SN 12.68 — Kosambi Sutta: At Kosambi (On Knowing Dependent Co-arising)

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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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

On one occasion Ven. Musila, Ven. Pavittha, Ven. Narada, and Ven. Ananda were staying in Kosambi at Ghosita's monastery.

Then Ven. Pavittha said to Ven. Musila, "Musila, my friend, putting aside conviction, putting aside preference, putting aside tradition, putting aside reasoning through analogies, putting aside an agreement through pondering views: Do you have truly personal knowledge that, 'From birth as a requisite condition come aging & death'?"

"Yes, Pavittha my friend. Putting aside conviction... preference... tradition... reasoning through analogies... an agreement through pondering views, I do have truly personal knowledge that, 'From birth as a requisite condition come aging & death.'"

(Similarly with 'From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth'... 'From clinging/sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming'... 'From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging/sustenance'... 'From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving'... 'From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling'... 'From the six

sense media as a requisite condition comes contact'... 'From name-&-form as a requisite condition come the six sense media'... 'From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form'... 'From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.')

"Musila, my friend, putting aside conviction, putting aside preference, putting aside tradition, putting aside reasoning through analogies, putting aside an agreement through pondering views: Do you have truly personal knowledge that, 'From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications'?"

"Yes, Pavittha my friend. Putting aside conviction... preference... tradition... reasoning through analogies... an agreement through pondering views, I do have truly personal knowledge that, 'From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.'"

"Musila, my friend, putting aside conviction, putting aside preference, putting aside tradition, putting aside reasoning through analogies, putting aside an agreement through pondering views: Do you have truly personal knowledge that, 'From the cessation of birth comes the cessation of aging & death'?"

"Yes, Pavittha my friend. Putting aside conviction... preference... tradition... reasoning through analogies... an agreement through pondering views, I do have truly personal knowledge that, 'From the cessation of birth comes the cessation of aging & death.'"

(Similarly with 'From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth'... 'From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming'... 'From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance'... 'From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving'... 'From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling'... 'From the cessation of the six sense media comes the cessation of contact'... 'From the cessation of name-&-form comes the cessation of the six sense media'... 'From the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of name-&-form'... 'From the cessation of fabrications comes the cessation of consciousness.')

"Musila, my friend, putting aside conviction, putting aside preference, putting aside tradition, putting aside reasoning through analogies, putting aside an agreement through pondering views: Do you have truly personal knowledge that, 'From the cessation of ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications'?"

"Yes, Pavittha my friend. Putting aside conviction... preference... tradition... reasoning through analogies... an agreement through pondering views, I do have truly personal knowledge that, 'From the cessation of ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications.'"

"Musila, my friend, putting aside conviction, putting aside preference, putting aside tradition, putting aside reasoning through analogies, putting aside an agreement through pondering views: Do you have truly personal knowledge that, 'The cessation of becoming is Unbinding'?"

"Yes, Pavittha my friend. Putting aside conviction... preference... tradition... reasoning through analogies... an agreement through pondering views, I do have truly personal knowledge that, 'The cessation of becoming is Unbinding.'"

"Then, Ven. Musila, you are an arahant whose fermentations are ended."

When this was said, Ven. Musila was silent. [1]

Then Ven. Narada said, "Pavittha my friend, it would be good if I were to get that question. Ask me that question and I will answer it for you."

"Then Ven. Narada will get that question. I will ask Ven. Narada that question, and may he answer that question for me."

(Ven. Pavittha asks the same questions of Ven. Narada, who gives the same answers as Ven. Musila.)

"Then, Ven. Narada, you are an arahant whose fermentations are ended."

"My friend, although I have seen properly with right discernment, as it actually is present, that 'The cessation of becoming is Unbinding,' still I am not an arahant whose fermentations are ended. [2] It's as if there were a well along a road in a desert, with neither rope nor water bucket. A man would come along overcome by heat, oppressed by the heat, exhausted, dehydrated, & thirsty. He would look into the well and would have knowledge of 'water,' but he would not dwell touching it with his body. [3] In the same way, although I have seen properly with right discernment, as it actually is present, that 'The cessation of becoming is Unbinding,' still I am not an arahant whose fermentations are ended."

When this was said, Ven. Ananda said to Ven. Pavittha, "When he speaks in this way, friend Pavittha, what do you have to say about Ven. Narada?"

"When Ven. Narada speaks in this way, friend Ananda, I have nothing to say about Ven. Narada except that [he is] admirable & skillful."

Notes

1.

According to the Commentary, Ven. Musila's silence here is a sign of affirmation.

2.

In other words, he has attained one of the preliminary levels of awakening (stream-entry, once-returning, or non-returning), but not full arahantship. As Mv.I.23.5 shows, even the level of stream-entry affords a vision of the Deathless.

3.

The image refers to two common similes for the full experience of Unbinding: (a) it is refreshing & nourishing, like drinking water (see Dhp 205); and (b) some arahants experience it as if touching it with the body (see AN 9.45).