AN 3.126 — Bharaṇḍu Kālāma Sutta (The Kālāma Bharaṇḍu)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

125. Bharaṇḍu Kālāma Sutta (The Kālāma Bharaṇḍu) Once, The Blessed One was touring the country of Kosala, when he arrived to the City of Kapilavatthu.

On hearing that The Blessed One had arrived in Kapilavatthu, The Sakyan Mahānāma rushed to see Him as he paid homage to The Teacher, and then stood to one side. The Blessed One then said to the Sakyan Mahānāma:

“Mahānāma, find me a suitable dwelling for my night’s rest in Kapilavatthu.”

Then, the Sakyan Mahānāma set off speedily, as he wandered looking everywhere in Kapilavatthu, trying to find a suitable resting place for The Blessed One to spend the night. But, not being successful in this, he returned to The Blessed One and reported:

“Bhante, in Kapilavatthu there is no suitable dwelling place for The Blessed One to spend the night. However, Lord, there is the monastery of Bharaṇḍu, the one from Kālāma, who was The Blessed One’s former student. Perhaps, The Blessed One may agree to take His rest there for the night?”

“Then, go there, Mahānāma, and prepare a resting mat for me.”

And the Sakyan Mahānāma got up, and went straight to the monastery of Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman, as he prepared a resting place for The Blessed One, and after placing water for washing the feet, he returned to The Blessed One and informed Him:

“Blessed One, the resting mat is made and prepared, and the water is placed for washing the feet. Let The Blessed One go, whenever it is convenient for Him.”

Then, The Blessed One went to Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman’s monastery, and after having washed His feet, He went and sat on His ready-made mat.

Then, it occurred to the Sakyan Mahānāma:

‘This is not the appropriate time to associate with The Blessed One, for He is now tired. I will come by in the morning, as I visit Him tomorrow.’

Thus, by paying homage to The Blessed One and circumambulating The Teacher, Mahānāma then went on his way.

The next morning, the Sakyan Mahānāma approached The Blessed One, paid homage to Him and then sat to one side.

And The Blessed One said this to him:

“Mahānāma, there are these three kinds of teachers found in the world. What three?

“Here, Mahānāma, a certain teacher explains and prescribes a thorough understanding of what exactly sensual pleasures are, but he neither explains much about their relationships to forms and feelings, nor their connection to each other.

“Then, there is another teacher, Mahānāma, who does elucidate and provide a clear explanation of both sensual pleasures and forms, but not of feelings, nor of their connection to each other.

“Still another teacher, Mahānāma, teaches and provides a clear explanation of sensual pleasures, of forms, and of feelings, as well as their relationships and connection to each other.

“These, Mahānāma, are the three teachers found in the world.

“Now, what do you think, Mahānāma? Would you say that the goal and outcome of these three teachers happen to be the same, or different?”

When this was said, Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman prompted the Sakyan Mahānāma, by telling him:

“Mahānāma, say that they are all the same!”

But The Blessed One intervened, by correcting Him quickly:

“No, Mahānāma, you must understand them to be quite different, in fact, and not the same!”

But, for the second time, Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman urged the Sakyan Mahānāma to answer The Blessed One’s question thus, by telling him again:

“Mahānāma, say that they are all the same!”

But The Blessed One again corrected Him:

“No, Mahānāma, you must understand them to be quite different, in fact, and not the same!”

Then, for the third time, Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman pressed the Sakyan Mahānāma, while insisting on his reply:

“Mahānāma, say that they are all the same!”

But for the third time, The Blessed One corrected Him, by saying:

“No, Mahānāma, you must understand them to be quite different, in fact, and not the same, at all!”

Then, it occurred to Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman:

‘I have been contradicted up to the third time by The Blessed One, and in the presence of this highly influential Mahānāma, the ruler of the Sakyans. I think it is best that I just leave Kapilavatthu altogether.’

Then, Bharaṇḍu the Kālāman left Kapilavatthu for good, and never returned.