

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

To the Brahmin Brahmaayu (Brahmaayusutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One was touring Videha, with about five hundred bhikkhus. At that time the Brahmin Brahmaayu, an aged decayed man of hundred and twenty years was living in Mithila. He had learned the three Vedas, knew, the rites and rituals as officiating priest, the phonology and etymology of words and the marks of a Great Man. The Brahmin Brahmaayu heard that the recluse Gotama who had gone forth from the Sakya clan was touring Videha with about five hundred bhikkhus. Such fame had spread about that good Gotama. That Blessed One is perfect, rightfully enlightened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knows the worlds, is the incomparable tamer of those to be tamed, Teacher of gods and men, enlightened and blessed. He declares to this world of gods and men, together with its Maaras, Brahmaas, recluses and Brahmins, a Teaching by himself known and realized. It is good at the beginning, in the middle and the end and it states the complete and pure holy life. It is good to see such perfect ones.

At that time the Brahmin Brahmaayu had a pupil, a young man named Uttara who had learned the three Vedas, knew the rites and rituals as officiating priest, the phonology and etymology of words and the marks of a Great Man. The Brahmin Brahmaayu addressed his pupil and said. 'Dear Uttara, approach the recluse Gotama, son of the Sakyas, who is said to be perfect, ... re.... enlightened and blessed, and find out whether these qualities are really so, or not. You should examine good Gotama for me.' 'Sir, how should I know whether good Gotama is endowed with these qualities or not.' 'Uttara, the two and thirty marks of a Great Man have come down to us in the sayings. One endowed with these marks has two courses of action and not another. If he leads the household life, becomes the Universal Monarch, a stable, righteous king with power in the four directions, endowed with the seven jewels. They are the jewels of the, wheel, elephant, horse, gem, woman, householder, and the advisor. He has more than a thousand sons, with heroic figures, clever and able to subdue foreign armies. He rules over the country bounded by the ocean righteously, without stick or weapon. If he leaves the household and becomes homeless, he will be perfect and all knowing and would remove the veil of darkness. I have given you this knowledge and you know that.'

The young man Uttara agreeing, got up from his seat worshipped and circumambulated the Brahmin Brahmaayu and left to go to Videha to meet the Blessed One. In stages he approached, the Blessed One, exchanged friendly greetings and sat on a side. The young man Uttara examined the two and thirty marks of a Great Man on the body of the Blessed One. Seeing most of the marks excepting two, not satisfied, has doubts, whether the pudendum is encased, and the tongue is large enough. It occurred to the Blessed One, this young man Uttara sees most of the marks of a Great Man on my body except two. He is not satisfied, is doubting whether the pudendum is enclosed and the tongue is large enough. Then the Blessed One exercised a psychic power, so that Uttara could see the encased pudendum. The Blessed One drew forth his tongue, touched the ear lobes, the nostrils and covered the complete forehead with the nose.

Then it occurred to the young man Uttara, the recluse Gotama is endowed with the two and thirty marks of a Great Man. If I follow the recluse Gotama, would see his postures. He followed after the Blessed One for seven months, like a shadow that follows someone, without leaving him. At the end of the seven months, he embarked on a tour to return to Mithila, to approach the Brahmin Brahmaayu. Approaching the Brahmin Brahmaayu, Uttara worshipped him and sat on side. The Brahmin Brahmaayu said. ‘Dear Uttara, is the recluse Gotama, endowed with those qualities as that fame says?’

‘Good One, the recluse Gotama is endowed with the two and thirty marks of a Great Man there is no question about it. His feet are well established when placed. The soles of the feet have wheels with thousandfold discs and naves, complete in every way. It is the mark of a Great Man. He has long eye -lashes, long fingers, hands and feet, soft to the touch. There are lines on the palms and feet like a woven net. He has high ankles and the legs of an antelope. When standing he does not bend and with the fingers could touch the knees. His pudendum is cased. His skin is of golden hue. Dust does not settle on his fine skin. On his body a single hair comes up from each pore and those dark blue hairs stand aloft turning to the right. He has a straight body, with the fore part like a lion’s. He has heaped up shoulders and his body has a breadth to suit the height. He has a halo, around his

