

AN 7.54: Abyākata Sutta

Undeclared

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

Then a certain monk approached the Fortunate One, paid respects to him, said to one side, and said, “Bhante, what is the cause, what is the condition, because of which no doubt arises in an educated disciple of the noble ones regarding the undeclared standpoints?”

“Monk, it is because of the cessation of opinions that no doubt arises in an educated disciple of the noble ones regarding the undeclared standpoints. Monk, ‘A Tathāgata exists after dying’ is in the domain of opinions. ‘A Tathāgata does not exist after dying’ is in the domain of opinions. ‘A Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after dying’ is in the domain of opinions. ‘A Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after dying’ is in the domain of opinions. Monk, an uneducated commoner does not understand opinions, does not understand the arising of opinions, does not understand the cessation of opinions, and does not understand the practice which leads to the cessation of opinions. Therefore their opinions increase; they are not freed from birth, decay, dying, sorrow, grief, pain, depression, and anguish; they are not freed from suffering, I say.

“Monks, an educated disciple of the noble ones understands opinions, understands the origin of opinions, understands the cessation of opinions, and understands the practice which leads to the cessation of opinions. Therefore their opinions cease; they are freed from birth, decay, dying, sorrow, grief, pain, depression, and anguish; they are freed from suffering, I say. Knowing and seeing in this way, monk, an educated disciple of the noble ones does not declare ‘A Tathāgata exists after dying’, does not declare ‘A Tathāgata does not exist after dying’, does not declare ‘A Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after dying’, and does not declare ‘A Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after dying’. Knowing and seeing in this way, monk, an educated disciple of the noble ones naturally does not make a declaration about the undeclared standpoints. Knowing and seeing in this way, monk, an educated disciple of the noble ones does not tremble, quiver, waver, or become anxious regarding the undeclared standpoints.

‘A Tathāgata exists after dying’... ‘A Tathāgata does not exist after dying’... ‘A Tathāgata both exists and does not exist after dying’... ‘A Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after dying’ is in the domain of craving... in the domain of perceptions... a concept... a complication... in the domain of craving... a torment. Monk, an uneducated commoner does not understand torment, does not understand the arising of torment, does not understand the cessation of torment, does not understand the practice which leads to the cessation of torment. Therefore their torment increases; they are not freed from birth, decay, dying, sorrow, grief, pain, depression, and anguish; they are not freed from suffering, I say. Monk, an educated disciple of the noble ones understands torment... Knowing and seeing in this way, monk, an educated disciple of the noble ones does not tremble, quiver, waver, or become anxious regarding the undeclared standpoints.

“Monk, this is the cause, this is the condition, because of which no doubt arises in an educated disciple of the noble ones regarding the undeclared standpoints.”