

Exploring the Ancient Path in the Buddha's Own Words

Lesson 3.2.9 Anattalakkhaṇasuttam The Characteristics of No Self



Play Audio

Anattalakkhaṇasuttam	The Characteristics of No Self
Ekam samayaṁ bhagavā bārāṇasiyaṁ viharati isipatane migadāye.	At one time the Bhagavā was staying at Bārāṇasi, in the Deer Park at Isipatana.
Tatra kho bhagavā pañcavaggiye bhikkhū āmantesi:	Here he addressed the pañcavaggiya-Bhikkhus, the group of five:
“Bhikkhavo”ti. “Bhadante”ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosum. Bhagavā etadavoca :	“O’Bhikkhus.” “Bhadante,” they replied. The Bhagavā spoke thus:
“Rūpaṁ, bhikkhave, anattā. Rūpañca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam rūpaṁ ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbhetha ca rūpe:	“O’Bhikkhus, body is not-self. Were body self, then this very body were not subject to disease and the body could be obtained thus:
‘Evam me rūpaṁ hotu, evam me rūpaṁ mā ahosi’ti.	‘Let my body be such and such, let my body be not thus.
Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, rūpaṁ anattā, tasmā rūpaṁ ābādhāya saṃvattati, na ca labbhati rūpe:	‘But as body is not-self, so it is subject to disease, and the body cannot be obtained thus:
‘Evam me rūpaṁ hotu, evam me rūpaṁ mā ahosi’’ti.	‘Let my body be such and such, let my body be not thus.’
“Vedanā anattā.	“Sensation is not-self.
Vedanā ca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam vedanā ābādhāya saṃvatteyya, labbhetha ca vedanāya :	Were sensation self, Bhikkhus, then this very sensation were not to undergo change and sensation could be obtained thus:
‘Evam me vedanā hotu, evam me vedanā mā ahosi’ti.	‘Let my sensation be such and such, let my sensation be not thus.’

Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, vedanā anattā, tasmā vedanā ābādhāya samvattati, na ca labbhati vedanāya:	But as sensation is not-self, so it undergoes change and sensation cannot be obtained thus:
‘Evam me vedanā hotu, evam me vedanā mā ahosī’’ti.	‘Let my sensation be such and such, let my sensation be not thus.’
“Saññā anattā...pe...	“Perception is not-self. Were perception self, Bhikkhus, then this very perception were not to undergo change and perception could be obtained thus: ‘Let my perception be such and such, let my perception be not thus.’ But as perception is not-self, so it undergoes change and perception cannot be obtained thus: ‘Let my perception be such and such, let my perception be not thus.’
Saṅkhārā anattā.	“Mental conditioned reaction is not-self.
Saṅkhārā ca hidam, Bhikkhave, attā abhavissamṣu, nayidam saṅkhārā ābādhāya samvatteyyum, labbhetha ca saṅkhāresu:	Were mental conditioned reaction self, Bhikkhus, then this very mental conditioned reaction were not to undergo change and mental conditioned reaction could be obtained thus:
‘Evam me saṅkhārā hontu, evam me saṅkhārā mā ahosu’nti.	‘Let my mental conditioned reaction be such and such, let my mental conditioned reaction be not thus.’
Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, sankhārā anattā, tasmā saṅkhārā ābādhāya samvattanti, na ca labbhati saṅkhāresu:	But as mental conditioned reaction is not-self, so it undergoes change and mental conditioned reaction cannot be obtained thus:
‘Evam me saṅkhārā hontu, evam me saṅkhārā mā ahosu’’ti.	‘Let my mental conditioned reaction be such and such, let my mental conditioned reaction be not thus.’
“Viññāṇam anattā.	“Consciousness is not-self.
Viññāṇañca hidam, bhikkhave, attā abhavissa, nayidam viññāṇam ābādhāya samvatteyya, labbhetha ca viññāṇe:	Were consciousness self, O’Bhikkhus, then this very consciousness were not subject to change and consciousness could be obtained thus:
‘Evam me viññāṇam hotu, evam me viññāṇam mā ahosī’ti.	‘Let my consciousness be such and such, let my consciousness be not thus.’
Yasmā ca kho, bhikkhave, viññāṇam anattā, tasmā viññāṇam ābādhāya samvattati, na ca labbhati viññāṇe:	But as consciousness is not-self, so it is subject to change, and consciousness cannot be obtained thus:

