SN 16.8 — Advice (3rd)

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Text

Linked Discourses 16.8

1. Kassapa

Advice (3rd)

Near Rājagaha, in the squirrels' feeding ground. Then Venerable Mahākassapa went up to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to him:

"Kassapa, advise the mendicants! Give them a Dhamma talk! Either you or I should advise the mendicants and give them a Dhamma talk."

"Sir, the mendicants these days are hard to admonish, having qualities that make them hard to admonish. They're impatient, and don't take instruction respectfully."

"Kassapa, that's because formerly the senior mendicants lived in the wilderness, ate only almsfood, wore rag robes, and owned just three robes; and they praised these things. They were of few wishes, content, secluded, aloof, and energetic; and they praised these things.

The senior mendicants invite such a mendicant to a seat, saying: 'Welcome, mendicant! What is this mendicant's name? This mendicant is good-natured; he's really eager to train. Please, mendicant, here, take a seat.'

Then the junior mendicants think: 'It seems that when a mendicant lives in the wilderness … and is energetic, and praises these things, senior mendicants invite them to a seat …' They practice accordingly. That is for their lasting welfare and happiness.

But these days, Kassapa, the senior mendicants don't live in the wilderness … and aren't energetic; and they don't praise these things.

When a mendicant is well-known and famous, a recipient of robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and supplies for the sick, senior mendicants invite them to a seat: 'Welcome, mendicant! What is this mendicant's name? This mendicant is good-natured; he's fond of his fellow monks. Please, mendicant, here, take a seat.'

Then the junior mendicants think: 'It seems that when a mendicant is well-known and famous, a recipient of robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicines and supplies for the sick, senior mendicants invite them to a seat …' They practice accordingly. That is for their lasting harm and suffering. And if it could ever be rightly said that spiritual practitioners have been imperiled by the peril of a spiritual practitioner, and vanquished by the

vanquishing of a spiritual practitioner, it is these days that this could be rightly said.”