

great radiance surpassing the divine majesty of the devas appeared in the world with its devas, Māra, and Brahmā, in this population with its ascetics and brahmins, with its devas and human beings. And even in those abyssal world intervals of vacancy, gloom, and utter darkness, where the moon and the sun, mighty and powerful as they are, cannot make their light prevail—there too an immeasurable great radiance surpassing the divine majesty of the devas appeared in the world. And the beings reborn there perceived each other by that light: "So indeed, there are also other beings reborn here." And this ten-thousand-fold world system shook, quaked, and trembled, and there too an immeasurable great radiance surpassing the divine majesty of the devas appeared in the world. That when the Bodhisatta came forth from his mother's womb, an immeasurable great radiance surpassing the divine majesty of the devas appeared in the world ... this too I remember as a wonderful and marvelous quality of the Blessed One."

22. "That being so, Ānanda, remember this too as a wonderful and marvelous quality of the Tathāgata: Here, Ānanda, for the Tathāgata feelings are known as they arise, as they are present, as they disappear; perceptions are known as they arise, as they are present, as they disappear; thoughts are known as they arise, as they are present, as they disappear. Remember this too, Ānanda, as a wonderful and marvelous quality of the Tathāgata."

23. "Venerable sir, since for the Blessed One feelings are known as they arise, as they are present, as they disappear; perceptions are known as they arise, as they are present, as they disappear; thoughts are known as they arise, as they are present, as they disappear—this too I remember as a wonderful and marvelous quality of the Blessed One."

What the Venerable Ānanda said. The Teacher approved. The one who heard was satisfied and delighted in the Venerable Ānanda's words.

(AN 123: *Acchariya-abhinā Sutta*, abridged; III 118-20; 122-24)

3. THE QUEST FOR ENLIGHTENMENT

(1) *Seeking the Supreme State of Sublime Peace*

5. "Monks, there are these two kinds of search: the noble search and the ignoble search. And what is the ignoble search? Here someone being himself subject to birth seeks what is also subject to birth, being

himself subject to aging, he seeks what is also subject to aging; being himself subject to sickness, he seeks what is also subject to sickness; being himself subject to death, he seeks what is also subject to death; being himself subject to sorrow, he seeks what is also subject to sorrow; being himself subject to defilement, he seeks what is also subject to defilement.

6-11. "And what may be said to be subject to birth, aging, sickness, and death; to sorrow and defilement? Wife and children, men and women slaves, goats and sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants, cattle, horses, and mares, gold and silver: these acquisitions are subject to birth, aging, sickness, and death; to sorrow and defilement; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them, and utterly absorbed in them, being himself subject to birth ... to sorrow and defilement, seeks what it also subject to birth ... to sorrow and defilement.¹⁰

12. "And what is the noble search? Here someone being himself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeks the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to aging, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, he seeks the unaging supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, he seeks the unailing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, he seeks the deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, he seeks the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being himself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, he seeks the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. This is the noble search.

13. "Monks, before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened bodhisatta, I too, being myself subject to birth, sought what was also subject to birth; being myself subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I sought what was also subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement. Then I considered thus: 'Why, being myself subject to birth, do I seek what is also subject to birth? Why, being myself subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, do I seek what is also subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement? Suppose that, being myself subject to birth, having

understood the danger in what is subject to birth, I seek the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. Suppose that, being myself subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I seek the unaging, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna.'

14. "Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with the blessing of youth, in the prime of life, though my mother and father wished otherwise and wept with tearful faces, I shaved off my hair and beard, put on the ochre robe, and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

15. "Having gone forth, monks, in search of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to Ājāra Kālāma and said to him: 'Friend Kālāma, I want to lead the spiritual life in this Dhamma and Discipline.' Ājāra Kālāma replied: 'The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man can soon enter upon and dwell in it, realizing for himself through direct knowledge his own teacher's doctrine.' I soon quickly learned that Dhamma. As far as mere lip-reciting and rehearsal of his teaching went, I could speak with knowledge and assurance, and I claimed, 'I know and see'—and there were others who did likewise.

