

Dhammapada

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*A collection of sayings of the Buddha
taken from the Pali Canon. Verse
references such as ⁴² indicate the
original source of the text, but don't
imply a full quotation.*

Pairs

¹ Our life is shaped by our mind:
it is ruled by our mind, it is made
by our mind. If one speaks or acts
with an evil mind, suffering fol-
lows him, as the wheel follows the
foot of the ox that draws the cart.

² Our life is shaped by our mind:
it is ruled by our mind, it is made
by our mind. If one speaks or acts
with a pure mind, happiness fol-
lows him, like a shadow that never
leaves him.

³ “He insulted me, hit me, defeated me, robbed me.” In those who harbor such thoughts, hatred will never cease. ⁴ “He insulted me, hit me, defeated me, robbed me.” In those who do not harbor such thoughts, hatred will cease. ⁵ For hatred never ceases by hatred. Hatred ceases by love. This is an eternal law.

⁶ Some do not realize that we all must die, but those who do realize it cease their quarrels at once.

⁷ Just as the wind throws down a weak tree, so will the tempter overthrow him who focuses only on pleasures, his senses uncontrolled, immoderate in his food, idle, and weak. ⁸ Just as the wind cannot throw down a rocky mountain, so the tempter will not overthrow him who does not focus on pleasures, his senses well controlled, moderate in his food, faithful and strong.

⁹ He who puts on the monk's yellow robe without having cleansed himself from sin, who disregards self-control and truth, is unworthy of the robe. ¹⁰ But he who has cleansed himself from sin, is well grounded in virtues, and regards self-control and truth, is indeed worthy of the robe.

¹¹ They who mistake the trivial for the essential, and the essential for the trivial, never arrive at the essential, but follow vain desires.

¹² They who know the essential as essential, and the trivial as trivial, arrive at the essential, and follow true desires.

¹³ Just as rain seeps through a poorly thatched house, passion seeps through an undeveloped mind. ¹⁴ Just as rain cannot seep through a well thatched house, passion cannot seep through a well

developed mind.

¹⁵ The evildoer grieves in this world, and in the next. He grieves in both. He grieves and suffers when he sees the evil of his own work. ¹⁶ The virtuous man delights in this world, and in the next. He delights in both. He delights and rejoices when he sees the purity of his own work.

¹⁷ The evildoer suffers in this world, and in the next. He suffers in both. He suffers when he thinks of the evil he has done. He suffers more when going to the next world.

¹⁸ The virtuous man is happy in this world, and in the next. He is happy in both. He is happy when he thinks of the good he has done. He is happier still when going to the next world.

¹⁹ The thoughtless man, if he re-

cites many scriptures, but does not do what they say, has no share in the blessings of the holy life, but is like a cowherd counting the cows of others. ²⁰ He who recites only a few scriptures, but does what they say, having forsaken lust and hatred and delusion, possesses true knowledge and serenity of mind, caring for nothing in this world or that to come, he shares in the blessings of the holy life.

Vigilance

²¹ Vigilance is the path to salvation. Carelessness is the path to death. Those who are vigilant do not die. Those who are careless are as if dead already. ²² The wise, having understood this clearly, delight in

vigilance, and rejoice in the knowledge of the noble ones. ²³ These wise people, meditative, steadfastly persevering, attain to salvation, the highest happiness.

²⁴ If a vigilant person is energetic, if he is mindful, if his deeds are pure, if he acts with consideration, if he has self-control, and is righteous, then his glory will increase.

²⁵ By effort, by vigilance, by discipline and self-control, the wise man may make for himself an island which no flood can overwhelm.

²⁶ The foolish and ignorant indulge in carelessness. The wise man keeps vigilance as his greatest treasure. ²⁷ Do not give way to carelessness or to the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. He who is vigilant and meditative, obtains ample joy.

²⁸ When the wise man drives away carelessness by vigilance, he climbs the tower of wisdom and looks down upon the fools. Without suffering, he looks at the suffering crowd, as one that stands on a mountain looks at them that stand on the ground below.

²⁹ Vigilant among the careless, awake among the sleeping, the wise man advances like a fast horse, leaving the weak behind. ³⁰ Vigilance is always praised; carelessness is always despised.

³¹ The monk who delights in vigilance, who looks with fear at carelessness, moves about like fire, burning all fetters, small and large.

³² The monk who delights in vigilance, who looks with fear at carelessness, cannot fall away. He is close to salvation.

Mind

³³ Just as a fletcher straightens his arrow, a wise man straightens his trembling and unsteady mind, which is difficult to guard, difficult to restrain.

³⁴ Just as a fish quivers when taken from its home in the water and thrown on land, our mind trembles all over to escape the influence of the tempter.

³⁵ It is good to tame the mind, which is difficult to tame and flighty, rushing wherever it wants. A tamed mind brings happiness.

³⁶ Let the wise man guard his mind, for it is subtle and elusive, and it rushes wherever it wants. A guarded mind brings happiness.

³⁷ The mind wanders far, moves about alone, is without a body,

and hides in the cave of the heart. Those who bridle it are free from the bonds of the tempter.

³⁸ If a man's mind is unsteady, if he does not know the true law, and if his faith is troubled, then his knowledge will never be perfect.

³⁹ If a man's mind is free from passion, if his mind is free from ill will, if he is unaffected by good and evil, then there is danger for him.

⁴⁰ Knowing that this body is fragile like a clay pot, and securing this mind like a fortress, attack the tempter with the sword of knowledge. Then guard what is won without feeling attachment to it.

⁴¹ Soon, this body will lie on the ground, discarded, without consciousness, like a useless log.

⁴² Whatever an enemy might do to an enemy, or a foe to a foe, a

wrongly directed mind can do to you even worse. ⁴³ Whatever a mother, a father, or any other relative might do for you, a well directed mind can do for you even more.

Flowers

⁴⁴ Who will overcome this earth, and the world of the dead, and the world of the gods? Who will choose the well taught path of virtue, as an expert florist chooses the right flower? ⁴⁵ A disciple will overcome this earth, and the world of the dead, and the world of the gods. A disciple will choose the well taught path of virtue, as an expert florist chooses the right flower.

