AN 3.53 — Aññatara Brāhmaṇa Sutta (A Certain Brahmin)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

Source: https://www.mindreleased.com/s/Book-3_Anguttara-Nikya-A-New-Translation.pdf#page=88

Source revision: ee5230c458ad6c1566f518d5909916ad92d12aebf1240750c5357dd9b5699f30

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Candana source labels: 53. Site text ID: AN 3.53.

Text

53. Aññatara Brāhmaṇa Sutta (A Certain Brahmin) Once, a certain brahmin approached The Blessed One, and after exchanging greetings with Him, sat down to one side and said:

“Master Gautama, we have often heard the statement:

‘The Dhamma is immediate and directly visible, and not a wait-and-see Discipline.’

“But how is it, Venerable Sir, that The Dhamma is thus: ‘immediate, directly visible, not a wait-and-see Discipline, encouraging of personal examination and inspection, always leading one forward, and to be realized by the wise, each one for themselves?’”

And The Blessed One replied, by saying:

“Brahmin, a greedy person, overcome by greed, consumed by greed, ends up harming himself, harming others, and harming both, while also feeling mental anguish, which leads him to experience even more suffering. But, if and when he relinquishes greed, he then no longer harms himself, nor harms others, nor harms both, thereby he does not feel mental anguish, and this itself saves him from experiencing much suffering.

“It is in this manner, brahmin, that one can understand the meaning of the statement:

‘The Dhamma is experienced here and now, for it is immediate and directly visible; not a wait-and-see Discipline; it encourages personal examination and inspection; always leading one forward, hence it is to be realized by the wise, each one for themselves!’

“Similarly, brahmin, an angry person, overcome and consumed by anger and hatred, ends up harming himself, harming others, and harming both, while also feeling mental anguish, which leads him to experience even more suffering. But, if and when he relinquishes anger and hatred, then he no longer harms himself, nor harms others, nor harms both; thereby he does not feel mental anguish, and this itself saves him from experiencing much suffering.

“It is in this manner, brahmin, that one can understand the meaning of the statement:

‘The Dhamma is experienced here and now, for it is immediate and directly visible; not a wait-and-see Discipline; it encourages personal examination and inspection; always leading one forward, hence it is to be realized by the wise, each one for themselves!’

“Also, brahmin, a deluded person, overcome by willful ignoring and consumed by deluded thinking, ends up harming himself, harming others, and harming both, while also feeling mental anguish, which leads him to experience even more suffering. But, if and when he relinquishes delusion and his willful ignoring, then he no longer harms himself, nor others, nor both himself and others; thereby he does not feel mental anguish, and this itself saves him from experiencing much suffering.

“It is in this manner, brahmin, that one can understand the meaning of the statement:

‘The Dhamma is experienced here and now, for it is immediate and directly visible; not a wait-and-see Discipline; it encourages personal examination and inspection; always leading one forward, hence it is to be realized by the wise, each one for themselves!’

Then, with his hands in reverential salutation, the brahmin respectfully exclaimed:

“Magnificent, Venerable sir! Magnificent, Venerable sir!

“The Blessed One has made The Dhamma clear to me in many ways! It is as though He turned upright what had been turned upside-down, revealing what was hidden, showing the way to one who was lost, or holding up a lamp in the dark for those with eyesight to see.

“I go to The Blessed One for refuge, and to The Dhamma, and to The Saṅgha of Bhikkhus!

“From this day forward, may The Blessed One kindly remember me as a lay disciple of His, who has taken refuge in Him, until the end of life.”