AN 8.24 — With Hatthaka (2nd)

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Numbered Discourses 8.24

3. Householders

With Hatthaka (2nd)

At one time the Buddha was staying near Āḷavī, at Āḷavī's premier shrine. Then the householder Hatthaka of Āḷavī, escorted by around five hundred lay followers, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to Hatthaka:

"Hatthaka, you have a large congregation. How do you bring together such a large congregation?"

"Sir, I bring together such a large congregation by using the four ways of being inclusive as taught by the Buddha. When I know that they can be included by a gift, I include them by giving a gift. When I know that they can be included by kindly words, I include them by kindly words. When I know that they can be included by taking care of them, I include them by caring for them. When I know that they can be included by equality, I include them by treating them equally. But also, worthy sir, my family is wealthy. They wouldn't think that a poor person was worth listening to in the same way."

"Good, good, Hatthaka! This is the right way to bring together a large congregation. Whether in the past, future, or present, all those who have brought together a large congregation have done so by using these four ways of being inclusive."

Then the Buddha educated, encouraged, fired up, and inspired Hatthaka of Āḷavī with a Dhamma talk, after which he got up from his seat, bowed, and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before leaving. Then, not long after Hatthaka had left, the Buddha addressed the mendicants: "Mendicants, you should remember the householder Hatthaka of Āḷavī as someone who has eight amazing and incredible qualities. What eight? He's faithful, ethical, conscientious, prudent, learned, generous, wise, and has few wishes. You should remember the householder Hatthaka of Āḷavī as someone who possesses these eight amazing and incredible qualities."