body. Of tastes, good Gotama knows the highest. He has the jaws of a lion with forty comely white teeth. He has a large tongue and a melodious voice like the voice of a cuckoo. He has dark blue eyes and a comely mouth. Between the eyebrows, is a tuft of hair turned to the right. Good Gotama has a raised top like wearing a turban. These are the two and thirty marks of a Great Man. Good Gotama always starts to walk with the right foot, placing the foot not too far nor too close. Does not walk too fast nor too slowly, the knees do not brush each other when walking, nor do the ankles and thighs. When walking his thighs do not writhe, bend or raise, only the lower body moves without a bodily effort.

When looking he turns the whole body. He does not look up or down and does not walk with inquisitive eyes. When confronting looks a short distance ahead yet is aware of his surrounding. Entering a house does not raise, bend or writhe the body. He does not turn about for a seat from a distance, or come too close, nor does he hang to the seat before sitting or throw himself on the seat. Seated inside a house he does not fidget with his hands or feet nor does he raise one foot over the other or place one calf over the other. He does not support his jaws with the hands. Inside a house he does not shake or shiver or sit uneasily, sits calm and at ease. Good Gotama accepting water in the bowl does not bend, raise or shake it, accepts the right amount of water. Washing the bowl does not make a sound, does not turn the bowl about, or put it on the ground to wash. With the water in the bowl he washes his fingers and with the fingers washes the bowl and throws the water not too far or too close without sprinkling it everywhere. Accepting rice in the bowl accepts the right amount, without turning or twisting the bowl. Accepts soups and curries enough to suit the amount of rice, but not to make a salve of it. Good Gotama chews the food in the mouth two or three times and does not swallow unbroken particles, does not keep any particles in the mouth, when the next mouthful is taken. Good Gotama partakes food conscious of the taste, yet not greedy for tastes. Considering eight things good Gotama partakes food not for, play, intoxication or adornment. He partakes food to support the body, without greed for tastes, thinking I should make an end of earlier unpleasant feelings, and not arouse new, just the right amount for a pleasant abiding, without faults. After partaking food, accepting water in the bowl does not bend, raise or shake it, accepts the right amount of water. Washing the bowl does not make a sound, does not turn the bowl about, or put it on the ground to wash. With the water in the bowl he washes his fingers and with the fingers washes the

bowl and throws the water not too far or too close without sprinkling it everywhere. After partaking food, he places the bowl on the ground, not too far nor too close, thinking may the bowl be of no disturbances, does not protect it too long. After the meal is over he sits silently for some time, not neglectful of a thanksgiving. When he gives the thanksgiving, it is not to debase that food or to desire some other food. It is an all round teaching, with advice, incitement, and to make the hearts light. After the thanksgiving, he gets up and goes away, not too fast, nor too slowly and not as though were relieved. He wears the robe not too short, nor too long, not too tight nor too loose. Wears it so that the body does not feel the contact of air, and dust and dirt does not settle on good Gotama's body.

Gone to the monastery sits on the prepared seat and washes his feet, not to adorn them. With washed feet, sits legs crossed, keeping his body straight and mindfulness established in front of him. He thinks, not to hurt himself, another, or anyone in the world

Thinks, the welfare of the whole world. In the monastery he teaches the gathering, not praising, or condemning them. Advises, incites, and makes the hearts light of all in that gathering. The sounds that leave the mouth of good Gotama have eight factors. They are distinct, wise, charming, pleasing to the ears, compact, not scattered, deep and resonant. Good Gotama's voice reaches as far as the gathering and does not exceed that gathering.

That gathering advised, incited and made the hearts light, get up and go away, thinking to come back, not with a mind of abandoning.

I have seen good Gotama, going, standing, sitting inside a house silently, partaking food there, sitting silently after the meal, giving the thanksgiving after the meal, going to the monastery, sitting silently in the monastery, teaching gatherings in the monastery. Good Gotamais thus and thus and something more.

