Ud 2.2 — Ud 2:2 Kings | Rājā Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

Ud 2:2 Kings (Rājā Sutta)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Sāvatthī at Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. And on that occasion a large number of monks, after the meal, on returning from their alms round, were sitting gathered together in the assembly hall when this discussion arose: “Friends, which of these two kings has greater wealth, greater possessions, the greater treasury, the larger realm, the greater stock of riding animals, the greater army, greater power, greater might: King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha or King Pasenadi of Kosala?” And this discussion came to no conclusion.

Then the Blessed One, emerging from his seclusion in the late afternoon, went to the assembly hall and, on arrival, sat down on a seat laid out. Seated, he addressed the monks: “For what topic are you sitting together here? And what was the discussion that

came to no conclusion?"

"Just now, lord, after the meal, on returning from our alms round, we were sitting gathered here at the assembly hall when this discussion arose: 'Friends, which of these two kings has greater wealth, greater possessions, the greater treasury, the larger realm, the greater stock of riding animals, the greater army, greater power, greater might: King Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha or King Pasenadi of Kosala?' This was the discussion that had come to no conclusion when the Blessed One arrived."

"It isn't proper, monks, that sons of good families, on having gone forth out of faith from home to the homeless life, should talk on such a topic. When you have gathered you have two duties: either Dhamma-talk or noble silence."1

Then, on realizing the significance of that, the Blessed One on that occasion exclaimed:

Any sensual bliss in the world,

any heavenly bliss,

isn't worth one sixteenth-sixteenth

of the bliss of the ending of craving.

Note

1. SN 21:1 equates noble silence with the second jhāna. This apparently relates to the fact that directed thought and evaluation, which MN 44 identifies as verbal fabrications, are abandoned when going from the first jhāna into the second.