

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

The detailed classification of actions (Mahaakammavibhangasutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was living in the squirrels' sanctuary in the bamboo grove in Raajagaha. At that time venerable Samaddhi lived in a remote dwelling. The wandering ascetic Potaliyaputta wandering and walking for exercise approached venerable Samiddhi, exchanged friendly greetings and sat on a side. Then the wandering ascetic Potaliyaputta said. 'Friend Samiddhi, this I heard from the recluse Gotama and he acknowledged it. Bodily actions are valueless, so too verbal actions, only mental actions are valuable. Is there an abiding attained to which someone does not feel anything?'

'Friend, Potaliyaputta, do not talk like that, do not abuse the Blessed One, it is not good to abuse the Blessed One. The Blessed One did not say that bodily actions and verbal actions are valueless and that only mental actions are valuable There is an abiding attained to which someone does not feel anything.'

'Friend, Samiddhi, how long is it since you have gone forth?'

'Friend, not very long, only three rains.'

'Now, what shall we think of the elder bhikkhus, when the novices protect their Teacher thus? Friend, Samiddhi, doing intentional actions by body, speech and mind how does one feel?'

'Friend, doing intentional actions by body, speech and mind, one feels unpleasant'

The wandering ascetic Potaliyaputta neither pleased nor scorning the words of venerable Samiddhi got up from his seat and went away.

Soon after the wandering ascetic Potaliyaputta had gone away, venerable Samiddhi approached venerable Aananda, exchanged friendly greetings, sat on a side and informed venerable Aananda all that conversation that took place between him and the wandering ascetic. Venerable Aananda, then said, friend, we have to see the Blessed One on account of this conversation. Let us approach the Blessed One, inform about this and as the Blessed One explains it, we will bear it in our minds.

Then venerable Samiddhi agreed and venerables Aananda and Samiddhi approached the Blessed One, worshipped, sat on a side, and venerable Aananda informed the Blessed One all that conversation that took place between venerable Samiddhi and the wandering ascetic Potaliyaputta.

The Blessed One said to venerable Aananda: ‘Aananda, I cannot recall even seeing the wandering ascetic potaliyaputta, so how could such a conversation have taken place. This foolish man Samiddhi has given a one sided reply, to a question that needed an explanatory reply.’

When this was said, venerable Udaayi intrudingly said to the Blessed One: ‘Venerable sir, if venerable Samiddhi had said, whatever is felt is unpleasant on account of this.’

Then the Blessed One addressed venerable Aananda: ‘Aananda, do you see the side track of this foolish man Udaayi? From the beginning I knew that foolish Udaayi would intrude unwisely. Aananda, the wandering ascetic Potaliyaputta had earlier asked about the three feelings. If this foolish man Samiddhi had explained to the wandering ascetic thus. Friend Potaliyaputta, doing intentional actions with pleasant feelings, by body, speech and mind, he feels pleasant. Doing intentional actions with unpleasant feelings, by body, speech and mind, he feels unpleasant. Doing intentional actions with neither unpleasant nor pleasant feelings, by body, speech and mind, he feels neither unpleasant nor pleasant. If he had explained it thus, he would have explained it correctly.

Yet Aananda, how are these foolish wandering ascetics of other sects to understand the Thus Gone One's detailed classification of actions. If you would listen to it I will explain.'

'Venerable sir, this is the right time to explain the Detailed classification of actions, the bhikkhus hearing it from the Blessed One would bear it in their minds.'

'Then Aananda listen and attend carefully I will tell. Aananda, there are four kinds of people evident in the world. What are the four? Aananda, a certain person destroys living things, takes the not given, misbehaves sexually, tells lies and malicious things, talks roughly and frivolously, covets, is with angry mind and wrong view, at the break up of the body, after death, he goes to decrease, is born in hell. .

Aananda, a certain person destroys living things, takes the not given, misbehaves sexually, tells lies and malicious things, talks roughly and frivolously, covets, is with angry mind and wrong view, at the break up of the body, after death, he increases, is born in heaven.

Aananda, a certain person abstains from, destroying living things, taking the not given, misbehaving sexually, telling lies and malicious things, talking roughly and frivolously. Does not covet, is without an angry mind and has right view, at the break up of the body, after death, he increases, is born in heaven.

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Aananda, a certain recluse or brahmin through exertion, making endeavour, yoking diligence and right attention attains to a certain concentration of mind through which he purifies the heavenly eye beyond human. Then he sees this person that destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death, decreased, born in hell. .He says, indeed there is demerit, there are results for misconduct. I saw this person who destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death, gone to decrease, born in hell. Then he says, all those who destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death, decrease are born in hell. Those who know this, know it rightly, those who know it in another way have wrong knowledge. Thus, he tenaciously holds to what he himself has known, seen and experienced, and defines it as, this only is the truth, all else is false.