"I considered: 'It is not through mere faith alone that Ājāra Kālāma declares: "By realizing it for myself with direct knowledge, I enter upon and dwell in this Dhamma." Certainly Ājāra Kālāma dwells knowing and seeing this Dhamma.' Then I went to Ājāra Kālāma and asked him: 'Friend Kālāma, in what way do you declare that by realizing it for yourself with direct knowledge you enter upon and dwell in this Dhamma?' In reply he declared the base of nothingness.¹⁴

"I considered: 'Not only Ājāra Kālāma has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavor to realize the Dhamma that Ājāra Kālāma declares he enters upon and dwells in by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge?'

"I soon quickly entered upon and dwelled in that Dhamma by realizing it for myself with direct knowledge. Then I went to Ājāra Kālāma and asked him: 'Friend Kālāma, is it in this way that you declare that you enter upon and dwell in this Dhamma by realizing it for yourself with direct knowledge?'—"That is the way, friend.'—"It is in this way,

friend, that I also enter upon and dwell in this Dhamma by realizing it for myself with direct knowledge.'—"It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us that we have such a venerable one for our fellow monk. So the Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and dwell in by realizing it for myself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and dwell in by realizing it for yourself with direct knowledge. And the Dhamma that you enter upon and dwell in by realizing it for yourself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and dwell in by realizing it for myself with direct knowledge. So you know the Dhamma that I know and I know the Dhamma that you know. As I am, so are you; as you are, so am I. Come, friend, let us now lead this community together.'

"Thus Ājāra Kālāma, my teacher, placed me, his pupil, on an equal footing with himself and awarded me the highest honor. But it occurred to me: 'This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna, but only to rebirth in the base of nothingness.'¹⁵ Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.

16. "Still in search, monks, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and said to him: 'Friend, I want to lead the spiritual life in this Dhamma and Discipline.' Uddaka Rāmaputta replied: 'The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man can soon enter upon and dwell in it, himself realizing through direct knowledge his own teacher's doctrine.' I soon quickly learned that Dhamma. As far as mere lip-reciting and rehearsal of his teaching went, I could speak with knowledge and assurance, and I claimed, 'I know and see'—and there were others who did likewise.

"I considered: 'It was not through mere faith alone that Rāma declared: "By realizing it for myself with direct knowledge, I enter upon and dwell in this Dhamma." Certainly Rāma dwelled knowing and seeing this Dhamma.' Then I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: 'Friend, in what way did Rāma declare that by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge he entered upon and dwelled in this Dhamma?' In reply Uddaka Rāmaputta declared the base of neither-perception-nor-nonperception.¹⁶

"I considered: 'Not only Rāma had faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness,

concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavor to realize the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and dwelled in by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge.'

'I soon quickly entered upon and dwelled in that Dhamma by realizing it for myself with direct knowledge. Then I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: 'Friend, was it in this way that Rāma declared that he entered upon and dwelled in this Dhamma by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge?'—'That is the way, friend.'—'It is in this way, friend, that I also enter upon and dwell in this Dhamma by realizing it for myself with direct knowledge.'—'It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us that we have such a venerable one for our fellow monk. So the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and dwelled in by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and dwell in by realizing it for yourself with direct knowledge. And the Dhamma that you enter upon and dwell in by realizing it for yourself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and dwelled in by realizing it for himself with direct knowledge. So you know the Dhamma that Rāma knew and Rāma knew the Dhamma that you know. As Rāma was, so are you; as you are, so was Rāma. Come, friend, now lead this community.'

'Thus Uddaka Rāmaputta, my fellow monk, placed me in the position of a teacher and accorded me the highest honor. But it occurred to me: 'This Dhamma does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna, but only to rebirth in the base of neither-perception-nor-nonperception.' Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.

