

AN 7.68: Dhammaññū Sutta

Knower of the Dhamma

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

“Monks, a monk who has seven qualities is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of donations, worthy of respect, an unsurpassable field of merit for the world. What seven? Here, monks, a monk is a Dhamma-knower, a benefit-knower, a self-knower, a moderation-knower, a time-knower, a group-knower, and a knower of the various kinds of people.

“Monks, how is a monk a Dhamma-knower? Here, monks, a monk knows the Dhamma - discourses, chants, explanations, poems, exclamations, quotations, stories of past lives, marvels, and interviews. Monks, if a monk does not know the Dhamma - discourses, chants, explanations, poems, exclamations, quotations, stories of past lives, marvels, and interviews - then they cannot be called a ‘Dhamma-knower.’ However, monks, if a monk knows the Dhamma - discourses, chants, explanations, poems, exclamations, quotations, stories of past lives, marvels, and interviews - then they can be called a ‘Dhamma-knower.’ In this way one is a Dhamma-knower.

“And how is one a benefit-knower? Here, monks, a monk knows the benefit of any kind of statement - ‘This is the benefit of this statement, that is the benefit of that statement.’ Monks, if a monk does not know the benefit of any kind of statement - ‘This is the benefit of this statement, that is the benefit of that statement’ - then they cannot be called a ‘benefit-knower.’ However, monks, if a monk knows the benefit of any kind of statement - ‘This is the benefit of this statement, that is the benefit of that statement’ - then they can be called a ‘benefit-knower.’ In this way one is a Dhamma-knower and a benefit-knower.

“And how is one a self-knower? Here, monks, a monk knows himself - ‘I have this much faith, morality, knowledge, generosity, wisdom, and inspiration.’ Monks, if a monk does not know himself - ‘I have this much faith, morality, knowledge, generosity, wisdom, and inspiration’ - then they cannot be called a ‘self-knower.’ However, monks, if a monk knows himself - ‘I have this much faith, morality, knowledge, generosity, wisdom, and inspiration’ - then they can be called a ‘self-knower.’ In this way one is a Dhamma-knower, a benefit-knower, and a self-knower.

“And how is one a moderation-knower? Here, monks, a monk knows moderation when receiving robes, almsfood, dwellings, medicines, and medical supplies. Monks, if a monk does not know moderation when receiving robes, almsfood, dwellings, medicines, and medical supplies, then they cannot be called a ‘moderation-knower.’ However, monks, if a monk knows moderation when receiving robes, almsfood, dwellings, medicines, and medical supplies, then they can be called a ‘moderation-knower.’ In this way one is a Dhamma-knower, a benefit-knower, a self-knower, and a moderation-knower.

“And how is one a time-knower? Here, monks, a monk knows the time - ‘This is the time for an exposition, this is the time for a question, this is the time for application, this is the time for retreat.’ Monks, if a monk does not know the time - ‘This is the time for an exposition, this is the time for a question, this is the time for application, this is the time for retreat’ - then they cannot be called a ‘time-knower.’ However, monks, if a monk

knows the time - 'This is the time for an exposition, this is the time for a question, this is the time for application, this is the time for retreat' - then they can be called a 'time-knower.' In this way one is a Dhamma-knower, a benefit-knower, a self-knower, a moderation-knower, and a time-knower.

"And how is one a group-knower? Here, monks, a monk knows a group - 'This is a group of aristocrats, this is a group of brahmins, this is a group of householders, this is a group of contemplatives; there one should approach in this way, stand in this way, act in this way, sit in this way, speak in this way, be silent in this way.' Monks, if a monk does not know a group - 'This is a group of aristocrats, this is a group of brahmins, this is a group of householders, this is a group of contemplatives; there one should approach in this way, stand in this way, act in this way, sit in this way, speak in this way, be silent in this way' - then they cannot be called a 'group-knower.' However, monks, if a monk knows a group - 'This is a group of aristocrats, this is a group of brahmins, this is a group of householders, this is a group of contemplatives; there one should approach in this way, stand in this way, act in this way, sit in this way, speak in this way, be silent in this way' - then they can be called a 'group-knower.' In this way one is a Dhamma-knower, a benefit-knower, a self-knower, a moderation-knower, a time-knower, and a group-knower.

"And how is one a knower of the various kinds of people? Here, monks, a monk knows people by pairs.

"There are two kinds of people - one who wishes to see noble beings, and one who does not wish to see noble beings. The person who does not wish to see noble beings is blameworthy because of that. The person who wishes to see noble beings is praiseworthy because of that.

"There are two kinds of people who wish to see noble beings - one who wishes to hear the good Dhamma, and one who does not wish to hear the good Dhamma. The person who does not wish to hear the good Dhamma is blameworthy because of that. The person who wishes to hear the good Dhamma is praiseworthy because of that.

"There are two kinds of people who wish to hear the good Dhamma - one who listens carefully when hearing the Dhamma, and one who does not listen carefully when hearing the Dhamma. The person who does not listen carefully when hearing the Dhamma is blameworthy because of that. The person who listens carefully when hearing the Dhamma is praiseworthy because of that.

"There are two kinds of people who listen carefully when hearing the Dhamma - one who remembers the Dhamma after hearing it, and one who does not remember the Dhamma after hearing it. The person who does not remember the Dhamma after hearing it is blameworthy because of that. The person who remembers the Dhamma after hearing it is praiseworthy because of that.

"There are two kinds of people who remember the Dhamma after hearing it - one who examines the meaning of the Dhamma that they remember, and one who does not examine the meaning of the Dhamma that they remember. The person who does not examine the meaning of the Dhamma that they remember is blameworthy because of that. The person

who examines the meaning of the Dhamma that they remember is praiseworthy because of that.

“There are two kinds of people who examine the meaning of the Dhamma that they remember - one who practices in accordance with the Dhamma after knowing its meaning, and one who does not practice in accordance with the Dhamma after knowing its meaning. The person who does not practice in accordance with the Dhamma after knowing its meaning is blameworthy because of that. The person who practices in accordance with the Dhamma after knowing its meaning is praiseworthy because of that.

“There are two kinds of people who practice in accordance with the Dhamma after knowing its meaning - one who practices for their own benefit but not for the benefit of others, and one who practices both for their own benefit and for the benefit of others. The person who practices for their own benefit but not for the benefit of others is blameworthy because of that. The person who practices both for their own benefit and for the benefit of others is praiseworthy because of that.

“Monks, in this way a monk knows people by pairs; in this way a monk is a knower of the various kinds of people.

“Monks, a monk who has these seven qualities is worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of donations, worthy of respect, an unsurpassable field of merit for the world.”