Pv 40 — Ucchu Sutta: Sugar Cane Ghost

English translation by Mahamevnawa Buddhist Monastery (Sutta Friends).

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Text

Ghost:

Bhante, as a result of my meritorious deeds, a large farm of sugar cane has appeared for me. Unfortunately, I am unable to eat from it. Please tell me why I cannot eat them. Even though I try very hard to pluck out a stalk, I fail every time. Leaves of the sugar cane cut my body and I become very weak and faint. I am suffering very much. Please tell me what bad deed I did in the past.

With a weak body I collapse on the ground. I tremble like a fish thrown to the hot ground. I am crying. Please tell me why this is happening to me.

I am starving, thirsty, and weak. Overcome by extreme thirst, I have never experienced any happiness. Please Bhante, tell me how I can eat the sugar cane.

Monk:

You have done an evil deed when you were in the human world. I will tell you what that is.

One day, you were going somewhere while chewing a sugar cane. Another person came up behind you with the idea that you would share with him. But you did not pay attention to him. Then he begged for a sugar cane saying, “Good sir, please give me some sugar cane.” With an angry mind, reluctantly, you passed back a sugar cane without looking at him. That is the karma that you are experiencing now. Therefore, now you should also turn your back to the sugar cane and try to pluck it. Then you will be able to eat as much as you wish. In this way you will be happy and satisfied.

So the ghost turned his back to the sugar cane and plucked it out of the ground. He ate as much as he wished. In this way he became happy and satisfied.