

0.0.1 Hundred Spears

1. Suppose, O bhikkhus, that someone might say thus to a man with a hundred years life-span, one who lives for a hundred years: “Come good man. In the morning, they will strike you with a hundred spears. At the midday, they will strike you with a hundred spears. In the evening, they will strike you with a hundred spears. That you, good man with one hundred years life-span, one who lives for a hundred years, being stricken with three hundred spears day after day, after a lapse of a hundred years, will make the breakthrough to the four noble truths, to which you have not made the breakthrough [before].”

2. It is enough, O bhikkhus, for a young clansman intent on his welfare to accept the offer. What is the reason for that? [Because] O bhikkhus, this samsara is without a discoverable beginning. A first point is not discerned of being stricken by spears, of being stricken by swords. That being so, O bhikkhus, yet I, O bhikkhus, do not say that the breakthrough to the four noble truths is accompanied by physical pain and mental pain. Rather I, O bhikkhus, do say that the breakthrough to the four noble truths is accompanied by physical pleasure and mental pleasure. Which four? The noble truth of suffering, the noble truth of the origination of suffering, the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

3. Therefore, O bhikkhus, an endeavour should be made [to realize]: “This is suffering.” An endeavour should be made [to realize]: “This is the origination of suffering.” An endeavour should be made [to realize]: “This is the cessation of suffering.” An endeavour should be made [to realize]: “This is the path leading to the cessation of suffering.”