

Probable original Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta as reconstructed by Bhante Sujato

Introduction

“This is the path to convergence, monks & nuns, for the purification of beings, for surmounting sorrow & lamentation, for ending bodily & mental suffering, for understanding the way, for witnessing Nibbana: that is, the four satipaṭṭhānas. What four?

Here, a monk or nun abides contemplating a body in the body internally, he abides contemplating a body in the body externally, he abides contemplating a body in the body internally & externally – ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed desire & aversion for the world. He abides contemplating a feeling in the feelings internally, he abides contemplating a feeling in the feelings externally, he abides contemplating a feeling in the feelings internally & externally – ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed desire & aversion for the world. He abides contemplating a mind in the mind internally, he abides contemplating a mind in the mind externally, he abides contemplating a mind in the mind internally & externally – ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed desire & aversion for the world. He abides contemplating a Dhamma in the dhammas internally, he abides contemplating a dhamma in the dhammas externally, he abides contemplating a dhamma in the dhammas internally & externally – ardent, clearly comprehending, mindful, having removed desire & aversion for the world.

Contemplation of body

And how, monks & nuns, does a monk or nun abide contemplating a body in the body?

Here, a monk or nun reviews this very body up from the soles of the feet and down from the tips of the hair, bounded by skin and full of many kinds of impurities thus: ‘In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, spleen, lungs, diaphragm, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, faeces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spit, snot, oil of the joints, and urine.’

Just as if there was a bag with an opening at both ends, full of various sorts of grain, such as hill rice, red rice, mung beans, peas, millet, and white rice, a man with good eyes were to open it up and review it thus: ‘This is hill rice, this is red rice, these are mung beans, these are peas, this is millet, this is white rice.’ In just the same way, a monk or nun reviews this very body up from the soles of the feet and down from the tips of the hair, bounded by skin and full of many kinds of impurities thus: ‘In this body there are head-hairs, body-hairs, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, spleen, lungs, diaphragm, large intestines, small intestines, contents of the stomach, faeces, bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat, tears, grease, spit, snot, oil of the joints, and urine.’

Mindfulness of the body is well established for the sake of knowledge & vision. One abides independent, not grasping at anything in the world. That is how a monk or nun abides contemplating a body in the body.

Contemplation of feelings

And further, monks and nuns, how does a monk or nun abide contemplating a feeling in the feelings?

Here, when feeling a pleasant feeling a monk or nun understands: ‘I feel a pleasant feeling.’

When feeling an unpleasant feeling he understands: ‘I feel an unpleasant feeling.’

When feeling a neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling.'

When feeling a carnal pleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a carnal pleasant feeling.'

When feeling a spiritual pleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a spiritual pleasant feeling.'

When feeling a carnal unpleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a carnal unpleasant feeling.'

When feeling a spiritual unpleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a spiritual unpleasant feeling.'

When feeling a carnal neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a carnal neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling.'

When feeling a spiritual neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling he understands: 'I feel a spiritual neither pleasant nor unpleasant feeling.'

Mindfulness of feelings is well established for the sake of knowledge & vision. One abides independent, not grasping at anything in the world. That is how a monk or nun abides contemplating a feeling in the feelings.

Contemplation of mind

And further, monks and nuns, how does a monk or nun abide contemplating a mind in the mind?

Here a monk or nun understands mind with lust as 'mind with lust'. He understands mind without lust as 'mind without lust'.

He understands mind with anger as 'mind with anger'. He understands mind without anger as 'mind without anger'.

He understands mind with delusion as 'mind with delusion'. He understands mind without delusion as 'mind without delusion'.

He understands contracted mind as 'contracted mind'. He understands distracted mind as 'distracted mind'.

He understands exalted mind as 'exalted mind'. He understands unexalted mind as 'unexalted mind'.

He understands surpassed mind as 'surpassed mind'. He understands unsurpassed mind as 'unsurpassed mind'.

He understands mind in samādhi as 'mind in samādhi'. He understands mind not in samādhi as 'mind not in samādhi'.

He understands released mind as 'released mind'. He understands unreleased mind as 'unreleased mind'.

Mindfulness of the mind is well established for the sake of knowledge & vision. One abides independent, not grasping at anything in the world. That is how a monk or nun abides contemplating a mind in the mind.

Contemplation of dhammas

And further, monks and nuns, how does a monk or nun abide contemplating a dhamma in the dhammas?

Here, when there is sensual desire in him, a monk or nun understands: 'There is sensual desire in me'. When there is no sensual desire in him, he understands: 'There is no sensual desire in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen sensual desire comes to be. And he understands how

the abandoning of the arisen sensual desire comes to be. And he understands how the non-arising in the future of the unarisen sensual desire comes to be.

When there is anger in him, he understands: 'There is anger in me'. When there is no anger in him, he understands: 'There is no anger in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen anger comes to be. And he understands how the abandoning of the arisen anger comes to be. And he understands how the non-arising in the future of the unarisen anger comes to be.

When there is sloth & torpor in him, he understands: 'There is sloth & torpor in me'. When there is no sloth & torpor in him, he understands: 'There is no sloth & torpor in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen sloth & torpor comes to be. And he understands how the abandoning of the arisen sloth & torpor comes to be. And he understands how the non-arising in the future of the unarisen sloth & torpor comes to be.

When there is restlessness & remorse in him, he understands: 'There is restlessness & remorse in me'. When there is no restlessness & remorse in him, he understands: 'There is no restlessness & remorse in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen restlessness & remorse comes to be. And he understands how the abandoning of the arisen restlessness & remorse comes to be. And he understands how the non-arising in the future of the unarisen restlessness & remorse comes to be.

When there is doubt in him, he understands: 'There is doubt in me'. When there is no doubt in him, he understands: 'There is no doubt in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen doubt comes to be. And he understands how the abandoning of the arisen doubt comes to be. And he understands how the non-arising in the future of the unarisen doubt comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of mindfulness in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of mindfulness in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of mindfulness in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of mindfulness in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of mindfulness comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of mindfulness comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of investigation of dhammas in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of investigation of dhammas in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of investigation of dhammas in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of investigation of dhammas in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of investigation of dhammas comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of investigation of dhammas comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of energy in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of energy in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of energy in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of energy in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of energy comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of energy comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of rapture in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of rapture in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of rapture in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of rapture in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of rapture comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of rapture comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of tranquillity in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of tranquillity in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of tranquillity in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of tranquillity in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of tranquillity comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of tranquillity comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of samādhi in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of samādhi in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of samādhi in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of samādhi in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of samādhi comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of samādhi comes to be.

When there is the awakening-factor of equanimity in him, he understands: 'There is the awakening-factor of equanimity in me'. When there is no awakening-factor of equanimity in him, he understands: 'There is no awakening-factor of equanimity in me'. And he understands how the arising of the unarisen awakening-factor of equanimity comes to be. And he understands how the fulfilment through development of the arisen awakening-factor of equanimity comes to be.

Mindfulness of dhammas is well established for the sake of knowledge & vision. One abides independent, not grasping at anything in the world. That is how a monk or nun abides contemplating a Dhamma in the dhammas.

Conclusion

This is the path leading to convergence, monks & nuns, for the purification of beings, for surmounting sorrow & lamentation, for ending bodily & mental suffering, for understanding the way, for witnessing Nibbana; that is, the four satipaṭṭhānas."