

## Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

### The Sixfold Examination (Chabbisodanasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in the monastery offered by Anaathapindika in Jeta's grove in Saavatthi. The Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus from there.

'Bhikkhus, the bhikkhu declares perfection. "Birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done. I know, there is nothing more to wish." The words of that bhikkhu should not be approved, nor disapproved. He should be questioned. Friend, there are these four ways of defining, declared by the Blessed One who knows and sees and is rightfully enlightened. What are the four? Defining the seen as the seen, the heard as the heard, the sensed as the sensed and the cognized as the cognized. Out of these four ways of defining, through which is the venerable one's mind released without holdings? It is lawful that a bhikkhu who has, destroyed desires, lived the holy life, done what should be done, dismissed the weight, come to the highest good, destroyed the desire 'to be' and is rightfully released should explain it. Friend, seeing it an error to fall for the seen, not settling, unbound, released, unyoked and with an unrestricted mind I abide Friend, seeing it an error to fall for the heard, not settling, unbound, released, unyoked and with an unrestricted mind I abide Friend, seeing it an error to fall for the sensed, not settling, unbound, released, unyoked and with an unrestricted mind I abide Friend, seeing it an error to fall for the cognized, not settling, unbound, released, unyoked and with an unrestricted mind I abide. Friend, knowing and seeing these four ways of defining, my mind is released from desires without holdings. His words should be accepted as good words and a further question should be asked Friend, these five holding masses are declared by the Blessed One who knows and sees and is rightfully enlightened. What are the five? They are the holding mass of matter, the holding mass of feelings, the holding mass of perceptions, the holding mass of determinations and the holding mass of consciousness. Knowing what and seeing what in the five holding masses, is the venerable one's mind released from desires without holdings

It is lawful that a bhikkhu who has, destroyed desires, lived the holy life, done what should be done, dismissed the weight, come to the highest good, destroyed the desire 'to be' and is rightfully released should explain it. Friend, seeing that matter is weak, my interest waned and dissatisfied, I destroyed ceased, gave up and released my mind from the latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding matter. (\*1) Seeing that feelings are weak, my interest waned and dissatisfied, I destroyed, ceased, gave up and released my mind from the latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding feelings. Seeing that perceptions are weak, my interest waned and dissatisfied, I destroyed, ceased, gave up and released my mind from the latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding perceptions. Seeing that determinations are weak, my interest waned and dissatisfied, I destroyed, ceased, gave up and released my mind from the latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding determinations. Seeing that consciousness is weak, my interest waned and dissatisfied, I destroyed, ceased, gave up and released my mind from the latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding consciousness. Friend, knowing and seeing these five holding masses my mind is released from desires without holdings. His words should be accepted as good words and a further question should be asked Friend, these six elements are declared by the Blessed One who knows and sees and is rightfully enlightened. What are the six? They are the elements of earth, water, fire, air, space and consciousness.

Knowing what and seeing what in these six elements is the venerable one's mind released from desires without holdings. It is lawful that a bhikkhu who has, destroyed desires, lived the holy life, done what should be done, dismissed the weight, come to the highest good, destroyed the desire 'to be' and is rightfully released should explain it. Friend, the earth element is void of a self. The self has no settlements in matter. The latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding settlements in matter destroyed, ceased, given up, I know that the mind is released. I realized that the water element, ...re.... fire element, ...re.... air element, ....re.... space element, ...re.... and the consciousness element is void of a self. The self has no settlements in consciousness. The latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding settlements in consciousness destroyed, ceased, given up I know that the mind is released. Friend, knowing and seeing these six elements in this manner, my mind is released from desires without holdings. His words should be accepted as good words and a further question should be asked. Friend, these six internal and external spheres are declared by the Blessed One who knows and sees and is rightfully enlightened. What are the six? Eye and forms, ear and

sounds, nose and smells, tongue and tastes, body and touches and mind and ideas. Knowing what and seeing what in these six internal and external spheres is the venerable one's mind released from desires without holdings. It is lawful that a bhikkhu who has, destroyed desires, lived the holy life, done what should be done, dismissed the weight, come to the highest good, destroyed the desire 'to be' and is rightfully released should explain it. The latent tendencies of following up erroneously with interest, greed and craving, eye consciousness, forms and things cognizable by eye consciousness, are destroyed, ceased and given up, I know my mind is released. The latent tendencies of following up erroneously with interest, greed and craving ear consciousness, sounds and things cognizable by ear consciousness, ....re....nose consciousness, smells and things cognizable by nose consciousness,...re.... tongue consciousness, tastes and things cognizable by tongue consciousness,...re.... body consciousness, touches and things cognizable by body consciousness and mind consciousness, ideas, and things cognizable by mind consciousness are destroyed, ceased and given up, I know my mind is released. Friend, knowing and seeing these six internal and external spheres in this manner, my mind is released from desires without holdings. His words should be accepted as good words and a further question should be asked. Friend, knowing and seeing what in this sixfold conscious body and all external signs are the latent tendencies of conceited measurings of me and mine completely destroyed? It is lawful that a bhikkhu who has, destroyed desires, lived the holy life, done what should be done, dismissed the weight, come to the highest good, destroyed the desire 'to be' and is rightfully released should explain it.

Friend, earlier when I was an ignorant householder, the Thus Gone One or a disciple of the Thus Gone One preached the Teaching and I gained faith, with that faith I thought, the household life is full of difficulties, going forth homeless is like open space. Living in a household it is not easy to lead a holy life complete and pure without being defiled. Shaving head and beard, putting on yellow clothes, why shouldn't I go forth homeless? At some suitable time I gave up a little wealth or a large mass of wealth, either left behind a small circle of friends, or a large circle of friends shaving head and beard and donning yellow clothes, went forth as a homeless.

