

18

(Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta

The (Tens) Discourse on Samadhi | A 10.6

or (Dasaka) Saññā 1 The 1st (Tens) Discourse on Perception

Theme: A meditator in thought-free samadhi is still “percipient”

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2017, 2018

1 Summary and highlights

1.1 SUMMARY. The (Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta (A 10.6) records the elder Ānanda’s questioning **the Buddha** about a meditator in thought-free samadhi (that is, dhyana) is still “percipient” [§1.2]. The Buddha replies that it is possible [§2]. When Ānanda asks how this is possible [§3], the Buddha replies that this is the case for one who has attained nirvana [§§4-5].

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE. The (Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta (A 10.6) is probably the very first of a series of questions that Ānanda asks the Buddha and Sāriputta about the nature of the mind during dhyana [2]—which is what *samādhi* refers to in this Sutta and the related ones. This is the shortest of the suttas dealing with the subject, and is the basis for those suttas dealing with similar questions on the nature of the dhyanic mind, 4 or 5 of which are listed below [3.1]

NOTE: If this is your first time reading this, it is helpful to right away go to (3) and be familiar with the “Related suttas,” and see how this Sutta is related to the other 4 in this set of suttas.

2 The mind in dhyana

2.1 THE DHYANIC MIND

2.1.1 THE DHYANIC MIND IS THOUGHT-FREE

2.1.1.1 Numerous suttas tell us how, with the overcoming of **the 5 mental hindrances** (*pañca nīvaraṇa*)—sensual desire, ill will, restlessness and worry, sloth and torpor, and doubt¹—are overcome, at least temporarily. These are “mental hindrances” (*nīvaraṇa*) because they are mental activities that arise at the level of the physical senses with the mind fully occupied with feelings, recognizing (perception), driven by emotions (formations),² and conceptualizing (consciousness)—these are **4 mental aggregates** at work.³

In short, the mind is at the mercy of our **physical senses**,⁴ wildly engaged in analyzing, processing, projecting and creating images of external realities—like a tourist lost in some foreign country seeing sights, listening to local sounds and music, smelling local smells, chatting and enjoying local food, and

¹ They are respectively: *kāma-c, chanda, vyāpāda, uddhacca, kukkuccha, thīna, middha* and *vicikicchā*. See **Nīvaraṇa**, SD 32.1; **(Nīvaraṇa) Saṅgārava S** (S 46.55), SD 3.12.

² These formations (*saṅkhārā*) are karmically potent acts of the mind, speech and body mostly, driven by greed, hate, delusion.

³ The 1st of the 5 aggregates (*pañca-k, khandha*) is “form” (*rūpa*); the other 4 are: *vedanā, saññā, saṅkhārā* and *viññāṇa*.

⁴ The 5 physical senses (*pañc’indriya*) are the eye, ear, nose, tongue and body. Implicit is the fact that these are “faculties” (*indriya*), ie, they function in sensing form, sound, smell, taste and touch respectively: see **Saññā Manasikāra 3** (A 11.9,1.2) (1-10), SD 53.23.

enjoying physical pleasures. At about the same time, the tourist so caught up with foreign pleasures, finds some of the local ways alien and repulsive, filling himself with ideas and views about the natives and their ways, and also worrying about his wealth running out on this extended vacation.

2.1.1.2 Once the mind is free from the 5 mental hindrances, it is released and uplifted to being simply itself, fully minding itself, so to speak—it attains **dhyana** (*jhāna*). This refers to fully being itself free from any sense-based activities. Basically, the mind attends to itself, sustaining this self-attention, so that it is rapturous (in a meditative sense), fully comfortable (“happy”) with itself, and undistracted. These are, in fact, the 5 dhyana-factors (*jhān’āṅga*): initial application, sustained application, zest, joy and sublime solitude⁵ of **the 1st dhyana**.

