Snp 2.2 — Sn 2:2 Raw Stench

English translation by Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu.

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Changes: Presentation only: original HTML markup reflowed into plain text; wording, numbering and source repetitions retained. No repetitions expanded.

Completeness: ABBREVIATED. Every source-unit character is preserved, including introductions, notes and verse structure. Thanissaro's collection-level note explicitly states that repetitions were cut: https://www.dhammatalks.org/suttas/about.html. This is evidence about the translation method, not an assertion that every individual unit contains an omission; no repetitions reconstructed.

Text

2:2 Raw Stench

According to SnA, this poem is a dialogue between a brahman ascetic, Tissa, and the previous Buddha, Kassapa, who—unlike “our” Buddha, Gotama—was born into the brahman caste.

Tissa:

“Those peacefully eating

millet, Job’s tears, green gram,

leaf-fruit, tuber-fruit, water-chestnut-fruit,

obtained in line with the Dhamma,

don’t desire sensual-pleasures
or tell falsehoods.

But when eating what is well-made,
well-prepared,
exquisite, given, offered by others,
when consuming cooked rice,
Kassapa, one consumes a raw stench.

Yet you, kinsman of Brahmā, say,
‘Raw stench is not proper for me,’
while consuming cooked rice
and the well-prepared fleshes of birds.
So I ask you, Kassapa, the meaning of that:
Of what sort is ‘raw stench’ for you?”

The Buddha Kassapa:
“Killing living beings,
hunting, cutting, binding,
theft, lying, fraud, deceptions,
useless recitations,
associating with the wives of others:
This is a raw stench,
not the eating of meat.

Those people here
who are unrestrained in sensuality,
greedy for flavors,
mixed together with what’s impure,
annihilationists,
discordant1 & indomitable:
This is a raw stench,

not the eating of meat.

Those who are rough, pitiless,
eating the flesh off your back,
betraying their friends,
uncompassionate, arrogant,
habitually ungenerous,
giving to no one:
This is a raw stench,
not the eating of meat.

Anger, intoxication,
stubbornness, hostility,
deceptiveness, resentment,
boasting, conceit & pride,
befriending those of no integrity:
This is a raw stench,
not the eating of meat.

Those of evil habits,
debt-repudiators, informers,
cheats in trading, counterfeiters,
vile men who do evil things:
This is a raw stench,
not the eating of meat.

Those people here
who are unrestrained toward beings,
taking what's others',
intent on injury,
immoral hunters, harsh, disrespectful:
This is a raw stench,

not the eating of meat.

Those who are very greedy,
constantly intent
on hindering and killing;
beings who, after passing away,
go to darkness,
fall headfirst into hell:
This is a raw stench,
not the eating of meat.

No fish & meat,2
no fasting, no nakedness,
no shaven head, no tangled hair,
no rough animal skins,
no performance of fire oblations,
or the many austerities
to become an immortal in the world,
no chants, no oblations,
no performance of sacrifices
at the proper season—
purify a mortal
who hasn't crossed over doubt.

One should go about
guarded
with regard to those things,
one's faculties understood,
standing firm in the Dhamma,
delighting in being straightforward
& mild.
Attachments past,

all suffering abandoned,

the enlightened one

isn't smeared

by what's heard or seen."

Thus the Blessed One,

explained the meaning again & again.

The one

who had mastered chants

understood it.

With variegated verses

the sage—

free from raw stench,

unfettered, indomitable3—

proclaimed it.

Hearing the Awakened One's

well-spoken word—

free from raw stench,

dispelling all stress—

the one with lowered mind

paid homage to the Tathāgata,

chose the Going Forth right there.

vv. 239–252

Notes

1. Visama: See Sn 1:12, note 11.

2. According to SnA, this means "abstaining from fish & meat."

3. Durannaya. Notice that being indomitable, a "raw stench" in a discordant person, becomes a positive trait in the awakened. This sort of contrast provides the basis for the wordplay that the Sutta Nipāta occasionally uses to describe the awakened in a paradoxical way. See, for instance, the conclusion to Sn 4:13.

Publisher references (not part of the sutta)

See also: MN 55