SN 3.17 — Diligence

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 3.17

2. Childless

Diligence

At Sāvatthī.

Seated to one side, King Pasenadi said to the Buddha, “Sir, is there one thing that secures benefits for both this life and lives to come?”

“There is, Great King.”

“So what is that one thing?”

“Diligence, Great King, is one thing that secures benefits for both this life and lives to come. The footprints of all creatures that walk can fit inside an elephant’s footprint. So an elephant’s footprint is said to be the biggest of them all. In the same way, diligence is one thing that secures benefits for both this life and lives to come.”

That is what the Buddha said. …

“For one who desires high delights

again and again—

long life, beauty, and health,

heaven, and an eminent family—

the astute praise diligence

in making merit.

Being diligent, an astute person

secures both benefits:

the benefit in this life,

and in lives to come.

An attentive one, comprehending the meaning,

is said to be astute.”