

1. Thus have I heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Sāvattthi in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's park. There he addressed the bhikkhus thus: "Bhikkhus." - "Venerable sir," they replied. The Blessed One said this:

2. "Bhikkhus, that any bhikkhu who has not abandoned five wildernesses in the heart and not severed five shackles in the heart should come to growth, increase, and fulfillment in this Dhamma and Discipline—that is impossible.

3. "What, bhikkhus, are the five wildernesses in the heart that he has not abandoned? Here a bhikkhu is doubtful, uncertain undecided, and unconfident about the Teacher, and thus his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, that is the first wilderness in the heart that he has not abandoned.

4. "Again, a bhikkhu is doubtful, uncertain, undecided, and unconfident about the Dhamma...As his mind does not incline to ardor... that is the second wilderness in the heart that he has not abandoned.

5. "Again, a bhikkhu is doubtful, uncertain, undecided, and unconfident about the Sangha...As his mind does not incline to ardor...that is the third wilderness in the heart that he has not abandoned.

6. "Again, a bhikkhu is doubtful, uncertain, undecided, and unconfident about the training...As his mind does not incline to ardor... that is the fourth wilderness in the heart that he has not abandoned.

7. "Again, a bhikkhu is angry and displeased with his companions in the holy life, resentful and callous towards them, and thus his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, that is the fifth wilderness in the that he has not abandoned. "These are the five wildernesses in the heart that he has not abandoned.

8. "What, bhikkhus, are the five shackles in the heart that he has not severed? Here a bhikkhu is not free from lust, desire, affection, thirst, fever, and craving for sensual pleasures, and thus his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, that is the first shackle in the heart that he has not severed.

9. "Again, a bhikkhu is not free from lust, desire, affection, thirst, fever, and craving for the body...As his mind does not incline to ardor...that is the second shackle in the heart that he has not severed.

10. "Again, a bhikkhu is not free from lust, desire, affection, thirst, fever, and craving for form.. .As his mind does not incline to ardor...that is the third shackle in the heart that he has not severed.

11. "Again, a bhikkhu eats as much as he likes until his belly is full and indulges in the pleasures of sleeping, lolling, and drowsing...As his mind does not incline to ardor...that is the fourth shackle in the heart that he has not severed.

12. "Again, a bhikkhu lives the holy life aspiring to some order of gods thus: 'By this virtue or observance or asceticism or holy life, I shall become a [great] god or some [lesser] god,' and thus his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind does not incline to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, this is the fifth shackle in the heart that he has not severed.

"These are the five shackles in the heart that he has not severed.

13. "Bhikkhus, that any bhikkhu who has not abandoned these five wildernesses in the heart and severed these five shackles in the heart should come to growth, increase, and fulfillment in this Dhamma and Discipline—that is impossible.

14. "Bhikkhus, that any bhikkhu who has abandoned five wildernesses in the heart and severed five shackles in the heart should come to growth, increase, and fulfillment in this Dhamma and Discipline—that is possible.

15. "What, bhikkhus, are the five wildernesses in the heart that he has abandoned? Here a bhikkhu is not doubtful, uncertain, undecided, or unconfident about the Teacher, and thus his inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, this first wilderness in the heart has been abandoned by him.

16. "Again, a bhikkhu is not doubtful, uncertain, undecided or unconfident about the Dhamma...As his mind inclines to ardor...this second wilderness in the heart has been abandoned by him.

17. "Again, a bhikkhu is not doubtful, uncertain, undecided, or unconfident about the Sangha...As his mind inclines to ardor...this third wilderness in the heart has been abandoned by him.

18. "Again, a bhikkhu is not doubtful, uncertain, undecided, or unconfident about the training...As his mind inclines to ardor...this fourth wilderness in the heart has been abandoned by him.

19. "Again, a bhikkhu is not angry and displeased with his companions in the holy life, nor resentful and callous towards them, and thus his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, this fifth wilderness in the heart has been abandoned by him.

"These are the five wildernesses in the heart that he has abandoned.

20. "What, bhikkhus, are the five shackles in the heart that he has severed? Here a bhikkhu is free from lust, desire, affection, thirst, fever, and craving for sensual pleasures, and thus his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, this first shackle in the heart has been severed by him.

21. "Again, a bhikkhu is free from lust, desire, affection, thirst, fever, and craving for the body...As his mind inclines to ardor...this second shackle in the heart has been severed by him.

22. "Again, a bhikkhu is free from lust, desire, affection, thirst, fever, and craving for form...As his mind inclines to ardor...this third shackle in the heart has been severed by him.

23. "Again, a bhikkhu does not eat as much as he likes until his belly is full and does not indulge in the pleasures of sleeping, lolling, and drowsing...As his mind inclines to ardor...this fourth shackle in the heart has been severed by him.

24. "Again, a bhikkhu does not live the holy life aspiring to some order of gods thus: 'By this virtue or observance or asceticism or holy life, I shall become a [great] god or some (lesser) god,' and thus his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving. As his mind inclines to ardor, devotion, perseverance, and striving, this fifth shackle in the heart has been severed by him.

"These are the five shackles in the heart that he has severed.

25. "Bhikkhus, that any bhikkhu who has abandoned these five wildernesses in the heart and severed these five shackles in the heart should come to growth, increase, and fulfillment in this Dhamma and Discipline—that is possible.

26. "He develops the basis for spiritual power consisting in concentration due to zeal and determined striving; he develops the basis for spiritual power consisting in concentration due to energy and determined striving; he develops the basis for spiritual power consisting in concentration due to [purity of] mind and determined striving; he develops the basis for spiritual power; consisting in concentration due to investigation and determined striving. And enthusiasm is the fifth.

27. "A bhikkhu who thus possesses the fifteen factors including enthusiasm is capable of

breaking out, capable of enlightenment, capable of attaining the supreme security from bondage.

"Suppose there were a hen with eight, ten, or twelve eggs, which she had covered, incubated, and nurtured properly. Even though she did not wish: 'Oh, that my chicks might pierce their shells with the points of their claws and beaks and hatch out safely!' yet the chicks are capable of piercing their shells with the points of their claws and beaks and hatching out safely. So too, a bhikkhu who thus possesses the fifteen factors including enthusiasm is capable of breaking out, capable of enlightenment, capable of attaining the supreme security from bondage."

That is what the Blessed One said. The bhikkhus were satisfied and delighted in the Blessed One's words.

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Majjhima Nikāya 16

Part One – The Root Fifty Discourses (Mūlapaṭṭhāsapāṭi)

The Division of the Lion's Roar (Sīhanādavagga)

Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi