AN 3.118 — Apaṇṇaka Sutta (With Certainty)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

117. Apaṇṇaka Sutta (With Certainty) Bhikkhus, there are these three failures. What three?

Failure in virtuous behavior; failing to develop the mind; and failure in rectifying one's view.

And what, Bhikkhus, is failure in virtuous behavior?

Here, Bhikkhus, someone destroys living beings, takes what is not freely given, engages in sexual misconduct, tells lies, slanders, uses harsh and mean words meant to hurt and cause injury and suffering, and engages in frivolous speech by using idle chatter.

This, Bhikkhus, is failure in virtuous behavior.

And what, Bhikkhus, is failing to develop the mind?

Here, Bhikkhus, someone has a mind that is full of desires, while also being mean and avaricious, having no consideration for others and their wellbeing.

This, Bhikkhus, is failing to develop the mind.

And what, Bhikkhus, is failing to rectify one's view?

Here, Bhikkhus, someone holds on to wrong views, while functioning with the wrong understanding, thus:

'There is no point in giving, making offerings, or sacrificing anything, since there are no benefits or good results for what is generously given, as well as in making offerings or sacrifices. Similarly, there are no results for good and evil actions; there is no 'this existence' nor a life beyond it; there is no mother, no father; there are no spontaneously reborn beings; there are no recluses or brahmins with upright behavior and proper conduct, with solid and reliably good character, who having come to the correct path and method, by realizing for themselves this world and the other, confidently and through their own personal experience, teach and declare it to others.'

Bhikkhus, this is failing to rectify the view.

Bhikkhus, as a result of failure in virtuous behavior, when their body breaks down, after death, those sentient beings are reborn into the miserable lower realms, in the hells.

Similarly, as a result of failing to develop the mind, when their body breaks down, after death, those sentient beings are reborn into the miserable lower realms, in the hells.

And also, as a result of failing to rectify and correct their view, when their body breaks down, after death, those sentient beings are reborn into the miserable lower realms, in the hells.

Bhikkhus, similar to a situation where a dice is tossed, no matter where it lands, it always ends up firmly on its base, so too is the case when, as a result of failure in virtuous behavior, after death, sentient beings are reborn into the miserable lower realms, in the hells.

Similarly, as a result of failing to develop the mind, when their body breaks down, after death, those sentient beings are reborn into the miserable lower realms, in the hells.

And also, as a result of failing to rectify and correct their view, when their body breaks down, after death, those sentient beings are reborn into the miserable lower realms, in the hells.

Bhikkhus, these are the three failures.

On the other hand, Bhikkhus, there are these three successful accomplishments. What three?

Success in virtuous behavior; success in developing the mind; and success in rectifying the view.

And what, Bhikkhus, is success in virtuous behavior?

Here, Bhikkhus, someone does not destroy nor harms living beings; does not take what is not freely given; does not engage in sexual misconduct; does not tell lies; does not slander; does not use harsh or mean words meant to harm or cause suffering; and does not talk frivolously nor uses idle chatter.

This, Bhikkhus, is success in virtuous behavior.

And what, Bhikkhus, is success in developing the mind?

Here, Bhikkhus, someone has a mind that does not covet what others have, nor is obsessed with desires or hatred, remaining considerate of others and their wellbeing.

This, Bhikkhus, is success in developing the mind.

And what, Bhikkhus, is success in rectifying the view?

Here, Bhikkhus, someone holds the Right View, while functioning with the right understanding, thus:

‘There is indeed much value in giving, making offerings, and sacrificing things, as there are surely benefits and good results for what is generously given, as well as in the offerings and sacrifices made. Similarly, there are results for good and evil actions; there is this existence and a life beyond; there is mother and father; there are indeed spontaneously reborn beings; there are recluses or brahmins with upright behavior and proper conduct, with solid and reliably good character, who having come to the correct path and method, through realizing for themselves this world and the other, confidently and through their own personal experience, teach and declare it to others.’

Bhikkhus, this is success in rectifying the view.

Now, Bhikkhus, as a result of success in virtuous behavior, after death, those sentient beings are reborn in good destinations, in the higher realms, in the heavenly abodes.

Similarly, as a result of success in developing the mind, after death, those sentient beings are reborn in good destinations, in the higher realms, in the heavenly abodes.

So also, as a result of success in rectifying and having corrected their view, after death, those sentient beings are reborn in good destinations, in the higher realms, in the heavenly abodes.

Bhikkhus, much like a dice when it gets tossed, no matter where it lands, it always ends up firmly on its base, so too, as a result of success in virtuous behavior, after death, sentient beings are reborn in good destinations, in the higher realms, in the heavenly abodes.

Similarly, as a result of success in developing the mind, after death, those sentient beings are reborn in good destinations, in the higher realms, in the heavenly abodes.

So also, as a result of success in rectifying the view, after death, those sentient beings are reborn in good destinations, in the higher realms, in the heavenly abodes.

Bhikkhus, these are the three moral accomplishments.