

## From the Ariyapariyesana Sutta (Majjhima no. 26)

attanā

**276.** “Ahampi sudaṃ, bhikkhave, pubbeva sambodhā anabhisambuddho bodhisatto’va samāno attanā jātidhammo samāno jātidhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi; attanā jarādhammo samāno jarādhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi, attanā byādhidhammo samāno byādhidhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi, attanā maraṇadhammo samāno maraṇadhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi, attanā sokadhammo samāno sokadhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi, attanā saṃkilesadhammo samāno saṃkilesadhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi.

Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘kiṃ nu kho ahaṃ attanā jātidhammo samāno jātidhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi, attanā jarādhammo samāno...pe... byādhidhammo samāno... maraṇadhammo samāno... sokadhammo samāno... attanā saṃkilesadhammo samāno saṃkilesadhammaṃyeva pariyesāmi?

13. “Bhikkhus, 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 ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I sought what was also subject to ageing, 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 ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, do I seek what is also subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement?’

Yaṃ nūna ahaṃ attanā jātidhammo samāno jātidhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā ajātaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyeseyyaṃ; attanā jarādhammo samāno jarādhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā ajaraṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyeseyyaṃ, attanā byādhidhammo samāno byādhidhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā abyādhiṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyeseyyaṃ, attanā maraṇadhammo samāno maraṇadhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā amataṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyeseyyaṃ, attanā sokadhammo samāno sokadhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā asokaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyeseyyaṃ, attanā saṃkilesadhammo samāno saṃkilesadhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā asaṃkiliṭṭhaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyeseyya’nti.

“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 ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, and defilement, I seek the unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, and undefiled supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna.’

**277.** “So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, aparena samayena daharo’va samāno susukāḷakeso, bhadrena yobbanena samannāgato paṭhamena vayasā /akāmakānaṃ mātāpitūnaṃ assu-  
mukhānaṃ rudantānaṃ / kesamassuṃ ohāretvā / kāsāyāni vatthāni acchādetvā / agārasmā  
anagāriyaṃ pabbajim.

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 robes, and went forth from the home life into homelessness.

So evaṃ pabbajito samāno kiṃkusala-gavesī anuttaraṃ santivarapadaṃ pariyesa-māno yena āḷāro kālāmo ten’upasaṅkamiṃ. Upasaṅkamitvā āḷāraṃ kālāmaṃ etadavocaṃ – ‘icchāmi ahaṃ, āvuso kālāma, imasmiṃ dhammavinaye brahmacariyaṃ caritun’ti. Evaṃ vutte, bhikkhave, āḷāro kālāmo maṃ etadavoca – ‘viharatu āyasmā; tādiso ayaṃ dhammo yattha viññū puriso na+cirass’eva sakaṃ ācariyakaṃ sayaṃ abhiññāya sacchikatvā upasampajja vihareyyā’ti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, nacirass’eva khippameva taṃ dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇiṃ. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, tāvataken’eva oṭṭhapahata-mattena lapitalāpanamattena ñāṇavādaṅca vadāmi theravādaṅca, ‘jānāmi passāmi’ti ca paṭijānāmi ahañceva aññe ca.

15. “Having gone forth, bhikkhus, in search of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and said to him: ‘Friend Kālāma, I want to lead the holy life in this Dhamma and Discipline.’ Āḷāra Kālāma replied: ‘The venerable one may stay here. This Dhamma is such that a wise man can soon enter upon and abide in it, realising 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.

Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘na kho āḷāro kālāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ kevalaṃ saddhāmattakena sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmīti pavedeti; addhā āḷāro kālāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ jānaṃ passaṃ viharatī’ti.

Atha khvāhaṃ, bhikkhave, yena āḷāro kālāmo tenupasaṅkamiṃ; upasaṅkamitvā āḷāraṃ kālāmaṃ etadavocaṃ – ‘kittāvatā no, āvuso kālāma, imaṃ dhammaṃ sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmīti pavedesī’ti [\[upasampajja pavedesīti \(sī. syā. pī.\)\]](#)? Evaṃ vutte, bhikkhave, āḷāro kālāmo ākiñcaññāyatanaṃ pavedesi.

