

**Sallatha Sutta: The Arrow (The Dart), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu
(pronouns modified) SN 36.6 PTS: S iv 207 CDB ii 1263**

"Practitioners, an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person feels feelings of pleasure, feelings of pain, feelings of neither-pleasure-nor-pain. A well-instructed disciple of the noble ones also feels feelings of pleasure, feelings of pain, feelings of neither-pleasure-nor-pain. So what difference, what distinction, what distinguishing factor is there between the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones and the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person?"

"For us, the teachings have the Blessed One as their root, their guide, & their arbitrator. It would be good if the Blessed One himself would explicate the meaning of this statement. Having heard it from the Blessed One, we will remember it."

"In that case, practitioners, listen & pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, venerable sir," the practitioners responded.

The Blessed One said, "When touched with a feeling of pain, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person sorrows, grieves, & laments, beats their breast, becomes distraught. So such a person feels two pains, physical & mental. Just as if one were to shoot a person with an arrow and, right afterward, were to shoot one with another arrow, so that they would feel the pains of two arrows; in the same way, when touched with a feeling of pain, the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person sorrows, grieves, & laments, beats their breast, becomes distraught. So they feel two pains, physical & mental.

"As a person is touched by that painful feeling, they are resistant. Any resistance-obsession with regard to that painful feeling obsesses one. Touched by that painful feeling, one delight in sensual pleasure. Why is that? Because the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person does not discern any escape from painful feeling aside from sensual pleasure. As one is delighting in sensual pleasure, any passion-obsession with regard to that feeling of pleasure obsesses one. They do not discern, as it actually is present, the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, or escape from that feeling. As they do not discern the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, or escape from that feeling, then any ignorance-obsession with regard to that feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain obsesses one.

"Sensing a feeling of pleasure, one senses it as though joined with it. Sensing a feeling of pain, one senses it as though joined with it. Sensing a feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain, one senses it as though joined with it. This is called an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person joined with birth, aging, & death; with sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs. One is joined, I tell you, with suffering & stress.

"Now, the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones, when touched with a feeling of pain, do not sorrow, grieve, or lament, do not beat their breast or become distraught. So they feel one pain: physical, but not mental. Just as if they were to shoot a person with an arrow and, right afterward, did not shoot one with another arrow, so that they would feel the pain of only one arrow. In the same way, when touched with a feeling of pain, the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones do not sorrow, grieve, or lament, do not beat their breast or become distraught. They feel one pain: physical, but not mental.

"As one is touched by that painful feeling, one is not resistant. No resistance-obsession with regard to that painful feeling obsesses one. Touched by that painful feeling, one does not delight in sensual pleasure. Why is that? Because the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones discerns an escape from painful feeling aside from sensual pleasure. As one is not delighting in sensual pleasure, no passion-obsession with regard to that feeling of pleasure obsesses one. One discerns, as it actually is present, the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, and escape from that feeling. As one discerns the origination, passing away, allure, drawback, and escape from that feeling, no ignorance-obsession with regard to that feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain obsesses one.

"Sensing a feeling of pleasure, one senses it disjoined from it. Sensing a feeling of pain, one senses it disjoined from it. Sensing a feeling of neither-pleasure-nor-pain, one senses it disjoined from it. This is called a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones disjoined from birth, aging, & death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs. one is disjoined, I tell you, from suffering & stress.

"This is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor between the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones and the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person."

The discerning person, learned,
doesn't sense a (mental) feeling of pleasure or pain:
This is the difference in skillfulness
between the sage & the person run-of-the-mill.

For a learned person
who has fathomed the Dhamma,
clearly seeing this world & the next,
desirable things don't charm the mind,
undesirable ones bring no resistance.

One's acceptance
& rejection are scattered,
gone to their end,
do not exist.

Knowing the dustless, sorrowless state,
one discerns rightly,
has gone, beyond becoming,
to the Further Shore.

Another version translated from the Pali by Nyanaponika Thera

"An untaught worldling, O monks, experiences pleasant feelings, he experiences painful feelings and he experiences neutral feelings. A well-taught noble disciple likewise experiences pleasant, painful and neutral feelings. Now what is the distinction, the diversity, the difference that exists herein between a well-taught noble disciple and an untaught worldling?

"When an untaught worldling is touched by a painful (bodily) feeling, he worries and grieves, he laments, beats his breast, weeps and is distraught. He thus experiences two kinds of feelings, a bodily and a mental feeling. It is as if a man were pierced by a dart and, following the first piercing, he is hit by a second dart. So that person will experience feelings caused by two darts. It is similar with an untaught worldling: when touched by a painful (bodily) feeling, he worries and grieves, he laments, beats his

breast, weeps and is distraught. So he experiences two kinds of feeling: a bodily and a mental feeling.

"Having been touched by that painful feeling, he resists (and resents) it. Then in him who so resists (and resents) that painful feeling, an underlying tendency of resistance against that painful feeling comes to underlie (his mind). Under the impact of that painful feeling he then proceeds to enjoy sensual happiness. And why does he do so? An untaught worldling, O monks, does not know of any other escape from painful feelings except the enjoyment of sensual happiness. Then in him who enjoys sensual happiness, an underlying tendency to lust for pleasant feelings comes to underlie (his mind). He does not know, according to facts, the arising and ending of these feelings, nor the gratification, the danger and the escape, connected with these feelings. In him who lacks that knowledge, an underlying tendency to ignorance as to neutral feelings comes to underlie (his mind). When he experiences a pleasant feeling, a painful feeling or a neutral feeling, he feels it as one fettered by it. Such a one, O monks, is called an untaught worldling who is fettered by birth, by old age, by death, by sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. He is fettered by suffering, this I declare.

"But in the case of a well-taught noble disciple, O monks, when he is touched by a painful feeling, he will not worry nor grieve and lament, he will not beat his breast and weep, nor will he be distraught. It is *one* kind of feeling he experiences, a bodily one, but not a mental feeling. It is as if a man were pierced by a dart, but was not hit by a second dart following the first one. So this person experiences feelings caused by a single dart only. It is similar with a well-taught noble disciple: when touched by a painful feeling, he will no worry nor grieve and lament, he will not beat his breast and weep, nor will he be distraught. He experiences one single feeling, a bodily one.

"Having been touched by that painful feeling, he does not resist (and resent) it. Hence, in him no underlying tendency of resistance against that painful feeling comes to underlie (his mind). Under the impact of that painful feeling he does not proceed to enjoy sensual happiness. And why not? As a well-taught noble disciple he knows of an escape from painful feelings other than by enjoying sensual happiness. Then in him who does not proceed to enjoy sensual happiness, no underlying tendency to lust for pleasant feelings comes to underlie (his mind). He knows, according to facts, the arising and ending of those feelings, and the gratification, the danger and the escape connected with these feelings. In him who knows thus, no underlying tendency to ignorance as to neutral feelings comes to underlie (his mind). When he experiences a pleasant feeling, a painful feeling or a neutral feeling, he feels it as one who is not fettered by it. Such a one, O monks, is called a well-taught noble disciple who is not fettered by birth, by old age, by death, by sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair. He is not fettered to suffering, this I declare.

"This, O monks, is the distinction, the diversity, the difference that exists between a well-taught noble disciple and an untaught worldling."