SN 36.31 — Not of the Flesh

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 36.31

3. The Explanation of the Hundred and Eight

Not of the Flesh

“Mendicants, there is rapture of the flesh, rapture not of the flesh, and rapture even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

There is pleasure of the flesh, pleasure not of the flesh, and pleasure even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

There is equanimity of the flesh, equanimity not of the flesh, and equanimity even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

There is liberation of the flesh, liberation not of the flesh, and liberation even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

And what is rapture of the flesh? There are these five kinds of sensual stimulation. What five? Sights known by the eye, which are likable, desirable, agreeable, pleasant, sensual, and arousing. Sounds … Smells … Tastes … Touches known by the body, which are likable, desirable, agreeable, pleasant, sensual, and arousing. These are the five kinds of sensual stimulation. The rapture that arises from these five kinds of sensual stimulation is called rapture of the flesh.

And what is rapture not of the flesh? It’s when a mendicant, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters and remains in the first absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of seclusion, while placing the mind and keeping it connected. As the placing of the mind and keeping it connected are stilled, they enter and remain in the second absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of immersion, with internal clarity and mind at one, without placing the mind and keeping it connected. This is called rapture not of the flesh.

And what is rapture even more spiritual than that not of the flesh? When a mendicant who has ended the defilements reviews their mind free from greed, hate, and delusion, rapture arises. This is called rapture even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

And what is pleasure of the flesh? Mendicants, there are these five kinds of sensual stimulation. What five? Sights known by the eye, which are likable, desirable, agreeable, pleasant, sensual, and arousing. Sounds … Smells … Tastes … Touches known by the body, which are likable, desirable, agreeable, pleasant, sensual, and arousing. These are the five

kinds of sensual stimulation. The pleasure and happiness that arise from these five kinds of sensual stimulation is called pleasure of the flesh.

And what is pleasure not of the flesh? It's when a mendicant, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters and remains in the first absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of seclusion, while placing the mind and keeping it connected. As the placing of the mind and keeping it connected are stilled, they enter and remain in the second absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of immersion, with internal clarity and mind at one, without placing the mind and keeping it connected. And with the fading away of rapture, they enter and remain in the third absorption, where they meditate with equanimity, mindful and aware, experiencing for themselves the bliss of which the noble ones declare, 'Equanimous and mindful, one meditates in bliss.' This is called pleasure not of the flesh.

And what is pleasure even more spiritual than that not of the flesh? When a mendicant who has ended the defilements reviews their mind free from greed, hate, and delusion, pleasure and happiness arises. This is called pleasure even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

And what is equanimity of the flesh? There are these five kinds of sensual stimulation. What five? Sights known by the eye, which are likable, desirable, agreeable, pleasant, sensual, and arousing. Sounds … Smells … Tastes … Touches known by the body, which are likable, desirable, agreeable, pleasant, sensual, and arousing. These are the five kinds of sensual stimulation. The equanimity that arises from these five kinds of sensual stimulation is called equanimity of the flesh.

And what is equanimity not of the flesh? It's when, with the giving up of pleasure and pain and the disappearance of former happiness and sadness, a mendicant enters and remains in the fourth absorption, without pleasure or pain, with pure equanimity and mindfulness. This is called equanimity not of the flesh.

And what is equanimity even more spiritual than that not of the flesh? When a mendicant who has ended the defilements reviews their mind free from greed, hate, and delusion, equanimity arises. This is called equanimity even more spiritual than that not of the flesh.

And what is liberation of the flesh? Liberation connected with form is liberation of the flesh.

And what is liberation not of the flesh? Liberation connected with the formless is liberation not of the flesh.

And what is liberation even more spiritual than that not of the flesh? When a mendicant who has ended the defilements reviews their mind free from greed, hate, and delusion, liberation arises. This is called liberation even more spiritual than that not of the flesh."

The Linked Discourses on feelings are complete.