

Selected Discourses from The Dighanikāya



by
Bhikkhu Pesala

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Bhikkhu Pesala

Association for Insight Meditation

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Foreword

These translations are my own. They differ on some key points from those of Maurice Walshe, Rhys Davids, Ajahn Thanissaro, and other translators. Translation from Pāḷi to English is an art rather than a science. My aim has always been to make them easy to understand rather than to be grammatically accurate or literal. The meaning sometimes only becomes clear on knowing the context of the discourse. I have consulted the Commentary where I could.

I have added footnotes to explain my choice of words, and to provide cross-references to other translations on my website.

In several places I have added the Pāḷi term in parenthesis. An index serves as a glossary of Pāḷi terms used in the translation.

The order of the discourses is numerical, rather than alphabetical as it is on my Website.

I welcome feedback to tell me about typos and obvious errors and omissions, but be gentle. I know I am not a Pāḷi scholar.

Bhikkhu Pesala

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Kevaṭṭa Suttam

A Discourse to Kevaṭṭa

The Householder's Son Kevaṭṭa

481. Thus have I heard — at one time the Blessed One was dwelling at Nālandā in Pāvārika's mango grove. Then the householder's son Kevaṭṭa approached the Blessed One, and having approached, paid homage, and sat down at one side. Sitting at one side, the householder's son Kevaṭṭa said to the Blessed One: "Venerable sir, this Nālandā is prosperous, wealthy, and populous, full of people who have faith in the Blessed One. It would be good, Venerable sir, if the Blessed One would instruct one monk to perform a superhuman¹ mystic wonder (*pāṭihāriya*) of psychic power (*iddhi*), thus this Nālandā would grow in faith for the Blessed One."

When this was said, the Blessed One said to Kevaṭṭa, the householder's son: "I do not, Kevaṭṭa, teach the Dhamma to the monks thus: 'Go and perform a superhuman feat of psychic power for householders dressed in white.'"

482. [A second and a third time, Kevaṭṭa, the householder's son, repeated his request, and the Blessed One replied as before]. [212]

The Mystic Wonder of Psychic Powers

483. "Kevaṭṭa, there are these three mystic wonders (*pāṭihāriya*) which, having realised them myself by direct knowledge, I explain them. What three? The mystic wonder of psychic power (*iddhipāṭihāriya*), the mystic wonder of mind-reading (*ādesanāpāṭihāriyaṃ*), and the mystic wonder of instruction (*anusāsanipāṭihāriyaṃ*).

484. "What, Kevaṭṭa, is the mystic wonder of psychic power (*iddhipāṭihāriya*)? Here, Kevaṭṭa, a monk displays various kinds of psychic power. Having been one, he becomes many; having been many, he becomes one; having been visible, he becomes invisible; having been invisible, he becomes visible; he passes through fences, walls, and mountains unhindered as if it was air; he plunges into the earth and emerges from it as if it was water; he sits cross-legged in the sky like a bird with wings; he touches with his hand the sun and the moon, mighty though they are; [213] he goes with his body even to the Brahma world.

¹Superhuman (*uttarimanussadhamma*). A state that is beyond the capability of ordinary human beings. A Vinaya rule forbids monks from exhibiting such powers. I do not know if the rule was laid down before or after the events described here.

“Then a certain person with faith (*saddho*) and devotion (*passano*)¹ sees that monk display various kinds of psychic power ... Brahma world.

“Then that person with faith and devotion tells a person without faith and devotion: ‘It is wonderful, friend! It is marvellous, friend! The recluses are of great power and skill. Our monk displays various kinds of psychic power. Having been one, he becomes many ... even to the Brahma world.

“Then that person without faith and devotion would say: ‘There is, friend, the Gandhāri charm. With that your monk displays various kinds of psychic power ... Brahma world.

“What do you think, Kevaṭṭa? Wouldn’t a person without faith and devotion say that?” “They would say that, Venerable sir.” “Seeing that danger in the mystic wonder of psychic powers, Kevaṭṭa, I am troubled by² the mystic wonder of psychic powers, I am ashamed of it, and I shun it.”

The Mystic Wonder of Mind-reading

485. “What, Kevaṭṭa, is the mystic wonder of mind-reading? Here, Kevaṭṭa, a monk points out the thoughts of other beings, of other individuals, he points out their thoughts and reflections: ‘Thus is your mind, your wish, thus are your thoughts.’

“Then a certain person with faith and devotion sees that monk sees that monk pointing out the thoughts of other beings, of other individuals ... ‘Thus is your mind, your wish, thus are your thoughts.’ Then that person with faith and devotion tells a person without faith and devotion: [214] ‘It is wonderful, friend! It is marvellous, friend! The recluses are of great power and skill. Our monk points out the thoughts of others ... thus are your thoughts.’

“Then that person without faith and devotion would say: ‘There is, friend, the Maṇikā charm. With that your monk reads the thoughts of other beings, or other individuals ... ‘Thus is your mind, your wish, thus are your thoughts.’

¹ Maurice Walshe translates these two terms (*saddho passano*) as “one with faith and trust,” and their opposites (*assaddho appassano*) as “one who is sceptical and unbelieving.” Ajahn Thanissaro translates them as “faith and conviction,” and “without faith and conviction.” The word “*passano*” is from the verb *pasīdati* = to be pleased, calm, peaceful, to find satisfaction.

² Troubled by (*aṭṭiyāmi*), ashamed of it (*harāyāmi*), and shun it (*jigucchāmi*). The Buddha is free from anxiety and all other mental defilements, but he is concerned for the welfare of all beings. In this case, one without faith and devotion would have unwholesome thoughts that monks exhibiting mystic wonders are using magic tricks to deceive others. When illusionists perform magic tricks, some gullible people are deceived and shocked, while those who know how the tricks are done, or those who are sceptical are not deceived, even if they do not know the method, they know that is just an illusion. Superhuman feats are not tricks, but genuine psychic powers gained by those with deep concentration. To convince the sceptical it is better to use the miracle of instruction.

“What do you think, Kevaṭṭa? Wouldn’t a person without faith and devotion say that?” “They would say that, Venerable sir.” “Seeing that danger in the mystic wonder of mind-reading, Kevaṭṭa, I am troubled by the mystic wonder of mind-reading, I am ashamed of it, and I shun it.

The Mystic Wonder of Instruction

486. “What, Kevaṭṭa, is the mystic wonder of instruction? Here, Kevaṭṭa, a monk instructs thus: ‘Apply your mind thus, do not apply your mind thus, pay attention thus, do not pay attention thus, reject this, cultivate that and abide in it.’ This, Kevaṭṭa, is called the mystic wonder of instruction.

“Again, Kevaṭṭa, a Tathāgata arises in the world ... [continued as in the Sāmaññaphala Sutta, which is similar, but not identical to, the Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya Sutta] [215] This, Kevaṭṭa, is called the mystic wonder of instruction.

“These three mystic wonders, Kevaṭṭa, having realised them myself with direct knowledge, I explain them.”

The Story of a Monk and the Cessation of the Four Elements

487. “At one time, Kevaṭṭa, in this order of monks, this train of thought arose in a certain monk: ‘Where do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’

488. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk attained such a state of concentration that the path to the realm of gods arose in him.¹ Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached the deities of the Four Great Kings, and having approached them said to those deities: ‘Where do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’

“When this was said, Kevaṭṭa, the deities of the Four Great Kings said to that monk: ‘Monk, we also do not know where the four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element. There are, monk, the Four Great Kings who surpass us and are superior to us. They may know where the four great elements cease without remainder ...’

¹ When relating this long account of a monk with psychic powers who is able to visit the various celestial realms, the Buddha is not troubled that Kevaṭṭa, who has faith and devotion, might not believe him. The Buddhist texts contain many such accounts of psychic powers, mind-reading, predictions, and deities visiting the Buddha or a forest monk to ask questions. The well known *Maṅgala Sutta* is just one example, where the Buddha replies to a question asked by a deity.

489. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached the Four Great Kings ... the deities of the Thirty-three (Tāvatiṃsa) ... [216]

490. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached the deities of the Thirty-three ... [217]

491. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached Sakka the king of the gods ... the Yāma gods ... the deity Suyāma ... [218] the gods of Tusita ... the god Santussito ... the Nimmānarati gods ... [219] the god Sunimmito ... the Paranimmitavasavatti gods ... the god Vasavatti ...

492. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached the god Vasavatti ... the Brahmakāyika gods who surpass me and are superior to me. [220] They may know where the four great elements cease without remainder ... ’

493. Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk attained such a state of concentration that the path to the realm of Brahma arose in him. Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached the Brahmakāyika gods, and having approached them said to those deities: ‘Where, friends, do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’

“When this was said, Kevaṭṭa, the Brahmakāyika deities said to that monk: ‘Monk, we also do not know where the four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element. There is, monk, Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Almighty (*abhibhū*), the invincible (*anabhibhūto*), the Omniscient (*aññadattḥudaso*), the Lord (*vasavatti*), the ruler (*issaro*), the maker (*katta*), the Creator (*nimmātā*), the supreme (*setṭho*), the originator (*sajitā*), the master (*vasī*), the father (*pitā*) of all that exists and will exist (*bhūtabhavyānaṃ*) who surpasses us and is superior to us. He may know where the four great elements cease without remainder ... ’

“Where, friends, is that Great Brahma now?” “We do not know, monk, where Brahma is, nor from where he will appear, nor when he will appear. However, monk, when a sign is seen, a light is born, radiance appears, Brahma will appear, these are signs of his appearance. Then, Kevaṭṭa, before long the Great Brahma appeared. [221]

494. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk approached the Great Brahma, and having approached, said to that Great Brahma: ‘Where, friend, do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’ When this was said, Kevaṭṭa, the Great Brahma said to that monk: ‘I am, monk, Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Almighty, the invincible, the Omniscient, the Lord, the ruler, the maker, the Creator, the supreme, the originator, the master, the father of all that exists and will exist.’

“Then a second time, Kevaṭṭa, that bhikkhu spoke to the Great Brahma: ‘I did not, friend ask you thus: ‘Are you Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Almighty, the invincible, the Omniscient, the Lord, the ruler, the maker, the Creator, the supreme, the originator, the master, the father of all that exists and will exist.’ I asked you thus, friend, ‘Where do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’

“Then a second time, Kevaṭṭa, the Great Brahma said to that monk: ‘I am, monk, Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Almighty, the invincible, the Omniscient, the Lord, the ruler, the maker, the Creator, the supreme, the originator, the master, the father of all that exists and will exist.’

“Then a third time, Kevaṭṭa, that bhikkhu spoke to the Great Brahma: ‘I did not, friend ask you thus: ‘Are you Brahma, the Great Brahma, the Almighty, the invincible, the Omniscient, the Lord, the ruler, the maker, the Creator, the supreme, the originator, the master, the father of all that exists and will exist.’ I asked you thus, friend, ‘Where do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’

495. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, the Great Brahma, having taken that monk by the arm and led him aside,¹ [222] said to that monk: ‘These Brahmakāyika gods believe (*jānanti*) thus: “There is nothing that the Brahma does not know, there is nothing that the Brahma does not see, there is nothing that the Brahma does not understand, there is nothing that the Brahma does not realise.” Therefore, I did not speak in their presence. I too, monk, do not know where the four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element. Therefore, monk, the fault is yours, the mistake is yours, that you have bypassed the Blessed One and sought the answer to your question elsewhere. Go, monk, to that Blessed One, and having approached him, ask him this question, however the Blessed One replies, that is how you should bear it in mind.”