As the dhyanic mind settles further, it “loses” its dhyana-factors in stages, further “lightening” itself into a more refined mind. With the settling away of initial application and sustained application, it attains **the 2nd dhyana**, where the mental solitude sublimates into *one-pointedness of mind*. With the disappearance of zest, the mind settles even more subtly joyful in **the 3rd dhyana**. Finally, with the disappearance of joy itself, the mind reaches **the 4th dhyana**, where the peace is more sublime than any worldly joy.

2.1.2 THE THOUGHT-FREE MIND CAN STILL “PERCEIVE”

2.1.2.1 Having understood the above sutta fundamentals about **the nature of dhyana**, we can only conclude that knowing and thinking as we experience them in daily life (in a worldly sense) cannot exist in dhyana. This is a very broad statement in layman’s terms and in the light of this set of 5 suttas [3.1], which should be studied together. Even at this early stage, we can surmise that the key term used in these suttas—“**percipient**” (*saññī*) in all the suttas except the last—does not fall under the purview of ordinary, worldly knowing and thinking. We will examine below why and what kind of cognizing occurs in dhyana.

2.1.2.2 We now need to ascertain what is not said in these suttas, especially in reference to **the Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 3** (A 11.9), SD 53.21, the last of the 5 suttas in our set [3.1]. In this Sutta, Ānanda asks the Buddha (paraphrased) [**§1.2**]:

“Is it possible that a meditator in samadhi (dhyana) would not attend to (*na ... manasi kareyya*):

- (1-10) any sense-experiences at all;
- (11-14) any experience of the 4 primary elements⁶ (namely, resistance, fluidity, warmth, movement);
- (15-18) any of the 4 formless dhyanas;
- (19-20) this world and other worlds (that is, space and time in a broad sense);
- (21) any kind of sense-based and mental activities?”

The simple verb here is *manasikaroti*, “to attend to,” which is what we are likely to do when we are “paying attention” to any act—thinking, speaking or doing—even in daily life. The Buddha first replies that a meditator in dhyana, indeed, does *not* do so—that is, does *not* attend (pay attention) to any of the 21 kinds of experiences listed above. [§2]

But then, notice that the Buddha, in his answer to Ānanda’s second question (“How is this possible?”) [§3], does not use this verb *manasi kareyya* (“would attend to”), but instead uses “(he) is one who per-

⁵ On the 5 dhyana-factors, see **Dhyana**, SD 8.4 (6). On “sublime solitude,” see SD 8.4 (5.1.2).

⁶ Bh Bodhi, in his n ad loc in **(Dasaka) Samādhi S** (A 10.6 @ A:B 1343), wrongly concludes that “this concentration is not a jhana based on the *kasinas* or formless attainments” (n1968).

ceives” (*saññī hoti*) [§4]. In fact, this is the verb, “perceives”—in the form of *saññī*, “one who perceives”—that is used throughout the other 4 suttas, that is, A 10.6, A 10.7, A 11.7 and A 11.8 [3.1].

Now, let us examine the meaning of *saññī*, “one who perceives,” as used in these Suttas.

2.2 HOW THE DHYANIC MIND “PERCEIVES”

2.2.1 “Perceive” and its context. From our understanding of the suttas thus far, we can therefore conclude that the dhyanic mind can still “perceive” [2.1]: the dhyanic meditator is “one who perceives” (*saññī*) the state that he is in. The verb for this is *saññānāti*, “one perceives,” derived from *sañ* (like the English prefix “con-” or “com-”) + *jānāti*, “to know.” Basically, this means “to know in a focused way.” In Pali, it is helpful, even necessary, to note how a verb (or any word) is used depending on its context (*pariyāyena*). “Perceive” is used here in the context of the experience of a dhyana meditator.

2.2.2 Meaning of “perceive” during dhyana

2.2.2.1 From the **Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 3** (A 11.9), it is clear that a dhyanic meditator neither knows nor thinks in the manner we do outside of dhyana, that is, in a sense-based worldly manner. He merely perceives in a special meditative way—and we must take care to understand this if we have not experienced dhyana ourselves, or at least understand and accept the sutta teachings on this subtle experiential matter.

