

DĪGHA NIKĀYA

Sutta 15

**The Great
Downbinding Spell**

Translated from the Pāli by Michael. M. Olds



BuddhaDust Publications

Los Altos

2021



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Buddha Dust

**Bits and scraps, crumbs, fine
Particles that drift down to
Walkers of The Walk.
Then: Thanks for that, Far-Seer!
Great 'Getter-of-the-Get'n!**



**May all beings be well and happy
May I act with friendliness in thought, word, and deed
towards all living beings
in whatsoever of the ten directions they may abide
whether far or near
May I sympathize with their pains and sorrows
Empathize with their situations
and be at all times objectively detached.**

Dīgha Nikāya

Sutta 15

Mahā-Nidāna Suttantaṃ

The Great Downbinding Spell

Translated from the Pāli by Michael. M. Olds



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Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa

In the name of The Lucky Man,
Aristocrat, Consummately Self-Awakened One

For my Mother and Father,
in gratitude for giving me this life.

To My Teachers
in the order encountered
H.C. Warren, Buddhism in Translations,
The Pali Text Society translators
T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, F.L. Woodward,
E.M. Hare, I.B. Horner,
and all those too little sung heros
that came before
and laid the foundations of today's Dhamma resources.
Ven. Jinamurti
Ven. Mew Fung Chen
Ven. M. Puṇṇaji
Carlos Castaneda

I HEAR TELL:

Once upon a time The Lucky Man, Kuru-land revisiting.

**Now then, "The-Word-Is-My-Work — Pleasure's the Word"
is the name of a market-town of the Kurus.**

**There then Old Man Ānanda, drew near Bhagava,
drawing near,
giving salutation,
he took a seat to one side.**

**Sitting to one side then
Old Man Ānanda said this to The Lucky Man:**

**"Miraculous Bhante!
Supernatural Bhante!
So very deep, Bhante,
is this rebounding conjuration,
and so very deep appearing.**

**Yet to me it seems
as clear as clear can be!"**

**"Not thus, Ānanda,
should this be said!**

**Not thus, Ānanda,
should this be said!**

**Very deep, Ānanda,
is this recursive self-hood,
and very deep does it appear.**

**It is, Ānanda,
because of not awakening to,
not penetrating this phenomenon,
that this age of excrudescence-covered
chord-bound birth,
this bull-rush-and-tule-grass
run-around way of living
rolls on to painful ruination."**

"'Is there here the precursor of aging and death?'

**This being asked, Ānanda,
'There is'
should be the reply.**

'What precurses aging and death?'

This being asked,

'Birth precurses aging and death.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of birth?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is.'

should be the reply.

'What precurses birth?'

This being asked,

'Existence precurses birth.'

should be the reply."

'Is there here the precursor of existence?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is.'

should be the reply.

'What precurses existence?'

This being asked,

'Support precurses existence.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of support?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is'

should be the reply.

'What precurses support?'

This being asked,

'Thirst precurses support.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of thirst?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is'

should be the reply.

""What precurses thirst?'

This being asked,

'Sense-experience precurses thirst.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of sense-experience?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is.'

should be the reply.

'What precurses sense-experience?'

This being asked,

'Contact precurses sense-experience.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of contact?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is.'

should be the reply.

'What precurses contact?'

This being asked,

'Named-form precurses contact.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of named-form?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is.'

should be the reply.

'What precurses named-form?'

This being asked,

'Consciousness precurses named-form.'

should be the reply.

'Is there here the precursor of consciousness?'

This being asked, Ānanda,

'There is.'

should be the reply.

'What precurses consciousness?'

This being asked,

'Named-form precurses consciousness.'

should be the reply.

Thus named-form precurses consciousness,
consciousness precurses named-form,
named-form precurses contact,
contact precurses sense-experience,
sense-experience precurses thirst,
thirst precurses support,
support precurses existence,
existence precurses birth,
birth precurses aging and death,

**grief and lamentation,
pain and misery
and despair.**

Thus is the coming to be of this whole heap of pain.

'Birth precurses aging and death.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Birth precurses aging and death':**

**If, Ānanda, there were no being born at all
of any sort,**

by any being of any sort,

whatever,

however;

that is:

of gods to godhood,

spirits to spirithood,

daemons to daemonhood,

beings to beinghood,

man to manhood,

quadrupeds to quadrupedhood,

of birds to birdhood,

snakes to snakehood —

if there were no being born by any being of thus and such a sort at all —

with the non-existence of all birth,

with the eradication of birth,

could there then be any discerning of aging and death?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,

just this is the driving force,

just this is the tie,

just this gives rise to,

just this is the precursor of aging and death,

that is to say: birth.