⁴⁶ Knowing that this body is like froth, and learning that it is insubstantial like a mirage, you will remove the flower-tipped arrows of the tempter, and never see the king of death.

⁴⁷ As a flood sweeps away a sleeping village, so death sweeps away a man who is immersed in gathering flowers, his mind distracted.

⁴⁸ Death subdues a man who is immersed in gathering flowers, his mind distracted, before he is satiated in his pleasures. ⁴⁹ As a bee collects nectar and departs without damaging the flower or its color or its scent, so should a sage collect alms in a village.

⁵⁰ Do not notice the faults of others, their sins of commission or omission, but notice your own misconduct and negligence.

⁵¹ Like a beautiful flower, full of color but without scent, are fair but fruitless words of him who does not practice them. ⁵² But, like a beautiful flower, full of color and full of scent, are fair and fruitful words of him who practices them.

⁵³ Just as many wreaths can be made from a heap of flowers, so can many good things be done by a mortal.

⁵⁴ The scent of flowers does not travel against the wind, not even that of sandalwood, tagara or jasmine; but the reputation of the virtuous does travel against the wind. The reputation of the virtuous pervades every place. ⁵⁵ Among the scent of sandalwood, tagara, lotus, and jasmine, the scent of virtue is unsurpassed.

⁵⁶ The scent that comes from

tagara and sandalwood is faint.
The scent of the virtuous is best,
it rises up to the gods. ⁵⁷ The
tempter never finds the path of
the virtuous, who lives with vigi-
lance, and is freed through perfect
knowledge.

⁵⁸ On a garbage heap by the road-
side, a lotus grows full of sweet per-
fume and delight. ⁵⁹ Likewise, on
a garbage heap of blind mortals, a
true disciple of the Buddha shines
forth in wisdom.

The Fool

⁶⁰ The night is long to the sleepless; a mile is long to the tired; life is long to the foolish who do not know the true law.

⁶¹ If a traveler does not meet a companion who is his better, or his equal, let him firmly keep to his solitary journey. There is no companionship with a fool. ⁶² He worries, "I have sons, and I have wealth," but he himself is not his own, how much less sons and wealth?

⁶³ A fool who knows his own foolishness, is wise to that extent. But a fool who thinks he is wise, is a fool indeed. ⁶⁴ Even if a fool associates with a wise man all his life, he will perceive the truth no more than a spoon perceives the flavor of the soup. ⁶⁵ If an intelligent man

associates with a wise man for only one minute, he will soon perceive the truth as the tongue perceives the taste of soup.

⁶⁶ Fools of little understanding are their own enemies, for they do evil deeds that bear bitter fruit.

⁶⁷ That deed is poorly done if a man must repent afterward, and its reward is crying and a tearful face.

⁶⁸ That deed is well done if a man does not repent afterward, and its reward is delight and happiness.

⁶⁹ As long as an evil deed does not bear fruit, the fool thinks it is like honey. But when it ripens, then the fool suffers grief. ⁷⁰ Even if a fool, month after month, eats his food like an ascetic with the tip of a blade of grass, he is not worth even one sixteenth of those who have understood the truth.

⁷¹ An evil deed, like freshly drawn milk, does not sour immediately; it follows the fool, smoldering, like fire covered by ashes.

⁷³ The fool wishes for a false reputation, for precedence among monks, for authority in the monasteries, for honor among other people. ⁷⁴ “May both laymen and monks think that I did it. Let them obey me in everything, great and small.” Such is the mind of the fool, and thus his desire and pride increase.

⁷⁵ One road leads to wealth, another road leads to salvation. If the monk, a disciple of Buddha, has learned this, he will not yearn for honor, he will strive for separation from the world.

The Wise

⁷⁶ If you find a wise man who points out faults, and who reproves, follow that wise man as one would follow a guide to hidden treasure. It will be better, not worse, for those who follow him. ⁷⁷ Let him admonish, let him teach, let him restrain you from what is improper. The good will love him. The bad will hate him.

⁷⁸ Do not have evildoers as companions, do not have vile people as friends. Have virtuous people as companions, have the best as friends.

⁷⁹ He who drinks in the law lives happily with a serene mind. The wise man rejoices always in the law, as preached by the noble ones.

⁸⁰ Irrigators guide the water.

Fletchers straighten the arrow.
Carpenters shape the wood. The
wise control themselves.

⁸¹ Just as a solid rock is not shaken
by the wind, the wise do not falter
amidst blame or praise. ⁸² After
they have listened to the law, the
wise become serene, like a deep,
smooth, and still lake.

⁸³ The good keep walking whatever
happens. The good do not prat-
tle, longing for pleasure. Whether
touched by happiness or sorrow,
the wise never appear elated or de-
pressed. ⁸⁴ A man is good, wise,
and virtuous if he does no wrong
for his own sake or for the sake
of others, if he wishes neither for
wealth, a son, or a kingdom, and
if he does not wish for success by
unfair means.

⁸⁵ Few among men arrive at the

other shore (salvation). The rest run up and down on this shore.

⁸⁶ But those who follow the law, when it has been well taught to them, will arrive at the other shore having crossed the dominion of death, however difficult to overcome.

⁸⁷ Let a wise man leave the dark way, and follow the bright path. After going from his home to homelessness, let him yearn for delight in detachment, so difficult to enjoy. ⁸⁸ Leaving all pleasures behind, and calling nothing his own, let the wise man cleanse himself of that which defiles the mind. ⁸⁹ Those whose minds are well grounded in the factors of enlightenment, who without clinging to anything, rejoice in freedom from attachment, whose appetites have been conquered, and who are full of light,

are free even in this world.

The Saint

⁹⁰ There is no suffering for him who has finished his journey, and is without sorrow, and is free on all sides, and has thrown off all fetters.

⁹¹ The mindful strive diligently. They are not attached to any home. Like swans who leave a lake, they leave their house and home.

⁹² Like birds in the air, the path of the saint is hard to trace. They have no riches, are wise regarding food, and their objective is emptiness and freedom. ⁹³ Like birds in the air, his path is hard to trace. He whose appetites are stilled, who is not attached to food, whose objective is emptiness and freedom.