2.2.2.2 Like **A 11.9**, which uses negative language—the meditator “would not attend to” (*na ... manasi kareyya*) his mental states—the other 4 suttas (**A 10.6**, **A 10.7**, **A 11.7** and **A 11.8**) [3.1] all use the verbal phrase, “would not perceive” (*na ... saññī assa*). From Ānanda’s question—which includes the first 10 points on the sense-faculties and their objects, that is, the 10 sense-bases (A 11.9,1.2)—it means that the dhyanic meditator “would not attend to” any of these 10 sense-bases (*ayatana*).

Anyway, these 10 sense-bases are also subsumed in the very last, that is, the 11th, item in the list: “what is seen, heard, sensed, known, attained, sought after, examined by the mind.” These, too, the meditator would not attend to. We can also surmise that the 1st 10 items (the 10 sense-bases) are omitted from the list of the other 4 suttas because they are subsumed in this 11th item, and, hence, it would be redundant to mention them again.

2.2.2.3 Why are the form dhyanas not mentioned? Neither the Suttas nor their commentaries say why the 4 form dhyanas are not included in the list of states that the meditator “would not perceive” [§1.2]. It is possible, at least in the case of the 1st dhyana, it is omitted because there is some rudimentary perception there in the form of “initial application and sustained application” (*vitakka, vicāra*). However, they cease completely from the 2nd dhyana onwards. These higher dhyanas are said to be “with neither initial application nor sustained application” (*avitakka, avicāra*).⁷ In fact, the dhyanas or samadhi are generally said to be “thought-free” (*avitakka*).⁸

The other possible surmise is that a subtle form of “perception” (*saññā*) or “recognizing” is possible in these 4 form dhyanas. It should be understood that such a perception—although devoid of knowing or thinking in a worldly sense—cannot occur simultaneously with a dhyana state. In fact, *saññā* refers to re-

⁷ A 4:440,22; Tha 650; Thī 75.

⁸ *Avitakka* as “thought-free” (said of *jhāna* or *samādhi*): V 3:4,10; D 1:37,13, 74,15; M 1:276,32, 454,20, 2:212,12; S 2:211,7, 4:264,2-18; A 1:53,19, 163,29; Dhs 161; see CPD: ²a-vitakka.

cognizing a mental state *after* it has occurred. This possibly can occur at the early stage or towards the end of the dhyana.⁹

2.2.2.4 Moreover, during satipatthana practice, when we notice any sign of mental hindrance, “based on the body, either a fever in the body, or sluggishness in the mind, or the mind strays outside,” we should direct the mind to some “inspiring sign” (*pāsādanīya nimitta*), arousing gladness, zest, tranquillity, happiness and concentration. Of this “directed cultivation” (*paṇidhāya bhāvanā*), **the Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka Sutta** (S 47.10) says: “So, he withdraws it [the mind], and neither thinks nor ponders at all. He understands, ‘I’m free from thinking and pondering, internally mindful and happy!’”¹⁰

The distracted mind, in other words, is directed to a suitable object so that it is steadied and purified. “Directed cultivation” can also be done on a deeper level of samadhi—the 4th dhyana to be exact. A meditator who wishes to cultivate psychic powers attains and masters the 4th dhyana. Emerging from it, he directs his super-clear mind to cultivate such powers.¹¹ It should be noted that these are only special occasions with special purposes, and not a characteristic of dhyana, which, as a rule, is thought-free [2.2.2.3].

2.2.2.5 More importantly, we can thus far surmise, too, that Ānanda understands that a dhyanic meditator neither knows nor thinks about any such sense-experiences—he is beyond knowing and thinking, beyond words and thoughts.¹² In fact, in all the other 4 suttas (A 10.6, A 10.7, A 11.7 and A 11.8) [3.1], all of which use the phrase, “he would not perceive.” These same suttas also record the Buddha as affirming that, despite *not* being percipient of the 11 kinds of meditative states. This further confirms that the dhyanic meditator is beyond words and thoughts in their normal senses.

