

Anguttara Nikāya

The Numerical Discourses

Dasakanipāta
(Book of the Tens)

AN 10.54

Samatha Sutta
“Internal Serenity”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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“Bhikkhus, before training yourselves to become able to penetrate and understand the hearts of others, first, you must train yourselves to become able to penetrate and understand *your own* heart. *This* is the right kind of practice.

“And how, Bhikkhus, should you train yourselves to become able to penetrate and understand *your own* heart?

“Bhikkhus, imagine a woman or a man who is young and youthful, fond of wearing adornments, who would take a clean mirror, or pour water into a vessel and look at the reflection of their face in it. If they were to see some dirt or blemish on their face, they would quickly try their best to remove it. And, if they did not see any dirt or blemish, they would be completely satisfied on account of it, as they consider to themselves:

‘I’m so glad for being fortunate, for I am without any blemishes, seeing that my face is clean.’

“In the same manner, Bhikkhus, self-examining, as you check the level of your heart, is crucial for the Bhikkhu to grow in his wholesome qualities. Therefore, you should pause and check the quality of your heart by asking:

‘Do I attain the internal serenity of the Heart, or do I not?’

‘Do I possess the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma, or do I not?’

“If the Bhikkhu, while self-examining, knows that although he is able to attain the internal serenity of the Heart but does not yet possess the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma, then, while being grounded in his attainment of the internal serenity of the Heart, he should apply

himself to achieve the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma. And by doing so, sometime later, he is able to attain both the internal serenity of the Heart *and* the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma.

“And, if the Bhikkhu knows, while self-examining, that although he does possess the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma, but he is not yet able to attain the internal serenity of the Heart, then, while being grounded in his attainment of the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma, he should apply himself to achieve the internal serenity of the Heart. And by doing so, sometime later, he is able to attain both the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma *and* the internal serenity of the Heart.

“But, if the Bhikkhu knows, while self-examining, that he neither is able to attain the internal serenity of the Heart nor does he possess the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma, then, he should immediately put forth exceptional fervency, dedicated effort, zeal, determination, and unremitting energy, along with consistent mindfulness and clear comprehension, in order to abandon those evil and unwholesome qualities.

“Bhikkhus, just like someone whose head hair and clothes have caught fire, would immediately put forth exceptional fervency, dedicated effort, zeal, determination, and unremitting energy, along with consistent mindfulness and clear comprehension, in order to extinguish the fire blazing over his head and clothes;

“In the same manner, that Bhikkhu should immediately put forth exceptional fervency, dedicated effort, zeal, determination, and unremitting energy, along with consistent mindfulness and clear comprehension, in order to attain both the internal serenity of the Heart *and* the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma. And by doing so, sometime later, he is able to attain both the internal serenity of the Heart *and* the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma.

“And, if the Bhikkhu knows, while self-examining, that he is able to attain both the internal serenity of the Heart and possesses the Higher Wisdom and Vision of The Dhamma, then, while being grounded in these wholesome states, he should further apply himself, in order to destroy the mental contaminants.

“Bhikkhus, I declare that there are two kinds of robes: those you should wear and those you should not wear. Similarly, there are two kinds of alms food: the one to be eaten and the one not to be eaten. Similarly, there are two kinds of dwellings: those that should be resided in, and those that should not be resided in. Similarly, there are two kinds of villages and towns: those that are to be resorted to and those that are not to be resorted to. Similarly, there are two kinds of kingdoms: the one that you should go to, and the one that you should not go to. In addition, there are two kinds of people: those you should associate with and those you should not associate with.

“Now, Bhikkhus, when I declare that there are two kinds of robes: those you should wear and those you should not wear, what is the reason for this to be said?

“If, on examining, you see that by wearing a certain kind of robe which you received, unwholesome qualities would be increasing in you, while wholesome qualities would decrease, then, you should not be wearing them.

“However, if, on examining, you see that by wearing a certain kind of robe which you received, unwholesome qualities would be decreasing in you, while wholesome qualities would increase, then, you may go ahead and wear them.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the reason why I declared that there are two kinds of robes: those you should wear and those you should not wear.

“When I declare, Bhikkhus, that there are two kinds of alms food: the one to be eaten and the one not to be eaten, what is the reason for this to be said?

“If, on examining, you see that by eating a certain kind of alms food which you received, unwholesome qualities would be increasing in you, while wholesome qualities would decrease, then, you should not be eating it.

“However, if, on examining, you see that by eating a certain kind of alms food which you received, unwholesome qualities would be decreasing in you, while wholesome qualities would increase, then, you may go ahead and eat it.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the reason why I declared that there are two kinds of alms food: the one to be eaten and the one not to be eaten.

“When I declare, Bhikkhus, that there are two kinds of dwellings: those that should be resided in, and those that should not be resided in, what is the reason for this to be said?

“If, on examining, you see that by residing in a certain kind of dwelling which you received, unwholesome qualities would be increasing in you, while wholesome qualities would decrease, then, you should not be residing in them.

“However, if, on examining, you see that by residing in a certain kind of dwelling which you received, unwholesome qualities would be decreasing in you, while wholesome qualities would increase, then, you may go ahead and reside in them.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the reason why I declared that there are two kinds of dwellings: those that should be resided in, and those that should not be resided in.

“When I declare, Bhikkhus, that there are two kinds of villages and towns: those that are to be resorted to and those that are not to be resorted to, what is the reason for this to be said?

“If, on examining, you see that by resorting to a certain kind of village or town, unwholesome qualities would be increasing in you, while wholesome qualities would decrease, then, you should not be resorting to them.

“However, if, on examining, you see that by resorting to a certain village or town, unwholesome qualities would be decreasing in you, while wholesome qualities would increase, then, you may go ahead and resort to them.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the reason why I declared that there are two kinds of villages and towns: those that are to be resorted to and those that are not to be resorted to.

“When I declare, Bhikkhus, that there are two kinds of kingdoms: the one you should go to, and the one you should not go to, what is the reason for this to be said?

“If, on examining, you see that by going to a certain kind of kingdom, unwholesome qualities would be increasing in you, while wholesome qualities would decrease, then, you should not go to them.

“However, if, on examining, you see that by going to a certain kind of kingdom, unwholesome qualities would be decreasing in you, while wholesome qualities would increase, then, you may go to them.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the reason why I declared, that there are two kinds of kingdoms: the one you should go to, and the one you should not go to.

“When I declare, Bhikkhus, that there are two kinds of people: those you should associate with and those you should not associate with, what is the reason for this to be said?

“If, on examining, you see that by associating with a certain kind of person, unwholesome qualities would be increasing in you, while wholesome qualities would decrease, then, you should not associate with them.

“However, if, on examining, you see that by associating with a certain kind of person, unwholesome qualities would be decreasing in you, while wholesome qualities would increase, then, you may go ahead and associate with them.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, this is the reason why I declared, that there are two kinds of people: those you should associate with and those you should not associate with.”

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