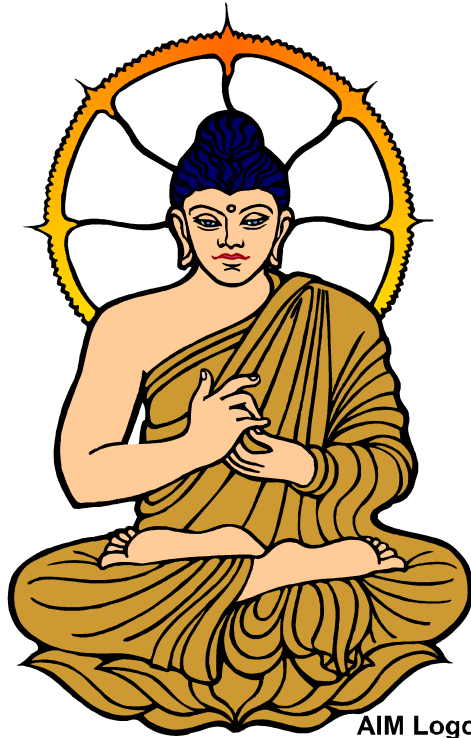


Anattalakkhaṇa Suttaṃ

The Discourse on the Characteristic of Not-self



Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā Bārāṇasiyaṃ viharati Isipatane Migadāye. Tatra kho Bhagavā pañcavaggiye bhikkhū āmantesi — “Bhikkhavo”ti. “Bhadante”ti te bhikkhū Bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etadavoca:—

“Rūpaṃ, bhikkhave, anattā. Rūpañca hidaṃ, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidaṃ rūpaṃ ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbheṭṭha ca rūpe — ‘Evaṃ me rūpaṃ hotu, evaṃ me rūpaṃ mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, rūpaṃ anattā, tasmā rūpaṃ ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati rūpe — ‘Evaṃ me rūpaṃ hotu, evaṃ me rūpaṃ mā ahoṣī’ti.”

“Vedanā anattā. Vedanā ca hidaṃ, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidaṃ vedanā ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbheṭṭha ca vedanāya — ‘Evaṃ me vedanā hotu, evaṃ me vedanā mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, vedanā anattā, tasmā vedanā ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati vedanāya — ‘Evaṃ me vedanā hotu, evaṃ me vedanā mā ahoṣī’ti.”

“Saññā anattā. Saññā ca hidaṃ, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidaṃ saññā ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbheṭṭha ca saññāya — ‘Evaṃ me saññā hotu, evaṃ me saññā mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, saññā anattā, tasmā saññā ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati saññāya — ‘Evaṃ me saññā hotu, evaṃ me saññā mā ahoṣī’ti.”

“Saṅkhārā anattā. Saṅkhārā ca hidaṃ, bhikkhave, attā abhavissamsu, nayidaṃ saṅkhārā ābādhāya saṃvatteyyuṃ, labbheṭṭha ca saṅkhāresu — ‘Evaṃ me saṅkhārā hontu, evaṃ me saṅkhārā mā ahesu’nti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, saṅkhārā anattā, tasmā saṅkhārā ābādhāya saṃvattanti, na ca labbhati saṅkhāresu — ‘Evaṃ me saṅkhārā hontu, evaṃ me saṅkhārā mā ahesu’nti.”

“Viññāṇaṃ anattā. Viññāṇaṃca hidaṃ, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidaṃ viññāṇaṃ ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbheṭṭha ca viññāṇe — ‘Evaṃ me viññāṇaṃ hotu, evaṃ me viññāṇaṃ mā ahoṣī’ti. Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, viññāṇaṃ anattā, tasmā viññāṇaṃ ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati viññāṇe — ‘Evaṃ me viññāṇaṃ hotu, evaṃ me viññāṇaṃ mā ahoṣī’ti.”

Thus have I heard: At one time the Blessed One was staying at the Deer Park at Isipatana, near Benares. Then he addressed the group of five monks:

“Materiality, monks, is not self. If materiality were self, materiality would not lead to affliction. It would be possible to say regarding materiality, ‘Let materiality be like this. Let materiality not be like that.’ However, since materiality is not self, materiality leads to affliction. And it is not possible to say regarding materiality, ‘Let materiality be like this. Let materiality not be like that.’

