

### Subhashita-7

कोधो हि शत्रुः प्रथमो नराणाम् देहस्थितो देहविनाशनाय।

यथा स्थितः काष्ठगतो हि वहिः

स एव विहः दहते शरीरम्॥

Krodho hi śatruḥ prathamo narāṇām Dehasthito dehavināśanāya | Yathā sthitaḥ kāṣṭhagato hi vahniḥ Sa eva vahniḥ dahate śarīram ||

# प्रतिपदार्थः

क्रोधः - Anger हि - Going on रात्रुः - enemy प्रथमः - Foremost नराणाम् - among mankind देहस्थितः - residing in within one self, देहविनारानाय - to destroy the body, यथा - just like/ just as, स्थितः - inherent/ residing, काष्ठगतः - a piece of wood(burning), हि - going on (here burning going on), विहः - fire, सः - he, एव - only, विहः - fire, दहतः - burning, रारीरम् - body



## तात्पर्यः

Anger is the foremost enemy of mankind, which inherently resides within ones' self to destroy him, just like fire enkindled by a piece of wood ends up burning the piece.

#### Story:

## The Anger-eating Demon

Retold from an ancient Buddhist Story (Section 93, SN xi.3.2). This story was told by Budha on one occasion, staying in Savatthi at Jetavana monastery in Anatha pindika's park.



Once there lived a demon who had a very peculiar diet: he fed on the anger of others. And his feeding ground was the Human world, there was no lack of food for him. He would very easily fill his stomach to his hearts content with least effort. It was easy to provoke a fight on national level, at family level or even create racial hatred.

To stir a war was as easy as eating a peanut for him. When a war is started, he would gorge properly because when war starts, hate multiplies by its own momentum and affect even the otherwise friendly people too. The demons' food supply was so much that he had to restrain himself so he does not over eat, being content with nibbling just a small piece of resentment found close-by.



As it often happens it became a bit overbearing and one day when he was feeling bored he thought to himself that he should try it with the gods. Upon thinking he decided to start with the Heaven.

He knew that only a few of these gods had entirely eliminated the fetters of ill-will and aversion, though they were far above petty and selfish quarrels. So, by magic power he transferred himself to that heavenly realm and was lucky enough to come at a time when the Divine King Sakka was absent. There was none in the large audience hall and without much ado the demon seated himself on King's empty throne, waiting quietly for things to happen, which he hoped would bring him a good feed. Soon some of the gods came to the hall and first they could hardly believe their own divine eyes when they saw that ugly demon sitting on the throne, squat and grinning. Having recovered from their shock, they started to shout and lament: "Oh you ugly demon, how can you dare to sit on the throne of our Lord? What utter cheekiness! What a crime! you should be thrown headlong into the hell and straight into a boiling cauldron! You should be quartered alive! Begone! Begone!"

But while the gods were growing more and more angry, the demon was guite pleased because from moment to moment he grew in size, in strength and in power. The anger he absorbed into his system started to ooze from his body as a smoky red-glowing mist. This evil aura kept the gods at a distance and their radiance was dimmed.

Suddenly a bright glow appeared at the other end of the hall and it grew into a dazzling light from which the King Sakka emerged, the King of Gods. He who had firmly entered the un-deflectable Stream was unshaken by what he saw. The smoke-screen created by the gods' anger parted when he slowly and politely approached the usurper of his throne. "Welcome, friend! Please remain seated. I can take another chair. May I offer you the drink of hospitality? Our Amrita is not bad this year. Or do you prefer a stronger brew, the vedic Soma?". I, Sakka the Lord of Gods, your obedient servant bows down to you Sir, please tell me how can I serve you.



While the King spoke these friendly words, the demon rapidly shrank to a diminutive size and finally disappeared, trailing behind a whiff of malodorous smoke which likewise soon dissolved.

**Reflection:** Mankind is engulfed in its self-destructive slavery to his impulses of hate and aggression which only serve the demoniac forces? Fires of hate and wide-traveling waves of violence threaten mankind. Also, the grass roots of society are poisoned by conflict and discord, manifesting in angry thoughts and words and in violent deeds. Anger-eating Demons are haunting and are kept well nourished by millions slaving for them all over the earth.

**Moral:** Anger or hatred does not cease this world of tooth and claw but Love alone releases hate, this the eternal Law.