And yet, in all the first 5 suttas, except for A 10.7¹³ (A 10.6, A 11.7, A 11.8 and A 11.9), the Buddha, in his answers at the end of each Sutta, declares that the dhyanic meditator *is* “**one who perceives**”—but in a qualified way.¹⁴ That is, he perceives thus: “This is peaceful [real], this is sublime,¹⁵ that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, nirvana.” This is what we will now examine.

2.2.3 The *etaṃ santam̐ ... nibbanam̐* pericope

2.2.3.1 “This is peaceful [real], this is sublime, that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, nirvana” (*etaṃ santam̐ etaṃ paṇitam̐ yad idam̐ sabba,saṅkhāra,samatho sabbūpadhi,paṇinissaggo taṅha-k,khayo virāgo nirodho nibbanam̐*).¹⁶ As a whole this stock passage describes the experience of nirvana, especially of a dhyanic meditator.

The Aṅguttara Commentary says that the passage refers to the concentration of fruition attainment (*phala,samāpatti,samadhi*) (AA 5:2,23). This attainment is not the fruition that, according to Abhidhamma, occurs for a few moments immediately following path-attainment. It is a special meditative state

⁹ This statement may not apply to short dhyana session but more so to longer sessions of many hours and even days (up to 7 days at a stretch).

¹⁰ S 47.10,7-11 (SD 24.2).

¹¹ On the 4th dhyana and psychic powers, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2,83+89, etc), SD 8.10; also SD 8.4 (5.4.3).

¹² This point is highlighted in **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (6.2.2).

¹³ This Sutta (**A 10.7**), SD 53.19—and also **A 11.8** (SD 53.20b)—records Sāriputta’s own testimony: see (2.2.3).

¹⁴ See A 10.6,4 (SD 53.18), A 10.7, A 11.7, A 11.8 and A 11.9

¹⁵ *Santam̐ ... paṇitam̐*, as at **M 102,17/2:235, 106,6/2:263; A 5:110**. For the whole formula, see foll n.

¹⁶ For refs, see §4 n.

attainable only by those who have already gained one of the 4 paths or their fruition. In other words, it is the meditative experience of nirvana by a noble saint (*ariya*).

The attainment, as evident from the Sutta, does not take any of the mundane, conditioned meditation objects as its support. Its support is *nirvana*, the unconditioned, experienced directly and immediately. The commentaries hold that this attainment is graded as fourfold according to the 4 stages of the path, that is, streamwinning, once-returning, non-returning and arhathood.¹⁷ [2.2.3.4]

2.2.3.2 Although this pericope speaks of the peaceful experience of nirvana, it is not exclusive to the arhat, but is also experienced by the other three kinds of saints, each at their own level. In other words, **the *etaṃ santam* ... *nibbānam* pericope** refers both to the dhyanic experience of the “awakening mind” and that of the “awakened mind.” Even the streamwinner is said to have the Dharma-eye (*dhamma, cak-khu*), where he is able to see nirvana, as it were, from afar.

In **the Udakūpama Sutta** (A 7.15), for example, the streamwinner is compared to a shipwreck survivor or who surveys the waters and sees land (nirvana) in the distance.¹⁸ **The (Musīla Nārada) Kosambī Sutta** (S 12.68) presents the streamwinner as a traveler, parched, thirsty and tired, coming upon a well and seeing water in it but, lacking any means (eg a bucket), is yet unable to draw any water from it.¹⁹

2.2.3.3 The *etaṃ santam* ... *nibbānam* pericope actually comprises two parts. The opening phrase, “This is peaceful! This is sublime!” (*etaṃ santam etaṃ paṇītam*)²⁰ sometimes appears by itself, describing the dhyanic mind. In **the Pañca-t, taya Sutta** (M 102), it refers to the first 2 dhyanas,²¹ and in **the Āneñja, sappāya Sutta** (M 106), to the base of nothingness, the third of the 4 formless attainments.²²

Even a non-Buddhist may be able to attain such sublime peace, but they are more likely to attribute to some preconditioned religious dogma or beliefs.²³ Even the wanderers and others before the Buddha’s time—like his two teachers, Ālāra Kālāma and Rāma²⁴--had attained dhyana, but on account of their lack of right view, failed to rise higher: they might have even experienced the peace and sublimity of dhyana, but not its truth and beauty in the light of right view.²⁵

It is noteworthy that *santa* (in *etaṃ santam*), meaning “peaceful,” can also mean “real,” in the sense of being “mind-made,” and yet may be reflected in a Dhamma-based way for the cultivation of insight leading to awakening. In other words, even the 4 dhyanas and the 4 attainments, in all their truth and beauty, are outshone in truth and beauty by those of nirvana.