496. “Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk as a strong man would stretch out his bent arm, or bend his outstretched arm he departed from the Brahma realm and appeared in front of me. Then, Kevaṭṭa, that monk, having paid homage, sat

¹ The irony of this passage is hilarious. Whoever says that the Buddha lacked a sense of humour is not familiar with such passages. The Great Brahma who is extolled, and extols himself in such magnificent terms as Almighty, Omniscient, the Lord of all beings that exist or that will exist, and so forth, knows himself that it just a vain pretence that he has to maintain to save face with his sycophantic junior deities. That is why I translate “*jānanti*,” as “believe,” rather than with its usual meaning of “know.” The Buddha often mocked the Brahmins, who believed that Brahma was their Almighty Creator.

down at one side. Sitting at one side, Kevaṭṭa, that monk said to me, ‘Where do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’”

The Simile of the Shore-finding Bird

497. “When this was said, Kevaṭṭa, I said to that monk: ‘At one time, monk, ocean-going merchants, taking a shore-finding bird entered the ocean with their ship. Not able to see the shore, they would release the shore-finding bird from the ship. It would fly to the east, south, west, and north, up and down, flying in all directions. If it saw the shore, it would fly in that direction. If it was not able to see the shore, it would return to the ship. Thus in this way, monk, you have sought the answer to your question [223] as far as the Brahma realm, but not finding it, you have returned to my presence. However, monk, this question should not be asked thus: ‘Where do these four great elements cease without remainder, that is to say, the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the air element?’”

498. “This is how, monk, the question should be asked —

“Where do water and earth, fire and air, find no firm footing?¹

Where are long and short, small and large, beautiful and ugly,

Where are mind and matter annihilated without remainder?”

499. “The answer to that is —

“In that consciousness that is invisible,² immeasurable, radiant in every respect.

Here, water and earth, fire and air, find no firm footing.

Here, long and short, small and large, beautiful and ugly,

Here, mind and matter are annihilated without remainder.

With the cessation of consciousness, here this is annihilated.”

500. Thus spoke the Blessed One. Delighted, Kevaṭṭa the householder’s son rejoiced in what the Blessed One had said.

¹ This is, of course, a very different question. The four elements do not cease when an Arahant attains nibbāna.

² The consciousness that is invisible (*anidassanaṃ*) is a term for the mind that knows nibbāna. One who realises nibbāna is not unconscious; the mind takes nibbāna as its object. Nibbāna cannot be seen, heard, smelt, tasted, nor touched. However, it can be known by the mind.

Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Suttam

The Greater Discourse on the Foundations of Mindfulness

372. “Thus have I heard — at one time the Blessed One was dwelling among the Kurū people, at Kammāsadhamma, a market town of the Kurū people. There the Blessed One addressed the monks — “Monks!” “Venerable sir,” those monks replied to the Blessed One. Then the Blessed One said:—

Introduction

373. “This is the only way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the transcendence of grief and lamentation, for the extinguishing of pain and sorrow, for attaining the right method, for the realisation of nibbāna, that is to say the four foundations of mindfulness.”

“What four? Here, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world; he dwells contemplating feelings in feelings, ... he dwells contemplating thoughts in thoughts ... he dwells contemplating mental-objects in mental-objects ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world.” [291]

Body Contemplation: Mindfulness of Breathing Section

374. “How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating the body in the body? Here, monks a monk, having gone to a forest, to the root of a tree, or to an empty place, having sat down cross-legged, and sitting erect, he establishes mindfulness in front of his face. He breathes in mindfully, he breathes out mindfully. When breathing in a long breath he knows, ‘I breathe in a long breath.’ When breathing in a short breath he knows, ‘I breathe in a short breath.’ When breathing out a long breath he knows, ‘I breathe out a long breath.’ When breathing out a short breath he knows, ‘I breathe out a short breath.’ ‘Experiencing the entire breath I will breathe in,’ he trains himself. ‘Experiencing the entire breath I will breathe out,’ he trains himself. ‘Calming the bodily formations I will breathe in,’ he trains himself. ‘Calming the bodily formations I will breathe out,’ he trains himself.”

“Just, monks, as a skilful turner or a turner's apprentice knows a long pull when a long pull is made, or knows a short pull when a short pull is made, even so, monks, a monk when breathing in a long inhalation is conscious of breathing in a long inhalation, or breathing out a long exhalation is conscious

of breathing out a long exhalation, or breathing in a short inhalation is conscious of breathing in a short inhalation, or breathing out a short exhalation is conscious of breathing out a short exhalation. He trains himself to be clearly conscious of the whole of the in-coming breath at its beginning, its middle, and at its end. He trains himself to be clearly conscious of the whole of the out-going breath at its beginning, its middle, and at its end. He trains himself to calm down the strong inhalation as he breathes in. He trains himself to calm down the strong exhalation as he breathes out. [292]

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally (his own body), or he dwells contemplating the body externally (the body of another), or he dwells contemplating both. He dwells contemplating origination factors in the body, or he dwells contemplating dissolution factors in the body, or he dwells contemplating origination and dissolution factors in the body. Or his mindfulness is established with the thought: ‘The body exists,’ just to the extent necessary for knowledge and mindfulness. He dwells independent and clings to nothing in the world. Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

Body Contemplation: Four Postures Section

375. Again, monks, when walking, a monk knows, ‘I am walking,’ or when standing, he knows, ‘I am standing,’ or when sitting he knows, ‘I am sitting,’ or when lying down, he knows ‘I am lying down,’ or however his body is disposed, he knows it.

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally ... Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

Body Contemplation: Clear Comprehension Section

376. “Again, monks, a monk, in going and coming practises clear comprehension; in looking ahead or to the side, he practises clear comprehension; in bending and stretching the limbs, he practises clear comprehension; in carrying the double robe and alms-bowl, and wearing the robes, he practises clear comprehension; in eating, drinking, chewing, and tasting, he practises clear comprehension; in defecating and urinating, he practises clear comprehension; in walking, standing, or sitting, in falling asleep and waking up, in speaking or remaining silent, he practises clear comprehension.” [293]

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally ... Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

Body Contemplation: Attention to Repulsiveness Section

377. “Again, monks, a monk reflects on this very body encased in skin and full of various foul things from the soles of the feet to the hairs on top of the head — in this body are head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, skin;¹ flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow, kidneys;² heart, liver, membranes, spleen, lungs;³ large intestine, small intestine, stomach, faeces, [brain];⁴ bile, phlegm, pus, blood, sweat, fat;⁵ tears, grease, saliva, snot, synovial fluid, and urine.”⁶

“It is, monks, like a bag with an opening at each end, full of various kinds of grain such as hill-paddy, paddy, green gram, cow-pea, sesame and husked rice; and a man with sound eyes, having opened it, should examine and reflect on the contents thus: ‘This is hill-paddy, this is lowland-paddy, this is green gram, this is cow-pea, this is sesame, this is husked rice,’ even so, monks, a monk examines and reflects on this very body, from the soles of the feet to the top of the hair on the head, enclosed by the skin and full of manifold impurities, “There are in this body: hair of the head ... [294] urine.”

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally ... Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

Body Contemplation: Attention to the Elements Section

378. “Again, monks, a monk reflects on the elements in this very body however it is disposed — ‘In this body are the earth element, the water element, the fire element, and the wind element.’”

“Just, monks, as a skilful butcher or a butcher’s apprentice, having slaughtered a cow, and cut it up into portions, sits at a cross-roads. Similarly, monks, a monk reflects on the four elements in this very body however it is disposed — in this body are the elements of earth, water, fire, and air.”

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally ... [295] Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

Body Contemplation: Nine Cemetery Objects Section

379. “Again, monks, if a monk should see a body in the cemetery, one, two, or three days dead, bloated, blue or black in colour, and festering, he compares his own body to it: “This very body too is of the same nature, it will become like that, and it has not transcended that.”

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally ... Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

¹ The skin pentad.

² The kidneys pentad.

³ The lungs pentad.

⁴ The brain pentad.

⁵ The fat sextad.

⁶ The urine sextad.

“Again, monks, if a monk should see a body in the cemetery, being devoured by crows, being devoured by hawks, being devoured by vultures, being devoured by herons, being devoured by dogs, being devoured by tigers, being devoured by leopards, being devoured by jackals, or being devoured by various kinds of worms, he compares his own body to it: “This very body too is of the same nature, it will become like that, and it has not transcended that.” [296]

“Again, monks, if a monk should see a body in the cemetery, reduced to a skeleton held together by tendons, with some flesh and blood still adhering to it ... reduced to a skeleton held together by tendons, blood-besmeared, fleshless ... reduced to a skeleton still held together by tendons, without flesh and blood ... reduced to loose bones scattered in all directions — at one place bones of a hand, at another place bones of a foot, at another place ankle-bones, at another place shin-bones, at another place thigh-bones, at another place hip-bones, at another place rib-bones, at another place spinal-bones, [297] at another place shoulder-bones, at another place neck-bones, at another place the jawbone, at another place the teeth, at another place the skull, he compares his own body to it: “This very body too is of the same nature, it will become like that, and it has not transcended that.”

“Again, monks, if a monk should see a body in the cemetery, reduced to bleached bones of conch-like colour ... reduced to bones more than a year old, lying in a heap ... reduced to rotted bones, crumbling to dust, he compares his own body to it: “This very body too is of the same nature, it will become like that, and it has not transcended that.”

“Thus he dwells contemplating the body internally ... [298] Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body.”

Contemplation of Feelings

380. “How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating feelings? Here, monk, a monk, when feeling a pleasant feeling he knows, ‘I feel a pleasant feeling.’ When feeling a painful feeling he knows, ‘I feel a painful feeling.’ When feeling a neutral feeling he knows, ‘I feel a neutral feeling.’ When feeling a pleasant sensual feeling he knows, ‘I feel a pleasant sensual feeling.’ When feeling a pleasant non-sensual feeling he knows, ‘I feel a pleasant non-sensual feeling.’ When feeling an unpleasant sensual feeling he knows, ‘I feel an unpleasant sensual feeling.’ When feeling an unpleasant non-sensual feeling he knows, ‘I feel an unpleasant non-sensual feeling.’ When feeling a neutral sensual feeling he knows, ‘I feel a neutral sensual feeling.’ When feeling a neutral non-sensual feeling he knows, ‘I feel a neutral non-sensual feeling.’”

“Thus he dwells contemplating feelings internally ... [299] Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating feelings in feelings.”

Contemplation of Thoughts

381. “Again, monks, how does a monk dwell contemplating thoughts in thoughts? Here, monks, when a thought with lust¹ is present he knows, ‘A lustful thought is present.’ When a thought free from lust is present he knows, ‘A thought free from lust is present.’ When a thought with anger is present he knows, ‘A thought with anger² is present.’ When a thought free from anger is present he knows, ‘A thought free from anger is present.’ When a deluded thought is present he knows, ‘A deluded thought³ is present.’ When an undeluded thought is present he knows, ‘An undeluded thought is present.’ When a lazy⁴ (contracted) mind is present he knows, ‘A lazy mind is present.’ When a distracted⁵ (restless) mind is present he knows, ‘A distracted mind is present.’ When a lofty⁶ mind is present he knows, ‘A lofty mind is present.’ When a non-lofty⁷ mind is present he knows, ‘A non-lofty mind is present.’ When an inferior⁸ mind is present he knows, ‘An inferior mind is present.’ When a superior mind is present he knows, ‘A superior mind is present.’ When a composed⁹ mind is present he knows, ‘A composed mind is present.’ When an uncomposed mind is present he knows, ‘An uncomposed mind is present.’ When a liberated¹⁰ mind is present he knows, ‘A liberated mind is present.’ When an unliberated mind is present he knows, ‘An unliberated mind is present.’