“I considered: ‘It is not through mere faith alone that Āḷāra Kālāma declares: “By realising for myself with direct knowledge, I enter upon and abide in this Dhamma.” Certainly Āḷāra Kālāma abides knowing and seeing this Dhamma.’ Then I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and asked him: ‘Friend Kālāma, in what way do you declare that by realising for yourself with direct knowledge you enter upon and abide in this Dhamma?’ In reply he declared the base of nothingness.

“Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘na kho āḷārasseva kālāmassa atthi saddhā, mayhaṃpatthi saddhā; na kho āḷārasseva kālāmassa atthi viriyaṃ, mayhaṃpatthi vīriyaṃ; na kho āḷārasseva kālāmassa atthi sati, mayhaṃpatthi sati; na kho āḷārasseva kālāmassa atthi samādhi, mayhaṃpatthi samādhi; na kho āḷārasseva kālāmassa atthi paññā, mayhaṃpatthi paññā.

“Yaṃnūnāhaṃ yaṃ dhammaṃ āḷāro kālāmo sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmīti pavedeti, tassa dhammassa sacchikiriyāya padaheyya’nti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, nacirass’eva khippameva taṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihāsiṃ.

“I considered: ‘Not only Āḷāra Kālāma has faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavour to realise the Dhamma that Āḷāra Kālāma declares he enters upon and abides in by realising for himself with direct knowledge?’ I soon quickly entered upon and abided in that Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge.

%%

“Atha khvāhaṃ, bhikkhave, yena āḷāro kālāmo tenupasaṅkamiṃ; upasaṅkamtivā āḷāraṃ kālāmaṃ etadavocaṃ: ‘Ettāvatā no, āvuso kālāma, imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedesī’ti? - ‘Ettāvatā kho ahaṃ, āvuso, imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedemī’ti. - ‘Ahampi kho, āvuso, ettāvatā imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmī’ti.

Then I went to Āḷāra Kālāma and asked him: ‘Friend Kālāma, is it in this way that you declare that you enter upon and abide in this Dhamma by realising for yourself with direct knowledge?’—‘That is the way, friend.’—‘It is in this way, friend, that I also enter upon and abide in this Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge.’

‘Lābhā no, āvuso, suladdhaṃ no, āvuso, ye mayaṃ āyasmantaṃ tādisaṃ sabrahmacāriṃ passāma. Iti yāhaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedemi taṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharasi. Yaṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharasi tamahaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedemi. Iti yāhaṃ dhammaṃ jānāmi taṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ jānāsi, yaṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ jānāsi tamahaṃ dhammaṃ jānāmi. Iti yādiso ahaṃ tādiso tuvaṃ, yādiso tuvaṃ tādiso ahaṃ. Ehi dāni, āvuso, ubhova santā imaṃ gaṇaṃ pariharāmā’ti. Iti kho, bhikkhave, āḷāro kālāmo ācariyo me samāno (attano) [( ) natthi (sī. syā. pī.)] antevāsiṃ maṃ samānaṃ attanā [attano (sī. pī.)] samasamaṃ ṭhapesi, uḷārāya ca maṃ pūjāya pūjesi.

“‘It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us that we have such a venerable one for our companion in the holy life. So the Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and abide in by realising for myself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge. And the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that I declare I enter upon and abide in by realising 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 Āḷāra Kālāma, my teacher, placed me, his pupil, on an equal footing with himself and awarded me the highest honour.

Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘nāyaṃ dhammo nibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattati, yāvadeva

ākiñcaññāyatanūpapattiyā'ti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, taṃ dhammaṃ analaṅkaritvā tasmā dhammā nibbijja apakkamiṃ.

