AN 3.35 — Hatthaka Sutta (Discourse to Hatthaka)

English translation by Bhikkhu Candana.

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Text

35. Hatthaka Sutta (Discourse to Hatthaka) This is what I personally heard.

At one time, The Blessed One was in Āḷavī, seated on a spread of leaves in the Siṁsapā forest, by a cattle track.

It was then that Hatthaka of Āḷavaka was walking and wandering for exercise, when he saw The Blessed One seated on a spread of leaves in the Siṁsapā forest, and decided to go and approach Him. Once there, he paid homage to The Blessed One, and then sat to one side and said:

“Bhante, did The Blessed One sleep well?”

“Yes, Prince, I slept well. I am one of those in this world who sleeps well.”

“But Bhante, these winter nights are very cold, the snow has already begun falling, the ground and the cattle-made ruts in the fields are rough to travel through, and here, the spread of leaves is very thin, while snow is falling even through the trees, which are already barren from their leaves, and although the cold wind blows through the saffron robe clinging to the body, yet The Blessed One says:

‘Yes Prince, I slept well, I am one of those in this world who sleeps well.’

“In that case, Prince, I will question you on this and you may answer as it pleases you. Now, consider this:

“There is a mansion belonging to a householder or a householder’s son, that is well painted, with closed windows and doors. In that mansion, there are cushions made of deer skin with coverings

of wool, with all the walls being properly plastered and insulated. Overhead too, there is a covering of a peaked roof that is well insulated, inside out, while the ceiling is covered, wall to wall, with antelope, deer hide and red coverings. Also, inside the house there are oil lamps, and so each room is well lit up, making the place very comfortable while the

householder's four wives attend to him, catering to all his needs and likes.

"Now, tell me, Prince, would he sleep well in such a place, or not? What do you think?"

"Bhante, he would truly sleep well! If anyone would be sleeping well in the world, then he would certainly be the one!"

"Then Prince, what do you think? Could it be possible that because of some bodily or mental affliction caused by greed that invades and keeps burning this householder or this householder's son, he loses that sense of comfort and instead ends up sleeping badly, or is not able to sleep at all?"

"Oh yes, that could be very possible, Bhante!"

"Therefore, Prince, the afflictions caused by greed, on account of which this householder or this householder's son would keep burning and thus sleep badly, are fully dispelled in The Tathāgata, entirely uprooted, and made like a dead palm tree stump, never to grow back again. That itself is a reason for Me to sleep well.

"Further, Prince, what do you think? Could it be possible that because of some bodily or mental affliction caused by anger or irritability that invades and keeps burning this householder or this householder's son, he loses that sense of comfort and instead ends up sleeping badly, or is not able to sleep at all?"

"Oh yes, that could be very possible, Bhante!"

"Therefore, Prince, the afflictions caused by anger or irritability, on account of which this householder or this householder's son would keep burning and thus sleep badly, are fully dispelled in The Tathāgata, entirely uprooted, and made like a dead palm tree stump, never to grow back again. That itself is a reason for Me to sleep well.

"Also, Prince, what do you think? Could it be possible that because of some bodily or mental affliction caused by delusion that invades and keeps burning this householder or this householder's son, he loses that sense of comfort and instead ends up sleeping badly, or is not able to sleep at all?"

"Oh yes, that could be very possible, Bhante!"

"Therefore, Prince, the afflictions caused by delusion, on account of which this householder or this householder's son would keep burning and thus sleep badly, are fully dispelled in The

Tathāgata, entirely uprooted, and made like a dead palm tree stump, never to grow back again. That itself is a reason for me to sleep well.

‘That Brahmin, who is no longer burning by passions for sense pleasures, Having relinquished all assets, attains to Nibbāna. Thus, he sleeps well, having cut off all attachments, ‘No longer plagued by sorrow in his heart, He truly is the one who sleeps peacefully, Having attained to the sublime peace of the heart.’