Dhammapada

THE BUDDHA (ATTRIBUTED)

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Translated from the Pali with AI (Claude) and edited



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INTRODUCTION

The *Dhammapada*, "verses of the Dhamma" or "the path of the teaching," is a collection of 423 short verses in 26 chapters, preserved in Pali in the Buddhist canon of the Theravāda tradition. Tradition holds that the Buddha spoke each verse on a particular occasion in the fifth century BC; the collection itself was probably put together in the following centuries and written down in Sri Lanka in the first century BC.

It is the most widely read Buddhist text. In verses built from pairs, contrasts and images — the cart wheel that follows the ox, the fletcher straightening an arrow, the house-builder found out at last — it teaches that the mind shapes everything we are, that hatred is never ended by hatred, and that the way beyond suffering lies in heedfulness, restraint and wisdom, leading to the peace of nibbāna.

Each verse stands on its own, and the chapters group them by theme or by a shared word: flowers, the fool, the wise, anger, craving, the monk, the brahmin.

The Pairs

Yamakavagga
Verses 1–20
Paired verses: the mind leads, and what follows depends on whether it is corrupt or pure.

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1 Experiences are preceded by mind,
led by mind, made by mind.
If with a corrupted mind
one speaks or acts,
suffering follows
as the wheel follows the hoof of the ox that draws it.[1]

2 Experiences are preceded by mind,
led by mind, made by mind.
If with a clear and trusting mind
one speaks or acts,
happiness follows
like a shadow that never leaves.

3 "He abused me, he struck me,
he beat me, he robbed me":
in those who bind themselves to such thoughts
hatred is not appeased.

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1 "Experiences" renders *dhammā*, here meaning states of mind or whatever is experienced. Elsewhere *dhamma* (singular) means the Buddha's teaching, or the true nature of things.

4 “He abused me, he struck me,
he beat me, he robbed me”:
in those who do not bind themselves to such thoughts
hatred is appeased.

5 Hatred is never appeased
by hatred in this world;
by non-hatred it is appeased:
this is an eternal law.

6 Others do not understand
that here we must hold ourselves in check;
but those who do understand it
thereby bring their quarrels to rest.

7 One who lives fixed on the attractive,
senses unguarded,
immoderate in eating,
lazy, weak in effort:
Māra overpowers him
as the wind a weak tree.[2]

8 One who lives contemplating the unattractive,
senses well guarded,
moderate in eating,
full of faith and effort:
Māra does not overpower him,
as the wind cannot a mountain of rock.[3]

9 One not free of stains
who puts on the ochre robe,
lacking self-control and truth,
is not worthy of that robe.[4]

2 Māra: the tempter, a deity who personifies death and the forces that keep beings bound to the round of rebirth.
3 Contemplating “the unattractive” was a monastic practice of reflecting on the unlovely parts of the body, as an antidote to lust.
4 The Pali plays on *kasāva*, “stain, impurity,” and *kāsāva*, the ochre-dyed robe worn by monks.

10 But one who has cast out the stains,
well settled in virtue,
possessed of self-control and truth,
is truly worthy of that robe.

11 Taking the worthless for the essential,
and seeing the essential as worthless,
they do not reach the essential,
feeding in the pastures of wrong intention.

12 Knowing the essential as essential,
and the worthless as worthless,
they reach the essential,
feeding in the pastures of right intention.

13 As into a badly thatched house
the rain seeps through,
so into an undeveloped mind
passion seeps through.

14 As into a well-thatched house
the rain does not seep through,
so into a well-developed mind
passion does not seep through.

15 Here he grieves, hereafter he grieves;
the evildoer grieves in both worlds.
He grieves, he is afflicted,
seeing the defilement of his own deeds.

16 Here he rejoices, hereafter he rejoices;
one who has done good rejoices in both worlds.
He rejoices, he delights,
seeing the purity of his own deeds.

17 Here he is tormented, hereafter he is tormented;
the evildoer is tormented in both worlds.
"I have done evil": he is tormented;
gone to a bad destination, he is tormented all the more.

18 Here he is glad, hereafter he is glad;
one who has done good is glad in both worlds.
"I have done good": he is glad;
gone to a good destination, he is gladder still.

19 Though he recites much scripture,
if the heedless man does not act on it,
like a cowherd counting other people's cows
he has no share in the ascetic life.

20 Though he recites little scripture,
if he lives the *dhamma* in line with the *dhamma*,
giving up passion, hatred and delusion,
rightly understanding, his mind well freed,
clinging to nothing here or hereafter,
he has a share in the ascetic life.

Heedfulness

Appamādavagga
Verses 21–32
Heedfulness is the path to the deathless; heedlessness the path to death.

21 Heedfulness is the path to the deathless;
heedlessness, the path to death.
The heedful do not die;
the heedless are as if dead already.[1]

22 Knowing this distinctly,
the wise, established in heedfulness,
rejoice in heedfulness,
delighting in the range of the noble ones.

23 Meditative, persevering,
always firm in effort,
the steadfast touch *nibbāna*,
the supreme safety from bondage.

24 For one who is energetic and mindful,
pure in deeds, acting with consideration,
restrained, living by the *dhamma*,
heedful, renown grows.

1 Heedfulness (*appamāda*): alert, diligent care in every act. "The deathless" is a name for *nibbāna*, the "extinguishing" of passion, hatred and delusion, the goal of the Buddha's path.

25 By effort and heedfulness,
by restraint and self-control,
let the wise make an island
that no flood can overwhelm.

26 Fools, people of poor understanding,
give themselves over to heedlessness;
but the wise guard heedfulness
as their greatest treasure.

27 Do not give yourselves over to heedlessness,
nor to intimacy with sensual delight;
for the heedful one, meditating,
attains abundant happiness.

28 When the wise one drives out heedlessness
by heedfulness,
having climbed the tower of wisdom,
free of sorrow, looking on the sorrowing people,
as one on a mountain looks down on those on the plain,
the steadfast looks down on fools.

29 Heedful among the heedless,
wide awake among the sleeping,
like a swift horse passing a weak one,
the wise one leaves them behind and goes on.

30 By heedfulness Maghavā
rose to the lordship of the gods.
Heedfulness is praised;
heedlessness is always blamed.[2]

2 Maghavā: a name of Sakka (Indra), king of the gods, said to have won that rank by diligent good deeds in a former life.

31 The monk who delights in heedfulness,
who sees danger in heedlessness,
burning every fetter, subtle or gross,
goes forward like a fire.[3]

32 The monk who delights in heedfulness,
who sees danger in heedlessness,
cannot fall away:
he is close to *nibbāna*.

3 "Monk" translates *bhikkhu,* literally "one who lives on alms." The fetters are the mental ties that bind one to the round of rebirth.

The Mind

Cittavagga
Verses 33–43
The restless, hard-to-guard mind, and the well-being that comes from taming it.

33 The mind, quivering and unsteady,
hard to guard, hard to hold back—
the wise one makes it straight,
as a fletcher straightens an arrow.

34 Like a fish thrown on dry land,
pulled out of its watery home,
this mind thrashes about
to escape the realm of Māra.

35 Hard to hold down, flighty,
alighting wherever it pleases:
good it is to tame the mind;
a tamed mind brings happiness.

36 Very hard to see, very subtle,
alighting wherever it pleases:
the wise should guard the mind;
a guarded mind brings happiness.

37 Traveling far, wandering alone,
bodiless, lying hidden in a cave:
those who restrain the mind
will be freed from the bonds of Māra.

38 For one whose mind is unsteady,
who does not know the true *dhamma*,
whose confidence wavers,
wisdom does not grow full.

39 For one whose mind is not soaked with lust,
whose heart is not struck by ill will,
who has gone beyond both merit and evil,
for such a wakeful one there is no fear.

40 Knowing this body to be like a clay pot,
making this mind firm like a fortified city,
fight Māra with the weapon of wisdom;
guard what you have won, and do not settle down in it.

41 Before long, alas, this body
will lie upon the ground,
cast aside, without consciousness,
like a useless log.

42 Whatever harm an enemy may do to an enemy,
or one who hates to one he hates,
a wrongly directed mind
can do one greater harm.

