AN 3.89 — Paṭhama Sikkhā Sutta (The Higher Trainings – Part 1)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

88. Paṭhama Sikkhā Sutta (The Higher Trainings – Part 1) Bhikkhus, these are the three higher trainings. What three?

Observing the training in the Higher virtues; the training in the Higher Mind; and the training in the Higher Wisdom.

And what, Bhikkhus, is the training in the Higher Virtues?

Here, Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhu becomes virtuous in his behavior while training in the Higher Virtues pertaining to the six sense bases. By undertaking these training rules, he is heedful and determined in their practice. This is called training in the Higher Virtue.

And what, Bhikkhus, is the training in the Higher Mind?

Here, Bhikkhus, by overcoming the obstructive five hindrances, while being secluded from sensual and harmful thoughts, the Bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the first jhāna, which is accompanied by thinking and planning, with joy and pleasure that arise from such seclusion. Later, through the disappearance of both thinking and planning, the Bhikkhu enters upon and abides in the second jhāna, which brings self-confidence and singleness of mind but without thinking and planning, with joy and pleasure born of the collected stability of mind. And with joy increasingly dissipating, he experiences a deepening of equanimity, where he remains mindful and fully aware, while experiencing pleasure and happiness within the body. This is the third jhāna, for which the Noble Ones state:

“Such a one mindfully abides in happiness, with ever-present equanimity.”

Further, by giving up both pleasure and pain, and having already gone beyond joy and anguish, the Bhikkhu remains in the continuous state of purifying mindfulness, with an ever-present sense of equanimity, as he enters upon and abides in the fourth jhāna, while experiencing neither pleasure nor pain, having now gone beyond both.

This, therefore, is called training in the Higher Mind.

And what, Bhikkhus, is training in Higher Wisdom?

Here, Bhikkhus, the Bhikkhu knows and sees how suffering comes to be. He knows and sees directly, how suffering is conditioned and the manner in which its origination unfolds and comes to be. He also knows and sees directly, how the very cessation of suffering unfolds and takes place. Furthermore, he knows and sees directly, how the Path of Practice itself, when applied correctly, puts an end to suffering, thereby bringing suffering to its cessation.

Bhikkhus, this is the training in the Higher Wisdom.

These, Bhikkhus, are therefore the Three Higher Trainings.