

(Khandhānupassanā) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta

Paṭhama (Khandha) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta

The First Discourse on the Destruction of Delight

(by seeing the aggregates)

[Mental liberation through reflecting the aggregates as impermanent]

(Saṃyutta Nikāya 22.51/3:51)

Translated by Piya Tan ©2005

Introduction

The (Khandha) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta 1 records the perception of impermanence (*anicca,saññā*) of the five aggregates (*pañca-k,khandha*). This is one of the central practices in connection with satipatthana.¹ It can be summarized in this way:

Monks, when a monk sees **form...feelings...perception...formations...consciousness**—which is really impermanent—as impermanent, that is his right view.

Seeing rightly, he feels revulsion.

When delight is destroyed, lust is destroyed; when lust is destroyed, delight is destroyed.

When delight and lust are destroyed, the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated.

Our present text, **the (Khandhānupassanā) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta**,² and **the (Khandha Manasi-kāra) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta**³ both deal with reflection on the five aggregates. While the former simply uses the verb “see” (*passati*), the latter uses two different verbs—“wisely consider” (*yoniso manasikarotha*) and “recognize” (*samanupassatha*), both in the 2nd plural exhortatory form.

The (Ajjhata) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta,⁴ and **the (Bahiddhā) Nandi-k,khaya Sutta**⁵ are parallel texts. The last sentence of each section of the first (ie our) text, has “the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated” (*cittam vimuttam suvimuttan ti vuccati*). The last sentence of each section of the last two texts (including our present text), however, simply reads “the mind is said to be well liberated” (*cittam suvimuttan ti vuccati*). All this shows that “the direct experience of impermanence represents the ‘power’ aspect of meditative wisdom.”⁶

— — —

How to use a sutta

This sutta, like many others in the Sutta Discovery series, has been translated with the repetition cycles (*peyyāla*) given in full. In this way, the sutta teaching is given in full, without the mind filling in too much of its own details in the perceived gaps. One should study a sutta not merely to *know* it, but to learn to “let go” of the self (or more correctly, the notion of a self). To this effect, the sutta should be mindfully read, or listened to, and reflected upon, again and again, like taking a regular dose of medicine. The roots of realization are growing even as you do so, and before you know it, it flowers and bears fruit!

¹ See “The Satipatthana Suttas” = SD 13.1(3.8).

² Also called **Paṭhama (Khandha) Nandi-k,khaya S**, S 22.51/3:51 = SD 12.9a.

³ Also called **Dutiya (Khandha) Nandi-k,khaya S**, S 22.52/3:51 f = SD 12.9b.

⁴ S 35.155/142 = SD 12.7.

⁵ S 35.156/142 = SD 12.8.

⁶ Analayo 2003:103. See **Pañca Sekha,bala S** (A 5.2) = SD 12.10; see also “The Satipatthana Suttas” = SD 13.1(3.8).

The Discourse on the Destruction of Delight 1 (by seeing the aggregates) (S 22.51/3:51)

How is the mind liberated?

1 At Sāvathī.

2 There the Blessed One said this:

3 (1) “Monks, when a monk sees **form**—which is really impermanent—as impermanent, that is his right view.

Seeing rightly, he feels revulsion.

When delight is destroyed, lust is destroyed; when lust is destroyed, delight is destroyed.

When delight and lust are destroyed, the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated.

4 (2) Monks, when a monk sees **feeling**—which is really impermanent—as impermanent, that is his right view.

Seeing rightly, he feels revulsion.

When delight is destroyed, lust is destroyed; when lust is destroyed, delight is destroyed.

When delight and lust are destroyed, the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated.

5 (3) Monks, when a monk sees **perception**—which is really impermanent—as impermanent, that is his right view.

Seeing rightly, he feels revulsion.

When delight is destroyed, lust is destroyed; when lust is destroyed, delight is destroyed.

When delight and lust are destroyed, the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated.

6 (4) Monks, when a monk sees **mental formations**—that are actually impermanent—as impermanent, that is his right view.

Seeing rightly, he feels revulsion.

When delight is destroyed, lust is destroyed; when lust is destroyed, delight is destroyed.

When delight and lust are destroyed, the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated.

7 (5) Monks, when a monk sees **consciousness**—which is really impermanent—as impermanent, that is his right view.

Seeing rightly, he feels revulsion.

When delight is destroyed, lust is destroyed; when lust is destroyed, delight is destroyed.

When delight and lust are destroyed, the mind is liberated: it is said to be well liberated.”

—evam—

050514; rev 060812; 081221a