Snp 4.15 — Attadanda Sutta: The Rod Embraced

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

"When embraced, the rod of violence[1] breeds danger & fear: Look at people quarreling. I will tell of how I experienced dismay. Seeing people floundering like fish in small puddles, competing with one another — as I saw this, fear came into me. The world was entirely without substance. All the directions were knocked out of line. Wanting a haven for myself, I saw nothing that wasn't laid claim to. Seeing nothing in the end but competition, I felt discontent. And then I saw an arrow here, so very hard to see, embedded in the heart. Overcome by this arrow you run in all directions. But simply on pulling it out you don't run, you don't sink.[2] [Here the trainings are recited.] [3] Whatever things are tied down in the world, you shouldn't be set on them. Having totally penetrated sensual pleasures, sensual passions,[4] you should train for your own Unbinding. Be truthful, not insolent, not deceptive, rid of divisiveness. Without anger, the sage should cross over the evil of greed & avarice. He should conquer laziness, weariness, sloth; shouldn't consort with heedlessness, shouldn't stand firm in his pride — the man with his heart set on Unbinding. He shouldn't engage in lying, shouldn't create a sense of allure in form, should fully fathom conceit, and live refraining from impulsiveness; shouldn't delight in what's old, prefer what's new,[5] grieve over decline, get entangled in what's dazzling & bright.[6] I call greed a 'great flood'; hunger, a swift current. Preoccupations are ripples; sensuality, a bog hard to cross over. Not deviating from truth, a sage stands on high ground : a brahman. Having renounced

All,[7] he is said to be at peace; having clearly known, he is an attainer-of-wisdom; knowing the Dhamma, he's independent. Moving rightly through the world, he doesn't envy anyone here. Whoever here has gone over & beyond sensual passions — an attachment hard to transcend in the world, doesn't sorrow, doesn't fret. He, his stream cut, is free from bonds. Burn up what's before, and have nothing for after. If you don't grasp at what's in between,[8] you will go about, calm. For whom, in name & form, in every way, there's no sense of mine, and who doesn't grieve over what is not: he, in the world, isn't defeated, suffers no loss.[9] To whom there doesn't occur 'This is mine,' for whom 'nothing is others,' feeling no sense of mine-ness, doesn't grieve at the thought 'I have nothing.' Not harsh, not greedy, not perturbed, everywhere in tune: this is the reward — I say when asked — for those who are free from pre- conceptions. For one unperturbed — who knows — there's no accumulating. Abstaining, unaroused, he everywhere sees security.[10] The sage doesn't speak of himself as among those who are higher, equal, or lower. At peace, free of selfishness, he doesn't embrace, doesn't reject," the Blessed One said.

Notes

1. Nd. I: The rod of violence takes three forms: physical violence (the three forms of bodily misconduct), verbal violence (the four forms of verbal misconduct), and mental violence (the three forms of mental misconduct). See AN 10.176.

2. Nd. I: "One doesn't run" to any of the destinations of rebirth; "one doesn't sink" into any of the four floods of sensuality, views, becoming, and ignorance (see SN 45.171 and AN 4.10).

3. This phrase, a kind of stage direction, seems to indicate that this poem had a ritual use, as part of a ceremony for giving the precepts.

4. "Sensual pleasure, sensual passions": two meanings of the word kama.

5. Nd. I: "Old" and "new" mean past and present aggregates.

6. Nd. I: "what's dazzling & bright" = craving and other defilements.

7. For the definition of All, see the discussion in The Mind Like Fire Unbound, pp. 31-32.

8. Nd. I: "Before," "after," and "in between" = past, future, and present.

9. "Isn't defeated, suffers no loss" — two meanings of the Pali phrase, na jiyyati.

10. See Ud. II.10.

See also: AN 3.38