

## Pingiya's Praises of the Way to the Beyond

'I will sing you the praises of The Way to the Beyond'. Said Pingiya (when he returned to where the bharmīn Bavari lives on the banks of the River Godhavarī). 'It was described to us by the man exactly as he saw it. But then, there isn't any reason why a man like him should lie – a mammoth of knowledge and completely pure, a man without desire.

When a voice has none of the glibness of pride and none of the ingrained stains of ignorance, then its words are full of sweetness and beauty. It is such words that I praise now.

They call him Buddha, Enlightened, Awake, dissolving darkness, with total vision, and knowing the world to its ends, he has gone beyond all the states of being and of becoming. He has no inner poison-drives; he is the total elimination of suffering. The man, brahmin Bavari, is the man I follow.

It is like a bird that leaves the bushes of the scrubland and flies to the fruit trees of the forest. I too have left the bleary half-light of opinions; like a swan I have reached a great lake.

Up till now, before I heard Gotama's teaching, people had always told me this: 'This is how it has always been, and this is how it will always be'; only the constant refrain of tradition, a breeding ground for speculation.

This prince, this beam of light, Gotama, was the only one who dissolved the darkness. This man Gotama is a universe of wisdom and a world of understanding.

A teacher whose Dhamma is the Way Things Are, instant, immediate and visible all around, eroding desire without harmful side-effects, with nothing else quite like it anywhere in the world'

'But Pingiya', said Bavari, 'why then don't you spend all your time, your every moment, with this man Gotama, this universe of wisdom this world of understanding.

this teacher whose Dhamma of the Way Things Are, instant, immediate and visible all around, eroding desire without harmful side-effects, and with nothing else quite like it anywhere in the world?'

'Brahmin, Sir', said Pingiya, 'there is no moment for me, however small, that is spent away from Gotama, from this universe of wisdom, this world of understanding.

This teacher whose teaching it the Way Things Are, instant, immediate and visible all around, eroding desire without harmful side effects, with nothing else quite like it anywhere in the world/.'

'You see, Sir', said Pingiya, 'with constant and careful vigilance it is possible for me to see him with my mind as clearly as with my eyes, in the night as well as day. And since I spend my nights revering him, there is not, to my mind, a single moment spent away from him.

I cannot now move away from the teaching of Gotama: the powers of confidence and joy, of intellect and awareness, hold me there. Whichever way this universe of wisdom goes it draws me with it.

Physically, I cannot move like that – my body is decaying, I am old and weak – but the driving power of purposeful thought propels me with it without break.

There was a time when, writhing in the mud of the swamps, I could only drift from one stone to the next. But then I saw the Sambuddha, fully awake and free from defilement.'

Then the Buddha spoke:

"Pingiya, he said, 'other people have freed themselves by the power of confidence. Vakkali, Bhardravudha, and Alavi-Gotama have all done this. You too should let that strength release you; you too will go to the further shore, beyond the draw of death.'

'These words', said Pingiya, 'are the words of a man of wisdom. As I hear them I become more confident. This man is Sambuddha; he has opened the curtains and woken up. There is nothing barren there; his mind is clear and luminous.

Everything accessible to knowledge is known to him, even the ultimate subtleties of godhood. There are no more questions for the doubtful who come to him: the teacher has answered them all.

Yes, I shall go there, I shall go beyond change, I shall go beyond formations; I shall go beyond comparison. There are no more doubts. You may consider this as mind released.'