SN 2.30 — The Disciples of Various Monastics of Other Religions

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Text

Linked Discourses 2.30

3. Various Sectarians

The Disciples of Various Monastics of Other Religions

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground.

Then, late at night, several glorious godlings lit up the entire Bamboo Grove. They were Asama, Sahalī, Niṅka, Ākoṭaka, Veṭambarī, and Māṇavagāmiya, and all of them were disciples of various monastics of other religions. They went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side.

Standing to one side, the godling Asama spoke this verse about Pūraṇa Kassapa in the Buddha's presence:

"In injuring and killing here,

in beating and extortion,

Kassapa saw no evil,

nor any merit for oneself.

What he taught should truly be trusted,

he's worthy of esteem as Teacher."

Then the godling Sahalī spoke this verse about the bamboo-staffed ascetic Gosāla in the Buddha's presence:

"Through fervent mortification in disgust of sin he became well restrained.

He gave up quarreling with people.

Refraining from false speech, he spoke the truth.

Surely such a man does no wrong!"

Then the godling Niṅka spoke this verse about the Jain ascetic of the Ñātika clan in the Buddha's presence:

“Disgusted at sin, an alert mendicant,

well restrained in the fourfold constraint;

explaining what is seen and heard:

surely he can be no sinner!”

Then the godling Ākoṭaka spoke this verse about various sectarian teachers in the Buddha’s presence:

“Pakudhaka Kātiyāna and the Jain ascetic,

as well as this bamboo-staffed ascetic and Pūraṇa:

Teachers of communities, attained ascetics,

surely they weren’t far from truly good men!”

Then the godling Veṭambarī replied to the godling Ākoṭaka in verse:

“Though the wretched jackal howls along,

it never equals the lion.

A nude liar with suspicious conduct,

though they teach a community, is not like the good.”

Then Māra the Wicked took possession of the godling Veṭambarī and spoke this verse in the Buddha’s presence:

“Those dedicated to mortification in disgust of sin,

safeguarding their seclusion,

entrenched in form,

they rejoice in the heavenly realm.

Indeed, those mortals give correct instructions

regarding the next world.”

Then the Buddha, knowing that this was Māra the Wicked, replied to him in verse:

“Whatever forms there are in this life or the next,

and those of shining beauty in the sky,

all of these you praise, Namuci,

like bait tossed out for catching fish.”

Then the godling Māṇavagāmiya spoke this verse about the Buddha in his presence:

“Of all the mountains of Rājagaha,

Vepulla's said to be the best.

Seta is the best of the Himalayan peaks,

and the sun, of travelers in space.

The ocean is the best of seas,

and the moon, of lights that shine at night.

But in all the world with its gods,

the Buddha is declared foremost."

The Linked Discourses on Godlings are complete.