



It is well indeed restraining this fleeting, wandering mind. Such restraint brings happiness.

35. *Dunnigghassa lahunō
yatthakāmanipātīnō
cittassa damathō sādhu
cittaṃ dantaṃ sukhāvahaṃ. (3:3)*

The mind is very hard to check
and swift, it falls on what it wants.
The training of the mind is good,
a mind so tamed brings happiness.

RESTRAINED MIND LEADS TO HAPPINESS

3 (2) The Story of a Certain Monk (Verse 35)

While residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to a certain monk.

On one occasion, sixty monks, after obtaining a meditation topic from the Buddha, went to Mātika village, at the foot of a mountain. There, Mātikamātā, mother of the village headman, offered them alms-food; she also built a monastery for them, so that they could stay in the village during the rainy season. One day she asked the group of monks to teach her the practice of meditation. They taught her how to meditate on the thirty-two constituents of the body leading to the awareness of the decay and dissolution of the body. Mātikamātā practiced with diligence and attained the three maggas (paths) and phalas (fruits) together with analytical insight and mundane supernormal powers, even before the monks did.

Rising from the bliss of the magga and phala she looked with the divine power of sight (*dibbacakkhu*) and saw that the monks had not attained any of the Maggas yet. She also learnt that those monks had enough potentiality for the attainment of arahatship, but they needed proper food. So, she prepared good, choice food for them. With proper food and right effort, the monks developed right concentration and eventually attained arahatship.

At the end of the rainy season, the monks returned to the Jētavana Monastery, where the Buddha was in residence. They reported to the Buddha that all of them were in good health and in comfortable circumstances and that they did not have to worry about food. They also mentioned about Mātikamātā who was aware of their thought and prepared and offered them the very food they wished for.

A certain monk, hearing them talking about Mātikamātā, decided that he, too, would go to that village. So, taking one meditation topic from the Buddha he arrived at the village monastery. There, he found that everything he wished for was sent to him by Mātikamātā, the lay-devotee. When he wished her to come she personally came to the monastery, bringing along choice food with her. After taking the food, he asked her if she knew the thoughts of others, but she evaded his question and replied, "People who can read the

thoughts of others behave in such and such a way." Then, the monk thought, "Should I, like an ordinary worldling, entertain any impure thoughts, she is sure to find out." He therefore got scared of the lay-devotee and decided to return to the Jētavana Monastery. He told the Buddha that he could not stay in Mātika village because he was afraid that the lay-devotee might detect impure thoughts in him. The Buddha then asked him to observe just one thing; that is, to control his mind. The Buddha also told the monk to return to Mātika village monastery, and not to think of anything else, but the object of his meditation only. The monk went back. The lay-devotee offered him good food as she had done to others before, so that he might be able to practice meditation without worry. Within a short time, he, too, attained arahatship.

Explanatory Translation (Verse 35)

dunniggahassa lahunō yattha kāmanipātīnō cittassa damathō sādhu; dantarā cittarā sukhāvaharā

dunniggahassa: difficult to be controlled; *lahunō*: swift; *yattha kāmanipātīnō*: focusing on whatever target it wishes; *cittassa*: of the mind; *damathō*: taming; *sādhu*: (is) good; *dantarā*: tamed; *cittarā*: mind; *sukhāvaharā*: brings bliss.

The mind is exceedingly subtle and is difficult to be seen. It attaches on whatever target it wishes. The wise guard the mind. the guarded mind brings bliss.

Commentary

duññiggahassa; yatthakāmanipātīnō: hard to control; focussing upon wherever it likes and on whatever it wishes. These two are given as characteristics of the mind. The mind is so quick and swift it is so difficult to get hold of it. Because it is nimble no one could restrain it unless the person is exceptionally disciplined. The other quality of the mind referred to in this stanza is its capacity to alight on anything it wishes. This is also a characteristic of the mind making it extremely difficult to keep in check. Our emotions are impersonal processes. They are not what we do. That is why they are difficult to control. It is only by not identifying with them that they can be stopped. By identifying with them, we give them strength. By calm observation as they come and go, they cease. They cannot be stopped by fighting with them.