
BUDDHA BEGS FOR FOOD

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7:48

ERUCH: Then there is another one which is good which I so often tell those who are interested in Buddhism and all that, the story. And that story is from there from that stage had passed and Buddha is walking towards the habitation where the people are inhabiting. From the place of solitude He is coming now back to the city life. So while He has come on his way, naturally, He got sage by his side, and so many, two or three others followed, and so forth, unbeknown to them why they are doing it. But that's the attraction, that's the personality. So they are just following Him and naturally there is no other way of sustenance but to beg. So likewise, with the passage of time there is a whole crowd there that is following Him and they have to go on begging all the time. The whole day passes by in begging for food you know killing this little span. [child shouting in background.]

So one day Buddha turns to them and tells them "How about going to a place where we need not have to beg, otherwise it takes all our time. The whole day is spent in begging like that. We should go and find some very wealthy farmer where we can have, no need for going for begging for some good time."

So they forsake going from place to place and spending their time in begging and they are now in search of a sizable big farmstead. So at last, one afternoon, say about 3 o'clock or 2:30, they reach a place which is a big farmstead there and there is a huge place you see built for the owner of the place. And they are there and Buddha says "We have come to this place now, let's go and beg from him."

In the meantime, having the crowd behind Him and all that, the dogs that were there, they started barking and creating a great ruckus. So, he just in a huff gets out of it and just flings the door open and what he finds to his surprise what he finds is Buddha standing with his begging bowl with a huge crowd behind him. He says "What do you want?" "I have come to beg at your place for me and for these people who are in need of food." "What do you mean by that? What presumption is that, that you come, you people are able-bodied and you come over here and beg, do you mean to say that my barn is filled from heavens? We have to toil, we have to sweat, you know how it is. We have to first till the land, then sow the seeds and how much trouble it is to till the land, and then to get the seeds and sow the seeds and all that, then we have to cover the seeds, then we have to wait for the rains and then the seeds sprout. All this takes time, this takes labour. Do you mean to say that the food is just stored there in the barn like that for you all to have it free of charge like that?"

And all the followers of Buddha just listening, this fellow is going on berating Buddha. "And then afterwards what happens? The crop is grown, then the years are there. Do you mean to say that by just having the years on the crop you get the food? We have to protect that, protect from the insects, protect from thieves, this, that and all that. And we have to keep vigil day in and day out, protect them from cattle eating it away. You mean to say that it comes from the heavens? My barn is full with all this food just like that and you just come here with your bowl there and want food like that? And then afterwards what happens, we do harvesting, and it is not an easy

thing. We have to then separate the chaff from the grain and all that, then you have to wait for the seasonal winds to blow so that the chaff is blown away and the grain is collected."

Which you will not understand of course because you being from the States and all this is there. There is a procedure for all that. Have you given it a thought how the grain is collected and all that? No. Nowadays, the machine goes there and everything is finished with the machine. But those were the years when it was sheer labour, and it was a pleasant labour because while doing that there were songs to the bestower of all the gifts, the benevolence.

So he is berating Buddha all the time like that. "And after we have had the crop, we have to separate the corn, we have to fill in the bags and the bags are there and we have to keep a vigil, lest some thief comes and robs us away and all that sort of thing and then eventually we put it in the barn. At the end of a whole year of slogging, sweating we fill the barn and you come here just on a single day and want food like that."

And then he was [inaudible], he was so furious being disturbed from his sleep and seeing the sight. He had no more words now to berate and so now he stood there gaping at them, And Buddha says, "You are so right, you are so very true, you really have to work hard and sweat.

With the sweat of your brow you collect all this in the barn and at the end of a year the season is over, the cycle is over and you do collect it. I am also a labourer, I also labour. But how fortunate you are that you reap the fruit of your labour at the end of one year. My labour is such that I have to labour for many, many generations and after nurturing it properly, after seeing to everything and all sides, one solitary food I collect and put in the barn. That is the soul."

So the farmer, who was not just a foolish person, he was an intelligent person, he realised with whom he is speaking. He immediately prostrated before Him and opened the barn and said, "Have as much as you want. My Lord, I mistook you for a beggar." He said "Yes, we are beggars, but in our beggary is the richness of the emperors." That's another story. You have heard this before?

PILGRIM 1: I have kind of one but not really, It doesn't really have a moral or anything, it's just the part I remember reading.

ERUCH: Because He has to labour for every little soul and so many reincarnations and all that He has to see to that and after so many reincarnations, one soul, one fruit is ripe, and that He puts in the barn, His barn.