

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The five and the three (Pancattaya Sutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living in the monastery offered by Anaathapindika in Jeta's grove in Saavatthi. The Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus from there. 'Bhikkhus, there are certain recluses and brahmins who declare views about the future. Such as there will be a healthy perceptive self after death. There will be a healthy non-perceptive self after death. There will be a healthy neither perceptive nor non-perceptive self after death. Or else the annihilation, destruction and the non existence of the conscience. Or else the extinction here and now. These five are sometimes declared as three, as there is a healthy self after death, the annihilation, destruction and non existence of the conscience and extinction here and now. So these five sometimes become three and the three sometimes become five. This is the short exposition of the five and the three.

Bhikkhus, those recluses and brahmins who make known a healthy perceptive self after death, declare of a material self or an immaterial self, or of a self that is material and immaterial, or else a self that is neither material nor immaterial. Or they make known of a healthy self, with a single perception, or with various perceptions, or a limited perception, or an unlimited perception, healthy after death. A certain one overcoming the object, consciousness, declares of limitless imperturbability. The Thus Gone One knows those recluses and brahmins who make known a healthy perceptive self after death, declaring of, a material self or an immaterial self, or a self that is material and immaterial, or else a self that is neither material nor immaterial. Or of those that make known of a healthy self, with a single perception, or with various perceptions, or a limited perception, or an unlimited perception, healthy after death. The Thus Gone One also knows of these perceptions which are incomparably pure in the highest order, whether material or immaterial, whether a single perception, or various perceptions. He knows of the sphere of nothingness too, which is limitlessly

imperturbable. Knows that these are compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations, knowing the escape from this, the Thus Gone One overcame them.

Bhikkhus, those recluses and brahmins that declare of a non perceptive self healthy after death, declare of, a material, or an immaterial, or of a material and immaterial, or of a neither material nor immaterial non perceptive self healthy after death. Here, bhikkhus, a certain recluse or brahmin who declares a perceptive self healthy after death, would revile those recluses and brahmins. What is the reason for that? Perception, is an ailment, an abcess, an arrow, this non perception is peaceful and exalted. The Thus Gone One knows it. The recluses and brahmins who make known of a non-perceptive self healthy after death, declare of a material or immaterial, or a material and immaterial, or a neither material nor immaterial non-perceptive self healthy after death. Bhikkhus, if a recluse or brahmin was to say, I will make known the coming and going, disappearing and appearing, growth and development without matter, without feelings, without perceptions, without determinations and without consciousness, it is not a possibility. That is compounded and coarse, there is the cessation of determinations. The Thus Gone knowing the escape overcame it

Bhikkhus, those recluses or brahmins who make known of a neither perceptive nor non-perceptive self healthy after death, declare of a neither perceptive nor non perceptive self, of material, or of immaterial, or of material and immaterial, or of neither material nor immaterial. Here, bhikkhus, certain recluses or brahmins who declare a perceptive self healthy after death and those who declare a non-perceptive self healthy after death, revile those recluses and brahmins. What is the reason for that? Perception, is an ailment, an abcess, an arrow, its delusion this neither peception nor non perception is peaceful and exalted. The Thus Gone One knows it.

Those good recluses and brahmins who make known a neither perceptive nor non-perceptive self healthy after death, declare of a neither perceptive nor non perceptive self, of matter, or of non matter, or of matter and non matter, or of neither matter nor non matter. Bhikkhus, whoever recluses and brahmins make known the mental achievements in the spheres of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touch with determinations, I declare these achievments as destruction. Bhikkhus, I declare these

should not be achieved with determinations. but come to the end of determinations. (*1) This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. The Thus Gone One seeing the escape, overcame it.