‘evam me viññāṇam hotu, evam me viññāṇam mā ahosi’’ti.	‘Let my consciousness be such and such, let my consciousness be not thus.’
“Tam kiṁ maññatha, bhikkhave, rūpam niccam vā aniccam vā”’ti?	“Now what do you think, O’Bhikkhus, is body permanent or impermanent?”
“Aniccam, bhante”. “Yam panāniccam dukkham vā tam sukham vā”’ti?	“Impermanent, Bhante.” “Now whatever is impermanent is it painful or pleasant?”
“Dukkham, bhante”. “Yam panāniccam dukkham vipariṇāmadhammam, kallam nu tam samanupassitum :	“It is painful, Bhante.” “Now can, whatever is impermanent and what is painful and therefore subject to change, considered thus:
‘Etam mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’’ti? “No hetam, bhante”.	“This is mine, this is I, this is myself?” “No, Bhante.”
“Vedanā... saññā... saṅkhārā... viññāṇam niccam vā aniccam vā”’ti?	“Now what do you think, O’Bhikkhus, is sensation.....; perception.....; mental conditioned reaction.....; consciousness permanent or impermanent?” —
“Aniccam, bhante”. “Yam panāniccam dukkham vā tam sukham vā”’ti?	“Impermanent, Bhante.” “Now whatever is impermanent is it painful or pleasant?” —
“Dukkham, bhante”. “Yam panāniccam dukkham vipariṇāmadhammam, kallam nu tam samanupassitum :	“It is painful, Bhante.” “Now can, whatever is impermanent and what is painful and therefore subject to change, considered thus:
‘Etam mama, esohamasmi, eso me attā’’ti? “No hetam, bhante”.	“This is mine, this is I, this is myself?” — “No, Bhante.”
“Tasmātiha, bhikkhave, yam kiñci rūpam atītānāgatapaccuppannam ajjhattam vā bahiddhā vā oḷārikam vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā pañītam vā yam dūre santike vā, sabbam rūpam :	“Therefore, Bhikkhus any kind of body whatsoever, whether arisen in the past, future or present, whether gross or subtle, whether internal or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must be realized with full wisdom in its true characteristic, thus:
‘Netam mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’’ti	‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’
Evametam yathābhūtam sammappaññāya datthabbam. Yā kāci vedanā atītānāgatapaccuppannā ajjhattā vā bahiddhā vā...pe... yā dūre santike vā, sabbā vedanā :	Whatever sensation, whether arisen in the past, future or present, whether gross or subtle, whether internal or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must be realized with full wisdom in its true characteristic, thus:
‘Netam mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’’ti	‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’

Evametam yathābhūtam sammappaññaya daṭṭhabbam. “Yā kāci saññā...pe... ye keci saṅkhārā atītānāgatapaccuppannā ajjhattam vā bahiddhā vā...pe... ye dūre santike vā, sabbe saṅkhārā :	Whatever perception, whether arisen in the past, future or present, whether gross or subtle, whether internal or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must be realized with full wisdom in its true characteristic, thus:
‘Netam mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti	‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’
Evametam yathābhūtam sammappaññaya daṭṭhabbam. “Yam kiñci viññāṇam atītānāgatapaccuppannam ajjhattam vā bahiddhā vā Olārikam vā sukhumam vā hīnam vā pañītam vā yan dūre santike vā, sabbam viññāṇam –	Whatever mentally conditioned reactions, whether arisen in the past, future or present, whether gross or subtle, whether internal or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must be realized with full wisdom in its true characteristic, thus:
‘Netam mama, nesohamasmi, na meso attā’ti	‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’
Evametam yathābhūtam sammappaññaya daṭṭhabbam.	Whatever consciousness, whether arisen in the past, future or present, whether gross or subtle, whether internal or external, whether inferior or superior, whether far or near, must be realized with full wisdom in its true characteristic, thus: ‘This is not mine, this is not I, this is not myself.’
“Evam passam, bhikkhave, sutavā ariyasāvako rūpasmimpi nibbindati, vedanāyapi nibbindati, saññāyapi nibbindati, saṅkhāresupi nibbindati, viññāṇasmimpi nibbindati	O’Bhikkhus, when a noble follower of the Enlightened One perceives in this way, he gets disgusted of corporality, he gets disgusted of sensation, gets disgusted of perception, gets disgusted of mental conditioned reactions and he gets disgusted of consciousness.
. Nibbindam virajjati;	When he thus gets disgusted, he gets free from attachment.
virāgā vimuccati.	Being free from attachment, he gets liberated.
Vimuttasmiṃ vimuttamiti nāṇam hoti.	When thus liberated, knowledge about this very liberation arises and he understands:
‘Khīṇā jāti, vusitam brahmacariyam, kataṃ karaṇiyam, nāparam itthattāyā’ti pajānāti’’ti.	‘Birth is exhausted, the holy life has been lived, what could be done is done, there will be no more further birth.
Idamavoca bhagavā. Attamanā pañcavaggiyā bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitam abhinandunti.	That is what the Bhagavā said . Elated in their minds the Bhikkhus approved his words.



Imasmiñca pana veyyākaraṇasmiñ bhaññamāne
pañcavaggiyānam bhikkhūnam anupādāya
āsavehi cittāni vimuccimśūti.

Now during this exposition of the Bhikkhus of
the group of five were liberated from all mental
impurities and of any further attachment.