SN 45.159 — Agantuka Sutta: For All Comers

English translation by Maurice O'Connell Walshe.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

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Text

"Suppose, monks, there is a guest-house. Travelers come from the east, the west, the north, the south to lodge here: nobles and Brahmans, merchants and serfs.[1] In the same way, monks, a monk who cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path, who assiduously practices the Noble Eightfold Path, comprehends with higher knowledge those states that are to be so comprehended, abandons with higher knowledge those states that are to be so abandoned, comes to experience with higher knowledge those states that are to be so experienced, and cultivates with higher knowledge those states that are to be so cultivated.

"What, monks, are the states to be comprehended with higher knowledge?[2]

"They are the five groups of clinging. Which five? The body-group, the feeling-group, the perception-group, the mental-formation group, the consciousness-group...

"What, monks, are the states to be abandoned with higher knowledge?

"They are ignorance and the desire for [further] becoming.

"And what, monks, are the states to be experienced with higher knowledge?

"They are knowledge and liberation.

"And what, monk, are the states to be cultivated with higher knowledge?

"They are calm and insight.[3]

"And how does a monk who cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path, who assiduously practices the Noble Eightfold Path, comprehend... abandon... come to experience... cultivate with higher knowledge those states that are to be so comprehended, abandoned, experienced, cultivated?

"In this, monks, a monk cultivates Right View... Right Concentration that is based on detachment, dispassion, leading to maturity of surrender.[4] In this way he comprehends... abandons... comes to experience... cultivates with higher knowledge those states that are to be so comprehended, abandoned, experienced, cultivated."

Notes

1.

The four "colors" from which the later caste system developed: the khattiyas (Sanskrit ksatriya) or nobles, the group to which Gotama himself belonged; the braahm.anas or Brahmans, the "priestly" caste (see SN 35.187, n. 1); the vessas (Sanskrit vaisya) or merchant class, and the suddas (Sanskrit suudra), the lowest class. For these, the term "serfs" in the text is not entirely appropriate, but it is hard to find an equivalent. See EB [Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, Colombo 1961] s.v. Caste.

2.

Abhiññaa.

3.

Samatha, vipassanaa: see SN 35.204, n. 9.

4.

Vossaggapari.naami. In a note to SN 3.18 (not included in this Anthology), Mrs Rhys Davids quotes SA [SN Commentary] on this term: "Surrender... is twofold: the ejection of all lower passions (kilesas) and the forward leap, or elan, to Nibbaana."

See also: SN 36.14.