'Existence precurses birth.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Existence precurses birth':**

**If, Ānanda, there were no existence at all
of any sort,**

by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
that is:
sensate existence,
existence in forms,
existence without form —
with the non-existence of all existence,
with the eradication of existence,
could there then be any discerning of birth?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of birth,
that is to say: existence.

'Support precurses existence.'

This is what I have said.

And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Support precurses existence':

If, Ānanda, there were no support at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
that is:
the support of senescence,
the support of views,
the support of ethical conduct, rites and rituals,
the support of self-experience —
with the non-existence of all support,
with the eradication of support,
could there then be any discerning of existence?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of existence,

that is to say: support.

'Thirst precurses support.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Thirst precurses support':**

**If, Ānanda, there were no thirst at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
that is:
thirst for forms,
thirst for sounds,
thirst for scents,
thirst for tastes,
thirst for contact,
thirst for knowledge,
with the non-existence of all thirst,
with the eradication of thirst,
could there then be any discerning of support?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of support,
that is to say: thirst.**

'Sense-experience precurses thirst.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Sense-experience precurses thirst':**

**If, Ānanda, there were no sense-experience at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
that is:
eye-contact sense-experience,
ear-contact sense-experience,**

nose-contact sense-experience,
tongue-contact sense-experience,
body-contact sense-experience,
mind-contact sense-experience,
with the non-existence of all sense-experience,
with the eradication of sense-experience,
could there then be any discerning of thirst?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of thirst,
that is to say: sense-experience.

Thus it is too, Ānanda, that sense-experience precurses thirst,
thirst precurses questing,
questing precurses gain,
gain precurses scheming,
scheming precurses desirous wishes,
desirous wishing precurses attachment,
attachment precurses acquisition,
acquisition precurses envy,
envy precurses guarding,
and making-guard-over precurses using the stick,
using the sword,
fights,
disputes,
retort,
contention,
slander,
betrayal,
and the coming to be of many another bad unskillful thing.

'Making-guard-over precurses using the stick,
using the sword,
fights,
disputes,
retort,
contention,
slander,
betrayal,
and the coming to be of many another bad unskillful thing.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Making-guard-over precurses using the stick,
using the sword,
fights,
disputes,
retort,
contention,
slander,
betrayal,
and the coming to be of many another bad unskillful thing.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no making-guard-over at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all making-guard-over,
with the eradication of making-guard-over,
could there then be any discerning of using the stick,
using the sword,
fights,
disputes,
retort,
contention,
slander,
betrayal,
and the coming to be of many another bad unskillful thing?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of using the stick,
using the sword,
fights,
disputes,
retort,
contention,
slander,
betrayal,
and the coming to be of many another bad unskillful thing,**

that is to say: making-guard-over.

'Envy precurses guarding.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Envy precurses guarding.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no envy at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all envy,
with the eradication of envy,
could there then be any discerning of guarding?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of guarding,
that is to say: envy.**

'Acquisition precurses envy.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Acquisition precurses envy.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no acquisition at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all acquisition,
with the eradication of acquisition,
could there then be any discerning of envy?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of envy,
that is to say: acquisition.**

'Attachment precurses acquisition.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Attachment precurses acquisition.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no attachment at all
of any sort**

**by any being of any sort,
whatever,**

however;

with the non-existence of all attachment,

with the eradication of attachment,

could there then be any discerning of acquisition?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,

just this is the driving force,

just this is the tie,

just this gives rise to,

just this is the precursor of acquisition,

that is to say: attachment.

'Desirous wishing precurses attachment.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Desirous wishing precurses attachment.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no desirous wishing at all
of any sort**

by any being of any sort,

whatever,

however;

with the non-existence of all desirous wishing,

with the eradication of desirous wishing,

could there then be any discerning of attachment?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,

just this is the driving force,

just this is the tie,

just this gives rise to,

just this is the precursor of attachment,

that is to say: desirous wishing.

