SN 7.10 — Many Daughters

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Text

Linked Discourses 7.10

1. The Perfected Ones

Many Daughters

At one time the Buddha was staying in the land of the Kosalans in a certain forest grove.

Now at that time one of the brahmins of the Bhāradvāja clan had lost fourteen oxen. While looking for them he went to that forest grove, where he saw the Buddha sitting down cross-legged, his body set straight, and mindfulness brought to the present. He went up to the Buddha, and recited these verses in the Buddha's presence:

"This ascetic mustn't have

fourteen oxen

missing for the past six days:

that's why this ascetic is happy.

This ascetic mustn't have

a field of sesame ruined,

with just one or two leaves:

that's why this ascetic is happy.

This ascetic mustn't have

rats in a vacant barn

dancing merrily:

that's why this ascetic is happy.

This ascetic mustn't have

carpets that for seven months

have been infested with fleas:

that's why this ascetic is happy.

This ascetic mustn't have

seven widowed daughters
with one or two children each:
that’s why this ascetic is happy.
This ascetic mustn’t have
a wife with sallow, blotchy skin
to wake him with a kick:
that’s why this ascetic is happy.
This ascetic mustn’t have
creditors knocking at dawn,
demanding, ‘Pay up! Pay up!’:
that’s why this ascetic is happy.”
“You’re right, brahmin, I don’t have
fourteen oxen
missing for the past six days:
that’s why I’m happy, brahmin.
You’re right, brahmin, I don’t have
a field of sesame ruined,
with just one or two leaves:
that’s why I’m happy, brahmin.
You’re right, brahmin, I don’t have
rats in a vacant barn
dancing merrily:
that’s why I’m happy, brahmin.
You’re right, brahmin, I don’t have
carpets that for seven months
have been infested with fleas:
that’s why I’m happy, brahmin.
You’re right, brahmin, I don’t have
seven widowed daughters

with one or two children each:

that's why I'm happy, brahmin.

You're right, brahmin, I don't have

a wife with blotchy, pockmarked skin

to wake me up with a kick:

that's why I'm happy, brahmin.

You're right, brahmin, I don't have

creditors knocking at dawn,

warning, 'Pay up! Pay up!':

that's why I'm happy, brahmin."

When he had spoken, the brahmin said to the Buddha, "Excellent, worthy Gotama! Excellent! … As if he were righting the overturned, or revealing the hidden, or pointing out the path to the lost, or lighting a lamp in the dark so people with clear eyes can see what's there, worthy Gotama has made the teaching clear in many ways. I go for refuge to the worthy Gotama, to the teaching, and to the mendicant Saṅgha. May I receive the going forth, the ordination in the worthy Gotama's presence?"

And the brahmin received the going forth, the ordination in the Buddha's presence. Not long after his ordination, Venerable Bhāradvāja, living alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute, soon realized the supreme culmination of the spiritual path in this very life. He lived having achieved with his own insight the goal for which gentlemen rightly go forth from the lay life to homelessness.

He understood: "Rebirth is ended; the spiritual journey has been completed; what had to be done has been done; there is nothing further for this place." And Venerable Bhāradvāja became one of the perfected.