SN 22.78 — SN 22:78 The Lion | Sīha Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

The Lion

Sīha Sutta (SN 22:78)

“Monks, the lion, the king of beasts, leaves his lair in the evening. Having left his lair, he stretches himself. Having stretched himself, he looks all around the four directions. Having looked all around the four directions, he roars his lion’s roar three times. Having roared his lion’s roar three times, he heads out for game. Any animals who hear the sound of the roar of the lion, the king of beasts, for the most part feel fear, terror, & fright. Those who live in holes go into their holes. Those who live in the water go into the water. Those who live in the forest go into the forest. Birds flee to the air. Even royal bull elephants, bound by strong leather bonds in villages, towns, & capital cities, bursting & breaking their bonds, frightened, scattering their urine & feces, run to & fro. So powerful among animals, monks,

is the lion, the king of beasts—so mighty & majestic.

"In the same way, monks, when a Tathāgata appears in the world—worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed—he teaches the Dhamma: 'Such is form, such its origination, such its disappearance. Such is feeling.... Such is perception.... Such are fabrications.... Such is consciousness, such its origination, such its disappearance.'1 Any devas who are long-lived, beautiful, abounding in pleasure, established for a long time in high palaces, on hearing the Tathāgata's Dhamma, for the most part feel fear, terror, & fright: 'Being inconstant, it seems, we supposed we were constant! Being impermanent, we supposed we were permanent! Non-eternal, we supposed we were eternal! We—inconstant, impermanent, & non-eternal, it seems—are encompassed in self-identification.' So powerful in the world with its devas, monks, is the Tathāgata—so mighty & majestic."

When the Awakened One, through direct knowledge,

—the Teacher, the person with no peer

in the world with its devas—

sets the Dhamma wheel rolling:

the cessation of self-identification,

& the cause of self-identification,

& the noble eightfold path,

leading to the stilling of suffering,

long-lived devas—beautiful, prestigious—

become fearful & frightened,

like deer at a lion's roar.

'We're not beyond self-identification.

It seems we're inconstant,' [they say,]

on hearing the word of the Worthy One,

the one fully released,

the one who is Such.

Note

1. See SN 22:5 and SN 22:56–57.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 11; MN 12; MN 44; AN 4:33; Iti 49