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SD 65.5

Koṭṭhika Sutta 3

The 3rd Discourse to Koṭṭhika | **S 35.163**
Be Ee Se **Koṭṭhika Anatta Sutta** The Koṭṭhika Discourse on the Nonself
Ce Koṭṭhita Anatta Sutta The Koṭṭhita Discourse on the Nonself
Theme: Letting go of the nonself
Translated and annotated by Piya Tan, 2009, ©2026

1 Sutta summary and significance

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

The Koṭṭhika Sutta 3 (S 35.163) is a "meditation lesson" the Buddha gives to the elder Koṭṭhika on the nonself of our dynamic being in its 5 aspects—*the internal sense-faculties*, their respective *sense-objects*, their respective *consciousnesses*, their respective *contacts* and their respective *feelings*—that they are all nonself [without any abiding core]; hence, "**you should abandon desire for it**" (that is, for each and every one of the sense-faculties, their objects, their consciousnesses, their contacts and their feelings).

1.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

1.2.1 Like the Koṭṭhika Sutta 1 (S 35.161), SD 65.3, and the Koṭṭhika Sutta 2 (S 35.162), SD 65.4, **the Koṭṭhika Sutta 3** is an analysis of what we are really made up of—our senses, their objects, their consciousnesses, their contacts and their feelings. We should not have any *liking* or *disliking* for any of them—because they are **nonself**, since they all lack any abiding core or essence; they are impermanent; hence, to enjoy them, or like or dislike them will bring suffering. Seeing each of them as they really are—as nonself—keeps us on the right track of insight into true reality. They should be abandoned.

1.2.2 Hence, we let go of what is nonself by *not seeing something abiding* in any of the 5 aspects of our being—*the internal sense-faculties*, their respective *sense-objects*, their respective *consciousnesses*, their respective *contacts* and their respective *feelings*. We only mindfully watch their arising and passing away without identifying with them. We abandon all desire for any of the objects.

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Tatiya Koṭṭhika Sutta

(For translation, see opposite page.)

Sāvatthiyaṁ:

2 [Atha kho …]

3 Ekam-antaṁ nisinno kho āyasmā mahā,koṭṭhiko bhagavantaṁ etad-avoca:

sādhu me bhante bhagavā saṅkhittena dhammaṁ desetu yam-ahaṁ bhagavato dhammaṁ sutvā eko vūpakaṭṭho appamatto ātāpi pahitatto vihareyyan ti.

Yo kho koṭṭhika anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo, ko ca koṭṭhika anattā,

4 cakkhuṁ kho koṭṭhika	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Rūpā	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Cakkhu,viññāṇaṁ	anatta,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Cakkhu,samphasso	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Yam-pi'daṁ cakkhu,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati vedayitaṁ sukhaṁ vā dukkhaṁ vā adukkham-asukhaṁ vā tam-pi	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.

5 Sotaṁ kho koṭṭhika	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Saddā	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Sota,viññāṇaṁ	anattā	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Sota,samphasso	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Yam-pi'daṁ sota,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati vedayitaṁ sukhaṁ vā dukkhaṁ vā adukkham-asukhaṁ vā tam-pi	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.

6 Ghānaṁ kho koṭṭhika	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Gandhā	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Ghāna,viññāṇaṁ	anattā	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Ghāna,samphasso	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Yam-pi'daṁ ghāna,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati **vedayitaṁ** sukhaṁ vā dukkhaṁ vā adukkham-asukhaṁ vā tam-pi	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.

7 Jivhā kho koṭṭhika	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Rasā	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Jivhā,viññāṇaṁ	anattā	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Jivhā,samphasso	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Yam-pi'daṁ jivhā,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati **vedayitaṁ** sukhaṁ vā dukkhaṁ vā adukkham-asukhaṁ vā tam-pi	anattā,	tatra te chando pahātabbo.

Koṭṭhika Sutta 3

The 3rd Discourse to Koṭṭhika

S 35.163

At Sāvatthī.

1 [Thus have I heard. At one time …]

2 Then the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhika approached the Blessed One, and having approached, saluted him and sat at one side.

3 Sitting at one side, the venerable Mahā Koṭṭhika said this to the Blessed One:

"Bhante, it would be good if the Blessed One would teach me the Dharma in brief, so that, having heard the Dharma from the Blessed One, I may dwell alone, aloof, diligent, ardent, and resolute."

3.2 "Koṭṭhika, whatever is	**nonself**	you should abandon desire for it.
And, Koṭṭhika, what is nonself?		
4 (1) **The eye**, Koṭṭhika, is	nonself;	you should abandon desire for it.
Forms are	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for them.*
Eye-consciousness is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Eye-contact is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Whatever **feeling** arises with eye-contact as condition—whether pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant—that too is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
5 (2) **The ear**, Koṭṭhika, is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it.*
Sounds are	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for them.*
Ear-consciousness is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Ear-contact is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Whatever **feeling** arises with ear-contact as condition—whether pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant—that too is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
6 (3) **The nose**, Koṭṭhika, is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it.*
Smells are	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for them.*
Nose-consciousness is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Nose-contact is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Whatever **feeling** arises with nose-contact as condition—whether pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant—that too is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
7 (4) **The tongue**, Koṭṭhika, is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it.*
Tastes are	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for them.*
Tongue-consciousness is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Tongue-contact is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.
Whatever **feeling** arises with tongue-contact as condition—whether pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant—that too is	nonself;	*you should abandon desire for it*.

8 **Kāyo** kho koṭṭhika anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Phoṭṭhabbā anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Kāya,viññāṇaṁ anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Kāya,samphasso anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Yam-pi,daṁ kāya,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati vedayitaṁ sukhaṁ vā dukkhaṁ vā adukkham-asukhaṁ vā tam-pi anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.

9 **Mano** kho koṭṭhika anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Dhammā anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Manov,iññāṇaṁ anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Mano,samphasso anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.
Yam-pi'daṁ mano,samphassa,paccayā uppajjati vedayitaṁ sukhaṁ vā dukkhaṁ vā adukkhama-sukhaṁ vā tampi anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo.

10 Yo kho koṭṭhika, anattā, tatra te chando pahātabbo ti.

8 (5) **The body**, Koṭṭhika, is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it.*
Touches [bodily feelings] are nonself; *you should abandon desire for them.*
Body-consciousness is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it*.
Body-contact is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it*.
Whatever **feeling** arises with body-contact as condition—whether pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant—that too is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it*.

9 (5) **The mind**, Koṭṭhika, is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it.*
Thoughts are nonself; *you should abandon desire for them.*
Mind-consciousness is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it*.
Mind-contact is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it*.
Whatever **[147] feeling** arises with mind-contact as condition—whether pleasant or painful or neither painful nor pleasant—that too is nonself; *you should abandon desire for it*.

10 Koṭṭhika, you should abandon desire for whatever is *nonself*."

—evaṁ—

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