

## WITHOUT THE MIND BODY IS WORTHLESS

### 3 (7) The Story of Tissa, the Monk with a Stinking Body (Verse 41)

**W**hile residing at the Jētavana Monastery, the Buddha spoke this verse, with reference to the monk Tissa.

After taking a meditation topic from the Buddha, monk Tissa was diligently practicing meditation when he was afflicted with a disease. Small boils appeared all over his body and these developed into big sores. When these sores burst, his upper and lower robes became sticky and stained with body fluids, and his body was stinking. For this reason, he was known as Pūtigattatissa, Tissa the thera with a stinking body.

Now the Buddhas never failed to survey the world twice a day. At dawn he surveys the world, looking from the rim of the world towards the perfumed chamber. Now at this time the Venerable Pūtigatta Tissa appeared within the net of the Buddha's sight.

The Buddha, knowing that the monk Tissa was ripe for arahatship, thought to himself, "This monk has been abandoned by his associates; at the present time he has no other refuge than me." Accordingly the Buddha departed from the perfumed chamber, and pretending to be making the rounds of the monastery, went to the hall where the fire was kept. He washed the boiler, placed it on the brazier, waited in the fire-room for the water to boil, and when he knew it was hot, went and took hold of the end of the bed where that monk was lying.

At that time the monks said to the Buddha, "Pray depart, Venerable; we will carry him out for you." So saying, they took up the bed and carried Tissa into the fire-room. The Buddha caused the monks to take Tissa's upper garment, wash it thoroughly in hot water, and lay it in the sunshine to dry. Then he went, and taking his stand near Tissa, moistened his body with warm water and bathed him.

At the end of his bath his upper garment was dry. The Buddha caused him to be clothed in his upper gar-

ment and washed thoroughly his under garment in hot water and laid in the sun to dry. As soon as the water had evaporated from his body, his under garment was dry. Thereupon Tissa put on his under garment and, with body refreshed and mind tranquil, lay down on the bed. The Buddha took his stand at Tissa's pillow and said to him, "Monk, consciousness will depart from you, your body will become useless and, like a log, will lie on the ground." At the end of the discourse monk Tissa attained arahatship together with analytical insight, and soon passed away.

#### Explanatory Translation (Verse 41)

*ayaṃ kāyō vata aciraṃ apētaviññānō chuddhō niratthaṃ kaliṅgaram iva paṭhaviṃ adhisessati*

*ayaṃ kāyō*: this body; *vata*: certainly; *aciraṃ*: soon; *apēta viññānō*: will be bereft of consciousness; *chuddhō*: discarded; *iva*: like; *niratthaṃ*: worthless; *kaliṅgaram*: a decayed log; *paṭhaviṃ*: on the ground; *adhi sessati*: lies

Soon, this body, without consciousness, discarded like a decayed worthless log, will lie on the earth.

#### Commentary

*aciraṃ vata*: very soon, without any doubt. The stanza explains the condition of the human body. Soon it will certainly decay.

*chuddhō*: will be thrown aside. However much friends and relations love a person, when he is alive, when he dies the body will be thrown away.

*niratthaṃ kaliṅgaram*: the discarded body will lie like a rotten log. It will be of no use to anyone. Once consciousness is gone, without life, our body is useless. It is worse than a log of wood, because the body cannot be put to any use, though a log of wood could be made use of, in some way.

