SN 22.22 — The Burden of Responsibility

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 22.22

3. The Burden

The Burden of Responsibility

At Sāvatthī.

“Mendicants, I will teach you the burden, the bearer of the burden, the taking up of the burden, and the putting down of the burden. Listen …

And what is the burden? The five grasping aggregates, it should be said. What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. This is called the burden.

And who is the bearer of the burden? The individual, it should be said; the venerable of such name and such clan. This is called the bearer of the burden.

And what is the taking up of the burden? It’s the craving that leads to future lives, mixed up with relishing and greed, taking pleasure there wherever it alights. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for continued existence, and craving for nonexistence. This is called the taking up of the burden.

And what is the putting down of the burden? It’s the fading away and cessation of that very same craving no residue left behind; giving it away, letting it go, releasing it, and not clinging to it. This is called the putting down of the burden.”

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

“The five aggregates are indeed burdens,

and the individual is the bearer of the burden.

Taking up the burden is suffering in the world,

and putting the burden down is happiness.

When the heavy burden is put down

without taking up another,

one who has plucked out craving, root and all,

is hungerless, quenched.”