

Majjhima Nikāya - The Middle Length Discourses

The Potter Ghatikara (Ghatikara Sutta)

I heard thus.

At one time the Blessed One, was going on a tour in the country of Kosala, with a large community of bhikkhus. The Blessed One, coming to a certain region, stepped out of the path and smiled. Then it occurred to venerable Ananda. The Blessed One does not smile for nothing. Why did the Blessed One smile? Then venerable Ananda, arranging his robe on one shoulder, clasped his hands towards the Blessed One and said. ‘Venerable sir, for what reason did the Blessed One smile?’ ‘Ananda, in the past in this region, there was a chief village named Vebhalinga. It was very prosperous and highly populated. The perfect rightfully enlightened one Kassapa abode supported on this village. Ananda, the perfect rightfully enlightened one Kassapa sat here and advised the community of bhikkhus.’

Venerable Ananda folded the robe in four and placing it there said. ‘Then venerable sir, sit here, so that it would be partaken by two perfect rightfully enlightened ones.’ The Blessed One sat on it and addressed venerable Ananda. ‘In this chief village Vebhalinga there was a potter named Ghatikara the chief supporter of the Blessed One, and he had an apprentice named Jotipala, a young lovable man. Then the potter Ghatikara addressed the young man Jotipala. Friend, Jotipala, let us go and see the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect, and rightfully enlightened. It is good to see such enlightened ones. Ananda. When this was said, the young man Jotipala said thus: Friend, ghatikara, what use comes seeing these monkish shavellings. For the second time the potter Ghatikara said Friend, Jotipala, let us go and see the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect, and rightfully enlightened. It is good to see such enlightened ones.. For the third time the potter Ghatikara said Friend, Jotipala, let us go and see the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect, and rightfully enlightened. It is good to see such enlightened ones,--
- For the third time the young man Jotipala said Friend, Ghatikara, what use comes seeing these monkish shavellings.

Then friend Jotipala, take the soap powder and the brush and let's go to the river, to bathe. To that he agreed and they went to the river to bathe. At the river too the potter Ghatikara addressed the young man. Good friend, Jotipala, the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect and rightfully enlightened one's monastery is close by. Let us go and see him, it is good to see such enlightened ones. When this was said, again the young man said, Friend, Ghatikara, what use comes seeing these monkish shavellings. Ananda, for the second and third time the young man Jotipala said this. Then the potter Ghatikara took hold of the young man Jotipala by his girdle and said again, Friend, Jotipala, let us go to see the Blessed one Kassapa, perfect, and rightfully enlightened. It is good to see such enlightened ones. The young man released himself from that hold and said, Friend, ghatikara, what use comes seeing these monkish shavellings. Then the potter Ghatikara, held the young man's well washed hair and said. Good friend, Jotipala, the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect and rightfully enlightened one's monastery is close by. Let us go and see him. It is good to see such enlightened ones. Ananda, then it occurred to the young man Jotipala, it is wonderful, how this potter Ghatikara should think to touch the washed hair of one of high birth like me. He does not think it should not be touched. Then he said. 'Let it be your wish.' 'Good friend, Jotipala, let it be your wish too! Seeing, these perfect rightfully enlightened ones is good.' . .

Friend, Ghatikara loosen the hold and let us go now. Then Ananda, the potter Ghatikana and the young man Jotipala approached the monastery of the perfect, rightfully enlightened one, Kassapa. The potter Ghatikara worshipped the Blessed One and sat on a side, the young man Jotipala exchanged friendly greetings with the perfect rightfully enlightened Blessed One Kassapa and sat on a side. The potter Ghatikara said thus to the perfect, rightfully enlightened one Kassapa. 'Venerable sir, this is my loveable friend and assistant, Jotipala, give him the Teaching.' The Blessed One Kassapa perfect, rightfully enlightened one advised, instructed incited and made the hearts light of the young man Jotipala and the potter Ghatikara. Then the two of them delighted and pleased got up from their seats, worshipped, circumambulated the Blessed One and went away.

Then the young man Jotipala said to the potter Ghatikara. ‘Friend, Ghatikara, you hear this Teaching, why don’t you leave the household and become a homeless?’

‘Friend, Jotipala, don’t you know, that I support my mother and father, who are blind and decayed?’

