Cp 12 — The Dragon Bhūridatta’s Conduct

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Text

The Conduct Leading to Buddhahood

The Chapter on an Elephant

The Perfection of Ethics (2nd)

The Dragon Bhūridatta’s Conduct

“Then again when I was

Bhūridatta, a dragon of great psychic power,

together with Virūpakkha the Great King

I went to a heavenly realm.

There I saw gods

wholly given over to pleasure.

For the sake of going to that heaven,

I undertook the observance of ethics.

After tending to my physical needs,

and eating enough to get by,

I resolved on the four factors,

and lay down atop a termite mound, thinking:

‘My outer skin and inner, flesh,

sinews and bones:

whoever has use for these,

they are already given, please take them.’

While lying there the ingrate

Ālampāyana grabbed me.

He threw me in a basket

and made me perform in places all over.
Though thrown in a basket
and crushed by his hands,
I did not get upset with Ālampāyana,
for fear of breaking my ethics.
To give up my own life
was as light as a blade of grass.
To transgress my ethical principles
was like overturning the earth.
In a hundred successive lives
I would give up my own life.
I would not even violate my ethics
for the sake of the four continents.
For the sake of protecting ethics,
and fulfilling my perfection of ethics,
I did not let my mind change,
even when thrown in a basket.”