AN 3.88 — Tatiya Sikkhā Sutta (Mastering the Trainings – Part 3)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

87. Tatiya Sikkhā Sutta (Mastering the Trainings – Part 3) Bhikkhus, the one hundred and fifty training rules are to be recited every two weeks. Therefore, all those sons of clansmen who come seeking their own good must observe them.

These training rules are categorized into three training groups. What are the three?

Here, Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhu develops and becomes complete in his practice, as he engages in training in the Higher Virtues, training in the Higher Mind, and training in Higher Wisdom, mastering them all.

Now, it might so happen that such a practitioner breaks his minor and lesser significant training rules. However, soon he can recover and regain his former balance.

And why is this so?

Because, while it is still quite possible for such a person to break his minor training rules and commit a wrongdoing, in terms of those lesser rules, yet given that he is well-structured in his dedication to the training rules, treating them as his core and fundamental basis, he can therefore regain his balance by continuing his work, undertaking and keeping those rules, which benefits him greatly in the Holy Life. Thus, his firmness in virtuous behavior and reliance on the training in the monastic rules helps him greatly.

Thus, by maintaining his diligent practice, he attains the Release of the Heart, that is the dustless Freedom through Wisdom, in this very life, having destroyed all the contaminants of the heart through his own direct realization and sincere efforts. In this manner, he attains to the Supreme Goal of the Holy Life, whereby he dwells in that state, while living out the rest of his days.

However, Bhikkhus, if the Bhikkhu is unable to realize the Release of the Heart that is the dustless Freedom through Wisdom, in this very life, then with the complete destruction of the five lower fetters binding all beings to the sensual world, at the conclusion of his

human existence, he then attains Final Nibbāna during the interval of his reappearance into the Pure Abodes, at which point he puts a final end to all suffering.

But, if he does not attain in this manner by to not penetrating thus far, then, through the complete destruction of the five lower fetters which bind one to the sensual world, once this body is no more, after death, he attains Final Nibbāna upon landing in the Pure Abodes, as he puts a final end to all suffering.

However, if he is still unable to realize or attain in this manner, then, with the complete destruction of the five lower fetters binding one to the sensual world, right after this life is over, at death, he reappears into the Pure Abodes, where he attains Final Nibbāna without exertion, and thus puts a final end to all suffering.

Still however, if he is still unable to realize this, then with the complete destruction of the five lower fetters that bind all beings to the sensual world, at the conclusion of this life, upon death, he reappears in the Pure Abodes, where he attains Final Nibbāna with some effort and exertion, thus putting a final end to all suffering.

And if he is still unable to realize this, then, with the destruction of the five lower fetters that bind one to the sensual world, already being a Non-Returner himself, he is declared to be “one who goes upstream” and reappears in the highest of Brahma realms, in the Akaniṭṭha Pure Abodes, where he will attain Full Liberation, without ever returning from that world.

If, however, he is still unable to realize or attain any of these states, then, with the complete destruction of the first three fetters, thus greatly reducing his passion, hatred, and delusion, he becomes a “Once-Returner,”, whereby he will come back only once more to this world of human existence, where he will put a final end to all suffering.

But, if he is still unable to realize this, then, through the complete destruction of the three fetters, he becomes a “one-seeder,” as he seeks rebirth once more in human existence, putting a final end to suffering.

But, if he is unable to realize this, then, with the complete destruction of the three fetters, he goes from family to family, being reborn in good families two or three more times at the most, upon the completion of which, he will put a final end to suffering.

But, if he is still unable to realize this, then, with the complete destruction of the three fetters, he limits his rebirths among the Devas or humans for seven more times at the most, where he finally puts an end to suffering.

It is in this way, Bhikkhus, that by dedicating oneself partially, one attains partial results, and by dedicating yourselves fully to the Holy Life, engaging through all its trainings, you will attain Final Liberation, here and now.

Thus, I declare that your genuine efforts in the Holy Life will not be a waste, hence these training rules are not to be regarded as fruitless, at all.