SN 11.9 — Seers in the Wilderness

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/sn11.9/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
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Text

Linked Discourses 11.9

Chapter One

Seers in the Wilderness

At Sāvatthī.

“Once upon a time, mendicants, several seers who were ethical, of good character, settled in leaf huts in a wilderness region.

Then Sakka, lord of gods, and Vepacitti, lord of titans, went to those seers. Vepacitti put on his lined sandals, strapped on his sword, and, carrying a sunshade, entered the hermitage through the main gate. He walked right past those seers, keeping them at arm’s length.

Sakka took off his lined sandals, gave his sword to others, and, putting down his sunshade, entered the hermitage through the same gate. He stood downwind of those seers, revering them with cupped palms.

Then those seers addressed Sakka in verse:

‘When seers have been long initiated,

the odor of their bodies goes with the gale.

You’d better leave, O thousand-eyed!

The odor of the seers is unclean, king of gods.’

‘When seers have been long initiated,

let the odor of their bodies go with the gale.

We yearn for this odor, sirs,

like a colorful crown of flowers.

The gods don’t see it as repulsive.’”