AN 2.13 — AN 2.13

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

Source: https://www.mindreleased.com/s/Book-2_Anguttara-Nikya-A-New-Translation.pdf#page=35

Source revision: 95439bcf66d6295a952d574a8501d2d31edc03ca3ed8eb1e5889f079f7b658c9

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Candana source labels: 13. Site text ID: AN 2.13.

Text

13. “Bhikkhus, there are these two powers. Which two?

“There is the power of wisely reflecting, and the power that comes from cultivation.

“Now, Bhikkhus, what is the power of wisely reflecting?

“Here, Bhikkhus, someone carefully scrutinizes while reflecting:

‘Whether in the present life or in future lifetimes still to come, all evil behavior committed through physical actions will produce and deliver its painful fruits. Similarly, whether in the present life or in future lifetimes still to come, all evil behavior committed through exchange of words or verbal actions will produce and deliver its painful fruits. Similarly, whether in the

present life or in future lifetimes still to come, all evil behavior committed through mental actions will produce and deliver its painful fruits.’

“And by wisely reflecting in this manner, that person gives up engaging in evil actions, and instead starts by choosing to engage in good and appropriate physical actions. Similarly, he chooses to engage in good and appropriate exchange of words or verbal actions. And similarly, he chooses to engage in good and appropriate mental actions while thinking and considering. In this manner, he purifies himself continuously, while trying to maintain pure conduct throughout life.

“This, therefore, is called the power of wisely reflecting.

“And what, Bhikkhus, is the power that comes from cultivation?

“Here, Bhikkhus, while living secluded and removed from sensual desires and unwholesome thoughts, the Bhikkhu enters upon and remains in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by thinking and planning, with joy and pleasure that arise from such seclusion.

“Next, through the disappearance of both thinking and planning, he enters upon and remains in the second jhāna, which has self-confidence and singleness of mind, that take place in the absence of thinking and planning, with joy and pleasure that are the result of the collected stability of the mind.

“Further, with the detachment from and the fading away of joy itself, the Bhikkhu remains in the comfort of equanimity, while being mindful and fully aware with pristine clarity, experiencing pleasure and happiness within the body, as he enters upon and remains in the third jhāna, about which the Noble Ones declare:

‘It is such a one indeed who is serenely mindful; abiding in happiness; with an ever-present sense of equanimity.’

“Afterwards, by giving up both pleasure and pain, and having already gone beyond joy and anguish, he remains in a state of purifying mindfulness with the ever-growing sense of equanimity, while experiencing neither pleasure nor pain, having gone beyond both, as he attains to the fourth jhāna.

“And this itself is called the power that comes from cultivation.

“These two, Bhikkhus, are therefore called the two powers.”