43 Neither mother nor father can do as much,
nor any other relatives:
a rightly directed mind
can do one greater good.

Flowers

Pupphavagga
Verses 44–59
Images of flowers for the teaching well spoken, virtue and the awakened.

44 Who will master this earth,
and this world of Yama with its gods?
Who will gather the well-taught words of the *dhamma*,
as a skilled one gathers flowers?[1]

45 One in training will master this earth,
and this world of Yama with its gods;
one in training will gather the well-taught words of the *dhamma*,
as a skilled one gathers flowers.[2]

46 Knowing this body to be like foam,
fully awakening to its mirage-like nature,
cutting off Māra's flower-tipped arrows,
go where the King of Death will not see you.[3]

47 The man who is only gathering flowers,
his mind attached—
as a great flood a sleeping village,
death sweeps him away.

1 Yama: the lord of the dead; his world is the realm of death. "Words of the *dhamma*" translates *dhammapada*, the title of this collection.
2 One in training (*sekha*): a disciple on the path who has not yet reached the goal.
3 Māra's flower-tipped arrows are the lures of sense pleasure, like the arrows of the Indian god of love.

48 The man who is only gathering flowers,
his mind attached,
still unsatisfied in sensual pleasures—
the Ender brings him under his power.

49 As a bee, without harming the flower,
its color or its scent,
flies off with the nectar,
so should the sage move through the village.[4]

50 Not the faults of others,
not what others have done or left undone,
but one's own should one consider:
what one has done and left undone.

51 Like a lovely flower,
bright in color but without scent,
are well-spoken words:
they bear no fruit in one who does not act on them.

52 Like a lovely flower,
bright in color and fragrant,
are well-spoken words:
they bear fruit in one who acts on them.

53 As from a heap of flowers
one can make many garlands,
so one born mortal
should do many good deeds.

54 The scent of flowers does not go against the wind,
nor that of sandalwood, tagara or jasmine;
but the fragrance of the good goes against the wind:
a good person pervades every direction.[5]

4 The sage (*muni*) here is the monk on his alms round, who takes a little food without burdening the households.
5 Tagara: a fragrant shrub whose wood and root were used for perfume.

55 Sandalwood or tagara,
blue lotus or summer jasmine:
among all these fragrances
the fragrance of virtue is supreme.

56 Slight is this fragrance
of tagara and sandalwood;
but the fragrance of the virtuous
rises highest, even among the gods.

57 Of those accomplished in virtue,
living in heedfulness,
freed by perfect understanding,
Māra cannot find the path.

58 As on a heap of rubbish
thrown down beside the highway
a lotus may grow,
sweet-smelling and lovely,

59 so among those who are like rubbish,
among blind ordinary people,
there shines out in wisdom
the disciple of the Fully Awakened One.

The Fool

Bālavagga
Verses 60–75
The long round of the fool, and the difference between gain and the path to release.

60 Long is the night for the wakeful,
long the league for the weary,
long the round of rebirth for fools
who do not know the true *dhamma*.[1]

61 If, as you travel, you do not find
one better than or equal to yourself,
go firmly on alone:
there is no companionship with a fool.

62 "I have sons, I have wealth":
so the fool torments himself.
He does not even own himself:
how then sons, how then wealth?

63 The fool who knows his foolishness
is to that extent wise;
but the fool who thinks himself wise
is rightly called a fool.

1 A league (*yojana*) was a day's march of several miles. The round of rebirth (*saṁsāra*) is the beginningless cycle of birth, death and rebirth.

64 Though all his life a fool
attends on a wise person,
he does not come to know the *dhamma*,
as a spoon does not know the taste of the soup.

65 Though only for a moment an intelligent person
attends on a wise one,
he quickly comes to know the *dhamma*,
as the tongue knows the taste of the soup.

66 Fools of little understanding
go about as their own enemies,
doing evil deeds
that bear bitter fruit.

67 That deed is not well done
which, once done, one regrets,
and whose result, weeping, with a tear-stained face,
one must undergo.

68 That deed is well done
which, once done, one does not regret,
and whose result, glad and happy,
one enjoys.

69 The fool thinks it honey
as long as the evil has not ripened;
but when the evil ripens,
then the fool comes to suffering.

70 Month after month, from the tip of a blade of kusa grass,
a fool may eat his food;
yet of those who have fully understood the *dhamma*
he is not worth a sixteenth part.[2]

2 Kusa grass: a sacred grass. Eating only what clings to the tip of a blade was an extreme ascetic fast.

71 An evil deed, once done,
does not turn at once, as fresh milk curdles;
smoldering, it follows the fool
like fire covered with ash.

72 Only to his harm
does knowledge come to the fool;
it destroys the fool's good fortune
and splits his head apart.

73 He may wish for undeserved esteem,
for precedence among the monks,
for authority over the monasteries,
and honor among other families.

74 "Let both householders and monastics
think that this was done by me alone;
let them follow my will alone
in every matter, great or small":
such is the fool's thinking,
and his desire and pride increase.

75 One way leads to gain,
another to *nibbāna*;
understanding this,
the monk, the disciple of the Buddha,
should not delight in honors
but should cultivate seclusion.

The Wise

Paṇḍitavagga
Verses 76–89
The wise person who accepts correction, is unshaken, and crosses to the far shore.

76 Like one who points out hidden treasure,
if you see someone who points out your faults,
an intelligent person who speaks in reproof,
keep company with such a wise one;
for one who keeps such company
things go better, not worse.

77 Let him advise and instruct,
and hold you back from what is base:
he is dear to the good,
and not dear to the bad.

78 Do not keep company with bad friends,
do not keep company with the lowest of people;
keep company with good friends,
keep company with the best of people.

79 One who drinks in the *dhamma* lives happily,
with a clear and calm mind;
in the *dhamma* proclaimed by the noble ones
the wise one always delights.

80 Irrigators lead the water,
fletchers bend the arrow shaft,
carpenters bend the wood,
the wise tame themselves.

81 As a solid rock
is not shaken by the wind,
so the wise are not moved
by blame and praise.

82 As a deep lake
is clear and undisturbed,
so the wise, hearing the teachings,
become clear and calm.

83 The good let go of everything;
the peaceful do not prattle out of desire for pleasures.
Touched by happiness or by pain,
the wise show neither elation nor dejection.

84 Not for his own sake nor for another's,
not wishing for a son, or wealth, or a kingdom,
not wishing for his own success by unjust means:
such a one is virtuous, wise and righteous.

85 Few among human beings
are those who reach the far shore;
the rest of the people
only run up and down this shore.

86 But those who, when the *dhamma* is well taught,
live in accordance with the *dhamma*,
will reach the far shore,
crossing the realm of death, so hard to cross.

87 Abandoning dark ways,
let the wise cultivate the bright,
going from home to homelessness,
to seclusion, where delight is hard to find.

88 There he should seek delight,
leaving sensual pleasures, owning nothing;
the wise one should cleanse himself
of the defilements of the mind.

89 Those whose minds, in the factors of awakening,
are rightly and well developed,
who in the giving up of grasping
delight, clinging to nothing,
their taints destroyed, radiant—
they in this world have reached *nibbāna*.[1]

1 The taints (*āsava*) are the deep-rooted outflows of sensual desire, craving for existence and ignorance; their destruction marks full awakening.

The Perfected

Arahantavagga
Verses 90–99
The arahant, free of fever and bonds, whose tracks cannot be traced.

90 For one who has finished the journey, free of sorrow,
freed in every way,
who has cast off every tie,
no fever is found.

91 The mindful exert themselves;
they do not delight in a settled home.
Like swans leaving a pond,
they leave home after home.

92 Those who store nothing up,
who fully understand their food,
whose range is the freedom
that is empty and signless—
like that of birds in the sky,
their course is hard to trace.

93 One whose taints are destroyed,
who is not dependent on food,
whose range is the freedom
that is empty and signless—
like that of birds in the sky,
his track is hard to trace.

94 One whose senses are calmed
like horses well tamed by the charioteer,
who has abandoned pride and is free of taints—
even the gods envy one who is so steady.