'Scheming precurses desirous wishes.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Scheming precurses desirous wishes.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no scheming at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all scheming,
with the eradication of scheming,
could there then be any discerning of desirous wishes?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of desirous wishes,
that is to say: scheming.**

'Gain precurses scheming.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Gain precurses scheming.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no gain at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all gain,
with the eradication of gain,
could there then be any discerning of scheming?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of scheming,
that is to say: gain.**

'Questing precurses gain.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Questing precurses gain.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no questing at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all questing,
with the eradication of questing,
could there then be any discerning of gain?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of gain,
that is to say: questing.**

'Thirst precurses questing.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Thirst precurses questing.'**

**If, Ānanda, there were no thirst at all
of any sort
by any being of any sort,
whatever,
however;
with the non-existence of all thirst,
with the eradication of thirst,
could there then be any discerning of questing?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of questing,
that is to say: thirst.**

'Contact precurses sense-experience.'

This is what I have said.

And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of

'Contact precurses sense-experience':

**If, Ānanda, there were no contact at all
of any sort**

**by any being of any sort,
whatever,**

however;

that is:

eye-contact,

ear-contact,

nose-contact,

tongue-contact,

body-contact,

mind-contact,

with the non-existence of all contact,

with the eradication of contact,

could there then be any discerning of sense-experience?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,

just this is the driving force,

just this is the tie,

just this gives rise to,

just this is the precursor of sense-experience,

that is to say: contact.

'Named-form precurses contact.'

This is what I have said.

And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of

'Named-form precurses contact':

If, Ānanda, those makings,

those characteristics,

those signs,

by which a named body is known —

if those makings,

those characteristics,

those signs,

had no being,

**could there then be any discerning of identification-contact with a formed
body?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

"If, Ānanda, those makings,

those characteristics,
those signs,
by which a formed body is known —
if those makings,
those characteristics,
those signs,
had no being,
could there then be any discerning of resistance-contact with a named
body?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"If, Ānanda, those makings,
those characteristics,
those signs,
by which are known the formed body and the named body —
if those makings,
those characteristics,
those signs,
had no being,
could there then be any discerning of either identification-contact or
resistance-contact?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"If, Ānanda, those makings,
those characteristics,
those signs,
by which are known the formed body and the named body —
if those makings,
those characteristics,
those signs,
had no being,
could there then be any discerning of contact?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of contact,
that is to say: named-form.

'Consciousness precurses named-form.'

This is what I have said.

And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of

'Consciousness precurses named-form':

**If, Ānanda, consciousness were not to enter the mother's womb,
could named-form develop itself there?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"If, Ānanda, consciousness
having entered the mother's womb,
were to be revoked from there
could named-form develop there
in such and such a way
so as to arrive at birth?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"If, Ānanda, consciousness
in some little boy or girl
were to be revoked from there
could there be shown the development,
growth,
flowering of their named-forms?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of named-form,
that is to say: consciousness.**

'Named-form precurses consciousness.'

This is what I have said.

**And this, Ānanda, is how to understand the scope of
'Named-form precurses consciousness':**

**If, Ānanda, consciousness were not to gain named-form,
could there then be any discerning of birth,
aging and death,
the coming to be and development of pain?"**

"Such could not be, bhante."

**"Therefore here, Ānanda,
just this is the driving force,
just this is the tie,
just this gives rise to,
just this is the precursor of consciousness,**

that is to say: named-form.

To this extent only, Ānanda,

is there birth,

aging,

death,

disappearance and reappearance —

to this extent is there verbal expression —

to this extent is there getting to the root —

to this extent is there knowing —

to this extent is there scope

for discriminating and drawing distinctions —

to this extent is there this run'n-round

showing up as some sort of being 'this'

at some place of being 'at' —

that is to say:

only just as far as named-form with consciousness.

And in what ways, Ānanda, is there discrimination and drawing distinctions concerning self?

Holding, Ānanda,

that the self is material and circumscribed, saying:

'My self is material and circumscribed,'

there is discrimination and drawing distinction.

Holding, Ānanda,

that the self is material and unending, saying:

'My self is material and unending,'

there is discrimination and drawing distinction.

Holding, Ānanda,

that the self is immaterial and circumscribed, saying:

'My self is immaterial and circumscribed,'

there is discrimination and drawing distinction.

Holding, Ānanda, that the self is immaterial and unending, saying:

'My self is immaterial and unending,'

there is discrimination and drawing distinction.