⁹⁴ Even the gods adore him whose senses have been subdued, like horses well trained by a charioteer, who is free from pride, and free from appetites. ⁹⁵ Like the earth, he is not provoked. He is firm like a pillar. He is like a pure lake without mud. No new births are in store for him.

⁹⁶ His mind is calm, and calm are his words and deeds. By true knowledge, he has obtained freedom, and thus become tranquil.

⁹⁸ In a village or in a forest, in a valley or on a hill, wherever saints dwell, that place is delightful. ⁹⁹ Delightful are the forests in which the crowds find no pleasure. Those without passion will find delight there, for they do not seek pleasure.

Thousands

¹⁰⁰ Better than a speech of a thousand vain words, is one thoughtful word, hearing which brings peace.

¹⁰¹ Better than a poem of a thousand vain verses, is one thoughtful verse, hearing which brings peace.

¹⁰² Better than reciting a hundred vain verses, is reciting one verse of law, hearing which brings peace.

¹⁰³ Greater than he who conquers a thousand times a thousand men in battle, is he who conquerors just one — himself. ¹⁰⁴ It is far better to conquer oneself than to conquer others. ¹⁰⁵ For a man who has conquered himself and always lives with self-control, not even a god, an angel, or a demon with a god can change that victory into defeat.

¹⁰⁶ A man could sacrifice by the

thousands for month after month for a hundred years, or he could pay homage for one moment to a man living in wisdom. Better is that homage than sacrifices for a century. ¹⁰⁷ A man could tend the sacrificial fire in the forest for a hundred years, or he could pay homage for one moment to a man living in wisdom. Better is that homage than sacrifices for a century. ¹⁰⁸ In this world, a man may make sacrifices and oblations for a whole year in order to gain merit, yet all of it is not worth a quarter of the merit gained by revering the righteous.

¹⁰⁹ For him who always respects and honors the wise, four things will increase: life, beauty, happiness, power.

¹¹⁰ Better than a hundred years lived immoral and unrestrained,

is one day lived virtuous and reflecting. ¹¹¹ Better than a hundred years lived ignorant and unrestrained, is one day lived wise and reflecting. ¹¹² Better than a hundred years idle and weak, is one day lived energetic and firm. ¹¹³ Better than a hundred years lived without seeing beginning or end, is one day lived seeing beginning and end. ¹¹⁴ Better than a hundred years lived without seeing the deathless state, is one day lived seeing the deathless state. ¹¹⁵ Better than a hundred years lived without seeing the highest law, is one day lived seeing the highest law.

Evil

¹¹⁶ Hasten to do good. Keep your mind from evil. If a man is slow to do good, his mind delights in evil.

¹¹⁷ If a man does what is evil, let him not do it again and again. Let him not delight in it, for accumulating evil brings pain. ¹¹⁸ If a man does what is good, let him do it again and again. Let him delight in it, for accumulating good brings joy.

¹¹⁹ Even an evildoer may be happy before his evil deed ripens, but when it ripens, he suffers. ¹²⁰ Even a good man may suffer before his good deed ripens, but when it ripens, he is happy.

¹²¹ Let no man think lightly of evil, saying in his heart, "It will not amount to much." As a water

pot is filled by the falling of water drops, so the fool becomes full of evil, even if he gathers it little by little. ¹²² Let no man think lightly of good, saying in his heart, "It will not amount to much." As a water pot is filled by the falling of water drops, so the wise man becomes full of good, even if he gathers it little by little.

¹²³ Let a man avoid evil deeds, as a wealthy merchant with few companions avoids a dangerous road; as a man who loves life avoids poison.

¹²⁵ If a man offends a harmless, pure, and innocent person, the evil falls back upon that fool, like dust thrown against the wind.

¹²⁶ Some are born in the womb. Evil-doers go to hell. The righteous go to heaven. Those without any

worldly desires attain salvation.

¹²⁷ Not in the sky, not in the middle of the sea, not in a cleft of the mountains, is there a spot to be found where a man can escape from the consequences of his evil deed. ¹²⁸ Not in the sky, not in the middle of the sea, not in a cleft of the mountains, is there a spot to be found where a man will not be overcome by death.

Punishment

¹²⁹ Everyone trembles at punishment, everyone fears death. Putting yourself in his place, do not kill or cause others to kill. ¹³⁰ Everyone trembles at punishment, everyone loves his own life. Putting

yourself in his place, do not kill or cause others to kill.

¹³¹ He who, seeking happiness, punishes beings who also desire happiness, will not find happiness after death. ¹³² He who, seeking happiness, does not punish beings who also desire happiness, will find happiness after death.

¹³³ Speak harshly to no one, or those who are spoken to will answer you in the same way. Contentious speech hurts, and retaliation will come to you. ¹³⁴ If your mind is still, like a broken gong, you have attained salvation, for there's no contention in you.

¹³⁵ As a cowherd drives cows to pasture with a staff, so ageing and death drive the life of men. ¹³⁶ A fool does not realize when he commits evil, but he suffers for those

deeds, as if burned by fire.

¹³⁷ He who inflicts pain on the innocent and unarmed, will soon suffer in one of these ten ways: ¹³⁸ severe pain, impoverishment, bodily injury, serious illness, mental illness, ¹³⁹ trouble from the government, a fearful accusation, loss of relatives, loss of wealth, ¹⁴⁰ or fire will destroy his houses. When his body is destroyed, the fool will go to hell.

¹⁴¹ Neither nakedness, nor matted hair, nor dirt, nor fasting, nor lying on the earth, nor rubbing with dust, nor sitting motionless, can purify a mortal who has not overcome doubt. ¹⁴² He who exercises tranquility, is quiet, subdued, restrained, chaste, and has set aside violence towards all others, he indeed is a holy man, an ascetic, a monk, even if dressed in fine apparel.

¹⁴³ Who in this world is so restrained by conscience that he needs no reproof, as a fine horse needs no whip? ¹⁴⁴ Like a fine horse when touched by the whip, be active and lively. By faith, by virtue, by effort, by meditation, by discerning the truth, by perfect knowledge and conduct, by mindfulness, you will leave this pain behind.

¹⁴⁵ Irrigators guide the water.
Fletchers straighten the arrow.
Carpenters shape the wood. Good
people fashion themselves.

