AN 8.30 — AN 8:30 To Anuruddha | Anuruddha Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

To Anuruddha

Anuruddha Sutta (AN 8:30)

Once the Blessed One was staying among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt. And at that time Ven. Anuruddha was living among the Cetis in the Eastern Bamboo Park. Then, as he was alone in seclusion, this line of thinking arose in Ven. Anuruddha’s awareness: “This Dhamma is for one who is modest, not for one who is self-aggrandizing. This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent. This Dhamma is for one who is reclusive, not for one who is entangled. This Dhamma is for one whose persistence is aroused, not for one who is lazy. This Dhamma is for one whose mindfulness is established, not for one whose mindfulness is confused. This Dhamma is for one whose mind is concentrated, not for one whose mind is unconcentrated. This

Dhamma is for one endowed with discernment, not for whose discernment is weak."

Then the Blessed One, realizing with his awareness the line of thinking in Ven. Anuruddha's awareness—just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm—disappeared from among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt, and re-appeared among the Cetis in the Eastern Bamboo Park, right in front of Ven. Anuruddha. There he sat down on a prepared seat. As for Ven. Anuruddha, having bowed down to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there the Blessed One said to him, "Good, Anuruddha, very good. It's good that you think these thoughts of a great person: 'This Dhamma is for one who is modest, not for one who is self-aggrandizing. This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent. This Dhamma is for one who is reclusive, not for one who is entangled. This Dhamma is for one whose persistence is aroused, not for one who is lazy. This Dhamma is for one whose mindfulness is established, not for one whose mindfulness is confused. This Dhamma is for one whose mind is concentrated, not for one whose mind is unconcentrated. This Dhamma is for one endowed with discernment, not for one whose discernment is weak.' Now then, Anuruddha, think the eighth thought of a great person: 'This Dhamma is for one who enjoys non-objectification,1 who delights in non-objectification, not for one who enjoys & delights in objectification.'

"Anuruddha, when you think these eight thoughts of a great person, then—whenever you want—quite secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities, you will enter & remain in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. When you think these eight thoughts of a great person, then—whenever you want—with the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, you will enter & remain in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance.... with the fading of rapture, you will remain equanimous, mindful, & alert, and sense pleasure with the body. You will enter & remain in the third jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding.' When you think these eight thoughts of a great person, then—whenever you want—with the abandoning of pleasure & pain, as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress, you will enter & remain in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain.

"Now, when you think these eight thoughts of a great person and become a person who can attain at will, without trouble or difficulty, these four jhānas—heightened mental states providing a pleasant abiding in the here & now—then your robe of cast-off rags will seem to you to be just like the clothes chest of a householder or householder's son, full of clothes of many colors. As you live contented, it will serve for your delight, for a comfortable abiding, for non-agitation, & for alighting on unbinding.

"When you think these eight thoughts of a great person and become a person who can attain at will, without trouble or difficulty, these four jhānas—heightened mental states providing a pleasant abiding in the here & now—then your meal of almsfood will seem to you to be just like the rice & wheat of a householder or householder's son, cleaned of black grains, and served with a variety of sauces & seasonings.... your dwelling at the foot of a

tree will seem to you to be just like the gabled mansion of a householder or householder's son, plastered inside & out, draft-free, bolted, and with its shutters closed.... your bed on a spread of grass will seem to you like the couch of a householder or householder's son, spread with long-haired coverlets, white woolen coverlets, embroidered coverlets, antelope-hide & deer-skin rugs, covered with a canopy, and with red cushions for the head & feet....

"When you think these eight thoughts of a great person and become a person who can attain at will, without trouble or difficulty, these four jhānas—heightened mental states providing a pleasant abiding in the here & now—then your medicine of strong-smelling urine will seem to you to be just like the various tonics of a householder or householder's son: ghee, fresh butter, oil, honey, and molasses sugar. As you live contented, it will serve for your delight, for a comfortable abiding, for non-agitation, & for alighting on unbinding.

"Now, then, Anuruddha, you are to stay right here among the Cetis for the coming Rains Retreat."

"As you say, venerable sir," Ven. Anuruddha responded to him.

Then, having given this exhortation to Ven. Anuruddha, the Blessed One—as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm—disappeared from the Eastern Bamboo Park of the Cetis and reappeared among the Bhaggas in the Deer Park at Bhesakaḷā Forest, near Crocodile Haunt. He sat down on a prepared seat and, as he was sitting there, he addressed the monks: "Monks, I will teach you the eight thoughts of a great person. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"Yes, lord," the monks responded to him.

