SN 44.6 — With Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita (4th)

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Text

Linked Discourses 44.6

1. The Undeclared Points

With Sāriputta and Koṭṭhita (4th)

At one time Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita were staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana.

Then in the late afternoon, Venerable Sāriputta came out of retreat, went to Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita, and they greeted each other. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side and said to Mahākoṭṭhita:

“Reverend Koṭṭhita, does a realized one still exist after death?” …

“Reverend, when asked these questions, you say that this has not been declared by the Buddha. What’s the cause, what’s the reason why this has not been declared by the Buddha?”

“Reverend, if you like, love, and enjoy form, and don’t truly see the cessation of form, you think ‘a realized one still exists after death’ or ‘a realized one no longer exists after death’ or ‘a realized one both still exists and no longer exists after death’ or ‘a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’

If you like, love, and enjoy feeling … perception … choices … consciousness, and don’t truly see the cessation of consciousness, you think ‘a realized one still exists after death’ … ‘a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’

If you don’t like, love, and enjoy form … feeling … perception … choices … consciousness, and you truly see the cessation of consciousness, you don’t think ‘a realized one still exists after death’ … ‘a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’

This is the cause, this is the reason why this has not been declared by the Buddha.”

“But reverend, could there be another way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha?”

“There could, reverend. If you like, love, and enjoy existence, and don’t truly see the cessation of continued existence, you think ‘a realized one still exists after death’ … ‘a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’ If you don’t like, love, and enjoy existence, and you truly see the cessation of continued existence, you don’t think ‘a realized one still exists after death’ … ‘a realized one neither still exists nor no longer

exists after death.' This too is a way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha."

"But reverend, could there be another way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha?"

"There could, reverend.

If you like, love, and enjoy grasping, and don't truly see the cessation of grasping, you think 'a realized one still exists after death' … 'a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.'

If you don't like, love, and enjoy grasping, and you truly see the cessation of grasping, you don't think 'a realized one still exists after death' … 'a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.'

This too is a way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha."

"But reverend, could there be another way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha?"

"There could, reverend.

If you like, love, and enjoy craving, and don't truly see the cessation of craving, you think 'a realized one still exists after death' … 'a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.'

If you don't like, love, and enjoy craving, and you truly see the cessation of craving, you don't think 'a realized one still exists after death' … 'a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.'

This too is a way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha."

"But reverend, could there be another way of explaining why this was not declared by the Buddha?"

"Seriously, reverend, what more could you want? For one who is freed due to the ending of craving, there is no cycle of rebirths to be found."