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abstained from, destroying living things, taking the not given, misbehaving sexually, telling lies and malicious things, talking roughly and frivolously. Did not covet, and bear an angry mind and had right view at the break up of the body, after death, increased, born in heaven. He says, indeed there is merit, there are results for good conduct I saw this person who abstained from, destroying living things, taking the not given, misbehaving sexually, telling lies and malicious things, talking roughly and frivolously. Did not covet, and bear an angry mind and had right view at the break up of the body, after death, increased, born in heaven. Then he says, all those who abstained from, destroying living things, taking the not given, misbehaving sexually, telling lies and malicious things, talking roughly and frivolously. Did not covet, and bear an angry mind and had right view at the break up of the body, after death, increase, are born in heaven. Those who know this, know it rightly, those who know it in another way have wrong knowledge. Thus, he tenaciously holds to what he himself has known, seen and experienced, and defines it as, this only is the truth, all else is false.

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talking roughly and frivolously. Did not covet, and bear an angry mind and had right view at the break up of the body, after death, decrease, are born in hell..Those who know this, know it rightly, those who know it in another way have wrong knowledge. Thus, he tenaciously holds to what he himself has known, seen and experienced, and defines it as, this only is the truth, all else is false.

There Aananda, if a recluse or brahmin was to say, 'Indeed there is demerit, there are results for misconduct'. I allow him that.'If he says I too saw this person who destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death, decrease, born in hell'. I allow him that too.If he says, 'All thosewho destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death decrease, are born in hell.'. I do not allow him that. If he says, 'They who know this, know it rightly, those who know it in another way have wrong knowledge.' I do not allow him that too. If he tenaciously holds to what he himself has known, seen and experienced, and defines it as, 'This only is the truth, all else is false.' I do not allow him that either. What is the reason? Aananda, the Thus Gone One's knowledge of the Detailed classification of actions is different.

There Aananda, if a recluse or brahmin was to say, 'Indeed there is no demerit, there are no results for misconduct.'I do not allow him that.'If he says I too saw this person who destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death, increased, born in heaven'. I allow him that. If he says, 'All thosewho destroyed living things, took the not given, misbehaved sexually, told lies and malicious things, talked roughly and frivolously, coveted, was with angry mind and wrong views at the break up of the body, after death, increase, are born in heaven.'. I do not allow him that either. If he says, 'They who know this, know it rightly, those who know it in another way have wrong knowledge.' I do not allow him that too. If he tenaciously holds to what he himself has known, seen and experienced, and defines it as, 'This only

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There Aananda, if a recluse or brahmin was to say, ‘Indeed there is no merit, there are no results for good conduct’. I do not allow him that.’If he says I too saw this person who abstained from, destroying living things, taking the not given, misbehaving sexually, telling lies and malicious things, talking roughly and frivolously. Did not covet, was without an angry mind and with right view at the break up of the body, after death, decrease, born in hell’. I allow him that. If he says, ‘All those who abstained from destroying living things, taking the not given, misbehaving sexually, telling lies and malicious things, talking roughly and frivolously, did not covet, was without angry mind and with right view at the break up of the body, after death, decrease, are born in hell’. I do not allow him that. If he says, ‘They who know this, know it rightly, those who know it in another way have wrong knowledge.’ I do not allow him that too. If he tenaciously holds to what he himself has known, seen and experienced, and defines it as, ‘This only is the truth, all else is false.’ I do not allow him that either. What is the reason? Aananda, the Thus Gone One’s knowledge of the Detailed classification of actions is different.

Aananda, that person who destroys living things, takes the not given, misbehaves sexually, tells lies and malicious things, talks roughly and frivolously, covets, is with angry mind and wrong view.and at the break up of the body, after death, decreases, is born in hell. Either earlier he would have done evil actions with unpleasant feelings, or later he would have done evil actions with unpleasant feelings, or else at the time of death he would have got completely convinced of wrong view, as a result of thatat the break up of the body, after death, he decreases, is born in hell. If he had destroyed living things,.....re..... wrong view, he experiences the results here and now, in the next birth or in a consequent birth.

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Thus Aananda, there is impossible action, impossible to shine forth, there is impossible action, possible to shine forth, there is possible action, possible to shine forth and there is possible action, impossible to shine forth (\*1)



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

Notes.

1. Thus Aananda, there is impossible action, impossible to shine forth, there is impossible action, possible to shine forth, there is possible action, possible to shine forth and there is possible action, impossible to shine forth 'Iti kho Aananda, atthi kamma.m abhabba.m abhabbaabhaasa.m; atthi kamma.m abhabba.m bhabbaabhaasa.m; atthi kamma.m bhabba.m'eva bhabbaabhaasa.m; atthi kamma.m bhabba.m abhabbaabhaasa.m ti' The most important point in the Detailed Classification of actions is, that intention matters everything to one's actions, and much of the results of actions are experienced here and now, or in the next birth or in a subsequent birth. Since intention is so very important, we should know that mere intending would not carry us across. eg We may aspire extinction, but without that effort and endeavour and without turning our foot steps towards it, it is not possible. These are impossible actions, impossible to shine forth. There are times when these impossible actions shine forth, when the necessary effort and endeavour are put into it. Then there are actions that begin at the six doors of mental contact, which we could handle efficiently and arrive at the results here and now. Thus there are possible actions, possible to shine forth. These same are sometimes unable to shine forth, as it happened to venerable Angulimaala. He did not experience the results of his evil actions, as he over rode them, and extinguished.

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