“Thus he dwells contemplating thoughts internally ... [300] Thus, too, monks, a monk dwells contemplating thoughts in thoughts.”

Contemplation of Mental-objects: Hindrances Section

382. “How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects in mental-objects? Here, monks, a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects

¹ *Sarāgaṃ* = lustful, with passion. All types of greedy thoughts should be included here: desire, greed, craving, covetousness, etc.

² *Sādosaṃ* = angry. All types of angry thoughts should be included here: ill-will, aversion, hatred, rage, annoyed, frustrated, disappointed, irritated, etc.

³ *Samohaṃ* = with delusion. All types of deluded thoughts should be included here: confused, conceited, proud, doubtful, etc.

⁴ *Saṅkhittam* = contracted, shrinking back from the task, lazy, bored, pessimistic, etc.

⁵ *Vikkhittam* = distracted, restless, agitated, excited, upset, perplexed, etc.

⁶ *Mahāggata* = lofty, grown great, elevated, as in the absorptions (*jhāna*).

⁷ *Amahāggata* = non-lofty, thoughts connected with the sensual realm.

⁸ *Sa-uttara* = inferior, with other thoughts that are superior to it.

⁹ *Samāhitam* = composed, concentrated, not scattered. Access concentration or absorption.

¹⁰ *Vimuttam* = liberated, free from defilements.

in the five hindrances. How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects in the five hindrances?

“Here, monks, when sensual desire is present a monk knows, ‘Sensual desire is present.’ When sensual desire is absent he knows, ‘Sensual desire is absent.’ He also knows how the unarisen sensual desire comes to arise, how the arisen sensual desire comes to be abandoned, and how the abandoned sensual desire does not arise again.

“Here, monks, when ill-will is present a monk knows, ‘Ill-will is present.’ When ill-will is absent he knows, ‘Ill-will is absent.’ He also knows how the unarisen ill-will comes to arise, how the arisen ill-will comes to be abandoned, and how the abandoned ill-will does not arise again.

“Here, monks, when sloth and torpor is present a monk knows, ‘Sloth and torpor is present.’ When sloth and torpor is absent he knows, ‘Sloth and torpor is absent.’ He also knows how the unarisen sloth and torpor comes to arise, how the arisen sloth and torpor comes to be abandoned, and how the abandoned sloth and torpor does not arise again.

“Here, monks, when restlessness and remorse is present [301] a monk knows, ‘Restlessness and remorse are present.’ When restlessness and remorse are absent he knows, ‘Restlessness and remorse are absent.’ He also knows how the unarisen restlessness and remorse come to arise, how the arisen restlessness and remorse come to be abandoned, and how the abandoned restlessness and remorse does not arise again.

“Here, monks, when doubt is present a monk knows, ‘Doubt is present.’ When doubt is absent he knows, ‘Doubt is absent.’ He also knows how the unarisen doubt comes to arise, how the arisen doubt comes to be abandoned, and how the abandoned doubt does not arise again.

“Thus he dwells contemplating mental-objects internally and externally. While contemplating mental-objects, he is aware that they arise and pass away. His awareness is established that mental-objects exist, but that they are not a being, nor a person, neither a woman nor a man, not a self nor anything pertaining to a self. He does not regard mental-objects as “I” or “mine,” thus he clings to nothing in the world. Thus, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the mental-objects of the five hindrances.

Contemplation of Mental-objects: Aggregates Section

383. “Again, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the mental-objects of the five aggregates of attachment. How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects in the mental-objects of the five

aggregates of attachment? Here, monks, a monk knows: this is matter, this is the arising of matter, this is the disappearance of matter; this is feeling, ... this is perception ... this is mental formations [302] ... this is consciousness, this is the arising of consciousness, this is the disappearance of consciousness."

"Thus he dwells contemplating mental-objects internally and externally. While contemplating mental-objects, he is aware that they arise and pass away. His awareness is established that mental-objects exist, but that they are not a being, nor a person, neither a woman nor a man, not a self nor anything pertaining to a self. He does not regard mental-objects as "I", or "mine," thus he clings to nothing in the world. Thus, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the five aggregates of attachment."

Contemplation of Mental-objects: Sense Faculties Section

384. "Again, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the six internal and external sense faculties. How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects in the six internal and external sense faculties?"

"Here, monks, a monk knows the eye and sights, and he knows the fetter that arises dependent on both. He also knows how the unarisen fetter comes to arise, how the arisen fetter comes to be abandoned, and how the abandoned fetter does not arise again."

"Here, monks, a monk knows the ear and sounds ... arise again."

"Here, monks, a monk knows the nose and odours ... arise again."

"Here, monks, a monk knows the tongue and tastes ... arise again."

"Here, monks, a monk knows the body and touches ... arise again."

"Here, monks, a monk knows the mind and ideas ... [303] arise again."

"Thus he dwells contemplating mental-objects internally and externally. While contemplating mental-objects, he is aware that they arise and pass away. His awareness is established that mental-objects exist, but that they are not a being, nor a person, neither a woman nor a man, not a self nor anything pertaining to a self. He does not regard mental-objects as "I", or "mine," thus he clings to nothing in the world. Thus, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the six internal and external sense faculties."

Contemplation of Mental-objects: Enlightenment Factors Section

385. "Again, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the seven enlightenment factors. How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects in the seven enlightenment factors? Here, monks, when the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is present in him a monk knows, 'The

enlightenment factor of mindfulness is present.' When the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of mindfulness is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of mindfulness is developed and reaches maturity."

"When the enlightenment factor of investigation is present in him he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of investigation is present.' When the enlightenment factor of investigation is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of investigation is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor of investigation comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of investigation is developed and reaches maturity."

"When the enlightenment factor of energy is present in him he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of energy is present.' When the enlightenment factor of energy is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of energy is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor of energy comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of energy is developed and reaches maturity."

"When the enlightenment factor of joy is present in him he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of joy is present.' [304] When the enlightenment factor of joy is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of joy is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor of joy comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of joy is developed and reaches maturity."

"When the enlightenment factor of tranquillity is present in him he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of tranquillity is present.' When the enlightenment factor of tranquillity is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of tranquillity is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor of tranquillity comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of tranquillity is developed and reaches maturity."

"When the enlightenment factor of concentration is present in him he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of concentration is present.' When the enlightenment factor of concentration is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of concentration is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor of concentration comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of concentration is developed and reaches maturity."

"When the enlightenment factor of equanimity is present in him he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of equanimity is present.' When the enlightenment factor of equanimity is absent he knows, 'The enlightenment factor of equanimity is absent.' He also knows how the unarisen enlightenment factor

of equanimity comes to arise, and how the arisen enlightenment factor of equanimity is developed and reaches maturity.”

“Thus he dwells contemplating mental-objects internally and externally. While contemplating mental-objects, he is aware that they arise and pass away. His awareness is established that mental-objects exist, but that they are not a being, nor a person, neither a woman nor a man, not a self nor anything pertaining to a self. He does not regard mental-objects as “I”, or “mine,” thus he clings to nothing in the world. Thus, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the seven enlightenment factors.” [305]

Contemplation of Mental-objects: The Truths Section

386. “Again, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the mental-objects of the four noble truths. How, monks, does a monk dwell contemplating mental-objects in the mental-objects of the four noble truths? Here, monks, a monk knows as it really is, “This is suffering, this is the origin of suffering, this is the cessation of suffering, this is the path leading to the cessation of suffering.”

The Exposition of the Truth of Suffering

387. “What, monks, is the noble truth of suffering? Birth is suffering, aging is suffering, death is suffering, grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair are suffering, association with the unloved is suffering, separation from the loved is suffering, not getting what one wishes is suffering, in brief the five aggregates of attachment are suffering.”

388. “What, monks, is birth? The coming into existence, the origination, the conception, arising in a new form, the appearance of the aggregates, the acquisition of sense-faculties in various beings — this, monks, is called birth.”

389. “What, monks, is aging? The process of aging and decrepitude, having broken teeth, grey hair, wrinkled skin, the fading of the life-force, the decline of the sense-faculties in various beings — this, monks, is called aging.”

390. “What, monks, is death? The decease, passing away, dissolution, disappearance, ending of life, passing away due to completion of the life-span, the breaking up of the aggregates, the discarding of the body, the destruction of the life-faculty of various beings — this, monks, is called death.”

391. “What, monks, is grief? [306] The grieving, sorrowing, and anxiety, the inward grief and wretchedness of one beset by any kind of ruinous loss, who is stricken by some painful misfortune — this, monks, is called grief.”

392. “What, monks, is lamentation? The weeping and lamenting, the act of weeping and lamenting, the crying and wailing of one beset by any kind of ruinous loss, who is stricken by some painful misfortune — this, monks, is called lamentation.”

393. “What, monks, is pain? The bodily pain and discomfort, the painful and unpleasant feeling produced by bodily contact — this, monks, is called pain.”

394. “What, monks, is sorrow? The mental pain and distress, the painful and unpleasant feeling produced by mental contact — this, monks, is called sorrow.”

395. “What, monks, is despair? The trouble and despair, the tribulation of one beset by any kind of ruinous loss, who is stricken by some painful misfortune — this, monks, is called despair.”

396. “What, monks, is the suffering of association with the unloved? Having to meet, be and remain in contact, or mingle with sights, sounds, odours, tastes, touches, and mind-objects that are undesirable, unpleasant or unenjoyable, or with beings who desire one’s harm, loss, discomfort, or bondage — this, monks, is called the suffering of association with the unloved.”

397. “What, monks, is the suffering of separation from the loved? Being unable to meet, be or remain in contact, or mix with sights, sounds, odours, tastes, touches and mind-objects that are desirable, pleasant or enjoyable, or with one’s mother, father, brothers, sisters, friends, colleagues, or blood relatives who desire one’s advantage, benefit, comfort, and freedom from bondage — this, monks, is called the suffering of separation from the loved.” [307]

398. “What, monks, is the suffering of not getting what one wishes? In beings subject to birth, monks, the wish may arise: ‘Oh that we were not subject to birth! Oh that new birth would not happen to us!’ However, it is not possible to get such a wish. This is the suffering of not getting what one wishes. In beings subject to aging, monks, the wish may arise: ‘Oh that we were not subject to aging! Oh that we would not get old!’ However, it is not possible to get such a wish. This too is the suffering of not getting what one wishes. In beings subject to disease, monks, the wish may arise: ‘Oh that we were not subject to disease! Oh that we would not get sick!’ However, it is not possible to get such a wish. This too is the suffering of not getting what one wishes. In beings subject to death, monks, the wish may arise: ‘Oh that we were not subject to death! Oh that we would not die!’ However, it is not possible to get such a wish. This too is the suffering of not getting what one wishes. In beings subject to grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair the wish may arise: ‘Oh that we were not subject to grief, lamentation, pain,

sorrow, and despair! Oh that we would not experience grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair! However, it is not possible to get such a wish. This too is the suffering of not getting what one wishes.”

399. “What, monks, in brief, is the suffering of the five aggregates of attachment? They are the aggregate of attachment to form, the aggregate of attachment to feelings, the aggregate of attachment to perceptions, the aggregate of attachment to mental formations, and the aggregate of attachment to consciousness. This, monks, in brief, is called the suffering of the five aggregates of attachment. This, monks, is called the noble truth of suffering.” [308]

The Exposition of the Truth of the Cause

400. “What, monks, is the noble truth of the cause of suffering? The craving that gives rise to fresh rebirth, accompanied by delight and passion, finding great delight here and there, namely — craving for sensual pleasures craving for existence, and craving for non-existence.”