‘Then friend, Ghatikara I will leave the household and become a homeless.’

.The young man Jotipala and the potter Ghatikara approached the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect, rightfully enlightened, worshipped and sat on a side. Then the potter Ghatikara said thus to the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened. ‘Venerable sir, this is my loveable friend and assistant Jotipala, give him the going forth.’. The young man Jotipala received the going forth and the higher ordination from the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect, rightfully enlightened. Ananda, the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened two weeks after conferring the higher ordination on the young man Jotipala, went on a tour to Benares, and gradually reached Benares.

Then, Ananda, the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened lived in Benares in the deer park in Isipatana. The king of Benares Kiki Kaasiraajaa heard, the Blessed One Kassapa perfect, rightfully enlightened has arrived in Benares and he got good conveyances arranged for himself, and came to see the Blessed One Kassapa in all royal splendour. Covering as far as the conveyances could go, he approached the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened on foot. Worshipped the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened and sat on a side. The Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened, advised, instructed, incited and made the heart light of the king of Benares, Kiki Kaasiraajaa. Then the delighted and pleased king invited the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened for the next day’s meal together with the community of bhikkhus. The Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened, accepted the invitation in silence. Then king Kiki Kaasiraajaa knowing that the Blessed One Kassapa had accepted the invitation got up from his seat worshipped and circumambulated the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened and went away. King Kiki Kaasiraajaa in his palace made preparations of various

nourishing eatables and drinks, with cooked rice with the fine rice of the colour pale yellow with the dark seeds picked and informed the Blessed One: Venerable sir, the meal is ready, and it's time for the meal.

Then Ananda, the Blessed One Kassapa putting on robes in the morning and taking bowl and robes, together with the Community of bhikkhus approached the palace of king Kiki Kaasiraajaa and sat on the seats prepared. The king served and satisfied the Blessed One Kassapa perfect, rightfully enlightened and the community of bhikkhus with his own hands. When the meal was over and the bowl was put away. King Kiki Kaasiraaja took a low seat and sitting said thus to the Blessed One: Venerable sir, may the Blessed One accept to spend the rains in Benares, I will attend on the Blessed One and the community in this manner. The Blessed One Kassapa perfect and rightfully enlightened said I have already accepted to spend the rains. King Kiki Kaasiraajaa entreated the Blessed One up to the third time and the Blessed One Kassapa said I have already accepted to spend the rains. Then king Kiki Kaasiraajaa was displeased and unpleasant, thinking, the Blessed One Kassapa perfect rightfully enlightened does not accept my invitation. He asked the Blessed One Kassapa. Venerable sir, is there some other enticing supporter? Great king, in the chief village, Vebhalinga there is a potter named Ghatikara, he is my chief supporter. To you, great king there is a change in the mind (* and displeasure thinking the Blessed One Kassapa does not accept my invitation to spend the rains in Benares. To the potter Ghatikara, such a thing does not happen, and will not happen. Great king, the potter Ghatikara has taken refuge in the enlightenment, in the Teaching and the Community of bhikkhus. Abstains from destroying life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from misbehaviour in sexuality, abstains from telling lies and abstains from intoxicating drinks. Great king, the potter Ghatikara has unwavering faith in Enlightenment, in the Teaching and the Community of bhikkhus. Is endowed with the virtues of the noble ones. Great king, the potter Ghatikara has overcome doubts about unpleasantness, about the arising of unpleasantness, about the cessation of unpleasantness and the path to the cessation of unpleasantness. Great king, the potter Ghatikara takes one meal per day, is virtuous and leads a holy life. Great king, he has put aside gold and gems, sovereign gold and silver. He does not till the ground with a mamoty or with his hand. He puts rats, mice and dogs into a box in a friendly manner and puts the left overs of rice, green grams or chick peas into it and leaves them saying take away whatever you wish. Great king, the

potter Ghatikara supports his blind decayed mother and father. Great king, the potter Ghatikara has destroyed the five lower bonds to the sensual world, is born spontaneously, will not proceed from that world and will extinguish in that same birth.

