

TWENTY-FOUR

Craving

The craving of a person who lives negligently  
Spreads like a creeping vine.  
Such a person leaps ever onward,  
Like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest. (334)\*

Sorrow grows  
Like grass after rain  
For anyone overcome by this miserable craving  
And clinging to the world. (335)\*

Sorrow falls away  
Like drops of water from a lotus  
For anyone who overcomes this miserable craving  
And clinging to the world. (336)

This I say to you:

Good fortune to all assembled here!

Dig out the root of craving

As you would the fragrant root of *bīraṇa*  
grass.

Don't let Māra destroy you again and again,

As a torrential river [breaks] a reed. (337)

Just as a felled tree grows again

If the roots are unharmed and strong,

So suffering sprouts again and again

Until the tendency to crave is rooted out. (338)

With the thirty-six streams [of craving]

Flowing mightily toward anything pleasing,

The person of wrong views

Is carried away on the currents of lustful intent.

(339)\*

The streams flow everywhere;

The creeper [of craving] sprouts and remains.

Seeing that the creeper has sprouted,

Use insight to cut it at the root. (340)

When desire flows,

Pleasure arises.

Attached to happiness, seeking enjoyment,

People are subject to birth and old age. (341)

Surrounded by craving,

People run around like frightened hares.

Held by fetters and bonds,

They suffer, repeatedly, over a long time. (342)

Surrounded by craving,

People run around like frightened hares.

Seeking dispassion,

A monastic should dispel craving. (343)

[Though] clear of the underbrush

And out of the forest,

Someone attached to the forest

Runs right back to it.

Come, see that free person

Run back into bondage. (344)\*

It's not a strong bond, say the wise,

That is made of iron, wood, or grass.

A strong bond, say the wise,

Is infatuation with jewels and ornaments

And longing for children and spouse—

That bond is weighty, elastic, and hard to  
loosen.

Having cut even this, they go forth,  
Free from longing, abandoning sensual pleasures.  
Those attached to passion  
Are caught in a river [of their own making]  
Like a spider caught in its own web.  
But having cut even this, the wise set forth,  
Free from longing, abandoning all suffering.

(345-347)\*

Let go of the past, let go of the future,  
Let go of the present.  
Gone beyond becoming,  
With the mind released in every way,  
You do not again undergo birth and old age.

(348)\*

For people who  
Have agitated thoughts  
And intense passion,  
And who are focused on what's pleasant,  
Craving grows more and more.  
Indeed, they strengthen their bonds.

But those who  
Delight in calming their thoughts,  
Are always mindful,  
And cultivate a focus on what's unpleasant,  
Will bring an end [to craving].  
They will cut Māra's bonds.

(349-350)\*

Fearless, free of craving, and without blemish,  
Having reached the goal  
And destroyed the arrows of becoming,  
One is in one's final body.

(351)\*

Free of craving and grasping,  
Skilled in words and their usage,  
Knowing the order of the teachings—  
What precedes and what follows—  
One is said to be "a great person of much wisdom,  
In one's final body."

(352)\*

"I am all-conquering, all-knowing,  
Stained by nothing.  
Letting go of everything,  
Released through the destruction of craving  
And having known directly on my own,  
Whom could I point to [as my teacher]?"

(353)\*

The gift of Dharma surpasses all gifts.  
The taste of Dharma surpasses all tastes.  
The delight in Dharma surpasses all delights.  
The destruction of craving conquers all suffering.

(354)

Wealth destroys those who lack in wisdom,  
But not those who seek the beyond.  
Craving wealth, those lacking wisdom  
Destroy themselves  
As well as others. (355)

Weeds are the ruin of fields;  
Passion is the ruin of people.  
So offerings to those free of passion  
Bear great fruit. (356)

Weeds are the ruin of fields;  
Ill will is the ruin of people.  
So offerings to those free of ill will  
Bear great fruit. (357)

Weeds are the ruin of fields;  
Delusion is the ruin of people.  
So offerings to those free of delusion  
Bear great fruit. (358)

Weeds are the ruin of fields;  
Longing is the ruin of people.  
So offerings to those free of longing  
Bear great fruit. (359)

*The*  
Dhammapada

A NEW TRANSLATION  
OF THE BUDDHIST CLASSIC  
WITH ANNOTATIONS



Gil Fronsdal

*Foreword by Jack Kornfield*



SHAMBHALA  
Boulder 2006