Iti 92 — The Corner of the Cloak

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Text

So It Was Said 92

The Book of the Threes

Chapter Five

The Corner of the Cloak

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“Mendicants, suppose a mendicant were to hold the corner of my cloak and follow behind me step by step. Yet they covet sensual pleasures; they’re infatuated, full of ill will and malicious intent. They are unmindful, lacking situational awareness and immersion, with straying minds and undisciplined faculties. Then they are far from me, and I from them. Why is that? Because that mendicant does not see the teaching. Not seeing the teaching, they do not see me.

Suppose a mendicant were to live a hundred leagues away. Yet they do not covet sensual pleasures; they’re not infatuated, or full of ill will and malicious intent. They have established mindfulness, situational awareness and immersion, with unified mind and restrained faculties. Then they are close to me, and I to them. Why is that? Because that mendicant sees the teaching. Seeing the teaching, they see me.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

“One full of desire and distress

may follow close behind,

yet see how distant they are—

the stirred from the still,

the burning from the quenched,

the greedy from the greedless.

An astute person who has understood

and directly known the teaching,

grows calm, as unperturbed

as a lake free of wind.

See how close they are—

the still to the still,

the quenched to the quenched,

the greedless to the greedless.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.