When this was said, the brahmin Brahmaayu got up from his seat, arranged the shawl on his shoulder, turning towards where the Blessed One was, with clasped hands uttered a solemn utterance thrice. 'I worship that Blessed One perfect and rightfully enlightened. We will some day meet that good Gotama, and have a conversation with him.'

The Blessed One touring Videha, in stages came to Mithila and abode in the Makhaadeva mango orchard.

The people of Mithila heard that the good recluse Gotama, the son of the Sakyas, touring videha had eventually arrived in Mithila, with a community of about five hundred bhikkhus and was abiding in the Makhaadeva mango orchard. About that good Gotama such fame had spread. ...re.. it is good to see such perfect ones. Then the Brahmin householders of Mithila, approached the Blessed One. Some worshipped, some exchanged friendly greetings, some clasped their hands towards the Blessed One, some announced their name and clan, and some others silently sat on a side.

The Brahmin Brahmaayu heard, the good recluse Gotama the son of the Sakyas has come to Mithila. Then he approached the Makhaadeva mango orchard with many young men. When the Brahmin Brahmaayu had come close to the Makhaadeva mango orchard, it occurred to him. It is not suitable for me to approach the recluse Gotama without prior notice. He called a certain young man and said. 'Come good man approach the recluse Gotama and for my sake inquire whether he is with few ailments, no troubles and has a light living. Then tell him, good Gotama, the Brahmin Brahmaayu is an aged decayed man of hundred and twenty years is living in Mithila. He has learned the three Vedas, knows, the rites and rituals as officiating priest, the phonology and etymology of words and the marks of a Great Man. Of the Brahmins living in Mithila, the Brahmin Brahmaayu is the wealthiest, the most learned in the Vedas, out of the aged, the most old, and the most famous. He desires to see good Gotama.' The young man agreeing approached the Blessed One, exchanged friendly greetings, standing on a side said. 'Good Gotama, the Brahmin Brahmaayu is an aged decayed man of hundred and twenty years is living in Mithila. He has learned the three Vedas, knows, the rites and rituals as officiating priest, the phonology and etymology of words and the marks of a

Great Man. Of the Brahmins living in Mithila, the Brahmin Brahmaayu is the wealthiest, the most learned in the Vedas, out of the aged, the most old, and the most famous. He desires to see good Gotama.'

'Young man, if he thinks, this is the suitable time do so.'

The young man approached the Brahmin Brahmaayu, and said. 'Consent is given by the good recluse Gotama, now do as it is fit.'

Then the Brahmin Brahmaayu approached the Blessed One. When he was approaching in the distance, the gathering moved and made some space for him, as suitable for his fame. Brahmin Brahmaayutold them. 'Useless, sit where you are, I'm going to the presence of the Blessed One.' He approached the Blessed One, exchanged friendly greetings and sat on a side. Seated he examined the two and thirty marks of a Great Man on the body of the Blessed One. Seeing most of them except two, not satisfied doubted whether the pudendum was encased and the tongue was large enough. Then the Brahmin addressed the Blessed One in verse.

'I hear of two and thirty marks of a Great Man,
Good sir, I do not see two of them on your body,
The Great Man's pudendum, the association with women
The size of the tongue, pull out the tongue and dispel doubts,
For the welfare here and now, and the here after.
Permission granted, may our wishes, be fulfilled.'

Then it occurred to the Blessed One, the Brahmin Brahmaayuu, sees most of the marks of a Great Man on my body, and not two of them.. He is not satisfied, doubts whether the pudendum is encased and the tongue is large enough. Then the Blessed One exercised a psychic power, so that the Brahmin

could see the encased pudendum. The Blessed One drew forth his tongue, touched the ear lobes, the nostrils and covered the complete forehead with the nose.

Then the Blessed One addressed the Brahmin Brahmaayuu with verses

‘The two and thirty marks of a Great Man, that you have heard of,

Are all present on my body, Brahmin, there are no doubts about that.

What I should know is known, what should be developed is developed.

What should be dispelled, is dispelled, therefore I’m enlightened.

For the welfare here and now, and here after,

I grant permission to ask whatever you wish.

