

Exploring the ancient path in the Buddha's own words -- Lesson 1.4.8

Sāmaññaphalasuttaṃ

*Evam vutte, rājā māgadho ajātasattu vedehiputto bhagavantam etadavoca—
“abhikkantaṃ, bhante, abhikkantaṃ, bhante. Seyyathāpi, bhante, nikkujjitaṃ vā
ukkujjeyya, paṭicchannaṃ vā vivareyya, mūlhasa vā maggaṃ ācikkheyya, andhakāre
vā telapajjotaṃ dhāreyya ‘cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhanti’ti; evamevaṃ, bhante,
bhagavatā anekapariyāyena dhammo pakāsito.¹*

*Esāhaṃ, bhante, bhagavantam saraṇam gacchāmi dhammañca
bhikkhusaṅghaṇca. Upāsakaṃ maṃ bhagavā dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupetaṃ saraṇam
gataṃ². Accayo maṃ, bhante, accagamā yathābālaṃ yathāmūlhaṃ yathā-akusalaṃ,
yohaṃ pitaraṃ dhammikaṃ dhammarājānaṃ issariyakāraṇā jīvitā voropesiṃ. Tassa
me, bhante bhagavā accayaṃ accayato paṭiggaṇhātuāyatiṃ saṃvarāyā³”ti.*

¹ These similes are introduced here because they are of common occurrence. The commentary explains each one of these metaphors. The first one illustrates the king's thought on his having turned away from the right Dhamma and fallen to the wrong direction, the second that the dispensation of the Buddha had been hidden by the jungle of wrong views to the king, the third one that the path to liberation was lost by pursuing a false path and the last that the Triple Gem could not be seen by the darkness of delusion.

² *Esāhaṃ, bhante, bhagavantam saraṇam gacchāmi dhammañca bhikkhusaṅghaṇca. Upāsakaṃ maṃ bhagavā dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupetaṃ saraṇam gataṃ:* The common formula to request acceptance as a follower of the teaching of the Buddha.

³ *accayaṃ accayato paṭiggaṇhāti*—to accept a confession of a sin and: *āyatiṃ saṃvarāya* - restraining from it in future: this is the formula used by Bhikkhus after confessing an unwholesome deed and the promise of its avoidance in future—a restraint that is binding and follows the rules of the *Pātimokkha*. Here *Ajātasattu* expresses his sincere regret by understanding his previous evil deed, asks for acceptance of his transgression and promises avoidance in future and the Buddha approves of his apology: *Yato ca kho tvam, mahārāja, accayaṃ accayato disvā yathāddhammaṃ paṭikarosi, taṃ te mayaṃ paṭiggaṇhāma. Vuddhihesā, mahārāja, ariyassa vinaye, yo accayaṃ accayato disvā yathāddhammaṃ paṭikaroti, āyatiṃ saṃvaraṃ āpajjati*”ti.—“Since you have, great King, understood your transgression as transgression and make amends according to Dhamma, we acknowledge it. Because, the growth in the Noble Discipline, O’ great King, is this: to understand one’s transgression as transgression, make amends according to Dhamma and to accomplish restraint in future.” (comp. 2.2.11.)

Dīghanikāyo, Sīlakkhandhavaggaṇṇā, Ajātasattu-upāsakattapaṭivedanā

ācikkheyya abhikkantaṃ accayo maṃ ajjatangge andhakāre anekapariyāyena	(opt. 2nd.3rd. sing.) ajja+t+agge andha+kāre an+eka+pariyāya+ena	would tell, relate, describe excellent, supreme a fault has overcome me day + top: henceforth blind + making: blindness not+ one:many + way, habit, disposition, order (lit.: going round)
esāhaṃ issariyakāraṇā nikkujjitaṃ pāṇupetaṃ	esa +āhaṃ issariya + kāraṇā pāṇa + upetaṃ	this + I rulership, supremacy + making fallen down, lying upside down life, breath of life + endowed with
paṭicchannaṃ paṭigganḥātuāyatimaṃ pakāsita pitaraṃ mūlhaṃ	paṭi+c+ chādeti (p.p.) paṭi+g+ganḥātu+āyatimaṃ pp.	covered, hidden acceptance, receiving + future explained, made known father gone astray, having lost one's way
telaṇṇajjotaṃ ukkujjeyya upāsakaṃ vivareyya voropesiṃ	tela+pajjotaṃ (opt. 2nd.3rd. sing.) (opt. 2nd.3rd. sing.) voropeti (aor.)	sesamum-oil + light, splendor would set upright, turn up disciple would get uncovered to take away, to deprive