Thag 15.1 — Koṇḍañña Who Understood

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Verses of the Senior Monks 15.1

The Book of the Sixteens

Chapter One

Koṇḍañña Who Understood

“My confidence grew

as I heard the teaching, so full of flavor.

Dispassion is what was taught,

without any grasping at all.”

“There are so many pretty things

in this vast territory.

They disturb one’s thoughts, it seems to me,

attractive, provoking lust.

Just as a rain cloud would settle

the dust blown up by the wind,

so thoughts settle down

when seen with wisdom.

All conditions are impermanent—

when this is seen with wisdom

one grows disillusioned with suffering:

this is the path to purity.

All conditions are suffering—

when this is seen with wisdom

one grows disillusioned with suffering:

this is the path to purity.
All things are not-self—
when this is seen with wisdom
one grows disillusioned with suffering:
this is the path to purity.”
“The senior monk awakened after the Buddha,
Koṇḍañña, is keenly energetic.
He has given up birth and death,
and has completed the spiritual journey.”
“There are floods, snares, and strong posts,
and a mountain hard to crack;
snapping the posts and snares,
breaking the mountain so hard to break,
crossing over to the far shore,
a meditator is freed from Māra’s bonds.
When a mendicant is haughty and fickle,
relying on bad friends,
they sink down in the great flood,
overcome by a wave.
But one not restless or fickle,
alert, with senses restrained,
intelligent, with good friends,
makes an end of suffering.
With knobbly knees,
thin and veiny,
eating and drinking in moderation—
this person’s spirit is undaunted.
Pestered by flies and mosquitoes
in the wilds, the formidable forest,

one should mindfully endure,

like an elephant at the head of the battle.

I don’t long for death;

I don’t long for life;

I await my time,

like a worker waiting for their wages.

I don’t long for death;

I don’t long for life;

I await my time,

aware and mindful.

I’ve served the Teacher

and fulfilled the Buddha’s instructions.

The heavy burden is laid down,

the leash to existence is eradicated.

I’ve attained the goal

for the sake of which I went forth

from the lay life to homelessness—

what use do I have for protégés?”