SN 55.7 — SN 55:7 The People of Bamboo Gate | Veḷudvāreyya Sutta

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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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

The People of Bamboo Gate

Veḷudvāreyya Sutta (SN 55:7)

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One, on a wandering tour among the Kosalans with a large Saṅgha of monks, arrived at a brahman village named Bamboo Gate.

Then the brahman householders of Bamboo Gate heard it said, "Gotama the contemplative—the son of the Sakyans, having gone forth from the Sakyan clan—on a wandering tour among the Kosalans with a large Saṅgha of monks—has arrived at Bamboo Gate. And of that Master Gotama this fine reputation has spread: 'He is indeed a Blessed One, worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct,

well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed. He makes known—having realized it through direct knowledge—this world with its devas, Māras, & Brahmās, this generation with its contemplatives & brahmans, its rulers & commonfolk; he explains the Dhamma admirable in the beginning, admirable in the middle, admirable in the end; he expounds the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely perfect, surpassingly pure. It is good to see such a worthy one.'"

So the brahman householders of Bamboo Gate went to the Blessed One. On arrival, some of them bowed down to the Blessed One and sat to one side. Some of them exchanged courteous greetings with him and, after an exchange of friendly greetings & courtesies, sat to one side. Some of them sat to one side having saluted him with their hands palm-to-palm over their hearts. Some of them sat to one side having announced their name & clan. Some of them sat to one side in silence.

As they were sitting there, the brahman householders of Bamboo Gate said to the Blessed One, "Master Gotama, we have wishes, desires, & aims like these: May we live at home crowded with children! May we experience Kāsi sandalwood! May we wear garlands, scents, & cosmetics! May we enjoy gold & silver! And with the breakup of the body, after death, may we reappear in a good destination, a heavenly world! May Master Gotama teach the Dhamma to us who have wishes, desires, & aims like these, so that we may live at home crowded with children, we may experience Kāsi sandalwood, we may wear garlands, scents, & cosmetics, we may enjoy gold & silver, and with the breakup of the body, after death, we may reappear in a good destination, a heavenly world!"

"Householders, I will teach you a Dhamma sequence that refers to oneself. Listen & pay close attention to it. I will speak."

"As you say, master," the brahman householders of Bamboo Gate responded to the Blessed One.

The Blessed One said, "And what is the Dhamma sequence that refers to oneself?

"There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones reflects thus: 'I love life & don't love death. I love happiness & abhor pain. Now if I—loving life & not loving death, loving happiness & abhorring pain—were to be killed, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I were to kill another who loves life & doesn't love death, who loves happiness & abhors pain, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he himself refrains from taking life, he gets others to refrain from taking life, and he speaks in praise of refraining from taking life. In this way, his bodily behavior is pure in three ways.1

"Further, he reflects thus: 'If someone, by way of theft, were to take from me what I haven't given, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I, by way of theft, were to take from another what he/she hadn't given, that would be displeasing &

disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he himself refrains from taking, by way of theft, what hasn't been given, he gets others to refrain from taking, by way of theft, what hasn't been given, and he speaks in praise of refraining from taking, by way of theft, what hasn't been given. In this way, his bodily behavior is pure in three ways.

"Further, he reflects thus: 'If someone were to commit adultery with my wives, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I were to commit adultery with the wives of another, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he himself refrains from sexual misconduct, he gets others to refrain from sexual misconduct, and he speaks in praise of refraining from sexual misconduct. In this way, his bodily behavior is pure in three ways.

"Further, he reflects thus: 'If someone were to damage my well-being by telling a lie, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I were to damage the well-being of another by telling a lie, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he himself refrains from telling lies, he gets others to refrain from telling lies, and he speaks in praise of refraining from telling lies. In this way, his verbal behavior is pure in three ways.

"Further, he reflects thus: 'If someone were to divide me from my friends with divisive speech, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I were to divide another from his/her friends with divisive speech, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he himself refrains from divisive speech, he gets others to refrain from divisive speech, and he speaks in praise of refraining from divisive speech. In this way, his verbal behavior is pure in three ways.

"Further, he reflects thus: 'If someone were to address me with harsh speech, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I were to address another with harsh speech, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he himself refrains from harsh speech, he gets others to refrain from harsh speech, and he speaks in praise of refraining from harsh speech. In this way, his verbal behavior is pure in three ways.

"Further, he reflects thus: 'If someone were to address me with idle chatter, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to me. And if I were to address another with idle chatter, that would be displeasing & disagreeable to the other. What is displeasing & disagreeable to me is displeasing & disagreeable to others. How can I inflict on others what is displeasing & disagreeable to me?' Reflecting in this way, he refrains from idle chatter, gets others to

refrain from idle chatter, and speaks in praise of refraining from idle chatter. In this way, his verbal behavior is pure in three ways.

“He is endowed with verified confidence in the Awakened One: ‘Indeed, the Blessed One is worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear-knowing & conduct, well-gone, an expert with regard to the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of people fit to be tamed, teacher of devas & human beings, awakened, blessed.’

“He is endowed with verified confidence in the Dhamma: ‘The Dhamma is well taught by the Blessed One, to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting verification, pertinent, to be experienced by the observant for themselves.’

“He is endowed with verified confidence in the Saṅgha: ‘The Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples who have practiced well… who have practiced straight-forwardly… who have practiced methodically… who have practiced masterfully—in other words, the four types of noble disciples when taken as pairs, the eight when taken as individual types2—they are the Saṅgha of the Blessed One’s disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world.’

“He is endowed with virtues that are appealing to the noble ones: untorn, unbroken, unspotted, unsplattered, liberating, praised by the observant, ungrasped at, leading to concentration.

“Now, householders, when a disciple of the noble ones is endowed with these seven good qualities and these four desirable states, then if he so desires, he himself may state about himself: ‘Hell is ended for me; animal wombs are ended; the state of the hungry ghosts is ended; planes of deprivation, the bad destinations, the lower realms are ended! I am a stream-winner, never again destined for the lower realms, certain, headed for self-awakening!’”

When this was said, the brahman householders of Bamboo Gate said to the Blessed One: “Magnificent, Master Gotama! Magnificent! Just as if he were to place upright what was overturned, to reveal what was hidden, to show the way to one who was lost, or to carry a lamp into the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way has Master Gotama—through many lines of reasoning—made the Dhamma clear. We go to Master Gotama for refuge, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. May Master Gotama remember us as lay followers who have gone to him for refuge, from this day forward, for life.”

Notes

1. In other words, (1) in refraining from disagreeable behavior on one’s own part, (2) in getting others to refrain from it, and (3) in speaking in praise of refraining from it.

2. The four pairs are (1) the person on the path to stream-entry, the person experiencing the fruit of stream-entry; (2) the person on the path to once-returning, the person

experiencing the fruit of once-returning; (3) the person on the path to non-returning, the person experiencing the fruit of non-returning; (4) the person on the path to arahantship, the person experiencing the fruit of arahantship. The eight individuals are the eight types forming these four pairs.

See also: AN 4:55; AN 8:54