

Anguttara Nikāya
The Numerical Discourses

Chakkanipāta
(Book of the Sixes)

AN 6.63

Mahā Vagga
(The Great Section)

Nibbedhika Pariyāya Sutta
“Penetrating”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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“Bhikkhus, I will now teach you an exposition on the method of penetrating into The Dhamma. So, listen and pay close attention.”

“Yes, Bhante!” responded the Bhikkhus who were gathered there.

The Blessed One then said:

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the exposition on the method of penetrating into the Dhamma?

“Here, Bhikkhus, sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the origin and arising of sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the variations in sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the fruits of sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the cessation of sensual pleasures should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures should be clearly known.

“Similarly, Bhikkhus, feelings should be clearly known; the origin and arising of feelings should be clearly known; the variations in feelings should be clearly known; the fruits of feelings should be clearly known; the cessation of feelings should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of feelings should be clearly known.

“Similarly, Bhikkhus, memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the origin and arising of memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the variations in memories

and mental associations should be clearly known; the fruits of memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the cessation of memories and mental associations should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of memories and mental associations should be clearly known.

“Similarly, Bhikkhus, mental contaminants should be clearly known; the origin and arising of mental contaminants should be clearly known; the variations in mental contaminants should be clearly known; the fruits of mental contaminants should be clearly known; the cessation of mental contaminants should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of mental contaminants should be clearly known.

“Similarly, Bhikkhus, actions should be clearly known; the origin and arising of actions should be clearly known; the variations in actions should be clearly known; the fruits of actions should be clearly known; the cessation of actions should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of actions should be clearly known.

“Similarly, Bhikkhus, suffering should be clearly known; the origin and arising of suffering should be clearly known; the variations in suffering should be clearly known; the fruits of suffering should be clearly known; the cessation of suffering should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of suffering should be clearly known.

A. “And what was the purpose, Bhikkhus, for it to be said: ‘Sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the origin and arising of sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the variations in sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the fruits of sensual pleasures should be clearly known; the cessation of sensual pleasures should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures should be clearly known?’

“Bhikkhus, there are five branches of sensual pleasures that are desirable and agreeable, which include: visible forms that are agreeable, enticing, desirable, stimulating, and thus sought-after; sounds that are agreeable, enticing, desirable, stimulating, and thus sought-after; odors that are agreeable, enticing, desirable, stimulating, and thus sought-after; flavors that are agreeable, enticing, desirable, stimulating, and thus sought-after; and touches that are agreeable, enticing, desirable, stimulating, and thus sought-after.

“But Bhikkhus, all these are not considered to be sensual pleasures, for in the Noble One’s Dispensation, these are merely called the ‘five branches’ of sensuality.

“It is one’s very own lustful intention that turns it into a ‘sensual pleasure.’

*Lustful intention is where a person’s sensual pleasure is to be found.
The beautiful things seen in the world are not sensual pleasures.
Lustful intention is where a person’s sensual pleasure is to be found
For, the beautiful things seen in the world, stand as they are,
The wise remove the very desire for them.*

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of sensual pleasures?

“Contact, Bhikkhus, is called their origin and arising.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the variations in sensual pleasures?

“Sensual desire for visible forms is one, sensual desire for sounds is another, sensual desire for odors is still another, sensual desire for flavors is still another, and sensual desire for touches is yet another. These are called the variations in sensual pleasures.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the fruits of sensual pleasures?

“Here, Bhikkhus, when someone desires to experience sensual pleasures, consequently a series of events come into being, which turn out to produce either good merits or bad merits for the person. These are called the fruits of sensual pleasures.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the cessation of sensual pleasures?

“Bhikkhus, the cessation of contact is the cessation of sensual pleasures. This same Noble Eightfold Path is the very cessation of sensual pleasures. That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right stability of mind.

“And, Bhikkhus, when the Noble Disciple knows and understands sensual pleasures in this manner; the origin and arising of sensual pleasures in this manner; the variations in sensual pleasures in this manner; the fruits of sensual pleasures in this manner; the cessation of sensual pleasures in this manner; and the Path leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures in this manner, then he is to be recognized as one who possesses the penetrative understanding of the Holy Life, leading to the cessation of sensual pleasures.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the purpose for what I said earlier regarding sensual pleasures.

