

BRFHMF+IMF+TF+IRF4N+TF◇



MIDDLE LENGTH DISCOURSE - N49

THE HOLY RUNIC TEXT

MPFO AM HNTFO: MRFO HFMSFO BHFXPF HFPTTHISFO PIFRFPTI
YMTFFPTM FTFTHFCITPIRFHYF FRFMM. TTRF RHQ BHFXPF BHIRRH
FMFTMHI: BHIRRHFPOTI. BHFMFTMTI TM BHIRRH BHFXPFTQ
CFKLFHYQYNO. BHFXPF MTFMFPQKF:

MRFMIFHF BHIRRHFP M HFMSFO NRRFDDHFFO PIFRFMI HNBHFXPPTM
HFTFRFYFMNM. TMTF RHQ CTF BHIRRHFP HFMSMTF BRFHYF BRFHMTQ
MPFRMCFO CFCFRFO MIBDHIXFTFO NCCFTFO HQTI: IMFO HIKFO IMFO MHNPFO
IMFO HFHYFTFO IMFO RMPFFFO IMFO FLFPFTFMHFMMFO. IMFO HI TF YFSFTI TF
Y*FTI TF KFPPTI TF NCCFYFTI. ITQ KF CTFXFO NTTFRIO HHHFRFTFO
FTTH*TI. FTHF RHFPHF BHIRRHFP BRFHYF BRFHMTQ KMTFY
KMTQCFRIPITFRRFMFXFO HFMSFTHFCI FMF BFPF CNRIHQ HFMMIXYITFO
PF BFHF CFHFRMSF, CFHFRITFO PF BFHF HFMMIXYMSSF, MPFMMPFO
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BRFHMFQRM CFTNRFHQHI.

FMMFYF RHQ MFO BHIRRHFP BFRQ BRFHMF MNRFTQPF FXFKHFFTFO.
MIFPFTF MFO MTFMFPQKF: MHI RHQ MFRIF, HFXTFO MFRIF, KRFHYFO RHQ
MFRIF IMFO CFRISF MFRFYI SFMIMFO IMHFXPFTFSF. IMFO HI MFRIF
HIKFO IMFO MHNPFO IMFO HFHYFTFO IMFO RMPFFFO IMFO FLFPFTFMHFMMFO.
IMFO HI TF YFSFTI TF Y*FTI TF M*FTI TF KFPPTI TF NCCFYFTI. ITQ KF
CFTFXFO NTTFRIO HHHFRFTFO FTTH*TI.

MPFO PNTTM FHF BHIRRHFP BRFQ BRFHMF MTFMFPQKF:
FPYFYXFTQ PFTF BHQ BFRQ BRFHMF, FPYFYXFTQ PFTF BHQ BFRQ BRFHMF:
SFTRF HI FMF FHKFO MPP HFMFFO HIKFTI PFRRHFTI, FMHNPFO MPP
HFMFFO MHNPFTI PFRRHFTI, FHYHYFTFO MPP HFMFFO HFHYFTFTI

ENGLISH TRANSLATION

by Thanissaro Bhikkhu

I have heard that on one occasion the Blessed One was staying near Savatthi in Jeta's Grove, Anathapindika's monastery. There he addressed the monks, "Monks!"

"Yes, lord," the monks responded.

The Blessed One said: "On one occasion recently I was staying in Ukkattha in the Subhaga forest at the root of a royal sala tree. Now on that occasion an evil viewpoint had arisen to Baka-Brahma: 'This is constant. This is permanent. This is eternal. This is total. This is not subject to falling away — for this does not take birth, does not age, does not die, does not fall away, does not reappear. And there is no other, higher escape.'

