AN 9.1 — AN 9:1 Self-awakening | Sambodhi Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

Nines

Self-awakening

Sambodhi Sutta (AN 9:1)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. There he said to the monks: “Monks, if wanderers who are members of other sects should ask you, ‘What, friend, are the prerequisites for the development of the wings to self-awakening?’1 how would you answer them?”

“For us, lord, the teachings have the Blessed One as their root, their guide, & their arbitrator. It would be good if the Blessed One himself would explicate the meaning of this

statement. Having heard it from the Blessed One, the monks will remember it."

"In that case, monks, listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks responded to him.

The Blessed One said, "If wanderers who are members of other sects should ask you, 'What, friend, are the prerequisites for the development of the wings to self-awakening?' you should answer, 'There is the case where a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues. This is the first prerequisite for the development of the wings to self-awakening.

"'And further, the monk is virtuous. He dwells restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in his behavior & sphere of activity. He trains himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults. This is the second prerequisite for the development of the wings to self-awakening.

"'And further, he gets to hear at will, easily & without difficulty, talk that is truly sobering & conducive to the opening of awareness, i.e., talk on modesty, contentment, seclusion, non-entanglement, arousing persistence, virtue, concentration, discernment, release, and the knowledge & vision of release. This is the third prerequisite for the development of the wings to self-awakening.

"'And further, he keeps his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful qualities and for taking on skillful qualities. He is steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with regard to skillful qualities. This is the fourth prerequisite for the development of the wings to self-awakening.

"'And further, he is discerning, endowed with the discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress. This is the fifth prerequisite for the development of the wings to self-awakening.'

"Monks, when a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will be virtuous, will dwell restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in his behavior & sphere of activity, and will train himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

"When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will get to hear at will, easily & without difficulty, talk that is truly sobering and conducive to the opening of awareness, i.e., talk on modesty, contentment, seclusion, non-entanglement, arousing persistence, virtue, concentration, discernment, release, and the knowledge & vision of release.

"When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will keep his persistence aroused for abandoning unskillful qualities and for taking on skillful qualities—steadfast, solid in his effort, not shirking his duties with

regard to skillful qualities.

“When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, it is to be expected that he will be discerning, endowed with discernment of arising & passing away—noble, penetrating, leading to the right ending of stress.

“And further, monks, when the monk is established in these five qualities, there are four additional qualities he should develop: He should develop (contemplation of) the unattractive so as to abandon lust. He should develop goodwill so as to abandon ill will. He should develop mindfulness of in-&-out breathing so as to cut off distractive thinking. He should develop the perception of inconstancy so as to uproot the conceit, ‘I am.’ For a monk perceiving inconstancy, the perception of not-self is made firm. One perceiving not-self attains the uprooting of the conceit, ‘I am’—unbinding in the here & now.”

Note

1. The five mental faculties. See SN 48:10.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 118; MN 119; SN 22:59; SN 45:2; Ud 4:1; Iti 17; Iti 76