AN 5.99 — The Lion

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Numbered Discourses 5.99

10. With Kakudha

The Lion

“Mendicants, toward evening the lion, king of beasts, emerges from his den, yawns, surveys the four quarters, and roars his lion’s roar three times. Then he sets out on the hunt. If he strikes an elephant, he does it carefully, not carelessly. If he strikes a buffalo … a cow … a leopard … or any smaller creatures—even a hare or a cat—he does it carefully, not carelessly. Why is that? Thinking: ‘May I not lose my way.’

‘Lion’ is a term for the Realized One, the perfected one, the fully awakened Buddha. When the Realized One teaches Dhamma to an assembly, this is his lion’s roar. When the Realized One teaches the monks … nuns … laymen … laywomen … or ordinary people—even food-carriers and hunters—he teaches them carefully, not carelessly. Why is that? Because the Realized One has respect and reverence for the teaching.”