SN 17.2 — A Hook

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Text

Linked Discourses 17.2

Chapter One

A Hook

At Sāvatthī.

“Possessions, honor, and popularity are grim, bitter, and harsh. They’re an obstacle to reaching the supreme sanctuary from the yoke.

Suppose an angler was to cast a baited hook into a deep lake. Seeing the bait, a fish would swallow it. And so the fish that swallowed the hook would meet with tragedy and disaster, and the angler can do what he wants with it.

‘Angler’ is a term for Māra the Wicked. ‘Hook’ is a term for possessions, honor, and popularity. Whoever enjoys and likes arisen possessions, honor, and popularity is called a mendicant who has swallowed Māra’s hook. They’ve met with tragedy and disaster, and the Wicked One can do with them what he wants.

So grim are possessions, honor, and popularity—bitter and harsh, an obstacle to reaching the supreme sanctuary from the yoke.

So you should train like this: ‘We will give up arisen possessions, honor, and popularity, and we won’t let them occupy our minds.’ That’s how you should train.”