

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

Classification of the Truth (Saccavibhangasuttam)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was lived in the deer sanctuary in Isispatana, in Benares and addressed the bhikkhus from there. ‘O! Bhikkhus.’ Those bhikkhus replied ‘Yes venerable sir.’ The Blessed One said ‘Bhikkhus, the Thus Gone One worthy, rightfully enlightened set rolling the Teaching not to be interrupted by a recluse, a brahmin, a god, Maara, Brahmaa or anyone in the world, announcing, detailing establishing and explaining the four noble truths.

What are the four? They are the announcing, detailing, establishing and explaining, the noble truth of unpleasantness, its arising, its cessation and the path and method leading to its cessation. Bhikkhus, associate Saariputta and Moggallaana. They are wise and helpful to those leading the holy life.

Saariputta is like the mother who gives birth and Moggallaana is like the father. Saariputta trains until the fruition of the entry into the stream of the Teaching and Moggallaana until the highest aim is attained. Bhikkhus, Saariputta can announce, detail, establish and explain the four noble truths.

Saying this the Blessed One got up from his seat and entered his dwelling.

Then venerable Saariputta soon after the Blessed had left, addressed the bhikkhus. ‘Bhikkhus, the Thus Gone One worthy, rightfully enlightened set rolling the Teaching not to be interrupted by a recluse, a brahmin, a god, Maara, Brahmaa or anyone in the world, announcing, detailing establishing and explaining the four noble truths.

Friends, what is the noble truth of unpleasantness? Birth is unpleasant. So too are decay, death, grief, lament, unpleasantness, displeasure and distress. Unfulfilled desires are also unpleasant. In short the five holding masses are unpleasant.

Friends, what is birth? The conscious birth in the womb of that and other group of beings, appearing of the masses and the gain of the mental faculties is birth.

Friends, what is decay? The breaking up of the body, grayness of hair, wrinkling of the skin, the decrease of the life span and maturing of the mental faculties in this and other group of beings is decay.

Friends, what is death? The disappearing, falling away, breaking up, apparent death, end of the life span, the falling apart of the masses and laying down the body of this and other group of beings is called death.

Friends, what is grief? Faced with one or the other kind of disaster, the grievous thoughts stricken by grief and the resulting internal and severe grief is called grief.

Friends, what is lament? Faced with one or the other kind of disaster, the grievous laments stricken by grief and the resulting loud and soft laments are called lamenting.

Friends, what is unpleasantness? Unpleasant, disagreeable feeling born of unpleasant disagreeable bodily contact (*1) is called unpleasantness.

Friends, what is displeasure? Unpleasant, disagreeable feeling born of unpleasant disagreeable mental contact (*2) is called displeasure.

Friends, what is a disturbed condition? Faced with one or the other kind of disaster, the arising unpleasant thoughts cause a disturbed condition that is troublesome and disturbing. This is called a disturbing condition.

Friends, what are unfulfilled desires that are unpleasant? Beings have such desires about birth. May birth not be to me. In this way non-birth does not come. It is not obtainable by desiring. This is an unfulfilled desire, which is unpleasant. Beings have such desires about decay. May decay not be to me. In this way non-decay does not come. It is not obtainable by desiring. This is an unfulfilled desire, which is unpleasant. Beings have such desires about ailing. May ailments not come to me. In this way non-ailing does not come. It is not obtainable by desiring. This is an unfulfilled desire that is unpleasant. Beings have such desires about death. May death not be to me. In this way deathlessness does not come. It is not obtainable by desiring. This is an unfulfilled desire, which is unpleasant. Beings have such desires about grief, lament, unpleasantness, displeasure and disturbed conditions. May grief, lament, unpleasantness, displeasure and disturbed conditions not come to me. In this way non-grief, non-lament, pleasantness, pleasure and the undisturbed condition do not come. They are not obtainable by desiring. These are unfulfilled desires, which are unpleasant.

Friends, how are the five holding masses in short unpleasant? In short the five holding masses of matter, feelings, perceptions, determinations and consciousness are unpleasant (*3).

Friends, this is the noble truth of unpleasantness.

Friends, what is the noble truth, of the arising of unpleasantness? The interest and greed to be again and again, rejoicing in sensuality, in desires 'to be' and desires 'not to be'. To this is called the noble truth of the arising of unpleasantness.

Friends, what is the noble truth, of the cessation of unpleasantness? Non-greed without anything left behind, the cessation, giving up the settlements of that same greed, is called the noble truth of the cessation of unpleasantness.