Great king, at one time I lived in the chief village Vebhalinga, then in the morning I put on robes and taking bowl and robes approached the mother and father of the potter Ghatikara, and told them. 'Now, where has this good one gone?' 'Venerable sir, your supporter has gone out. Venerable sir, take the cooked rice from the pot and soups and curries and partake of the food.' 'Then great king I take the cooked rice from the pot and soups and curries, partake of the food and go away. Then, great king, the potter Ghatikara would approach his mother and father and would ask: Who is it that came, took the rice from the pot and the soups and curries, partaking them, got up from the seat and has gone away?' 'Dear one, it is the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect and rightfully enlightened that took the rice from the pot and the soups and curries and partaking them, getting up from the seat has gone away.' 'Then it occurs to the potter Ghatikara, it is great gain for me, that the Blessed One, perfect and rightfully enlightened has taken me into such confidence. That pleasant joy would not leave him for two weeks, and for the mother and father it lasted one week.

Great king, at one time I lived in the chief village Vebhalinga, then in the morning I put on robes and taking bowl and robes approached the mother and father of the potter Ghatikaara, and told them.. Now, where has this good one gone?' 'Venerable sir, your supporter has gone out. Venerable sir, take the bread from the caldron and soups and curries and partake of the food.' 'Then great king I take the bread from the caldron and soups and curries, partake of the food and go away. Then, great king, the potter Ghatikaara would approach his mother and father and would ask: Who is it that came, took the bread from the caldron and the soups and curries, partaking them, got up from the seat and has gone away?' 'Dear one, it is the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect rightfully enlightened that took the bread from the caldron and the soups and curries partaking them, getting up from the seat has gone.' 'Then it occurred to the potter Ghatikara, it is great gain for me, that the Blessed One, perfect rightfully enlightened has taken me into such confidence. That pleasant joy would not leave him for two weeks, and for the mother and father it lasted one week.

Great king, at one time I lived in the chief village Vebhalinga, at that time my perfumed chamber was leaking, then I addressed the bhikkhus: Bhikkhus, do you know, the grass in the potter Ghatikara's house? Go! bring them. Great king, when this was said, the bhikkhus said. 'Venerable sir, there is no grass in the potter Ghatikara's house. There is his thatched roof of grass.' Then I said, 'Go bhikkhus, bring the grass of the thatched roof of the potter Ghatikara's house.' Then the bhikkhus removed the grass from the thatched roof of the potter Ghatikara's house. Then great king, the mother and father of the potter Ghatikara said. 'Who is it that removes the grass from the roof?' 'Sister, it is the bhikkhus, the Blessed One perfect rightfully enlightened one's perfumed chamber is leaking.' 'Take them! Good ones, you speak good words.' Then great king, the potter Ghatikara coming home approached his mother and father and asked. 'Who removed the grass from the roof?' 'It's the bhikkhus, dear one, the roof of the perfumed chamber of the Blessed One Kassapa, perfect and rightfully enlightened one is leaking.' Then it occurred to the potter Ghatikara. It is great gain for me, that the Blessed One perfect and rightfully enlightened has taken me into such confidence. That pleasant joy would not leave him for two weeks, and for the mother and father it lasted one week. Then that house stood roofless for three months and it did not rain. Great king, the potter Ghatikara is such a one.'

'Venerable sir, it is great gain for the potter Ghatikaara that the Blessed One spend the rains in this manner.'

'Then Ananda, king Kiki Kaasiraajaa sent about five hundred cart loads of pale yellow coloured, fine rice, and as much accompanying necessary things for them to the potter Ghatikaara. The royal messengers approached the potter Ghatikaara and said Good sir, these five hundred cart loads of pale yellow coloured fine rice, and as much accompanying necessary things are sent to you by king Kiki Kaasiraajaa accept them. The king has much work to do, it may be to me from the king.'

Ananda, it might occur to you. 'Did this young man Jotipala attain perfection then?'. 'It should not be thought in that manner. I was Jotipala at that time.'

The Blessed One said thus and venerable Ananda delighted in the words of the Blessed One.’

Notes:

(*) A change in the mind ‘ na bhagavaa vassa.m adhivaaseti atthi a~n~nathatta.matthi domaanassa.m’
The change in the mind is, the mind feeling unpleasant instantly. It happened to the king, when the Blessed One Kassapa would not accept to spend the rains in his kingdom.

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