

SN 12.15: Kaccānagotta Sutta

The Discourse to Kaccānagotta

Translated by Suddhāso Bhikkhu

At Sāvatti. Then Venerable Kaccānagotta approached the Blessed One, paid respects to him, and sat down to one side. When he was seated to one side, Venerable Kaccānagotta said to the Blessed One, “Bhante, it is said 'Right perspective, right perspective.' Bhante, how is there right perspective?”

“Kaccāna, for the most part this world is based upon a duality – existence and non-existence. Kaccāna, one who accurately sees with right wisdom the arising of the world does not have the thought of non-existence. Kaccāna, one who accurately sees with right wisdom the cessation of the world does not have the thought of existence.

“Kaccāna, for the most part this world is bound by procurement, clinging, and adherence¹. And as regards that procurement and clinging by the mind, that resolution and tendency towards adherence: when one does not procure, does not cling to, and does not resolve upon [thoughts of] 'My soul'²; when one has no doubt about, no uncertainty of, and no dependence on another for the knowledge that 'It is only suffering that arises, and only suffering that ceases' – this, Kaccāna, is 'Right perspective.'

“‘Everything exists': Kaccāna, this is one extreme. 'Nothing exists': this is the second extreme. Kaccāna, without approaching either of these two extremes, the Tathāgata teaches Dhamma by the middle:

“Due to ignorance there are conditional formations. Due to conditional formations there is consciousness. Due to consciousness there is mind and body. Due to mind and body there are the six senses. Due to the six senses there is sense-contact. Due to sense-contact there is feeling. Due to feeling there is craving. Due to craving there is clinging. Due to clinging there is existence. Due to existence there is birth. Due to birth there is old age and dieing; sorrow, lamentation, pain, depression, and anguish are produced. In this way there is the arising of this entire mass of suffering.

“However, when there is complete detachment from and cessation of ignorance, there is the cessation of conditional formations. From the cessation of conditional formations there is the cessation of consciousness. From the cessation of consciousness there is the cessation of mind and body. From the cessation of mind and body there is the cessation of the six senses. From the cessation of the six senses there is the cessation of sense-contact. From the cessation of sense-contact there is the cessation of feeling. From the cessation of feeling there is the cessation of craving. From the cessation of craving there is the cessation of clinging. From the cessation of clinging there is the cessation of existence. From the cessation of existence there is the cessation of birth. From the cessation of birth, old age, dieing, sorrow, lamentation, pain, depression, and anguish cease. In this way there is the cessation of this entire mass of suffering.”

1 *Upaya* (going close to), *upādāna* (holding close to), and *abhinivesa* (settling down on). The rendering “procurement, clinging, and adherence” is a prosodic approximation.

2 “*Attā me.*” This could be rendered “My self” or “My identity.”