17. 'Still in search, monks, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I wandered by stages through the Magadhan country until eventually I arrived at Uruvelā near Senānigama. There I saw an agreeable piece of ground, a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. I considered: 'This is an agreeable piece of ground, this is a delightful grove with a clear-flowing river with pleasant, smooth banks and nearby a village for alms resort. This will serve for the striving of a clansman intent on striving.' And I sat down there thinking: 'This will serve for striving.'⁷⁴

18. 'Then, monks, being myself subject to birth, having understood the danger in what is subject to birth, seeking the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unborn supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to aging, having understood the danger in what is subject to aging, seeking the unaging supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unaging supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to sickness, having understood the danger in what is subject to sickness, seeking the unailing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unailing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to death, having understood the danger in what is subject to death, seeking the deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the deathless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to sorrow, having understood the danger in what is subject to sorrow, seeking the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the sorrowless supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna; being myself subject to defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to defilement, seeking the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna. The knowledge and vision arose in me: 'My liberation is unshakable. This is my last birth. Now there is no more renewed existence.'"

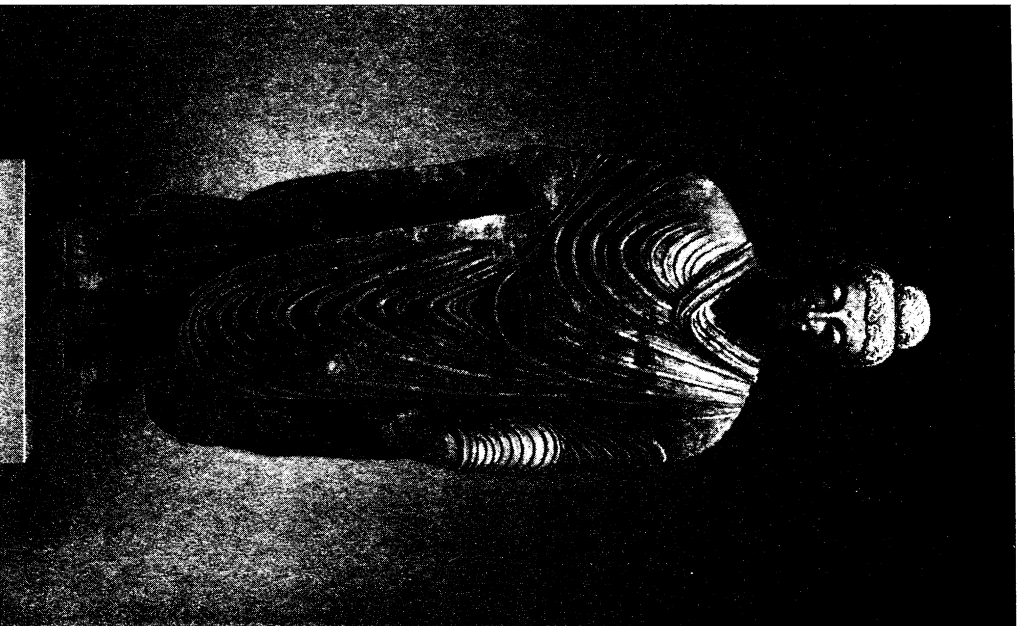
(from MN 26: *Ariyapariyesana Sutta*, 1160-67)

(2) *The Realization of the Three True Knowledges*

11. [Saccaka asked the Blessed One:]⁷⁵ 'Has there never arisen in Master Gotama a feeling so pleasant that it could invade his mind and remain? Has there never arisen in Master Gotama a feeling so painful that it could invade his mind and remain?'"

12. 'Why not, Aggivessana? Here, Aggivessana, before my enlightenment, while I was still only an unenlightened bodhisatta, I thought: '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 ochre robe, and go forth from the home life into homelessness.'

13-16. 'Later, while still young, a black-haired young man endowed with



Tamed, he is supreme among those who tame;
At peace, he is the sage among those who bring peace;
Freed, he is the chief of those who set free;
Delivered, he is the best of those who deliver.

—*Anguttara Nikāya* 4.23

In the
Buddha's
Words



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Bhikkhu Bodhi



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