable when repelling outsiders, in the same way, monks, a disciple of the noble ones, based on abandoning pleasure, abandoning pain, and the previous disappearance of elation and depression, attains and remains in the fourth Jhāna, which is neither painful nor pleasant and which has purity of mindfulness and equanimity. This makes them happy, unworried, and comfortable for approaching Nibbāna.

“These are the four Jhānas - superior mindstates which are visibly pleasant - which they can easily attain without any trouble or difficulty.

“Monks, when a disciple of the noble ones has these seven good qualities and can easily attain these four Jhānas - superior mindstates which are visibly pleasant - without any trouble or difficulty, then, monks, they are called a disciple of the noble ones who cannot be affected by Māra, who cannot be affected by the Evil One.”