AN 10.60 — Girimananda Sutta: Discourse to Girimananda Thera

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Text

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was living near Savatthi at Jetavana at the monastery of Anathapindika. Now at that time, the Venerable Girimananda was afflicted with a disease, was suffering therefrom, and was gravely ill. Thereupon the Venerable Ananda approached the Buddha and having saluted him sat beside him. So seated the Venerable Ananda said this to the Blessed One:

"Bhante (Venerable Sir,) the Venerable Girimananda is afflicted with disease, is suffering therefrom, and is gravely ill. It were well, bhante, if the Blessed One would visit the Venerable Girimananda out of compassion for him." (Thereupon the Buddha said):

"Should you, Ananda, visit the monk Girimananda and recite to him the ten contemplations, then that monk Girimananda having heard them, will be immediately cured of his disease.

"What are the ten?

Contemplation of impermanence. Contemplation of anatta (absence of a permanent self or soul). Contemplation of foulness (asubha). Contemplation of disadvantage (danger). Contemplation of abandonment. Contemplation of detachment. Contemplation of cessation. Contemplation of distaste for the whole world. Contemplation of impermanence of all component things. Mindfulness of in-breathing and out-breathing.

i. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of impermanence? Herein, Ananda, a monk having gone to the forest or to the foot of a tree or to an empty house (lonely place) contemplates thus: 'Matter (visible objects) is impermanent; feeling or sensation is impermanent; perception is impermanent; formations are impermanent; consciousness is impermanent. Thus he dwells contemplating impermanence in these five aggregates.' This, Ananda, is called contemplation of impermanence.

ii. "And what Ananda is contemplation of anatta? Herein, Ananda, a monk having gone to the forest or to the foot of a tree or to a lonely place contemplates thus: 'The eye is not the self; visible objects are not the self; the ear is not the self; sounds are not the self; the nose is not the self; smells are not the self; the tongue is not the self; tastes are not the self; the body is not the self; bodily contacts (tangible objects) are not the self; the mind is not the self; mental objects are not the self.' Thus he dwells contemplating not self in these internal and external bases. This, Ananda, is called contemplation of anatta.

iii. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of foulness? Herein, Ananda, a monk contemplates this body upward from the soles of the feet, downward from the top of the hair, enclosed in skin, as being full of many impurities. In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, intestines, intestinal tract, stomach, feces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, nasal mucous, synovium (oil lubricating the joints), and urine. Thus he dwells contemplating foulness in this body. This, Ananda, is called contemplation of foulness.

iv. "What, Ananda, is contemplation of disadvantage (danger)? Herein, Ananda, a monk having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a lonely place, contemplates thus: 'Many are the sufferings, many are the disadvantages (dangers) of this body since diverse diseases are engendered in this body, such as the following: Eye-disease, ear-disease, nose-disease, tongue-disease, body-disease, headache, mumps, mouth-disease, tooth-ache, cough, asthma, catarrh, heart-burn, fever, stomach ailment, fainting, dysentry, swelling, gripes, leprosy, boils, scrofula, consumption, epilepsy, ringworm, itch, eruption, tetter, pustule, plethora, diabetes, piles, cancer, fistula, and diseases originating from bile, from phlegm, from wind, from conflict of the humors, from changes of weather, from adverse condition (faulty deportment), from devices (practiced by others), from

kamma-vipaka (results of kamma); and cold, heat, hunger, thirst, excrement, and urine.' Thus he dwells contemplating disadvantage (danger) in this body. This Ananda, is called contemplation of disadvantage (danger).

v. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of abandonment? Herein, Ananda, a monk does not tolerate a thought of sensual desire that has arisen in him, dispels it, makes an end of it, and annihilates it. He does not tolerate a thought of ill-will that has arisen in him, but abandons, dispels it, makes an end of it, and annihilates it. He does not tolerate a thought of cruelty that has arisen in him but abandons it, dispels it, makes an end of it, and annihilates it. He does not tolerate evil, unprofitable states that arise in him from time to time, but abandons them, dispels them, makes an end of them, and annihilates them. This, Ananda, is called contemplation of abandonment.

vi. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of detachment? Herein, Ananda, a monk having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a lonely place, contemplates thus: 'This is peaceful, this is sublime, namely, the stilling of all conditioned things, the giving up of all substratum of becoming, the extinction of craving, detachment, Nibbana.' This, Ananda, is called contemplation of detachment.

vii. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of cessation? Herein, Ananda, a monk having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a lonely place, contemplates thus: 'This is peaceful, this is sublime, namely, the stilling of all component things, the extinction of craving, cessation, Nibbana.' This, Ananda, is called contemplation of cessation.

viii. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of distaste for the whole world? Herein, Ananda, (a monk) by abandoning any concern and clinging to this world, by abandoning mental prejudices, wrong beliefs, and latent tendencies concerning this world, by not grasping them, but by giving them up, becomes detached. This, Ananda, Is called contemplation of distaste for the whole world.

ix. "And what, Ananda, is contemplation of impermanence of all component things? Herein, Ananda, a monk is wearied, humiliated, and disgusted with all conditioned things. This, Ananda, is called contemplation of impermanence of all component things.

x. "And what, Ananda, is mindfulness of in-breathing and out-breathing? Herein, Ananda, a monk having gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to a lonely place, sits down, having folded his legs crosswise, keeping the body erect, and his mindfulness alive, mindful he breathes in, mindful he breathes out.

"When he is breathing in a long breath, he knows: 'I am breathing in a long breath,' when he is breathing out a long breath, he knows: 'I am breathing out a long breath'; when he is breathing in a short breath, he knows: 'I am breathing in a short breath,' when he is breathing out a short breath, he knows: 'I am breathing out a short breath.' 'Conscious of the entire process[1] I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself. 'Conscious of the entire process I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Calming the entire process, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'calming the entire process I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Experiencing rapture, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'experiencing rapture, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Experiencing bliss, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'experiencing bliss, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Experiencing the mental formations (feeling and perception), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'experiencing the mental formations, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Calming the mental formations, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'calming the mental formations, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Experiencing the mind (according to the fourfold absorptions, or jhanas), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'experiencing the mind, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Exceedingly gladdening the mind (by samatha, calming, as well as by vipassana, insight), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'exceedingly gladdening the mind, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Concentrating the mind (on the breath), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; concentrating the mind I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"'Liberating the mind (from the nivaranas, or hindrances), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself, 'liberating the mind I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating impermanence (in body, feelings, perceptions, volitional formations, consciousness), I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating impermanence, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating detachment, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating detachment, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating cessation, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself, 'contemplating cessation, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating abandonment, I shall breathe in,' thus he trains himself; 'contemplating abandonment, I shall breathe out,' thus he trains himself.

"This, Ananda, is called mindfulness of in-breathing and out-breathing. If, Ananda, you visit the monk Girimananda and recite to him these ten contemplations, then that monk, Girimananda, having heard them, will be immediately cured of his affliction."

Thereupon the Venerable Ananda, having learned these ten contemplations from the Blessed One, visited the Venerable Girimananda, and recited to him the ten contemplations. When the Venerable Girimananda had heard them, his affliction was immediately cured. He recovered from that affliction, and thus disappeared the affliction of the Venerable Girimananda.

Note

1.

Sabba-kaya. Literally, "the whole (breath) body." According to the Visuddhi Magga, kaya here does not mean the physical body, but the whole mass of in-breathing and out-breathing.