Ud 3.7 — Sakka’s Heartfelt Saying

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Heartfelt Sayings 3.7

Sakka’s Heartfelt Saying

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels’ feeding ground. Now at that time Venerable Mahākassapa was staying in the Pipphali cave. Having entered a certain state of immersion, he sat cross-legged for seven days without moving. When seven days had passed, Mahākassapa emerged from that state of immersion. It occurred to him, “Why not enter Rājagaha for almsfood?”

Now at that time five hundred deities were ready and eager for the chance to offer alms to Mahākassapa. But Mahākasspa turned down those deities. In the morning, he robed up, took his bowl and robe, and entered Rājagaha for alms.

Now at that time Sakka, lord of gods, wished to give alms to Mahākassapa. Having manifested in the appearance of an embroiderer, he wove the thread. The titan maiden Sujā spun it onto the spindle. Then, as Mahākassapa wandered indiscriminately for almsfood in Rājagaha, he approached Sakka’s house. Seeing Mahākassapa coming off in the distance, Sakka came out of his house, greeted him, and took the bowl from his hand. He re-entered the house and filled the bowl with rice from the pot. That almsfood had many tasty soups and sauces. Then it occurred to Mahākassapa, “Now, what being is this who has such psychic power?” It occurred to him, “This is Sakka, lord of gods.” Knowing this, he said to Sakka, “This is your doing, Kosiya; don’t do such a thing again.” “But Honorable Kassapa, we too need merit! We too ought to make merit.”

Then Sakka bowed and respectfully circled Mahākassapa, keeping him on his right. Then he rose into the air and, sitting cross-legged in midair, expressed this heartfelt sentiment three times: “Oh the gift, the best gift is well established in Kassapa! Oh the gift, the best gift is well established in Kassapa! Oh the gift, the best gift is well established in Kassapa!” With clairaudience that is purified and superhuman, the Buddha heard Sakka express this heartfelt sentiment while sitting in the sky.

Then, understanding this matter, on that occasion the Buddha expressed this heartfelt sentiment:

“A mendicant who relies on alms,

self-supported, providing for no other;

the unaffected one is envied by even the gods,

calm and ever mindful.”