SN 3.4 — SN 3:4 Dear | Piya 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

Dear

Piya Sutta (SN 3:4)

Near Sāvatthī. As he was sitting to one side, King Pasenadi Kosala said to the Blessed One: “Just now, lord, while I was alone in seclusion, this train of thought arose in my awareness: ‘Who are dear to themselves, and who are not dear to themselves?’ Then it occurred to me: ‘Those who engage in bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct are not dear to themselves. Even though they may say, “We are dear to ourselves,” still they aren’t dear to themselves. Why is that? Of their own accord, they act toward themselves as an enemy would act toward an enemy; thus they aren’t dear to themselves. But those who engage in good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct are dear to themselves. Even though they may say, “We aren’t dear to ourselves,”

still they are dear to themselves. Why is that? Of their own accord, they act toward themselves as a dear one would act toward a dear one; thus they are dear to themselves.'"

"That's the way it is, great king! That's the way it is! Those who engage in bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct are not dear to themselves. Even though they may say, 'We are dear to ourselves,' still they aren't dear to themselves. Why is that? Of their own accord, they act toward themselves as an enemy would act toward an enemy; thus they aren't dear to themselves. But those who engage in good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct are dear to themselves. Even though they may say, 'We aren't dear to ourselves,' still they are dear to themselves. Why is that? Of their own accord, they act toward themselves as a dear one would act toward a dear one; thus they are dear to themselves."

That is what the Blessed One said. Having said that, the One Well-Gone, the Teacher, said further:

"If you hold yourself dear

then don't fetter yourself

with evil,

for happiness isn't easily gained

by one who commits

a wrong-doing.

When seized by the End-maker

as you abandon the human state,

what's truly your own?

What do you take along when you go?

What follows behind you

like a shadow

that never leaves?

Both the merit & evil

that you as a mortal

perform here:

That's

what's truly your own,

what you take along when you go;

that's
what follows behind you
like a shadow
that never leaves.

So do what is admirable,
as an accumulation
for the future life.
Deeds of merit are the support for beings
when they arise
in the other world."

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 41; Ud 5:1; Iti 22; Dhp 1–2; Iti 60