Snp 1.12 — The Sage

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Text

Anthology of Discourses 1.12

The Sage

Peril stems from intimacy,

dust comes from an abode.

Freedom from abode and intimacy:

that is the sage’s vision.

Having cut down what’s grown, they wouldn’t replant,

nor would they nurture what’s growing.

That’s who they call a sage wandering alone,

the great seer has seen the state of peace.

Having appraised the fields and measured the seeds,

they wouldn’t nurture them with moisture.

Truly that sage who sees the ending of rebirth

has left speculation behind and is beyond reckoning.

Understanding all the planes of rebirth,

not wanting a single one of them;

truly that sage freed of greed

need not swim, for they have reached the far shore.

The vanquisher of all, knower of all, so very intelligent,

unsullied in the midst of all things,

has given up all, freed in the ending of craving:

that’s who the attentive know as a sage.

Strong in wisdom, with precepts and observances intact,

serene, loving absorption, mindful,
released from chains, kind, undefiled:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
The diligent sage wandering alone,
is unshaken by blame and praise—
like a lion not startled by sounds,
like wind not caught in a net,
like water not sticking to a lotus.
Leader of others, not by others led:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
Steady as a post in a bathing-place
when others speak endlessly against them,
freed of greed, with senses stilled:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
Steadfast, straight as a spindle,
horrified by wicked deeds,
discerning the just and the unjust:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
Restrained, they do no evil,
young or middle-aged, the sage is self-controlled.
Irreproachable, he does not insult anyone:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
When one who lives on charity receives alms,
from the top, the middle, or the leftovers,
they think it unworthy to praise or put down:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
The sage lives refraining from sex,
even when young is not tied down,
refraining from indulgence and negligence, freed:

that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
Understanding the world, the seer of the ultimate goal,
the unaffected one, having crossed the flood and the ocean,
has cut the ties, unattached and undefiled:
that’s who the attentive know as a sage.
The two are not the same, far apart in lifestyle and conduct—
the householder providing for a wife, and the selfless one true to their vows.
The unrestrained householder kills other creatures,
while the restrained sage always protects living creatures.
As the crested blue-necked peacock flying through the sky
never approaches the speed of the swan,
so the householder cannot compete with the mendicant,
the sage meditating secluded in the woods.