

The Buddha's Similes for the Four *Jhānas* (states of unification)

Secluded from sensual desires and unskillful [mental] states, one abides having entered the joy and happiness born of seclusion of the **first *jhāna*** that is accompanied with deliberate attention and sustained attention. One suffuses, fills, completely fills and pervades this very body with the joy and happiness born of seclusion. No part of the body is unpervaded with the joy and happiness born of seclusion.

Just as a skilled bath person or a bath person's apprentice heaps bath powder in a metal basin and, sprinkling it gradually with water, kneads it until the moisture wets one's ball of bath powder, soaks it, and pervades it inside and out, yet the ball itself does not ooze; so too, a practitioner makes the joy and happiness born of seclusion drench, steep, fill, and pervade this very body, so that there is no part of one's whole body is unpervaded with the joy and happiness born of seclusion.

With **the stilling of thinking and examining**, one abides have entered the joy and happiness **born of *samādhi*** of the **second *jhāna*** that has no deliberate attention and no sustained attention, and which has inner clarity and unification of mind. One suffuses, fills, completely fills and pervades this very body with the joy and happiness born of *samādhi*. No part of the body is unpervaded with the joy and happiness born of *samādhi*.

Just as though there were a lake whose waters welled up from below and it had no inflow from east, west, north, or south, and would not be replenished from time to time by showers of rain, then the cool fount of water flowing up in the lake would make the cool water suffuse, fill, completely fill, and pervade the lake, so that there would be no part of the whole lake unpervaded by cool water

With **the fading away** of joy, one abides having entered the **third *jhāna*** where one abides equanimous and mindful, with clear understanding. One experiences happiness with the body that the noble ones describe, "One abides with the happiness of one who is equanimous and mindful." One suffuses, fills, completely fills and pervades this very body with happiness. No part of the body is unpervaded with happiness.

Just as, in a pond of blue or red or white lotuses, some lotuses that are born and grow in the water thrive immersed in the water without rising out of it, and cool water suffuses, fills, completely fills and pervades them to their tips and their roots, so that there is no part of all those lotuses unpervaded by cool water.

Letting go of pleasure and pain, and with the earlier disappearance of happiness and unhappiness, one abides having entered the **fourth *jhāna***, [a state] of neither-pleasure-nor-pain with the purity of equanimity and awareness. One suffuses, fills, completely fills and pervades this very body with mental purity. No part of the body is unpervaded with mental clarity.

Just as though a person were sitting covered from the head down with a white cloth, so that there is no part of one's whole body enclosed by the white cloth