AN 5.49 — Kosala Sutta: The Kosalan

English translation by Helmuth Hecker & Sister Khema.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved; source ellipsis or repetition-omission statement retained. Canonical repetitions were not reconstructed.

Text

At one time the Lord was staying near Savatthi at Jeta Grove, Anathapindika's Monastery. Then King Pasenadi of Kosala approached the Lord and having done so, paid his respects and sat down nearby. Now at that time Queen Mallika died. A certain man then approached the King and whispered in his ear: "Your Majesty, Queen Mallika has died." At those words king Pasenadi was filled with grief and depression, and with shoulders drooping, head down, he sat glum, and with nothing to say. The Lord saw the king sitting there like that and spoke to him in this way:

"Great king, there are these five circumstances not-to-be-got by monk, brahman, deva, Mara, Brahma, or by anyone in the world. What are the five?

"That what is of the nature to decay may not decay, is a circumstance not-to-be-got by a monk... or by anyone in the world. That what is of the nature to be diseased may not be diseased, is a circumstance not-to-be-got by a monk... or by anyone in the world.

"That what is of the nature to die may not die, is a circumstance not-to-be-got by a monk... or by anyone in the world.

"That what is of the nature to be exhausted may not be exhausted, is a circumstance not-to-be-got by a monk... or by anyone in the world.

"That what is of the nature to be destroyed may not be destroyed, is a circumstance, not-to-be-got by a monk... or by anyone in the world.

"Great king, for an uninstructed ordinary person what is of the nature to decay does decay, what is of the nature to be diseased does become diseased, what is of the nature to die does die, what is of the nature to be exhausted is exhausted and what is of the nature to be destroyed is destroyed — and when these things happen to him he does not reflect, "It's not only for me that what is of the nature to decay decays... that what is of the nature to be destroyed is destroyed, but wherever there are beings, coming and going, dying and being born, for all those beings what is of the nature to decay decays... what is of the nature to be destroyed is destroyed, and if I, when there is decay in what is of the nature to decay... when there is destruction in what is of the nature to be destroyed, should grieve, pine, and lament, and crying beat the breast and so fall into delusion, food would not be enjoyed, my body would become haggard, work would not be done and enemies would be pleased, while friends would be depressed. Then, when there is decay in what is of the nature to decay, disease in what is of the nature to be diseased, death in what is of the nature to die, exhaustion in what is of the nature to be exhausted, destruction in what is of the nature to be destroyed, he grieves, pines and laments, and crying beats his breast and so falls into delusion.

"This is called an uninstructed ordinary person; pierced by the poisoned dart of grief, he just torments himself. Great king, for the instructed Noble Disciple what is of the nature to decay does decay... and what is of the nature to be destroyed is destroyed... and when these things happen to him he does reflect, "It's not only for me that what is of the nature to decay decays... that what is of the nature to be destroyed, is destroyed, but wherever there are beings, coming and going, dying and being born, for all those beings what is of the nature to decay decays... what is of the nature to be destroyed is destroyed, and if I, when there is decay in what is of the nature to decay... when there is destruction in what is of the nature to be destroyed, should grieve, pine and lament, and crying beat the breast and so fall into delusion, food would not be enjoyed, my body would become haggard, work would not be done and enemies would be pleased while friends would be depressed. Then when there is decay in what is of the nature to decay, disease in what is of the nature to be diseased, death in what is of the nature to die, exhaustion in what is of the nature to be exhausted, destruction in what is of the nature to be destroyed, he does not grieve or pine or lament, he does not beat his breast and fall into delusion.

"This is called an instructed Noble Disciple. Drawn out is the poisoned dart of grief with which the uninstructed ordinary person torments himself. Free of grief, free from the dart, the Noble Disciple has quenched himself completely."

"Great king, these are the five circumstances not-to-be-got by monk, brahman, deva, Mara, Brahma, or by anyone in the world."

Do not grieve, nor should you lament. Here, what good is gained? — none at all indeed, and enemies rejoice to see that grief and pain. But when misfortunes do not shake the wise — that one who knows well how to seek the good, then enemies because of that are pained seeing his face as formerly, not strained. Where and whatever good may gotten, be there and just there he should try for that by study, wisdom and well-spoken words, unpracticed so far, and tradition, too. But if he knows: "This good can be got Neither by me nor any other too" then ungrieving he should bear it all (and think), "Now how to use my strength for present work?"