SN 36.31 — Niramisa Sutta: Not of the Flesh

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

"Monks, there is rapture of the flesh, rapture not of the flesh, and rapture more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh. There is pleasure of the flesh, pleasure not of the flesh, and pleasure more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh. There is equanimity of the flesh, equanimity not of the flesh, and equanimity more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh. There is liberation of the flesh, liberation not of the flesh, and liberation more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh.

"And what is rapture of the flesh? There are these five strings of sensuality. Which five? Forms cognizable via the eye — agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Sounds cognizable via the ear... Aromas cognizable via the nose... Flavors cognizable via the tongue... Tactile sensations cognizable via the body — agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Now whatever rapture arises in dependence on these five strands of sensuality, that is called rapture of the flesh.

"And what is rapture not of the flesh? There is the case where a monk — quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful qualities — enters & remains in the first jhana: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the

second jhana: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation — internal assurance. This is called rapture not of the flesh.

"And what is the rapture more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh? Whatever rapture arises in a fermentation-ended monk as he is reflecting on his mind released from passion, reflecting on his mind released from aversion, reflecting on his mind released from delusion, that is called rapture more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh.

"And what is pleasure of the flesh? There are these five strings of sensuality. Which five? Forms cognizable via the eye — agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Sounds cognizable via the ear... Aromas cognizable via the nose... Flavors cognizable via the tongue... Tactile sensations cognizable via the body — agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Now whatever pleasure arises in dependence on these five strands of sensuality, that is called pleasure of the flesh.

"And what is pleasure not of the flesh? There is the case where a monk — quite withdrawn from sensual pleasures, withdrawn from unskillful qualities — enters & remains in the first jhana: rapture & pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the second jhana: rapture & pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation — internal assurance. With the fading of rapture, he remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, and senses pleasure with the body. He enters & remains in the third jhana, of which the Noble Ones declare, 'Equanimous & mindful, he has a pleasant abiding.' This is called pleasure not of the flesh.

"And what is the pleasure more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh? Whatever pleasure arises in a fermentation-ended monk as he is reflecting on his mind released from passion, reflecting on his mind released from aversion, reflecting on his mind released from delusion, that is called pleasure more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh.

"And what is equanimity of the flesh? There are these five strings of sensuality. Which five? Forms cognizable via the eye — agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Sounds cognizable via the ear... Aromas cognizable via the nose... Flavors cognizable via the tongue... Tactile sensations cognizable via the body — agreeable, pleasing, charming, endearing, fostering desire, enticing. Whatever equanimity arises in dependence on these five strands of sensuality, that is called equanimity of the flesh.

"And what is equanimity not of the flesh? There is the case where a monk, with the abandoning of pleasure & stress — as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress — enters & remains in the fourth jhana: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither-pleasure-nor-pain. This is called equanimity not of the flesh.

"And what is the equanimity more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh? Whatever equanimity arises in a fermentation-ended monk as he is reflecting on his mind released from passion, reflecting on his mind released from aversion, reflecting on his mind

released from delusion, that is called equanimity more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh.

"And what is liberation of the flesh? Liberation associated with form is of the flesh. What is liberation not of the flesh? Liberation associated with the formless is not of the flesh.

"And what is the liberation more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh? Whatever liberation arises in a fermentation-ended monk as he is reflecting on his mind released from passion, reflecting on his mind released from aversion, reflecting on his mind released from delusion, that is called liberation more not-of-the-flesh than that not of the flesh."