AN 3.52 — Dutiya Dvebrāhmaṇa Sutta (The Two Brahmins – Part 2)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Source revision: ee5230c458ad6c1566f518d5909916ad92d12aebf1240750c5357dd9b5699f30

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Candana source labels: 52. Site text ID: AN 3.52.

Text

52. Dutiya Dvebrāhmaṇa Sutta (The Two Brahmins – Part 2) At one time, two elderly brahmins, burdened by years, who had lived up to a hundred and twenty years approached The Blessed One. Then, once the friendly greetings were exchanged, they went and sat down to one side, and addressed The Blessed One by saying:

“Master Gotama, we are two elderly brahmins, burdened by years, who have lived up to a hundred and twenty years. However, we have not done anything wholesome, good, nor worthy of merits, and in addition, we have not established for ourselves any worthwhile shelter against the terrors of uncertainty.

“Please, let Master Gautama advise us for our good, welfare and happiness for a long time.”

“Indeed brahmins, you are truly burdened by years, having lived up to a hundred and twenty years, but you have not done anything wholesome, good, nor worthy of merits, and in addition, you have not established for yourselves any worthwhile shelter against the terrors of uncertainty.

“Truly, brahmins, this world is burning and in the flames of what are called decay, old age, afflictions, and death.

“But, despite being susceptible to the inevitable ravages of decay, old age, afflictions, and death, one can still have and maintain protection through the shelter of restraint, built and developed through his bodily actions, his speech or communication, and his thoughts.

“These, therefore, are one’s own island, one’s own shelter and support.

‘When the house is on fire, whatever is taken out of it and saved, Includes those items that are the most useful and valuable to you, Not the ones that are left behind, To go up in smoke, while burning in the blaze.

Since we all are being burned by decay, old age, afflictions, and death, What is left behind are the merits gained through actions That you have committed through the body, speech, and mind, Which no burning blaze could really touch, For, these will truly lead you to happiness, into the beyond.’