“When this craving arises, monks, where does it arise? When it establishes itself, where does it establish itself? When it arises and establishes itself, it does so in the delight and pleasure in the world. This is where craving arises and establishes itself.”

“Where are delight and pleasure in the world? In the ‘world’ of the eye are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself. In the ‘world’ of the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... the mind are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of sights ... sounds ... odours ... tastes ... touches ... ideas are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of eye-consciousness ... ear-consciousness ... nose-consciousness ... tongue-consciousness ... body-consciousness ... mind-consciousness are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of eye-contact ... ear-contact ... nose-contact [309] ... tongue-contact ... body-contact ... mind-contact are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of feeling born of eye-contact ... ear-contact ... nose-contact ... tongue-contact ... body-contact ... feeling born of mind-contact are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual perception ... auditory perception ... olfactory perception ... gustatory perception ... tactile perception ... mental perception are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual volition ... auditory volition ... olfactory volition ... gustatory volition ... tactile volition ... mental volition are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual craving ... auditory craving ... olfactory craving ... gustatory craving ... tactile craving ... mental craving are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual initial application ... auditory initial application ... olfactory initial application ... gustatory initial application ... tactile initial application ... mental initial application are delight and pleasure, there craving arises and establishes itself.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual sustained application ... auditory sustained application ... olfactory sustained application ... gustatory sustained application ... tactile sustained application ... mental sustained application are delight and pleasure, there craving [310] arises and establishes itself. This, monks, is called the noble truth of the cause of suffering.”

The Exposition of the Truth of Cessation

401. “What, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of suffering? It is the cessation without remainder of this very craving, its relinquishing and discarding, the liberation and detachment from it.”

“When this craving, monks, is abandoned, where is it abandoned? When it ceases, where does it cease? When this craving is abandoned and ceases, it is abandoned and ceases to delight and take pleasure in whatever is delightful and pleasurable in the world.”

“Where are delight and pleasure in the world? In the ‘world’ of the eye are delight and pleasure, there craving ceases and is abandoned. In the ‘world’ of the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... the mind, there craving is abandoned and ceases, there craving ceases to delight and take pleasure.”

“In the ‘world’ of sights ... sounds ... odours ... tastes ... touches ... ideas are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of eye-consciousness ... ear-consciousness ... nose-consciousness ... tongue-consciousness ... body-consciousness ... mind-consciousness are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of eye-contact ... ear-contact ... nose-contact ... tongue-contact ... body-contact ... mind-contact [311] are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of feeling born of eye-contact ... ear-contact ... nose-contact ... tongue-contact ... body-contact ... feeling born of mind-contact are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual perception ... auditory perception ... olfactory perception ... gustatory perception ... tactile perception ... mental perception are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual volition ... auditory volition ... olfactory volition ... gustatory volition ... tactile volition ... mental volition are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual craving ... auditory craving ... olfactory craving ... gustatory craving ... tactile craving ... mental craving are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual initial application ... auditory initial application ... olfactory initial application ... gustatory initial application ... tactile initial application ... mental initial application are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases.”

“In the ‘world’ of visual sustained application ... auditory sustained application ... olfactory sustained application ... gustatory sustained application ... tactile sustained application ... mental sustained application are delight and pleasure, there craving is abandoned and ceases. This, monks, is called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering.”

The Exposition of the Truth of the Path

402. “What, monks, is the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering? It is this very noble eightfold path, namely: right-view, right-thought, right-speech, right-action, right-livelihood, right-effort, right-mindfulness, and right concentration.”

“What, monks, is right-view? [312] Whatever, monks, is knowledge of suffering, knowledge of the cause of suffering, knowledge of the cessation of suffering, and knowledge of the path leading to the cessation of suffering; this, monk, is called right-view.”

“What, monks, is right-thought? Thoughts of renunciation, thoughts free from malice, thoughts free from cruelty; this, monks, is called right-thought.”

“What, monks, is right-speech? Abstaining from falsehood, abstaining from back-biting, abstaining from abuse, and abstaining from idle-chatter; this, monks, is called right-speech.”

“What, monks, is right-action? Abstaining from killing living-beings, abstaining from taking what is not given, abstaining from sexual misconduct; this, monks, is called right-action.”

“What, monks, is right-livelihood? Here, monks, a noble disciple, having abandoned wrong-livelihood, earns a living with a right-livelihood; this, monks, is called right-livelihood.”

“What, monks, is right-effort? Here, monks, a monk generates will, stirs up energy, applies his mind, and strives for the non-arising of evil, unwholesome states that have not yet arisen; generates will, stirs up energy, applies his mind, and strives for the abandoning of evil, unwholesome states that have arisen; generates will, stirs up energy, applies his mind, and strives for the arising of wholesome states that have not yet arisen; generates will, stirs up energy, applies his mind, [313] and strives for the maintenance, non-disappearance, and development of wholesome states that have arisen. This, monks, is called right-effort.”

“What, monks, is right-mindfulness? Here, monks, a monk dwells contemplating the body in the body, ardent, clearly comprehending, and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world; he dwell contemplating feelings in feelings, ... he dwells contemplating thoughts in thoughts ... he dwells contemplating mental-objects in mental-objects ardent, clearly comprehending and mindful, having overcome covetousness and sorrow concerning the world. This, monks, is called right-mindfulness.”

“What, monks, is right-concentration? Here, monks, a monk aloof from sensual thoughts, aloof from unwholesome states, attains to and abides in the first absorption with initial application, sustained application, with joy and bliss born of seclusion [from the hindrances]. With the calming of initial and sustained application, with the mind inwardly tranquil he attains to and abides in the second absorption without initial and sustained application, with joy and bliss born of concentration. With the abandoning of pleasure and pain and the extinguishing of the former happiness and sorrow, he attains to and abides in the fourth absorption purified by equanimity and mindfulness. This, monks, is called right-concentration. This monks, is called the noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

403. “Thus he dwells contemplating mental-objects internally [314] and externally. While contemplating mental-objects, he is aware that they arise and pass away. His awareness is established that mental-objects exist, but that they are not a being, nor a person, neither a woman nor a man, not a

self nor anything pertaining to a self. He does not regard mental-objects as “I”, or “mine,” thus he clings to nothing in the world. Thus, monks, a monk dwells contemplating mental-objects in the for noble truths.”

404. “Whoever, monks, thus develops these four foundations of mindfulness for seven years can expect one of two fruits — final knowledge in this very life, or if there is any remainder, the attainment of Non-returning.”

“Let alone, monks, seven years. Whoever, monks, thus develops these four foundations of mindfulness for six years ... five years ... four years ... three years ... two years ... one year ... Let alone, monks, one year. Whoever, monks, thus develops these four foundations of mindfulness for seven months can expect one of two fruits — final knowledge in this very life, or if there is any remainder, the attainment of Non-returning.”

“Let alone, monks, seven months. Whoever, monks, thus develops these four foundations of mindfulness for six months ... five months ... four months ... three months ... two months ... [315] one month ... half a month ... Let alone half a month, monks. Whoever, monks, thus develops these four foundations of mindfulness for seven days can expect one of two fruits — final knowledge in this very life, or if there is any remainder, the attainment of Non-returning.”

405. “That is why it was said: ‘This is the only way, monks, for the purification of beings, for the transcendence of grief and lamentation, for the extinguishing of pain and sorrow, for attaining the right method, for the realisation of nibbāna, that is to say the four foundations of mindfulness.’

Thus spoke the Blessed One. The monks rejoiced in what the Blessed One had said.

Pāyāsi Suttam

A Debate with Prince Pāyāsi

Introduction

The speaker of this discourse — Kumāra Kassapa — was honoured by the Buddha as the foremost among those who were eloquent. He was the son of a nun who had been ordained with her husband’s consent, not knowing that she was already pregnant. The boy was raised by King Bimbisāra of Rājagaha, and ordained as a novice at the age of seven. The Buddha referred to him as Kumāra (the boy or prince) Kassapa. He was one of the monks who had died during the time of the Buddha Kassapa while striving their utmost to attain nibbāna.¹ The first monk of that group attained Arahantship, while the second attained non-returning. This Brahma visited Kumāra Kassapa and posed a riddle, which was the basis of the Vammika Sutta. When he was older he received the higher ordination, and as he was younger than twenty, the Buddha made the rule that twenty years should include the time spent in the womb; so nineteen years and three months is old enough to receive the higher ordination.

The topic of rebirth is contentious among western Buddhists, who often claim that it is to be taken metaphorically, not literally. Many hold heretical views similar to those of Prince Pāyāsi, while others prefer to remain agnostic on the matter. The topic deserves careful study as right-view is an essential factor of the Noble Eightfold Path. One should refer to the Aparaṇṇaka Sutta for the skilful attitude to take if one is rightly sceptical about what is beyond one’s personal direct knowledge. A broad study of the Tipiṭaka should convince anyone that rebirth is literally true.

Translation

406. Thus have I heard — On one occasion the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa was wandering in the kingdom of Kosala with a large community of monks. In due course the five hundred monks arrived at a city of Kosala named Setabyā. Then the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa resided in the Simṣapā grove to the north of Setabyā. On that occasion, Prince Pāyāsi was dwelling at Setabyā — a populace place with a plentiful supply of grass, water, firewood, and grain — granted to him as a royal gift and with the powers of royalty by King Pasenadi of Kosala.

¹ The Commentary to the [Vammika Sutta](#) says there were five monks in the group. The third monk was reborn in the time of the Buddha Gotama as [Pukkusāti](#), the fourth as [Bāhiya Dārucīriya](#), and the fifth as [Kumāra Kassapa](#). Other sources say there were seven in the group, adding [Dabba Mallaputta](#), and [Sabhiya Thera](#).

The Story of Prince Pāyāsi

407. On that occasion this evil view had arisen in Prince Pāyāsi: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit (*phalaṃ*) or result (*vipāko*) [317] of good or evil volitional actions.” The brahmin householders of Setabyā heard: “The virtuous recluse Kumāra Kassapa, a disciple of the recluse Gotama, while wandering in the kingdom of Kosala with a community of five hundred monks has arrived at Setabyā and is residing in the Siṃsapā grove to the north of Setabyā. About the recluse Kumāra Kassapa a good reputation has spread: ‘The recluse is wise (*pañḍito*), experienced (*byatto*), intelligent (*medhāvī*), learned (*bahussuto*), eloquent (*cittakathī*), skilled in debate (*kalyāṇapaṭibhāno*), venerable (*vuddho*), and worthy (*arahā*). It is good to meet (*dassanaṃ*) such worthy ones.’ Then the brahmins of Setabyā, having left Setabyā in groups by the northern gate, set out towards the Siṃsapā grove.

408. On that occasion Prince Pāyāsi was relaxing for the day on the upper storey of his palace. Having seen the brahmins of Setabyā leaving in groups by the northern gate going towards the Siṃsapā grove he said to his attendant: “Why, good attendant, are the brahmins of Setabyā, having left Setabyā in groups by the northern gate, setting out towards the Siṃsapā grove?” [318]

“There is, friend, the recluse Kumāra Kassapa, a disciple of the recluse Gotama, who, while wandering in the kingdom of Kosala with a community of five hundred monks, has arrived at Setabyā and is residing in the Siṃsapā grove to the north of Setabyā. About the recluse Kumāra Kassapa a good reputation has spread: ‘The recluse is wise, experienced, intelligent, learned, eloquent, skilled in debate, venerable, and worthy. It is good to meet such worthy ones.’ Then the brahmins of Setabyā, having left Setabyā in groups by the northern gate, set out towards the Siṃsapā grove. They are going to meet the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa.”

