SN 3.19 — SN 3:19 Heirless (1) | Aputtaka 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

Heirless (1)

Aputtaka Sutta (SN 3:19)

Near Sāvatthī. Then King Pasenadi Kosala went to the Blessed One in the middle of the day and, on arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, sat to one side. As he was sitting there the Blessed One said to him, "Well now, great king, where are you coming from in the middle of the day?"

"Just now, lord, a money-lending householder died in Sāvatthī. I have come from conveying his heirless fortune to the royal palace: eight million in silver, to say nothing of the gold. But even though he was a money-lending householder, his enjoyment of food was like this: He ate broken rice & pickle brine. His enjoyment of clothing was like this: He wore

three lengths of hempen cloth. His enjoyment of a vehicle was like this: He rode in a dilapidated little cart with an awning of leaves."

"That's the way it is, great king. That's the way it is. When a person of no integrity acquires lavish wealth, he doesn't provide for his own pleasure & satisfaction, nor for the pleasure & satisfaction of his parents, nor for the pleasure & satisfaction of his wife & children; nor for the pleasure & satisfaction of his slaves, servants, & assistants; nor for the pleasure & satisfaction of his friends. He doesn't institute for contemplatives & brahmans offerings of supreme aim, heavenly, resulting in happiness, leading to heaven. When his wealth isn't properly put to use, kings make off with it, or thieves make off with it, or fire burns it, or water sweeps it away, or hateful heirs make off with it. Thus his wealth, not properly put to use, goes to waste and not to any good use.

"Just as with a pond in a place haunted by non-human beings, with clear water, cool water, fresh water, clean, with good fords, delightful: No people would draw water from it or drink it or bathe in it or apply it to their needs. And so that water, not properly put to use, would go to waste and not to any good use. In the same way, when a person of no integrity acquires lavish wealth… his wealth, not properly put to use, goes to waste and not to any good use.

"But when a person of integrity acquires lavish wealth, he provides for his own pleasure & satisfaction, for the pleasure & satisfaction of his parents, the pleasure & satisfaction of his wife & children; the pleasure & satisfaction of his slaves, servants, & assistants; and the pleasure & satisfaction of his friends. He institutes for contemplatives & brahmans offerings of supreme aim, heavenly, resulting in happiness, leading to heaven. When his wealth is properly put to use, kings don't make off with it, thieves don't make off with it, fire doesn't burn it, water doesn't sweep it away, and hateful heirs don't make off with it. Thus his wealth, properly put to use, goes to a good use and not to waste.

"Just as with a pond not far from a town or village, with clear water, cool water, fresh water, clean, with good fords, delightful. People would draw water from it or drink it or bathe in it or apply it to their needs. And so that water, properly put to use, would go to a good use and not to waste. In the same way, when a person of integrity acquires lavish wealth… his wealth, properly put to use, goes to a good use and not to waste."

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

"Like water

in a haunted place

that, without being imbibed,

dries up:

Such is the wealth

acquired by a worthless man
who neither enjoys it himself
nor gives.

But one enlightened & knowing,
on acquiring wealth,
enjoys it & performs his duties.
He, a bull among men,
having supported his kin
without blame,
without blame
goes to the land of heaven."

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: SN 1:41; AN 3:52–53; AN 5:41; AN 7:6–7; AN 9:20; Khp 8