Ud 2.7 — Ekaputta Sutta: The Only Son

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

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 the dear and beloved only son of a certain lay follower had died. So a large number of lay followers — their clothes wet, their hair wet — went to the Blessed One in the middle of the day and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As they were sitting there the Blessed One said to them: "Why have you come here — your clothes wet, your hair wet — in the middle of the day?"

When this was said, the lay follower said to the Blessed One, "My dear and beloved only son, lord, has died. This is why we have come here — our clothes wet, our hair wet — in the middle of the day."

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

Tied down by the allure of what seems dear,[1] heavenly beings, most people, worn out with misery, fall under the sway of the King of Death. But those who, day & night, heedfully abandon what seems dear, dig up misery by the root — Death's bait so hard to overcome.

Note

1.

Following the reading, piyarūpassāda-gaddhitāse in the Thai, Burmese, and BJT editions. The Sri Lankan edition available from the Journal of Buddhist Ethics has, piyarūpa-sātarūpa-gaddhitā ye: "Those tied down by what seems dear & what seems agreeable"; the PTS edition, piyarūpāsāta-gaddhitā ve: "Truly tied down by what seems dear & what is disagreeable." The parallel passage in the Udānavarga (5.10) has, priyarūpa-sāta-grathitā: "Tied down by what seems dear and is agreeable."

See also: MN 87, SN 42.11, Ud 2.8, Ud 8.8.