

Exploring the Ancient Path in the Buddha's Own Words

Lesson 3.7.10

Soṇakoḷivisavatthu

Balanced Endeavour should Resemble Strings of a Veeṇa properly Tuned



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<p>.....Addasā kho bhagavā āyasmato soṇassa caṅkamaṃ lohiteṇa phuṭaṃ, disvāna bhikkhū āmantesi—</p> <p>“kassa nvāyaṃ, bhikkhave, caṅkamo lohiteṇa phuṭo, seyyathāpi gavāghātanan”ti?</p> <p>“Āyasmato, bhante, soṇassa accāraddhavīriyassa caṅkamato pādā bhijjimsu.</p> <p>Tassāyaṃ caṅkamo lohiteṇa phuṭo, seyyathāpi gavāghātanan”ti.</p>	<p>When the Bhagavā saw that the cloister of Venerable Soṇa's walking path was stained with blood he addressed the Bhikkhus:</p> <p>“Now why, Bhikkus, is this walkway stained with blood, just as there had been a slaughter of cattle?”</p> <p>“The Venerable Soṇa, O' Bhante, in his strenuous efforts while walking up and down damaged his feet. That is why this cloister is stained with blood, just as there had been a slaughter of cattle.”</p>
<p>Atha kho bhagavā yenāyasmato soṇassa vihāro tenupasaṅkami, upasaṅkamitvā paññatte āsane nisīdi.</p> <p>Āyasmāpi kho soṇo bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi.</p> <p>Ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho āyasmantaṃ soṇaṃ bhagavā etadavoca—</p>	<p>Then the Bhagavā approached the dwelling place of Venerable Soṇa. Having reached there he sat down at the appointed seat.</p> <p>Thereupon the Venerable Soṇa greeted the Bhagavā respectfully and sat down at one side. Having sat down at one side the Bhagavā addressed the Venerable Soṇa thus:</p>

<p>“nanu te, soṇa, rahogatassa paṭisallīnassa evaṃ cetaso parivitakko udapādi—</p> <p>‘ye kho keci bhagavato sāvakā āradhaviyā viharanti, ahaṃ tesam aññataro. Atha ca pana me nānupādāya āsavehi cittaṃ vimuccati.</p> <p>Samvijjanti kho pana me kule bhogā; sakkā bhoge ca bhuñjitum, puññāni ca kātum.</p> <p>Yaṃnūnāhaṃ hīnāyāvattitvā bhoge ca bhuñjeyyaṃ, puññāni ca kareyyaṃ”ti? “Evaṃ, bhante”ti.</p>	<p>“How is it, Soṇa that during your solitary meditation the following thought arouse in your mind: ‘Those who are the disciples of the Bhagavā are putting forth strenuous efforts, I belong to them. But yet my mind is not freed from the impurities and tendency to cling to this world.</p> <p>Further there do exist those possessions of my family. It would be possible to enjoy these possessions and perform meritorious actions.</p> <p>What if I return to the worldly life and enjoy these possessions and perform meritorious actions?” “Yes, so it was, Bhante!”</p>
<p>“Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, soṇa, kusalo tvam pubbe agārikabhūto vīṇāya tantissare”ti?</p> <p>“Evaṃ, bhante”ti.</p> <p>“Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, soṇa, yadā te vīṇāya tantiyo accāyatā honti, api nu te vīṇā tasmiṃ samaye saravatī vā hoti, kammaññā vā”ti?</p> <p>“No hetam, bhante”ti.</p>	<p>“Now what do you think, Soṇa, were you not in your former life as householder well versed in playing the sound of the Veeṇa?” “Yes, so it was, Bhante!”</p> <p>“Now what do you think, Soṇa, when the strings of your Veeṇa were too tight, did your Veeṇa at this time resonate with appealing sounds and was it fit for playing?” “No, it was not, Bhante!”</p>

