Pv 22 — Uttaramātu Sutta: Uttara’s Mother

English translation by Mahamevnawa Buddhist Monastery (Sutta Friends).

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Text

A female ghost who was very ugly and scary approached a monk who was resting on the bank of the Ganges River. Her hair was extremely long and touched the ground. Covered by her hair, she spoke to the monk.

Ghost:

Bhante, it has been 55 years since I died in the human world. I have not eaten anything or drunk water since then. Please give me some water, I am very thirsty.

Monk:

There is this cool water in the Gaṅges River flowing down from the Himalayan Mountains. You can take some from here and drink. Why do you ask me for water?

Ghost:

Oh Bhante, if I take water from the river, it turns into blood. That is why I am asking you for water.

Monk:

Now what evil deed did you do by body, speech, or mind so that the water of rivers now becomes blood for you?

Ghost:

I had a son named Uttara who was a disciple of the Supreme Buddha. He donated robes, alms food, shelters, and other supplies to monks. I did not approve of what he did, so I got angry and cursed him by saying, “Hey Uttara, may the food and everything you give be received as blood in your next life!” Because of this action, the water of rivers becomes blood when I take it.