SN 22.54 — SN 22:54 Means of Propagation | Bīja Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

Means of Propagation

Bīja Sutta (SN 22:54)

Near Sāvatthī. There the Blessed One addressed the monks: “Monks.”

“Yes, lord,” the monks responded to him.

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 standing, stand attached to (a physical) form, supported by form (as its object), landing on form, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to feeling, supported by feeling (as its object), landing on feeling, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to perception, supported by perception (as its object), landing on perception, watered with delight, it would exhibit growth, increase, & proliferation.

“Should consciousness, when standing, stand attached to fabrications, supported by fabrications (as its object), landing 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 landing of consciousness. Consciousness, thus not having landed, not increasing, not concocting, 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.’”

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: AN 3:34; AN 3:77; SN 12:64