SN 6.2 — Garava Sutta: Reverence

English translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

I have heard that on one occasion, when the Blessed One was newly Self-awakened, he was staying at Uruvela on the bank of the Nerañjara River, at the foot of the Goatherd's Banyan Tree. Then, while he was alone and in seclusion, this line of thinking arose in his awareness: "One suffers if dwelling without reverence or deference. Now on what brahman or contemplative can I dwell in dependence, honoring and respecting him?"

Then the thought occurred to him: "It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of virtue that I would dwell in dependence on another brahman or contemplative, honoring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, in this generation with its brahmans and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another brahman or contemplative more consummate in virtue than I, on whom I could dwell in dependence, honoring and respecting him.

"It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of concentration that I would dwell in dependence on another brahman or contemplative, honoring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, in this generation with its brahmans and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another brahman or contemplative more consummate in concentration than I, on

whom I could dwell in dependence, honoring and respecting him.

"It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of discernment that I would dwell in dependence on another brahman or contemplative, honoring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, in this generation with its brahmans and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another brahman or contemplative more consummate in discernment than I, on whom I could dwell in dependence, honoring and respecting him.

"It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of release that I would dwell in dependence on another brahman or contemplative, honoring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, in this generation with its brahmans and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another brahman or contemplative more consummate in release than I, on whom I could dwell in dependence, honoring and respecting him.

"It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of knowledge and vision of release that I would dwell in dependence on another brahman or contemplative, honoring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Maras, & Brahmas, in this generation with its brahmans and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another brahman or contemplative more consummate in knowledge and vision of release than I, on whom I could dwell in dependence, honoring and respecting him.

"What if I were to dwell in dependence on this very Dhamma to which I have fully awakened, honoring and respecting it?"

Then, having known with his own awareness the line of thinking in the Blessed One's awareness — just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm — Brahma Sahampati disappeared from the Brahma-world and reappeared in front of the Blessed One. Arranging his upper robe over one shoulder, he saluted the Blessed One with his hands before his heart and said to him: "So it is, Blessed One! So it is, One-Well-Gone! Those who were Arahants, Rightly Self-awakened Ones in the past — they, too, dwelled in dependence on the very Dhamma itself, honoring and respecting it. Those who will be Arahants, Rightly Self-awakened Ones in the future — they, too, will dwell in dependence on the very Dhamma itself, honoring and respecting it. And let the Blessed One, who is at present the Arahant, the Rightly Self-awakened One, dwell in dependence on the very Dhamma itself, honoring and respecting it."

That is what Brahma Sahampati said. Having said that, he further said this:

Past Buddhas, future Buddhas, & he who is the Buddha now, removing the sorrow of many — all have dwelt, will dwell, he dwells, revering the true Dhamma. This, for Buddhas, is a natural law. Therefore one who desires his own good, aspiring for greatness, should respect the true Dhamma, recollecting the Buddhas' Teaching.