Dhp 33-43 — Chapter on Mind

English translation by Bhante Suddhāso.
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Source note: 10 Pali headings, colophons, or recitation-summary segments have no English translation in the source. All English source segments are retained; no body passages are omitted.

Text

Collection of Minor Texts

Verses of Dhamma

Chapter on Mind

Unstable and unsteady is the mind,

difficult to protect and restrain.

The wise straighten it,

like a fletcher straightens an arrow.

Like a fish pulled from its home

and thrown on dry land,

the mind thrashes about,

struggling to escape the realm of Māra.

The mind is fast-moving and hard to subdue,

landing wherever it wishes;

it is good to train it—

a trained mind brings happiness.

The mind is very subtle and hard to see,

landing wherever it wishes;

the wise protect it—

a guarded mind brings happiness.

The mind travels far, wanders alone,

incorporeal, self-sheltered;

those who restrain it

become free from the bonds of Māra.
For one whose mind is unsettled,
who does not understand the true Dhamma,
and whose clarity is disturbed,
wisdom does not become complete.
One whose mind is free from influences,
whose mind is unafflicted,
who has abandoned both merit and evil, and is alert
has no fear.
Having understood that this body is like a clay pot,
having fortified the mind like a city,
combat Māra using wisdom as one's weapon,
and protect the victory—you can be free of any abode.
Before long, this body
will lie on the ground
discarded and devoid of consciousness
like a useless log.
Compared to what might be done by an enemy to an enemy
or one hostile person to another,
a wrongly directed mind
can cause even more harm than that.
Compared to what might be done by a mother or a father
or any other relative,
a rightly directed mind
can bring even more benefit than that.