

Dhammapada

The Path of Truth

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

(Ch. 11) Jarā-Vagga

The Decay Chapter

(146)

ko nu hāso kimānando, niccaṃ pajjalite sati.

andha kārena onaddhā, padīpaṃ na gavesatha.

Who can laugh, who can delight, when everything is always on fire?

Obscured by darkness, you do not seek for a source of light.

(147)

passa cittakataṃ bimbaṃ, arukāyaṃ samussitaṃ.

āturaṃ bahusaṅkappaṃ, yassa natthi dhuvam ṭhiti.

See that the mind has been made like a puppet:

Blighted by arrogance, diseased by excessive thought, lacking stability and composure.

(148)

parijīṇṇamidaṃ rūpaṃ, rogaṇīlaṃ pabhaṅguraṃ.

bhijjati pūtisandeho, maraṇantañhi jivitaṃ.

This body is completely decayed, fragile, a nest of illness.

This rotting moss eventually breaks – because life ends in death.

(149)

yānimāni apatthāni, alābūneva sārade.

kāpotakāni atṭhīni, tāni disvāna kā rati.

When seeing these faded bones, like gourds discarded in autumn,

What delight can there be?

(150)

aṭṭhīnaṃ nagaraṃ kataṃ, maṃsalohitalepanaṃ.

yattha jarā ca maccu ca, māno makkho ca ohito.

Like a city built of bones, covered in blood and meat,

Where decay and death live, together with conceit and contempt.

(151)

jīranti ve rājarathā sucittā, atho sarīrampi jaraṃ upeti.

sataṅca dhammo na jaraṃ upeti, santo have sabbhi pavedayanti.

Even magnificent royal chariots wear out; so too this body decays.

But the true Dhamma never decays: the virtuous make it known.

(152)

appassutāyaṃ puriso, balibaddhova jīrati.

maṃsāni tassa vaḍḍhanti, paññā tassa na vaḍḍhati.

A man who has learned little grows up like an ox:

His muscles grow but his wisdom does not.

(153-154)

anekajātiṣaṃsāraṃ, sandhāvissaṃ anibbisāṃ.

gahakāraṃ gavesanto, dukkhā jāti punappunāṃ.

gahakāraka diṭṭhosi, puna gehaṃ na kāhasi.

sabbā te phāsukā bhaggā, gahakūṭaṃ visaṅkhatāṃ.

visaṅkhāragataṃ cittaṃ, taṇhānaṃ khayamajjhagā.

Wandering through many births, seeking but not finding the builder of this house -

Again and again experiencing the dissatisfaction of birth.

House-builder, you have been seen! You will build no house again.

All your rafters are broken, the roof-peak dismantled.

The mind has gone to the unconditioned - the elimination of craving has been reached.

(155)

acaritvā brahmacariyaṃ, aladdhā yobbane dhanāṃ.

jiṇṇakoṇcāva jhāyanti, khīṇamaccheva pallale.

Those who have neither lived the spiritual life nor gained wealth during their youth,

Waste away like old herons by a fishless pond.

(156)

acaritvā brahmacariyaṃ, aladdhā yobbane dhanāṃ.

senti cāpātikhīṇāva, purāṇāni anutthunaṃ.

Those who have neither lived the spiritual life nor gained wealth during their youth,

Lie around like wasted arrows - lamenting the past.