

The Adept

No sorrow exists for one who has completed his journey, who has let fall all cares, who is free in all his parts, who has cast off all bonds.

Those who are heedful strive always and, like swans leaving their lakes, leave one home after another.

Those who amass nothing, who eat moderately, who have perceived the emptiness of all things and who have attained unconditioned liberation, their path is as difficult to trace as that of a bird in the air.

One for whom all desires have passed away and who has perceived the emptiness of all things, who cares little for food, who has attained unconditioned liberation, his path is as difficult to trace as that of a bird in the air.

Even the Gods esteem one whose senses are controlled as horses by the charioteer, one who is purged of all pride and freed from all corruption.

One who fulfils his duty is as immovable as the earth itself. He is as firm as a celestial pillar, pure as an unclouded lake; and for him the cycle of births is completed.

Calm are the thoughts, the words and the acts of one who has liberated himself by the true knowledge and has achieved a perfect tranquillity.

The greatest among men is he who is not credulous but has the sense of the Uncreated, who has cut all ties, who has destroyed all occasion for rebirth.

Questions and Answers

Whether village or forest, plain or mountain, wherever the adepts may dwell, that place is always delightful.

Delightful are the forests which are shunned by the multitude. There, the adept, who is free from passion, will find happiness, for he seeks not after pleasure.

There is a very interesting sentence here: “He who is not credulous but has the sense of the Uncreated...”

One who is not credulous — all kinds of things can be understood from this word. The first impression is that it refers to one who does not believe in invisible things without having an experience of them, as distinct from people who follow, for example, a particular religion and have faith in dogmas simply because that is what they have been taught. But he “has the sense of the Uncreated”, that is to say, he is in contact with invisible things and knows them as they are, by identity. The Dhammapada has told us, to begin with, that the greatest of men is he who has no faith in what is taught but has a personal experience of things that are not visible, he who is free from all belief and has himself had the experience of invisible things.

Another explanation can also be given: one who is not credulous is he who does not believe in the reality of appearances, in things as we see them, who does not take them for the truth, who knows that these are only misleading appearances and that behind them lies a truth that is to be found and known by personal experience and by identity.

And this makes one reflect on the number of things, the countless number of things that we believe without any personal knowledge, simply because we have been taught that they are like that, or because we are accustomed to think they are like that, or because we are surrounded by people who believe that things are like that. If we look at all the things that we believe and not only believe but assert with an indisputable authority, “This is like this”, “That, but of course it is like that”, “And

this thing, yes, it is so....” In truth, however, we know nothing about it, it is simply because we are in the habit of thinking that they are like that. What are the things that you have experienced personally, with which you have had a direct contact, of which you can at least say with sincerity, “I am convinced that it is like that, because I have experienced it”? Not many.

In reality, if you truly want to have knowledge, you must begin by making a very important study: verify the things that we have been taught, even the most common and the most insignificant. Then you will understand why the text says “the greatest among men”, because I do not think that many have made this experiment.

Just to find out the number of things we believe and assert, simply because it is customary to believe and assert them, is indeed a very interesting discovery.

Now go and look into your thought and consciousness for all the things that you assert without proof. You will see!

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