Whoever, Ānanda,

discriminating and distinguishing the self

as material and circumscribed,

either discriminates and distinguishes the self

as material and circumscribed in the present,

or discriminates and distinguishes the self

as becoming material and circumscribed, saying;

'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'

**This is sufficient to describe
the 'material and circumscribed' point of view.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
discriminating and distinguishing the self
as material and unending,
either discriminates and distinguishes the self
as material and unending in the present,
or discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming material and unending, saying:**

'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'

**This is sufficient to describe
the 'material and unending' point of view.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
discriminating and distinguishing the self
as immaterial and circumscribed,
either discriminates and distinguishes the self
as immaterial and circumscribed in the present,
or discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming immaterial and circumscribed, saying:**

'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'

**This is sufficient to describe
the 'immaterial and circumscribed' point of view.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
discriminating and distinguishing the self
as immaterial and unending,
either discriminates and distinguishes the self
as immaterial and unending in the present,
or discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming immaterial and unending, saying:**

'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'

**This is sufficient to describe
the 'material and unending' point of view.**

**'Nuf-said with regard to those
who discriminate and draw distinctions
with regard to self.**

**And in what ways, Ānanda,
is there no discrimination and drawing distinctions**

concerning self?

**Not holding, Ānanda,
that the self is material and circumscribed, saying:**

**'My self is material and circumscribed,'
there is no discrimination and no drawing distinction.**

**Not holding, Ānanda,
that the self is material and unending, saying:**

**'My self is material and unending,'
there is no discrimination and no drawing distinction.**

**Not holding, Ānanda,
that the self is immaterial and circumscribed, saying:**

**'My self is immaterial and circumscribed,'
there is no discrimination and no drawing distinction.**

**Not holding, Ānanda,
that the self is immaterial and unending, saying:**

**'My self is immaterial and unending,'
there is no discrimination and no drawing distinction.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
not discriminating and not distinguishing the self
as material and circumscribed,
neither discriminates and distinguishes the self
as material and circumscribed in the present,
nor discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming material and circumscribed, saying;**

'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'

**This is sufficient to describe
the non-holding
of the 'material and circumscribed' point of view.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
not discriminating and distinguishing the self
as material and unending,
neither discriminates and distinguishes the self
as material and unending in the present,
nor discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming material and unending, saying:**

'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'

This is sufficient to describe

**the non-holding
of the 'material and unending' point of view.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
not discriminating and distinguishing the self
as immaterial and circumscribed,
neither discriminates and distinguishes the self
as immaterial and circumscribed in the present,
nor discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming immaterial and circumscribed, saying;
'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'**

**This is sufficient to describe
the non-holding
of the 'immaterial and circumscribed' point of view.**

**Whoever, Ānanda,
not discriminating and distinguishing the self
as immaterial and unending,
neither discriminates and distinguishes the self
as immaterial and unending in the present,
nor discriminates and distinguishes the self
as becoming immaterial and unending, saying:
'Although it is not thus it will be thus in time.'**

**This is sufficient to describe
the non-holding
of the 'material and unending' point of view.**

**And that's 'nuf-said with regard to those who do not discriminate and
draw distinctions with regard to self.**

**And what is it, Ānanda,
that is perceived and regarded in mind
as self?**

**Sense experience, Ānanda,
is perceived and regarded in mind
as self.**

Saying:

'Sense experience is my self,'

or

**'Sense experience is not my self,
my self is without sense experience,'**

thus the self is perceived and regarded in mind.

Saying:

**"Sense experience is not my self
and my self is not without sense experience,
my self experiences the phenomena of sense experience,'
thus, Ānanda, the self is perceived and regarded in mind.**

In the case, Ānanda, of one who says:

'Sense experience is my self,'

one should say:

**'Three, friend, are the sense experiences:
pleasant sense experience;
unpleasant sense experience;
sense experience that is neither unpleasant nor pleasant.**

**Of these three sense experiences,
which is it that is the self of you?'**

**At such a time, Ānanda,
as a pleasant sense experience is experienced,
there is no experience of unpleasant sense experience,
no experience of sense experience which is not unpleasant but not pleasant;
at that time only pleasant sense experience is experienced.**

**At such a time, Ānanda,
as an unpleasant sense experience is experienced,
there is no experience of pleasant sense experience,
no experience of sense experience which is not unpleasant but not pleasant;
at that time only unpleasant sense experience is experienced.**

**At such a time, Ānanda,
as sense experience that is not unpleasant but not pleasant is experienced,
there is no experience of pleasant sense experience,
no experience of sense experience which is unpleasant;
at that time only sense experience that is not unpleasant but not pleasant is
experienced.**

**Now, Ānanda,
pleasure is a sensation which is inconstant,
own-made,
appearing by way of precursors,
a passing thing,
an aging thing,
a fading thing,
an ending thing;
pain is a sensation which is inconsistent,**

own-made,
appearing by way of precursors,
a passing thing,
an aging thing,
a fading thing,
an ending thing;
the neither unpleasant nor pleasant sensation is one which is inconsistent,
own-made,
appearing by way of precursors,
a passing thing,
an aging thing,
a fading thing,
an ending thing.