B. “And what was the purpose, Bhikkhus, for it to be said: ‘Feelings should be clearly known; the origin and arising of feelings should be clearly known; the variations in feelings should be clearly known; the fruits of feelings should be clearly known; the cessation of feelings should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of feelings should be clearly known?’

“Bhikkhus, there are these three types of feelings: pleasant feelings, painful feelings, and neutral feelings.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of feelings?

“Contact, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of feelings.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the variations in feelings?

“There are, Bhikkhus, material pleasant feelings, spiritual pleasant feelings, material painful feelings, spiritual painful feelings, material neutral feelings, and spiritual neutral feelings. These are called the variations in feelings.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the fruits of feelings?”

“Here, Bhikkhus, when someone desires to experience a certain type of feeling, consequently a series of events come into being, which turn out to produce either good merits or bad merits for the person. These are called the fruits of feelings.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is called the cessation of feelings?”

“Bhikkhus, the cessation of contact is the cessation of feelings. This same Noble Eightfold Path is the very cessation of feelings. That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right stability of mind.

“And, Bhikkhus, when the Noble Disciple knows and understands feelings in this manner; the origin and arising of feelings in this manner; the variations of feelings in this manner; the fruits of feelings in this manner; the cessation of feelings in this manner; and the Path leading to the cessation of feelings in this manner; then he is to be recognized as one who possesses the penetrative understanding of the Holy Life, leading to the cessation of feelings.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the purpose for what I said earlier, regarding feelings.

C. “And what was the purpose, Bhikkhus, for it to be said: ‘Memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the origin and arising of memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the variations in memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the fruits of memories and mental associations should be clearly known; the cessation of memories and mental associations should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of memories and mental associations should be clearly known?’

“Bhikkhus, there are these six types of memories and mental associations: those that pertain to visible forms, sounds, odors, flavors, touches, and thoughts.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is called the origin and arising of memories and mental associations?”

“Contact, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of memories and mental associations.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are called the variations in memories and mental associations?”

“Bhikkhus, memories and mental associations pertaining to forms is one; memories and mental associations dealing with sounds is another; memories and mental associations dealing with odors is still another; memories and mental associations dealing with flavors is still another; memories and mental associations dealing with touches is still another, and memories and mental associations dealing with thoughts is yet another. These are called the variations in memories and mental associations.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the fruits of memories and mental associations?”

“Bhikkhus, modes of expression and communication are the fruits of memories and mental associations, such that given the situation, whatever a person perceives, combined with whatever is remembered and mentally associated, is what ends up being expressed by that person. These are called the fruits of memories and mental associations.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the cessation of memories and mental associations?

“Bhikkhus, the cessation of contact is the cessation of memories and mental associations. This same Noble Eightfold Path is the very cessation of memories and mental associations. That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right stability of mind.

“And, Bhikkhus, when the Noble Disciple knows and understands memories and mental associations in this manner; the origin and arising of memories and mental associations in this manner; the variations in memories and mental associations in this manner; the fruits of memories and mental associations in this manner; the cessation of memories and mental associations in this manner; and the Path leading to the cessation of memories and mental associations in this manner; then he is to be recognized as one who possesses the penetrative understanding of the Holy Life, leading to the cessation of memories and mental associations.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the purpose for what I said earlier, regarding memories and mental associations.

D. “And what was the purpose, Bhikkhus, for it to be said: ‘Mental contaminants should be clearly known; the origin and arising of mental contaminants should be clearly known; the variations in mental contaminants should be clearly known; the fruits of mental contaminants should be clearly known; the cessation of mental contaminants should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of mental contaminants should be clearly known?’

“Bhikkhus, there are these three mental contaminants: the mental contaminant of sensual pleasure, the mental contaminant for becoming, and the mental contaminant of ignorance.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of mental contaminants?

“Ignorance, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of mental contaminants.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the variations in mental contaminants?

“Bhikkhus, there are mental contaminants which lead to rebirth in hell, mental contaminants which lead to rebirth in the animal world, mental contaminants which lead to rebirth in the realm of hungry ghosts, mental contaminants which lead to rebirth in the human world, and mental contaminants which lead to rebirth in the heavenly realms. Bhikkhus, these are called the variations in mental contaminants.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the fruits of mental contaminants?

“Here, Bhikkhus, being immersed in ignorance, someone lives while bringing forth a series of events into being, which produce consequences that lead to either good merits or bad merits for that person. These are called the fruits of mental contaminants.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is called the cessation of mental contaminants?

