

Nandakovāda Sutta
“The Venerable Nandaka’s Instruction”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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I have personally heard this.

At one time, The Blessed One was living at the monastery offered by Anāthapindika within Jeta's Park, in the City of Sāvatthi.

Then, the Venerable Theri, Mahāpajāpati Gautami approached The Blessed One with nearly five hundred Bhikkhunis. After paying their respects by worshipping The Blessed One, they all stood to one side, and the Venerable Mahāpajāpati Gautami said to The Blessed One:

“Bhante, please advise the Bhikkhunis, by giving them a talk on the Dhamma.”

In those days, the Bhikkhus were still taking turns to teach and instruct the Bhikkhunis. However, every time it was the Venerable Nandaka’s turn, he would avoid it by not going to advise or teach the Bhikkhunis.

The Blessed One then addressed the Venerable Ānanda.

“Ānanda, whose turn is it to instruct and teach the Bhikkhunis today?”

“Bhante, it is the Venerable Nandaka’s turn, but he does not like to instruct the Bhikkhunis.”

Then, The Blessed One addressed the Venerable Nandaka and said:

“Instruct the Bhikkhunis, Nandaka. Please, Bhikkhu, teach the Bhikkhunis. Noble One, go and give the Bhikkhunis a talk on the Dhamma.”

“Yes, Bhante,” said the Venerable Nandaka. In the following morning, he put on his robes and by taking his alms bowl and outer robe, went on his alms round in Sāvatthi. Afterwards, once he had already collected his alms and the meal was over, he went to the monastery of the royal nuns. The Bhikkhunis, meanwhile, on seeing the Venerable Nandaka approach, quickly prepared a seat for him and also water for washing his feet.

Once at the monastery, the Venerable Nandaka sat on the prepared seat and washed his feet. The Bhikkhunis paid homage to the Venerable Nandaka, and then went and sat to one side. Then, the Venerable Nandaka said to those Bhikkhunis:

“Sisters, this talk on the Dhamma shall be in the form of questions and answers, where I will ask questions, and if you know or have the answer, you may go ahead and reply by saying: ‘*I understand,*’ or if you do not, then say: ‘*I do not understand.*’

And if it so happens that you experience doubt or uncertainty about what is being taught, then you should go ahead and ask by saying:

‘*Bhante, what is the meaning of this?*’ ‘*Why does it say so, Bhante?*’

On hearing this direction, the Bhikkhunis expressed their delight by saying:

“Bhante, even hearing this invitation from Master Nandaka, we are already very pleased and happy!”

And the Venerable Nandaka continued by instructing the Bhikkhunis:

1. “Sisters, is the eye permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me,*” “*this is happening to me,*” or “*this is myself?*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

2. “Sisters, is the ear permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me,*” “*this is happening to me,*” or “*this is myself?*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

3. “Sisters, is the nose permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

4. “Sisters, is the tongue permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

5. “Sisters, is the body permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

6. “Sisters, is the mind permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable. And why do we say this? We say this, because we have already seen this for ourselves, to be truly the case, through the development of correct wisdom, whereby we recognize how *all* of the six internal sense spheres are impermanent.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“And what do you think, Sisters?

1. “Are visible forms permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

2. “Are audible sounds permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

3. “Are smells permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

4. “Are flavors or tastes permanent or impermanent?”

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

5. “Are tactile objects or surfaces permanent or impermanent?”

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

6. “Are mental phenomena or thoughts permanent or impermanent?”

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable. And why do we say this? We say this, because we have already seen this for ourselves, to be truly the case, through the development of correct wisdom, whereby we recognize how *all* of the six external sense spheres are impermanent.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“And what do you think, Sisters?

1. “Is eye consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

2. “Is ear consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

3. “Is nose consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

4. “Is tongue consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

5. “Is body consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

6. “Is mind consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me,*” “*this is happening to me,*” or “*this is myself?*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable. And why do we say this? We say this, because we have already seen this for ourselves, to be truly the case, through the development of correct wisdom, whereby we recognize how *all* of the six internal sense spheres are impermanent.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“Sisters, in just the same way that a burning oil lamp has its oil as fuel for the flame, which is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. Similarly, the wick is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. The flame that burns is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. The light that emanates from all these things coming together is also impermanent, truly an unreliable thing.

“Now suppose, Sisters, someone were to say, that despite the fact that the burning oil lamp has its oil that is impermanent and an unreliable thing, also its wick that is impermanent, and truly an unreliable thing, as well as its flame that burns which is impermanent and truly an unreliable thing, the light emanating from all these things coming together, however, ‘is in fact permanent, eternal, and truly a reliable and an unchanging thing.’

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not in fact be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, a burning oil lamp has its oil as fuel for the flame, which is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. Similarly, the wick is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. The flame that burns is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. So is the light emanating from all these things coming together also impermanent and therefore, truly an unreliable thing.”