Old Age

¹⁴⁶ Why is there laughter and joy when this world is always burning? Surrounded by darkness, don't you look for a light?

¹⁴⁷ Look at this body — a painted image, covered with festering wounds, sickly, full of many thoughts — neither lasting nor stable. ¹⁴⁸ This body is worn out, full of sickness, and frail. This heap of corruption breaks to pieces, for life indeed ends with death. ¹⁴⁹ These white bones are like gourds thrown away in the autumn. What pleasure is there in seeing them?

¹⁵⁰ A city made of bones is covered with flesh and blood. Living in it are old age and death, pride and deceit. ¹⁵¹ The beautiful chariots of kings get worn out and so does

the body. But the virtue of good people does not age: thus do the good say among themselves.

¹⁵² A man who has learned little grows old like an ox. His body grows, but his wisdom does not.

¹⁵³ I roamed through many births, without reward and without rest, looking for the builder of this house. Painful is birth again and again. ¹⁵⁴ But now, builder of this house, I have seen you. You will not build this house again. All your rafters are broken, your ridge pole is dismantled. My mind has attained the extinction of all desires.

¹⁵⁵ Those who, in their youth, have not lived the holy life nor gained wealth, perish like old herons in a lake without fish. ¹⁵⁶ Those who, in their youth, have not lived the holy life nor gained wealth, lie sighing

over the past like arrows misfired from a bow.

Self

¹⁵⁷ If a man holds himself dear, let him watch himself carefully. Let a wise man keep vigil during one of the three watches of the night.

¹⁵⁸ Let each man first direct himself to what is proper, then let him teach others. Thus a wise man will not be reproached.

¹⁵⁹ If a man makes himself as he teaches others to be, then, being himself well tamed, he may tame others. One's self is indeed difficult to tame.

¹⁶⁰ A man is truly his own protector. Who else could be the protector? With self well controlled, one finds a protector such as few can find.

¹⁶¹ The evil a foolish man does by himself, self-born, self-created, grinds him down, as a diamond breaks a hard gem. ¹⁶² When overspread with great wickedness, like a tree covered by vines, a man brings himself down to where his enemy wishes. ¹⁶³ Evil deeds, which harm ourselves, are easy to do. Good and beneficial deeds are very difficult to do.

¹⁶⁴ The fool who scorns the teachings of the wise, of the noble, of the righteous, and follows false doctrine, is like the bamboo that dies after bearing fruit.

¹⁶⁵ Evil is done by oneself, by one-

self one is defiled. Evil is left undone by oneself, by oneself is one purified. Purity and impurity are one's own doing. No one can purify another.

¹⁶⁶ Let no man sacrifice his own welfare for that of another, however great. Let a man, after discerning his own welfare, be always attentive to it.

The World

¹⁶⁷ Do not follow vulgar ways. Do not live with abandon. Do not follow false doctrine. Do not be a friend of the world.

¹⁶⁸ Wake up! Do not be idle. Live a virtuous life. The virtuous sleeps with ease in this world and the next. ¹⁶⁹ Live a virtuous life. Do

not live a life of sin. The virtuous sleeps with ease in this world and the next.

¹⁷⁰ The king of death does not see him who looks upon the world as a bubble, as a mirage. ¹⁷¹ Come look at this world, decorated like a royal chariot. Fools are immersed in it, but the wise do not cling to it.

¹⁷² He who was reckless and then becomes mindful, brightens up this world like the moon when freed from clouds. ¹⁷³ He who replaces evil deeds with good deeds, brightens up this world, like the moon when freed from clouds.

¹⁷⁴ In this dark world, only a few can see. Only a few, like birds escaping from the net, go to heaven. ¹⁷⁵ Swans fly on the path of the sun, through the air by their wonderful power. The wise flee from

the world after defeating the tempter and his armies.

¹⁷⁶ A man who transgresses the one law, speaks lies, and scoffs at the world beyond, is capable of any evil.

¹⁷⁷ Misers do not go to the world of the gods; neither do fools praise generosity. A wise man rejoices in generosity, and through it becomes blessed in the world beyond.

¹⁷⁸ The first step towards holiness is better than sovereignty over the earth, better than going to heaven, and better than being lord over all the worlds.

The Awakened

¹⁸¹ Even the gods envy those who are awakened, who are devoted to meditation, who are wise, and who delight in the calm of renunciation.

¹⁸² It is difficult to obtain a human birth, difficult is the life of mortals. It is difficult to obtain the chance to hear the true law, difficult is the birth of the awakened.

¹⁸³ To avoid all evil, to cultivate good, and to purify one's mind, that is the teaching of the awakened. ¹⁸⁴ Patient endurance is the highest austerity. "Salvation is supreme", say the awakened. He is no monk who injures others. He is no ascetic who insults others.

¹⁸⁵ Not to revile, not to injure, to live restrained under the law, to be moderate in food, to live in sol-

itude, and to dwell on the highest thoughts: this is the teaching of the awakened.

¹⁸⁶ There is no way to satisfy lusts, even with a shower of gold coins. He is wise who knows that lusts give little satisfaction and much pain. ¹⁸⁷ Even in heavenly pleasures the wise finds no delight. The disciple who is fully awakened delights only in the destruction of craving.

¹⁸⁸ When threatened with danger, men go to many a refuge: to mountains and forests, to groves and shrines. ¹⁸⁹ But that is not a secure refuge, that is not the best refuge. A man is not delivered from all pain after going to that refuge.

¹⁹⁰ He who takes refuge with the law, the awakened, and their order, sees with clear understanding

the four holy truths: ¹⁹¹ pain, the cause of pain, the destruction of pain, and the holy eightfold path that leads to the quieting of pain; ¹⁹² That is a secure refuge, that is the best refuge. After going to that refuge, a man is delivered from all pain.

¹⁹³ An awakened man is hard to find. He is not born everywhere. Wherever such a wise man is born, that clan prospers.

¹⁹⁴ Blessed is the arising of awakened ones, blessed is the teaching of the true law, blessed is harmony in the order, blessed is the devotion of those who are at peace.

