SN 17.36 — Five Hundred Carts

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

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Chapter Four

Five Hundred Carts

Near Rājagaha, in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground.

Now at that time Prince Ajātasattu was going with five hundred carts at daybreak and dusk to attend on Devadatta, presenting him with an offering of five hundred servings of food.

Then several mendicants went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him, "Sir, Prince Ajātasattu is going with five hundred carts at daybreak and dusk to attend on Devadatta, presenting him with an offering of five hundred servings of food."

"Mendicants, don't envy Devadatta's possessions, honor, and popularity. As long as Prince Ajātasattu goes with five hundred carts at daybreak and dusk to attend on Devadatta, presenting him with an offering of five hundred servings of food, Devadatta can expect decline, not growth, in skillful qualities.

If they were to lance a boil on a wild dog's nose, it would get even wilder. In the same way, as long as Prince Ajātasattu goes with five hundred carts at daybreak and dusk to attend on Devadatta, presenting him with an offering of five hundred servings of food, Devadatta can expect decline, not growth, in skillful qualities.

So grim are possessions, honor, and popularity. …"