

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. There he addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Bhikkhus." "Venerable sir," they replied. The Blessed One said this:

2. "Here, bhikkhus, a bhikkhu makes a declaration of final knowledge thus: 'I understand: Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.'

3. "That bhikkhu's words should neither be approved nor disapproved. Without approving or disapproving, a question should be put thus: 'Friend, there are four kinds of expression rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. What four? Telling the seen as it is seen; telling the heard as it is heard; telling the sensed as it is sensed; telling the cognized as it is cognized. These, friend, are the four kinds of expression rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these four kinds of expression, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the taints?'

4. "Bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu is one with taints destroyed, who has lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached the true goal, destroyed the fetters of being, and is completely liberated through final knowledge, this is the nature of his answer:

"Friends, regarding the seen I abide unattracted, unrepelled, independent, detached, free, dissociated, with a mind rid of barriers. Regarding the heard...Regarding the sensed...Regarding the cognized I abide unattracted, unrepelled, independent, detached, free, dissociated, with a mind rid of barriers. It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these four kinds of expression, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the taints.'

5. "Saying 'good', one may delight and rejoice in that bhikkhu's words. Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

"Friend, there are these five aggregates affected by clinging, rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. What five? They are the

material form aggregate affected by clinging, the feeling aggregate affected by clinging, the perception aggregate affected by clinging, the formations aggregate affected by clinging, and the consciousness aggregate affected by clinging. These, friend, are the five aggregates affected by clinging, rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these five aggregates affected by clinging, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the taints?’

6. “Bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu is one with taints destroyed...and is completely liberated through final knowledge, this is the nature of his answer:

“‘Friends, having known material form to be feeble, fading away, and comfortless, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of attraction and clinging regarding material form, of mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding material form, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

“‘Friends, having known feeling...Having known perception...Having known formations...Having known consciousness to be feeble, fading away, and comfortless, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of attraction and clinging regarding consciousness, of mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

“‘It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these five aggregates affected by clinging, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the taints.’

7. “Saying ‘good’, one may delight and rejoice in that bhikkhu’s words. Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

“‘Friend, there are these six elements rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. What six? They are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element, the space element, and the consciousness element. These, friend, are the six elements rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these six elements, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the taints?’

8. “Bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu is one with taints destroyed...and is completely liberated through final knowledge, this is the nature of his answer:

“Friends, I have treated the earth element as not self, with no self based on the earth element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of attraction and clinging based on the earth element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies based on the earth element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

“Friends, I have treated the water element...the fire element...the air element...the space element...the consciousness element as not self, with no self based on the consciousness element. And with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of attraction and clinging based on the consciousness element, of mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies based on the consciousness element, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

“It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these six elements, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the taints.’

9. “Saying ‘good’, one may delight and rejoice in that bhikkhu’s words. Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

“But, friend, there are these six internal and external bases rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. What six? They are the eye and forms, the ear and sounds, the nose and odors, the tongue and flavors, the body and tangibles, the mind and mind-objects. These, friend, are the six internal and external bases rightly proclaimed by the Blessed One who knows and sees, accomplished and fully enlightened. How does the venerable one know, how does he see, regarding these six internal and external bases, so that through not clinging his mind is liberated from the taints?’

10. “Bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu is one with taints destroyed...and is completely liberated through final knowledge, this is the nature of his answer:

“Friends, with the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding the eye, forms, eye-consciousness, and things cognizable [by the mind] through eye-consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

“With the destruction, fading away, cessation, giving up, and relinquishing of desire, lust, delight, craving, attraction, and clinging, and of mental standpoints, adherences, and underlying tendencies regarding the ear, sounds, ear-consciousness, and things cognizable [by the mind] through ear-consciousness... regarding the nose, odors, nose-consciousness, and things cognizable [by the mind] through nose-consciousness... regarding the tongue, flavors, tongue-consciousness, and things cognizable [by the mind] through tongue-consciousness... regarding the body, tangibles, body-consciousness, and things cognizable [by the mind] through body-consciousness... regarding the mind, mind-objects, mind-consciousness, and things cognizable [by the mind] through mind-consciousness, I have understood that my mind is liberated.

“It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, regarding these five aggregates affected by clinging, that through not clinging my mind is liberated from the taints.’

11. “Saying ‘good’, one may delight and rejoice in that bhikkhu’s words. Having done so, a further question may be put thus:

“But, friend, how does the venerable one know, how does he see, so that in regard to this body with its consciousness and all external signs, I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit have been eradicated in him?’

12. “Bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu is one with taints destroyed...and is completely liberated through final knowledge, this is the nature of his answer:

“Friends, formerly when I lived the home life I was ignorant. Then the Tathāgata or his disciple taught me the Dhamma. On hearing the Dhamma I acquired faith in the Tathāgata. Possessing that faith, I considered thus: “Household life is crowded and dusty; life gone forth is wide open. It

is not easy while living in a home to lead the holy life utterly perfect and pure as a polished shell. Suppose I shave off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness.” On a later occasion, abandoning a small or a large fortune, abandoning a small or a large circle of relations, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the yellow robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

13-17. “Having thus gone forth and possessing the bhikkhus’ training and way of life...(as *Sutta*  
51, §§1

4-19

)...I purified my mind from doubt.

18. “Having thus abandoned these five hindrances, imperfections of the mind that weaken wisdom, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, I entered upon and abided in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. With the stilling of applied and sustained thought, I entered upon and abided in the second jhāna...With the fading away as well of rapture...I entered upon and abided in the third jhāna...With the abandoning of pleasure and pain...I entered upon and abided in the fourth jhāna, which has neither-pain-nor-pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity.

19. “When my concentrated mind was thus purified, bright, unblemished, rid of imperfections, malleable, wieldy, steady, and attained to imperturbability, I directed it to knowledge of the destruction of the taints. I directly knew as it actually is: “This is suffering”...“This is the origin of suffering”...“This is the cessation of suffering”...“This is the way leading to the cessation of suffering.” I directly knew as it actually is: “These are the taints”...“This is the origin of the taints”...“This is the cessation of the taints”...“This is the way leading to the cessation of the taints.”

20. “When I knew and saw thus, my mind was liberated from the taint of sensual desire, from the taint of being, and from the taint of ignorance. When it was liberated there came the knowledge: “It is liberated.” I directly knew: “Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.”

“‘It is by knowing thus, seeing thus, friends, that in regard to this body with its consciousness and all external signs, I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit have been eradicated in me.’

21. “Saying ‘good,’ bhikkhus, one may delight and rejoice in that bhikkhu’s words. Having done so, one should say to him: ‘It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us, friend, that we see such a companion in the holy life as the venerable one.’”

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

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Majjhima Nikāya 112

Part Three— The Final Fifty Discourses (Uparipaṭṭi āsappāṭi)

The Division at Devadaha (Devadahavagga)

Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

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