

Rahogata Sutta 1

Paṭhama Rahogata Sutta

The First Discourse on Being Alone

[Advanced satipatthana practice]

(Saṃyutta Nikāya 52.1/5:294-296)

Translated by Piya Tan ©2004

(1) Introduction

In three of its suttas, the **Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta** presents **Anuruddha** as an exponent of satipatthana:

- **The Padesa Sutta** (S 47.26):¹ Anuruddha tells Moggallāna that a “trainee” (*sekha*) is one who has only “partly cultivated” (*padesam bhāvitattā*) four satipatthanas.
- **The Sammatta Sutta** (S 47.27):² Anuruddha tells Moggallāna that an “adept” (*asekha*) is one who has “fully cultivated” (*sammattam bhāvitattā*) the four satipatthanas.
- **The (Anuruddha) Loka Sutta** (S 47.28):³ In answer to Sāriputta’s question, Anuruddha answers that his “greatness of direct knowledge” (*mahā’bhiññāta*) has been attained through his constant contemplating on the four satipatthanas, so that he directly knows this thousand-fold world.

In the **Anuruddha Saṃyutta**,⁴ where satipatthana features in every sutta, Anuruddha again appears in the same role, as an exponent of satipatthana. It is possible that this collection originally belonged to the Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta, but was given independent status as an appendix to the **Satipaṭṭhāna Saṃyutta**.⁵

The very first sutta of the Anuruddha Saṃyutta, the **Rahogata Sutta 1**,⁶ has been said to be “the most complex *vipassanā* analysis yet.”⁷ It merges into one complex pattern the two extensions of the *sati-paṭṭhāna* formula concerned with insight, one dealing with the contemplation of the four bases as internal and external, and the other with the contemplation of the four bases as having the nature of arising and ending. Each section is appended with a simple but profound variation of the “basic satipatthana refrain” or “auxiliary formula”:⁸

a monk dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful,⁹ **contemplating...in <the body,...feelings, ...in the mind,...dharma>**, putting away¹⁰ covetousness and displeasure¹¹ in the world.¹²

In fact, notes Sujato, “this is the only place where the *vipassanā* section is embedded within the *sati-paṭṭhāna* formula itself.” (2004b:143)

¹ S 47.26/5:174 f.

² S 47.27/5:175.

³ S 47.28/5:176 f.

⁴ See Bodhi’s useful introd in S:B 1515 f.

⁵ See S:B 1947 n280.

⁶ S 52.1/5:294-296 = SD 12.13.

⁷ Sujato, *A History of Mindfulness* (draft), 2004b:143.

⁸ See SD 12.1(3.7).

⁹ *Ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā,domanassam*. See SD 13.1 Introd (4.2).

¹⁰ *Vineyya*, see SD 13.1 Introd (4.2c).

¹¹ “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā,domanassam*; Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders it as “hankering and fretting for the world”; alt trs “desiring and disliking” or “longing and loathing.” See SD 13.1 Introd (4.2).

¹² “World” (*loka*). See SD 13.1 Introd (4.2b).

(2) The five perceptions

According to suttas like the **Indriya,bhāvanā Sutta** (M 152),¹³ the five perceptions [§§8, 12, 16, 20] are contemplations fully mastered by the arhats. They are also mentioned in the **Haliddavasana Sutta** (S 46.54).¹⁴ However, in the **Tikaṇḍaki Sutta** (A 5.144),¹⁵ they are given in some detail and taught to un-awakened monastics for overcoming the three unwholesome roots. **The Paṭisambhidā,magga** explains the five modes of perception thus:¹⁶

- (1) In the case of an agreeable [unrepulsive] object (eg as sensually attractive person), one either pervades it with the thought of foulness or regards it as impermanent.
- (2) In the case of a disagreeable [repulsive] object (eg a hostile person), one either pervades it with lovingkindness or regards it as physical elements.¹⁷
- (3) One pervades both agreeable and disagreeable objects with the thought of foulness or regards them as impermanent; thus one perceives both as repulsive.
- (4) One pervades both disagreeable and agreeable objects with lovingkindness or regards them as physical elements; thus one perceives both as unrepulsive.
- (5) Avoiding both disagreeable and agreeable, objects, having seen a form with the eyes, heard a sound with the ears, smelt smells with the nose, tasted tastes with the tongue, felt touch with the body, cognized a mind-object with the mind, one is neither glad nor sad, but abides in equanimity towards that, mindful and clearly knowing.

(Pm 22.26/2:212 f; Vism 12.36/381 f)

In the **Halidda,vasana Sutta** (S 46.54/5:119), the list five perceptions closes with the following:¹⁸

Or else, he enters and dwells in **the deliverance of the beautiful** (*subha vimokkha*). Monks, the liberation of mind by lovingkindness has the beautiful as its highest point, I say, for a wise monk here who has not penetrated to a higher liberation.