95 Like the earth, he shows no resentment;
like a gate-post, steady and true to his vows;
like a lake free of mud:
for one so steady there are no more rounds of rebirth.[1]

96 Calm is his mind,
calm his speech and action,
one freed by perfect understanding,
at peace and steady.

97 Not taking things on faith, knowing the uncreated,
one who has cut the links,
who has ended every opening and spewed out desire—
he is truly the highest of people.[2]

98 Whether in village or in forest,
in lowland or on high ground,
wherever *arahants* dwell,
that place is delightful.[3]

99 Delightful are the forests
where ordinary people find no delight;
those free of passion will delight there,
for they do not go seeking sensual pleasures.

1 The gate-post (*indakhīla*) was a post sunk deep at a city gate, a stock image of firmness.
2 A deliberate riddle: read on the surface, the words describe a scoundrel ("faithless, ungrateful, a housebreaker, one who has lost his chance, eaten his own vomit"); read rightly, they describe one fully awakened.
3 *Arahant*: one who has reached the goal, fully awakened and free of passion, hatred and delusion.

The Thousands

Sahassavagga
Verses 100–115
One useful word, one day of wise living, outweighs a thousand of the useless kind.

100 Though there be a thousand words
made up of meaningless phrases,
better is a single meaningful word
which, once heard, brings peace.

101 Though there be a thousand verses
made up of meaningless phrases,
better is a single line of verse
which, once heard, brings peace.

102 Though one should recite a hundred verses
made up of meaningless phrases,
better is a single word of the *dhamma*
which, once heard, brings peace.

103 Though one should conquer in battle
a thousand times a thousand men,
one who conquers just himself
is the greatest conqueror in battle.

104 Self-conquest is better
than conquering all these other people.
Of the person who has tamed himself,
who always lives in restraint,

105 neither god nor gandhabba,
nor Māra together with Brahmā,
could turn the victory into defeat
of such a being.[1]

106 Month after month, with a thousand coins,
though one should sacrifice for a hundred years,
and another should honor one who has developed himself
even for a single moment,
that honor is better
than a hundred years of sacrifice.

107 Though a person for a hundred years
should tend the sacred fire in the forest,
and another should honor one who has developed himself
even for a single moment,
that honor is better
than a hundred years of sacrifice.

108 Whatever sacrifice or offering in the world
one seeking merit might make for a whole year,
all of it is not worth a quarter:
reverence toward the upright is better.

109 For one in the habit of showing respect,
always honoring elders,
four things increase:
long life, beauty, happiness and strength.

110 Though one should live a hundred years
without virtue, uncollected,
better is a single day's life
of one virtuous and meditative.

1 Gandhabba: a celestial musician. Brahmā: the high god of the brahmins, counted here among the gods.

111 Though one should live a hundred years
without wisdom, uncollected,
better is a single day's life
of one wise and meditative.

112 Though one should live a hundred years
lazy and weak in effort,
better is a single day's life
of one who firmly rouses effort.

113 Though one should live a hundred years
not seeing rise and fall,
better is a single day's life
of one who sees rise and fall.

114 Though one should live a hundred years
not seeing the deathless state,
better is a single day's life
of one who sees the deathless state.

115 Though one should live a hundred years
not seeing the supreme *dhamma*,
better is a single day's life
of one who sees the supreme *dhamma*.

Evil

Pāpavagga
Verses 116–128
Hurry toward the good; no place on earth lets one escape an evil deed.

116 Hurry toward the good;
hold your mind back from evil.
When one is slow to do good,
the mind delights in evil.

117 If a person should do evil,
let him not do it again and again;
let him not set his heart on it:
painful is the piling up of evil.

118 If a person should do good,
let him do it again and again;
let him set his heart on it:
happy is the piling up of good.

119 Even the evildoer sees good fortune
as long as the evil has not ripened;
but when the evil ripens,
then the evildoer sees evil.

120 Even the good person sees misfortune
as long as the good has not ripened;
but when the good ripens,
then the good person sees good.

121 Do not think lightly of evil:
"It will not come to me."
By the falling of drops
even a water jar is filled;
the fool fills himself with evil,
gathering it little by little.

122 Do not think lightly of good:
"It will not come to me."
By the falling of drops
even a water jar is filled;
the steadfast one fills himself with good,
gathering it little by little.

123 As a merchant avoids a dangerous road
when his caravan is small and his wealth great,
as one who loves life avoids poison,
so should one avoid evil.

124 If there is no wound on the hand,
one may carry poison in it;
poison does not enter where there is no wound:
there is no evil for one who does no evil.

125 Whoever harms a harmless person,
one pure and without blemish,
the evil comes back on that very fool,
like fine dust thrown against the wind.

126 Some are reborn in a womb;
evildoers, in hell;
those of good conduct go to heaven;
those free of taints attain final *nibbāna*.

127 Not in the sky, not in the middle of the ocean,
not by entering a cleft in the mountains—
nowhere in the world is there a place
where one could stand and be free of one's evil deeds.

128 Not in the sky, not in the middle of the ocean,
not by entering a cleft in the mountains—
nowhere in the world is there a place
where one could stand and death would not overpower one.

Violence

Daṇḍavagga
Verses 129–145
All tremble at the rod; seeing others as oneself, do not strike or kill.

129 All tremble at the rod,
all fear death;
taking oneself as the measure,
one should not kill or cause others to kill.

130 All tremble at the rod,
life is dear to all;
taking oneself as the measure,
one should not kill or cause others to kill.

131 Beings long for happiness;
whoever harms them with the rod
while seeking his own happiness
will not find happiness after death.

132 Beings long for happiness;
whoever does not harm them with the rod
while seeking his own happiness
will find happiness after death.

133 Do not speak harshly to anyone;
those you speak to will answer back.
Angry talk is painful:
retaliation will strike you.

134 If you keep yourself silent
like a broken gong,
you have reached *nibbāna*:
no anger is found in you.

135 As a cowherd with his stick
drives the cows to pasture,
so old age and death
drive on the lives of living beings.

136 But when the fool does evil deeds,
he does not see what he is doing;
by his own deeds the dullard
is tormented as if burned by fire.

137 Whoever with the rod harms
the harmless and innocent
will quickly come to one
of these ten states:

138 severe pain, or loss,
or injury to the body,
or grave illness,
or loss of mind;

139 or trouble from the king,
or a terrible accusation,
or the loss of relatives,
or the ruin of wealth;

140 or else fire, the purifier,
burns down his houses;
and when the body breaks up, the fool
is reborn in hell.

141 Not going naked, not matted hair, not mud,
not fasting, nor lying on the bare ground,
not dust and dirt, nor striving while squatting on the heels,
can purify a mortal who has not overcome doubt.

142 Though finely dressed, if one lives evenly,
calm, tamed, restrained, leading the holy life,
having laid down the rod toward all beings—
that one is a brahmin, an ascetic, a monk.[1]

143 A person restrained by conscience—
is there anyone like that in the world,
who wards off reproach
as a good horse the whip?

144 Like a good horse touched by the whip,
be ardent and stirred to urgency.
By faith and virtue and energy,
by concentration and discernment of the *dhamma*,
accomplished in knowledge and conduct, mindful,
you will leave behind this suffering, which is not small.

145 Irrigators lead the water,
fletchers bend the arrow shaft,
carpenters bend the wood,
those of good conduct tame themselves.

1 Brahmin (*brāhmaṇa*): a member of the hereditary priestly class. An ascetic (*samaṇa*) is a wandering renunciant.

Old Age

Jarāvagga
Verses 146–156
The body as a painted house of bones, and the builder of the house discovered.

146 Why this laughter, why this joy,
when the world is always burning?
Shrouded in darkness,
will you not look for a lamp?

147 See this painted puppet,
a body of sores, propped up,
sick, full of many plans,
in which there is nothing lasting or stable.

148 Worn out is this form,
a nest of disease, perishable;
this putrid mass breaks up,
for life ends in death.

149 These bones, cast away
like gourds in autumn,
gray as doves—
seeing them, what delight can there be?

150 A city made of bones,
plastered with flesh and blood,
in which are stored old age and death,
pride and contempt.

151 Even the splendid chariots of kings wear out,
and the body too comes to old age;
but the *dhamma* of the good does not age:
so the good make known to the good.

