AN 10.85 — A Boaster

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Text

Numbered Discourses 10.85

9. Senior Mendicants

A Boaster

At one time Venerable Mahācunda was staying in the land of the Cetīs at Sahajāti. There he addressed the mendicants: “Reverends, mendicants!”

“Reverend,” they replied. Venerable Mahācunda said this:

“Take a mendicant who boasts and brags about their achievements: ‘I enter and emerge from the first absorption, the second absorption, the third absorption, and the fourth absorption. And I enter and emerge from the dimensions of infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and neither perception nor non-perception. And I enter and emerge from the cessation of perception and feeling.’

They’re pursued, pressed, and grilled by the Realized One, or by one of his disciples who has the absorptions, and is skilled in attainments, in the minds of others, and in encompassing another’s mind. Grilled in this way they get stuck or lose their way. They fall to ruin and disaster.

The Realized One or one of his disciples encompasses their mind and investigates: ‘Why does this venerable boast and brag about their achievements, saying, “I enter and emerge from the first absorption … and the cessation of perception and feeling.”’

They understand, ‘For a long time this venerable’s deeds have been broken, tainted, spotty, and marred. Their deeds and behavior are inconsistent. This venerable is unethical, and unethical conduct means decline in the teaching and training proclaimed by the Realized One.

This venerable is unfaithful, and lack of faith means decline …

This venerable is unlearned and unpracticed, and lack of learning means decline …

This venerable is hard to admonish, and being hard to admonish means decline …

This venerable has bad friends, and bad friends mean decline …

This venerable is lazy, and laziness means decline …

This venerable is unmindful, and unmindfulness means decline …

This venerable is deceptive, and deceitfulness means decline …

This venerable is burdensome, and being burdensome means decline …

This venerable is witless, and lack of wisdom means decline in the teaching and training proclaimed by the Realized One.'

Suppose one friend was to say to another: 'My dear, when you need money for some payment, just ask me and I'll give it.' Then when some payment falls due, that friend says to their friend: 'I need some money, my dear. Give me some.' They'd say: 'Well then, my dear, dig here.' So they dig there, but don't find anything. They'd say: 'You lied to me, my dear, you spoke hollow words when you told me to dig here.' They'd say: 'My dear, I didn't lie or speak hollow words. Well then, dig here.' So they dig there as well, but don't find anything. They'd say: 'You lied to me, my dear, you spoke hollow words when you said dig here.' They'd say: 'My dear, I didn't lie or speak hollow words. Well then, dig here.' So they dig there as well, but don't find anything. They'd say: 'You lied to me, my dear, you spoke hollow words when you said dig here.' They'd say: 'My dear, I didn't lie or speak hollow words. But I had gone mad, I was out of my mind.'

In the same way, take a mendicant who boasts and brags about their achievements: 'I enter and emerge from the first absorption … and the cessation of perception and feeling.'

They're pursued, pressed, and grilled by the Realized One, or by one of his disciples … Grilled in this way they get stuck or lose their way. They fall to ruin and disaster.

The Realized One or one of his disciples encompasses their mind and investigates: 'Why does this venerable boast and brag about their achievements, saying, "I enter and emerge from the first absorption … and the cessation of perception and feeling."'

They understand, 'For a long time this venerable's deeds have been broken, tainted, spotty, and marred. Their deeds and behavior are inconsistent. This venerable is unethical, and unethical conduct means decline in the teaching and training proclaimed by the Realized One.

This venerable is unfaithful …

unlearned and unpracticed …

hard to admonish …

with bad friends …

lazy …

unmindful …

deceptive …

burdensome …

This venerable is witless, and lack of wisdom means decline in the teaching and training proclaimed by the Realized One.'

It is quite impossible for a mendicant to achieve growth, improvement, or maturity in this teaching and training without giving up these ten qualities. It is quite possible for a mendicant to achieve growth, improvement, or maturity in this teaching and training after giving up these ten qualities.”