“Then, dear attendant, approach those brahmin householders, and having approached them say thus: ‘Friends, Prince Pāyāsi said, “Let the venerable ones wait, Prince Pāyāsi also wishes to meet the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa”.’ Formerly, the recluse Kumāra Kassapa has taught these foolish (*bale*) and inexperienced (*abyatte*) brahmin householders of Setabyā: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions.’ Indeed, there is not, good attendant, another world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.” Having replied to Prince Pāyāsi, “Very well, sir,”

the attendant approached the brahmin householders of Setabyā, and having approached them asked them to wait for Prince Pāyāsi to accompany them to meet the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa.

409. Then Prince Pāyāsi, accompanied by the brahmin householders of Setabyā approached the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa at the Siṃsapā grove; having approached him he exchanged friendly greetings, and having engaged in polite conversation [319] he sat down at one side. Some brahmin householders of Setabyā, having paid homage to the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa, sat down at one side; some, having exchanged friendly greetings and polite conversation, sat down at one side; some, having greeted him with joined palms, sat down at one side; some, having announced their name and clan, sat down at once side; and some, remaining silent, sat down at one side.

The Annihilationist View

410. Sitting at one side, Prince Pāyāsi said to the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa: “Thus, friend Kassapa,¹ is my doctrine, thus is my view: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

“I have never come across nor heard of a doctrine like this, a view like this. Why do you speak thus: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.’?”

The Allegory of the Sun and the Moon

411. “Then, prince, I will cross-question you, please reply as you see fit. What do you think, prince, the sun and the moon, are they in this world or another world, are they in the celestial or human realm?”

“Friend Kassapa, the sun and the moon are in another world, not in this one, they are in the celestial realm, not in the human realm.”

“For this reason, prince, you should think thus: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions.’”

412. Whatever friend Kassapa says, this is my view: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

“Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions’?”

¹ “*Bho*” is a familiar term of address used towards equals or inferiors. Pāyāsi was not showing due respect as might be expected from a non-believer.

“There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ...” [320]

“What is that, prince?”

“Herein, friend Kassapa, some of my friends, associates, and relatives are killers of living-beings, takers of what is not given, sexual miscreants, liars, slanderers, abusers, idle-chatterers, covetous, malevolent, and holders of wrong-views. After some time they become grievously ill. When I know that they will not recover from that disease I approach them and say: ‘Friend, there are some recluses and priests¹ who speak thus and hold this view — those who are killers of living-beings, takers of what is not given, sexual miscreants, liars, slanderers, abusers, idle-chatterers, covetous, malevolent, and holders of wrong-views, on the break-up of the body after death arise in an unfortunate destination, in perdition, in hell. Friend, you are a killer of living-beings, taker of what is not given, a sexual miscreant, a liar, a slanderer, an abuser, an idle-chatterer, covetous, malevolent, and holders of wrong-views. If what those recluses and priests say is true you will arise on the break-up of the body after death in an unfortunate destination, in perdition, in hell. If, friend, on the break-up of the body after death you arise in an unfortunate destination, in perdition, in hell, come back and tell me: “There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions.” You, friend, are trustworthy and reliable; whatever you have seen it will be as if I had seen it for myself.’ Having agreed by saying “Very well,” [321] they neither returned to tell me nor sent a messenger. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

The Allegory of the Robber

413. “Then, prince, I will cross-question you, please reply as you see fit. What do you think, prince, if your men captured a robber in the act and brought him before you saying: ‘This robber, lord, was caught in the act; sentence him to whatever punishment you wish.’ Then you would say thus: ‘Then, friends, having tied his arms behind him, bind him with strong ropes, having shaved his head, lead him with the loud clashing of cymbals through the streets and squares of the town out by the southern gate and at the southern place of execution cut off his head.’ Have said, ‘Very well,’ the executioners, having tied his arms behind him, and bound him with strong

¹ *Samaṇābrāhmaṇā* = recluses and priests. We should distinguish between householders of the brahmin caste, and brahmin priests who live a celibate life, but who are neither recluses nor monastics.

ropes, having shaved his head, led him with the loud clashing of cymbals through the streets and squares of the town out by the southern gate, and at the southern place of execution made him sit down. Perhaps that robber would say: 'Dear executioners, please wait. I have friends, associates, and relatives in this village or market town, when I have visited them I will come back.' Would those executioners grant his wish, [322] or just cut off the chattering thief's head?"

"Indeed not, friend Kassapa, they would not grant his wish ... they would just cut off the chattering thief's head."

"Indeed it is so, prince, a thief would not be granted his wish by his human executioners. What then can be said for those who are killers of living-beings, takers of what is not given, sexual miscreants, liars, slanderers, abusers, idle-chatterers, covetous, malevolent, and holders of wrong-views, on the break-up of the body after death arise in an unfortunate destination, in perdition, in hell. Would they be able to persuade the warders of hell: 'Dear wardens of hell, please wait while I go to prince Pāyāsi to tell him, "There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions"'? For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: "There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions."

414. "Whatever friend Kassapa says, this is my view: "There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions."

"Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: "There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions'?"

"There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ..."

"What is that, prince?"

"Herein, friend Kassapa, some of my friends, associates, and relatives abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual [323] misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, they are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views. After some time they become grievously ill. When I know that they will not recover from that disease I approach them and say: 'Friend, there are some recluses and priests who speak thus and hold this view: those who abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, they are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views, on the break-up of the body after death arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm.

Friend, you abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, you are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views. If what those recluses and priests say is true, on the break-up of the body after death you will arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm. If, friend, on the break-up of the body after death you arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm, please return and tell me: “There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions.” You, friend, are trustworthy and reliable; whatever you have seen it will be as if I had seen it for myself.’ Having agreed by saying “Very well,” they neither returned to tell me nor sent a messenger. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, [324] there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

The Allegory of the Cess-pit

415. “Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. It is as if, prince, a man had fallen head-first into a cess-pit. Then you tell your men: ‘Friends go and pull that man out of the cess-pit.’ Having said, ‘Very well,’ they would pull that man out of the cess-pit. Then you say to them: ‘Then, friends, scrape the excrement from his body with bamboo scrapers,’ and having said, ‘Very well,’ they would scrape the excrement from his body with bamboo scrapers. Then you say to them: ‘Shampoo his body thoroughly three times with yellow loam, and having said, ‘Very well,’ they would shampoo his body thoroughly three times with yellow loam. Then you say to them, ‘Anoint his body with oil and clean him well three times with fine talcum powder, then they would anoint his body with oil and clean him well three times with fine talcum powder. Then you say to them, ‘Cut his hair and beard,’ then they would cut his hair and beard. Then you say to them, ‘Adorn him with magnificent garlands, perfumes, and clothes, then they would adorn him with magnificent garlands, perfumes, and clothes. [325] Then you say to them, ‘Bring him to the palace and provide him with the five kinds of sensual pleasures, and they would bring him to the palace and provide him with the five kinds of sensual pleasures.

“What do you think, prince? Would that man — well bathed, well perfumed, with his hair and beard well trimmed, adorned with garlands, dressed in white clothes, having been brought up to the palace, enjoying and endowed with the five sensual pleasures — want to plunge back into that cess-pit?”

“Indeed not, friend Kassapa!”

“For what reason?”

“Foul, friend Kassapa, is that cess-pit, and it is regarded as foul, it is foul-smelling and regarded as foul-smelling, it is detestable and regarded as detestable, repulsive and regarded as repulsive.”

“In the same way, prince, human beings are foul to deities and regarded as foul, they are foul-smelling and are regarded as foul-smelling, they are detestable and are regarded as detestable, they are repulsive and are regarded as repulsive. The odour of human beings is annoying to deities from a hundred leagues. Why then should your friends and relatives who abstain killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, who are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views, who on the break-up of the body after death have arisen in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm, return to tell you: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions?’ For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit [326] and result of good and evil volitional actions’.”

416. “Whatever friend Kassapa says, this is my view: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

“Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions’?”

“There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ...”

“What is that, prince?”

“Herein, friend Kassapa, some of my friends, associates, and relatives abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, they are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views. After some time they become grievously ill. When I know that they will not recover from that disease I approach them and say: ‘Friend, there are some recluses and priests who speak thus and hold this view: those who abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, they are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views, on the break-up of the body after death arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm, among the deities of the thirty-three (Tāvātimsa). Friend, you abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, you are not covetous or malevolent,

and hold right-views. If what those recluses and priests say is true, on the break-up of the body after death you will arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm. If, friend, on the break-up of the body after death you arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm, among the deities of the thirty-three [327] please return and tell me: "There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions. You, friend, are trustworthy and reliable; whatever you have seen it will be as if I had seen it for myself." Having agreed by saying "Very well," they neither returned to tell me nor sent a messenger. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions."

The Allegory of the Deities of the Thirty-three

417. "Then, prince, I will cross-question you, please reply as you see fit. Whatever, prince, is a hundred years of human life, that is one day and night for the deities of the thirty-three. Thirty of such nights is one month, twelve of such months is one year, and a thousand of such years is the life-span of the deities of the thirty-three. If your friends, associates, and relatives who abstain from killing living beings, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct, telling lies, slandering, abusing, and idle chatter, who are not covetous or malevolent, and hold right-views, on the break-up of the body after death arise in a fortunate destination, in a heavenly realm, among the deities of the thirty-three. They might think, 'After enjoying celestial sensual pleasures for two or three days, let us go to Prince Pāyāsi and tell him: "There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions".' Would they have come and told you: 'There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions'?"

"No, indeed not, friend Kassapa, for we would have long since died. However, friend Kassapa, who told you: 'The deities of the thirty-three exist,' or 'The deities of the thirty-three are so long-lived?' I do not believe what friend Kassapa has said — "There are deities of the thirty-three," or "The deities of the thirty-three are so long-lived"." [328]

The Allegory of the Blind Man

418. "It is like, prince, a blind man who cannot see dark and light objects, cannot see blue, yellow, or red objects, cannot see crimson objects, the similar

and dissimilar, cannot see the stars, the moon, or the sun. He would speak thus: 'There are no dark and light objects, no blue, yellow, or red objects, no crimson objects, no similar or dissimilar, no stars, no moon, and no sun. I am not aware of them, and cannot see them, therefore they do not exist.' Prince, would that man be speaking correctly?"

"No, indeed not, friend Kassapa. There are dark and light objects, [329] there are blue, yellow, and red objects, there are crimson objects, the similar and dissimilar, there are the stars, the moon, and the sun. One who said, 'I am not aware of them, and cannot see them, therefore they do not exist,' would not be speaking correctly."

"In the same way, prince, your reply is like that of a blind man when you ask me: 'Friend Kassapa, who told you: "The deities of the thirty-three exist," or "The deities of the thirty-three are so long lived?" I do not believe what friend Kassapa has said — "There are deities of the thirty-three," or "The deities of the thirty-three are so long-lived".'

"It is not thus, prince, that the other world should be regarded, to be seen with the physical eye. Those recluses and priests who seek secluded abodes in forest groves and abide there heedful, strenuous and resolute, purifying the divine-eye, see with the purified divine-eye surpassing human sight this world and spontaneously arisen beings in the other world. Thus, prince, should the other world be seen, not as you think with the physical eye. For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: 'There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions'."

419. "Whatever friend Kassapa says, [330] this is my view: "There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions."

"Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: 'There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions'?"

