SN 45.8 — Analysis

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 45.8

1. Ignorance

Analysis

At Sāvatthī.

“Mendicants, I will teach and analyze for you the noble eightfold path. Listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.”

“Yes, sir,” they replied. The Buddha said this:

“And what is the noble eightfold path? It is right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion.

And what is right view? Knowing about suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering. This is called right view.

And what is right purpose? The purpose of renunciation, good will, and harmlessness. This is called right purpose.

And what is right speech? Refraining from speech that’s false, backbiting, harsh, or nonsensical. This is called right speech.

And what is right action? Refraining from killing living creatures, stealing, and unchastity. This is called right action.

And what is right livelihood? It’s when a noble disciple gives up wrong livelihood and earns a living by right livelihood. This is called right livelihood.

And what is right effort? It’s when a mendicant generates enthusiasm, tries, makes an effort, exerts the mind, and strives so that bad, unskillful qualities don’t arise. They generate enthusiasm, try, make an effort, exert the mind, and strive so that bad, unskillful qualities that have arisen are given up. They generate enthusiasm, try, make an effort, exert the mind, and strive so that skillful qualities arise. They generate enthusiasm, try, make an effort, exert the mind, and strive so that skillful qualities that have arisen remain, are not lost, but increase, mature, and are fully developed. This is called right effort.

And what is right mindfulness? It’s when a mendicant meditates by observing an aspect of the body—keen, aware, and mindful, rid of covetousness and displeasure for the world. They meditate observing an aspect of feelings—keen, aware, and mindful, rid of

covetousness and displeasure for the world. They meditate observing an aspect of the mind—keen, aware, and mindful, rid of covetousness and displeasure for the world. They meditate observing an aspect of principles—keen, aware, and mindful, rid of covetousness and displeasure for the world. This is called right mindfulness.

And what is right immersion? It's when a mendicant, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters and remains in the first absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of seclusion, while placing the mind and keeping it connected. As the placing of the mind and keeping it connected are stilled, they enter and remain in the second absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of immersion, with internal clarity and mind at one, without placing the mind and keeping it connected. And with the fading away of rapture, they enter and remain in the third absorption, where they meditate with equanimity, mindful and aware, experiencing for themselves the bliss of which the noble ones declare, 'Equanimous and mindful, one meditates in bliss.' With the giving up of pleasure and pain and the disappearance of former happiness and sadness, they enter and remain in the fourth absorption, without pleasure or pain, with pure equanimity and mindfulness. This is called right immersion."