Snp 4.2 — Eight on the Cave

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Text

Anthology of Discourses 4.2

Eight on the Cave

Trapped in a cave, thickly overspread,

sunk in delusion they stay.

That sort is far from seclusion,

for sensual pleasures in the world are not easy to give up.

The chains of desire, the bonds of life's pleasures

are hard to escape, for one cannot free another.

Looking to the past or the future,

they pray for these pleasures or former ones.

Greedy, fixated, infatuated by sensual pleasures,

they are incorrigible, habitually immoral.

When led to suffering they lament,

"What will become of us when we pass away from here?"

That's why a personage should train in this life:

should you know that anything in the world is wrong,

don't act wrongly on account of that;

for the attentive say this life is short.

I see the world's population floundering,

given to craving for future lives.

Base men wail in the jaws of death,

not rid of craving for life after life.

See them flounder over belongings,

like fish in puddles of a dried-up stream.

Seeing this, live unselfishly,

forming no attachment to future lives.

Rid of desire for both ends,

having completely understood contact, free of greed,

doing nothing for which they’d blame themselves,

the attentive don’t cling to the seen and the heard.

Having completely understood perception and having crossed the flood,

the sage, not clinging to possessions,

with dart plucked out, living diligently,

does not hope for this world or the next.