



Namo Buddhaya!!!

Children's Dhamma Program

Noble Dhamma for Little Hearts

The Story of Venerable Maha Moggallana

Dear Children,

Once, the Nigantha ascetics planned to kill Ven. Maha Moggallana because they thought that by doing away with Ven. Maha Moggallana the fame of the Buddha would also be diminished. So, they hired some assassins to kill Ven. Maha Moggallana who was staying at Kalasila near Rajagaha at that time. The assassins surrounded the monastery, but Ven. Maha Moggallana, with his supernatural power, escaped first through a keyhole, and for the second



time through the roof. Thus, they could not get hold of the Venerable for two whole months. When the assassins again surrounded the monastery during the third month, Ven. Maha Moggallana, recollecting that he had yet to pay for the evil deeds done by him during one of his past existences, did not exercise his supernormal power. So he was caught and the assassins beat him up until all his bones were utterly broken. After that, they left his body in a bush, thinking that he had passed away. But the Venerable, through his supernatural power, revived himself and went to see the Buddha at the Jetavana monastery. When he informed the Buddha that he would soon depart from samsara and attain Nibbana at Kalasila, near Rajagaha, the Buddha told him to go only after expounding the Dhamma to the congregation of bhikkhus, as that would be the last time they would see him. So, Ven. Maha Moggallana expounded the Dhamma and left after paying obeisance seven times to the Buddha.

The news of the passing away of Ven. Maha Moggallana at the hands of assassins spread like wildfire. King Ajatasattu ordered his men to investigate and get hold of the culprits. The assassins were caught and they were punished.

The bhikkhus felt very sorrowful over the death of Ven. Maha Moggallana, and could not understand why such a personage like Ven. Maha Moggallana should die at the hands of assassins. The Supreme Buddha said to them, "Bhikkhus! Considering that Ven. Maha Moggallana had lived a noble life in this existence, he should not have met with such a death. But in one of his past existences, he had done a great wrong to his own parents, who were both blind. In the beginning, he was a very dutiful son, but after his marriage, his wife began to make trouble and she suggested that he should get rid of his parents. He took his blind parents in a cart into a forest, and there he killed them by beating them and making them believe that it was some thief who was beating them. For that evil deed he suffered in hell for a long time; and in this existence, his last, he has died at the hands of assassins. Indeed, by doing wrong to those who should not be wronged, one is sure to suffer for it."

Due to this incident, the Supreme Buddha set forth this profound verse as follows:

*He who does harm with weapons to those who are innocent and should not be harmed
will soon come to any of these ten evil consequences: severe pain, shattered bones,
bodily wounds, insanity, serious illness, punishment from authority, grave wrongful
charges, loss of relatives, impoverishment, or houses consumed by fire.
With the dissolution of the body, the foolish one is reborn in hell.*

Even with the great merits Ven. Maha Moggallana collected in this existence, Venerable still suffered the tragic fate of being beaten to death. The utmost grave sin of harming your parents, let alone killing them in such a gruesome way, will bring you persistent suffering manyfold greater than the sin you have committed. As such, the Venerable suffered many years in hell as well as this gruesome death. Meritorious children, remember harming someone who is innocent, whether it be verbal or physical, is a grave sin, even more dire in the case that the victims are your parents. Indeed, by doing wrong to those who should not be wronged, one is sure to suffer for it.