

SUTRA OF THE LAST TEACHING BEQUEATHED BY THE BUDDHA

*continued from previous issues
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Contentment:

All of you Bhikshus, if you wish to be free from all suffering and difficulty, you should be content. The dharma of contentment is the dwelling of blessings, happiness, and peace. People who are content, although they might sleep on the ground, are peaceful and happy. Those who are not content, although they might abide in the heavens, are still dissatisfied. If one is not content, then even if one is rich, one is actually poor. If one is content, then even if one is poor, one is actually rich. Those who are discontent are always dragged along by their five sense organs, and are pitied by those who are content. This is known as contentment.

Seclusion:

All of you Bhikshus, seek quietude, the unconditioned peace, and happiness. You should be apart from confusion and disturbance, and dwell alone in seclusion. People who dwell in quietude are revered by the heavenly ruler Shakra and all the gods. For this reason you should renounce your own group and other groups, and dwell alone in seclusion in order to contemplate the basis for the extinction of suffering. If you delight in crowds, you will undergo a lot of affliction. It is like when a flock of birds gathers in a great tree, the tree is in danger of withering and collapsing. One who is bound and attached to the world drowns in a multitude of sufferings, like an old elephant sunk in mud, who is unable to get himself out. This is known as seclusion.

Vigor:

All of you Bhikshus, if you are vigorous, no affair will be difficult for you. For this reason all of you should be vigorous. It is like a small stream which, by flowing for a long time, is able to bore through stone. If, on the other hand, the mind of one who cultivates frequently becomes lax, it is like trying to make fire by friction but resting before there is any heat; though one wants to make fire, the fire is difficult to obtain. This is known as vigor.

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