

Exploring the ancient path in the Buddha's own words -- Lesson 2.1.13

Arakasuttam

“Bhūtapubbaṃ, bhikkhave, arako nāma satthā ahosi titthakaro kāmesu vītarāgo. Arakassa kho pana, bhikkhave, satthuno anekāni sāvakasatāni ahesuṃ. Arako satthā sāvakānaṃ evaṃ dhammaṃ deseti- appakaṃ, brāhmaṇa, jīvitam manussānaṃ parittam lahukaṃ bahudukkham bahupāyāsaṃ mantāyaṃ boddhabbam¹, kattabbaṃ kusalam, caritabbaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, natthi jātassa amaraṇaṃ.

“Seyyathāpi, brāhmaṇa, tiṇagge ussāvabindu sūriye uggacchante khippaṃyeva paṭivigacchati, na ciraṭṭhitikaṃ hoti; evamevaṃ kho, brāhmaṇa, ussāvabindūpamaṃ jīvitam manussānaṃ parittam lahukaṃ bahudukkham bahupāyāsaṃ mantāyaṃ boddhabbam, kattabbaṃ kusalam, caritabbaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, natthi jātassa amaraṇaṃ.....”ti.²

... “Tena kho pana, bhikkhave, samayena manussānaṃ saṭṭhivassasahassāni āyuppamānaṃ ahosi³, pañcavassasatikā kumārikā alaṃpateyyā ahosi. Tena kho pana,

¹ *mantāya boddhabbam, paññāya jānitabbanti attho*: The meaning of: By Mantras you should get enlightened is: Through wisdom you should understand.

² The text continues with various other examples to illuminate the shortage and insignificance of the human life, i.e.: just as a bubble in the water—*udakabubbulaṃ*; a line with a stick beaten in the water—*udake daṇḍarāji*; a mountain river moving fast and vast: *nadī pabbateyyā dūraṅgamā*;;

An interesting reference is given in: *Dīghanikāyo, Pāthikavaggapāli, Cakkavattisuttam, Bhikkhuno-āyuvanaṇḍaivaḍḍhanakathā*: “*Kiñca, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno āyusmiṃ? Idha, bhikkhave, bhikkhu chandasamādhīpadhānasañkhārasamannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti, vīriyasamādhīpadhānasañkhārasamannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti, cittasamādhīpadhānasañkhārasamannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti, vīmaṃsāsamādhīpadhānasañkhārasamannāgataṃ iddhipādaṃ bhāveti. So imesaṃ catunnaṃ iddhipādānaṃ bhāvitattā bahulīkatattā ākañkhamāno kappam vā tiṭṭheyya kappāvesasaṃ vā. Idam kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhuno āyusmiṃ.*”—And what, oh Bhikkhus, is the lifespan for a Bhikkhu? Here, oh Bhikkhus, a Bhikkhu develops the path of strength that is concentration of purpose accompanied by resolution of will, a Bhikkhu develops the path of strength that is concentration of effort accompanied by resolution of will, a Bhikkhu develops the path of strength that is concentration of mind accompanied by resolution of will, a Bhikkhu develops the path of strength that is concentration of investigation accompanied by resolution of will. By developing and increasing these four paths of strength he can live if he desires for a full lifespan or for more than a lifespan.

³ *manussānaṃ saṭṭhivassasahassāni āyuppamānaṃ ahosi*: The different length of lifespan and its close relation and dependence on the performed quality of moral standards and the holding up of social

bhikkhave, samayena manussānaṃ chaḷeva ābādhā ahesuṃ- sītaṃ, uṇhaṃ, jighacchā, pipāsā, uccāro, passāvo. So hi nāma, bhikkhave, arako satthā evaṃ dīghāyukesu manussesu evaṃ ciraṭṭhitikesu evaṃ appābādhesu sāvakānaṃ evaṃ dhammaṃ desessati- ‘appaṃ, brāhmaṇa, jīvitaṃ manussānaṃ parittaṃ lahukaṃ bahudukkhaṃ bahupāyāsaṃ mantāyaṃ boddhabbaṃ, kattabbaṃ kusalaṃ, caritabbaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, natthi jātassa amaraṇaṃ”ti.

“Etarahi taṃ, bhikkhave, sammā vadamāno vadeyya- ‘appaṃ jīvitaṃ manussānaṃ parittaṃ lahukaṃ bahudukkhaṃ bahupāyāsaṃ mantāyaṃ boddhabbaṃ, kattabbaṃ kusalaṃ, caritabbaṃ brahmacariyaṃ, natthi jātassa amaraṇaṃ’ti. Etarahi, bhikkhave, yo ciraṃ jīvati so vassasataṃ appaṃ vā bhiyyo. Vassasataṃ kho pana, bhikkhave, jīvanto tīṇiyeva utusatāni jīvati- utusataṃ hemantānaṃ, utusataṃ gimhānaṃ, utusataṃ vassānaṃ.⁴

.....Yaṃ, bhikkhave, satthārā karaṇīyaṃ sāvakānaṃ hitesinā anukampakena anukampaṃ upādāya; kataṃ vo taṃ mayā etāni, bhikkhave, rukkhamūlāni etāni suññāgārāni. Jhāyatha, bhikkhave, mā pamādattha; mā pacchā vippaṭisārino ahuvattha. Ayaṃ vo amhākaṃ anusāsani”ti.

Aṅuttaranikāyo, Sattakanipātapāḷi, Mahāvaggo

ahuvattha	bhavati (aor., 2nd pl.)	became
āyuppamaṇaṃ	āyu + p + pamānaṃ	life + span, period
alaṃpateyyā	alaṃ + pateyyā (opt.)	surely + should fit, suit
boddhabbaṃ	f.p.p.	you should understand
chaḷeva	cha + + eva	six + such like
jighacchā		hunger
lahukaṃ	lahu + ka	short, quick, trifling
parittaṃ	parittaṃ (adj.)	insignificant, trifling
pipāsā		drink, thirst, desire
saṭṭhivassasahassāni	saṭṭhi + vassa + saḥassāni	sixty + rainy seasons + thousand
tīṇiyeva	tīṇi + y + eva	three + such
tiṇagge	tiṇa + agge	grass, weed + top
titthakaro	tittha + karo	ford + maker; religious founder
ussāvabindu	ussāva + bindu	dew + drop
utusataṃ	utu + sata	season + hundred
vippaṭisārino		remorse, regret, repentance

principals as *sammāvāco*, *sammākammanto* and *sammā-ājīvo*, are explained in the *Cakkhavatti*, *Sihanadasutta*, *Dīghanikāyo*.

⁴ The text further details those seasons into the amount of days, into the amount of meals one takes during these days, into periods without food and those with food.