“Bhikkhus, the cessation of ignorance is the cessation of mental contaminants. This same Noble Eightfold Path is the very cessation of mental contaminants. That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right stability of mind.

“And, Bhikkhus, when the Noble Disciple knows and understands mental contaminants in this manner; the origin and arising of mental contaminants in this manner; the variations in mental contaminants in this manner; the fruits of mental contaminants in this manner; the cessation of mental contaminants in this manner; and the Path leading to the cessation of mental contaminants in this manner; then he is to be recognized as one who possesses the penetrative understanding of the Holy Life, leading to the cessation of mental contaminants.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the purpose for what I said earlier, regarding mental contaminants.

E. “And what was the purpose, Bhikkhus, for it to be said: ‘Actions should be clearly known; the origin and arising of actions should be clearly known; the variations in actions should be clearly known; the fruits of actions should be clearly known; the cessation of actions should be clearly known; and the path leading to the cessation of actions should be clearly known?’

“Intention, Bhikkhus, is what I call ‘action.’ It is through having the volition to do something that one intends and engages in action, whether by body, speech, or mind.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of actions?

“Contact, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of actions.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the variations in actions?

“Bhikkhus, there are actions that lead one to hell; there are actions that lead one to the animal world; there are actions that lead one to the hungry ghost realm; there are actions that lead one to the human world; and there are actions that lead one to the heavenly realms. This is called the variations in actions.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the fruits of actions?

“Bhikkhus, the fruits of actions are threefold: either experiencing the consequences of action here and now; or experiencing the consequences of actions in the next birth; or experiencing the consequences of actions in a subsequent birth. Bhikkhus, these are called the fruits of actions.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the cessation of actions?

“Bhikkhus, the cessation of contact is the cessation of actions. This same Noble Eightfold Path is the very cessation of actions. That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right stability of mind.

“And, Bhikkhus, when the Noble Disciple knows and understands actions in this manner; the origin and arising of actions in this manner; the variations in actions in this manner; the fruits of actions in this manner; the cessation of actions in this manner; and the Path leading to the cessation of actions in this manner; then he is to be recognized as one who possesses the penetrative understanding of the Holy Life, leading to the cessation of actions.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the purpose for what I said earlier, regarding actions.

F. “And what was the purpose, Bhikkhus, for it to be said: ‘Suffering should be clearly known; the origin and arising of suffering should be clearly known; the variations in suffering should be clearly known; the fruits of suffering should be clearly known; the cessation of suffering should be clearly known; the path leading to the cessation of suffering should be clearly known?’

“Birth is suffering; old age and decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; grief, wailing, depression, pain, and anguish are suffering; not getting what one desires is suffering; in short, the five grabbing aggregates are all suffering.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of suffering?

“Craving, Bhikkhus, is the origin and arising of suffering.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the variations in suffering?

“Bhikkhus, there is suffering that is of an extreme nature; suffering that is of a mild nature; suffering that fades away and dissipates slowly; and suffering which fades away quickly. This is called variations in suffering.

“And what, Bhikkhus, are the fruits of suffering?

“Here, Bhikkhus, someone with a heart that is overtaken by suffering, grieves, wails, beats his chest, and becomes obsessed, confused, and bewildered. Overwhelmed by the experience of suffering, with obsession in his heart, he reaches outside of himself, searching for answers, as he calls out: *“Who will tell me a line or two to help me reach the ending of this suffering?”*

“Bhikkhus, I say that as a result of suffering, there is either confusion or a constant search. Bhikkhus, these are called the fruits of suffering.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the cessation of suffering?

“Bhikkhus, the cessation of craving is the cessation of suffering. This same Noble Eightfold Path is the very cessation of suffering. That is, right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right stability of mind.

“And, Bhikkhus, when the Noble Disciple knows and understands suffering in this manner; the origin and arising of suffering in this manner; the variations of suffering in this manner; the fruits of suffering in this manner; the cessation of suffering in this manner; and the Path leading to the cessation of suffering in this manner; then he is to be recognized as one who possesses the penetrative understanding of the Holy Life, leading to the cessation of suffering.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the purpose for what I said earlier, regarding suffering.

“This, Bhikkhus, is the exposition on the method of penetrating into The Dhamma.”

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