Kp 7 — Outside the Walls

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Text

Basic Passages 7

Outside the Walls

Outside the walls they stand and wait,
at the junctions and the crossroads.
Returning to their former homes
they wait beside the door posts.
But when lavish food and drink
of many kinds is set out,
no one remembers them at all,
because of those beings's deeds.
That's why those who have compassion
give to their relatives
food and drink at the right time,
that's clean, delicious, and suitable.
"May this be for our relatives!
May our relatives be happy!"
Those ghosts who have gathered there,
the departed relatives who have come
for the lavish food and drink
gratefully express appreciation:
"May our relatives live long!
For those to whom we owe this gain,
who have given honor to us,

it will not be fruitless for the donor.”
There is no farming there,
no cow pasture can be found;
likewise there’s no trading,
and no commerce in gold coin.
The departed, the dead in that place
live on what is given here.
Just as water that rains on high
flows down to the plains,
so too what is given here
aids the departed ghosts.
Just as the rivers full
swell the ocean seas
so too what is given here
aids the departed ghosts.
Thinking: “They gave to me, they did for me,
they were my family, friend, comrade”,
give offerings to departed kin,
remembering past deeds.
For neither tears nor grief
or other lamentations
are of any use to the departed,
so long as their relatives stay like this.
This offering that has been given,
well placed in the Saṅgha,
is for their lasting welfare,
and aids them right away.
The relative’s duty has now been shown:
how high honor to departed is performed,

how the mendicants can be kept strong,

and how no little merit is produced by you.