

AN 5.26

Vimuttāyatana Sutta

“Ways of Attaining Release”

Translated by Candana Bhikkhu

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“Bhikkhus, these are the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke. And what are these five ways of Release?

1. “Here, Bhikkhus, the Teacher or a fellow companion in the Holy Life, in the eminent capacity of a teacher, instructs the Bhikkhu. Slowly, while listening to the Dhamma being taught to him, the Bhikkhu is moved as he becomes inspired and finally begins to understand the meaning of what is being instructed to him. This leads him to experience and understand the deeper levels of the Dhamma, personally.

“Being inspired thus, he suddenly feels much delight. And in the presence of such delight, joy arises within him, and for one with such a joyful mind, the body experiences deep relaxation and tranquility. And with the body becoming so relaxed and tranquil, one feels blissful. And when the Bhikkhu experiences such bliss, his heart becomes collected and stable.

“Bhikkhus, this is the *first* of the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke.

2. “There is also the case, Bhikkhus, where despite there being neither the Teacher nor a fellow companion in the Holy Life, in the eminent capacity of a teacher to instruct the Bhikkhu, the Bhikkhu himself teaches the Dhamma to others and in detail, in the manner he had learned it. Now, in the process of teaching the Dhamma to others, in detail, and in the manner that he had learned and cultivated it in his heart, the Bhikkhu is moved as he becomes inspired and finally begins to understand the meaning of the Dhamma taught by The Blessed One. This leads him to experience and understand the deeper levels of the Dhamma, personally.

“Being inspired thus, he suddenly feels much delight. And in the presence of such delight, joy arises within him, and for one with such a joyful mind, the body experiences deep relaxation and tranquility. And with the body becoming so relaxed and tranquil, one feels blissful. And when the Bhikkhu experiences such bliss, his heart becomes collected and stable.

“Bhikkhus, this is the *second* of the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke.

3. “Further, Bhikkhus, there is also the case where neither the Teacher nor a fellow companion in the Holy Life is to be found, functioning in the eminent capacity of a teacher to instruct the Bhikkhu, while the Bhikkhu himself happens to be unable to teach the Dhamma to others. Nevertheless, this does not stop him from reciting the Dhamma, in detail, and in the manner that he had heard and learned it. Now, because the Bhikkhu recites the Dhamma in detail, in doing so, the Bhikkhu is moved as he becomes inspired and finally begins to understand the meaning of the Dhamma taught by The Blessed One. This leads him to experience and understand the deeper levels of the Dhamma, personally.

“Being inspired thus, he suddenly feels much delight. And in the presence of such delight, joy arises within him, and for one with such a joyful mind, the body experiences deep relaxation and tranquility. And with the body becoming so relaxed and tranquil, one feels blissful. And when the Bhikkhu experiences such bliss, his heart becomes collected and stable.

“Now, Bhikkhus, this is the *third* of the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke.

4. “Further, Bhikkhus, there is also the case where neither the Teacher nor a fellow companion in the Holy Life is to be found, in the eminent capacity of a teacher to instruct the Bhikkhu, while the Bhikkhu himself happens to be unable to teach the Dhamma to others. In addition, he does not recite the Dhamma in detail, but he *does* carefully examine, while investigating the Dhamma within his heart, in detail, and in the manner that he had heard and learned it. Now, because this Bhikkhu carefully examines and investigates the Dhamma within the heart, in detail, and in the manner that he had heard and learned it, he is moved and becomes truly inspired, and finally begins to understand the meaning of the Dhamma taught by The Blessed One. This leads him to experience and understand the deeper levels of the Dhamma, personally.

“Being inspired thus, he suddenly feels much delight. And in the presence of such delight, joy arises within him, and for one with such a joyful mind, the body experiences deep relaxation and

tranquility. And with the body becoming so relaxed and tranquil, one feels blissful. And when the Bhikkhu experiences such bliss, his heart becomes collected and stable.

“Now, Bhikkhus, this is the *fourth* of the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke.

5. “Finally, Bhikkhus, even in the absence of the Teacher or a fellow companion in the Holy Life to instruct the Bhikkhu in the eminent capacity of a teacher, while the Bhikkhu himself is also unable to teach the Dhamma to others, in detail, and furthermore, he is neither able to recite the Dhamma in detail nor carefully examine or investigate the Dhamma within the heart, in detail, the Bhikkhu, however, is able to dedicate his attention and maintain it on one particular object of meditation, and as a result, he becomes well established in it. This eventually allows him to penetrate it, whereby he finally comes to see with wisdom, which leads him to experience and understand the deeper levels of the Dhamma, personally.

“Being inspired thus, he suddenly feels much delight. And in the presence of such delight, joy arises within him, and for one with such a joyful mind, the body experiences deep relaxation and tranquility. And with the body becoming so relaxed and tranquil, one feels blissful. And when the Bhikkhu experiences such bliss, his heart becomes collected and stable.

“Now, Bhikkhus, this is the *fifth* of the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, these are the five ways of attaining Release, wherein the Bhikkhu, while dedicating himself to the Training with diligence and resoluteness, comes to experience liberation as his unreleased heart becomes fully released, where his heart’s contaminants (*āsavas*) are finally depleted, as he finally accomplishes that which, up to that point, had not yet been accomplished, reaching the farther shore of ultimate security, beyond the reach of suffering’s yoke.”

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