MN 91 — MN 91 To Brahmāyu (Excerpt) | Brahmāyu Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Text

To Brahmāyu (Excerpt)

Brahmāyu Sutta (MN 91)

[The student Uttara is talking to his teacher, the brahman Brahmāyu:] “When walking, Master Gotama steps with his right foot first. He doesn’t extend his foot too far or place it down too near. He walks neither too quickly nor too slowly. He walks without knocking his knees together or knocking his ankles together. He walks without raising or lowering his thighs, without pinching them together or spreading them apart. When he walks, only the lower part of his body moves, and he walks without bodily effort. When turning to look, he turns to look with his entire body. He doesn’t look straight up or straight down. He walks without glancing around. He gazes a plow’s length before him; beyond that, he has unhindered knowledge & vision.

“When going indoors, he doesn’t raise or lower his body, bend it forward or back. He turns around neither too far from the seat nor too close. He doesn’t lean on his seat with his hand. He doesn’t plunk his body down on the seat.

“Having sat down indoors, he doesn’t fidget with his hands or his feet. He doesn’t sit with his knees crossed or with his ankles crossed. He doesn’t sit with his hand holding his chin.

“Having sat down indoors, he isn’t fearful, doesn’t shiver, doesn’t tremble, isn’t nervous. Being unfearful, not shivering, not trembling, not nervous, he—without his hair standing on end—is intent on seclusion.

“When receiving bowl-water, he doesn’t raise or lower the bowl, tip it forward or back. He receives neither too little nor too much bowl-water. He washes the bowl without making a sloshing sound. He washes the bowl without turning it over. He doesn’t wash his hands having put the bowl on the ground. When his hands are washed, the bowl is washed. When the bowl is washed, his hands are washed. He pours the bowl-water not too near, not too far, and without splashing.

“When receiving rice, he doesn’t raise or lower the bowl, tip it forward or back. He receives neither too little nor too much rice. He also receives curry, taking curry in the proper proportion. He doesn’t put too much curry in his mouthful. Having turned the mouthful over two or three times in his mouth, he swallows it. No unchewed rice grain enters his body; no rice grain remains in his mouth. Then he takes another mouthful. He takes his food experiencing the taste but not experiencing passion for the taste.

“Master Gotama eats food endowed with eight factors: not playfully, nor for intoxication, nor for putting on bulk, nor for beautification; but simply for the survival & continuance of this body, for ending its afflictions, for the support of the holy life, thinking, ‘Thus will I destroy old feelings (of hunger) and not create new feelings (from overeating). I will maintain myself, be blameless, & live in comfort.’

“When he has finished his meal and receives bowl-water, he doesn’t raise or lower the bowl, tip it forward or back. He receives neither too little nor too much bowl-water. He washes the bowl without making a sloshing sound. He washes the bowl without turning it over. He doesn’t wash his hands having put the bowl on the ground. When his hands are washed, the bowl is washed. When the bowl is washed, his hands are washed. He pours the bowl-water not too near, not too far, and without splashing. … He puts his bowl on the floor, not too near, not too far. He is neither careless of the bowl nor overly solicitous about it. … He sits in silence for a moment, but doesn’t exceed the time for the anumodanā [verses rejoicing in the merit of the donor]. … He gives the anumodanā, doesn’t criticize the meal, doesn’t expect another meal. He instructs, urges, rouses, & encourages the gathering with a talk purely on Dhamma. Having done so, he rises from his seat and departs. He walks neither too quickly nor too slowly, nor does he desire to get away.

“His robe is worn not too high on his body, not too low on his body, not too tight or too loose on his body. The wind doesn’t blow his robe away from his body. Dust & dirt don’t soil his body.

“Having gone to the monastery, he sits on a seat made ready. Having sat down, he washes his feet, but he doesn’t occupy himself with grooming his feet. Having washed his feet, he sits with his legs folded, sets his body erect, and brings mindfulness to the fore. He doesn’t set his mind on his own affliction, the affliction of others, or the affliction of both. He sits setting his mind on his own welfare, the welfare of others, the welfare of both—even the welfare of the entire cosmos.

“Having gone to the monastery, he teaches Dhamma to the gathering. He neither flatters nor berates the gathering. He instructs, urges, rouses, & encourages the gathering with a talk purely on Dhamma. The voice that issues from his mouth is endowed with eight qualities: It is distinct, intelligible, melodious, audible, ringing, focused, deep, & resonant. But while his voice is intelligible to the gathering, the sound of his voice doesn’t extend outside the gathering. Those who have been instructed, urged, roused, & encouraged by his Dhamma talk rise from their seats and depart, looking only at him and concerned with nothing else.

“We have seen Master Gotama walking, sir, we have seen him standing, we have seen him entering indoors, we have seen him sitting in silence indoors, we have seen him eating indoors, we have seen him sitting in silence after eating, we have seen him giving the anumodanā after eating, we having seen him returning to the monastery, we have seen him sitting in silence after going to the monastery, we have seen him teaching the Dhamma to a gathering in the monastery. He is like that, like that—and more than that.”

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: Sn 3:7; Sn 5:Epilogue