SN 15.10 — SN 15:10 Person | Puggala Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

Person

Puggala Sutta (SN 15:10)

This sutta is almost identical with Iti 24.

On one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha on Vulture Peak Mountain. There he addressed the monks, “Monks!”

“Yes, lord,” the monks responded to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said, “Monks, from an inconceivable beginning comes the wandering-on. A beginning point is not discernible, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by

craving are transmigrating & wandering on. If a single person were to transmigrate & wander on for an eon, he/she would leave behind a chain of bones, a pile of bones, a heap of bones, as large as this Mount Vepulla, if there were someone to collect them and the collection were not destroyed.

“Why is that? From an inconceivable beginning comes the wandering-on. A beginning point is not discernible, though beings hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving are transmigrating & wandering on. Long have you thus experienced stress, experienced pain, experienced loss, swelling the cemeteries—enough to become disenchanted with all fabrications, enough to become dispassionate, enough to be released.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Having said that, the One Well-gone, the Teacher, said further:

“The accumulation

of a single person’s

bones for an eon

would be a heap

on a par with the mountain,

so said the Great Seer.

(He declared this to be

the great Mount Vepulla

to the north of Vulture’s Peak

in the mountain-ring

of the Magadhans.)1

But when that person sees

with right discernment

the four noble truths—

stress,

the cause of stress,

the transcending of stress,

& the noble eightfold path,

the way to the stilling of stress—

having wandered on

seven times at most, then,

with the ending of all fetters,

he makes an end

of stress.”

Note

1. Magadha was a kingdom in the time of the Buddha, corresponding roughly to the present day state of Bihar. Its capital city, Rājagaha, was surrounded by a ring of five mountains. Vulture’s Peak, a secluded rock outcrop in the middle of the ring, was a spot frequented by the Buddha.