

## **Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses**

### **The shorter Discourse on Voidity (Culasunnata Sutta)**

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in the Pubba monastery, the palace of Migaara's mother in Saavatthi. Venerable Aananda, getting up from his seclusion in the evening, approached the Blessed One, worshipped, sat on a side and said thus. 'Venerable sir, once when the Blessed One was living with the Sakyas in the hamlet Naagaraka, I heard these acknowledged words from the Blessed One himself: "Aananda, at present I abide much in voidity." How could I, hearing it, grasp it thoroughly bear it?'

'Then Aananda, listen, hear, grasp thoroughly and bear it. Aananda, in the past as well as now, I abide much in voidity. Just as the palace of Migaara's mother is void of elephants, cattle, mares, raw gold, sovereign gold and assemblies of women and men and is not void of the community, on account of this there is a single perception. In the same manner the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of village or humans attends to the single perception of remoteness. (\*1) With the perception of remoteness, the mind springs, gets settled and is released. (\*2) Whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of village, is not evident here. Whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of humans, is not evident here There is this anxiety of the perception of remoteness. He knows, this is void of the perception of village and the perception of humans. He knows it is not void of the perception of remoteness. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it is enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of humans or the perception of remoteness, attends to the single perception of earth. With the perception of earth the mind springs, gets settled and is released. Like the bull beaten with the goad, is no more in his own power In the

same manner the bhikkhu disregarding the irregular features such as highlands, lowlands, river valleys and ridges attends to the single perception of earth. To him with the perception of earth the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of humans and the perception of remoteness, they're not evident here. There is non voidity on account of the single perception of earth. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it is enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of remoteness or the perception of earth, attends to the single perception of the sphere of space. With the perception of the sphere of space the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of remoteness and the perception of earth, they're not evident here. There is non voidity on account of the single perception of the sphere of space. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it's enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of earth or the perception of the sphere of space, attends to the single perception of the sphere of consciousness. With the perception of the sphere of consciousness the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of earth and the perception of the sphere of space, they're not evident here. There is non voidity on account of the single perception of the sphere of consciousness. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it's enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of the sphere of space or the perception of the sphere of consciousness, attends to the single perception of the sphere of nothingness. With the perception of the sphere of nothingness the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of the sphere of space and the perception of

the sphere of consciousness, are not evident here. There is non voidity on account of the single perception of the sphere of nothingness. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it's enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of the sphere of consciousness or the perception of the sphere of nothingness, attends to the single perception on account of neither perception nor non perception. With neither perception nor non perception the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of the sphere of consciousness and the perception of the sphere of nothingness, they're not evident here. There is anxiety on account of the single perception of neither perception nor non perception. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains there, is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it is enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of the sphere of nothingness or the perception of neither perception nor non perception, attends to the single signless concentration of the mind. With the signless concentration, the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of the perception of the sphere of nothingness and the perception of the sphere of neither perception nor non perception they're not evident here. There is anxiety on account of life and the body of six mental spheres. Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived, whatever remains there, is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it is enjoyed, thus comes about the unperverted, pure ascend to voidity.

Again, Aananda, the bhikkhu not attending to the perception of the sphere of nothingness or the perception of neither perception nor non perception, attends to the single signless concentration of the mind. With the signless concentration, the mind springs, gets settled and is released. He knows, even this signless concentration is compounded and mentally thought out. Whatever is compounded and mentally thought out, is impermanent and it ceases. When he knows and sees this, his mind finds release, from sensual desires, from desires 'to be,' and from ignorant desires. When released

knowledge arises, I'm released. Birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done. He knows, there is nothing to wish. He knows, whatever anxiety there's on account of sensual desires, they're not evident. On account of desires 'to be' they're not evident. On account of ignorant desires, they're not evident. There is anxiety on account of life and the body of six mental spheres. He knows this is void of sensual desires, void of desires 'to be' and void of ignorant desires. There is non voidity on account of life and the body of six mental spheres Thus on account of whatever is not there, voidity is perceived whatever remains is perceived as peaceful. Aananda, as it is enjoyed, thus comes about the most noble unperverted, pure ascend to voidity Aananda, whoever recluses or brahmins abode in voidity, they all abode in this most noble and pure voidity. Whoever recluses or brahmins will abide in voidity, they all will abide in this most noble and pure voidity. Whoever recluses or brahmins now abide in voidity, they all abide in this most noble and pure voidity. Therefore Aananda, you should train, we should abide in this most noble pure voidity.'

The Blessed One said thus and venerable Aananda delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

Notes.

1. Attends to the single perception of remoteness. 'ara~n~nsa~n~na.m pa.ticca manasikaroti ekatta.m' The perception of remoteness is the physical displacing of the enjoyments of the five strands of sensual pleasures.

2. With the perception of remoteness, the mind springs, gets settled and is released. 'tassa ara~n~nasa~n~naaya citta.m pakkhandati pasiidati santi.t.thati vimuccati.' It is the nature of the mind to spring at a sign, if agreeable get settled there and if ready to be released, to be released.