

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The sphere of Training (Dantabhuumisutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One lived in the squirrels' sanctuary in the bamboo grove in Raajagaha. At that time the novice Aciravata lived in a hut in the remote area. Then prince Jayasena wandering and walking for exercise approached the novice Aciravata, exchanged friendly greetings, sat on a side and said: 'Aggivessana, I have heard that the bhikkhu abiding diligent to dispel, realize one pointedness of mind.'

'Prince, that is so, the bhikkhu abiding diligent to dispel realize one pointedness of mind.'

'Good Aggivessana, teach me that Teaching as you have heard and practised.it'

'Prince, it is not possible for me to teach that Teaching, as I have heard and practised. You would not know the meaning of what I say, it will be only fatigue and trouble for me.'

'Good Aggivessana, teach me the Teaching as you have heard and practised. I would know the meaning and it would be of much benefit to me.'

'Prince, I will teach you the Teaching, as I have heard and practised it, if you understand the meaning of what I say, you are clever. If you do not understand the meaning of what I say, should be satisfied and should not ask any further questions about it.'

‘Good Aggivessana, teach me the Teaching as you have heard and practised. If I understand the words of good Aggivessana it would be of much benefit to me..

If I do not understand the meaning of what you say, I will be satisfied and will not ask any further questions about it.’

The novice Aciravata taught prince Jayasena, the Teaching as he had heard and practised it. Hearing it he said, it is not possible it could not happen that the bhikkhu abiding diligent to dispel could realize one pointedness of mind. Saying these words of impossibility, the prince got up from his seat and went away.’

Then the novice Aciravata soon after the prince had left, approached the Blessed One, worshipped, sat on a side and related all the conversation, that took place with prince Jayasena and himself. Then the Blessed One said to the novice. ‘Aggivessana, could it be gained by the prince? That which should be known, seen, attained and realized through non sensuality. Prince Jayasena would not attain it while living in the midst of sensuality, partaking sensuality molested by sensual thoughts, burning with sensual thirst and on the look out for sensual pleasures..It’s not possible that he would know, see and realize it. Aggivessana, there are two tamed, elephants, or horses, or bulls and there are two untamed, elephants, or horses, or bulls. Of these which do you think are more suitable for a training. Isn’t it the tamed set?’

‘Yes, venerable sir. It is the tamed set.’

‘Is the untamed set suitable for the training?’

‘No, venerable sir, they are not suitable.’

‘In the same manner Aggivessana, That which should be known, seen, attained and realized through non sensuality, prince Jayasena would attain while living in the midst of sensuality, partaking sensuality molested by sensual thoughts, burning with sensual thirst and on the look out for sensual pleasures is not possible. It is not possible, that he would know, see and realize it.

Aggivessana, at the end of the village or hamlet there is a huge mountain. Two friends, approach this mountain hand in hand. One of them climb to the top and the other stand at the foot. The one at the foot of the mountain tells his friend on the top. ‘Friend, what do you see from the top of the mountain?’ He says, I see pleasant remote places, pleasant forests, pleasant lands and ponds. The one at the foot of the mountain says, It is not possible that you should see pleasant remote places, pleasant forests, pleasant lands and ponds. Then the one on top of the mountain ascends the mountain and taking the one at the foot of the mountain by his arm leads him to the top. Allowing him to observe what he saw, asks him. ‘Friend, what do you see from the top of the mountain?’ He says, I see pleasant remote places, pleasant forests, pleasant lands and ponds. Friend, it was about this same you said

It is not possible to see pleasant remote places, pleasant forests, pleasant lands and ponds from the top of the mountain and now you say, I see pleasant remote places, pleasant forests, pleasant lands and ponds. How could we understand the meaning of these words? He would say, friend, then I was covered by this huge mountain and did not see what should be seen.

Aggivessana, in the same manner prince Jayasena is covered, hemmed in and obstructed by a huge mass of ignorance. Aggivessana, that which should be known, seen, attained and realized through non sensuality, prince Jayasena would attain while living in the midst of sensuality, partaking sensuality molested by sensual thoughts, burning with sensual thirst and on the look out for sensual pleasures is not possible. It is not possible, that he would know, see and realize it.

Aggivessana, if you had explained these two wonderful similes to prince Jayasena, undoubtedly he would have been pleased, and would have expressed his pleasure.

‘Venerable sir, how could I explain these two similes to prince Jayasena, I have never heard before, until I heard it from the Blessed One.’

