

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The Major Mass of Unpleasantness (Mahaadukkhakkhandhasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in the monasatery offered by Anaathapindika in Jeta's grove in Saavatthi. That morning a large number of bhikkhus put on robes and taking bowls and robes entered Saavatthi for alms. Then it ocured to those bhikkhus, it is too early to go for alms, what if we went to the monastery of the wandering ascetics . Then those bhikkhus went to the monastery of the wandering ascetics, exchanged friendly greetings and the bhikkhus sat on a side. Then the wandering ascetics said thus to the bhikkhus. Friends, the recluse Gotama points the accurate comprehension of sensuality, we too point the accurate comprehension of sensuality. The recluse Gotama points the accurate comprehension of matter, we too point the accurate comprehension of matter. The recluse Gotama points the accurate comprehension of feelings, we too point the accurate comprehension of feelings. So friends, what is the difference in the teaching and the advice given by our teacher and the recluse Gotama . Those bhikkhus, not pleased with those words of the wandering ascetics, and not able to protest, got up from their seats and went away thinking we will know the meaning of those words from the Blessed One.

Then those bhikkhus went the alms round in Saavatthi and after the meal was over and returning from the alms round approached the Blessed One and said thus: Venerable sir, this morning we put on robes and taking our bowls and robes entered Saavatthi for alms. Then it ocured to us, it is too early to go the alms round, what if we went to the monastery of the wandering ascetics. Then we went to the monastery of the wandering ascetics, exchanged friendly greetings and sat on a side. To us seated the wandering ascetics said thus: Friends, the recluse Gotama points the accurate comprehension of sensuality, we too point the accurate comprehension of sensuality. The recluse Gotama points the accurate comprehension of matter, we too point the accurate comprehension of matter. The recluse Gotama points the accurate comprehension of feelings, we too point the accurate

comprehension of feelings. So friends, what is the difference, in the teaching and the advice given by our teacher and the recluse Gotama. Venerable sir, we were not pleased with the words of the wandering ascetics, yet unable to protest we got up from our seats and came away thinking we will know the meaning of those words from the Blessed One.

Bhikkhus, to the wandering ascetics who say thus this is the reply. Friends, what is the satisfaction in sensuality, what is the danger in sensuality, what is the escape from sensuality. What is the satisfaction in matter, what is the danger in matter, what is the escape from matter. What is the satisfaction in feelings, what is the danger in feelings and what is the escape from feelings. Bhikkhus, when asked thus the wandering ascetics unable to reply become annoyed. What is the reason: Bhikkhus, it is beyond their range. In this world of gods and men together with the Maaras and Brahmaas and recluses and brahmins, I do not see anyone who could explain this other than the Thus Gone One, or a disciple of the Thus Gone One, or one who heard it here. .

Bhikkhus, what is the satisfaction in sensuality. Bhikkhus, fivefold are the strands of sensuality. What five: Exciting, agreeable, pleasant forms, arousing sensual desires, cognizable by eye consciousness. Exciting, agreeable, pleasant sounds, arousing sensual desires cognizable by ear consciousness. Exciting, agreeable, pleasant smells, arousing sensual desires cognizable by nose consciousness. Exciting, agreeable pleasant tastes, arousing sensual desires cognizable by tongue consciousness. Exciting agreeable pleasant touches, arousing sensual desires cognizable by body consciousness. Whatever pleasantness and pleasure arises on account of these five strands of sensuality, that is the satisfaction in sensuality.

Bhikkhus, what is the danger in sensuality. Whoever son of a clansman would have to make a living by some craft either handling money, or counting, or Mathematics, or farming, or trading, or rearing cattle, or ruling the country, or serving the king, or doing any other craft would have to undergo cold and heat, the sting of gad flies and yellow flies, the heat of the air, the touch of creeping things, would have to bear hunger and thirst. This is the danger of sensuality here and now, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality. This son of a clansman, strives and puts forth effort yet wealth

does not accrue to him. He grieves and laments beats his breast and comes to bewilderment of mind. This son of a clansman strives and puts forth effort and wealth accrues to him, then he comes to unpleasantness and displeasure administrating ways and means to protect his wealth. What if the king carries away my wealth, or thieves run away with it, what if fire burns it or be carried away by water. Or if unwelcome heirs carry it away. Then his wealth is either carried away by the king or carried away by thieves, or burnt by fire, or carried away by water, or some unwelcome heirs carry it away and he grieves and comes to much unpleasantness and displeasure. Bhikkhus, this is the danger of sensuality here and now, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality.

Again, bhikkhus, kings dispute with kings, warriors with warriors, brahmins with brahmins, householders with householders, mother disputes with the son, the son with the mother, the father with the son, the son with the father, brother with brother, brother with sister, sister with brother, friend with friend, They dispute quarrel and approach each other with hands, clods, sticks, weapons, and even face death, or come to deadly unpleasantness. This is the danger of sensuality here and now, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality.

Again on account of sensuality the two parties, take swords and shields, bows and arrows, and other weapons and approach each other, throw slippery implements at each other, shoot arrows, swords flickering like lightning, boiling oil is sprinkled and each other is crushed with superior force, necks are cut and they face death or deathly unpleasantness. This too is the danger of sensuality here and now, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality. .

Again on account of sensuality, robbers break into houses, plunder, rob, stay in ambush, go to others' wives,.. The king metes them punishment are caned and whipped, flogged with the jungle rope, flogged with the soiled stick, hands are severed, legs are severed, or both hands and legs are severed, ears and nose are severed, are put in the boiling gruel pot, shell tonsured, put in Raahu's mouth, garlanded with the blazing garland, hands are scorched, the bark dress is given, put with snakes, putting hooks in the flesh, cutting pieces of flesh from the body, driving a spike from ear to ear, beating to make the body like straw, immersing in the boiling oil, giving to the dogs to be eaten,

raising on a spike alive until death, and cutting the neck with the sword. This too is the danger of sensuality here and now, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality.