Friends, what is the noble truth, of the path and method for the cessation of unpleasantness? This same noble Eight-fold path, such as right view, right thoughts, right speech, right actions, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration is called the noble truth, of the path and method for the cessation of unpleasantness.

Friends, what is right view? Recognizing unpleasantness, its arising, its cessation and the path and method leading to the cessation of unpleasantness is called right view.

Friends, what are right thoughts? Thoughts, of giving up sensuality, turning away from anger and turning away from hurting are called right thoughts.

Friends, what is right speech? Abstaining from lies, slandering, rough speech and frivolous speech is called right speech.

Friends, what is right action? Abstaining from, destroying living things, taking the not given and misbehaving in sexual needs is called right action.

Friends, what is right livelihood? Here the noble disciple refrains from wrong livelihood and leads a livelihood that is right. This is called right livelihood.

Friends, what is right effort? Here, the bhikkhu arouses interest, puts forth effort and makes the mind spring forward. For the non arising of non-arisen evil thoughts of demerit, for the dispelling of arisen

evil thoughts of demerit, for the arousing of non arisen thoughts of merit and for the non deluded establishment, development and completion of arisen thoughts of merit. This is called right effort.

. Friends, what is right mindfulness? Here the bhikkhu is zealously mindful and aware to dispel covetousness and displeasure in the world, reflecting, the body in the body, the feeling in feelings, the mental state in the mind and the thought in thoughts. This is called right mindfulness.

Friends, what is right concentration? Here the bhikkhu forsaking sensuality and evil thoughts, with thoughts, discursive thoughts and joy and pleasantness born of seclusion abides in the first jhaana. Overcoming thoughts and discursive thoughts, the mind internally appeased and concentrated in one point, and with joy and pleasantness born of concentration abides in the second jhaana.. Again the bhikkhu abides mindful and aware with equanimity to joy and detachment, with the body experiencing pleasantness too (*4) and abides in the third jhaana. To this the noble ones say abiding in pleasantness mindful of equanimity. Again the bhikkhu dispelling pleasantness and unpleasantness and earlier having dispelled pleasure and displeasure and with mindfulness purified with equanimity abides in the fourth jhaana. To this is called right mindfulness.

Friends, this is the noble truth of the path and method for the cessation of unpleasantness.

Bhikkhus, the Thus Gone One worthy, rightfully enlightened set rolling the Teaching not to be interrupted by a recluse, a brahmin, a god, Maara, Brahmaa or anyone in the world, announcing, detailing establishing and explaining the four noble truths.

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

Notes.

1. Unpleasant, disagreeable feeling born of unpleasant disagreeable bodily contact is called unpleasantness. 'ya.m kho, aavuso, kaayika.m dukkha.m kaayika.m asaata.m kaayasamphassaja.m dukkha.m asaata.m vedaniiya.m –ida.m vuccati aavuso dukkha.m' The body consists of six doors of mental contact pervading the six spheres of contact in the form of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches and ideas. A person collects data from the world through these contacts. Some contacts are unpleasant and disagreeable and they give birth to unpleasant and disagreeable feelings. This is unpleasantness.

2. Unpleasant disagreeable feeling born of unpleasant disagreeable mental contact is called displeasure. 'ya.m kho aavuso cetasika.m asaata.m manosamphassaja.m dukkha.m asaata.m vedaniiya.m –ida.m vuccati aavuso domanassa.m' The mental unpleasant, disagreeable feeling is displeasure. As soon as the bodily pleasant agreeable feeling fades, there pervades the mental unpleasant, disagreeable feeling.

3. In short the five holding masses of matter, feelings, perceptions, determinations and consciousness are unpleasant. 'seyyathiida.m ruupuupaadaanakkhando vedanuupaadaanakkhando sa~n~nuupaadaanakkhanado sankhaaruupaadaanakkhando vi~n~naanuupaadanakkhando;-ime vuccanti aavuso sa.mkhittena pa~ncupaadaanakkhanaa dukkhaa.' These are called masses as there is a lot of matter, a lot of feelings, a lot of perceptions, a lot of determinations and a lot of consciousness. If someone probes into them meditating with keen interest, he finds that to hold them with the mind is unpleasant.

4. With the body experiencing pleasantness too. 'sukha.m ca kaayena patisa.mvedeti' Here the third jhaana is described and it is said that pleasantness is experienced with the body too. As the body is also the six doors of mental contact, pleasantness is enjoyed by not being disturbed by any of the contacts that come from these six spheres of mental contact. Is a pleasant experience enjoyed by the worthy ones 'arahantaa'