“In just the same manner, Sisters, if someone were to say: ‘*although my six internal sense spheres are impermanent, whatever pleasant, painful or neutral feelings I experience because of having these six internal spheres, however, are all permanent, eternal, and therefore, truly reliable things.*’

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, with the arising of specific conditions, there arise their specific kinds of feelings. And with the ending of those specific conditions, there end the specific kinds of feelings, as a result.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“Further, Sisters, imagine there is a huge tree, full of heartwood, with roots that are impermanent, changing, and seen truly as perishable things, the trunk also being impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing. Similarly, its branches and foliage too, being impermanent, changing, and perishable things, as well as its shadow, which is impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing. Now, suppose, Sisters, someone were to come and say, that even though the tree’s roots are impermanent, changing, and seen truly as changing things, the trunk also being impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing, similarly, its branches and foliage too, being impermanent, changing, and perishable things, but, somehow, its shadow, they claim, is in fact permanent, unchanging, eternal, and a non-perishable thing.

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, that huge tree, full of heartwood, with roots that are impermanent, changing, and seen truly as perishable things, the trunk also being impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing, similarly, its branches and foliage too, being impermanent, changing, and perishable things, and so must the case be with its shadow, for it too is impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing.

“In just the same manner, Sisters, if someone were to say; *‘although my six external sense spheres are impermanent, whatever pleasant, painful or neutral feelings I experience because of having these six external spheres, however, are all permanent, eternal, and therefore, truly reliable things.’*

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, with the arising of specific conditions, there arise their specific kinds of feelings. And with the ending of those specific conditions, there end the specific kinds of feelings, as a result.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees with the development of correct wisdom.

“Now, Sisters, suppose a skilled butcher or his apprentice would slaughter a cow with a sharp carving knife, but without damaging the internal fleshy parts or its external skin. He would then chop and sever all its internal connective tissues, joints and ligaments combined, by cutting them into small bits. And after skinning and peeling off the cow’s entire hide, they put the cow back together by placing all the cut-up joints and tissues back inside its outer skin to make it look like it was and then would say: *‘Here we have the same cow, intact, just like it was before, complete and in that same skin!’*”

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, that skilled butcher or his apprentice would be slaughtering the cow with that sharp carving knife, while chopping and severing all its internal connective tissues, joints and ligaments combined, by cutting them into small bits. And after skinning and peeling off the cow’s entire hide, even if they put the cow back together by placing all the cut-up joints and tissues back inside its outer skin to make it look like it was and then say: *‘Here we have the same cow, intact, just like it was before, complete and in that same skin!’*”

“However, that would still not change the fact that the cow has been removed from its skin and its internal connective tissues are now cut into pieces.”

“Sisters, the purpose in presenting you with this simile is to explain something, and here is its meaning:

“The internal flesh is a synonym for the six internal sense spheres, whereas the external skin of the cow is a synonym for the six external sense spheres: the sense objects. Now, the internal connective tissues, joints, and ligaments, is a synonym for yearning and lust. The sharp carving knife is a synonym for the Noble One's wisdom, because it is with that Noble wisdom that the internal impurities, fetters, and shackles that bind the person are chopped, severed, and cut again and again.

“Sisters, there are these Seven Factors of Awakening, which when the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates, he is then able to completely destroy the mental contaminants, as a result of which he finally experiences the Freedom of the Heart, attaining Freedom through Wisdom, all in *this* very body! And having realized it by his own direct and higher intuitive understanding, he continues experiencing Liberation, throughout his whole life.

“Now what, Sisters, are these Seven?”

“Here, Sisters, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Mindfulness Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Examination Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the

causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Persevering Effort Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Spiritual Joy Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Tranquility of Mind Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Collectedness of Mind Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“And, Sisters, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Equanimity Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“In this manner, Sisters, when the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates these Seven Factors of Awakening, he is then able to completely destroy the mental contaminants, as a result of which he finally experiences the Freedom of the Heart, attaining Freedom through Wisdom, all in *this* very body! And having realized it by his own direct and higher intuitive understanding, he continues experiencing Liberation, throughout his whole life.”

Thus, having instructed the nuns, the Venerable Nandaka sent them away, by saying:

“And now, Sisters, you may go, for it is late.”

“Yes, Bhante,” the Bhikkhunis replied, as they paid homage to the Venerable Nandaka and circumambulated him, while keeping him to their right.

Then, they went and approached The Blessed One, and after showing their respects to the Teacher, they all stood to one side, until The Blessed One addressed them, by saying:

“Bhikkhunis, you may now go, for it is late.”

“Yes, Lord,” the Bhikkhunis replied, as they paid homage to The Blessed One and circumambulated Him, while keeping him to their right, and then left.