"There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ..."

"What is that, prince?"

"Herein, friend Kassapa, I see virtuous recluses and priests of good conduct, who desire life and do not wish to die, who desire happiness and are averse to suffering. Therefore, friend Kassapa, it occurs to me: 'If these good recluses and priests know thus — "It will be better after death," then these virtuous recluses and priests of good conduct, would take poison, or take a knife, hang themselves, or jump from a cliff. Since these virtuous recluses and

priests of good conduct, who desire life and do not wish to die, desire happiness and are averse to suffering do not know thus — “It will be better after death,” they do not kill themselves. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

The Allegory of the Pregnant Woman

420. “Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, a certain brahmin had two wives. One had a son that was ten or twelve years old, and the other wife was pregnant and close to giving birth. Then the brahmin died. The youth said thus to his step-mother: ‘Lady, whatever wealth or grain, silver or gold there is, that is all mine; [331] there is nothing here for you. My father made me the heir.’ When this was said the brahminee said to the youth: ‘Wait, dear, until I give birth. If it is a boy, one portion will be his; if it is a girl, she will be your handmaiden (*opabhaggā*).’¹ A second and a third time the youth said to his step-mother: ‘Lady, whatever wealth or grain, silver or gold there is, that is all mine; there is nothing here for you. My father made me the heir.’

“Then the brahminee, having taken a knife, having entered a private room, cut open her belly (thinking): ‘Will I give birth to a boy or a girl?’ Thus she destroyed her own life, the life of the foetus, and her wealth. Thus the foolish and inexperienced meet with misfortune by seeking their inheritance unwisely, just so, prince, being foolish and inexperienced you seek the other [332] world like the brahminee, being foolish and inexperienced, met with misfortune, seeking her inheritance unwisely. It is not thus, prince, that virtuous recluses and priests of good conduct, bring to maturity what is unripe; but they wait for it to mature. Prince, those virtuous recluses and priests of good conduct live wisely. As long, prince, as those virtuous recluses and priests of good conduct remain alive they produce great merit, for the welfare of many, they practise for the happiness of many, out of compassion for the world, for the happiness of gods and men. For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions.’”

421. “Whatever friend Kassapa says, this is my view: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

¹ The Commentary glosses *opabhaggā* as *pādaparicārikā* — a wife or handmaiden. *Opabhaggā* is not in the PTS dictionary, but *upabhogga* is something to be enjoyed.

“Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions?’”

“There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ...”

“What is that, prince?”

“Herein, friend Kassapa, having caught a thief, my men bring him before me saying: ‘This thief, sir, is an evil-doer; punish him however you wish.’ I say to them: ‘Then, friends, put this man alive into a jar and seal its opening, bind it with wet leather, plaster it with a thick layer of wet clay [333], put it in an oven and light the fire.’ Having replied to me, ‘Very well,’ they do so. When we know the man is dead, we take out the jar, uncover its opening, and watch carefully thinking: ‘Perhaps we will see his soul (*jīvaṃ*) leaving.’” Nevertheless, we do not see his soul leaving. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

The Allegory of the Dream

422. “Then, prince, I will cross-question you, please reply as you see fit. Are you aware, prince, that while taking a rest during the day that you dream of seeing pleasing parks and forests, pleasing grounds and lakes?”

“I am aware, friend Kassapa, while taking a rest during the day of seeing such dreams.”

“On those occasions were there humpbacks (*khujjā*), dwarves (*vāmanakā*), maidens (*velāsikā*) and girls (*komārikā*) guarding you?”

“Indeed, there were, friend Kassapa.”

“Did they see your soul entering or leaving your body?” [334]

“Indeed not, friend Kassapa.”

“Then, prince, if one cannot see the soul of a living man entering or leaving his body, how could one see the soul of a dead man entering or leaving his body? For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions.’”

423. “Whatever friend Kassapa says, this is my view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.’”

“Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions?’”

“There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ...”

“What is that, prince?”

“Herein, friend Kassapa, having caught a thief, my men bring him before me saying: ‘This thief, sir, is an evil-doer; punish him however you wish.’ I say to them: ‘Then, friends, “Weigh this man on the scales, then having killed him by strangling with a bow string, weigh him again.” Having replied, “Very well, they do so. While he was alive he was lighter, softer, and more flexible. After he was dead he was heavier, stiffer, and less flexible. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”’

The Allegory of the Red-hot Iron Ball

424. “Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. [335] It is as if, prince, a man would weigh an iron ball that had been heated for the whole day, burning, blazing, and glowing; then weigh it again after it had cooled. When would it be lighter, softer, and more flexible? When it was burning, blazing, and glowing; or when it had cooled?”

“When, friend Kassapa, that iron ball was burning, blazing, and glowing with the elements of fire and wind, then it would be lighter, softer, and more flexible. When it had become cold, with neither the element of fire nor the element of wind, then it would be heavier, stiffer, and less flexible.”

“In the same way, prince, when the body has the elements of life, heat, and consciousness, then it is lighter, softer, and more flexible. When it has neither the element of life, heat, or consciousness, then it is heavier, stiffer, and less flexible. For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: ‘There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions’.”

425. “Whatever friend Kassapa says, this is my view: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

“Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions’?”

“There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ...”

“What is that, prince?”

“Herein, friend Kassapa, having caught a thief, my men bring him before me saying: ‘This thief, sir, is an evil-doer; punish him however you wish.’”

[336] I say to them: “Kill this man without damaging his epidermis (*chavi*), dermis (*camma*), flesh (*maṃsa*), sinews (*nhāru*), bones (*aṭṭhi*), or bone-marrow (*aṭṭhimiñjā*), deprive him of life, perhaps we will see his soul leaving.” Having replied to me, ‘Very well,’ they do so. When is not quite dead I say to them: “Then, friends, lay this man on his back.” They lay that man on his back, but we do not see his soul leaving. Then I say to them, “Then, friends, lay this man face-down.” They lay that man face-down, but we do not see his soul leaving. They lay him on his side, on his other side, standing up, upside down, they pummel him with their fists, with clods, with sticks, with swords ... shake him from side-to-side, up and down, perhaps we will see his soul leaving.” They do so. Nevertheless, we do not see his soul leaving. Though he has eyes and there are forms he does not experience the sense-faculty of sight. Though he has ears and there are sounds he does not experience the sense-faculty of hearing. Though he has a nose and there are odours he does not experience the sense-faculty of smell. Though he has a tongue [337] and there are flavours he does not experience the sense-faculty of taste. Though he has a body and there are contacts he does not experience the sense-faculty of touch. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.”

The Allegory of the Conch-Blower

426. “Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, a certain conch-blower, having taken his conch shell (*saṅkhaṃ*), went to the outlying districts. He approached a certain village, and having approached, blew his conch shell three times standing in the middle of the village. Putting the conch shell down on the ground, he sat down at one side. Then, prince, the people of those outlying districts thought: ‘Where did that sound come from that is so enchanting, so pleasing, so intoxicating, so addictive, so bewitching?’ Having gathered there they asked the conch-blower: ‘Where did this sound come from that is so enchanting (*rajanīyo*), so pleasing (*kamanīyo*), so intoxicating (*madanīyo*), so addictive (*bandhanīyo*), so bewitching (*mucchanīyo*)?’ ‘This conch shell is where those sounds came from, so enchanting, so pleasing, so intoxicating, so addictive, so bewitching.’

“They laid the conch shell on its back saying: ‘Make a sound, conch shell, make a sound.’ The laid it face-down, on its side, on its other side, [338] they pummelled it with their fists, with clods, with sticks, with swords ... they

shook it from side-to-side, up and down saying: 'Make a sound, conch shell, make a sound.' However, the conch shell made no sound.

"Then, prince, that conch-blower thought: 'How foolish these people from the outlying districts are; how unwisely they seek the sound of the conch-shell.' As they watched, having taken the conch shell, he blew it three times and went away taking it with him. Then, prince, those people from the outlying districts thought: 'When this conch shell is accompanied with a man, with effort, and with wind, then this conch shell makes a sound; but without a man, without effort, without wind, it makes no sound.' In the same way, prince, when this body has life, heat, and consciousness, then it can go and come, stand, sit, or lie down, see forms with the eyes, hear sounds with the ears, smell odours with the nose, taste flavours with the tongue, feel contacts with the body, and know thoughts with the mind. When this body has neither life, heat, nor consciousness then it cannot do this. For this reason too, prince, you should think thus: 'There is another world, there are spontaneously arisen beings, there is a fruit and result of good and evil volitional actions'."

427. "Whatever friend Kassapa says, [339] this is my view: "There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions."

"Is there any reason, prince, that you hold this view: 'There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions'?"

"There is, friend Kassapa, a reason why I hold this view ..."

"What is that, prince?"

"Herein, friend Kassapa, having caught a thief, my men bring him before me saying: 'This thief, sir, is an evil-doer; punish him however you wish.' I say to them: 'Cut off his epidermis, perhaps we will see his soul leaving. Nevertheless, we do not see his soul leaving. Then I say to them, 'Cut off his dermis, cut off his flesh, cut off his sinews, cut out his bones, cut out his bone-marrow, perhaps we will see his soul leaving.' They do so, nevertheless we do not see his soul leaving. This too, friend Kassapa, is a reason why I say that there is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions."

The Allegory of the Fire-worshipping Matted-hair Ascetic

428. "Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, a

certain fire-worshipping matted-hair ascetic dwelt in a leaf-hut in the forest. Then, prince, a certain travelling group was on the move, and having stayed one night near the ascetic's dwelling, they departed. Then, prince, the ascetic thought: [340] 'I will go to their camp site, perhaps I will find something that I can use.' Then the ascetic went out early and approached the camp site, and having approached he saw there an abandoned baby boy lying on his back. Having seen him, he thought: 'It would not be right for me to let a human being die, let me take this boy to my dwelling, feed him, and bring him up.' Thus the ascetic fed the boy and raised him in his hermitage. When the boy was ten or twelve years old, the fire-worshipping matted-hair ascetic had some business to attend to in the district. Then the ascetic said to that boy: 'I wish, son, to go to the district; attend to the fire. Do not let the fire go out. If the fire goes out, this is the axe, these are the fire sticks, this is the fire-drill, if the fire should go out you can relight it and attend to it. Then, having instructed the boy, the ascetic left to go to the district. The boy, engrossed in playing games, let the fire go out.

"Then that boy thought: 'My father said to me, "Son, attend to the fire. Do not let the fire go out. If the fire goes out, this is the axe, these are the fire sticks, this is the fire-drill, if the fire should go out you can relight it and attend to it." The fire has gone out, so let me relight it and attend to it. [341] Then that boy chopped the fire-drill with the axe (thinking): 'Perhaps this will make fire,' but it did not. He chopped the fire-drill into two, three, four, five, ten, a hundred pieces, he splintered it into bits, he pounded it in a mortar, he winnowed it in a strong wind (thinking): 'Perhaps this will make fire,' but it did not.

"Then that fire-worshipping matted-hair ascetic, having accomplished his business in the district, approached his own hermitage, and having approached said to that boy: 'Why, son, has the fire gone out?' The boy told him that it had gone out while he was engrossed in playing games, and how he had tried to relight it. Then that ascetic thought: 'How foolish and unskilled this boy is that he seeks fire in this way.' Then as the boy watched, the ascetic took some fire-sticks and a fire-drill, and started a fire, saying to that boy: 'This, son, is how a fire should be produced. [342] Not in the foolish, unskilful, and unwise way that you tried to do it.' In the same way, prince, you foolishly, unskilfully, and unwisely seek the other world. Prince, renounce your evil view, give up your evil view, do not let it be for your prolonged harm and misery."