"So I — having known with my awareness the train of thought in Baka Brahma's awareness — as a strong man would extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, vanished into the root of the royal sala tree in the Subhaga forest in Ukkattha and appeared in that brahma world. Baka Brahma saw me coming in the distance and, on seeing me, said, 'Come, good sir. You are well-come, good sir. It has been long, good sir, since you arranged to come here — for this, good sir, is constant. This is permanent. This is eternal. This is total. This is not subject to falling away — for here one does not take birth, does not age, does not die, does not fall away, does not reappear. And there is no other, higher escape.'

"When this was said, I told Baka Brahma, 'How immersed in ignorance is Baka Brahma! How immersed in ignorance is Baka Brahma! — in that what is actually inconstant he calls "constant." What is actually impermanent he calls "permanent." What is actually non-eternal he calls "eternal." What is actually partial he calls "total." What is actually subject to falling away he calls "not subject to falling away." Where one takes birth, ages, dies, falls away, and reappears, he says, "For here one does not take birth, does not age, does not die, does not fall away, does not reappear." And there being another, higher escape, he says, "There is no other, higher escape.'"

"Then Mara, the Evil One, taking possession of an attendant of the Brahma assembly, said to me, 'Monk! Monk! Don't attack him! Don't attack him! For this Brahma, monk, is the Great Brahma, the Conqueror, the Unconquered, the All-Seeing, All-Powerful, the Sovereign Lord, the Maker, Creator, Chief, Appointer and Ruler, Father of All That Have

Been and Shall Be. There were, monk, before your time, brahmans & contemplatives in the world

who found fault with earth and were disgusted with earth,
who found fault with liquid and were disgusted with liquid,
who found fault with fire and were disgusted with fire,
who found fault with wind and were disgusted with wind,
who found fault with beings and were disgusted with beings,
who found fault with devas and were disgusted with devas,
who found fault with Pajapati and were disgusted with Pajapati,
who found fault with Brahma and were disgusted with Brahma.

"They, with the break-up of the body, with the cutting off of life, were established in a coarse body. There were, monk, before your time, brahmans & contemplatives in the world

who praised earth and were delighted with earth,
who praised liquid and were delighted with liquid,
who praised fire and were delighted with fire,
who praised wind and were delighted with wind,
who praised beings and were delighted with beings,
who praised devas and were delighted with devas,
who praised Pajapati and were delighted with Pajapati,
who praised Brahma and were delighted with Brahma.

"They, with the break-up of the body, with the cutting off of life, were established in a refined body. So I tell you, monk, "Please, good sir, do only as Brahma says. Don't defy the word of Brahma. If you defy the word of Brahma, then — as a man, when the goddess of fortune approaches, chases her away with a stick, or as a man, falling into hell, loses hold of the earth with his hands and feet — that will be what you have accomplished. Please, good sir, do only as Brahma says. Don't defy the word of Brahma. Don't you see that Brahma's assembly has gathered?" And so Mara the Evil One directed my attention to Brahma's assembly.

"When this was said, I told Mara the Evil One, 'I know you, Evil One. Don't assume, "He doesn't know me." You are Mara, Evil One. And Brahma, and Brahma's assembly, and the attendants of Brahma's assembly have all fallen into your hands. They have all fallen into your power. And you think, "This one, too, has come into my hands, has come under

my control." But, Evil One, I have neither come into your hands nor have I come under your control.'

"When this was said, Baka Brahma told me, 'But, good sir, what is actually constant I call "constant." What is actually permanent I call "permanent." What is actually eternal I call "eternal." What is actually total I call "total." What is actually not subject to falling away I call "not subject to falling away." Where one does not take birth, age, die, fall away, or reappear, I say, "For this does not take birth, does not age, does not die, does not fall away, does not reappear." And there being no other, higher escape, I say, "There is no other, higher escape."

"There were, monk, before your time, brahmans & contemplatives in the world whose ascetic practice lasted as long as your entire life span. They knew, when there was another, higher escape, that there was another, higher escape; or, when there was no other, higher escape, that there was no other, higher escape. So I tell you, monk, both that you will not find another, higher escape, and that, to that extent, you will reap your share of trouble & weariness. Monk, if you relish earth, you will lie close to me, lie within my domain, for me to banish and to do with as I like. If you relish liquid ... fire ... wind ... beings ... devas ... Pajapati ... brahma, you will lie close to me, lie within my domain, for me to banish and to do with as I like.'

