SN 11.20 — Homage of the Saṅgha

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 11.20

Chapter Two

Homage of the Saṅgha

Near Sāvatthī in Jeta’s Grove.

“Once upon a time, mendicants, Sakka, lord of gods, addressed his chariot handler Mātali, ‘My dear Mātali, harness the chariot with its team of a thousand thoroughbreds. We will go to a park and see the scenery.’

‘Yes, lord,’ replied Mātali. He harnessed the chariot and informed Sakka, ‘Good fellow, the chariot with its team of a thousand thoroughbreds has been harnessed. Please go at your convenience.’

Then Sakka descended from the Palace of Victory, raised his cupped palms, and revered the mendicant Saṅgha.

So Mātali the chariot handler addressed Sakka in verse:

‘It’s these who should worship you,

namely the humans stuck in their putrid bodies,

sunk in a carcass,

stricken by hunger and thirst.

Why then do you envy those

who are homeless, Vāsava?

Relate the seers’ way of life,

let us hear what you say.’

‘This is why I envy the

homeless, Mātali.

When they leave a village,

they proceed without concern.

They hoard no goods in storerooms,
nor in pots or baskets.
They seek food prepared by others,
and, true to their vows, live on that.
The attentive, whose words are full of wisdom,
live peacefully and quietly.
Gods fight with titans,
and mortals fight each other, Mātali.
Not fighting among those who fight,
quenched among those who have taken up arms,
not grasping among those who grasp:
they're who I worship, Mātali.'
'Those who you worship
seem to be the best in the world, Sakka.
I too will worship
those who you worship, Vāsava.'
After saying this, Maghavā the chief,
king of gods, Sujā's husband,
having worshiped the mendicant Saṅgha,
climbed into his chariot."