

Dhammapada

The Path of Truth

Translated by Bhante Saddhāso

Yamaka-Vagga *The Chapter of Pairs*

(1)

Mind is the precedent of all phenomena,
the most powerful of all phenomena,
the creator of all phenomena.
If one speaks or acts with a corrupt mind, suffering follows,
As a track follows a wheel.¹

(2)

Mind is the precedent of all phenomena,
the most powerful of all phenomena,
the creator of all phenomena.
If one speaks or acts with a clear mind, happiness follows,
As a shadow that never leaves.

(3)

“They abused me, they hurt me, they defeated me, they robbed me!”
Those who hold on like this will never experience the ending of hostility.

(4)

“They abused me, they hurt me, they defeated me, they robbed me!”
Those who do not hold on like this will experience the ending of hostility.

(5)

Hostility never ends through further hostility.
Only by means of non-hostility does it end:
This is an eternal truth.

(6)

Others do not know that we must be restrained.
The wise ones who know this attain peace.

(7)

One who focuses on beauty, lacking sense-restraint,
Who does not know the right amount when eating, is lazy, and lacks energy -
Māra subdues that one, as the wind subdues a weak tree.

1 *Cakkam va vahato padam*. Lit. “wheel - as - follows - track.” There is much debate about how to translate this phrase, particularly since ‘pada’ can mean path, track, foot, or phrase, and also since the grammar of the sentence gives no indication of subject and object. This line is often translated as being about an ox pulling a cart, but that seems difficult to justify given that the line does not mention an ox or a cart.

(8)

One who does not focus on beauty, who has sense-restraint,
Who knows the right amount when eating, has faith and energy -
Māra does not subdue that one, as the wind does not subdue a stone mountain.

(9)

An impure person who puts on monastic robes -
Untrained and unaware of truth -
Such a person is not worthy of the robe.

(10)

One who is free of impurity, focused on virtue,
Who has taken up the training and the truth -
Such a person is worthy of the robe.

(11)

One who thinks the non-essential is essential,
And sees the essential as non-essential,
Does not arrive at the essence -
Their conduct is based on harmful attitudes.

(12)

One who knows the essential as essential,
And the non-essential as non-essential,
Arrives at the essence -
Their conduct is based on beneficial attitudes².

(13)

Just as the wind penetrates a poorly sealed house,
In the same way, lust penetrates an undeveloped mind.

(14)

Just as the wind does not penetrate a well-sealed house,
In the same way, lust does not penetrate a well-developed mind.

(15)

Sorrowing here, sorrowing after death,
An evil-doer sorrows in both places.
One sorrows and agonizes -
Having seen the extent of one's defiled actions.

(16)

Rejoicing here, rejoicing after death,
One who has made merit rejoices in both places.
One rejoices and exults -
Having seen the extent of one's pure actions.

2 *Sammā-saṅkappa*.

(17)

Tormented here, tormented after death,
An evil-doer is tormented in both places.
One is tormented by the thought "I have done evil deeds,"
And one is tormented even more when one arrives at an unpleasant fate.

(18)

Delighting here, delighting after death,
One who has made merit delights in both places.
One is delighted by the thought "I have made merit,"
And one delights even more when one arrives at a pleasant fate.

(19)

A negligent person who says much,
But does not act accordingly,
Is like a cowherd who counts other people's cows:
Such a one is not part of the contemplative life.

(20)

Even if one says little,
But acts in accordance with Dhamma,
Having abandoned lust, hatred, and delusion,
With accurate understanding and a liberated mind,
Without attachment either here or beyond -
Such a one is part of the contemplative life.