2.2.3.4 Finally, we can examine the answer to the question: How can a meditator who is not percipient of what is going on in his mind—or better, without any knowing or thinking—can still be **percipient** (*saññī*)? All the answers to Ānanda’s question on the dhyanic mind, recorded in the list of suttas [3.1] are given by the Buddha.

¹⁷ MA 3:146,21; AA 2:5,17; PmA 2:461,23.

¹⁸ A 7.15,6 (SD 28.6).

¹⁹ S 12.68,60 (SD 70.11).

²⁰ *Santam* ... *paṇītam*, as at **M 102**,17/2:235, **106**,6/2:263; **A 10.60**/5:110. For the whole formula, see foll n.

²¹ **Pañca-t, taya S**, M 102,17/2:235), SD 40a.12.

²² **Āneñja, sappāya S**, M 106,6/2:263), SD 85.13.

²³ An example is Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) who recorded her mystical experiences in *The Interior Castle* (1588) See L S Cousins, “The stages of Christian mysticism and Buddhist purification: The Interior Castle of St Teresa of Avila and the Path of Purification of Buddhaghosa,” 1989. See also SD 38.4 (3.2.3.2).

²⁴ On Ālāra and Rāma (father of Uddaka), see M 26,15.2 (SD 1.11); SD 1.1 (1.3); SD 10.16 (12).

²⁵ See **The Buddha discovered dhyana**, SD 33.1b (4.4.3.6; 5.1, 5.2; 7.1.3).

Sāriputta, too, gives the very same answer twice in the series: in **A 10.7** and **A 11.8**.²⁶ The meditator, who is a noble saint, in dhyana—like any meditator in dhyana—neither knows nor thinks anything, nor perceives anything except nirvana as being “peaceful and sublime.”

3 Related suttas

3.1 SUTTAS ON QUESTIONS ABOUT PERCEPTION DURING DHYANA

| | | <u>Question about perception during dhyana</u> | |
|---------------------------------|----------|--|-----------|
| (Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta | (A 10.6) | Ānanda asks the Buddha | SD 53.18 |
| (Dasaka) Sāriputta Sutta | (A 10.7) | Ānanda asks Sāriputta (about his own experience) | SD 53.19 |
| Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 1 | (A 11.7) | Ānanda asks the Buddha } (Ekā,dasaka) Saññā Sutta | SD 53.20a |
| Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 2 | (A 11.8) | | |
| Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 3 | (A 11.9) | Ānanda asks the Buddha (question incl 6 sense-bases) | SD 53.21 |

3.2 The (Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta (A 10.6) is the “basic Sutta” in this set of 5 related Suttas since it contains the shortest set of questions about perception during dhyana asked by Ānanda, in this case, to the Buddha. This basic set of questions is expanded as Ananda’s questions to Sāriputta (A 10.7), too. Its structure forms the basis for a number of suttas with similar teachings, such as those listed here. [1]

3.3 The (Dasaka) Sāriputta (A 10.7) opens with Ānanda asking Sāriputta about a meditator who, while not perceiving any meditative states can still be percipient. When Sāriputta answers yes, Ānanda further asks Sāriputta, “But how was the venerable Sāriputta percipient at that time?” Sāriputta explains, from his own experience, with additional information not found in the Buddha’s answer.

3.4 The (Ekā,dasaka) Saññā Sutta (A 11.7+11.8)—which is actually a single sutta but treated as two separate texts in the European edition—is an expanded parallel of **the (Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta** (A 10.6), with an additional section where Ananda discusses the same state of concentration with Sāriputta who gives the same answer as the Buddha’s.

