

Upaññāta Sutta

AN II 5 Came to Learn
Translated by Bhante Ānanda
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"I came to learn to things bhikkhus.

- (1) Never to rest satisfied with wholesome states,¹
(2) And unrestrained power of will.²

Uncurbed my effort was bhikkhus, I went:

*"Let only my skin, tendons and bones be left,
And the flesh and blood in this body dry up.*

*Whatever is possible by human power
Human will, human strength,³ that, I will achieve.
Resolve will not fall away
But will be firmly established and developed.*

¹ *Yā ca asantuṭṭhitā kusalesu dhammesu.*

Here, the Buddha clearly indicates to be never rest content in cultivating wholesome qualities, meaning, to never stop cultivating them. Never to rest content with what was done in the past and give way to laziness and complacency. The way that the Buddha's Teaching is being taught nowadays gives the impression that one needs to cut away and "repress" all craving. The problem is that this also involves the cutting away of "Chanda" which is "wholesome desire".

The Buddha did not teach the way to carelessness! He did not teach the path to dull acceptance. There needs to be desire for release, for happiness or for awakening for one to practice. To cut away all forms of intention or will, even the wholesome ones, is in fact very far from the Buddha's Teaching. Final Nibbāna is unconditioned but the Eight-Spoked Path is conditioned. And one should definitely arouse the desire to cultivate it, for one's own interest. An Ariyan practitioner does try his or her best to generate wholesome Kamma, wholesome qualities, wholesome mental states by way of training. That is the reason why the Buddha called it "the gradual training". The reality is, desire is necessary to break free from unwholesome craving, desire for the wholesome. The desire for the six sense-bases and their respective objects, that is the kind of desire that one should be careful about.

² *Yā ca appaṭivānitā padhānasmiṃ.* Unabating will.

³ *Purisathāmena purisavīriyena purisaparakkamena*



Bhikkhus

*By carefully attention, we came to Sambodhi,⁴
By careful attention, we came to the unsurpassable
Release from the yoke.⁵*



You also bhikkhus, if by unrelenting effort you would go:

*“Let only my skin, tendons and bones be left,
And the flesh and blood in this body dry up.
Whatever is possible by human power
Human will, human strength, that, I will achieve.
Resolve will not fall away
But will be firmly established and developed.*

*In no long time,
You would attain the purpose
For which sons of good families
Honestly leave their home and become homeless,
Seeking for the highest,*

The complete perfection of the holy life.

*And having realized it in this present life,
By your own direct knowledge,*

You would abide in it.⁶

⁴ *Appamādādhigatā sambodhi, Full Awakening, Complete Understanding. Mayham: The Buddha here interestingly speaks in the first person plural.*

⁵ *Appamādādhigato anuttaro yogakkhemo. Here, “yoga” is not the goal, in fact, the Buddha taught the way to Yogakkhema, freedom from yoga or bondage, complete unshackling of the mind. The yoke is craving here.*

⁶ *Diṭṭheva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharissatha.*

Thus bhikkhus, you should train:

With unabating resolve we will go:

*“Let only my skin, tendons and bones be left,
And the flesh and blood in this body dry up.
Whatever is possible by human power
Human will, human strength, that, I will achieve.
Resolve will not fall away
But will be firmly established and developed.”*

Thus you should train bhikkhus.

Fifth.



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