MN 132 — Ānanda and One Fine Night

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Text

Middle Discourses 132

Ānanda and One Fine Night

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery.

Now at that time Venerable Ānanda was educating, encouraging, firing up, and inspiring the mendicants in the assembly hall with a Dhamma talk on the topic of the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night.

Then in the late afternoon, the Buddha came out of retreat, went to the assembly hall, where he sat down on the seat spread out, and addressed the mendicants: "Who was inspiring the mendicants with a talk on the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night?"

"It was Venerable Ānanda, sir."

Then the Buddha said to Venerable Ānanda, "But in what way were you inspiring the mendicants with a talk on the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night?"

"I was doing so in this way, sir," replied Ānanda.

"Don't run back to the past,

don't anticipate the future.

What's past is left behind,

the future has not arrived;

and any present phenomenon

you clearly discern in every case.

The unfaltering, the unshakable:

having known that, foster it.

Today's the day to keenly work—

who knows, tomorrow may bring death!

For there is no bargain to be struck

with Death and his mighty horde.

One who keenly meditates like this,

tireless all night and day:

that's who has one fine night—

so declares the peaceful sage.

And how do you run back to the past? …

And how do you not run back to the past? …

And how do you anticipate the future? …

And how do you not anticipate the future? …

And how do you falter amid presently arisen phenomena? …

And how do you not falter amid presently arisen phenomena? … That's how you don't falter amid presently arisen phenomena.

'Don't run back to the past,

don't anticipate the future. …

that's who has one fine night—

so declares the peaceful sage.'

That's how I was inspiring the mendicants with a talk on the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night."

"Good, good, Ānanda. It's good that you were inspiring the mendicants with a talk on the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night."

And the Buddha repeated the verses and analysis once more.

That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, Venerable Ānanda approved what the Buddha said.