3.5 The Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 3 (A 11.9) is unique in the set of 5 Suttas. In all the other 4 suttas, the verbal phrase used is “would not perceive” (*na ... saññāssa*), but in A 11.9 Ānanda uses the phrase “**would not attend to**” (*na ... manasi kareyya*), that is, the meditator “would not attend to” any of the 5 physical senses or their respective 5 sense-objects during samadhi. These 10 “bases” (*āyatana*) are not found in the other Suttas’ questions. Otherwise, the question format is the same as in **the Saññā Manasikāra Sutta 1** (A 11.7)²⁷ and parallels those of the Sutta listed above.

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²⁶ **Saññā Manasikāra S 2** (A 11.8,9), SD 53.20b.

²⁷ See A 11.9 (SD 53.21 (1.2)).

(Dasaka) Samādhi Sutta

The (Tens) Discourse on Samadhi

A 10.6

1 (At Sāvattḥī.)

Then, the venerable Ānanda approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side. Sitting at one side, the venerable Ānanda said to the Blessed One:

1.2 “Can it be,²⁸ bhante, that a monk²⁹ attain samadhi in such a manner that:³⁰

- | | |
|--|--|
| (1) he would not perceive <u>earth</u> as [in] earth; ³¹ | <i>n’eva paṭhaviyaṃ paṭhavi,saññī assa³²</i> |
| (2) he would not perceive <u>water</u> as water; | <i>na āpasmim āpo,saññī assa</i> |
| (3) he would not perceive <u>fire</u> as fire; | <i>na tejasmim tejo,saññī assa</i> |
| (4) he would not perceive <u>wind</u> as wind; | <i>na vāyasmim vāyo,saññī assa</i> |
| (5) he would not perceive <u>the base of infinite space</u> as the base of infinite space; | <i>na ākāśānañc’āyatane ākāśānañc’āyatana’saññī assa</i> |
| (6) he would not perceive <u>the base of infinite consciousness</u> as the base of infinite consciousness; | <i>na viññāṇañc’āyatane viññāṇañc’āyatana,saññī assa</i> |
| (7) he would not perceive <u>the base of nothingness</u> as the base of nothingness; | <i>na ākiñcaññ’āyatane ākiñcaññ’āyatana,saññī assa</i> |
| (8) he would not perceive <u>the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception</u> as the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; | <i>na n’eva,saññā,nāsaññāyatane n’eva,saññā,nāsaññāyatana,saññī assa</i> |
| (9) he would not perceive this world as <u>this world</u> ; | <i>na idha loke idha loka,saññī assa</i> |
| (10) he would not perceive other worlds as <u>other worlds</u> ; | <i>na para,loke para,loka,saññī assa</i> |
| —and yet he would still be percipient? ” | <i>saññī ca pana assāti</i> |

The Buddha’s reply

2 “It can be, Ānanda, that a monk attain samadhi in such a manner that:

- (1) he would not perceive earth as [in] earth;
- (2) he would not perceive water as water;
- (3) he would not perceive fire as fire;
- (4) he would not perceive wind as wind;

²⁸ “Can it be (that),” *siyā*: see n on *siyā ... assa* below.

²⁹ Here, “a monk” (*bhikkhu*) refers to any meditator: see **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,3A) n, SD 13.3.

³⁰ *Siyā nu kho bhante bhikkhuno tathā,rūpo samādhi,paṭilābho yathā.*

³¹ Comy: “He would not be percipient on account of the perception, “Earth!” having taken earth as object.” (AA 5:2,7). The same is true for the other primary elements which follow: water, fire, and wind. See (2.1.2.2).

³² On the Pali form “Can it be ... (that) he would,” *siyā ... assa*, see Warder, *Introduction to Pali*, 1963, 1974:86 f.

