Snp 4.6 — Jara Sutta: Old Age

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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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, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

How short this life! You die this side of a century, but even if you live past, you die of old age. People grieve for what they see as mine, for nothing possessed is constant, nothing is constantly possessed.[1] Seeing this separation simply as it is, one shouldn't follow the household life. At death a person abandons what he construes as mine. Realizing this, the wise shouldn't incline to be devoted to mine. Just as a man doesn't see, on awakening, what he met in a dream, even so he doesn't see, when they are dead — their time done — those he held dear. When they are seen & heard, people are called by this name or that, but only the name remains to be pointed to when they are dead. Grief, lamentation, & selfishness are not let go by those greedy for mine, so sages letting go of possessions, seeing the Secure, go wandering forth. A monk, living withdrawn, enjoying a dwelling secluded: they say it's congenial for him he who wouldn't, in any realm, display self. Everywhere the sage independent holds nothing dear or undear. In him lamentation & selfishness, like water on a white lotus, do not adhere. As a water bead on a lotus leaf, as water on a red lily, does not adhere, so the sage does not adhere to the seen, the heard, or the sensed; for, cleansed, he doesn't construe in connection with the seen, the heard, or the sensed. In no other way does he wish for purity, for he neither takes on passion nor puts it away.[2]

Notes

1.

"Nothing possessed is constant, nothing is constantly possessed" — two readings of the phrase, na hi santi nicca pariggaha.

2.

Nd.I: An arahant has put passion totally away once and for all, and so has no need to do it ever again. An alternative explanation is that, as Sn 5.6 points out, the arahant has gone beyond all dhammas, dispassion included.