“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 reappearance in the base of nothingness.’ Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.

**278.** “So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, kiṃ kusalagavesī anuttaraṃ santivarapadaṃ pariyesamāno yena uddako rāmaputto tenupasaṅkamiṃ; upasaṅkamtivā uddakaṃ rāmaputtaṃ etadavocaṃ – ‘icchāmaṃ, āvuso, imasmiṃ dhammavinaye brahmacariyaṃ caritu’nti. Evaṃ vutte, bhikkhave, uddako rāmaputto maṃ etadavoca – ‘viharatāyasmā; tādiso ayaṃ dhammo yattha viññū puriso nacirasseva sakaṃ ācariyaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihareyyā’ti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, nacirasseva khippameva taṃ dhammaṃ pariyāpuṇiṃ. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, tāvatakeneva oṭṭhapahatamattena lapitalāpanamattena ñāṇavādañca vadāmi theravādañca, ‘jānāmi passāmī’ti ca paṭijānāmi ahañceva aññe ca. Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘na kho rāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ kevalaṃ saddhā mattakena sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmīti pavedesi; addhā rāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ jānaṃ passaṃ vihāsī’ti.

16. “Still in search, bhikkhus, 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 holy 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 abide in it, himself realising 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 realising for myself with direct knowledge, I enter upon and abide in this Dhamma.” Certainly Rāma abided knowing and seeing this Dhamma.’

“Atha khvāhaṃ, bhikkhave, yena uddako rāmaputto tenupasaṅkamiṃ; upasaṅkamtivā uddakaṃ rāmaputtaṃ etadavocaṃ – ‘kittāvatā no, āvuso, rāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmīti pavedesi’ti? Evaṃ vutte, bhikkhave, uddako rāmaputto nevasaññānāsaññāyatanam pavedesi.

“Then I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: ‘Friend, in what way did Rāma declare that by realising for himself with direct knowledge he entered upon and abided in this Dhamma?’ In reply Uddaka Rāmaputta declared the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

“Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘na kho rāmasseva ahoṃ saddhā, mayhaṃpatthi saddhā; na kho rāmasseva ahoṃ vīriyaṃ, mayhaṃpatthi vīriyaṃ; na kho rāmasseva ahoṃ sati, mayhaṃpatthi sati; na kho rāmasseva ahoṃ samādhi, mayhaṃpatthi samādhi, na kho rāmasseva ahoṃ paññā, mayhaṃpatthi paññā. Yaṃnūnaṃ yaṃ dhammaṃ rāmo sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmīti pavedesi, tassa dhammassa sacchikiriyāya

padaheyya’nti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, nacirasseva khippameva taṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja vihāsiṃ.

“I considered: ‘Not only Rāma had faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. I too have faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. Suppose I endeavour to realise the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and abided in by realising for himself with direct knowledge.’ I soon quickly entered upon and abided in that Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge.

“Atha khvāhaṃ, bhikkhave, yena uddako rāmaputto tenupasaṅkamiṃ; upasaṅkamitvā udakaṃ rāmaputtaṃ etadavocaṃ – ‘Ettāvatā no, āvuso, rāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedesī’ti? – ‘Ettāvatā kho, āvuso, rāmo imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedesī’ti. - ‘Ahampi kho, āvuso, ettāvatā imaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharāmi’ti.

Then I went to Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: ‘Friend, was it in this way that Rāma declared that he entered upon and abided in this Dhamma by realising for himself with direct knowledge?’—‘That is the way, friend.’—‘It is in this way, friend, that I also enter upon and abide in this Dhamma by realising for myself with direct knowledge.’