¹⁹⁵ He who reveres those who deserve reverence — the awakened ones or their disciples, who have overcome all obstacles, sorrow, and lamentation, ¹⁹⁶ who found deliver-

ance and know no fear — his merit can never be measured.

Happiness

¹⁹⁷ We live happily, not hating those who hate us. When among men who hate us, we dwell without hatred. ¹⁹⁸ We live happily, without illness among the ill. When among men who are ill, we dwell without illness. ¹⁹⁹ We live happily, without greed among the greedy. When among men who are greedy, we dwell without greed. ²⁰⁰ We live happily, we who own nothing.

²⁰¹ Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered live in pain. The contented is happy, having given up both victory and defeat.

²⁰² There is no fire like lust, no loss like hatred, no pain like this existence, and no happiness higher than peace.

²⁰³ Hunger is the worst disease, this existence the greatest pain. If one truly knows this, he realizes salvation, the highest happiness. ²⁰⁴ Health is the greatest gift, contentment the greatest wealth. Trust is the best kinsman, salvation the highest happiness.

²⁰⁵ He who has savored the taste of solitude and tranquility is free from fear and evil, refreshed with the nourishment of the law.

²⁰⁶ The sight of noble ones is good. To live with them is always happiness. If a man does not see fools, he will be truly happy.

²⁰⁷ He who walks with fools suffers

for a long time. Company with fools, as with an enemy, is always painful. Company with the wise is a pleasure, like reunion with family.²⁰⁸ Therefore, follow the wise, the intelligent, the learned, the steadfast, the dutiful, the noble. Follow a good and discerning man, as the moon follows the path of the stars.

Pleasure

²⁰⁹ He who gives himself to vanity, instead of to meditation, who forgets the goal and grasps at pleasure, will come to envy him who has exerted himself.

²¹⁰ Don't seek for what is pleasant or unpleasant, for it is pain not to see the pleasant, and it is pain to see what is unpleasant.

²¹¹ Therefore, let no man hold anything dear, for loss of the dear is painful. Those who hold nothing dear and hate nothing have no fetters.

²¹² From pleasure comes grief, from pleasure comes fear. He who is free from pleasure knows neither grief nor fear.

²¹³ From affection comes grief, from affection comes fear. He who is free from affection knows neither grief nor fear.

²¹⁴ From attachment comes grief, from attachment comes fear. He who is free from attachment knows neither grief nor fear.

²¹⁵ From lust comes grief, from lust comes fear. He who is free from lust knows neither grief nor fear.

²¹⁶ From craving comes grief, from

craving comes fear. He who is free from craving knows neither grief nor fear.

²¹⁷ He who has virtue and insight, who is just, who speaks the truth, and does his own business, him the world holds dear.

²¹⁸ He who is intent upon salvation, who is satisfied in his mind, and who is not attached to pleasure, is called “carried upstream”.

²¹⁹ Family, friends, and well-wishers welcome a man, long absent, who returns safely from afar. ²²⁰ As family receives a friend on his return, so do his good works welcome him who has done good, and has gone from this world to the next.

Anger

²²¹ Let a man leave anger, forsake pride, and overcome all bondage. No suffering befalls the man who is detached from name and form, and who calls nothing his own.

²²² I call him a master charioteer who holds back rising anger like a racing chariot. Others merely hold the reins.

²²³ Overcome anger with love, evil with good, greed with generosity, and lies with truth. ²²⁴ Speak the truth, do not yield to anger, and give, if asked, even if it's only a little. By these three steps you will go near the gods.

²²⁵ The sages who harm no one, and always control their body, go to the unchangeable state, where they suffer no more. ²²⁶ Those who

are always vigilant, studying day and night, intent on salvation, their passions fade away.

²²⁷ This is an old saying, not just of today: “They blame him who is silent, they blame him who speaks much, they blame him who speaks little.” There is none on earth who escapes blame. ²²⁸ There never was, there never will be, nor is there now, a man who is always blamed or always praised.

²²⁹ If the knowledgeable praise him, having observed him day after day to be without blemish, wise, and rich in knowledge and virtue, ²³⁰ like an ingot of gold, who can blame him? Even the gods praise him. Even the Creator praises him.

²³¹ With your body: beware of anger, be restrained, leave its sins, and with it practise virtue.

²³² With your tongue: beware of anger, be restrained, leave its sins, and practise virtue. ²³³ With your mind: beware of anger, be restrained, leave its sins, and practise virtue. ²³⁴ The wise who control their body, their tongue, and their mind, are well controlled indeed.

Impurity

²³⁵ You are now like a withered leaf, the messengers of death stand nearby. You stand at the door of departure, yet have no provision for your journey. ²³⁶ Make an island for yourself, work hard, be wise. When your impurities are blown away, and you are free from guilt, you will enter into the heavenly world of the elect.

²³⁷ Your life has come to an end, you are near death, there is no resting place for you on the road, yet you have no provision for your journey. ²³⁸ Make an island for yourself, work hard, be wise. When your impurities are blown away, and you are free from guilt, you will not enter again into birth and decay.

²³⁹ Let a wise man remove his own impurities, as a smith removes impurities from silver one by one, little by little, and moment by moment. ²⁴⁰ Just as rust destroys the iron from which it springs, so do a transgressor's deeds lead him to an evil destination.

²⁴¹ The impurity of prayers is not reciting them. The impurity of houses is not repairing them. The impurity of beauty is sloth. The impurity of a watchman is mindlessness.

²⁴² Sexual misconduct is the impurity of woman, stinginess the impurity of a donor. All evil ways are impurities, both in this world and in the next. ²⁴³ But there is an impurity worse than all others: ignorance. O monks, throw off that impurity to become pure.

²⁴⁴ Life is easy for a shameless man, who is cunning as a crow, who makes mischief, and is insulting, arrogant, and corrupt. ²⁴⁵ But life is hard for a modest man, who always seeks purity, is disinterested, quiet, spotless, and observant.

²⁴⁶ He who destroys life, speaks lies, takes what is not given, goes to another man's wife, ²⁴⁷ and gives himself to intoxicating liquor, he digs up his own root here in this world. ²⁴⁸ Know this, good man, that evil is hard to control. Do not let greed and vice bring you to pro-

longed grief.