‘Just as Aggivessana, the head anointed warrior king would address the elephant hunter. Good elephant hunter ascend the royal elephant, enter the elephant grove, search for a wild elephant and fix it with a rope to the royal elephant’s neck and let the royal elephant bring it to open ground. Aggivessana, now the wild elephant is brought to open space. Then the elephant hunter informs the head anointed warrior king. Lord! the wild elephant is brought to open space. Next the head anointed warrior king addresses the elephant tamer. Good friend, elephant tamer, tame the wild elephant, so that it may get over the wild ways, wild thoughts and the displeasures and worries of leaving the remote. Make him like the end of the village and the ways of humans. The elephant tamer agrees and fixes a huge strong post and ties the wild elephant to the post by his neck, so that it may get over its wild ways, thoughts and displeasures and worries of leaving the remote and would get used to the end of the village and the ways of humans. The elephant tamer speaks words that are pleasing and go straight to the heart, speaks words that are accepted as polite by many. When the wild elephant listens to the words of the elephant tamer. He is given grass and water. If the wild elephant accepts grass and water, the elephant trainer knows that the elephant would live and not die. Then the elephant trainer gives him a further training as, good one, take this! Put it down! If he obeys the elephant trainer, he is given a further training. Good one, go forward! Recede! If the king’s elephant obeys these orders, he is given a further training as stand up! and sit down! If the king’s elephant obeys the elephant trainer’s orders he is given a further training in imperturbability. A great log is tied to the trunk and a man with an elephant lance climbs on the elephant’s neck Men with lances stand all round

and the elephant trainer too taking a long elephant lance stands in front of the elephant. He doing imperturbability does not move the front feet nor the hind feet. Does not move the fore part of the

body nor the hind part of the body. Does not move the head nor ears. Does not move the teeth, tail or the trunk. The king's elephant endures the contact of weapons, swords, and arrows. Endures loud noises of drums, conches and melodious sounds made by enemies. When all crookednesses, and faults are rectified and is blameless, he becomes worthy for the king, the property of the king and gets the mark of royalty.

Aggivessana, in the same manner the Thus Gone One arises in the world, perfect, rightfully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knower of the worlds, the incomparable tamer of those to be tamed, Teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. He declares to the world together with its Maaras, Brahmaas, the community of recluses and brahmins gods and men, that Teaching good at the beginning, in the middle and at the end full of meaning even in the letter, complete in every way stating the pure holy life. Hearing this a householder or a householder's son, born to some clan, gains faith in the Thus Gone One. With that faith he reflects. The life in a household is full of defilements, going forth is like open space. It is not easy for one living a household life to lead the holy life complete and pure without defilements. What if I shave head and beard, don yellow robes and go forth as a homeless. Later he gives up a little wealth, or much wealth, a small circle of friends, or a large circle of friends, shaving head and beard, and donning yellow robes goes forth as a homeless. Aggivessana, when this much is done, the noble disciple comes to open space. Aggivessana, here the greed of gods and men is for the five strands sense pleasures. Then the Thus Gone One gives him a further training. Come bhikkhu be virtuous, abiding by the higher code of rules, practise the right conduct, seeing fear in the slightest fault. When the bhikkhu practises right conduct, seeing fear in the slightest fault, the Thus Gone One gives him a further training. Come bhikkhu protect your doors of mental contact. Seeing a form do not take the sign or details. To one abiding not protecting the mental faculty of the eye, evil desires of covetousness and displeasure may arise, fall to its control. Hearing a sound, ...re..... scenting a smell, ...re....enjoying a taste, ...re.... experiencing a touch with the body,...re.... and cognizing an idea in the mind. do not take the sign or details. To one abiding not protecting the mental contact of the mind, evil desires of covetousness and displeasure may arise, fall to its control. Aggivessana, when the bhikkhu is protected in his doors of mental contact, the Thus Gone One gives him a further training. Come bhikkhu, know the right amount to partake of food. Partake food reflecting, it is not,

for play, for intoxication, or to look beautiful, but for the upkeep of the body. Not for the enjoyment of soups but to lead the holy life. Reflect I will put an end to earlier feelings, will not arouse new, for a faultless pleasant abiding. Aggivessana, when the bhikkhu knows the right amount to partake of food, the Thus Gone One gives him a further training. Come bhikkhu abide wakeful. During the day, sit in the *cankamana* and clean the mind of hindering things. In the first watch of the night sit in the *cankamana* and clean the mind of hindering things. In the middle watch of the night turn to the right, making the lion's posture, place one foot over the other and with the perception of waking go to sleep. In the last watch of the night, sit in the *cankamana* and clean the mind of hindering things. When the bhikkhu is yoked to wakefulness, the Thus Gone One gives him a further training. Come bhikkhu be endowed with mindful awareness. Be mindful when approaching and receding, looking on and looking about, bending and stretching, bearing the three robes and bowl, enjoying, drinking, eating and tasting, urinating and excreting, when going, standing, sitting and lying until awake. Be mindful when talking and keeping silence. When the bhikkhu is endowed with mindful awareness, the Thus Gone One gives a further training. Come bhikkhu abound a secluded dwelling. Abound a forest, the root of a tree, a mountain grotto, a charnel ground, a jungle path, an open space or a leaves hut. Then he abounds a forest, the root of a tree, a mountain grotto, a charnel ground, a jungle path, an open space or a leaves hut. After the meal, he sits cross legged, with the body erect and mindfulness established in front of him. He abides dispelling the coveting mind and cleans the mind of coveting thoughts. He abides dispelling the angry mind and cleans the mind of angry thoughts, with compassion for all living things. Dispelling sloth and torpor he abides mindful and aware of a perception of light to dispel sloth and torpor. He abides dispelling restlessness and worry, internally appeased cleans the mind of restlessness and worry. Abides dispelling doubts about merits that should be done and should not be done and cleans the mind of doubts.