152 The man of little learning
ages like an ox:
his flesh grows,
but his wisdom does not grow.

153 Through the round of many births
I ran on without reward,
seeking the builder of the house:
painful is birth again and again.

154 House-builder, you are seen!
You will not build the house again.
All your rafters are broken,
the ridge-pole is shattered.
The mind has gone to the unconditioned;
it has reached the end of cravings.[1]

155 Not having lived the holy life,
not having won wealth in youth,
they waste away like old herons
at a lake without fish.

156 Not having lived the holy life,
not having won wealth in youth,
they lie like spent arrows shot from the bow,
sighing over the past.

1 By tradition, words spoken by the Buddha at his awakening. The house is the body and the round of rebirth; its builder is craving.

The Self

Attavagga
Verses 157–166
One is one's own protector: make yourself what you would teach others to be.

157 If one holds oneself dear,
one should guard oneself well;
in one of the three watches
the wise one should keep vigil.[1]

158 One should first establish oneself
in what is proper,
and then instruct others:
so the wise will not be defiled.

159 If one would make oneself
as one instructs others,
well tamed, one could tame others:
for the self, it seems, is hard to tame.

160 One is one's own protector:
what other protector could there be?
With oneself well tamed,
one gains a protector hard to find.

1 The night was divided into three watches; the verse is also read as referring to the three stages of life.

161 The evil done by oneself,
born of oneself, produced by oneself,
grinds down the dullard
as a diamond grinds a gem of stone.

162 One whose lack of virtue is extreme,
like a creeper spreading over a sal tree,
does to himself
just what an enemy would wish.

163 Easy to do are things that are bad
and harmful to oneself;
what is beneficial and good
is supremely hard to do.

164 Whoever scorns the teaching of the *arahants*,
the noble ones who live by the *dhamma*—
the dullard,
relying on an evil view—
like the fruit of the kaṭṭhaka reed
bears fruit for his own destruction.[2]

165 By oneself is evil done,
by oneself one is defiled;
by oneself is evil left undone,
by oneself one is purified.
Purity and impurity depend on oneself:
no one can purify another.

166 Let no one neglect his own good
for another's, however great;
knowing well his own good,
let him be intent on the true good.

2 The kaṭṭhaka, a kind of bamboo, dies once it has borne fruit.

The World

Lokavagga
Verses 167–178
Look on the world as a bubble or a mirage; the good life leads beyond it.

167 Do not follow what is low,
do not live in heedlessness,
do not follow wrong view,
do not be one who prolongs the world.

168 Rise up, do not be heedless;
live the *dhamma* of good conduct.
One who lives the *dhamma* sleeps at ease
in this world and the next.

169 Live the *dhamma* of good conduct;
do not live it badly.
One who lives the *dhamma* sleeps at ease
in this world and the next.

170 As one would look at a bubble,
as one would look at a mirage:
one who looks on the world this way
the King of Death does not see.

171 Come, look at this world,
decked out like a royal chariot,
in which fools sink down;
for those who understand, there is no attachment.

172 One who once was heedless
but afterwards is heedless no more
lights up this world
like the moon freed from a cloud.

173 One whose evil deeds
are covered over by good
lights up this world
like the moon freed from a cloud.

174 Blind is this world;
few here see clearly.
Like a bird freed from a net,
few go to heaven.

175 Swans travel on the path of the sun;
by supernormal power they travel through the air;
the steadfast are led out of the world,
having conquered Māra and his army.

176 For a person who has broken the one rule,
who speaks falsely,
who scoffs at the world beyond,
there is no evil he will not do.

177 The miserly do not go to the world of the gods;
fools do not praise giving;
but the steadfast rejoice in giving,
and so are happy in the world beyond.

178 Than sole rule over the earth,
than going to heaven,
than lordship over all the worlds,
the fruit of stream-entry is better.[1]

1 Stream-entry: the first stage of awakening, after which the goal is certain within at most seven lives.

The Buddha

Buddhavagga
Verses 179–196
The Buddhas, hard to find; the four noble truths; the teaching of all Buddhas.

179 Whose victory cannot be undone,
whose victory no one in the world can approach—
that Buddha of boundless range,
the trackless one: by what track will you lead him?[1]

180 One in whom there is no ensnaring, clinging
craving to lead him anywhere at all—
that Buddha of boundless range,
the trackless one: by what track will you lead him?

181 The steadfast who are intent on meditation,
delighting in the peace of renunciation—
even the gods envy them,
fully awakened and mindful.

182 Hard is it to be born human,
hard is the life of mortals,
hard is it to hear the true *dhamma*,
hard is the arising of Buddhas.

1 "Trackless" (*apada*): leaving no footprint by which he could be led or trapped.

183 Not to do any evil,
to undertake what is good,
to purify one's own mind:
this is the teaching of the Buddhas.

184 Patient endurance is the highest austerity;
nibbāna is supreme, say the Buddhas.
One who harms another has not truly gone forth;
one who oppresses another is no ascetic.

185 Not insulting, not harming,
restraint according to the monastic code,
moderation in food,
a secluded bed and seat,
devotion to the higher mind:
this is the teaching of the Buddhas.[2]

186 Not even with a rain of coins
is there satisfaction in sensual pleasures;
"Sensual pleasures give little enjoyment and much pain":
knowing this, the wise one

187 finds no delight
even in heavenly pleasures;
the disciple of the Fully Awakened One
delights in the ending of craving.

188 To many refuges they go,
to mountains and to forests,
to sacred groves, trees and shrines—
people driven by fear.

189 But that is not a safe refuge,
that is not the supreme refuge;
going to that refuge,
one is not freed from all suffering.

2 The monastic code (*pātimokkha*): the rules of discipline for monks and nuns, recited every fortnight.

190 One who has gone for refuge
to the Buddha, the *dhamma* and the *saṅgha*
sees the four noble truths
with right wisdom:[3]

191 *dukkha*, the arising of *dukkha*,
the overcoming of *dukkha*,
and the noble eightfold path
that leads to the stilling of *dukkha*.[4]

192 This is a safe refuge,
this is the supreme refuge;
going to this refuge,
one is freed from all suffering.

193 Hard to find is the thoroughbred person;
he is not born just anywhere.
Wherever such a steadfast one is born,
that family prospers in happiness.

194 Happy is the arising of Buddhas,
happy the teaching of the true *dhamma*,
happy the harmony of the *saṅgha*,
happy the austerity of those in harmony.

195 One who honors those worthy of honor,
Buddhas or their disciples,
who have gone beyond all proliferation
and crossed over sorrow and lamentation—

196 one who honors such as these,
quenched, fearing nothing from any side—
his merit cannot be measured
by anyone as "just this much."

3 *Saṅgha*: the community of monks and nuns, and more broadly of those who have realized the teaching.
4 *Dukkha*: suffering, the unsatisfactoriness of all conditioned existence; the first of the four noble truths.

Happiness

Sukhavagga
Verses 197–208
Living happily among the hostile, the anxious and the greedy;
nibbāna the highest happiness.

197 Happily indeed we live,
without hatred among the hateful;
among hateful people
we dwell without hatred.

198 Happily indeed we live,
unafflicted among the afflicted;
among afflicted people
we dwell unafflicted.

199 Happily indeed we live,
without eagerness among the eager;
among eager people
we dwell without eagerness.

200 Happily indeed we live,
we who own nothing;
we shall feed on joy,
like the radiant gods.[1]

1 The Radiant gods (*ābhassarā*) are said to feed on joy alone.

201 Victory breeds hatred;
the defeated one lies down in pain.
The peaceful one lies down at ease,
having given up victory and defeat.

202 There is no fire like passion,
no losing throw like hatred,
no pain like the aggregates,
no happiness higher than peace.[2]

203 Hunger is the worst illness,
conditioned things the worst pain;
knowing this as it really is:
nibbāna is the highest happiness.

204 Health is the greatest gain,
contentment the greatest wealth,
trust the best of kin,
nibbāna the highest happiness.

205 Having drunk the taste of solitude
and the taste of peace,
one becomes free of fear and free of evil,
drinking the taste of joy in the *dhamma*.