Here, “the beautiful” (*subha*) refers to the divine abodes (*brahma, vihāra*),¹⁹ or more specifically, the attainment of dhyanas through them, that is called “the beautiful as its highest point.” This is where the cultivation of the divine abodes “is made the basis for insight” (*pādam katvā vipassanam*), which in turn bring awakening. A good example is found in the **Aṭṭhaka,nāgara Sutta** (M 52).²⁰ The Saṃyutta Commentary says that the meditator cultivates lovingkindness until the third or fourth dhyanas (*tika, -catukka-j,jhāna*), then takes this as the basis for cultivating insight and the path (SA 3:172).²¹

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¹³ M 152.11-16/3:301.

¹⁴ S 46.54/115-121.

¹⁵ A 5.144/3:169 = SD 2.12/

¹⁶ Here arranged according to the Aṅguttara listing. See **Tikaṇḍaki S** (A 5.144/3:169) = SD 2.12 & **Halidda,-vasana S** (S 46.54.12/5:119) = SD 10.11.

¹⁷ “Elements,” *dhātu*. The analysis of the elements (*dhātu,vavatthāna*), the last of the 40 traditional meditation methods, is described in great detail Vism 11.27-119/347-371. The method of given in brief in **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22.6/2:294 f) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10.12/1:57 f) = SD 13, and in detail in **Mahā Hatthi,padūpamā S** (M 28.6-28/1:185-191), **Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 1:421-425/62.8-17) and **Dhātuvibhaṅga S** (M 140.13-18/3:240-243).

¹⁸ See SD 2.12 Introd (2) & SD 10.11 (12d) for details.

¹⁹ SA 3:172; DAṬ 2:154; MAṬ:Be 2:121; AAṬ:Be 3:249.

²⁰ M 52.8-11/1:351 f.

²¹ For discussion, see **Halidda,vasana S** (S 46.54/5:115-121) = SD 10.11.

The First Discourse on Being Alone

(S 52.1/5:294-296)

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time the venerable Anuruddha was dwelling in Anātha,piṇḍika's Park, in Jeta's Forest, near Sāvattihī.

2 Then, while the venerable Anuruddha was alone in seclusion, a reflection arose in his mind:

“Those who have neglected the four focusses of mindfulness have neglected the noble path leading to the complete destruction of suffering.

Those who have undertaken the four focusses of mindfulness have undertaken the noble path leading to the complete destruction of suffering.”

3 Then the venerable Moggallāna, having known with his own mind the reflection in the venerable Anuruddha, just as a strong man would stretch his bent arm or would bend his stretched arm, appeared before the venerable Anuruddha.

4 Then the venerable Moggallāna said this to the venerable Anuruddha:

“To what extent, friend Anuruddha, have the four focusses of mindfulness been undertaken by a monk?”

CONTEMPLATING OF THE BODY

5 INTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. “Here, friend, a monk dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful,²² contemplating the nature of arising in the body²³ internally, putting away²⁴ covetousness and displeasure²⁵ in the world.²⁶

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in the body internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells [295] exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in the body internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.²⁷

6 EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in the body externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in the body externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in the body externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

7 INTERNAL-AND-EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in the body internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in the body inter-

²² *Ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhā,domanassāni*. See Introd (4.2) above.

²³ *Samudaya,dhammānupassī kāyasmim viharati*. According to Bodhi, this phrase is usually as “‘he abides contemplating in the body its arising factors’ (as at M:ÑB 149), on the assumption that the compound contains a plural, *samudaya,dhammā*. A plural sense, however, is not mandatory, and it is more consistent with the use of a suffix – *dhamma* elsewhere to take it as meaning ‘subject to’ or ‘having the nature of’ here as well. At S 22.126/3:171 f *samudaya,dhamma, vaya,dhamma*, and *samudaya,vaya,dhamma* serve as *bahubbīhi* (adjectival) compounds in apposition to each of the five aggregates, and it seems that in this passage too the terms should be understood in the same sense, as singulars meaning ‘subject to origination, etc.’” (S:B 1927 n178)

²⁴ *Vineyya*, see Introd (4.2c) above.

²⁵ “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā,domanassāni*, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the world”; alt tr “longing and displeasure” or “longing and loathing.” See Introd (4.2) above.

²⁶ “World” (*loka*). See Introd (4.2b) above.