Again, bhikkhus, on account of sensuality, misbehaving in body, in words and mentally, after death are born in loss, in decrease are born in hell. This is the danger of sensuality here after, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality

Bhikkhus, what is the escape from sensuality, Whoever bhikkhu gives up the interest and greed for sensuality, that is the escape from sensuality. .

Bhikkhus, a recluse or brahmin who does not know the satisfaction of sensuality as the satisfaction , the danger of sensuality as the danger and the escape from sensuality as the escape, as it really is, would know sensuality himself accurately or teach others to attain accurate knowledge of sensuality is not a possibility. A recluse or brahmin, who knows the satisfaction of sensuality as the satisfaction, the danger of sensuality as the danger and the escape from sensuality as the escape, would know sensuality himself accurately or teach others to attain accurate knowledge of sensuality is a possibility.

Bhikkhus, what is the satisfaction of matter. Like a young girl of warrior caste, or brahmin caste, or of householder caste, in her fifteenth or sixteenth year, not too tall nor too short, not very thin nor very fat, not very dark nor very fair, that girl at that time has attained the highest perfection of beauty. Whatever pleasantness and pleasure arises on account of that perfection of beauty, that is the satisfaction in matter.

Bhikkhus, what is the danger of matter. That same sister with time becomes eighty years or ninety years or even a hundred years, and is seen decayed, bent like a rafter, shivering and supported on a stick, miserable all the youth gone, teeth broken, hair greyed, head bald, the skin wrinkled and spotted, all her earlier perfection of beauty vanished and the danger appeared. Bhikkhus, this is the

danger of matter. That same sister is seen diseased, in unpleasantness, badly ill, immersed in her own urine and excreta, raised and laid by others. All her earlier perfection of beauty vanished and the danger appeared. Bhikkhus, this too is the danger of matter. Again, that same sister is seen dead abandoned in the charnel ground. After one, or two, or three days bloated, turned blue and festering, her earlier perfection of beauty vanished and danger appeared, this too is the danger of matter. Again, that same sister is seen abandoned in the charnel ground

devoured by crows, hawks, vultures or by dogs and foxes, or by various other living things, her earlier perfection of beauty vanished and danger appeared, this too is the danger of matter. Again, that same sister would be seen abandoned in the charnel ground a skeleton with flesh and blood joined with veins.- A skeleton without flesh or blood joined with veins. Bones thrown every where, in one place a hand bone, in another a foot bone, in another a knee bone, in another a thigh bone, in another a hip bone, in another the back bone and in another the skull, her earlier perfection of beauty vanished and the danger appeared. This too is the danger of matter. Again that sister is seen abandoned in the charnel ground, bones turned white the colour of shells, bones decayed after three years, -bones turned to dust. Her earlier perfection of beauty vanished and the danger appeared. Bhikkhus, this too is the danger of matter.

Bhikkhus, what is the escape from matter. The driving out of interest and greed, the dispelling of interest and greed for matter. That is the escape from matter. .

Bhikkhus, a recluse or brahmin who does not know the satisfaction of matter as the satisfaction, the danger of matter as the danger and the escape from matter as the escape, as it really is, would know matter himself accurately or teach others to attain accurate knowledge of matter is not a possibility. A recluse or brahmin, who knows the satisfaction of matter as the satisfaction, the danger of matter as the danger and the escape from matter as the escape, would know matter himself accurately or teach others to attain accurate knowledge of matter is a possibility.

Bhikkhus, what is the satisfaction in feelings: Here the bhikkhu secluded from sense desires, secluded from demeritorious thoughts with thoughts and thought processes and with joy born of seclusion abides in the first jhaana. When the bhikkhu secluded from sense desires, secluded from demeritorious thoughts, with thoughts and thought processes and with joy born of seclusion abides in the first jhaana, he does not think to hurt himself, nor does he think to hurt others. He does not think to hurt either. At such times he feels non-hurtful feelings only. Bhikkhus, I say, the satisfaction in feelings is the highest non-hurtfulness.

Again bhikkhus, when the bhikkhu overcoming thoughts and thought processes, the mind internally appeased, concentrated and in one point, without thoughts and thought processes and with joy born of concentration abides in the second jhaana-- abides in the third jhaana - abides in the fourth jhaana. When the bhikkhu dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness, earlier having dispelled pleasure and displeasure, mindfulness purified with equanimity abides in the fourth jhaana, he does not think to hurt himself, nor does he think to hurt others. He does not think to hurt either. At such times he feels non-hurtful feelings only. Bhikkhus, I say, the satisfaction in feelings is the highest non-hurtfulness.

Bhikkhus, what is the danger in feelings. That feelings are impermanent, unpleasant, changing things that is the danger in feelings.

Bhikkhus, what is the escape from feelings. That giving up and dispelling of interest and greed for feelings that is the escape from feelings.

Bhikkhus, a recluse or brahmin who does not know the satisfaction of feelings as the satisfaction, the danger of feelings as the danger and the escape from feelings as the escape, as it really is, would know feelings himself accurately or teach others to attain accurate knowledge of feelings is not a possibility. A recluse or brahmin, who knows the satisfaction of feelings as the satisfaction, the danger of feelings as the danger and the escape from feelings as the escape, would know feelings himself accurately or teach others to attain accurate knowledge of feelings is a possibility.

The Blessed One said thus and those bhikkhus delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

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