

THE DESTRUCTION OF LUST

By Bhikkhu Lokanatha

LUST is the curse of an age. How is it destroyed? Lust is destroyed by eating little, sleeping little, living on a vegetarian diet, reading Buddhist books, living in a holy environment, living with noble monks, meditating on the nastiness of the living body and the dead body, watching the mind.

Lust arises through thinking that the body is lovely. When we realise that the body is excrementitious, lust dies. The living body consists of 32 filthy parts as follows:

Hair of the head, hair of the body, nails, teeth, skin, flesh, tendons, bone, marrow, kidneys, heart, liver, pleura, spleen, lungs, lower intestine, upper intestine, stomach, faeces, brain in the head, bile, phlegm, blood, pus, sweat, fat, tears, grease, saliva, snot synovic, fluid, urine.

If the hair of the head falls into the rice and curry, the rice and curry is thrown away in disgust. So the parts of the body which fall are loathsome; while the parts which still stick to the body "appear" beautiful on account of lust which blinds the eyes!

Hence we should constantly see the body as it really is, a foul latrine on two legs! And it is ridiculous to beautify a walking latrine!

A dead body exposed in the open for a few days is an excellent subject for meditation. The swollen stinking corpse bluish-black with swarms of worms-issuing from the nine holes is enough to make one disgusted with the foul nature of the body. We should sit down and identify ourselves with the horrible corpse with the following reflection:

"As I am now, so once was he; as he is now, so I shall be!" By thinking in this way, the thought will finally dawn upon us that our body is a corpse bound to our neck! And we shall loath and hate our body and the bodies of others. This is the way to destroy lust for ever.

The living body is "cooked" by the combustion and metabolic processes, and is thereby kept from decomposing. But the body living or dead is exactly the same foul nature and should be hated. Look at the leprous bodies, how filthy they are!

When all lust is completely destroyed, Nibbana is attained! For Nibbana means "No lust". Nibbana is the Supreme fireless State. Lust is the fiercest of all fires. When lust is destroyed, the cool state of Supreme Nibbana is attained.

"A wandering mind lies in the fangs of the passions". Laziness is the devil's workshop. The exalted Buddha said: A monk who applies himself to the higher thought should pass in review from time to time five phases of mind; and these are they:

1. If while watching the mind some lustful thoughts arise, we should at once divert the attention to some noble thoughts, like the thought of Buddha, etc., and the wrong thoughts will disappear.
2. If, however, the wrong thoughts do not disappear by this method, we should ignore the wrong thoughts, and the wrong thoughts will disappear. For example, if we do not wish to see a man's face we simply turn our heads in another direction.
3. If, however, the wrong thoughts do not disappear by this method, we should consider how the evil thought ripen into evil speech and evil actions, by thus considering the danger of evil thoughts, the evil thoughts quickly disappear. Remember that hate often leads to murder.
4. If this method fails, then we should allay what moulds wrong thoughts, i.e., searching out the causes and rooting them out.
5. If all else fails, then we should resort to "direct action", i.e., we should clench the teeth, throw up the tongue against the palate, and by sheer force of will-power we should root out the evil thoughts. Like a giant who grasps a dwarf by the head and shoulders, and throws him far away, even so by striving hard, the evil thoughts will pass away and disappear, so that our heart stands firm, is steadfast, is focussed and concentrated.

Thus always watching the mind, the mind will become clean and pure, and Nibbana will be attained forever.

We should eat as little as possible, simply to keep the body going, and no more. For, if we throw too much coal into the furnace, the furnace will become hot, and passion will arise. One meal a day before noon is the safest rule. For, if we eat at night, passion will increase.

We should live on a vegetarian diet. The carnivorous animals are ferocious. Look at the tigers, panthers and wolves! A vegetarian diet will make you tranquil and calm. The teeth of man clearly show that he was intended to live on vegetables, fruits and nuts, like the monkeys.

Live and let live. The creatures are our neighbours. All life is one, your neighbour is yourself, to love your neighbour is to love yourself, to hate your neighbour is to hate yourself.

The exalted Buddha said: "It is impossible to find a single insect which has not been our mother or father or aunt or uncle, etc., in the past birth." Hence all creatures are our relatives and we should refrain from eating our relatives like cannibals.

We should sleep as little as possible. The whole world is burning. We are in a burning house. How can we sleep in a burning house? The human heart does not sleep. Then, why should the mind sleep? Is the mind less powerful than the heart? Science has proved that the mind is the dictator of the body.

At the Smithsonian institution at Washington, a human being was placed in a cage and made to fast for 40 days. His organs were weighed before and after. After the 40 days fast it was found that his liver and kidneys and other organs were reduced to half the original size while the brain was exactly the same as before.

So all the organs had "sacrificed" themselves to keep the brain intact. Hence the brain is more powerful than the heart and should work at least as much as the heart which pumps away unceasingly.

Four hours' sleep in the lying posture is quite sufficient. If possible, the lying posture should be renounced forever, and a man should train himself to "rest" in the sitting posture all night. By renouncing the lying posture the Tempter will never get an opportunity to enter! For, virtue is man's most precious treasure and should be guarded zealously night and day, day and night.

Bhikku Lokanatha was born in Italy and educated in America. He received a B.Sc. in Chemistry. Having read the Dhammapada he was converted to Buddhism and became a monk in Burma. Later he visited Ceylon and there received Upasampada— Higher Ordination under the leadership of venerable Kodagoda Upasena Maha Nayaka Thera of Ramanna Sect. He travelled

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