AN 5.178 — Kings

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Numbered Discourses 5.178

18. A Lay Follower

Kings

“What do you think, mendicants? Have you ever seen or heard of a person who has given up killing living creatures, and the kings have them arrested for that, and execute, imprison, or banish them, or do what the case requires?”

“No, sir.”

“Good, mendicants! I too have never seen or heard of such a thing. Rather, the kings are informed of someone’s bad deed: ‘This person has murdered a man or a woman.’ The kings have them arrested for killing, and execute, imprison, or banish them, or do what the case requires. Have you ever seen or heard of such a case?”

“Sir, we have seen it and heard of it, and we will hear of it again.”

“What do you think, mendicants? Have you ever seen or heard of a person who has given up stealing, and the kings have them arrested for that …?”

“No, sir.”

“Good, mendicants! I too have never seen or heard of such a thing. Rather, the kings are informed of someone’s bad deed: ‘This person took something from a village or wilderness, with the intention to commit theft.’ The kings have them arrested for stealing … Have you ever seen or heard of such a case?”

“Sir, we have seen it and heard of it, and we will hear of it again.”

“What do you think, mendicants? Have you ever seen or heard of a person who has given up sexual misconduct, and the kings have them arrested for that …?”

“No, sir.”

“Good, mendicants! I too have never seen or heard of such a thing. Rather, the kings are informed of someone’s bad deed: ‘This person had relations with women or maidens under someone else’s protection.’ The kings have them arrested for that … Have you ever seen or heard of such a case?”

“Sir, we have seen it and heard of it, and we will hear of it again.”

“What do you think, mendicants? Have you ever seen or heard of a person who has given up lying, and the kings have them arrested for that …?”

“No, sir.”

“Good, mendicants! I too have never seen or heard of such a thing. Rather, the kings are informed of someone’s bad deed: ‘This person has ruined a householder or householder’s child by lying.’ The kings have them arrested for that … Have you ever seen or heard of such a case?”

“Sir, we have seen it and heard of it, and we will hear of it again.”

“What do you think, mendicants? Have you ever seen or heard of a person who has given up intoxicants of beer, wine, and liquor, and the kings have them arrested for that, and execute, imprison, or banish them, or do what the case requires?”

“No, sir.”

“Good, mendicants! I too have never seen or heard of such a thing. Rather, the kings are informed of someone’s bad deed: ‘While under the influence of intoxicants of beer, wine, and liquor, this person murdered a woman or a man. Or they stole something from a village or wilderness. Or they had relations with women or maidens under someone else’s protection. Or they ruined a householder or householder’s child by lying.’ The kings have them arrested for being under the influence of intoxicants of beer, wine, and liquor, and execute, imprison, or banish them, or do what the case requires. Have you ever seen or heard of such a case?”

“Sir, we have seen it and heard of it, and we will hear of it again.”