

Lokavipatti Sutta: The Failings of the World

"Monks, these eight worldly conditions spin after the world, and the world spins after these eight worldly conditions. Which eight? Gain, loss, status, disgrace, censure, praise, pleasure, and pain. These are the eight worldly conditions that spin after the world, and the world spins after these eight worldly conditions.

"For an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person there arise gain, loss, status, disgrace, censure, praise, pleasure, and pain. For a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones there also arise gain, loss, status, disgrace, censure, praise, pleasure, and pain. So what difference, what distinction, what distinguishing factor is there between the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones and the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person?"

"For us, lord, the teachings have the Blessed One as their root, their guide, and their arbitrator. It would be good if the Blessed One himself would explicate the meaning of this statement. Having heard it from the Blessed One, the monks will remember it."

"In that case, monks, listen and pay close attention. I will speak."

"As you say, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said, "Gain arises for an uninstructed run-of-the-mill person. He does not reflect, 'Gain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful, and subject to change.' He does not discern it as it actually is.

"Loss arises... Status arises... Disgrace arises... Censure arises... Praise arises... Pleasure arises...

"Pain arises. He does not reflect, 'Pain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful, and subject to change.' He does not discern it as it actually is.

"His mind remains consumed with the gain. His mind remains consumed with the loss... with the status... the disgrace... the censure... the praise... the pleasure. His mind remains consumed with the pain.

"He welcomes the arisen gain and rebels against the arisen loss. He welcomes the arisen status and rebels against the arisen disgrace. He welcomes the arisen praise and rebels against the arisen censure. He welcomes the arisen pleasure and rebels against the arisen pain. As he is thus engaged in welcoming and rebelling, he is not released from birth, aging, or death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, or despairs. He is not released, I tell you, from suffering and stress.

"Now, gain arises for a well-instructed disciple of the noble ones. He reflects, 'Gain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful, and subject to change.' He discerns it as it actually is.

"Loss arises... Status arises... Disgrace arises... Censure arises... Praise arises... Pleasure arises...

"Pain arises. He reflects, 'Pain has arisen for me. It is inconstant, stressful, and subject to change.' He discerns it as it actually is.

"His mind does not remain consumed with the gain. His mind does not remain consumed with the loss... with the status... the disgrace... the censure... the praise... the pleasure. His mind does not remain consumed with the pain.

"He does not welcome the arisen gain, or rebel against the arisen loss. He does not welcome the arisen status, or rebel against the arisen disgrace. He does not welcome the arisen praise, or rebel against the arisen censure. He does not welcome the arisen pleasure, or rebel against the arisen pain. As he thus abandons welcoming and rebelling, he is released from birth, aging, and death; from sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, and despairs. He is released, I tell you, from suffering and stress.

"This is the difference, this the distinction, this the distinguishing factor between the well-instructed disciple of the noble ones and the uninstructed run-of-the-mill person."

Gain/loss, status/disgrace, censure/praise, pleasure/pain: these conditions among human beings are inconstant, impermanent, subject to change.

Knowing this, the wise person, mindful, ponders these changing conditions. Desirable things don't charm the mind, undesirable ones bring no resistance.

His welcoming and rebelling are scattered, gone to their end, do not exist.

Knowing the dustless, sorrowless state, he discerns rightly, has gone, beyond becoming, to the Further Shore.

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