Thag 13.1 — Soṇakoḷivisa

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Verses of the Senior Monks 13.1

The Book of the Thirteens

Chapter One

Soṇakoḷivisa

He who was special in the kingdom,

the footman to the king of Aṅga,

today is special in the Dhamma—

Soṇa has gone beyond suffering.

Five to cut, five to drop,

and five more to develop.

When a mendicant slips five chains

they're said to have crossed the flood.

If a monk is insolent and negligent,

concerned only with externals,

their ethics, immersion, and wisdom

do not become fulfilled.

They dump what should be done,

and do what should not be done.

For the insolent and the negligent,

their defilements only grow.

Those that have properly undertaken

constant mindfulness of the body,

don't cultivate what should not be done,

but always do what should be done.
Mindful and aware,
their defilements come to an end.
The straight path has been explained—
go on it and don’t turn back.
Urge yourself on
and take yourself to extinguishment.
When my energy was over-exerted,
the supreme Teacher in the world
created the simile of the arched harp for me.
The Clear-eyed One taught the Dhamma,
and when I heard what he said,
I happily did his bidding.
Practicing serenity of mind
for the attainment of the highest goal.
I’ve attained the three knowledges
and fulfilled the Buddha’s instructions.
When you’re dedicated to renunciation
and seclusion of the heart;
when you’re dedicated to kindness
and the end of grasping;
when you’re dedicated to the ending of craving
and clarity of heart;
and you’ve seen the arising of the senses,
your mind is rightly freed.
For that one, rightly freed,
a mendicant with peaceful mind,
there’s nothing to be improved,
and nothing more to do.

As the wind cannot stir
a solid mass of rock,
so too sights, tastes, sounds,
smells, and touches—the lot—
and ideas, whether liked or disliked,
don’t disturb the unaffected one.
Their mind is steady and unfettered
as they observe fall.