‘Lābhā no, āvuso, suladdhaṃ no, āvuso, ye mayaṃ āyasmantaṃ tādisaṃ sabrahmacāriṃ passāma. Iti yaṃ dhammaṃ rāmo sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedesi, taṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharasi. Yaṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharasi, taṃ dhammaṃ rāmo sayāṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja pavedesi. Iti yaṃ dhammaṃ rāmo abhiññāsi taṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ jānāsi, yaṃ tvaṃ dhammaṃ jānāsi, taṃ dhammaṃ rāmo abhiññāsi. Iti yādiso rāmo ahosi tādiso tuvaṃ, yādiso tuvaṃ tādiso rāmo ahosi. Ehi dāni, āvuso, tuvaṃ imaṃ gaṇaṃ pariharā’ti. Iti kho, bhikkhave, uddako rāmaputto sabrahmacārī me samāno ācariyaṭṭhāne maṃ ṭhapesi, ulārāya ca maṃ pūjāya pūjesi.

“It is a gain for us, friend, it is a great gain for us that we have such a venerable one for our companion in the holy life. So the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and abided in by realising for himself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge. And the Dhamma that you enter upon and abide in by realising for yourself with direct knowledge is the Dhamma that Rāma declared he entered upon and abided in by realising 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 companion in the holy life, placed me in the position of a teacher and accorded me the highest honour.

Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘nāyaṃ dhammo nibbidāya na virāgāya na nirodhāya na upasamāya na abhiññāya na sambodhāya na nibbānāya saṃvattati, yāvadeva nevasaññānāsaññāyatanūpapattiyā’ti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, taṃ dhammaṃ analaṅkaritvā tasmā dhammā nibbijja apakkamiṃ.

“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 reappearance in the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.’ Not being satisfied with that Dhamma, disappointed with it, I left.

**279.** “So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, kiṃ kusalagavesī anuttaraṃ santivarapadaṃ pariyesamāno magadhesu anupubbena cārikaṃ caramāno yena uruvelā senānigamo tadavasariṃ. Tatthaddasaṃ ramaṇīyaṃ bhūmibhāgaṃ, pāsādikañca vanasaṇḍaṃ, nadiñca sandantiṃ setakaṃ supatitthaṃ ramaṇīyaṃ, samantā [sāmanta (?)] ca gocaraḡāmaṃ. Tassa mayhaṃ, bhikkhave, etadahosi – ‘ramaṇīyo vata, bho, bhūmibhāgo, pāsādiko ca vanasaṇḍo, nadī ca sandati setakā supatitthā ramaṇīyā, samantā ca gocaraḡāmo. Alaṃ vatidaṃ kulaputtassa padhānatthikassa padhānāyā’ti. So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, tattheva nisīdiṃ – alamidaṃ padhānāyāti.

17. “Still in search, bhikkhus, of what is wholesome, seeking the supreme state of sublime peace, I wandered by stages through the Magadhan country until eventually I arrived at Senānigama near Uruvelā. 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.’

**280.** “So kho ahaṃ, bhikkhave, attanā jātidhammo samāno jātidhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā ajātaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyesamāno ajātaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ ajjhagamaṃ, attanā jarādhammo samāno jarādhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā ajaraṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyesamāno ajaraṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ ajjhagamaṃ, attanā byādhidhammo samāno byādhidhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā abyādhiṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyesamāno abyādhiṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ ajjhagamaṃ, attanā maraṇadhammo samāno maraṇadhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā amataṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ ajjhagamaṃ, attanā sokadhammo samāno sokadhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā asokaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ ajjhagamaṃ, attanā saṃkilesadhammo samāno saṃkilesadhamme ādīnavaṃ viditvā asaṃkiliṭṭhaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ pariyesamāno asaṃkiliṭṭhaṃ anuttaraṃ yogakkhemaṃ nibbānaṃ ajjhagamaṃ. Nāṇaṃca pana me dassanaṃ udapādi – ‘akuppā me vimutti, ayamantimā jāti, natthi dāni punabbhavo’ti.

18. “Then, bhikkhus, 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 ageing, having understood the danger in what is subject to ageing, seeking the unageing supreme security from bondage, Nibbāna, I attained the unageing 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 deliverance is unshakeable; this is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being.’