Then it occurred to the Brahmin Brahmaayu. Permission is granted, by the Blessed One to ask questions. What should I ask the recluse Gotama, is it the welfare here and now or the welfare here after. It occurred to the Brahmin Brahmaayu. I’m clever in the welfare here and now. Even others question me about the welfare here and now. I should question the recluse Gotama the welfare here after. So he addressed the Blessed One in verses.

‘Good One, how does one become a Brahmin? How does he become a knower?

How does he know the three Vedas? And to what is it said health?

How does one become worthy? And how does he become perfect?

How does one become a sage? And what is enlightenment?

Then the Blessed One explained them to the Brahmin Brahmaayu in verses.

Recollecting earlier births, and seeing the heavenly and hellish births,
With the destruction of birth, the sage becomes master, of knowledges
Knows the purity of the mind, when released from all greed,
When birth and death is expelled, the holy life becomes complete
When come to the end of all things, such ones are said to be enlightened.

When this was said, the Brahmin Brahmaayu, got up from his seat, arranged the shawl on one shoulder, put his head at the feet, worshipped the Blessed One, kissed the feet, and stroked them with the hands, and announced ‘Good Gotama, I’m the Brahmin Brahmaayu.’ Then that gathering was surprised and said, ‘The power of the recluse is wonderful. The Brahmin Brahmaayu, so famous and well known should show this kind of reverence and humility.’ Then the Blessed One said. ‘Useless, Brahmin get up and sit on your seat, as your mind is pleased, mine too is pleased.’ Then the Brahmin got up and sat on his seat. Then the Blessed One gave the gradual Teaching to the Brahmin Brahmaayu.

Such as giving gifts, becoming virtuous, the heavens, the dangers of sensuality, and their defiling nature and the fruits of giving up. When the Blessed One knew that the mind of the Brahmin Brahmaayu is pure, refined, free from hindrances, is aloft and pleased. The Blessed One gave the Teaching peculiar to the Enlightened Ones, such as unpleasantness, its arising, cessation and the path to its cessation. Just as a pure cloth would take the dye evenly, there arose to the Brahmin Brahmaayu the pure and stainless eye of the Teaching, seated on that same seat. Whatever thing arises, all that ceases. Then the Brahmin Brahmaayu then and there, attained, knew and penetrated the Teaching. Doubts dispelled, knew, what should and should not be done, became confident and did not want a Teacher any more, in the dispensation of the Teacher.

He said thus to the Blessed One. ‘Good Gotama, now I understand, it’s like something overturned is reinstalled. Like something covered is disclosed. It’s like the path is shown to someone who has lost his way. It’s like a lamp is lighted for those who have their sight to see forms. Good Gotama

has taught in various ways. Now I take refuge in good Gotama, in the Teaching, and the Community of bhikkhus. May good Gotama accept tomorrow's meal together with the Community of bhikkhus.'

The Blessed One accepted in silence. The Brahmin Brahmaayu knowing that the Blessed One had accepted the invitation, got up from his seat, worshipped and circumambulated the Blessed One and went away. Then the Brahmin Brahmaayu at the end of that night made them prepare nourishing eatables and drinks at his home and informed the Blessed One. 'Good Gotama, the food is ready.'

The Blessed One put on robes in the morning, took bowl and robes approached the Brahmin Brahmaayu's house, together with the Community of bhikkhus and sat on the prepared seats. The Brahmin Brahmaayu served and satisfied the Community of bhikkhus headed by the Blessed One with nourishing eatables and drinks with his own hands for seven days. At the end of the seven days the Blessed One went on the tour to Videha.

Soon after the Blessed One went away the Brahmin Brahmaayu passed away. Many bhikkhus approached the Blessed One, worshipped the Blessed One, sat on a side and said. 'Venerable sir, the Brahmin Brahmaayu passed away, where are his movements after death?'

'Bhikkhus, the Brahmin Brahmaayu is wise, stands on his feet according to the Teaching, had no trouble, realising the Teaching. He destroyed the five lower fetters binding to the sensual world and arose spontaneously, will not proceed, from that world.

The Blessed One said those words and those bhikkhus delighted in the words of the Blessed One.