AN 7.68 — One Who Knows the Teachings

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an7.68/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Numbered Discourses 7.68

7. The Great Chapter

One Who Knows the Teachings

“A mendicant with seven qualities is worthy of offerings dedicated to the gods, worthy of hospitality, worthy of a religious donation, worthy of veneration with cupped palms, and is the supreme field of merit for the world. What seven? It’s when a mendicant knows the teachings, knows the meaning, has self-knowledge, knows moderation, knows the right time, knows assemblies, and knows individuals high and low.

And how is a mendicant one who knows the teachings? It’s when a mendicant knows the teachings: statements, mixed prose & verse, discussions, verses, inspired exclamations, legends, stories of past lives, amazing stories, and elaborations. If a mendicant did not know these teachings, they would not be called ‘one who knows the teachings’. But because they do know these teachings, they are called ‘one who knows the teachings’. Such is the one who knows the teachings.

And how are they one who knows the meaning? It’s when a mendicant knows the meaning of this or that statement: ‘This is what that statement means; that is what this statement means.’ If a mendicant did not know the meaning of this or that statement, they would not be called ‘one who knows the meaning’. But because they do know the meaning of this or that statement, they are called ‘one who knows the meaning’. Such is the one who knows the teachings and the one who knows the meaning.

And how are they one who has self-knowledge? It’s when a mendicant has self-knowledge: ‘This is the extent of my faith, ethics, learning, generosity, wisdom, and eloquence.’ If a mendicant did not have self-knowledge, they would not be called ‘one who has self-knowledge’. But because they do have self-knowledge, they are called ‘one who has self-knowledge’. Such is the one who knows the teachings, the one who knows the meaning, and the one who has self-knowledge.

And how are they one who knows moderation? It’s when a mendicant knows moderation when receiving robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and supplies for the sick. If a mendicant did not know moderation, they would not be called ‘one who knows moderation’. But because they do know moderation, they are called ‘one who knows moderation’. Such is the one who knows the teachings, the one who knows the meaning, the one who has self-knowledge, and the one who knows moderation.

And how are they one who knows the right time? It's when a mendicant knows the right time: 'This is the time for recitation; this is the time for questioning; this is the time for meditation; this is the time for retreat.' If a mendicant did not know the right time, they would not be called 'one who knows the right time'. But because they do know the right time, they are called 'one who knows the right time'. Such is the one who knows the teachings, the one who knows the meaning, the one who has self-knowledge, the one who knows moderation, and the one who knows the right time.

And how are they one who knows assemblies? It's when a mendicant knows assemblies: 'This is an assembly of aristocrats, of brahmins, of householders, or of ascetics. This one should be approached in this way. This is how to stand, to act, to sit, to speak, or to stay silent when there.' If a mendicant did not know assemblies, they would not be called 'one who knows assemblies'. But because they do know assemblies, they are called 'one who knows assemblies'. Such is the one who knows the teachings, the one who knows the meaning, the one who has self-knowledge, the one who knows moderation, the one who knows the right time, and the one who knows assemblies.

And how are they one who knows individuals high and low? It's when a mendicant understands individuals in terms of pairs. Two individuals: one likes to see the noble ones, one does not. The individual who doesn't like to see the noble ones is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who does like to see the noble ones is praiseworthy in that respect.

Two individuals like to see the noble ones: one likes to hear the true teaching, one does not. The individual who doesn't like to hear the true teaching is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who does like to hear the true teaching is praiseworthy in that respect.

Two individuals like to hear the true teaching: one actively listens to the teaching, one does not. The individual who doesn't actively listen to the teaching is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who does actively listen to the teaching is praiseworthy in that respect.

Two individuals actively listen to the teaching: one remembers the teaching they've heard, one does not. The individual who doesn't remember the teaching they've heard is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who does remember the teaching they've heard is praiseworthy in that respect.

Two individuals remember the teaching they've heard: one examines the meaning of the teachings they have remembered, one does not. The individual who does not examine the meaning of the teachings they have remembered is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who does examine the meaning of the teachings they have remembered is praiseworthy in that respect.

Two individuals examine the meaning of the teachings they have remembered: one understands the meaning and the teaching and practicesin line with the teaching, one understands the meaning and the teaching but does not practice in line with the teaching. The individual who understands the meaning and the teaching but does not practice in line with the principle of the teaching is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who understands the meaning and the teaching and practices in line with the principle of the

teaching is praiseworthy in that respect.

Two individuals understand the meaning and the teaching and practice in line with the teaching: one practices to benefit themselves but not others, and one practices to benefit both themselves and others. The individual who practices to benefit themselves but not others is reprehensible in that respect. The individual who practices to benefit both themselves and others is praiseworthy in that respect.

That's how a mendicant understands individuals in terms of pairs.

That's how a mendicant is one who knows individuals high and low. A mendicant with these seven qualities is worthy of offerings dedicated to the gods, worthy of hospitality, worthy of a religious donation, worthy of veneration with cupped palms, and is the supreme field of merit for the world."