

SN 56.11

Mahā Vagga Saṃyutta (Collection of the Great Sections)

Sacca Saṃyutta (Connected Discourses on the Truths)

Dhammacakkapavattana Vagga

(The Group on Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion)

Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta

“Setting the Wheel of Dhamma in Motion”

Translated by Candana Bhikkhu

Copyright © Candana Bhikkhu 2021

This is what I personally heard.

Once, the Blessed One was living at Varanasi’s Deer Park, in Isipatana.

It was then, that the Blessed One, by addressing the group of Five Bhikkhus in this manner, said the following:

“Bhikkhus, for the one who has gone forth from home life into homelessness, these two extremes should be avoided and not followed. What are these two?

“The first is gratifying oneself through the pursuit of maximizing sensual pleasures, which is inferior, vulgar, the way of common, ordinary people, ineffective, useless, and cheap; and the second is mortifying oneself through extreme asceticism, which is unnecessarily painful, ineffective, worthless, ignoble, crude, and useless.

“By steering clear from either of these two extremes, the Tathāgata has Awakened by understanding the Middle Path, which gives rise to knowledge and vision, leading one to peaceful contentment, to penetrative insight, to Perfect Awakening, to Nibbāna.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is that Middle Path that was Awakened to by the Tathāgata, which gives rise to knowledge and vision, leading one to peaceful contentment, to penetrative insight, to Perfect Awakening, to Nibbāna?

“It is this Noble Eightfold Path. That is: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right Collectedness of Mind. This, Bhikkhus, is that Middle Path that was Awakened to by the Tathāgata, which gives rise to knowledge and vision, leading one to peaceful contentment, to penetrative insight, to Perfect Awakening, to Nibbāna.

“Furthermore, Bhikkhus, understand this now to be the Noble Truth of suffering.

“That is: birth is suffering, aging is suffering, illness is suffering, death is suffering; to be brought together with what is painful and displeasing is suffering; whereas separation from what

is pleasing is suffering; not to get what one wants and yearns for is suffering. In short, the five grabbing aggregates are all suffering.

“Furthermore, Bhikkhus, understand this now to be the Noble Truth of the origin and cause of suffering.

“That is: this thirst and craving for rebirth, to renewed experiences of what is enjoyed as delightful, longing for more experiences of pleasure here and there; that is, thirst for sensual pleasures, thirst for rebecoming, thirst for ending one’s own existence.

“Furthermore, Bhikkhus, understand this now to be the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering.

“That is: the complete and remainder-less state of dispassion, which is the ending of that same thirst; the giving up, the release from bondage, the non-reliance upon, and total freedom from that very same thirst.

“Furthermore, Bhikkhus, understand this now to be the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the cessation of suffering; namely, the Noble Eightfold Path.

“That is: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right collectedness of mind.

“By understanding for the first time, ‘This to be the Noble Truth of suffering,’ Bhikkhus, suddenly, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of suffering must be fully understood.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of suffering has been fully understood by me.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“By understanding for the first time, ‘This, to be the Noble Truth of the origin and cause of suffering,’ Bhikkhus, suddenly, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of the origin and cause of suffering must be abandoned.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of the origin and cause of suffering has been abandoned by me.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“By understanding for the first time, ‘This to be the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering,’ Bhikkhus, suddenly, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering must be experienced.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering has been experienced by me.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“By understanding for the first time, ‘This to be the Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the cessation of suffering,’ Bhikkhus, suddenly, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the cessation of suffering must be developed and experienced.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Now, Bhikkhus, ‘This Noble Truth of the Path that leads to the cessation of suffering has been developed and experienced by me.’ As a result, Bhikkhus, there arose in me the Eye of Dhamma, in its completeness of vision, with wisdom and understanding of things never previously experienced, as the Higher Knowledge and light arose within me.

“Bhikkhus, for as long as I did not possess the purity of knowledge and vision, to fully discern these Four Noble Truths, and to see them as they truly are in their three individual and twelve collective aspects, I did *not* announce my Supremely Perfect Awakening to this world with its Devas, Māras, Brahmās, with its recluses and brahmins, along with this generation of Devas and humans.

“But it was *only* after I possessed the purity of knowledge and vision, to fully discern these Four Noble Truths, and see them as they truly are in their three individual and twelve collective aspects, that I announced my Supremely Perfect Awakening to this world with its Devas, Māras, Brahmās, with its recluses and brahmins, along with this generation of Devas and humans.

“Thus, the Experiential Knowing and Vision arose in me, as I realized: ‘Unshakable is my Freedom. This is my very last birth. Now, there is no more rebecoming.’”

This is what the Blessed One said. Elated, the hearts of the group of five Bhikkhus were gladdened, as they all delighted in hearing the Blessed One’s words.

Meanwhile, as this discourse was being given, there arose within the Venerable Koṇḍañña’s heart the spotless and immaculate Dhamma Eye, as he now personally understood as well, how: “All that is the result of causes, comes to an end.”

And, as the Blessed One turned and set the Wheel of the Dhamma in motion thus, the Devas living on the Earth raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Earth Devas proclaiming aloud, the Devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Devas of the realm of the Four Great Kings proclaiming aloud, the Tavatimsa Devas of the realm of the Thirty-Three also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Tavatimsa Devas of the realm of the Thirty-Three proclaiming aloud, the Yāma Devas also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Yāma Devas proclaiming aloud, the Joyful Devas of the Tushita realm also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Joyful Devas of the Tushita realm proclaiming aloud, the Nimmānarati Devas (the Gods who love to create) also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Nimmānarati Devas (the Gods who love to create) proclaiming aloud, the Paranimmita Vasavatti Devas (those who love to control the creations of other Gods) also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasī, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

In hearing the Paranimmita Vasavatti Devas (those who love to control the creations of other Gods) proclaiming aloud, the Divine Beings living in the company of the Great Brahmā God also raised a jubilant cry, for all to hear:

“At Varāṇasi, in the Deer Park at Isipatana, the Blessed Lord has finally turned and set the Sublime Wheel of the Dhamma in motion, which cannot be stopped by any recluse or brahmin or Deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.”

And so, at that moment, and in that very instant, the resounding jubilant cry spread as far as the Brahmā worlds, and these ten thousand galactic world systems all shook, quaked, and trembled, and a boundlessly magnificent light appeared instantaneously in each of these world systems, one that surpassed the majestic radiance of all the Devas in all the realms, combined.

Then the Blessed One declared this joyous utterance:

“Koṇḍañña has now Seen It!

“Koṇḍañña has now Seen It!”

And at that very moment, the Venerable Koṇḍañña acquired the name:

“Añña Koṇḍañña — Koṇḍañña, Who Has Seen It.”

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu