



Craving [Dhammapada]

334. The craving (*tanha*) of a thoughtless man grows like a creeping vine. He runs around here and there, like a monkey seeking fruit in the forest.

335. Whoever is overcome by this fierce craving in this world finds that his sufferings increase like [grass after the rains].

336. Whoever overcomes this fierce craving in this world is difficult to be conquered. Sufferings fall off from him, like water-drops from a lotus leaf.

337. This I will say to all gathered here: Dig up the root of craving, like one in search of a fragrant root digs out the grass above, so that Mara (the tempter) may not crush you again and again, as the stream crushes the reeds.

338. Just as a cut down tree will grow again as long as its root is sound and firm, so will suffering return again and again if your tendency towards craving is not rooted out.

339. The misguided man, whose craving for pleasure is overwhelming..., will be carried off by the waves that are his own desires fixated on passion.

340. The currents run in all directions, and the creeping vine (of passion), having sprung up, becomes established. When you see that creeper spring up, cut its roots by means of wisdom.

341. Seeking extravagant and luxurious delights, a man becomes sunken in lust and keen on pleasure, and thus undergoes birth and decay (again and again).

342. Men driven on by craving run about like hunted hares. Held in fetters and bonds, they undergo lasting suffering over and over.

343. Men driven on by craving run about like a hunted hares. Therefore [one] who desires to be free of passion, should drive out their craving.

344. When a man who has escaped from the forest of lust has been drawn back into that forest, then free from the forest as he is, he runs right back into it. Look at him; once free, he has returned to his bondage.

345. Wise people do not call a manacle strong which is made of iron, wood or hemp. A far stronger manacle is the attachment to jewels and rings, children and wives.

346. That manacle that wise people call strong is one that drags one downward—one that feels loose, but which is actually is very difficult to break. When at last one breaks this manacle, he renounces the world, abandoning sensual pleasures.

347. Those who are slaves to passion, fall back into the swirling stream of desires, as a spider runs down a web which he has made himself. When the wise have cut this off, they become free of longing and leave all suffering behind.

348. Let go of your cravings of the future; let go of your cravings of the past; let go of your cravings of the present. Cross over to the opposite shore of existence. If your mind becomes free, you will not enter again into birth and death.

349. When a man is tossed about by his own troubled thoughts and is filled with passion, fixated on what is enticing, his craving steadily grows. Such a man makes his manacles strong indeed.

350. The man who delights in calming his thoughts, mindfully reflecting on the impurities of the bodies, will put an end to craving and cut the bonds of Mara.

351. He who has reached this goal, and is without fear, craving or moral blemish, has plucked out the thorns of existence. This will be his last body.

352. He who is without craving and attachment, an expert in the study of texts and their interpretation, he is indeed, the bearer of his last body and is called the sage, the great man.

353. I am the conqueror of all, I am the knower of all. But unattached am I to all that is conquered and known, Through the destruction of craving, I am free. Having achieved realization myself, whom shall I call my teacher?...

355. Riches destroy the foolish, yet not those who seek the other shore. The fool by his craving for riches destroys himself, as if he were destroying his own enemy.

356. Fields are damaged by weeds; mankind is damaged by passion. Therefore what is offered to those free of passion bears great fruit.

357. Fields are damaged by weeds; mankind is damaged by hatred. Therefore what is offered to those free of hatred bears great fruit.

358. Fields are damaged by weeds; mankind is damaged by delusion. Therefore what is offered to those free of delusion bears great fruit.

359. Fields are damaged by weeds, mankind is damaged by craving. Therefore a gift bestowed on those who are free from craving brings great reward.

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