

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvattṥī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. Now on that occasion the householder Anāthapiṇḍika was afflicted, suffering, and gravely ill. Then he addressed a certain man thus: "Come, good man, go to the Blessed One, pay homage in my name with your head at his feet, and say: 'Venerable sir, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika is afflicted, suffering, and gravely ill; he pays homage with his head at the Blessed One's feet.' Then go to the venerable Sāriputta, pay homage in my name with your head at his feet, and say: 'Venerable sir, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika is afflicted, suffering, and gravely ill; he pays homage with his head at the venerable Sāriputta's feet.' Then say: 'It would be good, venerable sir, if the venerable Sāriputta would come to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika, out of compassion.'"

"Yes, sir," the man replied, and he went to the Blessed One, and after paying homage to the Blessed One, he sat down at one side and delivered his message. Then he went to the venerable Sāriputta, and after paying homage to the venerable Sāriputta, he delivered his message, saying: "It would be good, venerable sir, if the venerable Sāriputta would come to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika, out of compassion.' The venerable Sāriputta consented in silence.

3. Then the venerable Sāriputta dressed, and taking his bowl and outer robe, went to the residence of the householder Anāthapiṇḍika with the venerable Ānanda as his attendant. Having gone there, he sat down on a seat made ready and said to the householder Anāthapiṇḍika: "I hope you are getting well, householder, I hope you are comfortable. I hope your painful feelings are subsiding and not increasing, and that their subsiding, not their increase, is apparent."

4. "Venerable Sāriputta, I am not getting well, I am not comfortable. My painful feelings are increasing, not subsiding; their increase and not their subsiding is apparent. Just as if a strong man were splitting my head open with a sharp sword, so too, violent winds cut through my head. I am not getting well...Just as if a strong man were tightening a tough leather strap around my head as a headband, so too, there are violent pains in my head. I am not getting well...Just as if a skilled butcher or his apprentice were to carve up an ox's belly with a sharp butcher's knife, so too, violent winds are carving up my belly. I am not getting well...Just as if two strong men were to seize a weaker man by both arms and roast him over a pit of hot coals, so too, there is a violent burning in my body. I am not getting well, I am not comfortable. My

painful feelings are increasing, not subsiding; their increase and not their subsiding is apparent.”

5. “Then, householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to the eye, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the eye.’ Thus you should train. You should train thus: ‘I will not cling to the ear...I will not cling to the nose...I will not cling to the tongue...I will not cling to the body...I will not cling to the mind, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the mind.’ Thus you should train.

6. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to forms...I will not cling to sounds...I will not cling to flavors...I will not cling to tangibles...I will not cling to mind-objects, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind objects.’ Thus you should train.

7. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to eye-consciousness...I will not cling to ear-consciousness...I will not cling to nose-consciousness...I will not cling to tongue-consciousness...I will not cling to body-consciousness...I will not cling to mind-consciousness, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-consciousness.’ Thus you should train.

8. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to eye-contact...I will not cling to ear-contact...I will not cling to nose-contact...I will not cling to tongue-contact...I will not cling to body-contact...I will not cling to mind-contact, and my consciousness will not be dependent on mind-contact.’ Thus you should train.

9. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to feeling born of eye-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of ear-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of nose-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of tongue-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of body-contact...I will not cling to feeling born of mind-contact, and my consciousness will not be dependent on feeling born of mind-contact.’ Thus you should train.

10. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to the earth element...I will not cling to the water element...I will not cling to the fire element...I will not cling to the air element...I will not cling to the space element...I will not cling to the consciousness element, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the consciousness element.’ Thus you should train.

11. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to material form...I will not cling to feeling...I will not cling to perception...I will not cling to formations...I will not cling to consciousness, and my consciousness will not be dependent on consciousness.’ Thus you should train.

12. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to the base of infinite space...I will not cling to the base of infinite consciousness...I will not cling to the base of nothingness...I will not cling to the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.’ Thus you should train.

13. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to this world, and my consciousness will not be dependent on this world. I will not cling to the world beyond, and my consciousness will not be dependent on the world beyond.’ Thus you should train.

14. “Householder, you should train thus: ‘I will not cling to what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, encountered, sought after, and examined by the mind, and my consciousness will not be dependent on that.’ Thus you should train.”

15. When this was said, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika wept and shed tears. Then the venerable Ānanda asked him: “Are you foundering, householder, are you sinking?”

“I am not foundering venerable Ānanda, I am not sinking. But although I have long waited upon the Teacher and bhikkhus worthy of esteem, never before have I heard such a talk on the Dhamma.”

“Such talk on the Dhamma, householder, is not given to lay people clothed in white. Such talk on the Dhamma is given to those who have gone forth.”

“Well then, venerable Sāriputta, let such talk on the Dhamma be given to lay people clothed in white. There are clansmen with little dust in their eyes who are wasting away through not

hearing [such talk on] the Dhamma. There will be those who will understand the Dhamma.”

16. Then, after giving the householder Anāthapiṇḍika this advice, the venerable Sāriputta and the venerable Ānanda rose from their seats and departed. Soon after they had left, the householder Anāthapiṇḍika died and reappeared in the Tusita heaven.

17. Then, when the night was well advanced, Anāthapiṇḍika, now a young god of beautiful appearance, went to the Blessed One, illuminating the whole of Jeta’s Grove. After paying homage to the Blessed One, he stood at one side and addressed the Blessed One in stanzas:

“Oh blessed is this Jeta’s Grove,

Dwelt in by the sagely Sangha,

Wherein resides the King of Dhamma,

The fount of all my happiness.

By action, knowledge and Dhamma,

By virtue and noble way of life –

By these are mortals purified,

Not by lineage or wealth.

Therefore a wise person who sees

What truly leads to his own good,

Should investigate the Dhamma

And purify himself with it.

Sāriputta has reached the peak

In virtue, peace, and wisdom's ways;

Any bhikkhu who has gone beyond

At best can only equal him.”

18. That is what the young god Anāthapiṇḍika said, and the Teacher approved. Then the young god Anāthapiṇḍika, thinking: “The Teacher has approved of me,” paid homage to the Blessed One, and keeping him on his right, he vanished at once.

19. When the night had ended, the Blessed One addressed the bhikkhus thus: “Bhikkhus, last night when the night was well advanced, there came to me a certain young god of beautiful appearance who illuminated the whole of Jeta’s Grove. After paying homage to me, he stood at one side and addressed me in stanzas thus:

“Oh blessed is this Jeta’s Grove...

At best can only equal him.”

That is what the young god said. Then the young god, thinking: ‘The Teacher has approved of me,’ paid homage to me, and keeping me on his right, he vanished at once.”

20. When this was said, the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One: “Surely, venerable sir, that young god must have been Anāthapiṇḍika. For the householder Anāthapiṇḍika had perfect confidence in the venerable Sāriputta.”

“Good, good, Ānanda! As far as reasoning goes you have drawn the right conclusion. That young god was Anāthapiṇḍika, no one else.”

That is what the Blessed One said. The venerable Ānanda was satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

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Majjhima Nikāya 143

Part Three— The Final Fifty Discourses (Uparipaṇḍāsapāṇi)

The Division of Expositions (Vibhangavagga)

Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi

Contributed by Chris Burke