

## There Is a Way Out of It All

### *The Salt Crystal*

"Monks, for anyone who says, '*In whatever way a person makes kamma*, that is how it is experienced,' there is **no** living of the holy life, there is no opportunity for the right ending of stress. But for anyone who says, '*When a person makes kamma* to be felt in such & such a way, that is how its result is experienced,' there is the living of the holy life, there is the opportunity for the right ending of stress.

"There is the case where a trifling evil deed done by a certain individual takes him to hell. There is the case where the very same sort of trifling deed done by another individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.

"Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual takes him to hell? There is the case where a certain individual is **undeveloped** in [contemplating] the body, undeveloped in virtue, undeveloped in mind, undeveloped in discernment: restricted, small-hearted, dwelling with suffering. A *trifling evil deed* done by this sort of individual *takes him to hell*.

"Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment? There is the case where a certain individual **is developed** in [contemplating] the body, **developed** in virtue, **developed** in mind, **developed** in discernment: unrestricted, large-hearted, dwelling with the immeasurable. A *trifling evil deed* done by this sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part *barely appears for a moment*.

"Suppose that a man were to drop a salt crystal into a small amount of water in a cup. What do you think? Would the water in the cup become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink?"

"Yes, lord. Why is that? There being only a small amount of water in the cup, it would become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink."

"Now suppose that a man were to drop a salt crystal into the River Ganges. What do you think? Would the water in the River Ganges become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink?"

"No, lord. Why is that? There being a great mass of water in the River Ganges, it would not become salty because of the salt crystal or unfit to drink."

"In the same way, there is the case where a trifling evil deed done by one individual [the first] takes him to hell; and there is the case where the very same sort of trifling deed done by the other individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.