"I, too, know that, brahma. If I relish earth, I will lie close to you, lie within your domain, for you to banish and to do with as you like. If I relish liquid ... fire ... wind ... beings ... devas ... Pajapati ... brahma, I will lie close to you, lie within your domain, for you to banish and to do with as you like. Moreover, I discern your sphere, I discern your splendor: "Baka Brahma has this much great power. Baka Brahma has this much great might. Baka Brahma has this much great influence."

"Well, monk, how do you discern my sphere, how do you discern my splendor: "Baka Brahma has this much great power. Baka Brahma has this much great might. Baka Brahma has this much great influence"?"

"As far as suns & moons revolve,
shining, illuminating the directions,
over a thousand-fold world
your control holds sway.

There you know those above & below,
those with lust & those without,
the state of what is as it is,
the state of what becomes otherwise,
the coming & going of beings.

"That, brahma, is how I discern your sphere, that is how I discern your splendor: "Baka Brahma has this much great power. Baka Brahma has this much great might. Baka Brahma has this much great influence." There are, brahma, bodies other than yours that you don't know, don't see, but that I know, I see. There is, brahma, the body named Abhassara (Radiant/Luminous) from which you fell away & reappeared here. From your having lived here so long, your memory of that has become muddled. That is why you don't know it, don't see it, but I know it, I see it. Thus I am not your mere equal in terms of direct knowing, so how could I be inferior? I am actually superior to you.

"There is, brahma, the body named Subhakinha (Beautiful Black/Refulgent Glory) ... the body named Vehapphala (Sky-fruit/Great Fruit), {the body named Abhibhu (Conqueror)} [5] which you don't know, don't see, but that I know, I see. Thus I am not your mere equal in terms of direct knowing, so how could I be your inferior? I am actually superior to you.

"Having directly known earth as earth, and having directly known the extent of what has not been experienced through the earthness of earth,[6] I wasn't earth, I wasn't in earth, I wasn't coming from earth, I wasn't "Earth is mine." I didn't affirm earth.[7] Thus I am not your mere equal in terms of direct knowing, so how could I be inferior? I am actually superior to you.

"Having directly known liquid as liquid ... fire as fire ... wind as wind ... beings as beings ... devas as devas ... Pajapati as Pajapati ... brahma as brahma ... the radiant as radiant ... the beautiful black as the beautiful black ... the sky-fruit as the sky-fruit ... the conqueror as the conqueror ...

"Having directly known the all as the all, and having directly known the extent of what has not been experienced through the allness of the all, I wasn't the all, I wasn't in the all, I wasn't coming forth from the all, I wasn't "The all is mine." I didn't affirm the all. Thus I am not your mere equal in terms of direct knowing, so how could I be inferior? I am actually superior to you.'

"If, good sir, you have directly known the extent of what has not been experienced through the allness of the all, may it not turn out to be actually vain and void for you.'

"Consciousness without surface,
endless, radiant all around,
has not been experienced through the earthness of earth ... the liquidity of liquid ... the fieriness of fire ... the windiness of wind ... the allness of the all.'

"Well then, good sir, I will disappear from you.'

"Well then, brahma, disappear from me if you can.'

"Then Baka Brahma, [thinking,] 'I will disappear from Gotama the contemplative. I will disappear from Gotama the contemplative,' was not able to disappear from me. When this was said, I said to Baka Brahma, 'Well then, brahma, I will disappear from you.'

"Well then, good sir, disappear from me if you can.'

