MN 131 — MN 131 An Auspicious Day | Bhaddekaratta Sutta

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

An Auspicious Day

Bhaddekaratta Sutta (MN 131)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. There he addressed the monks: “Monks!”

“Yes, lord,” the monks responded to him.

The Blessed One said: “Monks, I will teach you the summary & exposition of one who has had an auspicious day. Listen & pay close attention. I will speak.”

“As you say, lord,” the monks responded to him.

The Blessed One said:

You shouldn’t chase after the past
or place expectations on the future.
What is past
is left behind.
The future
is as yet unreached.
Whatever quality is present
you clearly see right there,
right there.
Not taken in,
unshaken,
that’s how you develop the heart.

Ardently doing
what should be done today,
for—who knows?— tomorrow
death.
There is no bargaining
with Mortality & his mighty horde.

Whoever lives thus ardently,
relentlessly
both day & night,
has truly had an auspicious day:1
So says the Peaceful Sage.

“And how, monks, does one chase after the past? One gets carried away with the delight of ‘In the past I had such a form [body]’ … ‘In the past I had such a feeling’ … ‘In the past I had such a perception’ … ‘In the past I had such a fabrication’ … ‘In the past I had such a consciousness.’ This is called chasing after the past.

“And how does one not chase after the past? One does not get carried away with the delight of ‘In the past I had such a form’ … ‘In the past I had such a feeling’ … ‘In the past I had such a perception’ … ‘In the past I had such a fabrication’ … ‘In the past I had such a consciousness.’ This is called not chasing after the past.

“And how does one place expectations on the future? One gets carried away with the delight of ‘In the future I might have such a form’ … ‘In the future I might have such a feeling’ … ‘In the future I might have such a perception’ … ‘In the future I might have such a fabrication’ … ‘In the future I might have such a consciousness.’ This is called placing expectations on the future.

“And how does one not place expectations on the future? One does not get carried away with the delight of ‘In the future I might have such a form’ … ‘In the future I might have such a feeling’ … ‘In the future I might have such a perception’ … ‘In the future I might have such a fabrication’ … ‘In the future I might have such a consciousness.’ This is called not placing expectations on the future.

“And how is one taken in with regard to present qualities? There is the case where an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person who has not seen the noble ones, is not versed in the teachings of the noble ones, is not trained in the teachings of the noble ones, sees form as self, or self as possessing form, or form as in self, or self as in form.

“He/she sees feeling as self, or self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in self, or self as in feeling.

“He/she sees perception as self, or self as possessing perception, or perception as in self, or self as in perception.

“He/she sees fabrications as self, or self as possessing fabrications, or fabrications as in self, or self as in fabrications.

“He/she sees consciousness as self, or self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in self, or self as in consciousness. This is called being taken in with regard to present qualities.

“And how is one not taken in with regard to present qualities? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones who has seen the noble ones, is versed in the teachings of the noble ones, is well-trained in the teachings of the noble ones, does not see form as self, or self as possessing form, or form as in self, or self as in form.

“He/she does not see feeling as self, or self as possessing feeling, or feeling as in self, or self as in feeling.

“He/she does not see perception as self, or self as possessing perception, or perception as in self, or self as in perception.

“He/she does not see fabrications as self, or self as possessing fabrications, or fabrications as in self, or self as in fabrications.

“He/she does not see consciousness as self, or self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as in self, or self as in consciousness. This is called not being taken in with regard to present qualities.

You shouldn’t chase after the past

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death.

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with Mortality & his mighty horde.

Whoever lives thus ardently,

relentlessly

both day & night,

has truly had an auspicious day:1

So says the Peaceful Sage.

“‘Monks, I will teach you the summary & exposition of one who has had an auspicious day’: Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the monks delighted in the Blessed One's words.

Note

1. The Pali literally says, "an auspicious night," but this should be interpreted in light of the custom—common in cultures that follow the lunar calendar—of calling a 24-hour period of day-and-night a "night."

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: SN 21:10; SN 22:1; AN 6:19–20; Ud 1:10