He who holds, Ānanda,
that the experience of pleasant sensation is the self, stating:

'This is the self of me;'

at the ending of that pleasant sensation
must also hold that:

'The self of me has gone.'

He who holds, Ānanda,
that the experience of unpleasant sensation is the self, stating:

'This is the self of me;'

at the ending of that unpleasant sensation
must also hold that:

'The self of me has gone.'

He who holds, Ānanda,
that the experience of sensation
that is neither unpleasant nor pleasant is the self, stating:

'This is the self of me;'

at the ending of that sensation
that is neither unpleasant nor pleasant
must also hold that:

'The self of me has gone.'

Thus to hold that
'Sense experience is my self,'
is to perceive and regard the self
even in the here and now as inconstant,
subject to pain and pleasure,
a thing that comes and goes.

Such being so, Ānanda,
holding the view that
'Sense experience is my self'
is not recommended.

In the case, Ānanda, of one who says:

'Sense experience is not my self,
my self is without sense experience,'

one should say:

'In the case, friend,
where there was no sense experience at all,
could one say:

'This is me?'

Answering properly,
'Such could not be, bhante,'
would be the reply.

Such being so, Ānanda,
holding the view that
'Sense experience is not my self,
my self is without sense experience'
is not recommended.

In the case, Ānanda, of one who says:

'Sense experience is not my self
and my self is not without sense experience,
my self experiences the phenomena of sense experience,'

one should say:

'If sense experience of every kind
were to become completely ended,
were all sense experience to not be;
with the end of sense experience
would it be possible to point to and say:

"I am this,"?

Answering properly,
'Such could not be, bhante,'
would be the reply.

Such being so, Ānanda,
holding the view that
'Sense experience is not my self

**and my self is not without sense experience,
my self experiences the phenomena of sense experience,
is not recommended.**

**From that time when, Ānanda,
a Beggar does not perceive the self
as sense experience;
or does not perceive the self
as without sense experience;
or does not perceive the self
as not sense experience but not without sense experience —
experiencing the phenomena of sense experience;
thus not perceiving,
there is nothing in the world
with which he is involved;
not involved
he is untroubled;
untroubled
he has thoroughly unbound himself,
and he knows:**

**'Left behind is birth,
lived is the best of lives,
done is duty's doing,
no further it'n'n'at'n for me!'**

To a Beggar thus freed in mind, Ānanda, saying:

**'The That-that's-got-that exists after death;'
such a view would not appear too brilliant;**

**'The That-that's-got-that does not exist after death;'
such a view would not appear too brilliant;**

**'The That-that's-got-that neither exists nor does not exist after death;'
such a view would not appear too brilliant;**

**'The That-that's-got-that both exists and does not exist after death;'
such a view would not appear too brilliant.**

How come?

**Because, Ānanda,
as far as description
and the scope of description;
as far as getting to the root
and the scope of getting to the root;**

**as far as delineation
and the scope of delineation;**

**as far as wisdom
and range of wisdom;**

**as far as the rolling of this rolling-on,
this Beggar has seen with higher-knowledge.**

**And to hold the view that
that beggar with higher knowledge
does not know and see
would not appear too brilliant.**

**There are, Ānanda, seven footholds of consciousness:
and two realms.**

What seven?

**[1] There are beings, Ānanda,
diverse in body,
diverse in perception
suchas man,
some gods
and some on the path to ruin.**

This is the first foothold of consciousness.

**[2] There are beings, Ānanda,
diverse in body,
similar in perception,
such as the gods in the Brahma group.**

This is the second foothold of consciousness.

**[3] There are beings, Ānanda,
similar in body,
diverse in perception,
suchas the gods of the Abhassara.**

This is the third foothold of consciousness.

**[4] There are beings, Ānanda,
similar in body
and similar in perception,
such as the gods of the Subhakiṇhā.**

This is the fourth foothold of consciousness.

**[5] There are beings, Ānanda that,
passing past all perception of forms,
leaving behind perception of reaction,**

averting the mind from perception of diversity,
thinking 'Unending is space,'
experience the Realm of Space.

This is the fifth foothold of consciousness.

[6] There are beings, Ānanda that,
wholly passing past the Realm of Space,
thinking 'Unending is Consciousness,'
experience the Realm of Consciousness.

This is the sixth foothold of consciousness.