Gone forth I became a trainer in the life of a bhikkhu. I gave up hurting living things, throwing away stick and weapon ashamed abode arousing compassion for all beings. Abstaining from taking what is not given, desired the given, made my mind pure, without theft I abode Abstaining from low sexual intercourse led the holy life. Abstaining from telling lies became reliable and trustworthy and abode without a dispute with the world. Gave up slandering. Hearing it here did not say it elsewhere, to split these. Hearing elsewhere did not say it here to split those, Thus I united the split, promoted unity. Fond of unity spoke words to unite. Gave up rough talk, saying pleasing words that went straight to the heart of all. Abstained from frivolous talk saying appropriate, truthful and meaningful words, in accordance with the Teaching and Discipline, words that could be treasured.

Abstained from destroying seed groups and vegetable groups. Partaking one meal a day, abstained from food at night and at untimely hours. Abstained from dance, singing, music, decorations, flowers and scents, annointments and adornments. Abstained from high and stately beds. Abstained from accepting gold and silver, uncooked rice and uncooked flesh,. Abstained from accepting women and girls, slaves, men or women. Abstained from accepting goats and cows, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses and mares.

Abstained from accepting fields and wealth, and doing the work of a messenger. Abstained from buying and selling and unfair ways of weighing and measuring. Abstained from cutting severing, destroying and highway robbery, and wrong ways of gaining food.

Satisfied, covering the body with robes, and feeding the belly with morsel food, went with all the belongings wherever I went. Like the birds small and large that go with the weight of their wings. Likewise satisfied covering the body with robes and feeding the belly with morsels I went with all my belongings wherever I went.. Endowed with this mass of virtues, I experienced the pleasure of blamelessness internally.

Seeing a form with the eye, I did not take the sign or the elements. To one abiding with the mental faculty of the eye uncontrolled, demerit of covetousness and displeasure may trickle. I abode protecting the mental faculty of the eye. Hearing a sound with the ear, Cognizing a smell,...re.. tasting,..re.. cognizing touches with the body,..re.....Cognizing an idea with the mind, did not take the sign or the elements. To one abiding with the mental faculty of the mind not controlled, demerit of covetousness and displeasure may trickle. I abode protecting the mental faculty of the mind. Endowed with the noble ones' control of the mental faculties, I experienced the untouched pleasure of the mental faculties. Going forward or returning I became aware. Looking on, or looking aside I became aware. Bending or stretching, bearing the bowl and three robes, tasting, drinking, eating and enjoying I became aware. Going, standing, sitting, lying, if awake, and keeping silence I became aware.

Endowed, with the mass of virtues, the control of the mental faculties, rightmindfulness of the noble ones, I abode in a secluded dwelling, such as a forest, the root of a tree, a mountain grotto a cave, a charnel ground, a jungle forest, an open space, or a heap of straw. After the meal and returning from the alms round, I sat legs crossed, the body placed straight and mindfulness established in front.

Dispelling covetousness for the world I abode freeing the mind. Dispelling anger I abode with a mind free of anger, compassionate to all born. Dispelling sloth and torpor abode, aware of a perception of light, mindful of cleaning sloth and torpor. Dispelling restlessness and worry abode with a mind internally appeased, cleaning the mind of restlessness and worry. Abode with doubts dispelled of merit that should and should not be done.

I dispelled the five hindrances of the mind, and wisely making the minor defilements weak, secluded the mind from sensual thoughts and demerit. With thoughts and thought processes and with joy and pleasantness, born of seclusion abode in the first jhaana..

Again overcoming thoughts and thought processes, the mind internally appeased, in a single point, with joy and pleasantness born of concentration I abode in the second jhaana.

Again, with equanimity to joy and detachment and aware of experiencing pleasantness, with the body too, abode in the third jhaana. The noble ones say this is abiding in pleasantness, mindful of equanimity.

Again, dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness and earlier having dispelled pleasure and displeasure, mindfulness purified with equanimity I abode in the fourth jhaana.

When the mind was concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, malleable workable not disturbed, I directed the mind for the destruction of desires. Knew this is unpleasant, this is, its arising, this its cessation, and this the path to the cessation of unpleasantness as it really is. Knew the desires, their rising, their cessation and the path to their cessation as it really was. The mind that knew and saw thus, was released from sensual desires, from desires 'to be' and from ignorant desires. When released, I knew, I'm released, birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done. There's nothing more to wish. Friend, knowing and seeing this sixfold conscious body and all external signs in this manner, I completely destroyed the latent tendencies of conceited measurings of me and mine. Bhikkhus, his words should be accepted as good words and he should be told. 'Friend, it is great gain, that we meet co-associates like you.'

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

Notes.

1. Seeing matter is weak, my interest waned and dissatisfied, I destroyed, ceased, gave up and released my mind from the latent tendencies of falling for and firmly holding matter. 'ruupa.m kho

aha.m aavuso, abala.m.viraaga.m anassaasika.m veditvaa ye ruupe upaayupaadaanaa cetaso adhi.t.thaanaabhinivesanaanusayaa, tesa.m khayaa viraagaa nirodhaa caagaa pa.tinissaggaa vimutta.m me citta.m ti pajaanaami.' Holding matter, is something done with the mind. It is the mind's follow up with interest and greed. So too with the other four masses of feelings, perceptions, determinations and consciousness. Thus it is the follow up with interest and greed for these five masses that have to be destroyed, ceased, given up and thus the mind should be released

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