SN 7.8 — With Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper

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Text

Linked Discourses 7.8

1. The Perfected Ones

With Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper

At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground.

Now at that time ghee and milk-rice had been set out for the brahmin Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper, who thought, "I will serve the sacred flame! I will perform the fire sacrifice!"

Then the Buddha robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, entered Rājagaha for alms. Wandering indiscriminately for almsfood in Rājagaha, he approached Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper's home and stood to one side.

Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper saw him standing for alms and addressed him in verse:

"One who's accomplished in the three knowledges,

of good birth and ample learning,

accomplished in knowledge and conduct

may enjoy this milk-rice."

"Even one who mutters many prayers

is no brahmin by birth

if they're filthy and corrupt within,

with a following gained by fawning.

One who knows their past lives,

sees heaven and places of loss,

and has attained the ending of rebirth,

is a sage of perfect insight.

Because of these three knowledges

a brahmin is a master of the three knowledges.

Accomplished in knowledge and conduct,

they may enjoy this milk-rice.”

“May the worthy Gotama eat! The worthy one is a brahmin.”

“Food enchanted by a verse isn’t fit for me to eat.

That’s not the principle of those who see, brahmin.

The Buddhas cast aside things enchanted with verses.

Since there is such a principle, brahmin, that’s how they live.

Serve with other food and drink

the consummate one, the great seer,

with defilements ended and remorse stilled.

For he is the field for the seeker of merit.”

When he had spoken, the brahmin Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper said to the Buddha, “Excellent, worthy Gotama! …” … And Venerable Bhāradvāja the Fire-Worshiper became one of the perfected.