"So then, monks, I fabricated a fabrication of psychic power to the extent that Brahma, the Brahma assembly, and the attendants of the Brahma assembly heard my voice but did not see me. Having disappeared, I recited this verse:

'Having seen
 danger
 right in becoming,
 and becoming
 searching for non-becoming,
I didn't affirm
any kind of becoming,
or cling to any delight.'

"Then in Brahma, the Brahma assembly, and the attendants of the Brahma assembly there arose a sense of amazement & awe: 'How amazing! How awesome! — The great power, the great might of Gotama the contemplative! Never before have we seen or heard of any other contemplative or brahman of such great power, such great might as that of this Gotama the contemplative, who went forth from a Sakyan clan! Living in a generation that so delights in becoming, so rejoices in becoming, is so fond of becoming, he has pulled out

becoming by the root!

"Then Mara, the Evil One, taking possession of an attendant of the Brahma assembly, said to me, 'If, good sir, this is what you discern, if this is what you have awakened to, do not lead (lay) disciples or those gone forth. Do not teach the Dhamma to (lay) disciples or those gone forth. Do not yearn for (lay) disciples or those gone forth. There were, good sir, before your time, brahmans & contemplatives in the world who claimed to be worthy & rightly self-awakened. They led (lay) disciples & those gone forth. They taught the Dhamma to (lay) disciples & those gone forth. They yearned for (lay) disciples & those gone forth. Having led (lay) disciples & those gone forth, having taught the Dhamma to (lay) disciples & those gone forth, having yearned for (lay) disciples & those gone forth, they — on the break-up of the body, with the cutting off of life — were established in a coarse body.

"There were, good sir, before your time, brahmans & contemplatives in the world who claimed to be worthy & rightly self-awakened. They did not lead (lay) disciples or those gone forth. They did not teach the Dhamma to (lay) disciples or those gone forth. They did not yearn for (lay) disciples or those gone forth. Having not led (lay) disciples or those gone forth, having not taught the Dhamma to (lay) disciples or those gone forth, having not yearned for (lay) disciples or those gone forth, they — on the break-up of the body, with the cutting off of life — were established in a refined body.

"So, monk, I tell you this: Please, good sir, be effortless. Abide committed to a pleasant abiding in the here-&-now — for it is skillful, good sir, that this not be taught. Don't instruct others.'

"When this was said, I told Mara the Evil One, 'I know you, Evil One. Don't assume, "He doesn't know me." You are Mara, Evil One. And it's not sympathetic to welfare that you speak thus to me. It's sympathetic to what is not welfare that you speak thus to me. You think this, Evil One: "Those to whom Gotama the contemplative will teach the Dhamma will defy my sovereignty. Without being rightly self-awakened, Evil One, your contemplatives & brahmans claimed to be rightly self-awakened. I, however, being rightly self-awakened claim to be rightly self-awakened. For when the Tathagata is teaching the Dhamma to his disciples, he is Such. When he is not teaching the Dhamma to his disciples, he is Such. When leading his disciples he is Such. When not leading his disciples he is Such. Why is that? The fermentations that defile, that lead to further becoming, that disturb, that ripen in stress, that tend to future birth, aging, & death: Those the Tathagata has abandoned, their root destroyed, like an uprooted palmyra tree, deprived of the conditions of development,

not destined for future arising. Just as a palmyra tree with its crown cut off is incapable of growing again; so, too, the fermentations that defile, that lead to further becoming, that disturb, that ripen in stress, that tend to future birth, aging, & death: Those the Tathagata has abandoned, their root destroyed, like an uprooted palmyra tree, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising."

Thus, because of the silencing of Mara, and because of the brahma's invitation, this discourse is entitled, "The Brahma Invitation."

SOURCES

Runic text adapted from: MN I_utf8", edited by Access to Insight. Access to Insight (Legacy Edition), 30 November 2013, http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/sltip/MN_I_utf8.html .

Translated text from: "Brahma-nimantanika Sutta: The Brahma Invitation" (MN 49), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight (Legacy Edition), 17 December 2013, <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.049.than.html> .