

SN. 4.2.1.6. (36.6) – Sallasuttam

Discourse on the Dart (The Simile of the Dart)

Assutavā bhikkhave puthujjano sukhampi vedanāṃ vediyati, dukkhampi vedanaṃ vediyati, adukkhamasukhampi vedanaṃ vediyati, sutavā bhikkhave ariyasāvako sukhampi vedanaṃ vediyati, dukkhampi vedanaṃ vediyati, adukkhamasukhampi vedanaṃ vediyati, tatra bhikkhave ko viseso, ko adhippāyo, kiṃ nānākaraṇaṃ sutavato ariyasāvakassa assutavatā puthujanno?

“Bhikkhus, an untaught commoner experiences pleasant sensations, unpleasant sensations and neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensations. A learned noble disciple experiences pleasant sensations, unpleasant sensations and neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensations. What, bhikkhus, is the distinction, what is the difference, and what are the different means of the learned noble disciple and the untaught commoner?”

Bhagavamamūlakā no bhante dhammā bhagavantettikā bhagavampaṭisaraṇā, sādhu vata bhante bhagavattaṃ yeva paṭibhātu etassa bhāsitassa attho bhagavato sutvā bhikkhu dhāressantīti.

“Venerable sir, our Dhamma is rooted in the Sublime One; guided by the Sublime One, in the Sublime One is our refuge. Surely it would be well and profitable, venerable sir, if the Sublime One would reveal what was said. Hearing from the Sublime One the bhikkhus will remember it.”

Tena hi bhikkhave suṇātha, sādhu kaṃ manasikarotha, bhāsissāmīti.

“Just so, bhikkhus, listen and consider well – I will speak.”

Evaṃ bhante’ti kho te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosum, bhagavā etadavoca:

“Yes Venerable Sir” replied the bhikkhus; and the Sublime One said:

Assutavā bhikkhave puthujjano dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno socati kilamati paridevati urattāḷiṃ kandati sammohaṃ āpajjati. so dve vedanā vediyati kāyikaṇca – cetasikaṇca. Seyyathāpi bhikkhave purisaṃ sallena vijjheyyaṃ, tamena dutiyena sallena anuvedhaṃ vijjheyyaṃ, evaṃ hi so bhikkhave puriso dve sallena vedanā vediyetha. Evameva kho bhikkhave assutavā puthujjano dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno socati; kilamati, paridevati urattāḷiṃ kandati, sammohaṃ āpajjati, so dve vedanā vediyati kāyikaṇca cetasikaṇca.

“Bhikkhus, when an untaught commoner is touched by an unpleasant sensation he exhibits distress, fatigue, lamentation, beats his chest and cries out in bewilderment; so he experiences two sensations – of the body and of the mental faculties. Bhikkhus, it is as if a man while shot by one dart, was shot and pierced by a second; so it is that he experiences the sensation of two darts. So it is, bhikkhus, that when an untaught

commoner is touched by an unpleasant sensation he exhibits distress, fatigue, lamentation, beats his chest and cries out in bewilderment; so it is that he experiences two sensations – of the body and of the mental faculties.

Tassāyeva kho pana dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno paṭighavā hoti. Tamenam dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighavantam yo dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighānusayo so anuseti, so dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno kāmasukham abhinandati. Tam kissa hetu, na bhikkhave pajānāti assutavā puthujjano aññatra kāmasukhā dukkhāya vedanāya nissaraṇam, tassa kāmasukham abhinandato yo sukhāya vedanāya rāgānusayo so anuseti. So tāsam vedanānam samudayañca atthagamañca assādañca ādīnavañca nissaraṇaṇca yathābhūtam nappajānāti.

“So it is that when touched by an unpleasant sensation he resists it. As he resists that unpleasant sensation, a proclivity to resist the unpleasant sensation tends to underlie it. And as he is touched by that unpleasant sensation, he seeks gratification in pleasurable objects. And why is this? Bhikkhus, the untaught commoner does not have direct knowledge of an escape from an unpleasant sensation, other than through pleasurable objects. And because he is seeking gratification through pleasurable objects, any pleasant sensations will have a proclivity to passion that will tend to underlie it. And so it is that he does not have direct knowledge as it actually is of the arising, passing away, attraction, disadvantage and escape from these sensations.

Tassa tāsam vedanānam samudayañca atthagamañca assādañca ādīnavañca nissaraṇaṇca yathābhūtam appajānato yo adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya avijjānusayo so anuseti. So sukhañce vedanam vediyati, saññatto nam vediyati; dukkhañce vedanam vediyati, saññatto nam vediyati; adukkhamasukhañce vedanam vediyati, saññatto nam vediyati. ayam vuccati bhikkhave assutavā puthujjano saññatto jātiyā jarāmarañena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi; saññutto dukkhasmāti vadāmi.

“As he does not have direct knowledge as it actually is of the arising, passing away, attraction, disadvantage and escape from these sensations, a proclivity to ignorance of neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensations tends to underlie it. Such that when he is experiencing a pleasant sensation, it is as though he were obsessed with that experience; when he is experiencing an unpleasant sensation, it is as though he were obsessed with that experience; and when he is experiencing neither a pleasant nor unpleasant sensation, it is as though he were obsessed with that experience. Bhikkhus, this is called an untaught commoner who is obsessed with birth, aging and death, sorrow, weeping, affliction, mental distress and troubles; I say he is obsessed with what brings suffering.

