Snp 5.4 — Mettagu-manava-puccha: Mettagu's Questions

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.5.04.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 ("Mettagu-manava-puccha: Mettagu'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 ("Mettagu-manava-puccha: Mettagu'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 30 November 2013. How to cite this document (a suggested style): "Mettagu-manava-puccha: Mettagu's Questions" (Sn 5.4), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight (BCBS Edition), 30 November 2013, https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/snp/snp.5.04.than.html . Alternate format:

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

[Mettagu:]

I ask you, O Blessed One. Please tell me. I regard you as knowledgeable, with your self developed. From what have the many forms of stress & suffering arisen in the world?

[The Buddha:]

If you ask me the coming-into-being of stress & suffering, I will tell it to you as one who discerns. From acquisition [1] as cause the many forms of stress & suffering come into being in the world. Whoever, unknowing, makes acquisitions — the fool — comes to stress & suffering again & again. So one who's discerning, focused on the birth of stress & suffering, their coming-into-being, should make no acquisitions.

[Mettagu:]

What we asked, you've expounded. Now we ask something else. Please tell us. How do the prudent cross over the flood of birth & aging, lamentation & sorrow? Please, sage, declare

this to me as this Dhamma has been known by you.

[The Buddha:]

I will teach you the Dhamma — in the here & now, not quoted words — knowing which, living mindfully, you'll cross over beyond entanglement in the world.

[Mettagu:]

And I relish, Great Seer, that Dhamma supreme, knowing which, living mindfully, I'll cross over beyond entanglement in the world.

[The Buddha:]

Whatever you're alert to, above, below, across, in between:[2] dispelling any delight, any laying claim to those things, consciousness should not take a stance in becoming. The monk who dwells thus — mindful, heedful — letting go of his sense of mine, knowing right here would abandon birth & aging, lamentation & sorrow, stress & suffering.

[Mettagu:]

I relish, Gotama, the Great Seer's words well-expounded, without acquisition, for yes, O Blessed One, you've abandoned stress & suffering as this Dhamma has been known by you. And they, too, would abandon stress & suffering those whom you, sage, would admonish unceasingly. Having met you, I bow down to you, Great One. Perhaps you will admonish me unceasingly.

[The Buddha:]

Whoever you recognize as a knowledgeable brahman, possessing nothing, unentangled in sensuality & becoming yes, he has crossed over the flood. Having crossed to the far shore, he is without harshness or doubt. And any one who has realized, who is knowledgeable here, having unentangled the bond to becoming and non-, [3] free of craving, untroubled, undesiring — he, I tell you, has crossed over birth & aging.

Notes

1.

The term "acquisition" (upadhi), in its everyday sense, denotes the possessions, baggage, and other paraphernalia that a nomadic family might carry around with it in its wanderings. On the psychological level, it denotes anything for which one might have a sense of "I" or "mine" and which, consequently, one would carry around as a kind of mental baggage.

2.

Nd.II gives six different valid interpretations for "above, below, across, in between":

above = the future; below = the past; across and in between = the present

above = the deva world; below = hell; across and in between = the human world

above = skillfulness; below = unskillfulness; across and in between = indeterminate mental qualities

above = the property of formlessness; below = the property of sensuality; across and in between = the property of form

above = feelings of pleasure; below = feelings of pain; across and in between = feelings of neither pleasure nor pain

above = the body from the feet on up; below = the body from the crown of the head on down; across and in between = the middle of the body

3.

Becoming and non-becoming (or dis-becoming) are the two most subtle objects of craving that lead on to continued existence — and suffering — in the round of birth & death.