SN 22.93 — A River

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 22.93

10. Flowers

A River

At Sāvatthī.

“Suppose, mendicants, there was a mountain river that flowed swiftly, going far, carrying all before it. If wild sugarcane, kusa grass, reeds, vetiver, or trees grew on either bank, they’d overhang the river. And if a person who was being swept along by the current grabbed the wild sugarcane, kusa grass, reeds, vetiver, or trees, it’d fall apart, and they’d come to ruin because of that.

In the same way, an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons.

They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. But their form falls apart, and they come to ruin because of that. They regard feeling … perception … choices … consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. But their consciousness falls apart, and they come to ruin because of that.

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, sir.” …

“Is feeling … perception … choices … consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, sir.”

“So you should truly see … Seeing this … They understand: ‘… there is nothing further for this place.’”