Snp 2.2 — Putrefaction

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Anthology of Discourses 2.2

Putrefaction

“The good eat properly obtained
millet, wild grains, broomcorn,
greens, tubers, and grapes.
They don’t lie to get what they want.
But when you eat delicious food,
nicely cooked and prepared, and offered by others,
enjoying a dish of fine rice,
Kassapa, you eat putrefaction.
‘Putrefaction is not appropriate for me’—
so you said, O brahmin only by kin.
Yet here you are enjoying a dish of fine rice,
well prepared with the flesh of fowl.
I’m asking you this, Kassapa:
what do you take to be putrefaction?”

“Killing creatures, mutilation, murder, abduction;
stealing, lying, cheating and fraud,
learning crooked spells, adultery:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
People here with unbridled sensuality,
greedy for tastes, mixed up in impurity,
nihilists, immoral, intractable:

this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
Tough, callous calumniators,
pitiless and arrogant betrayers of friends,
misers who never give anything:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
Anger, vanity, obstinacy, contrariness,
deceit, jealousy, boastfulness,
haughtiness, intimacy with the wicked:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
The ill-behaved, debt-evaders, informants,
business cheats and con-artists,
vile men committing sin:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
People here who can’t stop harming living creatures,
taking from others, intent on hurting,
immoral, cruel, harsh, lacking regard for others:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
Greedy, hostile, aggressive to others,
and addicted to evil—those beings pass into darkness,
falling headlong into hell:
this is putrefaction, not eating meat.
Not fish or flesh or fasting,
nudity or baldness, or dreadlocks or dirt,
not rough hides or serving the sacred flame,
or the many endless mortifications in the world,
not hymns or oblations, sacrifices or seasonal observances,
will cleanse a mortal not free of doubt.
Guarding the streams of sense impressions, wander with faculties understood,
standing on the teaching, delighting in integrity and tenderness.

The attentive have slipped their chains and given up all suffering;

they don’t cling to the seen and the heard.”

The Buddha explained this matter to him again and again,

until the master of hymns understood it.

It was illustrated with colorful verses

by the sage free of putrefaction, unattached, hard to trace.

Having heard the fine words of the Buddha,

that are free of putrefaction, casting aside all suffering;

humbled, he bowed to the Realized One,

and right away begged to go forth.