SN 55.27 — SN 55:27 To Anāthapiṇḍika (2) | Anāthapiṇḍika Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

To Anāthapiṇḍika (2)

Anāthapiṇḍika Sutta (SN 55:27)

At Sāvatthī. Now, on that occasion Anāthapiṇḍika the householder was diseased, in pain, severely ill. Then he said to one of his men, "Come, my good man. Go to Ven. Ānanda and, on arrival, pay homage to his feet with your head in my name and say 'Venerable sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is diseased, in pain, severely ill. He pays homage with his head to your feet.' Then say: 'It would be good if Ven. Ānanda would visit Anāthapiṇḍika's home, out of sympathy for him.'"

Responding, "As you say, lord," to Anāthapiṇḍika the householder, the man went to Ven. Ānanda and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, he said, "Venerable sir, Anāthapiṇḍika the householder is diseased, in pain, severely ill. He pays homage with his head to your feet." Then he said, "It would be good if Ven. Ānanda would visit Anāthapiṇḍika's home, out of sympathy for him."

Ven. Ānanda acquiesced with silence.

Then early in the morning, Ven. Ānanda—having adjusted his under robe and carrying his bowl & outer robe—went Anāthapiṇḍika's home. On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready. Seated, he said to Anāthapiṇḍika: "I hope you are getting better, householder. I hope you are comfortable. I hope that your pains are lessening and not increasing. I hope that there are signs of their lessening, and not of their increasing."

"I am not getting better, venerable sir. I am not comfortable. My extreme pains are increasing, not lessening. There are signs of their increasing, and not of their lessening."

"Householder, for an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person endowed with four qualities, there is dread, there is alarm, there is fear of death as it relates to the next life. Which four?

"There is the case where an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is endowed with suspicion of the Buddha. As he sees that suspicion of the Buddha within himself, there is dread, there is alarm, there is fear of death as it relates to the next life.

"Further, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is endowed with suspicion of the Dhamma. As he sees that suspicion of the Dhamma within himself, there is dread, there is alarm, there is fear of death as it relates to the next life.

"Further, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is endowed with suspicion of the Saṅgha. As he sees that suspicion of the Saṅgha within himself, there is dread, there is alarm, there is fear of death as it relates to the next life.

"Further, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person is endowed with poor virtue. As he sees that poor virtue within himself, there is dread, there is alarm, there is fear of death as it relates to the next life.

"Householder, for an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person endowed with these four qualities, there is dread, there is alarm, there is fear of death as it relates to the next life.

"Now, for an instructed disciple of the noble ones endowed with four qualities, there is no dread, there is no alarm, there is no fear of death as it relates to the next life.1 Which four?

"There is the case where an instructed disciple of the noble ones is endowed with verified confidence in the Awakened One: 'Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human

beings, awakened, blessed.'

"Further, the disciple of the noble ones is endowed with verified confidence in the Dhamma: 'The Dhamma is well taught by the Blessed One, to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be experienced by the observant for themselves.'

"Further, the disciple of the noble ones is endowed with verified confidence in the Saṅgha: 'The Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well... who have practiced straight-forwardly... who have practiced methodically... who have practiced masterfully—in other words, the four types of noble disciples when taken as pairs, the eight when taken as individual types2—they are the Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world.'

"Further, the disciple of the noble ones is endowed with virtues that are appealing to the noble ones: untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the observant, ungrasped at, leading to concentration.

"Householder, for an instructed disciple of the noble ones person endowed with these four qualities, there is no dread, there is no alarm, there is no fear of death as it relates to the next life."

"I have no fear, venerable Ānanda. Why should I be afraid?3 I am endowed with verified confidence in the Buddha... the Dhamma... and the Saṅgha.... And as for the training rules appropriate for the laity taught by the Blessed One, I don't see in myself any that have been broken."

"This is a gain for you, householder, a great gain. You have declared the fruit of stream-entry."

Notes

1. This seems to mean that, although one may fear the pain of death, one has no fear of where one will be reborn after death.

2. The four pairs are (1) the person on the path to stream-entry, the person experiencing the fruit of stream-entry; (2) the person on the path to once-returning, the person experiencing the fruit of once-returning; (3) the person on the path to non-returning, the person experiencing the fruit of non-returning; (4) the person on the path to arahantship, the person experiencing the fruit of arahantship. The eight individuals are the eight types forming these four pairs.

3. Following the Sri Lankan, Burmese, and PTS editions. The Thai edition reads, tyāhaṁ bhāsissami, which is an ungrammatical way of saying, "I will say to you."

See also: AN 4:116; AN 4:184; AN 5:179