AN 5.155 — The Decline of the True Teaching (2nd)

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Numbered Discourses 5.155

16. The True Teaching

The Decline of the True Teaching (2nd)

“Mendicants, these five things lead to the decline and disappearance of the true teaching. What five?

It’s when the mendicants don’t memorize the teaching— statements, mixed prose & verse, discussions, verses, inspired exclamations, legends, stories of past lives, amazing stories, and elaborations. This is the first thing that leads to the decline and disappearance of the true teaching.

Furthermore, the mendicants don’t explain the teaching in detail to others as they learned and memorized it. This is the second thing …

Furthermore, the mendicants don’t make others recite the teaching in detail as they learned and memorized it. This is the third thing …

Furthermore, the mendicants don’t rehearse the teaching in detail as they learned and memorized it. This is the fourth thing …

Furthermore, the mendicants don’t think about and consider the teaching in their hearts, examining it with their minds as they learned and memorized it. This is the fifth thing that leads to the decline and disappearance of the true teaching.

These five things lead to the decline and disappearance of the true teaching.

These five things lead to the continuation, persistence, and enduring of the true teaching. What five?

It’s when the mendicants memorize the teaching— statements, mixed prose & verse, discussions, verses, inspired exclamations, legends, stories of past lives, amazing stories, and elaborations. This is the first thing that leads to the continuation, persistence, and enduring of the true teaching.

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Furthermore, the mendicants rehearse the teaching in detail as they learned and memorized it. This is the fourth thing …

Furthermore, the mendicants think about and consider the teaching in their hearts, examining it with their minds as they learned and memorized it. This is the fifth thing that leads to the continuation, persistence, and enduring of the true teaching.

These five things lead to the continuation, persistence, and enduring of the true teaching.”