AN 10.71 — AN 10:71 Wishes | Ākaṅkha Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

Wishes

Ākaṅkha Sutta (AN 10:71)

This discourse lists ten reasons, of ascending worth, for perfecting the precepts and being committed to the development of tranquility (samatha) and insight (vipassanā). An interesting feature of this discussion is that the Buddha does not separate insight and jhāna into separate paths of practice, and actually cites insight, together with tranquility, as a prerequisite for mastering the four jhānas.

* * *

On one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. There he addressed the monks, "Monks!"

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

The Blessed One said: "Monks, dwell consummate in virtue, consummate in terms of the Pāṭimokkha. Dwell restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in your behavior & sphere of activity. Train yourselves, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.

[1] "If a monk would wish, 'May I be dear & pleasing to my companions in the holy life, respected by & inspiring to them,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[2] "If a monk would wish, 'May I be someone who receives robes, alms food, lodgings, & medicinal requisites for curing the sick,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[3] "If a monk would wish, 'Whatever I use or consume in terms of robes, alms food, lodgings, & medical requisites for curing the sick, may that be of great fruit, of great benefit to those who provided them,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[4] "If a monk would wish, 'When my kinsmen & relatives who have died & passed away recollect me with brightened minds, may it be of great fruit, of great benefit,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[5] "If a monk would wish, 'May I be content with whatever robes, alms food, lodgings, & medical requisites for curing the sick are available,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[6] "If a monk would wish, 'May I be resistant to cold, heat, hunger, & thirst; to the touch of gadflies & mosquitoes, wind & sun & creeping things; to abusive, hurtful language; to bodily feelings that, when they arise, are painful, sharp, stabbing, fierce, distasteful, deadly,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[7] "If a monk would wish, 'May I overcome displeasure & delight, and not be overcome by displeasure & delight. May I dwell conquering again & again any displeasure & delight that

has arisen,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[8] "If a monk would wish, 'May I overcome fear & dread, and not be overcome by fear & dread. May I dwell conquering again & again any fear & dread that have arisen,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[9] "If a monk would wish, 'May I attain—whenever I want, without strain, without difficulty—the four jhānas that are heightened mental states, pleasant abidings in the here & now,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

[10] "If a monk would wish, 'May I—with the ending of effluents—remain in the effluent-free awareness-release & discernment-release, having directly known & realized them for myself right in the here & now,' then he should be one who brings the precepts to perfection, who is committed to inner tranquility of awareness, who doesn't neglect jhāna, who is endowed with insight, and who frequents empty dwellings.

"'Monks, dwell consummate in virtue, consummate in terms of the Pāṭimokkha. Dwell restrained in accordance with the Pāṭimokkha, consummate in your behavior & sphere of activity. Train yourselves, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.' Thus was it said. And in reference to this was it said."

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 6; AN 4:28; AN 4:94; AN 4:128; AN 4:170; AN 5:98; AN 5:114; AN 8:53; AN 8:70