

SN 54.11

Saṃyutta Nikāya
The Connected Discourses

Mahāvagga Saṃyutta
(Connected Discourses on the Great Section)

Ānāpāna Saṃyutta
(Connected Discourses on In and Out Breathing)

Dutiya Vagga
(The Second Section)

Icchānaṅgala Sutta
“At Icchānaṅgala”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana
Copyright © Bhikkhu Candana 2023

At one time, while The Blessed One was living in the wooded area in the region of Icchānaṅgala, He addressed the Bhikkhus, and said:

“Bhikkhus, I will be going into seclusion during this Vassa’s three-month duration. While on retreat, no one is to come by or visit me, except for the one among you who will bring my daily alms food.”

“As you wish, Bhante,” replied the Bhikkhus.

And as instructed, no one was allowed to go or visit The Blessed One, except for the Bhikkhu who brought Him his daily alms food.

Now, once that three-month period had ended, The Blessed One left the seclusion of His retreat, and by approaching the Bhikkhus, spoke these words:

“Bhikkhus, if the wanderers of other traditions were to approach and ask you:

‘Friends, could you tell us as to what the Recluse Gautama had been primarily practicing as His usual meditation object or technique in His seclusion, throughout this past Vassa’s three-month duration?’

“Then, you must answer them by saying:

‘Friends, Our Teacher, the Recluse Gautama was primarily practicing breathing in and out as His usual meditation object, for that was the technique He used in His seclusion, throughout this past Vassa’s three-month duration.’

“To this end, Bhikkhus, mindfully I breathed in and mindfully I breathed out.

1. “While breathing in, I practiced, as I closely observed and knew the long inbreath, whenever it took place. While breathing out too, I closely observed and knew the long outbreath, whenever it took place.
2. “While breathing in, I practiced, as I closely observed and knew the short inbreath, whenever it took place. While breathing out too, I closely observed and knew the short outbreath, whenever it took place.
3. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully experienced the full length of the inbreaths. While breathing out too, I continued training, as I mindfully experienced the full length of the outbreaths.
4. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I began calming the breath’s bodily movements, the process of breathing in and out itself, that are the bodily *saṅkhāras*. While breathing out too, I continued calming the breathing in and out.
5. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I began relaxing the body with the experiencing of Spiritual Joy (*pīti*). While breathing out too, I continued relaxing the body with the experience of *pīti*.
6. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I experienced the overarching silent state of gladness (*sukha*), happily permeating throughout the body. While breathing out too, I continued experiencing the overarching silent state of gladness (*sukha*), happily permeating throughout the body.
7. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I experienced the presence and movement of feelings and memories, taking place within the heart. While breathing out, I continued mindfully experiencing the presence and movement of feelings and memories, taking place within the heart.
8. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I relaxed the movement of both feelings and memories, occurring within the heart, witnessing them dissipate and dissolve on their own. While breathing out too, I continued relaxing the movement of both feelings and memories, occurring within the heart, witnessing them dissipate and dissolve on their own.
9. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully experienced the Heart (*Citta*), in silence. While breathing out too, I continued mindfully experiencing the *Citta*, in silence.

10. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully appreciated the *Citta*, in a silent delight. While breathing out too, I continued mindfully appreciating the *Citta*, in a silent delight.

11. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I gently allowed the *Citta* to come to the state of silent collectedness. While breathing out too, I continued gently allowing the *Citta* to come to the state of silent collectedness.

12. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I kept opening and experiencing the *Citta* becoming released. While breathing out too, I continued opening and experiencing the *Citta* becoming released.

13. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully witnessed impermanence taking place everywhere, and all the time. While breathing out too, I continued mindfully witnessing impermanence taking place everywhere, all the time.

14. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully witnessed dispassion and fading away taking place within me, towards all things. While breathing out too, I continued mindfully witnessing dispassion and fading away taking place within me, towards all things.

15. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully witnessed the reality of cessation taking place. While breathing out too, I continued mindfully witnessing the reality of cessation taking place.

16. “While breathing in, I continued training myself, as I mindfully witnessed relinquishment taking place within me, towards all things. While breathing out too, I continued mindfully witnessing relinquishment taking place within me, towards all things.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, if there is any correct and true meditation that is to be called ‘a noble state to be or settle in’, or ‘a divine state to be or settle in’, or one to be identified as the ‘Tathāgata’s dwelling place,’ then it would be just this collectedness of the heart (*samādhi*) through training in the practice of the in and out breathing (*ānāpānasati*) meditation.

“For this reason, Bhikkhus, those Noble Disciples in Training among you, who have not yet reached the fulfillment of your prime objective that is the completion of the Holy Life, and as a result, are constantly yearning to attain to that ultimate safety from bondage, you must therefore, remember that the practice of the in and out breathing (*ānāpānasati*) meditation itself does and will, in fact, lead you to the ending and full destruction of the heart’s contaminants.

“And as to those Arahants among you, Bhikkhus, who have already ended and fully destroyed the heart’s contaminants, having completed the Goal of the Holy Life, fulfilled what had to be fulfilled, put down the heavy load, having already attained to their prime objective, totally obliterated the fetters for rebecoming, and are thus, fully released through their Full Awakening, for them, the practice of the in and out breathing (*ānāpānasati*) meditation itself helps them to

lead to a blissful state of being here and in this present life, always establishing them in ever present mindfulness and full awareness.

“Therefore, Bhikkhus, if there is any correct and true meditation that is to be called ‘a noble state to be or settle in’, or ‘a divine state to be or settle in’, or one to be identified as the ‘Tathāgata’s dwelling place,’ then it would be just this collectedness of the heart (*samādhi*) through training in the practice of the in and out breathing (*ānāpānasati*) meditation.”

Sādhu

Sādhu

Sādhu