AN 4.109 — Trees

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Text

Numbered Discourses 4.109

11. Clouds

Trees

“Mendicants, there are these four kinds of tree. What four?

One is a softwood surrounded by softwoods,

one is a softwood surrounded by hardwoods,

one is a hardwood surrounded by softwoods, and

one is a hardwood surrounded by hardwoods.

These are the four kinds of tree. In the same way, these four individuals similar to trees are found in the world. What four?

One is a softwood surrounded by softwoods,

one is a softwood surrounded by hardwoods,

one is a hardwood surrounded by softwoods, and

one is a hardwood surrounded by hardwoods.

And how is an individual a softwood surrounded by softwoods? It’s when an individual is unethical, of bad character, and their followers are the same. That’s how an individual is a softwood surrounded by softwoods. That individual is like a softwood tree that’s surrounded by softwoods, I say.

And how is an individual a softwood surrounded by hardwoods? It’s when an individual is unethical, of bad character, but their followers are ethical, of good character. …

And how is an individual a hardwood surrounded by softwoods? It’s when an individual is ethical, of good character, but their followers are unethical, of bad character. …

And how is an individual a hardwood surrounded by hardwoods? It’s when an individual is ethical, of good character, and their followers are the same.

These four individuals similar to trees are found in the world.”