MN 126 — MN 126 To Bhūmija | Bhūmija Sutta

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Text

To Bhūmija

Bhūmija Sutta (MN 126)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Forest, the Squirrels’ Sanctuary.

Then, early in the morning, Ven. Bhūmija—having adjusted his lower robe and taking his bowl & outer robe—went to Prince Jayasena’s residence.1 On arrival, he sat down on a seat made ready. Prince Jayasena went to Ven. Bhūmija and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with him. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to Ven. Bhūmija, “Master Bhūmija, there are some contemplatives & brahmans who espouse this teaching, espouse this view: ‘If one follows

the holy life, even when having made a wish (for results), one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life even when having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results.'2 With regard to that, what does Master Bhūmija's teacher say, what is his view, what does he declare?"

"I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, prince, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way: 'If one follows the holy life inappropriately, even when having made a wish (for results), one is incapable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life inappropriately, even when having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. (But) if one follows the holy life appropriately, even when having made a wish, one is capable of obtaining results. If one follows the holy life appropriately, even when having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is capable of obtaining results.' I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way."

"If that is what Master Bhūmija's teacher says, if that is his view, if that is what he declares, then yes, Master Bhūmija's teacher stands, as it were, having struck all of those many contemplatives & brahmans down by the head."

Prince Jayasena then served Ven. Bhūmija from his own dish of milk rice.

Then Ven. Bhūmija, after his meal, returning from his almsround, went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to the Blessed One, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to the Blessed One: "Just now, lord, early in the morning—having adjusted my lower robe and taking my bowl & outer robe—I went to Prince Jayasena's residence. On arrival, I sat down on a seat made ready. Then Prince Jayasena went to me and, on arrival, exchanged courteous greetings with me. After an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, he sat to one side. As he was sitting there he said to me, 'Master Bhūmija, there are some contemplatives & brahmans who espouse this teaching, espouse this view: "If one follows the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results." With regard to that, what does Master Bhūmija's teacher say, what is his view, what does he declare?'

"When this was said, I replied to Prince Jayasena, 'I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, prince, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way: "If one follows the holy life inappropriately, even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having

made no wish, one is incapable of obtaining results. (But) if one follows the holy life appropriately, even when having made a wish… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, one is capable of obtaining results." I haven't heard this face to face with the Blessed One, I haven't received this face to face with the Blessed One, but there is the possibility that the Blessed One would answer in this way.'

"'If that is what Master Bhūmija's teacher says, if that is his view, if that is what he declares, then yes, Master Bhūmija's teacher stands, as it were, having struck all of those many contemplatives & brahmans down by the head.'

"Answering in this way when thus asked, lord, am I speaking in line with what the Blessed One has said, am I not misrepresenting the Blessed One with what is unfactual, am I answering in line with the Dhamma so that no one whose thinking is in line with the Dhamma will have grounds for criticizing me?"

"Certainly, Bhūmija, in answering in this way when thus asked, you are speaking in line with what I have said, you are not misrepresenting me with what is unfactual, and you are answering in line with the Dhamma so that no one whose thinking is in line with the Dhamma will have grounds for criticizing you. For any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results), they are incapable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of oil, looking for oil, wandering in search of oil, would pile gravel in a tub and press it, sprinkling it again & again with water. If he were to pile gravel in a tub and press it, sprinkling it again & again with water even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

"Suppose a man in need of milk, looking for milk, wandering in search of milk, would twist the horn of a newly-calved cow. If he were to twist the horn of a newly-calved cow even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish

and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of butter, looking for butter, wandering in search of butter, would sprinkle water on water in a crock and twirl it with a churn-stick. If he were to sprinkle water on water in a crock and twirl it with a churn-stick even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of fire, looking for fire, wandering in search of fire, would take a fire stick and rub it into a wet, sappy piece of wood. If he were to take a fire stick and rub it into a wet, sappy piece of wood even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with wrong view, wrong resolve, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, & wrong concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are incapable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an inappropriate way of obtaining results.

“But as for any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining

results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of oil, looking for oil, wandering in search of oil, would pile sesame seeds in a tub and press them, sprinkling them again & again with water. If he were to pile sesame seeds in a tub and press them, sprinkling them again & again with water, even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of milk, looking for milk, wandering in search of milk, would pull the teat of a newly-calved cow. If he were to pull the teat of a newly-calved cow even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of butter, looking for butter, wandering in search of butter, would sprinkle water on curds in a crock and twirl them with a churn-stick.3 If he were to sprinkle water on curds in a crock and twirl them with a churn-stick even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“Suppose a man in need of fire, looking for fire, wandering in search of fire, would take a fire stick and rub it into a dry, sapless piece of wood. If he were to take a fire stick and rub it into a dry, sapless piece of wood even when having made a wish (for results)… having made no wish… both having made a wish and having made no wish… neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, he would be capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“In the same way, any contemplatives or brahmans endowed with right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, & right concentration: If they follow the holy life even when having made a wish (for results), they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when both having made a wish and having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. If they follow the holy life even when neither having made a wish nor having made no wish, they are capable of obtaining results. Why is that? Because it is an appropriate way of obtaining results.

“Bhūmija, if these four similes had occurred to you in the presence of Prince Jayasena, he would have naturally felt confidence in you and—feeling confidence—would have shown his confidence in you.”

“But, lord, how could these four similes have occurred to me in the presence of Prince Jayasena, as they are natural to the Blessed One and have never before been heard from him?”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Bhūmija delighted in the Blessed One’s words.

Notes

1. According to the Commentary, Ven. Bhūmija was Prince Jayasena’s uncle.

2. These contemplatives & brahmans are probably the proponents of non-action, annihilation, and non-relatedness as presented in DN 2.

3. To this day, this is the way butter is obtained in rural north India. The churn-stick is a small stick that has attached to its end blocks of wood resembling an orange with alternate sections removed. This is twirled in the curds. The water sprinkled on the curds dilutes the buttermilk, which helps separate it from the milk fat left on the blocks of the churn-stick.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 117; SN 22:101; SN 42:6; SN 45:8; AN 5:43; Thig 12