SN 36.31 — SN 36:31 Not of the Flesh | Nirāmisa Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

Source: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/SN/SN36_31.html

Source revision: sha256:06db98f11dbe5b66e3b290b0f8bcaa44ec5f2fe3d1e1b74062fcf0baea044036

License: CC-BY-NC-4.0 — https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

License URL: https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/

Copyright: Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017

License notice: Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported. To see a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. “Commercial” shall mean any sale, whether for commercial or non-profit purposes or entities. Questions about this book may be addressed to Metta Forest Monastery Valley Center, CA 92082-1409 U.S.A. Additional resources More Dhamma talks, books and translations by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu are available to download in digital audio and various ebook formats at dhammatalks.org. Printed copy A paperback copy of this book is available free of charge. To request one, write to: Book Request, Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082 USA.

Attribution: From Handful of Leaves, Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu; https://www.dhammatalks.org/Archive/Writings/Ebooks/SuttaPitaka_251113.epub. Copyright 2014 Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu, Revised edition 2017 This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 Unported. To see a copy of this license visit http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/. “Commercial” shall mean any sale, whether for commercial or non-profit purposes or entities. Questions about this book may be addressed to Metta Forest Monastery Valley Center, CA 92082-1409 U.S.A. Additional resources More Dhamma talks, books and translations by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu are available to download in digital audio and various ebook formats at dhammatalks.org. Printed copy A paperback copy of this book is available free of charge. To request one, write to: Book Request, Metta Forest Monastery, PO Box 1409, Valley Center, CA 92082 USA.

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

Not of the Flesh

Nirāmisa Sutta (SN 36:31)

“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, enticing, linked

to sensual desire. 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, enticing, linked to sensual desire. Now whatever rapture arises in dependence on these five strings 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 secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities—enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, 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 an effluent-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, enticing, linked to sensual desire. 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, enticing, linked to sensual desire. Now whatever pleasure arises in dependence on these five strings 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 secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities—enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. With the stilling of directed thoughts & evaluations, he enters & remains in the second jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of concentration, unification of awareness free from directed thought & evaluation—internal assurance. With the fading of rapture, he remains equanimous, mindful, & alert, senses pleasure with the body, and enters & remains in the third jhāna, 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 an effluent-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, enticing, linked to sensual desire. 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, enticing, linked to sensual desire. Whatever equanimity arises in dependence on these five strings 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 & pain—as with the earlier disappearance of elation & distress—enters & remains in the fourth jhāna: 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 an effluent-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 an effluent-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.”

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: DN 21–22; MN 101; MN 102; Thag 1:85