Bhikkhus, of those recluses and brahmins that make known, the perceptive self healthy after death, the non-perceptive self healthy after death and also the neither perceptive nor the non-perceptive self healthy after death, certain ones revile the recluses and brahmins who declare the annihilation, destruction and the non existence of the conscience. What is the reason for that? All these good recluses and brahmins declare their attachments hanging upside down, saying we will be in the future. As it would occur to a merchant gone to trade, it will be to me thus, and I will make gains. Thus, I will be in the future occurs to the recluses and brahmins as to the merchant gone to trade. The Thus Gone One knows. Those recluses and brahmins, who declare the annihilation, destruction and the non existence of the conscience, fear the self loathe it, and run round that same self. Like one bound to a wooden or iron post would run round and round the post. In the same manner those recluses and brahmins, who declare the annihilation, destruction and the non existence of the conscience of the person, fear the self, loathe it, and run round that same self. This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. The Thus Gone One seeing the escape, overcame it.

Whoever recluses and brahmins declared views about the future did so declaring one or the other of the five of these. Bhikkhus, there are recluses and brahmins who make known views about the past. They also get included in one or the other of these five. There are recluses and brahmins who declare views about the past such as the self and the world are eternal, this only is the truth, all else is false, the self and the world are not eternal, this only is the truth, all else is false, the self and the world are eternal and not eternal, this only is the truth, all else is false, the self and the world are neither eternal nor non eternal, this only is the truth, all else is false. The self and the world are limited, the self and the world are unlimited, the self and the world are limited and unlimited, the self and the world are neither limited nor unlimited, this only is the truth all else is false. The self and the world are of one perception, are of various perceptions, are of a limited perception, are of unlimited perception, this

only is the truth all else is false. The self and the world, is completely pleasant, is completely unpleasant, is pleasant and unpleasant, is neither unpleasant nor pleasant, this only is the truth all else is false.

Bhikkhus, those recluses and brahmins who declare the view, the self and the world is eternal, this only is the truth, all else is false. That they should by themselves realize this pure view without a faith, a liking, hearsay, careful thinking and without a pleased view is not a possibility. When there is something realized by these good recluses and brahmins by themselves, there should be a certain amount of purity in these recluses and brahmins, yet they tell of a holding. This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. Knowing this the Thus Gone One seeing the escape and overcame it.

Bhikkhus, the recluses and brahmins who bear the view the self and world is not eternal, eternal and not eternal, neither eternal nor non eternal, limited, unlimited, limited and unlimited, neither limited nor not limited, of one perception, of various perceptions, of limited perception, of unlimited perception, only pleasant, only unpleasant, pleasant and unpleasant, neither unpleasant nor pleasant, this only is the truth, all else is false That they should by themselves realize this pure view without a faith, a liking, hearsay, careful thinking and without a pleased view is not a possibility. When there is something realized by these good recluses and brahmins by themselves, there should be a certain amount of purity in these recluses and brahmins, yet they tell of a holding. This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. Knowing this the Thus Gone One seeing the escape overcame it.

Bhikkhus, a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and future, not intending any sensual bonds, abides in joy secluded, thinking this is peaceful and exalted. This joy born of seclusion ceases and displeasure and unpleasantness arises to him. When the displeasure and unpleasantness ceases, that joy born of seclusion arises to him. It is like the shade that is dispelled with light and the light that is dispelled with the shade. In the same manner a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and future, not intending any sensual bonds, abides in joy secluded, thinking this is

peaceful and exalted. This joy born of seclusion ceases and displeasure and unpleasantness arises to him. When the displeasure and unpleasantness ceases, that joy born of seclusion arises to him. The Thus Gone One knows, this good recluse or brahmin giving up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, abides in joy secluded, thinking this is peaceful and exalted. This joy born of seclusion ceases and displeasure and unpleasantness arises to him. When the displeasure and unpleasantness ceases, that joy born of seclusion arises to him. This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. Knowing this the Thus Gone One seeing the escape overcame it