When the Bhikkhunis had gone back to their quarters, The Blessed One addressed the Bhikkhus and said:

“Bhikkhus, on seeing the Moon waxing during the fourteenth day of the month, you cannot find those who would doubt that it is incomplete, for it is not Full Moon yet. In the same manner, Bhikkhus, although those Bhikkhunis are very moved and delighted in hearing the Dhamma from Nandaka, nevertheless, their main purpose has not been fulfilled, yet.”

Then, The Blessed One addressed the Venerable Nandaka again, by saying:

“Therefore, Nandaka, go ahead and instruct those Bhikkhunis, yet again on that same topic!”

“Yes, Bhante,” said the Venerable Nandaka. In the following morning, he put on his robes and by taking his alms bowl and outer robe, he went on his alms round in Sāvatti. Afterwards, once he had already collected his alms and the meal was over, he went to the monastery of the royal nuns. And as before, he began instructing the Bhikkhunis by saying:

1. “Sisters, is the eye permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

2. “Sisters, is the ear permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

3. “Sisters, is the nose permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

4. “Sisters, is the tongue permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

5. “Sisters, is the body permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

6. “Sisters, is the mind permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable. And why do we say this? We say this, because we have already seen this for ourselves, to be truly the case, through the development of correct wisdom, whereby we recognize how *all* of the six internal sense spheres are impermanent.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“And what do you think, Sisters?

1. “Are visible forms permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

2. “Are audible sounds permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

3. “Are smells permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

4. “Are flavors or tastes permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

5. “Are tactile objects or surfaces permanent or impermanent?

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.

6. “Are mental phenomena or thoughts permanent or impermanent?”

“They are impermanent, Bhante.”

“And those which are impermanent, are they considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“They are considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable. And why do we say this? We say this, because we have already seen this for ourselves, to be truly the case, through the development of correct wisdom, whereby we recognize how *all* of the six external sense spheres are impermanent.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“And what do you think, Sisters?”

1. “Is eye consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

2. “Is ear consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

3. “Is nose consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

4. “Is tongue consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: *“this is part of me,” “this is happening to me,” or “this is myself?”*

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

5. “Is body consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable.”

6. “Is mind consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“It is impermanent, Bhante.”

“And that which is impermanent, is it considered to be suffering or happiness?”

“It is considered to be suffering, Bhante.”

“So, with what is impermanent, suffering, and thus unreliable in its changing nature, is it suitable for you to look upon it or claim it as: “*this is part of me*,” “*this is happening to me*,” or “*this is myself*?”

“No, Bhante, it is not suitable. And why do we say this? We say this, because we have already seen this for ourselves, to be truly the case, through the development of correct wisdom, whereby we recognize how *all* of the six internal sense spheres are impermanent.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“Sisters, in just the same way that a burning oil lamp has its oil as fuel for the flame, which is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. Similarly, the wick is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. The flame that burns is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. The light that emanates from all these things coming together is also impermanent, truly an unreliable thing.

“Now suppose, Sisters, someone were to say, that despite the fact that the burning oil lamp has its oil that is impermanent and an unreliable thing, also its wick that is impermanent, and truly an unreliable thing, as well as its flame that burns which is impermanent and truly an unreliable thing, the light emanating from all these things coming together, however, ‘is in fact permanent, eternal, and truly a reliable and an unchanging thing.’

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not in fact be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, a burning oil lamp has its oil as fuel for the flame, which is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. Similarly, the wick is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. The flame that burns is impermanent, truly an unreliable thing. So is the light emanating from all these things coming together, also impermanent, and therefore, truly an unreliable thing.”

“In just the same manner, Sisters, if someone were to say: *‘although my six internal sense spheres are impermanent, whatever pleasant, painful or neutral feelings I experience because of having these six internal spheres, however, are all permanent, eternal, and therefore, truly reliable things.’*”

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, with the arising of specific conditions, there arise their specific kinds of feelings. And with the ending of those specific conditions, there end the specific kinds of feelings, as a result.”

“Sādhu...Sādhu, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“Further, Sisters, imagine there is a huge tree, full of heartwood, with roots that are impermanent, changing, and seen truly as perishable things, the trunk also being impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing. Similarly, its branches and foliage too, being impermanent, changing, and perishable things, as well as its shadow, which is impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing. Now, suppose, Sisters, someone were to come and say, that even though the tree’s roots are impermanent, changing, and seen truly as changing things, the trunk also being impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing, similarly, its branches and foliage too, being impermanent, changing, and perishable things, but, somehow, its shadow, they claim, is in fact permanent, unchanging, eternal, and a non-perishable thing.

