MN 134 — Lomasakaṅgiya and One Fine Night

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Text

Middle Discourses 134

Lomasakaṅgiya and One Fine Night

So I have heard. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery.

Now at that time Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya was staying in the Sakyan country at Kapilavatthu in the Banyan Tree Monastery.

Then, late at night, the glorious godling Candana, lighting up the entire Banyan Tree Monastery, went up to the Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya, and stood to one side. Standing to one side, he said to Lomasakaṅgiya:

"Mendicant, do you remember the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night?"

"No, reverend, I do not. Do you?"

"I also do not. But do you remember just the verses on the one who has one fine night?"

"I do not. Do you?"

"I do."

"How do you remember the verses on the one who has one fine night?"

"This one time, the Buddha was staying among the gods of the thirty-three at the root of the Orchid Tree on the stone spread with a cream rug. There he taught the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night to the gods of the thirty-three:

'Don't run back to the past,

don't anticipate the future.

What's past is left behind,

the future has not arrived;

and any present phenomenon

you clearly discern in every case.

The unfaltering, the unshakable:

having known that, foster it.

Today's the day to keenly work—

who knows, tomorrow may bring death!

For there is no bargain to be struck

with Death and his mighty horde.

One who keenly meditates like this,

tireless all night and day:

that's who has one fine night—

so declares the peaceful sage.'

That's how I remember the verses of the one who has one fine night. Learn the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night, mendicant, memorize it, and remember it. It is beneficial and relevant to the fundamentals of the spiritual life."

That is what the godling Candana said before vanishing right there.

Then Lomasakaṅgiya set his lodgings in order and, taking his bowl and robe, set out for Sāvatthī. Eventually he came to Sāvatthī and Jeta's Grove. He went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and told him what had happened. Then he added:

"Sir, please teach me the summary recital and the analysis of the one who has one fine night."

"But mendicant, do you know that god?"

"I do not, sir."

"That godling was named Candana. Candana pays attention, applies the mind, concentrates wholeheartedly, and actively listens to the teaching. Well then, mendicant, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak."

"Yes, sir," Lomasakaṅgiya replied. The Buddha said this:

"Don't run back to the past,

don't anticipate the future.

What's past is left behind,

the future has not arrived;

and any present phenomenon

you clearly discern in every case.

The unfaltering, the unshakable:

having known that, foster it.

Today's the day to keenly work—

who knows, tomorrow may bring death!

For there is no bargain to be struck

with Death and his mighty horde.

One who keenly meditates like this,

tireless all night and day:

that's who has one fine night—

so declares the peaceful sage.

And how do you run back to the past? …"

That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, Venerable Lomasakaṅgiya approved what the Buddha said.