The Blessed One said, "Now, what are the eight thoughts of a great person? This Dhamma is for one who is modest, not for one who is self-aggrandizing. This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent. This Dhamma is for one who is reclusive, not for one who is entangled. This Dhamma is for one whose persistence is aroused, not for one who is lazy. This Dhamma is for one whose mindfulness is established, not for one whose mindfulness is confused. This Dhamma is for one whose mind is concentrated, not for one whose mind is unconcentrated. This Dhamma is for one endowed with discernment, not for one whose discernment is weak. This Dhamma is for one who enjoys non-objectification, who delights in non-objectification, not for one who enjoys & delights in objectification.

"'This Dhamma is for one who is modest, not for one who is self-aggrandizing.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk, being modest, does not want it to be known that 'He is modest.' Being content, he does not want it to be known that 'He is content.' Being reclusive, he does not want it to be known that 'He is reclusive.' His persistence being aroused, he does not want it to be known that 'His persistence is aroused.' His mindfulness being established, he does not want it to be known that 'His mindfulness is established.' His mind being concentrated, he does not

want it to be known that 'His mind is concentrated.' Being endowed with discernment, he does not want it to be known that 'He is endowed with discernment.' Enjoying non-objectification, he does not want it to be known that 'He is enjoying non-objectification.' 'This Dhamma is for one who is modest, not for one who is self-aggrandizing.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk is content with any old robe cloth at all, any old almsfood, any old lodging, any old medicinal requisites for curing the sick at all. 'This Dhamma is for one who is content, not for one who is discontent.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one who is reclusive, not for one who is entangled.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk, when living reclusively, is visited by monks, nuns, lay men, lay women, kings, royal ministers, sectarians & their disciples. With his mind bent on seclusion, tending toward seclusion, inclined toward seclusion, aiming at seclusion, relishing renunciation, he converses with them only as much is necessary for them to take their leave. 'This Dhamma is for one who is reclusive, not for one who is entangled.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one whose persistence is aroused, not for one who is lazy.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk keeps his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful mental qualities and taking on skillful mental qualities. He is steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful mental qualities. 'This Dhamma is for one whose persistence is aroused, not for one who is lazy.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one whose mindfulness is established, not for one whose mindfulness is confused.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk is mindful, endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & able to call to mind even things that were done & said long ago. 'This Dhamma is for one whose mindfulness is established, not for one whose mindfulness is confused.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one whose mind is concentrated, not for one whose mind is unconcentrated.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk, quite secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture he remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, and senses pleasure with the body. He enters & remains in the third jhāna, of which the noble ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding.' With the abandoning of pleasure & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—he enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. 'This Dhamma is for one whose

mind is concentrated, not for one whose mind is unconcentrated.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one endowed with discernment, not for one whose discernment is weak.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk is discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. 'This Dhamma is for one endowed with discernment, not for one whose discernment is weak.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said.

"'This Dhamma is for one who enjoys non-objectification, who delights in non-objectification, not for one who enjoys & delights in objectification.' Thus was it said. With reference to what was it said? There is the case where a monk's mind leaps up, grows confident, steadfast, & released in the cessation of objectification. 'This Dhamma is for one who enjoys non-objectification, who delights in non-objectification, not for one who enjoys & delights in objectification.' Thus was it said. And with reference to this was it said."

Now, during the following Rains Retreat, Ven. Anuruddha stayed right there in the Eastern Bamboo Park among the Cetis. Dwelling alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute, he in no long time entered & remained in the supreme goal of the holy life for which clansmen rightly go forth from home into homelessness, directly knowing & realizing it for himself in the here & now. He knew: "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world." And thus Ven. Anuruddha became another one of the arahants.

Then, on attaining arahantship, he uttered this verse:

Knowing my thoughts,

the Teacher, unexcelled in the cosmos,

came to me through his power

in a body made of mind.

He taught in line with my thoughts,

and then further.

The Buddha,

delighting in non-objectification,

taught non-objectification.

Knowing his Dhamma,

I kept delighting in his bidding.

The three knowledges

have been attained;

the Buddha's bidding,

done.

Note

1. "Objectification" is a translation of papañca. Although in some circles papañca has come to mean a proliferation of thinking, in the Canon it refers not to the amount of thinking, but to a type of thinking marked by the classifications and perceptions it uses. As Sn 4:14 points out, the root of these classifications and perceptions is the thought, "I am the thinker." From this assumption grow such classifications as "me/not me," "existing/not existing," which frame experience in terms conducive to further becoming. DN 21 and MN 18 discuss the relationship between objectification and conflict. AN 4:173 states that the range of objectification is identical with the range of the six sense media. SN 43 lists non-objectification as one of many epithets for unbinding.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: DN 21; MN 2; MN 18; SN 22:3; AN 4:28; AN 4:173; AN 5:30; AN 8:53; AN 10:69; AN 10:72; Ud 3:1; Iti 80; Thag 6:10