Pv 42 — Rājaputta Sutta: The Son of a King

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Text

Supreme Buddha:

That prince experiences all these wonderful things as a result of his previous good karma, but he is obsessed by delightful forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches. One day he went to a park and enjoyed dancing, singing, and playing sports. Upon returning, he entered the city of Rajagaha. There, he saw a Pacceka Buddha named Sunetta who was very calm, concentrated, and virtuous. He led a very simple life. He was on his alms round begging for food.

The prince was riding an elephant, so he climbed down and asked the Buddha mockingly, “Bhante, did you get food?” The prince forcefully snatched the Buddha’s bowl from his hands and smashed it on the ground. Laughing at the Buddha he said, “Hey monk, I am the son of King Kitava. You cannot do anything to me.”

The result of that evil deed was very painful. After death, he fell directly into hell. He suffered for a long time. Exactly how long? Six times eighty-four thousand years. That many years he had to suffer in the miserable hell. One time he was boiled legs first, and another time he was boiled head first. One time boiled from the left side, another time boiled from the right side. Thus he experienced immense pain.

Having gotten angry at that Buddha who never got angry, the foolish prince suffered many hundreds and thousands of years in hell. After a very long time, he died there and was reborn in the ghost world as a ghost suffering from hunger and thirst.

Arrogance caused this misfortune. Having understood the danger of too much enjoyment, wise people should be very humble. If one respects the Buddhas, that person is praised in this very life. After death, that wise person will be reborn in heaven.