206 Good is the sight of the noble ones;
living with them is always happiness.
By not seeing fools
one would always be happy.

207 One who keeps company with fools
grieves for a long time;
living with fools is painful,
always, as with an enemy;
but living with the steadfast is happiness,
like a gathering of kin.

2 The aggregates (*khandha*): the five components of a person—body, feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness.

208 Therefore:
the steadfast, the wise, the learned,
the enduring, dutiful noble one—
such a good and intelligent person
one should follow, as the moon follows the path of the stars.

The Dear

Piyavagga
Verses 209–220
From what is dear comes grief, from what is dear comes fear.

209 Applying himself to what he should not,
not applying himself to what he should,
abandoning the goal and grasping at the pleasant,
he envies those who apply themselves.

210 Do not be joined with the dear,
nor ever with the not-dear;
not seeing the dear is painful,
and so is seeing the not-dear.

211 Therefore do not hold anything dear,
for parting from the dear is hard;
no bonds exist for those
to whom nothing is dear or not dear.

212 From what is dear comes grief,
from what is dear comes fear;
for one freed from what is dear
there is no grief—how then fear?

213 From affection comes grief,
from affection comes fear;
for one freed from affection
there is no grief—how then fear?

214 From delight comes grief,
from delight comes fear;
for one freed from delight
there is no grief—how then fear?

215 From sensual desire comes grief,
from sensual desire comes fear;
for one freed from sensual desire
there is no grief—how then fear?

216 From craving comes grief,
from craving comes fear;
for one freed from craving
there is no grief—how then fear?

217 One accomplished in virtue and insight,
established in the *dhamma*, who speaks the truth,
who does his own work:
people hold such a one dear.

218 One in whom a longing for the ineffable has arisen,
whose mind is suffused with it,
whose mind is not bound to sensual pleasures,
is called "one bound upstream."[1]

219 When a man long absent
comes home safely from far away,
relatives, friends and well-wishers
welcome him on his return.

220 In the same way, when one who has done good
goes from this world to the next,
his good deeds receive him,
as relatives welcome a dear one home.

1 "The ineffable" is *nibbāna*. "One bound upstream" is a disciple who will reach the goal in a higher world without returning to this one.

Anger

Kodhavagga
Verses 221–234
Overcome anger with calm, the bad with good, meanness with giving, a liar with truth.

221 Let go of anger, give up pride,
pass beyond every fetter;
on one who does not cling to name-and-form,
who owns nothing, no sufferings fall.[1]

222 One who holds back anger as it rises,
like a chariot running out of control—
him I call a charioteer;
other people only hold the reins.

223 Conquer anger by non-anger,
conquer the bad by good,
conquer the miser by giving,
conquer the liar by truth.

224 Speak the truth, do not give way to anger,
give when asked, even if you have little:
by these three things
one comes into the presence of the gods.

1 Name-and-form (*nāmarūpa*): mind and body, the whole psycho-physical person.

225 The sages who harm no one,
always restrained in body,
go to the unshakable state,
where, having gone, they grieve no more.

226 For those who are ever wakeful,
training day and night,
intent on *nibbāna*,
the taints come to an end.

227 This is an old saying, Atula,
not one of today:
they blame the one who sits silent,
they blame the one who talks a lot,
they blame even the one who speaks in moderation:
there is no one in the world who is not blamed.[2]

228 There never was, and never will be,
nor is there now,
a person wholly blamed
or wholly praised.

229 But one whom the discerning praise,
having observed him day after day—
flawless in conduct, intelligent,
endowed with wisdom and virtue—

230 like a coin of Jambu River gold:
who is fit to blame him?
Even the gods praise him;
he is praised even by Brahmā.[3]

231 Guard against unruliness of body;
be restrained in body;
giving up bad conduct of body,
practice good conduct of body.

2 Atula: the lay follower to whom the verse is addressed.
3 Jambu River gold: the finest gold, from a legendary river.

232 Guard against unruliness of speech;
be restrained in speech;
giving up bad conduct of speech,
practice good conduct of speech.

233 Guard against unruliness of mind;
be restrained in mind;
giving up bad conduct of mind,
practice good conduct of mind.

234 The steadfast are restrained in body,
restrained also in speech;
the steadfast are restrained in mind:
they are truly well restrained.

Stains

Malavagga
Verses 235–255
Stains of body, speech and mind, and the worst stain of all, ignorance.

235 You are now like a withered leaf;
the messengers of Yama stand near you.
You stand at the threshold of departure,
and you have no provisions for the journey.

236 Make an island for yourself;
strive quickly, be wise.
With impurities blown away, blameless,
you will reach the heavenly realm of the noble ones.

237 Your life has now come to its close;
you have set out for the presence of Yama.
There is no resting place for you on the way,
and you have no provisions for the journey.

238 Make an island for yourself;
strive quickly, be wise.
With impurities blown away, blameless,
you will not come again to birth and old age.

239 Gradually the wise one,
little by little, moment by moment,
as a smith with silver,
should blow away his own impurities.

240 As rust arising from iron
eats away the very iron it came from,
so the deeds of one who oversteps the bounds
lead him to a bad destination.

241 Not reciting is the stain of sacred verses;
neglect is the stain of houses;
laziness is the stain of beauty;
heedlessness, the stain of a guard.

242 Misconduct is the stain of a woman;
stinginess, the stain of a giver;
evil states are stains
in this world and the next.

243 But a stain worse than these:
ignorance is the greatest stain.
Abandon this stain,
and be stainless, monks.

244 Life is easy for the shameless,
bold as a crow, a backbiter,
pushy and brazen,
living a corrupt life.

245 But life is hard for one with conscience,
always seeking purity,
keen but unassuming,
pure in livelihood, clear-seeing.

246 Whoever takes life,
speaks falsely,
takes in the world what is not given,
goes to another's wife,

247 or gives himself to
drinking liquor and wine—
right here in this world
he digs up his own root.

248 Know this, good friend:
those of evil nature are unrestrained.
Do not let greed and wrongdoing
keep you long in suffering.

249 People give according to their faith,
according to their trust;
whoever there is discontented
with the food and drink that others receive
does not attain, by day or by night,
concentration.

250 But one in whom this is cut off,
uprooted, destroyed at the root—
he, by day or by night,
attains concentration.

251 There is no fire like passion,
no grip like hatred,
no net like delusion,
no river like craving.

252 Easy to see are others' faults,
but one's own are hard to see.
One winnows others' faults
like chaff,
but hides one's own,
as a cheat hides a losing throw.

253 One who looks for others' faults,
always finding fault—
his taints grow;
he is far from the end of the taints.

254 There is no track in the sky,
no true ascetic outside this teaching.
People delight in proliferation;
the Tathāgatas are free of it.[1]

255 There is no track in the sky,
no true ascetic outside this teaching;
no conditioned thing is eternal;
there is no wavering in the Buddhas.

1 Tathāgata, "thus gone" or "thus come": the Buddha's name for himself and for other Buddhas. Proliferation (*papañca*): the mind's spinning out of concepts and self-centered views.

The Just

Dhammaṭṭhavagga
Verses 256–272
What truly makes someone a judge, a sage, an elder or a renunciant.

256 One is not just
because one decides a case in haste;
the wise one should investigate both
what is right and what is wrong.

257 Leading others without violence,
lawfully and impartially,
the intelligent guardian of the law
is called “just.”

258 One is not wise
merely because one speaks much;
one who is secure, without hatred, without fear,
is called “wise.”

259 One is not a bearer of the *dhamma*
merely because one speaks much;
but one who, though he has heard little,
sees the *dhamma* directly, in his own person—
he is a bearer of the *dhamma*,
one who is not heedless of the *dhamma*.

260 One is not an elder
because one's head is gray;
one's years are ripe,
but one is called "grown old in vain."[1]

261 One in whom there is truth and *dhamma*,
harmlessness, restraint and self-control,
the steadfast one who has spewed out impurity,
is called an "elder."

