SN 56.43 — The Great Scorching

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 56.43

5. A Cliff

The Great Scorching

“Mendicants, there is a hell called ‘The Great Scorching’. There, whatever sight you see with your eye is unlikable, not likable; undesirable, not desirable; unpleasant, not pleasant. Whatever sound you hear … Whatever odor you smell … Whatever flavor you taste … Whatever touch you feel … Whatever idea you know with your mind is unlikable, not likable; undesirable, not desirable; unpleasant, not pleasant.”

When he said this, one of the mendicants said to the Buddha, “Sir, that scorching really is mighty, so very mighty. Is there any other scorching more mighty and terrifying than this one?”

“There is, mendicant.”

“But sir, what is it?”

“Mendicants, there are ascetics and brahmins who don’t truly understand about suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path. They take pleasure in choices that lead to rebirth … They continue to make such choices … Having made such choices, they burn with the scorching of rebirth, old age, and death, of sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They’re not freed from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They’re not freed from suffering, I say.

There are ascetics and brahmins who truly understand about suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path. They don’t take pleasure in choices that lead to rebirth … They stop making such choices … Having stopped making such choices, they don’t burn with the scorching of rebirth, old age, and death, of sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They’re freed from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They’re freed from suffering, I say.

That’s why you should practice meditation …”