[7] There are beings, Ānanda that,
wholly passing past the Realm of Consciousness,
thinking 'There is nothing,'
experience the Realm Where There are No Things There.

This is the seventh foothold of consciousness.

These are the seven footholds of consciousness.

And there is

[1] the Realm of Non-perception

and there is

[2] the Realm of Neither Perception nor Non-Perception.

These are the two realms.

Now, Ānanda,

with regard to the first foothold of consciousness

wherein are beings diverse in body,

diverse in perception

suchas man,

some gods

and some on the path to ruin;

understanding such, Ānanda,

understanding it's coming to be;

understanding it's passing away;

understanding it's gratifications;

understanding it's dangers,

would it be bright of one

to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,

with regard to the second foothold of consciousness

wherein are beings diverse in body,

similar in perception,

such as the gods in the Brahma group;
understanding such, Ānanda,
understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,
with regard to the third foothold of consciousness
wherein are beings similar in body,
diverse in perception,
such as the gods of the Abhassara;
understanding such, Ānanda,
understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,
with regard to the fourth foothold of consciousness
wherein are beings similar in body
and similar in perception,
such as the gods of the Subhakiṇhā;
understanding such, Ānanda,
understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,
with regard to the fifth foothold of consciousness
wherein are beings passing past all perception of form,
leaving behind perception of reaction,
averting the mind from perception of diversity,

thinking 'Unending is space,'
experience the Realm of Space;
understanding such, Ānanda,
understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,
with regard to the sixth foothold of consciousness
wherein are beings wholly passing past the Realm of Space,
thinking 'Unending is Consciousness,'
experience the Realm of Consciousness;
understanding such, Ānanda,
understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,
with regard to the seventh foothold of consciousness
wherein are beings wholly passing past the Realm of Consciousness,
thinking 'There is nothing,'
experience the Realm Where There is No Thing There;
understanding such, Ānanda,
understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"And again, Ānanda,
with regard to the Realm of Non-perception
and the Realm of Neither Perception nor Non-Perception;
understanding such, Ānanda,

understanding it's coming to be;
understanding it's passing away;
understanding it's gratifications;
understanding it's dangers,
would it be bright of one
to become overjoyed with such?"

"Such could not be, bhante."

"In so far, Ānanda, as a Beggar,
with regard to the seven footholds of consciousness
and the two realms,
their coming to be,
their passing away,
their gratifications,
their dangers,
freed from such,
such a being,
so freed,
so knowing,
attained to freedom,
I say of such,
such a Beggar is wisdom-freed.

There are, Ānanda,
these eight releases.

What eight?

[1] In form, seeing form.

This is the first release.

[2] Perceiving the personally immaterial one sees external form.

This is the second release.

[3] Thinking "How pure!"
he intends to get that.

This is the third release.

[4] Elevating himself above
all perceptions of materiality,
allowing perceptions of resistance to subside,
not scrutinizing perceptions of diversity,
thinking:

'Un-ending is space.'

he enters into

and makes a habitat of

the Space-dimension.

This is the fourth release.

**[5] Elevating himself completely above
the Space-dimension,
thinking:**

'Un-ending is consciousness.'

**he enters into
and makes a habitat of
the Consciousness-dimension.**

This is the fifth release.

**[6] Elevating himself completely above
the Consciousness-dimension,
thinking:**

'There are no things there.'

**he enters into
and makes a habitat of
the No-things-there dimension.**

This is the sixth release.

**[7] Elevating himself completely above
the No-things-there-dimension**

**he enters into
and makes a habitat of
the Dimension of Neither-perception-nor-non-perception.**

This is the seventh release.

**[8] Elevating himself completely above
the Dimension of Neither-perception-nor-non-perception,**

**he enters into
and makes a habitat of
the sense-experience-perception-ending.**

This is the eighth release.

**When, Ānanda,
a Beggar can attain these eight releases
in progressive order,
can attain them in retrogressive order,
can attain them in progressive and retrogressive order,
can attain them,
entering as he wishes,
emerging as he wishes,
whenever,**

however
and for as long as he wishes,
and when,
having destroyed the corruptions,
with uncorrupted mental freedom
freed by wisdom in this seen thing
by his own super-knowledge of the truth,
having entered into and making a habitat of that,
I say of such a Bhikkhu
that he is both-ways freed,
and of those that are both-ways freed
I say there is none greater
nor more bountiful than this."
This is what the Bhagava said,
and the elder Ānanda was greatly pleased thereat.