429. "Even though, friend Kassapa, says this, I am not able to renounce this evil view. King Pasenadi of Kosala knows of me, and so do foreign kings, 'Prince Pāyāsi holds this doctrine, this view, "There is no other world, there

are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions." If, friend Kassapa, I renounce this evil view, they will say about me: "How foolish is Prince Pāyāsi, unskilled in grasping things wrongly." I will maintain it out of anger (*kopena*), out of stubbornness (*makkhena*), out of arrogance (*palāsa*)."

The Allegory of the Two Caravans

430. "Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, a great caravan of a thousand wagons was travelling from the east to the west. Wherever they went they quickly consumed all grass, firewood, and vegetation. This great caravan had two leaders [343] each with five hundred wagons. Therefore the two caravan leaders thought: 'This great caravan of a thousand wagons quickly consumes all grass, firewood, and vegetation wherever it goes. What if we divide into two caravans of five hundred wagons,' and they did so. One caravan leader gathered plenty of grass, firewood, and water, and set off. After two or three days that caravan leader saw a dark man with red eyes, coming down the path towards him, carrying a bow and quiver, and wearing a garland of white lotuses. His clothes and hair were wet, his donkey-cart's wheels were splattered with mud. Seeing him, he said: 'Friend, where have you come from?' He replied, 'From such and such a district.' 'Where are you going?' 'To such and such a district.' 'Has there, friend, been a storm ahead of us?' 'Indeed, friend. There has been a storm ahead of you, the path is wet and there is plenty of grass, [344] firewood, and water. Friend, throw away the grass, firewood, and water that you already have, with a light load your wagons will go quicker, do not weary your draught animals.'

"Then the caravan leader said to his wagon drivers: 'The man said that there has been a storm and the path ahead is wet, there is plenty of grass, firewood, and water. Throw away the grass, firewood, and water that you already have, friends, with a light load your wagons will go quicker, do not weary your draught animals.' They replied to the caravan leader, 'Very well, friend,' and they did so. The caravan then set off with lightened wagons. At the first camp site they saw neither grass, nor firewood, nor water. At the second camp site ... At the third camp site ... At the fourth camp site ... At the fifth camp site ... At the sixth camp site ... At the seventh camp site ... They all came to distress and destruction. Whatever human beings or cattle were in that caravan were eaten by that non-human (*amanussa*) demon (*yakkha*), and only bones remained.

“Then the second caravan leader said: ‘Friends, the (first) caravan has long since left.’ They gathered plenty of grass, firewood, and water, and the (second) caravan set off. After two or three days, that caravan leader saw a dark man with red eyes, coming down the path towards him, carrying a bow and quiver, and wearing a garland of white lotuses. His clothes and hair were wet, his donkey-cart’s wheels were splattered with mud. Seeing him, [345] he said: ‘Friend, where have you come from?’ He replied, ‘From such and such a district.’ ‘Where are you going?’ ‘To such and such a district.’ ‘Has there, friend, been a storm ahead of us?’ ‘Indeed, friend. There has been a storm ahead of you, the path is wet and there is plenty of grass, firewood, and water. Friend, throw away the grass, firewood, and water that you already have, with a light load your wagons will go quicker, do not weary your draught animals.’

“Then that caravan leader said: ‘Friends, this man said, “There has been a storm ahead of us, the path is wet and there is plenty of grass, firewood, and water. Friend, throw away the grass, firewood, and water that you already have, with a light load your wagons will go quicker, do not weary your draught animals.” This good man is neither our friend, nor our relative, why should we trust him? Do not throw away the grass, firewood, and water that you already have. Set out with what goods you have.’ Replying to the caravan leader, ‘Very well, friend,’ the caravan set off with the goods that they had. At the first camp site they saw neither grass, [346] nor firewood, nor water. At the second camp site ... At the third camp site ... At the fourth camp site ... At the fifth camp site ... At the sixth camp site ... At the seventh camp site they saw neither grass, nor firewood, nor water. Then they saw the caravan that had fallen into distress and destruction, and they saw the bones of the human beings and cattle that had been eaten by that non-human demon.

“Then that caravan leader said: ‘This caravan, friends, fell into distress and destruction due to the advice of the foolish caravan leader. Then, friends, throw away whatever in our vehicles is of little value, and take whatever in this caravan is of great value.’ Replying to that caravan leader, ‘Very well, friend,’ they did so. Having heeded the advice of the wise caravan leader they safely crossed over that wilderness. In the same way, prince, you will come to distress and destruction like the first caravan leader if you seek for the other world in the wrong way. Those who believe whatever they hear, they are also heading for distress and destruction, like the wagon drivers. Prince, renounce your evil view, give up your evil view, do not let it be for your prolonged harm and misery.”

431. “Even though, friend Kassapa, says this, I am not able to renounce this evil view. [347] King Pasenadi of Kosala knows of me, and so do foreign kings, ‘Prince Pāyāsi holds this doctrine, this view, “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.” If, friend Kassapa, I renounce this evil view, they will say about me: “How foolish is Prince Pāyāsi, unskilled in grasping things wrongly.” I will maintain it out of anger, out of stubbornness, out of arrogance.”

The Allegory of the Dung Carrier

432. “Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, there was a swineherd who was going from his own village to another. There he saw a big heap of dried dung that had been thrown away. Seeing it, he thought: ‘This big heap of dried dung will be food for my pigs; I should take it with me.’ Having spread out his upper cloak, he gathered the heap of dung in it, tied it into a bundle, and carried it away on his head.

“As he was going along there was a sudden heavy shower of rain. He continued on his way, splattered with dung oozing and dripping to the tips of his toes. Those people who saw him said: ‘Are you out of your mind, man? Are you crazy? Why are you carrying this bundle of dung, oozing and dripping down to the tips of your toes?’ ‘You are the ones out of your minds, you are crazy! [348] This will be food for my pigs.’

“In the same way, prince, you reply like the dung carrier in my allegory. Prince, renounce your evil view, give up your evil view, do not let it be for your prolonged harm and misery.”

433. “Even though, friend Kassapa, says this, I am not able to renounce this evil view. King Pasenadi of Kosala knows of me, and so do foreign kings, ‘Prince Pāyāsi holds this doctrine, this view, “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions.” If, friend Kassapa, I renounce this evil view, they will say about me: “How foolish is Prince Pāyāsi, unskilled in grasping things wrongly.” I will maintain it out of anger, out of stubbornness, out of arrogance.”

The Allegory of the Poisoned Dice

434. “Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, two gamblers were gambling with dice. One of the gamblers swallowed the unlucky dice when it fell. The second gambler noticed what he was doing and said: ‘You

are always winning. Give me the dice, and I will make a prayer with them.' The first gambler saying, 'OK buddy,' gave the dice to the second gambler. Then that gambler smeared the dice with poison and said to the first gambler, 'Let's play again buddy.' The other replied, 'OK buddy,' and they played for a second time. [349] Again the first gambler swallowed the unlucky dice when it fell. Seeing what he was doing again the second gambler said:-

"It is smeared with the hottest fire,
but the man who swallows it is not aware.
Swallow! Go on, swallow, you cheat!
Afterwards you will regret it bitterly!"

"In the same way, prince, you speak like the first gambler in my allegory. Prince, renounce your evil view, give up your evil view, do not let it be for your prolonged harm and misery."

435. "Even though, friend Kassapa, says this, I am not able to renounce this evil view. King Pasenadi of Kosala knows of me, and so do foreign kings, 'Prince Pāyāsi holds this doctrine, this view, "There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions." If, friend Kassapa, I renounce this evil view, they will say about me: "How foolish is Prince Pāyāsi, unskilled in grasping things wrongly." I will maintain it out of anger, out of stubbornness, out of arrogance."

The Allegory of the Hemp Carrier

436. "Then, prince, I will make an allegory. Perhaps by means of an allegory a wise man will understand the meaning. At one time, prince, a certain tribe migrated. Then a man said to his friend, 'Come, buddy, let us go to that district. Perhaps we may find something valuable. 'Very well, buddy,' his friend replied. They came to a village street [350] and saw there a big pile of abandoned hemp. He said, 'This hemp is abandoned. You bundle up as much as you want, and I will bundle up as much as I want, and we will both go having taken bundles of hemp.' Having agreed, they did so. They came to another village street, and saw there a big pile of abandoned hemp-thread. He said to his friend, 'The hemp-thread is what we wanted the hemp for. This hemp-thread is abandoned. Throw away the hemp, and bundle up as much hemp-thread as you want, I will bundle up as much as I want, and we will both go having taken bundles of hemp-thread.' His friend replied, 'I have brought this bundle of hemp a long way and it is well tied up. It is enough for me; you do as you wish.' Then his friend threw away his bundle of hemp and took a bundle of hemp-thread.

“Then they reached another village street, and saw there a big heap of abandoned hemp-cloth. ‘This hemp-cloth is what we wanted the hemp or the hemp-thread for. This hemp-cloth is abandoned. Throw away your hemp, I will throw away my hemp-thread. We will both bundle up as much hemp-cloth as we want, and go having taken bundles of hemp-cloth.’ His friend replied, ‘I have brought this bundle of hemp a long way and it is well tied up. It is enough for me; you do as you wish.’ Then his friend threw away his bundle of hemp-thread and took a bundle of hemp-cloth. [351]

“Then they reached another village street, and saw a big heap of abandoned linen (*khomaṃ*) ... linen-thread ... linen-cloth ... silk (*kappāsaṃ*) ... silk-thread ... silk-cloth ... copper (*lohaṃ*) ... tin (*tipuṃ*) ... lead (*sisāṃ*) ... silver (*sajjhaṃ*) ... and saw a big heap of abandoned gold (*suvaṇṇaṃ*). He said to his friend, ‘This gold is why we wanted the other goods. This big heap of gold is abandoned. Throw away your bundle of hemp and bundle up as much gold as you want, I will bundle up as much as I want, and we will both go having taken bundles of gold.’ His friend replied, ‘I have brought this bundle of hemp a long way and it is well tied up.’¹ It is enough for me; you do as you wish.’ Then his friend threw away his bundle of silver and took a bundle of gold.

“Then they approached their own village. The friend who brought a bundle of hemp neither pleased his parents, nor his wife and children, nor his friends and colleagues, nor did he attain any joy [352] or happiness from it for himself. However, his friend who came back with a bundle of gold pleased his parents, pleased his wife and children, pleased his friends and colleagues, and attained joy and happiness from it for himself. “In the same way, prince, you speak like the hemp carrier in my allegory. Prince, renounce your evil view, give up your evil view, do not let it be for your prolonged harm and misery.”

Going for Refuge

437. “I was pleased and delighted with friend Kassapa’s first allegory, but I wanted to hear these eloquent replies to my questions. The Venerable Kassapa is a skilled adversary in debate. Excellent, friend Kassapa, magnificent, friend Kassapa! It is as if, friend Kassapa, what was overturned was set upright, what was hidden was revealed, the right way was pointed out to someone who was lost, or a light was lit in the darkness so that those with eyes could see. Thus, the truth has been explained in various ways by friend

¹ *Susannaddha* = tightly bound, well tied up. How sad it is that many people are firmly attached to their views. The longer they have held them, the harder it is to give them up. Even when they know their views are faulty, they are reluctant to abandon them and adopt what is clearly a better path.

Kassapa. I go for refuge to the Venerable (*bhavantam*)¹ Gotama, to the Dhamma, and to the Saṅgha of monks. May friend Kassapa regard me as a disciple gone for refuge from today onwards for as long as I live.”