²⁴⁹ People give according to their faith or conviction. If a man worries about the food and drink given to others, he will find no rest by day or night. ²⁵⁰ He in whom that feeling is cut down, uprooted, and destroyed, finds rest by day and night.

²⁵¹ There is no fire like passion, no grip like hatred, no snare like delusion, no river like craving.

²⁵² It is easy to see the faults of others, but difficult to see one's own. A man winnows the faults of others like chaff, but hides his own, like a cheat hides an unlucky throw of the dice.

²⁵³ If a man focuses on the errors of others, and is always inclined to find fault, his own faults will grow,

and he is far from destroying them.

²⁵⁴ The world delights in vanity,
but the awakened are free from it.

²⁵⁵ No creature is eternal, but the
awakened are never shaken.

The Just

²⁵⁶ A man does not become just by
passing arbitrary judgement. No,
he is called just who weighs both
right and wrong, ²⁵⁷ who judges
impartially and without hurry, in
line with law, guarding the law,
guarded by the law, and who is
intelligent.

²⁵⁸ A man is not wise just because
he talks a lot. He is called wise
who is patient, and free from hostil-
ity and fear.

²⁵⁹ A man does not uphold the law just because he talks a lot. He who has learned only a little of the law, yet comprehends it and never neglects it, he upholds the law.

²⁶⁰ A man is not an elder just because his hair is grey. He may be advanced in years, but is called “one grown old in vain.” ²⁶¹ He in whom there is truth, virtue, love, restraint, self control, who is free from impurity, and is wise, he is called an elder.

²⁶² Eloquence or physical beauty do not make an envious, greedy, dishonest man respectable. ²⁶³ He is called respectable when all these are cut down, uprooted, and destroyed, when he is free from hatred, and is wise.

²⁶⁴ An undisciplined man who speaks lies does not become a

monk just by shaving his head.
How can he be a monk who is held captive by desire and greed? ²⁶⁵ He who quiets evil, both small and large, is called a monk, because he has overcome all evil.

²⁶⁶ A man is not a monk just because he asks for alms. He who adopts the whole law is a monk.

²⁶⁷ He who is above both good and evil, who is chaste, and who goes through the world with understanding, he indeed is called a monk.

²⁶⁸ A foolish and ignorant man does not become a sage just by silence. But the wise, as if holding the scales, chooses good and avoids evil. ²⁶⁹ For this reason he is a sage. He who weighs both sides of this world is called a sage.

²⁷⁰ A man does not become noble by harming living creatures. He is

called noble for harming no living thing.

²⁷¹ Not by rules and practices, not by much learning, not by great concentration, not by life in seclusion, ²⁷² not by thinking, “I enjoy the happiness of renunciation which no worldling can know”, should the monk be confident without attaining the extinction of desires.

The Path

²⁷³ Of paths, the Eightfold is best.
Of truths, the Four Noble are best.
Of virtues, detachment is best.
Of men, he who has eyes to see is best.

²⁷⁴ This is the only path, there is no other, to purify vision. Follow this path and it will bewilder the

tempter. ²⁷⁵ Following this path will end pain. Once I understood how to remove thorns in the flesh, I preached this path.

²⁷⁶ You yourself must make an effort. Buddhas only show the way. The thoughtful who follow the path are freed from the tempter's bonds.

²⁷⁷ "All created things are temporary." He who sees and knows this turns away from pain. This is the path to purity.

²⁷⁸ "All created things are painful." He who sees and knows this turns away from pain. This is the path to purity.

²⁸⁰ He who does not exert himself when it is time, who, though young and strong, is full of sloth, whose will and mind are weak, that lazy and idle man will never find the

path to knowledge.

²⁸¹ Let a man watch his speech, be well restrained in mind, and never commit wrong with his body. If a man purifies these three courses of action, he will achieve the path taught by the wise.

²⁸² Zeal brings knowledge. Lack of zeal loses knowledge. Knowing these two paths of gain and loss, let a man conduct himself so that knowledge may grow.

²⁸³ Cut down the whole forest of desire, not just one tree. Danger comes from the forest. Once you have cut down this forest and its undergrowth, monks, you will be free.

²⁸⁴ As long as the smallest craving of man for woman is not destroyed, his mind is in bondage, as the suck-

ing calf to its mother. ²⁸⁵ Cut out the love of self, like an autumn lotus with your hand. Cherish the road of peace, salvation, as shown by the awakened.

²⁸⁶ "I will live here during the rains, and over here in winter and summer." Thus thinks the fool, unaware of obstructions.

²⁸⁷ Death carries off the man, praised for his children and flocks, his mind distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village.

²⁸⁸ For him whom death has seized, kinsmen are no protection. Neither sons, a father, nor relations can give shelter. ²⁸⁹ Knowing this, a wise and good man should quickly clear the path leading to salvation.

Miscellaneous

²⁹⁰ If by leaving a small pleasure one sees a great pleasure, let a wise man leave the small pleasure and look to the great.

²⁹¹ He who seeks pleasure for himself by causing pain to others is entangled by the bonds of hatred, and cannot be free from hatred.

²⁹² Desires always increase for unruly, heedless people who neglect what should be done and do what should not be done. ²⁹³ But desires will come to an end for watchful, wise people who do not do what should not be done, who steadfastly do what should be done, and whose whole watchfulness is always directed to their body.

²⁹⁶ The disciples of Gotama are wide awake and vigilant, and their

minds day and night are always set on the Awakened, ²⁹⁷ on the law, ²⁹⁸ on the church, ²⁹⁹ and on their body.

³⁰⁰ The disciples of Gotama are wide awake and vigilant, and their minds day and night always delight in compassion, ³⁰¹ and in meditation.

³⁰² It is hard to be a monk. It is hard to enjoy that life. Household life is also hard and painful. It is painful to dwell with unequals and the wandering monk is beset with pain. Therefore let no man wander aimlessly and he will not be beset with pain.

³⁰³ A faithful, virtuous, reputable, and wealthy man is respected wherever he goes. ³⁰⁴ Like the Himalayas, good people shine from afar. Like arrows shot by night,

bad people are unseen even when they are near.

³⁰⁵ He who sits alone, sleeps alone, walks alone, is diligent, and subdues himself alone, will rejoice in the solitude of the forest.

