Iti 91 — Lifestyle

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Text

So It Was Said 91

The Book of the Threes

Chapter Five

Lifestyle

This was said by the Buddha, the Perfected One: that is what I heard.

“This is the last of lifestyles, mendicants, namely relying on alms. The world curses you: ‘You beggar, walking bowl in hand!’ Yet earnest gentlemen take it up for a good reason. Not to escape a summons by a king or a summons for a bandit, or because you were in debt or in fear, or in order to make a living. Rather, because they think: ‘I’m swamped by rebirth, old age, and death; by sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. I’m swamped by suffering, mired in suffering. Hopefully I can make an end to this entire mass of suffering.’ That’s how this gentleman has gone forth. Yet they covet sensual pleasures; they’re infatuated, full of ill will and malicious intent. They are unmindful, lacking situational awareness and immersion, with straying minds and undisciplined faculties. Suppose there was a firebrand for lighting a funeral pyre, burning at both ends, and smeared with dung in the middle. It couldn’t be used as timber either in the village or the wilderness. I say that individual is just like this. They’ve missed out on the pleasures of the lay life, and haven’t fulfilled the goal of the ascetic life.”

The Buddha spoke this matter. On this it is said:

“They’ve left behind the pleasures of the lay life,

and miss out on the goal of the ascetic life.

Ruining it, they throw it away,

and perish like a funeral firebrand.

Many who wear a scrap of ocher cloth

are unrestrained and wicked.

Being wicked, they are reborn in hell

due to their bad deeds.

It’d be better for the immoral and unrestrained

to eat an iron ball,

scorching, like a burning flame,

than to eat the nation’s alms.”

This too is a matter that was spoken by the Blessed One: that is what I heard.