SN 7.2 — SN 7:2 Insult | Akkosa Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro 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

Insult

Akkosa Sutta (SN 7:2)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Forest, the Squirrels’ Sanctuary. Then the brahman Akkosaka [“Insulter”] Bhāradvāja heard that a brahman of the Bhāradvāja clan had gone forth from the home life into homelessness in the presence of the Blessed One. Angered & displeased, he went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, insulted & cursed him with rude, harsh words.

When this was said, the Blessed One said to him: “What do you think, brahman? Do friends & colleagues, relatives & kinsmen come to you as guests?”

“Yes, Master Gotama, sometimes friends & colleagues, relatives & kinsmen come to me as guests.”

“And what do you think? Do you serve them with staple & non-staple foods & delicacies?”

“Yes, sometimes I serve them with staple & non-staple foods & delicacies.”

“And if they don’t accept them, to whom do those foods belong?”

“If they don’t accept them, Master Gotama, those foods are all mine.”

“In the same way, brahman, that with which you have insulted me, who is not insulting; that with which you have taunted me, who is not taunting; that with which you have berated me, who is not berating: that I don’t accept from you. It’s all yours, brahman. It’s all yours.

“Whoever returns insult to one who is insulting, returns taunts to one who is taunting, returns a berating to one who is berating, is said to be eating together, sharing company, with that person. But I am neither eating together nor sharing your company, brahman. It’s all yours. It’s all yours.”

“The king together with his court know this of Master Gotama—‘Gotama the contemplative is an arahant’—and yet still Master Gotama gets angry.”1

The Buddha:

“Whence is there anger

for one free from anger,

tamed,

living in tune—

one released through right knowing,

calmed

& Such.

You make things worse

when you flare up

at someone who’s angry.

Whoever doesn’t flare up

at someone who’s angry

wins a battle

hard to win.

You live for the good of both

—your own, the other's—

when, knowing the other's provoked,

you mindfully grow calm.

When you work the cure of both

—your own, the other's—

those who think you a fool

know nothing of Dhamma."

When this was said, the brahman Akkosaka Bhāradvāja said to the Blessed One, "Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. I go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, & to the Saṅgha of monks. Let me obtain the Going-forth in Master Gotama's presence, let me obtain Acceptance (into the Saṅgha of monks)."

Then the brahman Akkosaka Bhāradvāja received the Going-forth in the Blessed One's presence, he gained the Acceptance. And not long after his Acceptance—dwelling alone, secluded, heedful, ardent, & resolute—he in no long time entered & remained in the supreme goal of the holy life, for which clansmen rightly go forth from home into homelessness, directly knowing & realizing it for himself in the here & now. He knew: "Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for the sake of this world." And so Ven. Bhāradvāja became another one of the arahants.

Note

1. Akkosaka thinks that the Buddha is cursing him—and thus angry—when actually the Buddha is simply stating a fact in line with the law of kamma.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 21; MN 28; SN 1:71; SN 11:5; AN 7:60; Dhp 133–134