“Feeling is not self. If feeling were self, feeling would not lead to affliction. It would be possible to say regarding feeling, ‘Let feeling be like this. Let feeling not be like that.’ However, since feeling is not self, feeling leads to affliction. And it is not possible to say regarding feeling, ‘Let feeling be like this. Let feeling not be like that.’

“Perception is not self. If perception were self, perception would not lead to affliction. It would be possible to say regarding perception, ‘Let perception be like this. Let perception not be like that.’ However, since perception is not self, perception leads to affliction. And it is not possible to say regarding perception, ‘Let perception be like this. Let perception not be like that.’

“Formations¹ are not self. If formations were self, formations would not lead to affliction. It would be possible to say regarding formations, ‘Let formations be like this. Let formations not be like that.’ However, since formations are not self, formations lead to affliction. And it is not possible to say regarding formations, ‘Let formations be like this. Let formations not be like that.’

“Consciousness is not self. If consciousness were self, consciousness would not lead to affliction. It would be possible to say regarding consciousness, ‘Let my consciousness be like this. Let my consciousness not be like that.’ However, since consciousness is not self, consciousness leads to affliction. And it is not possible to say regarding consciousness, ‘Let my consciousness be like this. Let my consciousness not be like that.’

“Taṃ kiṃ maññatha, bhikkhave, rūpaṃ niccaṃ vā aniccaṃ vā”ti? “Aniccaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti?

“Dukkhaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāma-dhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassituṃ — ‘Etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?”

“No hetāṃ, bhante.”

“Vedanā niccā vā aniccā vā?

“Aniccā bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti?

“Dukkhaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāma-dhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassituṃ — ‘Etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?”

“No hetāṃ, bhante.”

“Saññā niccā vā aniccā vā?

“Aniccā bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti?

“Dukkhaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāma-dhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassituṃ — ‘Etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?”

“No hetāṃ, bhante.”

“Saṅkhārā niccā vā aniccā vā?

“Aniccā bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti?

“Dukkhaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ panāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāma-dhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassituṃ — ‘Etaṃ mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’ti?”

“No hetāṃ, bhante.”

“What do you think, monks? “Is materiality permanent or impermanent?”
“impermanent, Venerable sir.”

“Is that which is impermanent satisfactory or unsatisfactory?”²
“Unsatisfactory, Venerable sir.”

“Is it fitting to regard what is impermanent, unsatisfactory, subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am’?”
“Indeed not, Venerable sir.”

“Is feeling permanent or impermanent?”
“Impermanent, Venerable sir.”

“Is that which is impermanent satisfactory or unsatisfactory?”
“Unsatisfactory, Venerable sir.”

“Is it fitting to regard what is impermanent, unsatisfactory, subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am’?”
“Indeed not, Venerable sir.”

“Is perception permanent or impermanent?”
“Impermanent, Venerable sir.”

“Is that which is impermanent satisfactory or unsatisfactory?”
“Unsatisfactory, Venerable sir.”

“Is it fitting to regard what is impermanent, unsatisfactory, subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am’?”
“Indeed not, Venerable sir.”

“Are formations permanent or impermanent?”
“Impermanent, Venerable sir.”

“Is that which is impermanent satisfactory or unsatisfactory?”
“Unsatisfactory, Venerable sir.”

“Is it fitting to regard what is impermanent, unsatisfactory, subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. This is what I am’?”
“Indeed not, Venerable sir.”

“Viññāṇaṃ niccaṃ vā aniccaṃ vā”ti?

“Aniccaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ paṇāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vā taṃ sukhaṃ vā”ti?

“Dukkhaṃ, bhante.”

“Yaṃ paṇāniccaṃ dukkhaṃ vipariṇāmadhammaṃ, kallaṃ nu taṃ samanupassituṃ — ‘Etaṃ mama, esoḥamasmi, eso me attā’ti?’”

“No hetuṃ, bhante.”

“Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, yaṃ kiñci rūpaṃ atītānāgatapaccuppannaṃ ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumāṃ vā hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā yaṃ dūre santike vā, sabbāṃ rūpaṃ — ‘Netuṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti evameṭaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ.

