

# Dhammapada

## The Path of Truth

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

### (Ch. 18) Mala-Vagga

#### The Contaminant Chapter

(235)

**paṇḍupalāsova dānisi, yamapurisāpi ca te upatṭhitā.**

**uyyogamukhe ca tiṭṭhasi, pātheyyampi ca te na vijjati.**

*You are like a fallen leaf now, and Death's minions have come.*

*You stand at the starting point of a struggle – and no provisions can be found for you.*

(236)

**so karoḥi dīpamattano, khippaṃ vāyama paṇḍito bhava.**

**niddhantamalo anaṅgaṇo, dibbaṃ ariyabhūmiṃ upehisi.**

*Make an island<sup>1</sup> for yourself, quickly try to become wise;*

*One who has no contaminants and no flaws will reach the divine state of the noble ones.*

(237)

**upanītavayo ca dānisi, sampayātosī yamassa santike.**

**vāso te natthi antarā, pātheyyampi ca te na vijjati.**

*Now you have come close to vanishing; you have reached the presence of death.*

*You have nowhere to dwell here – and no provisions can be found for you.*

(238)

**so karoḥi dīpamattano, khippaṃ vāyama paṇḍito bhava.**

**niddhantamalo anaṅgaṇo, na punaṃ jātijaraṃ upehisi.**

*Make an island for yourself, quickly try to become wise;*

*One who has no contaminants and no flaws will not return to birth and decay.*

(239)

**anupubbena medhāvī, thokaṃ thokaṃ khaṇe khaṇe.**

**kammāro rajatasseva, niddhame malamattano.**

*Progressively, bit by bit, moment by moment,*

*Wise people remove contaminants from themselves,*

*Like a smith purifying silver.*

(240)

**ayasāva malaṃ samuṭṭhitam, tatutṭhāya tameva khādati.**

**evaṃ atidhonacāriṇaṃ, sāni kammāni nayanti duggatiṃ.**

*When rust appears it eats away the metal it arose from;*

*In the same way, a sanctimonious<sup>2</sup> person is led to a bad destination by their own actions.*

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<sup>1</sup> As *dīpa* can mean either “island” or “lamp,” this could also be “make a lamp for yourself.”

<sup>2</sup> *Atidhonacāriṇaṃ*. A literal translation could be “one who behaves (*cārin*) excessively (*ati*) pure (*dhona*)” – ie, a person who presents themselves as being more pure than they really are.

(241)

**asajjhāyamalā mantā, anuṭṭhānamalā gharā.**

**malaṃ vaṇṇassa kosajjaṃ, pamādo rakkhato malaṃ.**

*Non-repetition contaminates mantras, non-upkeep contaminates a house,  
Laziness contaminates beauty, negligence contaminates security.*

(242-243)

**malitthiyā duccharitaṃ, maccheraṃ dadato malaṃ.**

**malā ve pāpakā dhammā, asmiṃ loke paramhi ca.**

**tato malā malataraṃ, avijjā paramaṃ malaṃ.**

**etaṃ malaṃ pahantvāna, nimmalā hotha bhikkhavo.**

*Misconduct contaminates a woman<sup>3</sup>, stinginess contaminates a donor,*

*Evil choices contaminate both this life and the next.*

*There is a contaminant that's even worse - ignorance, the paramount contaminant.*

*Abandon this contaminant and be pure, monks!*

(244)

**sujivaṃ ahirikena, kākasūrena dhamsinā.**

**pakkhandinā pagabbhena, saṃkiliṭṭhena jīvitaṃ.**

*Life is easy for one who has no conscience, an offensive person with the heart of a crow,  
Obtrusive and inconsiderate, living a defiled life.*

(245)

**hirīmatā ca dujjīvaṃ, niccaṃ sucigavesinā.**

**alīnenāppagabbhena, suddhājīvena passatā.**

*Life is hard for one who has a conscience, a person who always seeks purity,*

*Diligent and considerate, who can be seen to have a pure life.*

(246-247)

**yo paṇamatipātetī, musāvādañca bhāsati.**

**loke adinnamādiyati, paradārañca gacchati.**

**surāmerayapānañca, yo naro anuyuñjati.**

**idhevameso lokasmiṃ, mūlaṃ khaṇati attano.**

*One who takes life, speaks lies, steals, commits adultery, and drinks alcohol,*

*Even here in this life, they destroy their own foundation.*

(248-250)

**evaṃ bho purisa jānāhi, pāpadhammā asaṇṇatā.**

**mā taṃ lobho adhammo ca, ciraṃ dukkhāya randhayuṃ.**

**dadāti ve yathāsaddhaṃ, yathāpasādanam jāno.**

**tattha yo maṅku bhavati, paresaṃ pānabhojane.**

**na so divā vā rattiṃ vā, samādhimadhigacchati.**

**yassa cetam samucchinnam, mūlaghaccaṃ samūhatam.**

**sa ve divā vā rattiṃ vā, samādhimadhigacchati.**

*Know that lack of restraint is a harmful thing;*

*Don't let unrighteous greed afflict you with long-lasting suffering.*

*One gives where one has confidence, or where it brings joy;*

<sup>3</sup> And a man, for that matter.

*One who is disturbed by food and drink being given to others  
Does not gain concentration, by day or by night.  
One who has shredded, destroyed, and uprooted that root,  
Gains concentration, whether it is day or night.*

**(251)**

**natthi rāgasamo aggi, natthi dosasamo gaho.**

**natthi mohasamaṃ jālaṃ, natthi taṇhāsamā nadī.**

*There is no fire equal to passion, no binding equal to aversion,  
There is no trap equal to delusion, there is no river equal to craving.*

**(252)**

**sudassaṃ vajjamaññesaṃ, attano pana duddasaṃ.**

**paresaṃ hi so vajjāni, opunāti yathā bhusaṃ.**

**attano pana chādeti, kaliṃva kitavā saṭho.**

*It is easy to see other people's flaws, and hard to see our own.  
When we expose other people's flaws but conceal our own,  
We are like a swindler cheating at dice.*

**(253)**

**paravajjānupassissa, niccaṃ ujjhānasaññino.**

**āsavā tassa vaḍḍhanti, ārā so āsavakkhayā.**

*One who looks at the flaws of others, and is always finding fault,  
Increases one's own defilements, and is far from the elimination of defilement.*

**(254)**

**ākāseva padaṃ natthi, samaṇo natthi bāhire.**

**papañcābhiratā pajā, nippapañcā tathāgatā.**

*There is no path in the sky, and there is no contemplative elsewhere<sup>4</sup>;  
Ordinary people delight in proliferation – whereas a Tathāgata is free of proliferation.*

**(255)**

**ākāseva padaṃ natthi, samaṇo natthi bāhire.**

**saṅkhārā sassatā natthi, natthi buddhānamiñjitam.**

*There is no path in the sky, and there is no contemplative elsewhere;  
There is no formation that is eternal, and no agitation in awakened beings.*

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<sup>4</sup> *Samaṇo natthi bāhire.* That is, there are no enlightened beings outside of the Buddha's path.