

Anguttara Nikāya

The Numerical Discourses

Pañcakanipāta
(Book of the Fives)

AN 5.79

Tatiya Anāgatabhaya Sutta

“On Terrors to Come— Part 3”

Translated by Bhikkhu Candana

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“Bhikkhus, these five are future terrors to come that are not yet here, but they will arrive in the future. You should be alert to them *and* make a strong effort to abandon them when they *do* arrive. What are these five?

1) “Bhikkhus, in the future there will be Bhikkhus who will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, as well as their mental cultivation. Therefore, they will severely lack in wisdom.

“And although they will give the Higher Ordination to others, yet they will be unable to discipline them in the higher virtues, in the higher mind, and in the higher wisdom. Then, those newly ordained Bhikkhus, just like their preceptors, will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, and thus, they too will be weak in their mental cultivation, and therefore severely lack in wisdom.

“Later, these Bhikkhus in turn will give the Higher Ordination to others but will be unable to discipline them in the higher virtues, in the higher mind, and in the higher wisdom. And in turn, those Bhikkhus too will be unable to discipline them in the higher virtues, in the higher mind, and in the higher wisdom.

“In this manner, Bhikkhus, by corrupting the Dhamma, the Vinaya Discipline also becomes corrupted, and similarly by corrupting the Vinaya, the Dhamma itself becomes corrupted. This, Bhikkhus, is the first of the five terrors to come that are not yet here, but they *will* arrive in the future. You should, therefore, be alert to them *and* make a strong effort to abandon them when they *do* arrive.

2) “Bhikkhus, in the future there will be Bhikkhus who will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, as well as their mental cultivation. Therefore, they will severely lack in wisdom.

“And although they will provide dependence to others during their primary monastic years, yet they will be unable to discipline them in the higher virtues, in the higher mind, and in the higher wisdom. Then, similar to their own preceptors, those ordained Bhikkhus too will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, as well as their mental cultivation. Therefore, they will severely lack in wisdom. And these too, in turn, will provide dependence to others during *their* primary monastic years, but will be unable to discipline them in the higher virtues, in the higher mind, and in the higher wisdom.

“In this manner, Bhikkhus, by corrupting the Dhamma, the Vinaya Discipline also will become corrupted, and similarly by corrupting the Vinaya, the Dhamma itself becomes corrupted. This, Bhikkhus, is the second of the five terrors to come that are not yet here, but they *will* arrive in the future. You should, therefore, be alert to them *and* make a strong effort to abandon them when they *do* arrive.

3) “Bhikkhus, in the future there will be Bhikkhus, who will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, as well as their mental cultivation. Therefore, they will severely lack in wisdom.

“And, as these Bhikkhus engage in discussions on The Dhamma, due to their lack in practice and thus genuine understanding of The Dhamma, they will decline into evil ways by teaching and living according to what is adhamma, while even defending their wrong views when being questioned or scrutinized.

“In this manner, Bhikkhus, by corrupting the Dhamma, the Vinaya Discipline will become corrupted, and similarly by corrupting the Vinaya, the Dhamma itself becomes corrupted. This, Bhikkhus, is the third of the five terrors to come that are not yet here, but they *will* arrive in the future. You should, therefore, be alert to them *and* make a strong effort to abandon them when they *do* arrive.

4) “Bhikkhus, in the future there will be Bhikkhus, who will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, as well as their mental cultivation. Therefore, they will severely lack in wisdom.

“And when the words of The Blessed One are being spoken and recited, the discourses given by The Tathāgata that are deep in meaning, leading one to the supramundane state connected with emptiness, they will not want to listen or pay close attention to them, or try to apply their minds to them, in an effort to grasp their deep meanings. In fact, these Bhikkhus will discourage and minimize the importance of studying and learning The Tathāgata’s words found within the Suttas.

“However, when The Blessed One’s words have been altered beyond recognition by commentators, poets, or disciples of another dispensation and transformed into poetry, using flowery and fancy language, and when these are recited, suddenly these Bhikkhus will want to listen to them; they will respect and worship these words, memorizing them, claiming them to be the words of The Blessed One, as it fits their defiled minds.

“In this manner, Bhikkhus, by corrupting the Dhamma, the Vinaya Discipline also will become corrupted, and similarly by corrupting the Vinaya, the Dhamma itself becomes corrupted. This, Bhikkhus, is the fourth of the five terrors to come that are not yet here, but they *will* arrive in the future. You should, therefore, be alert to them *and* make a strong effort to abandon them when they *do* arrive.

5) “Bhikkhus, in the future there will be Bhikkhus, who will not be strong enough to persevere bodily hardship; similarly, they will not be strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, as well as their mental cultivation. Therefore, they will severely lack in wisdom.

“At that time, the elder Bhikkhus themselves not being strong enough to persevere bodily hardship, and not being strong enough to persevere in developing virtuous behavior, they will also be weak in their mental cultivation. Thus, they will be severely lacking in wisdom. As a result, they will then indulge in a luxurious and comfortable lifestyle, slacking in their practice and development in The Dhamma. In this manner, they will become leaders in backsliding, neglecting the work that is to be done in seclusion, and therefore neither being vigilant nor alert, nor putting in the effort to strive diligently to attain what is yet to be attained, to experience what is yet to be experienced, to realize what is yet to be realized; they will severely lack the resolve or desire to do it.

“Later, those Bhikkhus who are to be their students will also follow the example of their preceptors, indulging in a luxurious and comfortable lifestyle, slacking in their practice and development in the Dhamma, as they too become leaders in backsliding, neglecting the work to be done in seclusion. Thus, they will live without any vigilance nor be alert, nor put in the effort to strive diligently to attain what is yet to be attained, to experience what is yet to be experienced, to realize what is yet to be realized, as they too will lack the resolve or desire to do it.

“In this manner, Bhikkhus, by corrupting the Dhamma, the Vinaya Discipline also will become corrupted, and similarly by corrupting the Vinaya, the Dhamma itself becomes corrupted. This, Bhikkhus, is the fifth of the five terrors to come that are not yet here, but they *will* arrive in the future. You should, therefore, be alert to them *and* make a strong effort to abandon them when they *do* arrive.”

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