Thig 13.5 — Thig 13:5 Subhā the Goldsmith’s Daughter

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

Thig 13:5 Subhā the Goldsmith’s Daughter

“I was a child, with clean clothes,

when I first heard the Dhamma.

And within me, heedful,

was a break-through to the truth.

Then I arrived

at an enormous dissatisfaction

with all sensuality.

Seeing the danger
in self-identity,
I longed only
for renunciation.
Leaving my circle of relatives,
slaves, workers,
prosperous villages & fields,
delightful, enticing possessions,
I went forth,
abandoning not-insignificant wealth.

Having gone out through conviction
in the well-taught true Dhamma,
it wouldn't be proper for me—
aspiring to nothingness—
having cast off gold & silver
to take them back.
Gold & silver
don't buy awakening,
don't buy peace.
This [gold] isn't proper for contemplatives.
This isn't noble wealth.
This is
greediness, intoxication,
delusion, bondage to dust,
suspicion, many troubles.
There's no lasting stability here.
It's to this extent that many, many men
—heedless, their hearts defiled—
opposing one another, create

conflicts, murder, bondage,

calamity, loss, grief, & lamentation.

Many misfortunes are seen

for those head-over-heels in sensuality.

So, my relatives:

Why do you, like enemies,

try to bind me to sensuality?

You know I've gone forth,

seeing the danger in sensuality.

Gold coin & bullion

can't put an end to effluents.

Sensuality is an enemy,

a murderer,

hostile, arrows & bonds.

So, my relatives:

Why do you, like enemies,

try to bind me to sensuality?

You know I've gone forth

with shaven head, wrapped in a patchwork cloak.

Leftover alms-scraps, gleanings,

a robe made from cast-off cloth:

That's what's proper for me—

the requisites of one with no home.

The great seers have rejected sensuality,

both human & divine.

Released are they,

in the place of security.

Arrived are they,

in unshaken ease.

So may I not come into union
with sensuality, in which no shelter is found.
It’s an enemy, a murderer
—sensuality—
painful, like a mass of flame.
Greed:
an obstacle,1 fearful, threatened,
full of thorns,
very discordant,
a great cause of delusion.
Sensuality:
a frightening attack,
like a snake’s head
in which fools delight—
blinded, run-of-the-mill.

Because many people in the world
are stuck in the mud of sensuality,
unknowing,
they don’t realize the ending of birth & death.
Many people follow the path
to bad destinations
because of sensuality,
bringing disease on themselves.

Thus sensuality creates enemies.
It burns, is defiled.
It’s the bait of the world,
constraining, the bondage of death,
maddening, deceptive, agitating the mind.
It’s a net cast by Māra

for the defilement of living beings:
with endless drawbacks, much pain,
great poison,
giving little enjoyment, creating conflict,
drying up the good side [of the mind].

I, having cast off[2] much trouble like this
caused by sensuality,
will not return to it,
as I always delight in unbinding.
Doing battle with sensuality
in hopes of the cool state,
I will stay heedful, finding delight[3]
in the ending of fetters.
I follow the path—
eightfold, straight,
griefless, stainless, secure—
over which great seers
have crossed."

See this Subhā, the goldsmith's daughter,
standing firm in the Dhamma,
entering the imperturbable state,[4]
doing jhāna at the foot of a tree.
This is the eighth day of her going forth
confident, beautiful through the true Dhamma.
Trained by Uppalavaṇṇā,[5]
she's a three-knowledge woman[6]
who's left death behind;
freed from slavery, debtless,
a nun with developed faculties,[7]

set loose from all ties,

her task done,

effluent- free.

Sakka, lord of beings,

with his community of devas,

approaching her through supranormal power,

pays homage to her:

Subhā the goldsmith's daughter.

Notes

1. Reading paripantho with the Burmese, Sinhalese, and PTS editions. The Thai edition has aparisuddho, "impure."

2. Reading hitvā with the Thai edition. The other editions have katvā, "done."

3. Reading ratā, delighting, with the Thai edition. The Sinhalese and PTS read tesaṁ, so that the line means "in the ending of their fetters"; the Burmese edition reads sabba-, so that the line means, "in the ending of all fetters."

4. See MN 106.

5. A student of the Buddha, declared by him to be the foremost nun in terms of her supranormal powers. See SN 5:5.

6. See Thag 4:8, note 2.

7. This can mean that she has achieved restraint over her sense faculties, or that she has fully developed the faculties of conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, and discernment. See. SN 48:10 and AN 4:37.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 13–14; MN 54