Hell

³⁰⁶ He goes to hell, the one who asserts what didn't happen, and the one who did a thing but says, "I have not done it". They are both evildoers, and are equal in the next world.

³⁰⁷ Many men who wear the saffron robe are ill-mannered and unrestrained. Such evildoers by their evil deeds go to hell. ³⁰⁸ It would be better to swallow an iron ball,

red-hot and aflame, than for an immoral, unrestrained man to eat the alms of the people.

³⁰⁹ A wreckless man who lies down with his neighbor's wife gains four things: a bad reputation, poor sleep, punishment, and hell. ³¹⁰ There is bad reputation, an evil destination, the brief pleasure of the frightened man and woman, and the king imposes a heavy punishment. Therefore, let no man lie down with his neighbor's wife.

³¹¹ Just as a blade of grass, if wrongly handled, cuts the hand, so does asceticism, if wrongly practised, lead to hell.

³¹² An act performed carelessly, a broken vow, and questionable celibacy, none of these bring much reward. ³¹³ If anything is to be done, then do it vigorously. A careless

pilgrim only scatters the dust of his passions more widely.

³¹⁴ It is better not to do an evil deed, for an evil deed torments a man afterwards. It is better to do a good deed, for having done it, one is not tormented. ³¹⁵ Like a frontier fort with defences inside and out, so let a man guard himself. Do not let a moment pass by, for they who allow the right moment to pass, suffer pain when consigned to hell.

³¹⁶ They who are ashamed of what is not shameful, and are not ashamed of what is shameful, such men, embracing false doctrines go to an evil destination.

³¹⁷ They who see danger where there is none, and see no danger where there is, such men, embracing false doctrines go to an evil destination.

³¹⁸ They who see wrong where there is none, and see no wrong where there is, such men, embracing false doctrines go to an evil destination.

³¹⁹ They who see wrong as wrong, and see right as right, such men, embracing true doctrine go to a good destination.

The Elephant

³²⁰ As an elephant in battle endures an arrow shot from a bow, so will I endure defamation. Many people lack virtue.

³²¹ They only lead a tamed elephant into crowds. The king only rides a tamed elephant. The tamed man who endures defamation is the best among men.

³²² Trained mules, thoroughbred horses, and elephants with large tusks are excellent, but he who tames himself is better still. ³²³ For with these animals no man reaches the untrodden country, where a tamed man goes by taming himself.

³²⁴ The elephant called Dhana-palaka, deep in rut, is difficult to hold. He does not eat a morsel in captivity, but longs for the elephant grove.

³²⁵ When a man is inactive and gluttonous, sleeping and rolling around in bed like an overfed hog, that fool is born again and again.

³²⁶ This mind used to wander about as it liked, wherever it wished, however it pleased. Now I will hold it in check, as a rider with a hook controls an elephant in rut.

³²⁷ Delight in mindfulness. Watch over your mind. Lift yourself out of the evil way, as an elephant lifts itself out of the mud.

³²⁸ If you find a wise, prudent, and virtuous friend, then, overcoming all dangers, walk with him joyfully and mindfully.

³²⁹ If you find no friend who is wise, prudent and virtuous, then walk alone, like a king leaving behind his kingdom, like an elephant in the forest. ³³⁰ It is better to live alone. There is no companionship with a fool. Live alone, do no evil, and be content, like an elephant in the forest.

³³¹ These are good: friends when the need arises, contentment with what you have, merit in the hour of death, giving up all grief, ³³² serving your mother, serving your fa-

ther, serving monks, serving holy men, ³³³ virtue lasting into old age, firmly rooted faith, attaining discernment, avoiding evil.

Craving

³³⁴ The craving of a heedless man grows like a creeping vine. He runs from life to life, like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest.

³³⁵ He who is overcome by this vile and clinging craving, his suffering increases like grass after rain.

³³⁶ He who overcomes this vile craving, so difficult to conquer, suffering falls off him like water drops from a lotus leaf.

³³⁷ To all assembled here I say, “Good luck. Dig up the root of craving, like one seeking the sweet

scented root of birana grass. Let not the tempter crush you again and again, as the stream crushes a reed.” ³³⁸ A tree will grow again, even if cut down, as long as its root is safe and firm. Thus, unless latent craving is destroyed, suffering will return again and again.

³³⁹ The thirty six streams of craving flow towards pleasure. The misguided man, in whom they flow strongly, is carried away. ³⁴⁰ The streams flow everywhere. The creeping vines of craving grow everywhere. If you see the vine spring up, cut its root with knowledge.

³⁴² Driven by craving, men run about like a snared rabbit. Held by fetters and bonds, they suffer again and again for a long time. ³⁴³ Driven by craving, men run about like a snared rabbit. So a monk should drive out craving, and strive to be

without passion.

³⁴⁵ The wise do not say that a fetter made of iron, wood, or hemp is strong. Far stronger is a longing for jewels and ornaments, children and wives. ³⁴⁶ The wise say that a strong fetter drags one down, though seeming loose, it is difficult to remove. After having cut it, the wise are free from cares, and leave the world, desires, and pleasures behind.

³⁴⁸ Give up the past, the future, and the present, to cross to the other shore of existence. If your mind is completely free, you will not enter into birth and decay again.

³⁴⁹ If a man is tossed about by doubts, full of passion, and focused on pleasure, his craving grows more and more. He makes his fetters strong, indeed. ³⁵⁰ If a man de-

lights in quieting doubts, is always mindful, and meditates on the impurities, he will end craving and cut the fetter of the tempter.

³⁵¹ He who has reached the goal is without fear, is without craving, is without blemish, and has removed all the thorns of life: this will be his last body.

³⁵⁴ The gift of the law exceeds all gifts. The taste of the law exceeds all tastes. Delight in the law exceeds all delights. The extinction of craving overcomes all suffering.

³⁵⁵ Riches destroy the foolish, but not those who seek the beyond. The fool, by craving for riches, destroys himself and others.

³⁵⁶ Weeds spoil a field. Passion spoils a man. Therefore, a gift given to those without passion yields

great fruit.