Sutavā ca kho bhikkhave ariyasāvako dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno na socati na kilamati na paridevati na urattāḷim kandati na sammoham āpajjati: so ekaṃ vedanam vediyati kāyikaṃ, na cetasikaṃ. Seyyathāpi bhikkhave purisaṃ sallena vijejhayyūṃ, tamena dutiyena sallena anuvedam na vijjheyūṃ. Evaṃ hi so bhikkhave puriso ekaṃ sallena vedanam vediyetha. Evameva kho bhikkhave sutavā ariyasāvako dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno na socati na kilamati na paridevati, na urattāḷim kandati, na sammoham āpajjati; so ekaṃ vedanam vediyati kāyikaṃ, na cetasikaṃ.

Although, bhikkhus, when the learned noble disciple is touched by an unpleasant sensation he does not exhibit distress, fatigue, lamentation, beats his chest or cries out in bewilderment; so he experiences one sensation – of the body and not of the mental faculties. Bhikkhus, it is as if a man while shot by one dart, was not shot and pierced by a second; so it is that he experiences the sensation of only one dart. So it is, bhikkhus, that when a learned noble disciple is touched by an unpleasant sensation, he does not exhibit distress, fatigue, lamentation, beats his chest or cries out in bewilderment; so it is that he experiences one sensation – of the body and not of the mental faculties.

Tassāyeva kho pana dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno paṭighavā na hoti, tamenam dukkhāya vedanāya apaṭighavantam yo dukkhāya vedanāya paṭighānusayo so nānuseti. so dukkhāya vedanāya phuṭṭho samāno kāmasukham nābhinandati. Tam kissa hetu, pajānāti hi bhikkhave sutavā ariyasāvako aññatra kāmasukhā dukkhāya vedanāya nissaraṇam.

“So it is that when he is touched by an unpleasant sensation he does not resist it. As there is no resistance to that unpleasant sensation, there is no proclivity to resist the unpleasant sensation that would tend to underlie it. And as he is touched by that unpleasant sensation, he does not seek gratification in pleasurable objects. And why is this? Bhikkhus, the learned noble disciple has direct knowledge of an escape from an unpleasant sensation, other than through pleasurable objects.

Tassa kāmasukham anabhinandato yo sukhāya vedanāya rāgānusayo so nānuseti. So tāsam vedanānam samudayañca atthagamañca assādañca ādīnavañca nissaraṇañca yathābhūtam pajānāti, tassa tāsam vedanānam samudayañca atthagamañca assādañca ādīnavañca nissaraṇañca yathābhūtam pajānato yo adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya avijjānusayo so nānuseti, so sukhañce vedanam vediyati visaññutto nam vediyati, dukkhañce vedanam vediyati visaññutto nam vediyati, adukkhamasukhañce vedanam vediyati visaññutto nam vediyati.

“And because he is not seeking gratification in pleasurable objects, any pleasant sensations will not have a proclivity to passion that would tend to underlie it. And so it is that he has direct knowledge as it actually is of the arising, passing away, attraction, disadvantage and escape from these sensations. As he does have direct knowledge as it actually is of the arising, passing away, attraction, disadvantage and escape from these sensations, there is not a proclivity to ignorance of neither pleasant nor unpleasant sensations that would tend to underlie it. Such that when he is experiencing a pleasant sensation, it is not as though he were obsessed with that experience; when he is experiencing an unpleasant sensation, it is not as though he were obsessed with that experience; and when he is experiencing neither a pleasant nor unpleasant sensation, it is not as though he were obsessed with that experience.

Ayam vuccati bhikkhave sutavā ariyasāvako visaññutto jātiyā jarāmarañena sokehi paridevehi dukkhehi domanassehi upāyāsehi, visaññutto dukkhasmāti vadāmi. Ayam kho bhikkhave viseso, ayam adhippāyo, idam nānākaraṇam sutavato ariyasāvakassa assutavatā puthujjannoti.

“Bhikkhus, this is called a learned noble disciple who is not obsessed with birth, aging and death, sorrow, weeping, affliction, mental distress and troubles; I say he is not obsessed with what brings suffering.

This, bhikkhus, is the distinction, this is the difference, this is the different means of the learned noble disciple and the untaught commoner.”

Na vedanaṃ vediyati sapañño.  
Sukhampi dukkhampī bahussutopi  
Ayañca dhīrassa puthujjanena  
Mahā viseso kusalassa hoti.

“The well-learned wise one,  
Does not experience a sensation;  
Pleasant or unpleasant.  
This is the great difference in skill,  
Between the wise and the commoner.

Saṅkhātadhammassa bahussutassa  
Sampassato lokamimaṃ parañca  
Iṭṭhassa dhammā na mathenti cittaṃ  
Aniṭṭhato no paṭighātameti.

“For the well-learned Dhamma-thinker,  
With insight into this world and beyond;  
Pleasant things do not trouble the mind,  
With the unpleasant there is no resistance.

Tassānurodhā athavā virodhā  
Vidhūpitā atthagatā na santi  
Padañca ñatvā virajaṃ asokaṃ  
Sammā pajānāti bhavassa pāraguti.

Of satisfaction, praise or rejection,  
Scattered are these – gone out of existence.  
He goes knowing the dustless and sorrowless.  
With perfect knowledge,  
Gone beyond that state of existence.



[Khantijayo – 2013]