SN 16.6 — Advice

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/sn16.6/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Linked Discourses 16.6

1. Kassapa

Advice

Near Rājagaha, in the Bamboo Grove. 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.

Take the monk named Bhaṇḍa, Ānanda’s protégé. He’s been competing in studies with the monk named Abhiñjika, Anuruddha’s protégé. They say: ‘Come on, monk, who can speak more? Who can speak better? Who can speak longer?’”

So the Buddha addressed one of the monks, “Please, monk, in my name tell the monk named Bhaṇḍa, Ānanda’s protégé, and the monk named Abhiñjika, Anuruddha’s protégé that the Teacher summons them.”

“Yes, sir,” that monk replied. He went to those monks and said, “Venerables, the Teacher summons you.”

“Yes, reverend,” those monks replied. They went to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to them:

“Is it really true, monks, that you’ve been competing in studies, saying: ‘Come on, monk, who can speak more? Who can speak better? Who can speak longer?’”

“Yes, sir.”

“Have you ever known me to teach the Dhamma like this: ‘Please mendicants, compete in studies to see who can recite more and better and longer’?”

“No, sir.”

“If you’ve never known me to teach the Dhamma like this, what then do you know and see, you futile men, that after going forth in such a well explained teaching and training you’d compete in studies to see who can speak more and better and longer?”

Then those monks bowed with their heads to the Buddha's feet and said, "We made a mistake, sir. It was foolish, stupid, and unskillful of us in that after going forth in such a well explained teaching and training we competed in studies to see who can speak more and better and longer. Please, sir, accept our mistake for what it is, so we will restrain ourselves in future."

"Indeed, monks, you made a mistake. It was foolish, stupid, and unskillful of you to act in that way. But since you have recognized your mistake for what it is, and have dealt with it properly, I accept it. For it is growth in the training of the Noble One to recognize a mistake for what it is, deal with it properly, and commit to restraint in the future."