AN 4.38 — AN 4:38 Detached | Paṭilīna Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Source revision: sha256:06db98f11dbe5b66e3b290b0f8bcaa44ec5f2fe3d1e1b74062fcf0baea044036

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

Detached

Paṭilīna Sutta (AN 4:38)

“Monks, a monk who has shaken off idiosyncratic truths [pacceka-sacca],1 who has thoroughly given up searching, who is calmed in his bodily fabrication,2 is said to be detached.

“And how has a monk shaken off idiosyncratic truths? There is the case where a monk has shaken off the run-of-the-mill idiosyncratic truths of run-of-the-mill contemplatives & brahmans—in other words, ‘The cosmos is eternal,’ ‘The cosmos is not eternal,’ ‘The cosmos is finite,’ ‘The cosmos is infinite,’ ‘The soul & the body are the same,’ ‘The soul is one thing and the body another,’ ‘After death a Tathāgata exists,’ ‘After death a Tathāgata

does not exist,' 'After death a Tathāgata both does & does not exist,' 'After death a Tathāgata neither does nor does not exist.' All of these he has thrown off, shaken off, renounced, vomited up, let go, abandoned, relinquished. This is how a monk has shaken off idiosyncratic truths.

"And how has a monk thoroughly given up searching? There is the case where a monk has abandoned his search for sensuality, has abandoned his search for becoming, and has allayed his search for a holy life.3 This is how a monk has thoroughly given up searching.

"And how is a monk calmed in his bodily fabrication? There is the case where a monk, with the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. This is how a monk is calmed in his bodily fabrication.

"And how is a monk detached? There is the case where a monk's conceit, 'I am,' is abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. This is how a monk is detached."

Sensuality-search, becoming-search,

together with the holy-life search—

i.e., grasping at 'such is the truth'

based on an accumulation

of viewpoints:

Through the relinquishing of searches

& the abolishing of viewpoints

of one dispassionate to

all passion,

and released in the ending

of craving,

he, a monk

peaceful, mindful,

calmed, undefeated,

awakened

with the breaking-through of conceit,

is said to be

detached.

Notes

1. Pacceka can also mean “singular” or “personal.” Idiosyncratic truths are the opposite of noble truths, which are universal. See Sn 4:8 and Sn 4:12.

2. “Bodily fabrication” (kāya-saṅkhāra) is a technical term for the in-and-out breath. See MN 44. On the stilling of the in-and-out breath as a defining feature of the fourth jhāna, see SN 36:11, AN 9:31, and AN 10:72. The definition of the calming of bodily fabrication given in this sutta helps to explain what is meant by the fourth step in mindfulness of breathing: “He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in calming bodily fabrication.’ He trains himself, ‘I will breathe out calming bodily fabrication.’” See MN 118.

3. On these three searches, see Iti 54–55. The Commentary to this sutta says that the search for a holy life is allayed with the path of arahantship, although the search for a holy life in the form of views subsides earlier with the path of stream-entry.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: AN 10:20