

AN 6.10
Mahānāma Sutta
“Mahānāma, the Sakyan”
Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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At one time, The Blessed One was staying at Nigrodha’s monastery in the Sakyan Capital City of Kapilavatthu. It was during that time that Mahānāma the Sakyan approached The Blessed One and after paying homage to Him, sat to one side and said to The Blessed One:

“Bhante, what is usually the position of the heart of the Noble Disciple who has reached the Fruition Stage and now comprehends the Tathāgata’s Dispensation?”

“Mahānāma, the heart of the Noble Disciple who has reached the Fruition Stage and now comprehends the Tathāgata’s Dispensation is usually positioned in this manner:

1. “Here, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Buddha thus:

‘The Blessed One is an Arahant, Perfectly Awakened, endowed with Sublime Knowledge and Supremely Pure Conduct, the Well-Gone, the Knower of worlds, the Incomparable Tamer of those to be tamed, the Teacher of gods and humans, Enlightened and Blessed.’

“And whenever, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Tathāgata in this manner, his heart is no longer caught within the clutches of lust, hatred, or delusion; instead, his mind is naturally pointed straight towards the Tathāgata. And such a Noble Disciple, whose heart is resolute and unwavering, soon realizes the meanings directly, becoming inspired by the Dhamma, and experiences for himself the joy that understanding the Dhamma brings to him. And for the one who becomes thus joyful, there is gladness in the mind. And when the mind is glad, the body becomes relaxed. And because of the relaxation within the body, he experiences happiness. And for the Noble Disciple experiencing such happiness, the mind becomes naturally collected. This, Mahānāma, is called the Noble Disciple who lives in harmony amidst a world that is in disharmony; he dwells untroubled among the troubled population, unafflicted and unstained. And having entered the Stream of the Dhamma, he maintains the recollection of the Buddha.

2. “Again, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Dhamma thus:

‘The Dhamma of the Blessed One is well expounded, it is directly visible here and now, immediately effective, inviting inspection, leading inwards, and to be applied and personally realized by the wise, for themselves.’

“And whenever, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Dhamma in this manner, his heart is no longer caught within the clutches of lust, hatred, or delusion; instead, his mind is naturally pointed straight towards the Dhamma. And such a Noble Disciple whose heart is resolute and unwavering, soon realizes the meanings directly, becoming inspired by the Dhamma, and experiences for himself the joy that understanding the Dhamma brings to him. And for the one who becomes thus joyful, there is gladness in the mind. And when the mind is glad, the body becomes relaxed. And because of the relaxation within the body, he experiences happiness. And for the Noble Disciple experiencing such happiness, the mind becomes naturally collected.

“This, Mahānāma, is called the Noble Disciple who lives in harmony amidst a world that is in disharmony; he dwells untroubled among the troubled population, unafflicted and unstained. And having entered the Stream of the Dhamma, he maintains the recollection of the Dhamma.

3. “Again, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Noble Sangha thus:

‘The Disciples of the Blessed One are practicing well the good way, which is the Threefold Training of Sīla, Samādhi, Paññā (morality, mental cultivation and wisdom); the Disciples of the Blessed One are practicing the straight path of the Threefold Training, which is the Middle Path; the Disciples of the Blessed One are practicing wisely to realize Nibbāna, in a methodical way; the Disciples of the Blessed One are practicing the Dhamma, in harmony. Such are the Four Pairs of Eight Great Beings, comprising the Eight Noble Disciples of the Blessed One, the ones to be honored and respected, deserving of hospitality, worthy of offerings, to be venerated with reverential salutation with one’s palms pressed together at the heart, the incomparable field of merit for the world.’

“And whenever, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Noble Sangha of the Blessed One in this manner, his heart is no longer caught within the clutches of lust, hatred, or delusion; instead, his mind is naturally pointed straight towards the Noble Sangha. And such a Noble Disciple whose heart is resolute and unwavering, soon realizes the meanings directly, becoming inspired by the Dhamma, and experiences for himself the joy that understanding the Dhamma brings to him. And for the one who becomes thus joyful, there is gladness in the mind. And when the mind is glad, the body becomes relaxed. And because of the relaxation within the body, he experiences happiness. And for the Noble Disciple experiencing such happiness, the mind becomes naturally collected.

