Dhp 306-319 — The Hell Chapter

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Text

Collection of Minor Texts

Verses of Dhamma

The Hell Chapter

Those who proclaim what never happened go to hell,

as well as those who do something then say they did not.

After death, both are the same;

people whose afterlife was determined by lowly actions.

Many who wear ochre on their neck

are evil and unrestrained.

Because of their evil actions

they are reborn in hell.

It is better to eat a red-hot iron ball,

glowing like fire,

than for an immoral, unrestrained person

to eat the nation’s almsfood.

Four things happen to a negligent person

who commits adultery:

bad karma, insomnia,

criticism, and rebirth in hell.

One acquires bad karma and the destiny of evil people,

and only the minute pleasure of a frightened man with a frightened woman;

and then the king enacts a severe punishment.

Therefore, one should not commit adultery.

Just as a blade, when poorly held,

cuts the hand that holds it,

a contemplative life that is held incorrectly

draws one closer to hell.

Lax behavior,

defiled practice,

a suspicious spiritual life -

this does not bring great benefit.

If one will do what one should do,

then one should make a solid effort,

because a lax renunciant

scatters more dust.

It is better when misconduct is not done;

misconduct torments afterwards.

It is better when good conduct is done;

after doing so, one is not tormented.

As a border city

is guarded inside and out,

in the same way guard yourself;

let not a moment slip past you.

When the moment is past they sorrow,

those who arrived in hell.

They are ashamed when they should not be ashamed,

they are not ashamed when they should be ashamed;

taking up wrong view,

beings go to a bad destination.

They see danger where there is no danger,

they see no danger where there is danger;

taking up wrong view,

beings go to a bad destination.

They think the blameless is blameworthy,

and see the blameworthy as blameless;

taking up wrong view,

beings go to a bad destination.

Knowing the blameworthy as blameworthy

and the blameless as blameless,

taking up right view,

beings go to a good destination.