# Ja 79 — Kharassara Jātaka

English translation by Robert Chalmers.

Source: https://raw.githubusercontent.com/suttacentral/sc-data/2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b/html_text/en/pli/sutta/kn/ja/vol1/ja79.html

Source revision: 2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

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Edited by E. B. Cowell

Original edition: Cambridge University Press, volume 1, 1895

Pinned source revision: https://github.com/suttacentral/sc-data/commit/2d9ca8da858f94302ed6783e2717bf73d651881b

Scope: Complete numbered source article from the traditional Jātaka commentary; canonical verses appear in story context. This is not a verse-only edition.

Changes: Converted the pinned SuttaCentral HTML article to plain text; removed inline print page-reference labels and normalized whitespace. The original source retains references.

## Text

“He gave the robbers time.”—This story was told by the Master while at Jetavana, about a certain Minister. He, ’Tis said, ingratiated himself with the king, and, after collecting the royal revenue in a border-village, privily arranged with a band of robbers that he would march the men off into the jungle, leaving the village for the rascals to plunder,—on condition that they gave him half the booty. Accordingly, at daybreak when the place was left unprotected, down came the robbers, who slew and ate the cattle, looted the village, and were off with their booty before he came back at evening with his followers. But it was a very short time before his knavery leaked out and came to the ears of the king. And the king sent for him, and, as his guilt was manifest, he was degraded and another headman put in his place. Then the king went to the Master at Jetavana and told him what had happened. “Sire,” said the Blessed One, “the man has only shewn the same disposition now which he shewed in bygone days.” Then at the king’s request he told this story of the past.

Once on a time when Brahmadatta was reigning in Benares, he appointed a certain Minister to be headman of a border-village; and every-thing came to pass as in the above case. Now in those days the Bodhisatta was making the round of the border-villages in the way of trade, and had taken up his abode in that very village. And when the headman was marching his men back at evening with drums a-beating, he exclaimed, “This scoundrel, who privily egged on the robbers to loot the village, has waited till they had made off to the jungle again, and now back he comes with drums a-beating,—feigning a happy ignorance of anything wrong having happened.” And, so saying, he uttered this stanza—

He gave the robbers time to drive and slay

The cattle, burn the houses, capture folk;

And then with drums a-beating, home he marched,

—A son no more, for such a son is dead.

In such wise did the Bodhisatta condemn the headman. Not long after, the villany was detected, and the rascal was punished by the king as his wickedness deserved.

“This is not the first time, sire,” said the king, “that he has been of this disposition; he was just the same in bygone days also.” His lesson ended, the Master shewed the connexion and identified the Birth by saying, “The headman of to-day was also the headman of those days, and I myself the wise and good man who recited the stanza.”

The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha’s Former Births, edited by E.B. Cowell, published by The Cambridge University Press.

Vol. 1, translated by Robert Chalmers, 1895.

Vol. 2, translated by W.H.D. Rouse, 1895.

Vol. 3, translated by H.T. Francis and R.A. Neil, 1897.

Vol. 4, translated by W.H.D. Rouse, 1901.

Vol. 5, translated by H.T. Francis, 1905.

Vol. 6, translated by E.B. Cowell and W.H.D. Rouse, 1907.

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Prepared for SuttaCentral by Bhikkhu Sujato.