Dispelling the five hindrances and wisely making the finer defilements of the mind weak, abides reflecting the body in the body, abides reflecting feelings in feelings, abides reflecting the mental qualities in the mind and abides reflecting thoughts on the Teaching, mindful and aware to dispel covetousness and displeasure for the world.

Aggivessana, like the elephant trainer who fixes a huge strong post and ties the wild elephant to the post by his neck, so that it may get over its wild ways, thoughts and displeasures and worries of leaving the remote and would get used to the end of the village and the ways of humans. Aggivessana, in the same manner, the noble disciple's mind is bound with the four establishments of mindfulness, so that his worldly ways, thoughts, troubles, worries and fatigue are turned out, for the attainment of extinction.

Then the Thus Gone One trains him further. Come! bhikkhu, abide reflecting the body in the body. Do not think thoughts concerning the body. Abide reflecting feelings in feelings, do not entertain thoughts concerning feelings. Abide reflecting the mental states in the mind, do not entertain thoughts concerning those mental states. Abide reflecting thoughts on the Teaching, do not entertain them. He overcomes thoughts and thought processes, appeases the mind internally and brings it to a single point. With joy and pleasantness born of concentration he attains to the second jhaana and to the third jhaana

When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for the knowledge of previous births. Recollects the manifold previous births, one birth, two births, three, four, five, ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births, innumerable forward cycles of births, innumerable backward cycles of births, innumerable forward and backward cycles of births. There I was born of such name, clan, disposition, supports, experiencing such pleasant and unpleasant feelings, with such a life span. Disappearing from there was born there with such name, clan, disposition, supports, experiencing such pleasant and unpleasant feelings, with such a life span. Disappearing from there, is born here. Thus with all modes and all details manifold previous births are recollected.

When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for knowledge of the disappearing and appearing of beings. With the heavenly eye purified beyond human, sees beings disappearing and appearing un-exalted and exalted, beautiful and ugly, arising in good and bad states according to the results of actions. These good

beings misbehaving by body, speech and mind, blaming noble ones, with the wrong view of actions, after death are born in loss, in decrease, in hell. As for these good beings, well behaved in body speech and mind not blaming noble ones, with the right view of actions after death are born in heaven. Thus, with the heavenly eye purified beyond human sees beings disappearing and appearing.

When the mind is concentrated, pure, free from minor defilements, malleable workable not disturbed, he directs the mind for the destruction of desires. He knows this is unpleasant, this its arising, this its cessation, and this, the path to the cessation of unpleasantness as it really is. Knows these are desires, this, their rising, this, their cessation and this, the path to their cessation as it really is. His mind that knows and sees thus, is released from sensual desires, from desires 'to be' and from ignorant desires. When released, he knows, I'm released, birth is destroyed, the holy life is lived, what should be done is done. There's nothing more to wish.

That bhikkhu endures, cold, heat, hunger, thirst, the sting of gad flies and yellow flies, the heat of the air and the touch of serpents and creeping things. Endures badly enunciated words and unwelcome piercing sharp unpleasant feelings, that deprive life. All greed, anger and delusion turned out, free from blemish becomes worthy of reverence, hospitality, gifts and reverential salutation and it becomes an incomparable field of merit for the world

Aggivessana, the king's elephant even of age if untamed and untrained, his death would be reckoned as an untamed death. Even of middle age if untamed and untrained, his death would be reckoned as an untamed death. Even of young age if untamed and untrained, his death would be reckoned as an untamed death. Aggivessana in the same manner, the death of an elder bhikkhu not destroyed desires, is reckoned as an untamed death. The death of a middling bhikkhu not destroyed desires, is reckoned as an untamed death. The death of a young bhikkhu not destroyed desires, is reckoned as an untamed death

Aggivessana, the king's elephant even of age if tamed and trained, his death would be reckoned as a tamed death. Even of middle age if tamed and trained, his death would be reckoned as a tamed death. Even of young age if tamed and trained, his death would be reckoned as a tamed death. Aggivessana in the same manner, the death of an elder bhikkhu, desires destroyed is reckoned as a tamed death. The death of a middling bhikkhu, desires destroyed is reckoned as a tamed death. The death of a young bhikkhu, desires destroyed is reckoned as a tamed death'

The Blessed One said thus and the novice Aciravata delighted in the words of the Blessed One.

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