Bhikkhus, a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcomes the joy of seclusion, and abides, in immaterial pleasantness thinking, this abiding in immaterial pleasantness, is peaceful and exalted. That immaterial pleasantness ceases and the joy of seclusion arises to him. When the joy of seclusion ceases, the immaterial pleasantness arises to him. It is like the shade that is dispelled with light and the light that is dispelled with the shade. In the same manner a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcoming the joy of seclusion, abides in immaterial pleasantness thinking the immaterial pleasantness, is peaceful and exalted. The immaterial pleasantness ceases and the joy born of seclusion arises to him. When the joy born of seclusion fades, immaterial pleasantness arises. The Thus Gone One knows this good recluse or brahmin giving up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcoming the joy of seclusion, abides in immaterial pleasantness thinking that immaterial pleasantness is peaceful and exalted. That immaterial pleasantness fades and the joy of seclusion arises to him. When the joy of seclusion fades the immaterial pleasantness arises to him. This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. Knowing this the Thus Gone One seeing the escape overcame it.

Bhikkhus, a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcomes the joy of seclusion, overcomes immaterial pleasantness, and abides in neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings thinking, this abiding in neither unpleasant

nor pleasant, is peaceful and exalted. Those neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings cease and the immaterial pleasant feelings arise to him. When the immaterial pleasant feelings cease, the neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings arise to him. It is like the shade that is dispelled with light and the light that is dispelled with the shade. In the same manner a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcoming the joy of seclusion, overcoming immaterial pleasant feelings abides in neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings thinking the neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings are peaceful and exalted. The neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings cease and immaterial pleasant feelings arise to him. When immaterial pleasant feelings fade, neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings arise to him. The Thus Gone One knows, this good recluse or brahmin giving up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcoming the joy of seclusion, and overcoming immaterial pleasant feelings abides in neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings thinking that neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings are peaceful and exalted. Those neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings fade and immaterial pleasant feelings arise to him. When immaterial pleasant feelings fade neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings arise This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. Knowing this the Thus Gone One seeing the escape and overcame it

Bhikkhus, a certain recluse or brahmin gives up views about the past and views about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcomes the joy of seclusion, overcomes immaterial pleasant feelings, and overcomes neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings and thinks I'm appeased, I'm extinguished, I do not hold. The Thus Gone One knows, this good recluse or brahmin, giving up views about the past and about the future, not intending any sensual bonds, overcoming the joy of seclusion, overcoming immaterial pleasant feelings and overcoming neither unpleasant not pleasant feelings, thinks I'm appeased, extinguished and do not hold. This venerable one is close to extinction, yet is holding to views of the past, or views of the future, or holding to the sensual bond, or to the joy of seclusion, or to immaterial pleasant feelings, or to neither unpleasant not pleasant feelings. That this venerable one says I'm appeased, extinguished and not holding, talks of his holdings This is compounded and coarse, there is a cessation of determinations. Knowing this the Thus Gone One seeing the escape overcame it

This is the incomparably noble appeasement realized by the Thus Gone One, as it really is, of the arising, fading, satisfaction, and the danger of the six mental spheres of contact, that is non holding release. The Thus Gone One has realized this incomparable noble appeasement, knowing as it really is the arising, fading, satisfaction, danger, and the escape from them, and is released without holdings.

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

Notes.

1. Bhikkhus, whoever recluses or brahmins make known the mental achievements in the spheres of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touch, with determinations, I declare these achievements as destruction. Bhikkhus, I declare that these should not be achieved with determinations, but come to the end of determinations. 'Ye keci bhikkhave samanabrahmanaa di.t.thasutamutavi~n~naatabbassa sankhaaramattena etassa aayatanassa upasampada.m pa~n~naapenti, byasana.m hi eta.m bhikkhave akkhaayati aayatanassa upasampadaaya: na h' eta.m bhikkhave, aayatana.m sasa.nkhaarasamaapattipattabba.m akkhaayati sasa.mkhaaraavasesaasamaapattipattabba.m eta.m bhikkhave aayatana.m akhaayati' The achievements of heavenly, eye, ear, nose, taste and other forms of clairvoyance like going through space, the Blessed One says should not be attained before realizing extinction 'nibbaana'. It leads to destruction, as it did to Venerable Devadatta. They should be attained after attaining extinction. Devadatta and some other co-associates of his became conceited about their attainments, and could not proceed any further.

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