<p>“Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, soṇa, yadā te vīṇāya tantiyo atisithilā honti, api nu te vīṇā tasmim samaye saravatī vā hoti, kammaññā vā”ti?</p> <p>“No hetam, bhante”ti.</p> <p>“Taṃ kiṃ maññasi, soṇa, yadā te vīṇāya tantiyo neva accāyatā honti nātisithilā, same guṇe paṭiṭṭhitā, api nu te vīṇā tasmim samaye saravatī vā hoti, kammaññā vā”ti?</p> <p>“Evaṃ, bhante”ti.</p>	<p>“Now what do you think, Soṇa, when the strings of your Veeṇa were too loose, did your Veeṇa at this time resonate appealingly and was it fit for playing?” “No, it was not, Bhante!”</p> <p>“Now what do you think, Soṇa, when the strings of your Veeṇa were neither too tight nor too loose, but tuned evenly, did your Veeṇa at this time resonate appealingly and was it fit for playing?” “Yes, it was, Bhante!”</p>
<p>“E v a m e v a k h o , s o ṇ a , accāraddhavīriyaṃ uddhaccāya saṃvattati, atilīnavīriyaṃ kosajjāya saṃvattati.</p> <p>Tasmātiha tvaṃ, soṇa, vīriyasamataṃ adhiṭṭhaha, indriyānaṃca samataṃ paṭivijjha, tattha ca nimittaṃ gaṇhāhi”ti.</p>	<p>Now in this very way, Soṇa, putting forth too strenuous energy is conducive to restlessness, if energy is being put forth too sluggish it is conducive to slothfulness. Therefore, Soṇa, you should determine on exerting your energy evenly, likewise mastering the faculties evenly and taking up a meditative object!</p>

<p>“Evaṃ, bhante”ti kho āyasmā soṇo bhagavato paccassosi.</p> <p>Atha kho bhagavā āyasmantaṃ soṇaṃ iminā ovādena ovaditvā— seyyathāpi nāma balavā puriso sammiñjitaṃ vā bāhaṃ pasāreyya, pasāritaṃ vā bāhaṃ samiñjeyya evameva— sītavane āyasmato soṇassa sammukhe antarahito gijjhakūṭe pabbate pāturahosi.</p> <p>Atha kho āyasmā soṇo aparena samayena vīriyasamataṃ adhiṭṭhāsi, indriyānaṃca samataṃ paṭivijjhi, tattha ca nimittaṃ aggahehi.</p> <p>Atha kho āyasmā soṇo, eko vūpakaṭṭho appamatto ātāpī pahitatto viharanto, na cirasseva —yassatthāya kulaputtā sammadeva agāasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajanti— tadanuttaraṃ brahmacariyapariyosānaṃ diṭṭheva dhamme sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihāsi.</p> <p>‘Khīṇā jāti, vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ, nāparaṃ itthattāyā’ti abhiññāsi.</p> <p>Aññataro ca panāyasmā soṇo arahataṃ ahosi.</p>	<p>“Yes, Bhante!” replied the Venerable Soṇa to the Bhagavā.</p> <p>Then, having thus advised the Venerable Soṇa with this exhortation the Bhagavā just as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm or bent back his outstretched arm returned from the cool grove of the Venerable Soṇa to the Vultures hill of Gijjhakūṭe.</p> <p>From then on the Venerable Soṇa resolved on exerting his efforts evenly, mastering the faculties evenly and taking up a meditative object.</p> <p>There the Venerable Soṇa dwelled alone and secluded, diligent, ardent with resolute will.</p> <p>After no long time he realised the supreme fulfilment of the holy life, for the purpose of which many a householder’s son leave the householders life into homelessness by his own wisdom in this very life, abided in it and dwelled in it:</p> <p>“Destroyed is birth, the holy life is fulfilled, it is done what had to be done, there is no more state of becoming!”</p> <p>This is how the Venerable Soṇa became one of the Arahants.</p>
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