

Wisdom Verses from “The Wheel of Sharp Weapons,” attributed to Dharmarakṣita (verses 103-116)\*

103. Listen! All of this is but Dependent Origination.  
Dependent and empty, they are devoid of self-subsistence.  
Changing from one form to another, they are like apparitions;  
Like a fire ring [seen in a rotating torch], they are mere illusions.
104. Like a plantain tree, life force has no inner core;  
Like a bubble, life has no inner core;  
Like a mist, it disappears when one bends down [to look];  
Like a mirage, it is beguiling from a distance;  
Like a reflection in a mirror, it appears tangible and real;  
Like fog, it appears as if it is here to stay.
105. The butcher and enemy, Ego, too, is just the same;  
Though ostensibly it appears to exist, it never does;  
Though seemingly real, nowhere is it really;  
Though appearing, it's beyond reification and refutation.
106. So how can there be a wheel of Karma?  
It's thus: Though they are devoid of intrinsic existence,  
Just as moon's reflection appears in a cup of water,  
Karma and its effects appear as diverse falsehoods.  
So within this mere appearance I will follow the ethical norms.
107. When the fire at the end of the universe blazes in a dream,  
I feel terrified by its heat, though it has no intrinsic reality.  
Likewise, although hell realms and their likes have no intrinsic reality,  
Out of trepidation of being smelt, burnt and so on, I forsake[evil].
108. When in feverish delirium, although there is no darkness at all  
One feels as if plunged and trapped inside a deep dark cave.  
So, too, although ignorance and so on lack intrinsic reality,  
I will dispel ignorance by means of the three wisdoms.
109. When a musician plays a song with his violin,  
If probed there is no intrinsic reality to the sound.  
Yet melodious tunes arise through the aggregation of unprobed facts  
And soothe the anguish that lies in people's hearts.
110. Likewise when karma and its effects are thoroughly analyzed,  
Though they do not exist as intrinsically one or many,  
Vividly appearing they cause the rising and cessation of phenomena.  
Seemingly real they experience birth and death of every kind.  
So, within this mere appearance, I will follow the ethical norms.
111. When drops of water fill a vase.  
It is not the first drop that fills it.  
Nor the last drop or each drop individually.  
Through the gathering of dependent factors, the vase is filled.
112. Likewise, when someone experiences joy and suffering—the effects—.  
This is not due to the first instant of their cause.  
Nor is it due to the last instant of their cause.  
Joy and suffering are felt through the coming together of dependent factors.  
So, within this mere appearance, I will follow the ethical norms.
113. Ah! So utterly delightful when left unanalyzed.  
This world of appearance is devoid of any essence.  
Yet, it seems as if it really does exist.  
Profound indeed is this truth so hard for the weak to see.
114. Now as I place my mind on this truth in total equipoise.  
What is there that retains definite appearance?  
What exists and what does not exist?  
What thesis is there anywhere of is or is not?
115. There is no object, no subject, nor no ultimate nature [of things];  
Free of all ethical and conceptual elaboration,  
If I abide naturally with this uncontrived awareness  
In the ever present, innate state, I will become a great being.
116. Thus by practicing conventional awakening mind  
And the ultimate mind of awakening,  
May I accomplish without obstacles the two accumulations  
And realize perfect fulfillment of the two aims.

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\* Jinpa, Thupten, trans. 2006. *Mind Training: The Great Collection*. Wisdom Publications. pp.149-152.