




Namo Buddhaya !

## The Story of Sakka King of Gods



**A**t one time, the Buddha was residing at the Kûtāgāra Monastery near the city of Vēsāli. A Licchavi prince named Māhali, who lived at Vēsāli, thought to himself, "The Enlightened One has described the great glory of Sakka. Has the Buddha seen Sakka? Or has he not seen Sakka? Is the Buddha acquainted with Sakka? Or is he not acquainted with Sakka? I will ask him."

**S**o the Licchavi prince approached the Exalted One was, and having drawn near, saluted the Exalted One and sat down on one side. And having sat down on one side, the Licchavi prince Māhali spoke thus to the Exalted One,

**"B**lessed One, have you seen Sakka king of gods?" The Buddha replied, "Yes, Māhali, I have indeed seen Sakka king of gods." "O Blessed One, it must certainly have been a counterfeit of Sakka; for it is a difficult matter to see Sakka king of gods."

**"N**evertheless, Māhali, I know Sakka; I know what qualities made him Sakka; I know by the cultivation of what qualities Sakka attained Sakkaship."



**"M**āhali, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being, a prince named Magha; therefore he is called Maghavā. Māhali, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being who in a previous state of existence gave gifts; therefore he is called Purindada. Māhali, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being, who gave alms tirelessly; therefore he is called Sakka."

**"M**āhali, in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being who gave a dwelling-place; therefore he is called Vāsavā. Māhali in a previous state of existence Sakka king of gods was a human being who could think of as many as thousand things in an instant; therefore he is called Sahassakkha. Māhali, Sakka king of gods has an Asura maiden named Sujata as a wife; therefore he is called Sujampati."

“Māhali, Sakka king of gods bears sway as lord and master over the Gods of the Thirty-three; therefore he is called King of Gods. Māhali, Sakka king of gods in a previous state of existence as a human being took upon himself and fulfilled seven vows. Because he took upon himself and fulfilled these SEVEN VOWS, Sakka attained Sakkaship.”



“Now what were the seven?”

1. As long as I live, I will be a person who takes care of my parents with love and kindness.
2. As long as I live, I will be a person who honours and respects my elders and my teachers.
3. As long as I live, I will be a person who only speaks gentle, kind loving words.
4. As long as I live, I will be a person who will not tell tales.
5. As long as I live, I will be a householder who has no greedy thoughts; who practices generosity; who gives generously, who will be attentive to requests, be with an open hand prepared to give, a person thinking of giving all the time, who is happy and delighted to give.
6. As long as I live, I will be a person who speaks only the truth.
7. As long as I live, I will be a person who is free from anger. Should anger spring up within me, I will quickly quash it and halt that unpleasant thought.

“Māhali, Sakka king of gods in a previous state of existence took upon himself and fulfilled seven vows. Because he took upon himself and fulfilled these seven vows, Sakka attained Sakkaship.” The Buddha said, "That, in a previous birth, Sakka was born as Maghba. During that birth with thirty companions he built roads and resting places for the benefit of the masses. His tireless effort brought him into the exalted position of king of gods". Afterwards, the Buddha recited the following stanza.

Appamādēna Maghavā - Dēvānaṃ setṭhaṃ gathô  
Appamādaṃ pasaṃsaṃti - Pamādô garahitô sadā

Heedfulness is always praised - heedlessness is ever blamed  
By heedfulness did Magha go - to lordship of the gods

Dhamma Pada, Appamada Vagga

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