Yā kāci vedanā atītānāgata-paccuppannā ajjhattā vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikā vā sukhumā vā hīnā vā paṇītā vā yā dūre santike vā, sabbā vedanā — ‘Netuṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti evameṭaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ.

“Yā kāci saññā atītānāgata-paccuppannā ajjhattā vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikā vā sukhumā vā hīnā vā paṇītā vā yā dūre santike vā, sabbā vedanā — ‘Netuṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti evameṭaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ.

“Ye keci saṅkhārā atītānāgata-paccuppannā ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumāṃ vā hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā ye dūre santike vā, sabbe saṅkhārā — ‘Netuṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti evameṭaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ.

“Yaṃ kiñci viññāṇaṃ atītānāgata-paccuppannaṃ ajjhattaṃ vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikaṃ vā sukhumāṃ vā hīnaṃ vā paṇītaṃ vā yaṃ dūre santike vā, sabbāṃ viññāṇaṃ — ‘Netuṃ mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti evameṭaṃ yathābhūtaṃ sammappaññāya daṭṭhabbaṃ.

“Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, Venerable sir.”

“Is that which is impermanent satisfactory or unsatisfactory?”

“Unsatisfactory, Venerable sir.”

“Is it fitting to regard what is impermanent, unsatisfactory, and subject to change as: ‘This is mine. This is my self. I am this’?”

“Indeed not, Venerable sir.”

“Thus, monks, any materiality whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; gross or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: every materiality is to be seen as it really is with wisdom as: ‘This is not mine. This is not my self. I am not this.’

“Any feeling whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; gross or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: every feeling is to be seen as it really is with wisdom as: ‘This is not mine. This is not my self. I am not this.’

“Any perception whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; gross or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: every perception is to be seen as it really is with wisdom as: ‘This is not mine. This is not my self. I am not this.’

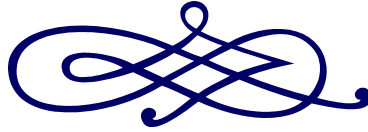
“Any formations whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; gross or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: every mental formation is to be seen as it really is with wisdom as: ‘This is not mine. This is not my self. I am not this.’

“Any consciousness whatsoever that is past, future, or present; internal or external; gross or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: every consciousness is to be seen as it really is with wisdom as: ‘This is not mine. This is not my self. I am not this.’

“Evaṃ passaṃ, bhikkhave, sutavā ariyasāvako rūpasimpi nibbindati, vedanāyapi nibbindati, saññāyapi nibbindati, saṅkhāresupi nibbindati, viññāṇasmimpi nibbindati. Nibbindaṃ virajjati; virāgā vimuccati. Vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti nāṇaṃ hoti. ‘Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ itthattāyā’ti pajānāti”ti.

Idamavoca Bhagavā. Attamanā pañcavaggiyā bhikkhū Bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandaṃ. Imasmiṃca pana veyyākaraṇasmiṃ bhaññamāne pañcavaggiyānaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ anupādāya āsavehi cittāni vimucchiṃsūti.

Tena kho pana samayena cha loke arahanto honti.



“Seeing thus, the well-instructed disciple of the Noble Ones grows disenchanted with the body, disenchanted with feelings, disenchanted with perception, disenchanted with formations, disenchanted with consciousness. Disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through dispassion, he is freed. With freedom, there is the knowledge, ‘I am free.’ He knows ‘Birth has been destroyed, the holy life has been fulfilled, what should be done has been done. There is nothing further to be done here.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. Delighted, the group of five monks rejoiced in what the Blessed One had said; and while this exposition was being given, the minds of the five monks were fully released from the corruptions, without any remainder.

Then there were six Arahants in the world.³

¹ Formations, mental formations, or volitional activities — both unwholesome ones such as greed, aversion, and delusion, and wholesome ones such as generosity, kindness, and wisdom.

² *Dukkha* should here be translated as “unsatisfactory,” not as “suffering.” It is absurd to say that pleasant feelings, joy, and happiness are “suffering,” but they are unsatisfactory, *i.e.* one can never get enough of happiness, but it always has a down-side when it changes or the object of one’s desire cannot be achieved.

³ This line is found in the account given in the *Vinaya Mahāvagga*, not in the *Suttanta Piṭaka*, *Samyuttanikāya*, *Khandhasamyutta*, *Upayavaggo*.