Snp 5.3 — Punnaka-manava-puccha: Punnaka's Questions

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.5.03.than.html

Source revision: sha256:7c411108530c04aafcca0ac43267ed12227cbb2653320e8ae0bb686e566bb783

License: CC-BY-NC-4.0 — https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

License URL: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Copyright: ©1994 Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

License notice: The text of this page ("Punnaka-manava-puccha: Punnaka's Questions", by Thanissaro Bhikkhu) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of the license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. Documents linked from this page may be subject to other restrictions.

Attribution: ©1994 Thanissaro Bhikkhu. The text of this page ("Punnaka-manava-puccha: Punnaka's Questions", by Thanissaro Bhikkhu) is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of the license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. Documents linked from this page may be subject to other restrictions. Transcribed from a file provided by the translator. Last revised for Access to Insight on 29 August 2012. How to cite this document (a suggested style): "Punnaka-manava-puccha: Punnaka's Questions" (Sn 5.3), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 29 August 2012, https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.5.03.than.html .

Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

[Punnaka:]

To the one unperturbed, who has seen the root [of all things], I have come with a question. Because of what have many human seers — noble warriors, brahmans — offered sacrifices to devas here in the world? I ask you, O Blessed One. Please tell me.

[The Buddha:]

Those many human seers — noble warriors, brahmans — who have offered sacrifices to devas here in the world, Punnaka, hoping for more of this state of being, offered their sacrifices because of aging.

[Punnaka:]

Those many human seers — noble warriors, brahmans — who have offered sacrifices to devas here in the world: Have they, O Blessed One, heeding the path of sacrifice, crossed over birth & aging? I ask you, O Blessed One. Please tell me.

[The Buddha:]

They hoped for, liked, longed for, so sacrificed — they longed for sensuality, dependent on gain. I tell you: those who take on the yoke of sacrifice, impassioned with the passion for becoming, have not crossed over birth & aging.

[Punnaka:]

If those who take on the yoke of sacrifice haven't crossed over the flood, dear sir, then who in the world of beings divine & human has crossed over birth & aging? I ask you, O Blessed One. Please tell me.

[The Buddha:]

He who has fathomed the far & near in the world, for whom there is nothing perturbing in the world — his vices evaporated, undesiring, untroubled, at peace — he, I tell you, has crossed over birth & aging.

Note

AN 3.32 and AN 4.41 contain discussions of the last verse in this poem.

In AN 3.32, Ven. Ananda asks the Buddha, "Could it be that a monk could attain a concentration of such a sort such that, with regard to this conscious body, he would have no 'I'-making or 'mine'-making or obsession of conceit, such that with regard to all external themes [topics of concentration] he would have no 'I'-making or 'mine'-making or obsession of conceit, and that he would enter & remain in the awareness-release & discernment-release in which there is no 'I'-making or 'mine'-making or obsession of conceit?"

The Buddha answers that it is possible, and that such a concentration can be attained when one is percipient in this way: "This is peace, this is exquisite — the resolution of all mental processes; the relinquishment of all acquisitions; the ending of craving; dispassion; cessation; Unbinding." He then adds that it was in connection to this state of mind that he uttered the last verse in this poem.

In AN 4.41, the Buddha identifies four ways of developing concentration: "There is the development of concentration that, when developed & pursued, leads to a pleasant abiding in the here & now. There is the development of concentration that, when developed & pursued, leads to the attainment of knowledge & vision. There is the development of concentration that, when developed & pursued, leads to mindfulness & alertness. There is the development of concentration that, when developed & pursued, leads to the ending of the effluents." (For details, see AN 4.41) The Buddha then adds that he uttered the last verse of this poem in connection with these four ways of developing concentration.