262 Not by mere eloquence,
nor by a lovely complexion,
does a man become admirable
if he is envious, stingy and deceitful.

263 But one in whom this is cut off,
uprooted, destroyed at the root,
the intelligent one who has spewed out fault,
is called "admirable."

264 Not by a shaven head is one an ascetic
if one is undisciplined and speaks falsely;
full of desire and greed,
how can one be an ascetic?

265 One who stills evils,
small and great, in every way,
because he has stilled evils
is called an "ascetic."[2]

266 One is not a monk
merely because one begs from others;
by taking up a worldly way of life
one is not a monk.[3]

1 Elder (*thera*): a senior monk.
2 A play on words: *samaṇa*, "ascetic," is linked with *sameti*, "to still."
3 A play on words: *bhikkhu*, "monk," is linked with *bhikkhati*, "to beg."

267 But one who here has set aside
merit and evil, living the holy life,
who goes through the world with understanding—
he is called a "monk."

268 Not by silence is one a sage
if one is dull and ignorant;
but the wise one who, as if holding up scales,
takes what is best

269 and avoids what is evil—
he is a sage, and for that reason a sage;
one who weighs both worlds
is for that reason called a "sage."[4]

270 One is not noble
who harms living beings;
by harmlessness toward all living beings
one is called "noble."

271 Not merely by rules and observances,
nor by much learning,
nor by attaining concentration,
nor by a secluded bed,

272 nor by "I touch the happiness of renunciation
that ordinary people do not know,"
should a monk rest content,
until he has reached the end of the taints.

4 A play on words: *muni*, "sage," is linked with *mona*, "silence," and *munāti*, "to weigh."

The Path

Maggavagga
Verses 273–289
The eightfold path, the best of paths; all conditioned things are impermanent.

273 Of paths, the eightfold is the best;
of truths, the four statements;
of states, freedom from passion is the best;
of two-footed beings, the one with eyes.

274 This is the only path, there is no other,
for the purification of insight.
Follow this path:
it bewilders Māra.

275 Following it,
you will make an end of suffering.
I have taught you the path,
having understood how to pull out the dart.

276 You yourselves must make the effort;
the Tathāgatas only point the way.
Those who follow it, meditating,
will be freed from the bonds of Māra.

277 "All conditioned things are impermanent":
when one sees this with wisdom,
one grows weary of *dukkha*:
this is the path to purity.

278 "All conditioned things are *dukkha*":
when one sees this with wisdom,
one grows weary of *dukkha*:
this is the path to purity.

279 "All things are not-self":
when one sees this with wisdom,
one grows weary of *dukkha*:
this is the path to purity.[1]

280 One who does not rise when it is time to rise,
young and strong but given to sloth,
his thoughts sunk and weak, lazy—
the idle one does not find the path by wisdom.

281 Guarding speech, restrained in mind,
let one do nothing unwholesome by body;
let one purify these three ways of action
and win the path taught by the sages.

282 From meditation wisdom arises;
without meditation wisdom decays.
Knowing this twofold path
of growth and decline,
one should so establish oneself
that wisdom increases.

283 Cut down the forest, not just a tree;
from the forest comes fear.
Having cut down forest and undergrowth,
be free of the forest, monks.[2]

284 As long as the undergrowth of desire,
even the slightest, of a man for women is not cut down,
so long is his mind in bondage,
like a suckling calf to its mother.

1 Not-self (*anattā*): nothing, conditioned or unconditioned, is a lasting self.
2 A play on words: *vana* means both "forest" and "desire," and *nibbana*, "forest-free," echoes *nibbāna*.

285 Cut off your own affection
as one plucks an autumn lily by hand;
cultivate the very path of peace,
nibbāna, taught by the Well-Gone One.[3]

286 "Here I will spend the rains,
here the winter and the summer":
so the fool thinks,
not seeing the danger.

287 The man intoxicated with his children and cattle,
his mind attached—
as a great flood a sleeping village,
death sweeps him away.

288 Sons are no shelter,
nor father, nor relatives;
for one seized by the Ender
there is no shelter among kin.

289 Knowing the force of this,
the wise one, restrained by virtue,
should quickly clear
the path that leads to *nibbāna*.

3 The Well-Gone One (*sugata*): an epithet of the Buddha.

Miscellaneous

Pakiṇṇakavagga
Verses 290–305
Verses on giving up a small happiness for a great one, and the disciples who are always awake.

290 If by giving up a lesser happiness
one sees a greater happiness,
the steadfast one should give up the lesser happiness,
seeing the greater.

291 One who seeks his own happiness
by causing pain to others,
entangled in the bonds of hatred,
is not freed from hatred.

292 What should be done is neglected,
and what should not be done is done;
for the arrogant and the heedless
the taints increase.

293 But those who have well undertaken
mindfulness of the body, always,
do not pursue what should not be done,
and persist in what should be done;
for the mindful and clearly knowing
the taints come to an end.

294 Having killed mother and father
and two kings of the warrior class,
having killed a kingdom with its subjects,
the brahmin goes on untroubled.[1]

295 Having killed mother and father
and two learned kings,
having killed the tiger as the fifth,
the brahmin goes on untroubled.[2]

296 Well awake they always awaken,
the disciples of Gotama,
whose mindfulness day and night
is always set on the Buddha.[3]

297 Well awake they always awaken,
the disciples of Gotama,
whose mindfulness day and night
is always set on the *dhamma*.

298 Well awake they always awaken,
the disciples of Gotama,
whose mindfulness day and night
is always set on the *saṅgha*.

299 Well awake they always awaken,
the disciples of Gotama,
whose mindfulness day and night
is always set on the body.

300 Well awake they always awaken,
the disciples of Gotama,
whose minds day and night
delight in harmlessness.

1 A riddle: by tradition, mother is craving, father is conceit, the two kings are opposing wrong views, and the kingdom is the senses and their objects.
2 By tradition, the "tiger" is doubt, the fifth of the five hindrances to meditation.
3 Gotama: the Buddha's clan name.

301 Well awake they always awaken,
the disciples of Gotama,
whose minds day and night
delight in meditation.

302 Hard is going forth, hard to delight in it;
hard to live in is the household, and painful;
painful is living with those unlike oneself;
the traveler is beset by suffering.
So do not be a traveler,
do not be beset by suffering.[4]

303 One with faith, accomplished in virtue,
possessed of fame and wealth—
whatever region he goes to,
there he is honored.

304 The good shine from afar,
like the Himalayas;
the bad are not seen even here,
like arrows shot in the night.

305 Sitting alone, lying down alone,
walking alone, untiring,
alone taming oneself,
one should delight at the forest's edge.

4 The traveler is one who wanders on in the round of rebirth.

Hell

Nirayavagga
Verses 306–319
Liars, those who break their vows, and others headed for a bad destination.

306 One who speaks untruth goes to hell,
and so does one who has done a thing and says, “I did not.”
Both become equal after death,
people of base deeds, in the world beyond.

307 Many with the ochre robe around their necks
are of evil nature and unrestrained;
evil ones, by their evil deeds,
are reborn in hell.

308 Better to swallow an iron ball,
red-hot, like a flame of fire,
than that one without virtue, unrestrained,
should eat the alms of the land.

309 Four things befall the heedless man
who consorts with another’s wife:
demerit gained, sleep that is not at ease,
blame third, and hell fourth.

310 Demerit gained, and a bad destination;
the brief pleasure of a frightened man with a frightened woman;
and the king imposes a heavy punishment:
therefore a man should not consort with another’s wife.

311 As kusa grass, wrongly grasped,
cuts the very hand,
so the ascetic life, wrongly handled,
drags one down to hell.

312 Any slack act,
any corrupted observance,
a holy life lived under suspicion,
bears no great fruit.

313 If a thing is to be done, do it;
push on with it firmly;
for a slack wanderer
only scatters more dust.

314 A bad deed is better left undone;
a bad deed torments one afterward.
A good deed is better done,
which, once done, one does not regret.

315 As a frontier city
is guarded inside and out,
so guard yourselves;
do not let the moment pass you by;
for those who let the moment pass grieve
when they are consigned to hell.

