

## A TESTAMENT

How much can the life and death of a single person actually hurt or damage the common progress of humankind, I ask you? All progress in the world hinges on the collective power of karma and merit of entire generations of people, each one succeeding the last. That's how it seems to work.

It is said that samsara offers not a single example of remediating death, and as this saying makes the point quite eloquently, each of us should definitely bear it in mind.

There are so many impediments and obstacles to life, both large and small. Given how many such impediments to survival there are, how can we ever be sure that we will be able to eliminate all of them?

Birth and death are the shared destiny of us all, and they are linked one to the other. Yet, even though they happen to everyone, there is a clear connection between being born earlier and dying sooner. Since that is the case, the possibility of once more taking birth interdependently occurs only due to a variety of karmas and aspirations bridging the gap.

Certain events shock us. When we witness them it feels like the sky has caved in on our heads, as our minds simply cannot fathom them. We might be left dumbstruck in a state of pure shock. In reality, though, such astonishing events rarely, if ever, occur. It is rather that we overreact to events, because our minds are under the sway of subtle grasping.

In this world, all living beings, and all their affairs, no matter what they may be, are perishable and will be destroyed. Not only that, it is demonstrably the case that the manner and timing of their destruction are not within our power to figure out.

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(*translation by Tulku Sherdor, April 8, 2025*)