SN 36.6 — An Arrow

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Source: https://suttacentral.net/sn36.6/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
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Text

Linked Discourses 36.6

1. With Verses

An Arrow

“Mendicants, an unlearned ordinary person feels pleasant, painful, and neutral feelings. A learned noble disciple also feels pleasant, painful, and neutral feelings. What, then, is the difference between a learned noble disciple and an ordinary unlearned person?”

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. …”

“When an unlearned ordinary person experiences painful physical feelings they sorrow and wail and lament, beating their breast and falling into confusion. They experience two feelings: physical and mental.

It’s like a person who is struck with an arrow, only to be struck with a second arrow. That person experiences the feeling of two arrows.

In the same way, when an unlearned ordinary person experiences painful physical feelings they sorrow and wail and lament, beating their breast and falling into confusion. They experience two feelings: physical and mental.

When they’re touched by painful feeling, they resist it. The underlying tendency for aversion toward painful feeling underlies that.

When touched by painful feeling they look forward to enjoying sensual pleasures. Why is that? Because an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t understand any escape from painful feeling apart from sensual pleasures. Since they look forward to enjoying sensual pleasures, the underlying tendency to greed for pleasant feeling underlies that.

They don’t truly understand feelings’ origin, disappearance, gratification, drawback, and escape. The underlying tendency to ignorance about neutral feeling underlies that.

If they feel a pleasant feeling, they feel it attached. If they feel a painful feeling, they feel it attached. If they feel a neutral feeling, they feel it attached.

They’re called an unlearned ordinary person who is attached to rebirth, old age, and death, to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They are attached to suffering, I say.

When a learned noble disciple experiences painful physical feelings they don’t sorrow or wail or lament, beating their breast and falling into confusion. They experience one feeling:

physical, not mental.

It's like a person who is struck with an arrow, but was not struck with a second arrow. That person would experience the feeling of one arrow.

In the same way, when a learned noble disciple experiences painful physical feelings they don't sorrow or wail or lament, beating their breast and falling into confusion. They experience one feeling: physical, not mental.

When they're touched by painful feeling, they don't resist it. There's no underlying tendency for aversion toward painful feeling underlying that.

When touched by painful feeling they don't look forward to enjoying sensual pleasures. Why is that? Because a learned noble disciple understands an escape from painful feeling apart from sensual pleasures. Since they don't look forward to enjoying sensual pleasures, there's no underlying tendency to greed for pleasant feeling underlying that.

They truly understand feelings' origin, disappearance, gratification, drawback, and escape. There's no underlying tendency to ignorance about neutral feeling underlying that.

If they feel a pleasant feeling, they feel it detached. If they feel a painful feeling, they feel it detached. If they feel a neutral feeling, they feel it detached.

They're called a learned noble disciple who is detached from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They are detached from suffering, I say.

This is the difference between a learned noble disciple and an unlearned ordinary person.

A wise and learned person does not not feel

the feeling of pleasure and pain.

This is the great difference of skill

between the attentive one and the ordinary.

A learned person who has appraised the teaching

discerns this world and the next.

Desirable things don't disturb their mind,

nor are they repelled by the undesirable.

Both favoring and opposing

are cleared and ended, and are no more.

Knowing the stainless, sorrowless state,

they who have gone beyond rebirth understand rightly."