This, Mahānāma, is called the Noble Disciple who lives in harmony amidst a world that is in disharmony; he dwells untroubled among the troubled population, unafflicted and unstained. And having entered the Stream of the Dhamma, he maintains the recollection of the Noble Sangha.

4. “Again, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects his own virtues that are continuously kept, unbroken, flawless, stainless, and liberating from his old negative patterns of behavior; virtues that are praised by the wise as pure, all of which leads him to the collectedness of mind.

“And whenever, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects his own virtuous behavior in this manner, his heart is no longer caught within the clutches of lust, hatred, or delusion; instead, his mind is naturally pointed straight towards being virtuous. And such a Noble Disciple whose heart is resolute and unwavering, soon realizes the meanings directly, becoming inspired by the Dhamma, and experiences for himself the joy that understanding the Dhamma brings to him. And for the one who becomes thus joyful, there is gladness in the mind. And when the mind is glad, the body becomes relaxed. And because of the relaxation within the body, he experiences happiness. And for the Noble Disciple experiencing such happiness, the mind becomes naturally collected.

“This, Mahānāma, is called the Noble Disciple who lives in harmony amidst a world that is in disharmony; he dwells untroubled among the troubled population, unafflicted and unstained. And having entered the Stream of the Dhamma, he maintains the recollection of his virtues.

5. “Again, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects his generosity, while reflecting:

‘It is truly a great gain for me that despite being surrounded by a world that is obsessed by stinginess, I on the other hand, live with generosity in my heart, having given up the stains of miserliness; I live while being freely generous, enjoying the giving up of things, while being open-handed in my dedication to charity and providing resources to those in need, sharing with them whatever it is of value that I possess.’

“And whenever, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects his generosity in this manner, his heart is no longer caught within the clutches of lust, hatred, or delusion; instead, his mind is naturally pointed straight towards being generous. And such a Noble Disciple whose heart is resolute and unwavering, soon realizes the meanings directly, becoming inspired by the Dhamma, and experiences for himself the joy that understanding the Dhamma brings to him. And for the one who becomes thus joyful, there is gladness in the mind. And when the mind is glad, the body becomes relaxed. And because of the relaxation within the body, he experiences happiness. And for the Noble Disciple experiencing such happiness, the mind becomes naturally collected.

“This, Mahānāma, is called the Noble Disciple who lives in harmony amidst a world that is in disharmony; he dwells untroubled among the troubled population, unafflicted and unstained. And having entered the Stream of the Dhamma, he maintains the recollection of his generosity.

6. “Again Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Devas, as he reflects:

‘There are Devas reborn in the company of the Four Great Kings, Devas in the company of the Thirty-Three gods, there are also the Yāma Devas, the Devas in the Tushita Heaven, Devas who delight in their own creations, and Devas who delight in controlling the creation of other Devas, there are the Devas who are in Brahmā’s company, and still above these realms many more sublime Devas are to be found. Just like these Devas in their own individual pasts possessed the strong faith, virtuous behavior, learning, generosity, and wisdom, and thus at the end of their lives, while disappearing from here, they immediately reappeared there, in those Divine Destinations, I too now possess in my heart that *same* level of faith, virtuous behavior, learning, generosity, and wisdom.

“And whenever, Mahānāma, the Noble Disciple recollects the Devas in this manner, his heart is no longer caught within the clutches of lust, hatred, or delusion; instead, his mind is naturally pointed straight towards the Devas. And such a Noble Disciple whose heart is resolute and unwavering, soon realizes the meanings directly, becoming inspired by the Dhamma, and experiences for himself the joy that understanding the Dhamma brings to him. And for the one who becomes thus joyful, there is gladness in the mind. And when the mind is glad, the body becomes relaxed. And because of the relaxation within the body, he experiences happiness. And for the Noble Disciple experiencing such happiness, the mind becomes naturally collected. This, Mahānāma, is called the Noble Disciple who lives in harmony amidst a world that is in disharmony; he dwells untroubled among the troubled population, unafflicted and unstained. And having entered the Stream of the Dhamma, he maintains the recollection of the Devas.

“Mahānāma, this is the manner in which the heart of the Noble Disciple, who has reached the Fruition Stage and now comprehends the Tathāgata’s Dispensation, is usually positioned.”

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