(Ekā, dasaka) Mettānisaṁsā Sutta

The (Elevens) Discourse on the Benefits of Lovingkindness

Or (Ekā, dasaka) Mettānisaṁsā Sutta

The Discourse on the (Eleven) Benefits of Lovingkindness

Mettānisaṁsā Sutta (Ce) The Discourse on the Benefits of Lovingkindness

Theme: The 11 benefits of cultivating lovingkindness

Translated by Piya Tan ©2003; rev 2010

Chinese Āgama parallels

1.1 Scholars link two texts in the Chinese Tripiṭaka to the (Ekā, dasaka) Mettānisaṁsā Sutta: one is from the Ekottara Āgama (EĀ 49.10 = T138*) and the other is in fascicle 47, sutra 10 (T125*), which opens with these words:

若有眾生修行慈心解脫。  
If various sentient beings cultivate lovingkindness for liberation,

廣布其義。  
expound widely its meaning,

與人演說。  
speak about it to others,

當獲此十一果報。  
he would gain these 11 benefits. (T125* @ T2.806a18-20)

What follows is that essentially identical with the Pali version.

1.2 In the case of the first Chinese version (EĀ 49.10), only its second half parallels the Pali (Ekā, dasaka) Mettānisaṁsā Sutta. The first part has new materials dealing some kind of recollection on the Buddha’s virtues. The basic idea is to use a recollection of the Buddha as a basis for the cultivation of lovingkindness, thus:

當以十一想思念如來。  
One should reflect on the 11 qualities of the Tathagata.

已思念當發慈心於如來所。  
Having reflected, one should cultivate a heart of lovingkindness before the Tathagata.

雲何為十一。  
What are the eleven?

戒意清淨  
(1) He is pure in precept and wishes.

威儀具足  
(2) He is endowed with dignity in appearance.

諸根不錯  
(3) His various faculties are good [not bad].

信意不亂  
(4) His faith is unconfused.

常有勇健意  
(5) He is ever intrepid and firm-minded.

若更苦樂不以為憂  
(6) He is untroubled by extremes of difficulty or happiness.

意不忘失  
(7) He is not forgetful.

正觀現在前  
(8) Calm and clear regarding the present.

三昧意無休息  
(9) He has uninterrupted samadhi.

智慧意無量  
(10) Immeasurably wise in thought.

觀佛無厭足  
(11) The Buddha’s meditative insight is unshakable.

Thus monks should apply these 11 thoughts
to recall the Tathagata.

1 Entitled 佛說十一想思念如來經 Fóshuō shíyī xiǎng sīnián rúlái jīng.
Having recalled the Tathagata, one should cultivate a lovingkind heart before the Tathagata.

(T138* = T2.861a16-22)

(Ekā, dasaka) Mettānisaṁsa Sutta  
The (Elevens) Discourse on  
The Benefits of Lovingkindness  

A 11.16

1 Bhikshus, if the liberation of mind by lovingkindness is practised, cultivated, often cultivated, habitually cultivated, thoroughly cultivated, firmly established, consolidated and properly undertaken, eleven benefits are to be expected. What are the eleven?

2 (1) One sleeps happily.  
(2) One wakes happily.  
(3) One sees no bad dreams.  
(4) One is dear to humans.  
(5) One is dear to non-humans.  
(6) One is protected by devas.  
(7) Fire, poison and weapons cannot harm one.  
(8) One’s mind easily concentrates.  
(9) One’s countenance is serene.  
(10) One dies unconfused.  
(11) And, if one penetrates no higher state, one goes to the brahma world.

3 Bhikshus, if the liberation of mind by lovingkindness is practised, cultivated, often cultivated, habitually cultivated, thoroughly cultivated, firmly established, consolidated and properly undertaken, these eleven benefits are to be expected.

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