- (5) he would not perceive the base of infinite space as the base of infinite space;
 (6) he would not perceive the base of infinite consciousness as the base of infinite consciousness;
 (7) he would not perceive the base of nothingness as the base of nothingness;
 (8) he would not perceive the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception as the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception;
 (9) he would not perceive this world as this world;
 (10) he would not perceive other worlds as other worlds;
 —and yet he would still be **percipient**.”

Ānanda’s 2nd question (to the Buddha)

3 “But **how**, bhante, **can it be said** that a monk attain samadhi in such a manner that:³³

- (1) he would not perceive earth as earth;
 (2) he would not perceive water as water;
 (3) he would not perceive fire as fire;
 (4) he would not perceive wind as wind; [8]
 (5) he would not perceive the base of infinite space as the base of infinite space;
 (6) he would not perceive the base of infinite consciousness as the base of infinite consciousness;
 (7) he would not perceive the base of nothingness as the base of nothingness;
 (8) he would not perceive the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception as the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception;
 (9) he would not perceive this world as this world;
 (10) he would not perceive other worlds as other worlds;
 —and yet he would still be **percipient**?”

The Buddha’s answer

4 “Here, Ānanda, a monk³⁴ is one who perceives thus:³⁵

‘This is peaceful [real], this is sublime,³⁶ that is, the stilling of all formations, the relinquishing of all acquisitions, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, **nirvana**.’³⁷

5 This is how, Ānanda, it can be that a monk attain samadhi in such a manner that:

- (1) he would not perceive earth as earth;
 (2) he would not perceive water as water;
 (3) he would not perceive fire as fire;
 (4) he would not perceive wind as wind;

³³ *Yathā,katham̐ pana bhante siyā bhikkhuno tathā,rūpo samādhi,paṭilābho, yathā ...*

³⁴ See §1.2 n on “a monk.”

³⁵ *Idh’ānanda bhikkhu evaṃ saññī hoti*. For explanation, see (2.2.2).

³⁶ *Santaṃ ... paṇitaṃ*, as at **M 102**,17/2:235, **106**,6/2:263; A 5:110. On the whole formula, see foll n & (2.2.3).

³⁷ *Etaṃ santaṃ etaṃ paṇitaṃ yad idaṃ sabba,saṅkhāra,samatho sabbūpadhi,paṇinissaggo taṅha-k,khayo virāgo nirodho nibbānan’ti*. Here, *saṅkhārā* is pl, reflecting the unawakened state; but is sg (*saṅkhāro*) when it describes an arhat’s mind: see **Cūḷa Vedalla S** (M 44,13-15/1:301) + SD 40a.9 (2.4). For this stock as ref to *nirvana*: **M 64**,9.3/1:-436,34 (SD 21.10); **A 3.32**/1:133,1, **9.36**/4:423,3+21, 424,18, 425,11 *pe*, 426,4 *pe*, **10.6**/5:8,8, **10.60**/5:110,23, 111,1, **11.7**/5:319,15, **11.8**/5:320,21, **11.9**/5:322,15, **11.19**/5:354,9, **11.20**/5:355,27, **11.21**/5:357,1, **11.22**/5:358,14; **Nm** 2:424; **Miln** 325. Not ref to nirvana: **M 102**/2:230,18, 231,17, 235,18+20+23 (*all pe*), 236×2, 237: all to *diṭṭhi* and *kappa*, **106**/2:263,18 (*ākiñcaññāyatana*), 264,11 (*n’eva,saññā,nāsaññāyatana*), **M 152**/3:299,12+24+33 (*all upekhā*), 300,3+6+ 9+12+ 15+19+2 (*all upekhā*); It **49**/2.2.12/44; **Pm** 1:159. See (2.1).

- (5) he would not perceive the base of infinite space as the base of infinite space;
 (6) he would not perceive the base of infinite consciousness as the base of infinite consciousness;
 (7) he would not perceive the base of nothingness as the base of nothingness;
 (8) he would not perceive the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception as the base of neither-perception-nor-non-perception;
 (9) he would not perceive this world as this world;
 (10) he would not perceive other worlds as other worlds;
 —and yet he would still be **percipient**.”

— evaṃ —

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