SN 47.19 — Sedaka Sutta: At Sedaka

English translation by Thanissaro 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

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was living among the Sumbhas. Now there is a Sumbhan town named Sedaka. There the Blessed One addressed the monks, "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said, "Once upon a time, monks, a bamboo acrobat, having erected a bamboo pole, addressed his assistant, Frying Pan: 'Come, my dear Frying Pan. Climb up the bamboo pole and stand on my shoulders.'

"'As you say, Master,' Frying Pan answered the bamboo acrobat and, climbing the bamboo pole, stood on his shoulders.

"So then the bamboo acrobat said to his assistant, 'Now you watch after me, my dear Frying Pan, and I'll watch after you. Thus, protecting one another, watching after one another, we'll show off our skill, receive our reward, and come down safely from the bamboo pole.'

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"When he had said this, Frying Pan said to him, 'But that won't do at all, Master. You watch after yourself, and I'll watch after myself, and thus with each of us protecting ourselves, watching after ourselves, we'll show off our skill, receive our reward, and come down safely from the bamboo pole.'

"What Frying Pan, the assistant, said to her Master was the right way in that case.

"Monks, the establishing of mindfulness is to be practiced with the thought, 'I'll watch after myself.' The establishing of mindfulness is to be practiced with the thought, 'I'll watch after others.' When watching after yourself, you watch after others. When watching after others, you watch after yourself.

"And how do you watch after others when watching after yourself? Through cultivating [the practice], through developing it, through pursuing it. This is how you watch after others when watching after yourself.

"And how do you watch after yourself when watching after others? Through endurance, through harmlessness, through a mind of goodwill, & through sympathy. This is how you watch after yourself when watching after others.

"The establishing of mindfulness is to be practiced with the thought, 'I'll watch after myself.' The establishing of mindfulness is to be practiced with the thought, 'I'll watch after others.' When watching after yourself, you watch after others. When watching after others, you watch after yourself."

See also: AN 5.20; AN 4.95; AN 4.96; AN 4.99.