316 Ashamed of what is not shameful,
not ashamed of what is shameful,
taking up wrong views,
beings go to a bad destination.

317 Seeing danger where there is none,
and no danger where there is danger,
taking up wrong views,
beings go to a bad destination.

318 Thinking the blameless blameworthy,
and seeing the blameworthy as blameless,
taking up wrong views,
beings go to a bad destination.

319 Knowing the blameworthy as blameworthy,
and the blameless as blameless,
taking up right views,
beings go to a good destination.

The Elephant

Nāgavagga
Verses 320–333
Enduring harsh words as the war elephant endures arrows;
the tamed and the untamed.

320 As an elephant in battle
endures the arrow shot from the bow,
so I will endure abuse:
for many people lack virtue.

321 The tamed one they lead into a crowd;
the tamed one the king mounts;
best among humans is the tamed,
who endures abuse.

322 Excellent are tamed mules,
thoroughbred horses of Sindh,
and great tusker elephants;
better still is one who has tamed himself.[1]

323 For not by these mounts
could one go to the land never reached,
as one who is tamed goes there
by his own well-tamed self.

1 Sindh: the Indus region, famed for its horses.

324 The tusker named Dhanapāla,
in fierce rut, hard to restrain,
held captive, will not eat a mouthful:
the tusker remembers the elephant forest.

325 When one is sluggish and eats too much,
sleepy, rolling about as he lies,
like a great hog fattened on fodder,
the dullard enters the womb again and again.

326 Formerly this mind went wandering
where it wished, where it liked, as it pleased;
today I will hold it back with wisdom,
as the one with the goad holds back an elephant in rut.

327 Delight in heedfulness,
guard your own minds;
pull yourselves out of the rough road,
like an elephant sunk in mud.

328 If you find a wise companion,
a fellow traveler, steadfast, living well,
overcoming all dangers,
travel with him, glad and mindful.

329 If you find no wise companion,
a fellow traveler, steadfast, living well,
like a king leaving a conquered kingdom,
travel alone, like an elephant in the elephant forest.

330 Better to live alone;
there is no companionship with a fool.
Travel alone and do no evil,
at ease, like an elephant in the elephant forest.

331 Friends are happiness when need arises;
contentment with whatever there is is happiness;
merit is happiness at the end of life;
the abandoning of all suffering is happiness.

332 In this world it is happiness to honor one's mother,
and happiness to honor one's father;
in this world it is happiness to honor ascetics,
and happiness to honor brahmins.

333 Virtue is happiness until old age;
firmly established faith is happiness;
the gaining of wisdom is happiness;
not doing evil is happiness.

Craving

Taṇhāvagga
Verses 334–359
Craving grows like a creeper; dig up its root.

334 In a person who lives heedlessly
craving grows like a creeper;
he leaps from life to life,
like a monkey in the forest looking for fruit.

335 Whoever is overcome by this wretched
craving that clings to the world—
his sorrows grow
like bīraṇa grass after rain.

336 But whoever overcomes this wretched
craving, so hard to get past in the world—
sorrows fall away from him
like drops of water from a lotus.

337 This I tell you—good fortune to you—
all of you gathered here:
dig up the root of craving,
as one who wants its fragrant root digs up bīraṇa grass.
Do not let Māra, as a stream a reed,
break you again and again.[1]

1 Bīraṇa: a coarse grass whose root, *usīra* (vetiver), is fragrant.

338 As long as its root is unharmed and firm,
a tree, though cut down, grows again;
so while the underlying tendency to craving is not rooted out,
this suffering arises again and again.

339 One in whom the thirty-six streams
flowing toward the pleasing are strong—
that one of wrong view is swept away
by thoughts that rest on passion.[2]

340 The streams flow everywhere;
the creeper sprouts and stands.
Seeing that creeper sprung up,
cut its root with wisdom.

341 Flowing and moist with affection
are the joys that come to a being;
bound to pleasure, seeking happiness,
such people are bound for birth and old age.

342 People driven by craving
run about like a trapped hare;
held fast by fetters and ties,
they come to suffering again and again, for a long time.

343 People driven by craving
run about like a trapped hare;
therefore one should drive out craving,
longing for one's own freedom from passion.

344 Having left the undergrowth, intent on the forest life,
freed from the forest, he runs back to the forest:
come, look at that person—
freed, he runs back into bondage.[3]

2 The thirty-six streams: three kinds of craving (for sense pleasure, for existence, for non-existence) multiplied by the twelve sense-bases.
3 The play on *vana*, "forest" and "desire," describes a monk who returns to the life he left.

345 The wise do not call that a strong bond
which is made of iron, wood or rope;
but the infatuation of the infatuated with jewels and
earrings,
the longing for children and wives—

346 that, say the wise, is the strong bond:
it drags one down, it is loose, and hard to undo.
Cutting this too, they go forth,
free of longing, leaving sensual pleasure behind.

347 Those infatuated with passion fall back into the stream
they have made, like a spider into its web.
Cutting this too, the steadfast go on,
free of longing, leaving all suffering behind.

348 Let go of what is before, let go of what is behind,
let go of what is between, gone beyond becoming;
with your mind freed in every way,
you will not come again to birth and old age.

349 For a person churned up by thoughts,
strong in passion, fixed on the attractive,
craving grows all the more:
he makes his bond strong.

350 But one who delights in the stilling of thoughts,
who cultivates the unattractive, always mindful—
he will make an end of craving;
he will cut Māra's bond.

351 One who has reached the goal, fearless,
free of craving, blameless,
has cut off the arrows of becoming:
this is his last body.

352 Free of craving, without grasping,
skilled in words and their meaning,
knowing the arrangement of letters,
which comes first and which after—
he is called "one in his last body,
of great wisdom, a great person."

353 "I have overcome all, I know all,
untainted amid all things;
I have given up everything, freed by the ending of craving;
having understood by myself, whom should I name as my
teacher?"

354 The gift of the *dhamma* surpasses all gifts;
the taste of the *dhamma* surpasses all tastes;
delight in the *dhamma* surpasses all delights;
the ending of craving overcomes all suffering.

355 Riches destroy the dullard,
but not those who seek the far shore;
through craving for riches the dullard
destroys himself as he would another.

356 Weeds are the bane of fields;
passion is the bane of these people;
so what is given to those free of passion
bears great fruit.

357 Weeds are the bane of fields;
hatred is the bane of these people;
so what is given to those free of hatred
bears great fruit.

358 Weeds are the bane of fields;
delusion is the bane of these people;
so what is given to those free of delusion
bears great fruit.

359 Weeds are the bane of fields;
desire is the bane of these people;
so what is given to those free of desire
bears great fruit.

The Monk

Bhikkhuvagga
Verses 360–382
The restrained monk who delights in the teaching and dwells in loving-kindness.

360 Restraint of the eye is good,
good is restraint of the ear;
restraint of the nose is good,
good is restraint of the tongue.

361 Restraint of the body is good,
good is restraint of speech;
restraint of the mind is good,
good is restraint in everything.
The monk restrained in everything
is freed from all suffering.

362 Controlled in hand, controlled in foot,
controlled in speech, supremely controlled,
delighting within, collected,
alone and content: him they call a monk.

363 The monk who controls his tongue,
speaks with wisdom, and is not puffed up,
who makes clear the meaning and the *dhamma*—
sweet is his speech.

364 Dwelling in the *dhamma*, delighting in the *dhamma*,
reflecting on the *dhamma*,
recollecting the *dhamma*, the monk
does not fall away from the true *dhamma*.

365 Do not despise what you yourself receive,
do not go about envying others;
a monk who envies others
does not attain concentration.

366 Though a monk receives little,
if he does not despise what he receives,
the gods praise him,
pure in livelihood and untiring.

367 One who has no sense of "mine"
toward name-and-form in any way,
and does not grieve for what is not—
he is called a "monk."

368 The monk who dwells in loving-kindness,
with confidence in the Buddha's teaching,
will reach the peaceful state,
the stilling of conditioned things, happiness.

369 Bail out this boat, monk;
bailed out, it will go lightly for you.
Cutting off passion and hatred,
you will then go to *nibbāna*.

