AN 7.50 — Sex

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an7.50/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
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Text

Numbered Discourses 7.50

5. A Great Sacrifice

Sex

Then the brahmin Jānussoṇi went up to the Buddha, and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side and said to the Buddha, “Does Worthy Gotama claim to be chaste?”

“Brahmin, if anyone should be rightly said to live the chaste life intact, impeccable, spotless, and unmarred, full and pure, it’s me.”

“But what, Worthy Gotama, is a break, taint, stain, or mar in chastity?”

“Firstly, an ascetic or brahmin who claims to be perfectly chaste does not mutually engage in sex with a lady. However, they consent to being anointed, massaged, bathed, and rubbed by a lady. They enjoy it and like it and find it rewarding. This is a break, taint, stain, or mar in chastity. This is called one who lives the chaste life impurely, yoked by the yoke of sex. They’re not freed from rebirth, old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They’re not freed from suffering, I say.

Furthermore, an ascetic or brahmin who claims to be perfectly chaste does not mutually engage in sex with a lady. Nor do they consent to massage and bathing. However, they giggle and play and have fun with ladies. …

they gaze into a lady’s eyes. …

they listen through a wall or rampart to the sound of ladies laughing or chatting or singing or crying. …

they recall when they used to laugh, chat, and have fun with ladies. …

they see a householder or their child amusing themselves, supplied and provided with the five kinds of sensual stimulation. …

They don’t see a householder or their child amusing themselves, supplied and provided with the five kinds of sensual stimulation. However, they live the chaste life wishing to be reborn in one of the orders of gods. They think: ‘By this precept or observance or fervent austerity or spiritual practice, may I become one of the gods!’ They enjoy it and like it and find it rewarding. This is a break, taint, stain, or mar in chastity. This is called one who lives the chaste life impurely, yoked by the yoke of sex. They’re not free from rebirth, old age,

death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They're not free from suffering, I say.

As long as I saw that these seven sexual yokes—or even one of them—had not been given up in me, I didn't announce my supreme perfect awakening in this world with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans.

But when I saw that these seven sexual yokes—every one of them—had been given up in me, I announced my supreme perfect awakening in this world with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans. Knowledge and vision arose in me: 'My freedom is unshakable; this is my last rebirth; now there'll be no more future lives.'"

When he said this, the brahmin Jānussoṇi said to the Buddha, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! … From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life."