SN 22.54 — Bija Sutta: Means of Propagation

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

At Savatthi. There the Blessed One addressed the monks: "Monks."

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "Monks, there are these five means of propagation. Which five? Root-propagation, stem-propagation, joint-propagation, cutting-propagation, & seed-propagation as the fifth. And if these five means of propagation are not broken, not rotten, not damaged by wind & sun, mature, and well-buried, but there is no earth and no water, would they exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation?"

"No, lord."

"And if these five means of propagation are broken, rotten, damaged by wind & sun, immature, and poorly-buried, but there is earth & water, would they exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation?"

"No, lord."

"And if these five means of propagation are not broken, not rotten, not damaged by wind & sun, mature, and well-buried, and there is earth & water, would they exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation?"

"Yes, lord."

"Like the earth property, monks, is how the four standing-spots for consciousness should be seen. Like the liquid property is how delight & passion should be seen. Like the five means of propagation is how consciousness together with its nutriment should be seen.

"Should consciousness, when taking a stance, stand attached to (a physical) form, supported by form,[1] established on form, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

"Should consciousness, when taking a stance, stand attached to feeling, supported by feeling, established on feeling, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

"Should consciousness, when taking a stance, stand attached to perception, supported by perception, established on perception, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

"Should consciousness, when taking a stance, stand attached to fabrications, supported by fabrications, established on fabrications, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

"Were someone to say, 'I will describe a coming, a going, a passing away, an arising, a growth, an increase, or a proliferation of consciousness apart from form, from feeling, from perception, from fabrications,' that would be impossible.

"If a monk abandons passion for the property of form...

"If a monk abandons passion for the property of feeling...

"If a monk abandons passion for the property of perception...

"If a monk abandons passion for the property of fabrications...

"If a monk abandons passion for the property of consciousness, then owing to the abandonment of passion, the support is cut off, and there is no base for consciousness. Consciousness, thus unestablished, not proliferating, not performing any function, is released. Owing to its release, it is steady. Owing to its steadiness, it is contented. Owing to its contentment, it is not agitated. Not agitated, he (the monk) is totally unbound right within. He discerns that 'Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.'"

Notes

1.

"Supported by form": I.e., having form as its object. Similarly for feeling, perception, and fabrications.

See also: SN 12.38; SN 22.53