370 Cut off five, give up five,
and cultivate five more;
a monk who has gone beyond five ties
is called "one who has crossed the flood."[1]

1 By tradition: cut the five lower fetters, give up the five higher fetters, cultivate the five faculties (faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, wisdom); the five ties are passion, hatred, delusion, pride and views.

371 Meditate, monk, do not be heedless;
do not let your mind delight in sensual pleasures;
do not, heedless, swallow the iron ball,
do not cry out as you burn, "This is suffering!"

372 There is no meditation without wisdom,
no wisdom without meditation;
one who has both meditation and wisdom
is close to *nibbāna*.

373 For one who has entered an empty dwelling,
a monk with a calm mind,
there is a delight beyond the human
as he rightly sees into the *dhamma*.

374 Whenever he contemplates
the rise and fall of the aggregates,
he gains joy and gladness:
for those who understand, that is the deathless.

375 This is the beginning here
for a wise monk:
guarding the senses, contentment,
and restraint according to the monastic code.

376 Associate with good friends,
pure in livelihood and untiring;
be friendly in your ways
and skilled in conduct;
then, full of gladness,
you will make an end of suffering.

377 As the jasmine sheds
its withered flowers,
so, monks, you should shed
passion and hatred.

378 Calm in body, calm in speech,
calm and well collected,
the monk who has spewed out the bait of the world
is called “one at peace.”

379 Rouse yourself by yourself,
examine yourself by yourself;
guarded by yourself and mindful,
you will live happily, monk.

380 One is one’s own protector:
what other protector could there be?
One is one’s own refuge;
therefore restrain yourself,
as a merchant a fine horse.

381 The monk full of gladness,
with confidence in the Buddha’s teaching,
will reach the peaceful state,
the stilling of conditioned things, happiness.

382 The monk who, though young,
devotes himself to the Buddha’s teaching
lights up this world
like the moon freed from a cloud.

The Brahmin

Brāhmaṇavagga
Verses 383–423
Who is a true brahmin: not by birth or matted hair, but by purity and freedom.

383 Strive and cut off the stream;
drive out sensual desires, brahmin.
Knowing the ending of conditioned things,
you know the uncreated, brahmin.[1]

384 When in two things
the brahmin has gone to the far shore,
all his bonds
come to an end, for he knows.[2]

385 One for whom there is no far shore, no near shore,
nor both far and near,
free of distress, unbound—
him I call a brahmin.

386 Meditating, free of dust, seated,
his task done, free of taints,
having reached the highest goal—
him I call a brahmin.

1 In this chapter, as in verse 142, "brahmin" is the name the Buddha gives to one who is holy in conduct, whatever his birth or class.
2 The two things: by tradition, calm and insight.

387 The sun shines by day,
the moon glows by night,
the warrior shines in his armor,
the brahmin shines in meditation;
but all day and all night
the Buddha shines in splendor.

388 Because he has put away evil, he is a brahmin;
because he lives in calm, he is called an ascetic;
because he has sent away his own impurities,
he is called "one gone forth."[3]

389 One should not strike a brahmin,
nor should a brahmin lash out at him;
shame on one who strikes a brahmin,
and more shame on one who lashes out in return.

390 This is no small good for a brahmin,
when the mind is held back from what is dear.
Wherever the intent to harm turns away,
just there suffering is stilled.

391 One who by body, by speech
or by mind does no wrong,
restrained in these three ways—
him I call a brahmin.

392 From whomever one learns the *dhamma*
taught by the Fully Awakened One,
one should revere him devoutly,
as a brahmin reveres the sacrificial fire.

393 Not by matted hair, not by clan,
not by birth is one a brahmin;
one in whom there is truth and *dhamma*—
he is pure, and he is a brahmin.

3 Plays on words: *brāhmaṇa* and *bāhita*, "put away"; *samaṇa* and *samacariyā*, "living in calm"; *pabbajita*, "gone forth," and *pabbājaya*, "sending away."

394 What use is your matted hair, dullard,
what use your robe of antelope skin?
Inside, you are a tangle;
you polish only the outside.

395 One who wears robes of rags,
lean, veins standing out,
meditating alone in the forest—
him I call a brahmin.

396 I do not call one a brahmin
merely for being born of a brahmin mother's womb.
He is only one who says "sir" to others,
if he owns anything.
One who owns nothing and grasps at nothing—
him I call a brahmin.[4]

397 One who has cut every fetter,
who does not tremble,
who has gone beyond ties, unbound—
him I call a brahmin.

398 One who has cut the strap and the thong,
the rope with all that goes with it,
who has lifted the bar, awakened—
him I call a brahmin.[5]

399 One who, without hatred, endures
abuse, beating and bonds,
whose strength is patience, whose army is strength—
him I call a brahmin.

4 "One who says 'sir'" (*bhovādī*): a nickname for brahmins, who addressed others as *bho*.
5 By tradition, the strap is hatred, the thong craving, the rope wrong views, and the bar ignorance.

400 Free of anger, keeping his vows,
virtuous, not puffed up,
tamed, in his last body—
him I call a brahmin.

401 Like water on a lotus leaf,
like a mustard seed on the point of an awl,
one who does not cling to sensual pleasures—
him I call a brahmin.

402 One who knows, right here,
the end of his own suffering,
who has laid down the burden, unbound—
him I call a brahmin.

403 One of deep wisdom, intelligent,
skilled in what is the path and what is not,
who has reached the highest goal—
him I call a brahmin.

404 Not mixing with householders
nor with the homeless either,
wandering without a home, wanting little—
him I call a brahmin.

405 One who has laid down the rod
toward beings, whether frail or firm,
who neither kills nor causes killing—
him I call a brahmin.

406 Friendly among the hostile,
at peace among the violent,
not grasping among those who grasp—
him I call a brahmin.

407 One from whom passion and hatred,
pride and contempt have fallen away,
like a mustard seed from the point of an awl—
him I call a brahmin.

408 One who utters speech that is not harsh,
that informs, that is true,
by which he offends no one—
him I call a brahmin.

409 One who here, long or short,
small or large, fine or foul,
takes nothing in the world that is not given—
him I call a brahmin.

410 One in whom no longings are found
for this world or the next,
free of longing, unbound—
him I call a brahmin.

411 One in whom no attachments are found,
who through understanding is free of doubt,
who has plunged into the deathless—
him I call a brahmin.

412 One who here has gone beyond the tie
of both merit and evil,
sorrowless, stainless, pure—
him I call a brahmin.

413 Stainless and pure like the moon,
clear and undisturbed,
in whom delight in becoming is exhausted—
him I call a brahmin.

414 One who has passed beyond this swamp, this rough road,
the round of rebirth, delusion,
who has crossed, reached the far shore, meditates,
unwavering, free of doubt,
quenched through not grasping—
him I call a brahmin.

415 One who here, giving up sensual pleasures,
wanders forth, homeless,
in whom sensual desire and becoming are exhausted—
him I call a brahmin.

416 One who here, giving up craving,
wanders forth, homeless,
in whom craving and becoming are exhausted—
him I call a brahmin.

417 Leaving behind the human yoke,
having passed beyond the heavenly yoke,
unbound from every yoke—
him I call a brahmin.

418 Leaving behind delight and discontent,
cooled, free of the grounds of rebirth,
the hero who has overcome the whole world—
him I call a brahmin.

419 One who knows the passing away of beings
and their rebirth, in every way,
unattached, well gone, awakened—
him I call a brahmin.

420 One whose destination is unknown
to gods, gandhabbas and humans,
an *arahant* with taints destroyed—
him I call a brahmin.

421 One who has nothing before,
nothing after, and nothing in between,
who owns nothing and grasps at nothing—
him I call a brahmin.

422 The bull, the noble one, the hero,
the great sage, the victor,
the unwavering, the one who has bathed, the awakened—
him I call a brahmin.[6]

423 One who knows his former lives,
who sees heaven and the states of woe,
and has reached the end of births,
a sage perfected in direct knowledge,
who has completed all that is to be completed—
him I call a brahmin.

6 "One who has bathed" (*nhātaka*): a brahmin who has completed his studies with a ritual bath; here, one cleansed of every impurity.