Excerpted from AN 5:57 Themes

The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha

Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi, Wisdom

Publications



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Five Subjects for Frequent Reflection

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"Monks, there are these five themes that should often be reflected upon by a woman or a man, by a householder or one gone forth. What five? (1) A woman or a man, a householder or one gone forth, should often reflect thus: 'I am subject to old age; I am not exempt from old age.' (2) A woman or a man, a householder or one gone forth, should often reflect thus: 'I am subject to illness; I am not exempt from illness.' (3) A woman or a man, a householder or one gone forth, should often reflect thus: 'I am subject to death; I am not exempt from death.' (4) A woman or a man, a householder or one gone forth, should often reflect thus: 'I must be

bad, that one does. All beings that come and go, that pass away and undergo rebirth, are owners of their kamma, heirs of their kamma; all have kamma as their origin, kamma as their relative, kamma as their resort; all will be heirs of whatever kamma, good or bad, that they do.' As he often reflects on this theme, the path is generated. He pursues this path, develops it, and cultivates it. As he is does so, the fetters are entirely abandoned and the underlying tendencies are uprooted.

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