SN 7.11 — Kasi Bharadvaja Sutta: Discourse to Bharadvaja, the Farmer

English translation by Piyadassi Thera.

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Completeness: UNKNOWN. Entire protected source unit, including notes and verses, preserved; canonical completeness has not been independently established.

Text

Thus have I heard:

On one occasion the Blessed One was living at Dakkhinagiri (monastery), in the brahmana village Ekanala, in Magadha. Now at that time, it being the sowing season, five hundred plows of the brahman Kasibharadvaja were put to use. Then in the forenoon the Blessed One having dressed himself, took bowl and (double) robe, and went to the place where brahman Kasibharadvaja's work was going on. It was the time of food distribution by the brahman, and the Blessed One drew near, and stood at one side. Bharadvaja seeing the Blessed One standing there for alms said to him:

"Recluse, I do plow, and do sow, and having plowed and sown I eat. You also, recluse should plow and sow; having plowed and sown you should eat."

"I, too, brahman, plow and sow; having plowed and sown, I eat."

"We do not see the Venerable Gotama's yoke, or plow, or plowshare, or goad or oxen. Nevertheless the Venerable Gotama says: 'I, too, brahman, plow and sow; having plowed and sown, I eat.'"

Thereupon the brahman addressed the Blessed One in a stanza:

1. "You profess to be a plowman, yet your plow we do not see; asked about your plow and the rest, tell us of them that we may know."

[The Buddha:]

2. "Faith is my seed, austerity the rain, wisdom my yoke and plow, modesty is the pole, mind the strap, mindfulness is my plowshare and goad.

3. "Controlled in speech and conduct, guarded in deed and speech, abstemious in food,[1] I make truth my weed cutter; arahantship, my deliverance complete.

4. "Exertion, my team in yoke, draws me to Nibbana's security, and on it goes without stopping, wither gone one does not suffer.

5. "Thuswise is this plowing plowed which bears the fruit of Deathlessness; having plowed this plowing one is freed from every ill."

Then brahman Kasibharadvaja filling a golden bowl with milk-rice offered it to the Blessed One saying: "May the Venerable Gotama partake of this milk rice; a plowman, indeed, is Venerable Gotama who plows a plow for the fruit of Deathlessness (Nibbana)."

[The Buddha:]

6. "What I receive by reciting verses, O brahman, I should not eat. It is not the tradition of those who practice right livelihood. The Buddhas reject what is received by reciting verses. This brahman, is the conduct (of the Buddhas) as long as Dhamma reigns.

7. "To those wholly consummate, taintless, and well-disciplines great sages, should thou offer other food and drink; sure field is that for merit-seeking men."

"To whom, then Venerable Gotama, shall I give this milk rice?"

"Brahman, in the world of Devas, Maras, and Brahmas or among the generation of recluses, brahmanas, deities, and humans, there is no one by whom this milk rice, if eaten, could be wholly digested except by the Tathagata (the Buddha), or the disciple of a Tathagata. Therefore, brahman, either cast this milk rice where there is no grass, or into water where there are no living creatures."

Thereupon the brahman flung that milk rice into water where there were no living creatures, and the milk rice thrown into the water smoked and steamed making the noise "cicchita, citicita," just like a plowshare heated during the day, when thrown into water,

smokes, and steams making the noise "cicchita, citicita."

Then the brahman Kasibharadvaja, alarmed, with hair standing on end, approached, and fell with his head at the Blessed One's feet and said as follows.

"Most excellent, O Gotama, is thy teaching, most excellent. Just as a man would set upright what is overturned, reveal what is concealed, point out the way to one gone astray, bring an oil lamp into the darkness so that those with eyes could see objects, even so the Dhamma (doctrine) has been declared in many a manner by the Venerable Gotama. I take refuge in the Venerable Gotama (the Buddha), in the Dhamma and in the Sangha (the Order). I wish to receive the novice's ordination (pabbajja) and higher ordination (upasampada)."

Brahman Kasibharadvaja duly received both the pabbajja and upasampada from the Blessed One. Not long after his upasampada the Venrable Bharadvaja dwelling alone and aloof, diligent, strenuous, and resolute, ere long, by his own insight, here and now, realized and attained the highest perfection (arahantship), the end of the Noble Life — for the sake of which men of good family go forth from home to live the homeless life. Birth is destroyed, lived is the noble life, done is what has to be done, there is no more of this state. The Venerable Bharadvaja became one of the arahants.

Note

1.

In the use of the four requisites: robes, food, lodging, medicine (Comy).