SN 1.31 — Virtuous

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 1.31

4. The Host of a Hundred Felicities

Virtuous

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

Then, late at night, several glorious deities of the host of a hundred felicities, lighting up the entire Jeta's Grove, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side. Standing to one side, one deity spoke this verse in the Buddha's presence:

"Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

things get better, not worse."

Then another deity spoke this verse in the Buddha's presence:

"Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

wisdom is gained—but not from anyone else."

Then another deity spoke this verse in the Buddha's presence:

"Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

you grieve not among the grieving."

Then another deity spoke this verse in the Buddha's presence:

"Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

you dazzle among your relatives.”

Then another deity spoke this verse in the Buddha’s presence:

“Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

sentient beings go to a good place.”

Then another deity spoke this verse in the Buddha’s presence:

“Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

sentient beings live happily.”

Then another deity said to the Buddha, “Sir, who has spoken well?”

“You’ve all spoken well in your own way. However, listen to me also:

Associate only with the virtuous!

Try to get close to the virtuous!

Understanding the true teaching of the good,

you’re released from all suffering.”

That is what the Buddha said. Delighted, those deities bowed and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on their right, before vanishing right there.