³⁵⁷ Weeds spoil a field. Hatred spoils a man. Therefore, a gift given to those without hatred yields great fruit.

³⁵⁸ Weeds spoil a field. Delusion spoils a man. Therefore, a gift given to those without delusion yields great fruit.

³⁵⁹ Weeds spoil a field. Desire spoils a man. Therefore, a gift given to those without desire yields great fruit.

The Monk

³⁶⁰ Good is restraint over the eye, over the ear, over the nose, and over the tongue. ³⁶¹ Good is restraint in the body, in speech, in mind, in all things. A monk, restrained in all things, is freed from all suffering.

³⁶² He who controls his hands, feet, and speech; who is well controlled, delights in the inward, is collected, solitary and content, him they call a monk.

³⁶³ The monk who controls his tongue, speaks moderately and calmly, and teaches the law and its meaning, his speech is sweet.

³⁶⁴ The monk who abides in the law, delights in the law, meditates on the law, and keeps the law in

mind, he will never fall away from the true law.

³⁶⁵ Let him not despise what he has received, nor envy others. A monk who envies others does not obtain concentration.

³⁶⁶ If a monk lives purely, is diligent, and does not despise what he has received, though he receives little, then even the gods will praise him. ³⁶⁸ The monk who abides in kindness, and is devoted to the teachings of Buddha, will attain peace, happiness, and cessation of natural desires.

³⁶⁹ Monk, bail out this boat. Once bailed, it will sail lightly. Having cut out passion and hatred, you will reach Salvation.

³⁷¹ Meditate monk. Be mindful. Do not direct your mind to sensual

pleasure. Heedless, do not swallow the flaming iron ball lest you cry out when burning, "This is suffering."

³⁷² There is no meditation without insight. There is no insight without meditation. He who has insight and meditation is near Salvation.

³⁷³ A monk who has entered his empty house, whose mind is tranquil, and who sees the law clearly, feels a delight more than human.

³⁷⁴ Once he has considered the origin and destruction of the elements of the body, he finds happiness and joy belonging to those who know the immortal.

³⁷⁵ This is the beginning for a wise monk: guarding the senses, contentment, restraint under the law.

³⁷⁶ He should have friends who are noble, energetic, and pure. He

should be friendly, and skilled in conduct. Then, having much joy, he will put an end to suffering.

³⁷⁷ Shed passion and hatred, O monks, as the jasmine plant sheds its withered flowers. ³⁷⁸ That monk is called quiet whose body and speech and mind are calm, who is collected, and who has purged the baits of the world.

³⁷⁹ Reprove yourself and examine yourself by yourself. By being vigilant and attentive, you will live happily. ³⁸⁰ You are your own master and refuge. Therefore, watch over yourself as a merchant watches over a good horse.

³⁸¹ The monk who is full of joy, and who has faith in the teachings of Buddha will reach the quiet place, cessation of natural desires, and happiness. ³⁸² Even a young

monk who applies himself to the teachings of Buddha brightens this world, like the moon set free from clouds.

The Holy Man

³⁸⁶ He who is mindful, blameless, settled, dutiful, without passions, and who has attained the highest goal, him I call a holy man.

³⁸⁷ The sun shines by day, the moon shines by night, the warrior shines in armor, the holy man shines in meditation. But the Awakened One shines with splendor day and night.

³⁸⁸ A man is called holy for discarding evil, contemplative for walking quietly, a pilgrim for leaving his own impurities.

³⁸⁹ No one should attack a holy man, but no holy man, if attacked, should give in to his anger. Shame on him who attacks a holy man, but more shame to him who gives in to his anger.

³⁹⁰ Nothing is better for a holy man than to hold his mind back from the pleasures of life. When all desire to injure has vanished, pain ceases.

³⁹¹ I call him a holy man who does not offend in body, word, or mind, and is restrained on these three points.

³⁹² Revere that teacher who has taught you the law as taught by the Buddha, just as a holy man reveres the sacrificial fire.

³⁹³ A man does not become holy by his matted hair, by his family,

or by birth. He in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is pure, he is a holy man. ³⁹⁴ What use is matted hair, O fool? What use is your coat of goat skins? The tangle is within you, but you comb the outside.

³⁹⁷ I call him a holy man who has cut every fetter, is fearless, independent and unshackled.

³⁹⁹ I call him a holy man who, without anger, endures insult, imprisonment, and beating, who has patience like the strength of an army.

⁴⁰⁰ I call him a holy man who is free from anger, dutiful, virtuous, without craving, subdued, and who has received his last body.

⁴⁰¹ I call him a holy man who does not cling to pleasures, like water on a lotus leaf or a mustard seed

on the tip of a needle. ⁴⁰² I call him a holy man who, even here, discerns the end of his suffering, has put down his burden, and is unshackled.

⁴⁰³ I call him a holy man who is wise, has deep understanding, discerns the right and wrong path, and has reached the ultimate goal.

⁴⁰⁴ I call him a holy man who keeps aloof from both laymen and ascetic, who has no permanent home, and few desires.

⁴⁰⁵ I call him a holy man who renounces violence towards all beings, whether weak or strong, and neither kills nor causes others to kill.

⁴⁰⁷ I call him a holy man from whom passion and hatred, pride and envy have dropped like a mustard seed from the tip of a needle.

⁴⁰⁸ I call him a holy man who speaks true and instructive words, free from harshness, so that he offends no one. ⁴⁰⁹ I call him a holy man who only takes what is given to him, be it long or short, small or large, good or bad.

⁴¹² I call him a holy man who, in this world, is above attachment to merit and evil, is without grief, stainless, and pure.

⁴¹⁶ I call him a holy man who, leaving all craving, travels without a home, and in whom all craving is extinct.

⁴¹⁷ I call him a holy man who, after leaving all attachment to men, has risen above all attachment to the gods, and is free from every attachment.

⁴²¹ I call him a holy man who does

not cling to past, present, or future, who has nothing, who clings to nothing.

⁴²² I call him a holy man, the fearless, the noble, the heroic, the great sage, the conqueror, the passionless, the pure, the awakened.

⁴²³ I call him a holy man who knows his former lives, who sees heaven and hell, has reached the end of births, is perfect in knowledge, a sage, and who has mastered all there is to master.