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, that huge tree, full of heartwood, with roots that are impermanent, changing, and seen truly as perishable things, the trunk also being impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing, similarly, its branches and foliage too, being impermanent, changing, and perishable things, and so must the case be with its shadow, for it too is impermanent, changing, and a perishable thing.

“In just the same manner, Sisters, if someone were to say; *‘although my six external sense spheres are impermanent, whatever pleasant, painful or neutral feelings I experience because of having these six external spheres, however, are all permanent, eternal, and therefore, truly reliable things.’*”

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, with the arising of specific conditions, there arise their specific kinds of

feelings. And with the ending of those specific conditions, there end the specific kinds of feelings, as a result.”

“Sādhū...Sādhū, indeed Sisters!

“That is how a Noble Disciple truly sees, with the development of correct wisdom.

“Now, Sisters, suppose a skilled butcher or his apprentice would slaughter a cow with a sharp carving knife, but without damaging the internal fleshy parts or its external skin. He would then chop and sever all its internal connective tissues, joints and ligaments combined, by cutting them into small bits. And after skinning and peeling off the cow’s entire hide, they put the cow back together by placing all the cut-up joints and tissues back inside its outer skin to make it look like it was and then would say: *‘Here we have the same cow, intact, just like it was before, complete and in that same skin!’*

“Now, would such a person be speaking correctly?”

“No, Bhante, such a person would not be speaking correctly! And why do we say that? It is because, Bhante, that skilled butcher or his apprentice would be slaughtering the cow with that sharp carving knife, while chopping and severing all its internal connective tissues, joints and ligaments combined, by cutting them into small bits. And after skinning and peeling off the cow’s entire hide, even if they put the cow back together by placing all the cut-up joints and tissues back inside its outer skin to make it look like it was and then say: *‘Here we have the same cow, intact, just like it was before, complete and in that same skin!’*

“However, that would still not change the fact that the cow has been removed from its skin and its internal connective tissues are now cut into pieces.”

“Sisters, the purpose in presenting you with this simile is to explain something, and here is its meaning:

“The internal flesh is a synonym for the six internal sense spheres, whereas the external skin of the cow is a synonym for the six external sense spheres: the sense objects. Now, the internal connective tissues, joints, and ligaments, is a synonym for yearning and lust. The sharp carving knife is a synonym for the Noble One’s wisdom, because it is with that Noble wisdom that the internal impurities, fetters, and shackles that bind the person are chopped, severed, and cut again and again.

“Sisters, there are these Seven Factors of Awakening, which when the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates, he is then able to completely destroy the mental contaminants, as a result of which he finally experiences the Freedom of the Heart, attaining Freedom through Wisdom, all in *this* very body! And having realized it by his own direct and higher intuitive understanding, he continues experiencing Liberation, throughout his whole life.

“Now what, Sisters, are these Seven?

“Here, Sisters, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Mindfulness Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Examination Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Persevering Effort Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Spiritual Joy Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Tranquility of Mind Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“Similarly, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Collectedness of Mind Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“And, Sisters, the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates the Equanimity Awakening Factor, as he becomes more and more settled in seclusion, becoming more dispassionate, while the causes for agitation start to die and cease in him, all of which lead him to continuously relinquish, by giving up.

“In this manner, Sisters, when the Bhikkhu constantly develops and cultivates these Seven Factors of Awakening, he is then able to completely destroy the mental contaminants, as a result of which he finally experiences the Freedom of the Heart, attaining Freedom through Wisdom, all in *this* very body! And having realized it by his own direct and higher intuitive understanding, he continues experiencing Liberation, throughout his whole life.”

Thus, having instructed the nuns, the Venerable Nandaka sent them away, by saying:

“And now, Sisters, you may go, for it is late.”

“Yes, Bhante,” the Bhikkhunis replied, as they paid homage to the Venerable Nandaka and circumambulated him, while keeping him to their right.

Then, they went and approached The Blessed One, and after showing their respects to the Teacher, they all stood to one side, until The Blessed One addressed them, by saying:

“Bhikkhunis, you may now go, for it is late.”

“Yes, Lord,” the Bhikkhunis replied, as they paid homage to The Blessed One and circumambulated Him, while keeping him to their right, and then left.

When the Bhikkhunis had gone back to their quarters, The Blessed One addressed the Bhikkhus and said:

“Bhikkhus, on seeing the Full Moon on the fifteenth day of the month, you cannot find those who would doubt that it is complete, for it is already the Full Moon. In the same manner, Bhikkhus, those Bhikkhunis are very moved and delighted in hearing the Dhamma from Nandaka, for their main purpose has now been fulfilled.

Thus, Bhikkhus, I declare that the least accomplished among these Bhikkhunis is a Stream-Winner, never to be reborn into the miserable realms, bound for Full Liberation herself!”

This is what The Blessed One said, and those Bhikkhus too were delighted and happy, with what The Blessed Lord stated.

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