Thig 13.5 — Subhā, the Daughter of a Blacksmith

English translation by Bhikkhuni Soma.
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Text

Verses of the Elder Bhikkhunīs

Chapter of the Twenties

Subhā, the Daughter of a Blacksmith

“I was young and pure
when I heard the Dhamma.
I understood the truth
through heedfulness,
and then all sensual pleasures
stopped being so appealing.
I saw the danger in self-identity
and longed for renunciation.
I left behind relatives,
workers and servants,
and prosperous village fields,
pleasing and delightful.
I gave up much wealth
for the sake of going forth,
Now that I have left the household life
out of faith in the well-spoken true Dhamma,
it wouldn’t be proper
for one who aspires to nothingness,
to revert to gold and silver
after casting them away.

Silver or gold
do not bring enlightenment nor peace.
They are not proper for a contemplative,
this isn't noble wealth.
It's just greed and intoxication,
delusion and increase of impurity.
It is unreliable, troublesome,
and short-lived.
Human beings with defiled minds pursue it.
Heedless and lustful,
they get into numerous quarrels,
pitting themselves against each other.
One can see those entangled in sensual pleasures
afflicted with much misfortune:
ruin, imprisonment, hardship,
loss, grief, and lamentation.
Treacherous relatives,
why do you try to trap me in sensual pleasures?
You know I have gone forth
after seeing the danger in sensual pleasures.
Neither gold nor money
will eliminate the influences of mind.
Sensual pleasures are murderous enemies,
foes, darts, fetters.
Treacherous relatives,
why do you try to trap me in sensual pleasures?
You know I have gone forth
with a shaven head, wrapped in the outer robe.
Collecting lumps of leftover food,

and robes made from discarded rags:
these are the supports for the homeless life,
this is what is proper for me.
The great sages have spewed out sensual pleasures,
both divine and human.
They are in a safe place, they are liberated,
they have reached unshakable happiness.
I should not get involved with sensual pleasures,
where safety is not found.
Sensual pleasures are deadly enemies,
they are like a great mass of fire, they are suffering.
Greed is hazardous, frightful,
pestering, troublesome.
It is the opposite of peace,
and the way into much delusion.
Sensual pleasures are like the head of a snake,
dangerous and dire.
Foolish blind worldlings
delight in them—
indeed there are many foolish beings in the world,
trapped in the mud of sensual pleasures,
who do not know the end
of birth and death.
Because of sensual pleasures
humans are on the path that leads to a bad destination.
Many decide to follow it,
bringing illness to themselves,
by producing enmity,
torment, and complete defilement.

Sensual pleasures are entrapping,
the world's bait that binds us to death.
Maddening, enticing,
sensual pleasures crush the mind.
They are a trap set by Māra
for the defilement of sentient beings.
Sensual pleasures have endless drawbacks,
cause much suffering, and are highly poisonous.
They bring little enjoyment, they produce conflict,
causing one's bright wholesome traits to wither away.
I will not go back
to sensual pleasures,
which have caused me so much misery—
now I always enjoy Nirvana.
When I was battling with sensual pleasures,
I longed for a state of coolness—
now I dwell heedful
in the destruction of all fetters.
Free from sorrow, stainless, safe:
I follow the upright
Noble Eightfold Path,
the one because of which the Great Sage crossed over."
"You see this person established in Dhamma,
Subhā, the daughter of a blacksmith.
Having become free from passion,
she meditates at the root of a tree.
Today is the eighth day since her going forth,
faith shining in the true Dhamma.
Trained by Uppalavaṇṇā,

possessing the three knowledges, leaving behind death.

A free person with no debt,

a bhikkhunī with well-developed spiritual powers,

with all bonds unbound,

she is one who has done what was to be done, and is free from influences.”

Then Sakka, using psychic powers,

approached her with an assembly of Devas,

and the lord of beings paid homage to

Subhā, the daughter of a blacksmith.

… The Elder Subhā, daughter of a blacksmith.

The Chapter of the Twenties is finished.