

these, monks, are the four kinds of persons found existing in the world."

(AN 4:125; II 128-29)

9. THE PERILS OF SAMSĀRA

(1) *The Stream of Tears*

"Monks, this saṃsāra is without discoverable beginning. A first point is not discerned of beings roaming and wandering on hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving. What do you think, monks, which is more: the stream of tears that you have shed as you roamed and wandered through this long course, weeping and wailing because of being united with the disagreeable and separated from the agreeable—or the water in the four great oceans?"

"As we understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, venerable sir, the stream of tears that we have shed as we roamed and wandered through this long course, weeping and wailing because of being united with the disagreeable and separated from the agreeable—this alone is more than the water in the four great oceans."

"Good, good, monks! It is good that you understand the Dhamma taught by me in such a way. The stream of tears that you have shed as you roamed and wandered through this long course, weeping and wailing because of being united with the disagreeable and separated from the agreeable—this alone is more than the water in the four great oceans. For a long time, monks, you have experienced the death of a mother; as you have experienced this, weeping and wailing because of being united with the disagreeable and separated from the agreeable, the stream of tears that you have shed is more than the water in the four great oceans.

"For a long time, monks, you have experienced the death of a father ... the death of a brother ... the death of a sister ... the death of a son ... the death of a daughter ... the loss of relatives ... the loss of wealth ... loss through illness; as you have experienced this, weeping and wailing because of being united with the disagreeable and separated from the agreeable, the stream of tears that you have shed is more than the water in the four great oceans. For what reason? Because, monks, this saṃsāra is without discoverable beginning.... It

is enough to experience revulsion toward all formations, enough to become dispassionate toward them, enough to be liberated from them."

(SN 15:3; II 179-80)

(2) *The Stream of Blood*

While the Blessed One was dwelling at Kaiyagaha in the Bamboo Grove, thirty monks from Pāvā approached him—all forest dwellers, almsfood eaters, rag-robe wearers, three-robe users, yet all still with fetters.¹¹ Having approached, they paid homage to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Then it occurred to the Blessed One: "These thirty monks from Pāvā are all forest dwellers, almsfood eaters, rag-robe wearers, three-robe users, yet all are still with fetters. Let me teach them the Dhamma in such a way that while they are sitting in these very seats their minds will be liberated from the taints by nonclinging."¹² Then the Blessed One addressed those monks thus: "Monks!"

"Venerable sir!" those monks replied. The Blessed One said this:

"Monks, this saṃsāra is without discoverable beginning. A first point is not discerned of beings roaming and wandering on, hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving. What do you think, monks, which is more: the stream of blood that you have shed when you were beheaded as you roamed and wandered through this long course—or the water in the four great oceans?"

"As we understand the Dhamma taught by the Blessed One, venerable sir, the stream of blood that we have shed when we were beheaded as we roamed and wandered through this long course—this alone is more than the water in the four great oceans."

"Good, good, monks! It is good that you understand the Dhamma taught by me in such a way. The stream of blood that you have shed as you roamed and wandered through this long course—this alone is more than the water in the four great oceans. For a long time, monks, you have been cows, and when as cows you were beheaded, the stream of blood that you shed is greater than the waters in the four great oceans. For a long time you have been buffalo, sheep, goats, deer, chickens, and pigs.... For a long time you have been arrested as burglars, highwaymen, and adulterers, and when you were beheaded, the stream of blood that you shed is greater than the water in the four great oceans. For what reason? Because, monks, this saṃsāra is without discoverable

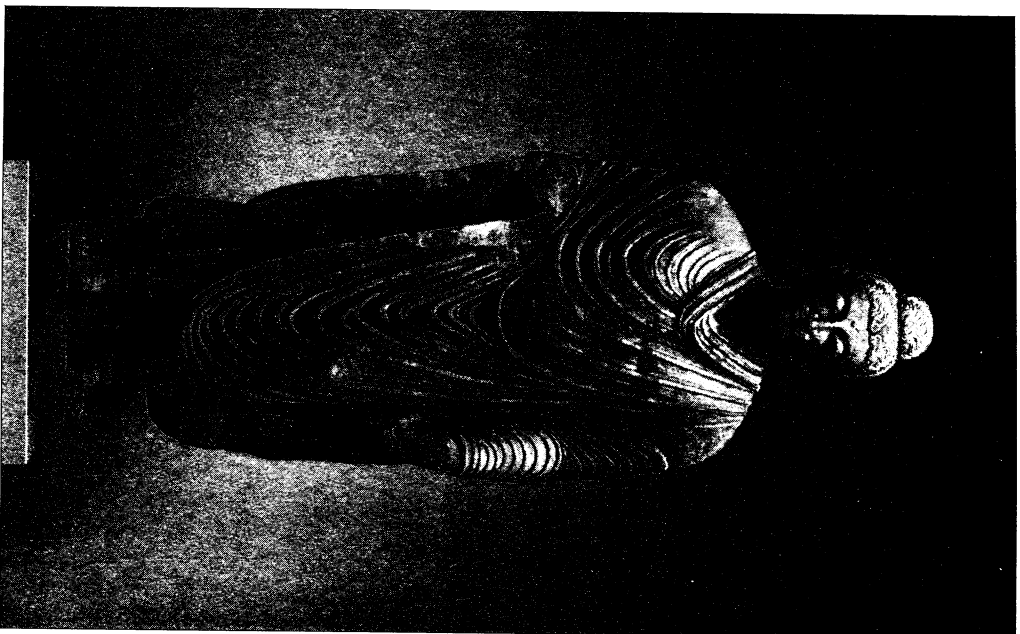
beginning. A first point is not discerned of beings roaming and wandering on, hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving. For such a long time, monks, you have experienced suffering, anguish, and disaster, and swelled the cemetery. It is enough to become disenchanted with all formations, enough to become dispassionate toward them, enough to be liberated from them. "

This is what the Blessed One said. Elated, those monks delighted in the Blessed One's statement. And while this exposition was being spoken, the minds of the thirty monks from Pāvā were liberated from the taints by nonclinging.

(SN 15:13; II 187-89)

VII. The Path to Liberation





Tamed, he is supreme among those who tame;
At peace, he is the sage among those who bring peace;
Freed, he is the chief of those who set free;
Delivered, he is the best of those who deliver.

—*Anguttara Nikāya* 4:23

In the
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