AN 3.56 — Breaking Apart

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an3.56/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Numbered Discourses 3.56

6. Brahmins

Breaking Apart

Then a certain well-to-do brahmin went up to the Buddha, and seated to one side he said to him:

“Worthy Gotama, I have heard that brahmins of the past who were elderly and senior, the tutors of tutors, said: ‘In the old days this world was so full of humans you’d think they were squashed together. The villages, towns, and capital cities were no more than a chicken’s flight apart.’ What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these days human numbers have dwindled, a decline in population is evident, and whole villages, towns, cities, and countries have disappeared?”

“These days, brahmin, humans just love illicit desire. They’re overcome by immoral greed, and mired in wrong religious teachings. Taking up sharp knives, they murder each other. And so many people perish. This is the cause, this is the reason why these days human numbers have dwindled.

Furthermore, because these days humans just love illicit desire … the heavens don’t provide enough rain, so there’s famine, a bad harvest, with crops blighted and turned to straw. And so many people perish. This is the cause, this is the reason why these days human numbers have dwindled.

Furthermore, because these days humans just love illicit desire … native spirits let vicious monsters loose. And so many humans perish. This is the cause, this is the reason why these days human numbers have dwindled.”

“Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! … From this day forth, may the worthy Gotama remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge for life.”