AN 5.200 — Elements of Escape

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Text

Numbered Discourses 5.200

20. Brahmins

Elements of Escape

“Mendicants, there are these five elements of escape. What five?

Take a case where a mendicant focuses on sensual pleasures, but on that their mind does not leap forth, gain confidence, settle down, and become decided. But when they focus on renunciation, on that their mind leaps forth, gains confidence, settles down, and becomes decided. Their mind is in a good state, well developed, well risen, well freed, and well detached from sensual pleasures. They’re freed from the distressing and feverish defilements that arise because of sensual pleasures, so they don’t experience that kind of feeling. This is how the escape from sensual pleasures is explained.

Take another case where a mendicant focuses on ill will, but their mind does not leap forth … But when they focus on good will, their mind leaps forth … Their mind is in a good state … well detached from ill will. They’re freed from the distressing and feverish defilements that arise because of ill will, so they don’t experience that kind of feeling. This is how the escape from ill will is explained.

Take another case where a mendicant focuses on harming, but their mind does not leap forth … But when they focus on compassion, their mind leaps forth … Their mind is in a good state … well detached from harming. They’re freed from the distressing and feverish defilements that arise because of harming, so they don’t experience that kind of feeling. This is how the escape from harming is explained.

Take another case where a mendicant focuses on form, but their mind does not leap forth … But when they focus on the formless, their mind leaps forth … Their mind is in a good state … well detached from forms. They’re freed from the distressing and feverish defilements that arise because of form, so they don’t experience that kind of feeling. This is how the escape from forms is explained.

Take a case where a mendicant focuses on substantial reality, but their mind does not leap forth, gain confidence, settle down, and become decided. But when they focus on the cessation of substantial reality, their mind leaps forth, gains confidence, settles down, and becomes decided. Their mind is in a good state, well developed, well risen, well freed, and well detached from substantial reality. They’re freed from the distressing and feverish defilements that arise because of substantial reality, so they don’t experience that kind of

feeling. This is how the escape from substantial reality is explained.

Delight in sensual pleasures, ill will, harming, form, and substantial reality don’t linger within them. That’s why they’re called a mendicant who is without underlying tendencies, who has cut off craving, cast off the fetters, and by rightly comprehending conceit has made an end of suffering. These are the five elements of escape.”