Snp 5.4 — Puṇṇakamāṇavapucchā Sutta

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.
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Text

Snp. 5.4

Puṇṇakamāṇavapucchā Sutta

“Questions of the Brahmin

Puṇṇaka”

1043. “O! Unshakeable Teacher, who clearly sees the root of all things, there is a question I have come to ask,” said the brahmin Puṇṇaka, as he continued:

“Why have the sages, human beings, warrior kings, and brahmins in the world, been making sacrifices to the gods all this time, and continue to do so? I kindly ask You on this matter. May The Blessed One please tell me the answer to this.”

1044. And The Blessed One replied:

“All those sages, human beings, warrior kings, and brahmins in the world have been making sacrifices to the gods, and continue to do so, for the simple reason that they all must face sickness and old age, yet they hope to somehow reappear into a better state, after death, Puṇṇaka.”

1045. “Bhante, has anyone among those sages, human beings, warrior kings, and brahmins in the world,” continued the brahmin Puṇṇaka, “while being so meticulous

and dedicated in the rituals of making those offerings and sacrifices to the gods, been able to break free, by crossing over and completely overcoming the cycles of rebirth and death? I kindly ask The Blessed One to please give me the answer to this.”

1046. And The Blessed One continued in His reply:

“Whether by wishing, praying, beseeching, begging, extolling, or praising, they have all been offering and making sacrifices for the simple reason for gaining more opportunities,

so to enjoy sensual pleasures. Thus, I declare, that despite all the offerings and sacrifices they make, because they are driven by passion, none of those people have been able to break free, or cross over and completely overcome the cycles of rebirth and death."

1047. And the brahmin Puṇṇaka asked further:

"In that case, Bhante, seeing that none among those people were able to overcome the cycles of rebirth and death by the making of offerings and sacrifices to the gods, then, who are the ones, Blessed Lord, who did in fact break free, by crossing over, and thus completely overcoming the cycles of rebirth and death? Please, may The Blessed One tell me the answer to this."

1048. And The Blessed One said:

"Seeing the world's vicissitudes, tranquil beyond its highs and lows, he stands unperturbed by its troubles, unperplexed, and desireless.

"And with no hidden embers of passions or hopes left in him, it is he, whom I declare, the one who remains untouched. For he indeed has broken free, and fully crossed over birth and death."