²⁷ This section and the foll two [5-7] merge the supplementary sections in (Mahā)/Satipaṭṭhāna S (D 22 & M 10) = SD 13.3. In the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutas, these exercises follow in sequence, but are kept distinct.

nally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in the body internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

8 THE FIVE PERCEPTIONS.²⁸ (1) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(2) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(3) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive and in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(4) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the unrepulsive and in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(5) If he wishes thus: ‘Avoiding both the unrepulsive and the repulsive, may I dwell equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing,’ he dwells therein equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing.²⁹

CONTEMPLATING OF FEELINGS

Contemplating impermanence in feelings

9 INTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. ‘Here, friend, a monk dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in feelings internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in feelings internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in feelings internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.³⁰

10 EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in feelings externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in feelings externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in feelings externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

11 INTERNAL-AND-EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in feelings internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in feelings internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in feelings internally and externally, [296] putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

12 THE FIVE PERCEPTIONS. (1) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(2) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(3) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive and in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

²⁸ The 5 perceptions are explained in **Tikaṇḍaki S** (A 5.144/3:169) = SD 2.12. See above Introd (2).

²⁹ In **Haliddavasana S** (S 46.54/5:119), this section follows: Or else, he enters and dwells in **the deliverance of the beautiful** (*subha vimokkha*). Monks, the liberation of mind by lovingkindness has the beautiful as its highest point, I say, for a wise monk here who has not penetrated to a higher liberation. See Introd (2) above; see also SD 2.12 Introd (2) & SD 10.11 (12d) for details.

³⁰ This section and the foll two [9-11] merge the supplementary sections in (**Mahā**)/**Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22 & M 10) = SD 13.3. In the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutas, these exercises follow in sequence, but are kept distinct.

(4) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the unrepulsive and in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(5) If he wishes thus: ‘Avoiding both the unrepulsive and the repulsive, may I dwell equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing,’ he dwells therein equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing.³¹

CONTEMPLATING OF THE MIND

13 INTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. ‘Here, friend, a monk dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in the mind internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in the mind internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in the mind internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.³²

14 EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in the mind externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in the mind externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in the mind externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

15 INTERNAL-AND-EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in the mind internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in the mind internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in the mind internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

16 THE FIVE PERCEPTIONS. (1) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(2) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(3) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive and in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(4) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the unrepulsive and in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(5) If he wishes thus: ‘Avoiding both the unrepulsive and the repulsive, may I dwell equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing,’ he dwells therein equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing.³³

³¹ In **Haliddavasana S** (S 46.54/5:119), this section follows: Or else, he enters and dwells in **the deliverance of the beautiful** (*subha vimokkha*). Monks, the liberation of mind by lovingkindness has the beautiful as its highest point, I say, for a wise monk here who has not penetrated to a higher liberation. See SD 2.12 Introd (2) & SD 10.11 (12d) for details.

³² This section and the foll two [13-15] merge the supplementary sections in **(Mahā)/Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22 & M 10) = SD 13.3. In the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutas, these exercises follow in sequence, but are kept distinct.

³³ In **Haliddavasana S** (S 46.54/5:119), this section follows: Or else, he enters and dwells in **the deliverance of the beautiful** (*subha vimokkha*). Monks, the liberation of mind by lovingkindness has the beautiful as its highest point, I say, for a wise monk here who has not penetrated to a higher liberation. See SD 2.12 Introd (2) & SD 10.11 (12d) for details.

CONTEMPLATING OF DHARMAS

17 INTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. “Here, friend, a monk dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in dharmas internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in dharmas internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in dharmas internally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.³⁴

18 EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in dharmas externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in dharmas externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in dharmas externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

19 INTERNAL-AND-EXTERNAL CONTEMPLATION. He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising in dharmas internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of ending in dharmas internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

He dwells exertive, clearly knowing, mindful, contemplating the nature of arising and ending in dharmas internally and externally, putting away covetousness and displeasure in the world.

20 THE FIVE PERCEPTIONS. (1) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(2) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(3) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the repulsive in the unrepulsive and in the repulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the repulsive therein.

(4) If he wishes thus: ‘May I dwell perceiving the unrepulsive in the unrepulsive and in the unrepulsive,’ he dwells perceiving the unrepulsive therein.

(5) If he wishes thus: ‘Avoiding both the unrepulsive and the repulsive, may I dwell equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing,’ he dwells therein equanimously, mindful and clearly knowing.³⁵

21 To that extent, friend, have the four focusses of mindfulness been undertaken by a monk.”

—evaṃ—

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³⁴ This section and the foll two [17-19] merge the supplementary sections in (Mahā)Satipatṭhāna S (D 22 & M 10) = SD 13.3. In the Satipatṭhāna Sutas, these exercises follow in sequence, but are kept distinct.

³⁵ In Haliddavasana S (S 46.54/5:119), this section follows: Or else, he enters and dwells in **the deliverance of the beautiful** (*subha vimokkha*). Monks, the liberation of mind by lovingkindness has the beautiful as its highest point, I say, for a wise monk here who has not penetrated to a higher liberation. See SD 2.12 Introd (2) & SD 10.11 (12d) for details.