“I wish, friend Kassapa, to make a great sacrifice (*mahāyaññaṃ*). Exhort me, Venerable (*bhavaṃ*) Kassapa, for my welfare and happiness for a long time.”

Talk on Sacrifice

438. “That kind of sacrifice, prince, where cattle are killed, goats are killed, chickens are killed, or various kinds of living things are slaughtered, and where the recipients [353] have wrong-view, wrong-thought, wrong-speech, wrong-action, wrong-livelihood, wrong-effort, wrong-mindfulness, and wrong-concentration; such sacrifices, prince, are not of great fruit, great benefit, great splendour, nor very pervasive (*mahāvipphāro*).² It is as if, prince, a farmer were to enter the forest taking his seeds and plough. There, in an untilled field with unfertile soil where the tree stumps had not been pulled out, he would plant seeds that were broken, rotten, damaged by heat and wind, stale, not prosperous; and the rain god did not send rain at the proper time. Would those seeds germinate, grow, and prosper? Would the farmer get an abundant harvest?” “Indeed not, friend Kassapa.” “In the same way, prince, a sacrifice where cattle are killed ... living things are slaughtered, where the recipients are of wrong-view, wrong-thought, wrong-speech, wrong-action, wrong-livelihood, wrong-effort, wrong-mindfulness, and wrong-concentration; such a sacrifice, prince, is not of great fruit, great benefit, great splendour, nor very pervasive.

“That kind of sacrifice, prince, where cattle ... living things are not slaughtered, and where the recipients have right-view, right-thought, right-speech, right-action, right-livelihood, right-effort, right-mindfulness, and right-concentration; such sacrifices, prince, are of great fruit, great benefit, great splendour, and very pervasive. It is as if, prince, a farmer were to enter the forest taking his seeds and plough. There, in a well-tilled field with fertile soil where the tree stumps had been pulled out, he would plant seeds [354] that were unbroken, not rotten, undamaged by heat and wind, fresh, prosperous; and the rain god sent rain at the proper time. Would those seeds germinate, grow, and prosper?” “Indeed they would, friend Kassapa.” “In the same way, prince, a sacrifice where cattle ... living things are not

¹ “*Bhavantam*” is a polite form of address used towards superiors: “Sir, Lord, or Venerable.”

² “*Mahāvipphāro*,” spreading far. When a great alms-giving is made, people praise it, and many get to hear about it. If it is insignificant, only those present know about it. The merits of giving depend on the virtue of the recipients, as well as on the virtue and generosity of the giver.

slaughtered, where the recipients are of right-view, right-thought, right-speech, right-action, right-livelihood, right-effort, right-mindfulness, and right-concentration; such a sacrifice is of great fruit, great benefit, great splendour, and very pervasive.”

The Story of the Brahmin Youth Uttara

439. Then Prince Pāyāsi established an alms-giving for recluses (*samaṇa*), priests (*brāhmaṇa*), the poor (*kaṇa*), travellers (*addhika*), tramps (*vaṇibbaka*), and beggars (*yācakānaṃ*). At that alms-giving this kind of food was given: broken rice porridge with sour gruel; and coarse cloths with ball fringes were given. A brahmin youth named Uttara was put in charge of the distribution. Having given that alms he said: “Through this alms-giving I have been associated with Prince Pāyāsi in this world, but not in the other world.” Prince Pāyāsi heard about this, [355] and having summoned him said: “Is it true, dear Uttara, that you said this?” “Indeed it is, friend.” “Why did you say, dear Uttara, having given the alms: ‘Through this alms-giving I have been associated with Prince Pāyāsi in this world, but not in the other world’? Do we, friend Uttara, not wish to make merit and gain a reward for our charity?”

“Friend, you would not want to touch this kind of food with your foot, much less eat it. You would not want to touch this kind of cloth with your food, much less wear it. You are affectionate and kind to us, how can we reconcile such kindness with coarseness?” “Very well then, dear Uttara, arrange to give such food as I eat and such cloths as I wear.” Having replied, “Very well, friend,” to Prince Pāyāsi he did so. [356]

440. Then Prince Pāyāsi — having given alms carelessly (*asakkaccaṃ*), not with his own hand (*asahaṭṭhā*), disrespectfully (*acittikataṃ*), as something discarded (*apaviddhaṃ*) — on the break-up of the body after death arose among the deities of the Four Great Kings, in the empty Serisaka mansion. However, Uttara — having given alms carefully, with his own hand, respectfully, not as something discarded — on the break-up of the body after death arose among the deities of the Thirty-three.

The Deity Pāyāsi

441. Then on that occasion, the Venerable Gavampati regularly went to the empty Serisaka mansion to spend the day. Then the deity Pāyāsi approached the Venerable Gavampati, and having approached, paid homage and stood at one side. As the deity Pāyāsi was standing there the Venerable Gavampati said to him: “Who are you, friend?” “I, venerable sir, am Prince

Pāyāsi.” “Are you not the one, friend, who held this view: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously arisen beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil volitional actions’? “It is true, venerable sir, I held this view. However, [357] I was dissuaded from this evil view by the Venerable Kumāra Kassapa.” “Where, friend, has the brahmin youth Uttara, who was in charge of your alms-giving, arisen?” “The brahmin youth Uttara — who was in charge of my alms-giving — having given alms carefully, with his own hand, respectfully, not as something discarded — on the break-up of the body after death arose among the deities of the Thirty-three. However, venerable sir, having given alms carelessly, not with my own hand, disrespectfully, as something discarded — on the break-up of the body after death, have arisen among the deities of the Four Great Kings, in this empty Serisaka mansion. Therefore, Venerable Gavampati, having gone to the world of human beings, tell them: ‘Give alms carefully, with your own hand, respectfully, not as something discarded. Prince Pāyāsi — having given alms carelessly, not with his own hand, disrespectfully, as something discarded, on the break-up of the body after death has arisen about the deities of the Four Great Kings, in the empty Serisaka mansion. The brahmin youth Uttara — who was in charge of my alms-giving — having given alms carefully, with his own hand, respectfully, not as something discarded — on the break-up of the body after death arose among the deities of the Thirty-three.’”

Then the Venerable Gavampati, having returned to the world of human beings, told them: “Give alms carefully, with your own hand, respectfully, not as something discarded. Prince Pāyāsi — having given alms carelessly, not with his own hand, disrespectfully, as something discarded, on the break-up of the body after death has arisen about the deities of the Four Great Kings, in the empty Serisaka mansion. The brahmin youth Uttara — who was in charge of my alms-giving — having given alms carefully, with his own hand, respectfully, not as something discarded — on the break-up of the body after death arose among the deities of the Thirty-three.”

Singāla Suttam

A Discourse to Singāla

Introduction

This important discourse explains in detail the social responsibilities and proper conduct for a lay Buddhist. It is referred to as A Lay Person's Discipline.

I have abbreviated the translation in places to avoid some repetitions that are not needed when writing. I have added some Pāli words in parentheses for those who wish to know the original words used, and some footnotes to explain the meaning of key terms in more detail. Translation is an art, and the best English word to use depends on the context. If you have time, learn sufficient Pāli to read the original texts with the help of a dictionary. The Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka is an excellent tool to study the texts and Commentaries. It includes a dictionary to translate from Pāli to English or Hindi.

Translation

Thus have I heard — At one time the Blessed One was dwelling at Rājagaha in the Squirrels' Sanctuary in the Bamboo Grove. At that time, Siṅgālaka, the son of a householder, having risen early in the morning, and come out from Rājagaha, in wet clothes and hair, worshipped with joined palms the different directions — the east, the south, the west, the north, the nadir and the zenith.

Then the Blessed One, having dressed (*nivāsetvā*), taking his almsbowl and double-robe (*pattacivaramādāya*),¹ entered Rājagaha for alms. On seeing Siṅgālaka the Blessed One said: "Why do you, householder's son,² have risen early in the morning and come out from Rājagaha, in wet cloths and with wet hair, worship with joined palms the different directions?"

"Venerable sir, on his deathbed my father said, 'Dear son, honour the directions.' So, venerable sir, respecting (*sakkaronto*), esteeming (*garuṃ karonto*), honouring (*mānento*), and venerating (*pūjento*) my father's last words, I rise early in the morning, come out from Rājagaha in wet clothes and with wet hair, and worship with joined palms the different directions."

¹This stock phrase describes how monks prepare to walk for alms. Having put on the lower robe around the waist, and the upper robe around both shoulders, they carry the folded double-robe and the almsbowl. If they live in remote areas they may put on the upper robe only before entering the village. The training rule states to enter inhabited areas well-covered (*Suppaṭicchanno antaraghare gamissāmiti sikkhā karaṇiṃyā'ti.*)

²Householder's son (*gahapatiputta*). There is no way to tell his age, but one assumes that he was still fairly young and unmarried. On coming into an inheritance at a young age, being faced with many new responsibilities, he would have been in need of advice. His mother, Siṅgālamātā, became a nun and an Arahant, and was praised as the best of the nuns liberated by faith.

Six Directions

“It is not thus, householder’s son, that the six directions are worshipped in the noble one’s discipline.”

“How then, venerable sir, should the six directions be worshipped in the noble one’s discipline? It would be good if the Blessed One would teach me how the six directions are to be worshipped in the noble one’s discipline.”

“In that case, householder’s son, listen and pay careful attention. I will speak.”

“Very well, venerable sir,” *Siṅgālaka* replied, and the Blessed One said:—

“Householder’s son, the noble disciple has abandoned four impure actions; he does no evil due to the four causes; and he does not follow six practices that cause dissipation of wealth. By avoiding these fourteen evils, he secures the six directions and practices for success in both worlds. He has accomplished his tasks for this world as well as for the next. On the breakup of the body after death, he is reborn in a fortunate celestial realm.”

Four Impure Actions

“What are the four impure actions that he has abandoned? Killing living beings (*pāṇātipāto*), householder’s son, is an impure action, taking what is not given (*adinnādānaṃ*) is an impure action, sexual misconduct (*kāmesu-micchācāro*) is an impure action, telling lies (*musāvādo*) is an impure action. He has abandoned these four impure actions.”

Thus said the Blessed One. After the Fortunate One (*sugato*) had spoken these words, the Teacher (*sathā*) added:—

“Killing, stealing, telling lies, and committing adultery¹ are never praised by the wise.

¹ Committing adultery. Literally, “Going to the wives of others (*paradāraḡamanañceva*). Sexual misconduct (*kāmesu-micchācāra*) means literally “Misconduct in sensual pleasures,” but the meaning is sexual misconduct. This includes having sexual relations with twenty types of women (*Vin.iii.139*); ten unmarried and ten married:† 1) Protected by her mother (*māturakkhitā*), 2) Protected by her father (*piturakkhitā*), 3) Protected by her mother and father (*mātāpiturakkhitā*), 4) Protected by her brother (*bhāturakkhitā*), 5) Protected by her sister (*bhāginirakkhitā*), 6) Protected by her relatives (*ñātirakkhitā*), 7) Protected by her clan (*gottarakkhītā*), 8) Protected by the Dhamma (*dhammarakkhitā*), 9) Protected in some other way (*sārakkhā*) such as a flower garland (betrothed), 10) Protected by a legal punishment (*saparidaṇḍā*).

† **Ten kinds of wives:** 1) Bought with money (*dhanakkītā*), 2) Living together through affection (*chandaovāsini*), 3) Living together by giving property (*bhogavāsini*), 4) Living together by giving clothing (*paṭavāsini*), 5) Bought by providing water (*odapattakini*), 6) Living together having removed the water-pot carrying cloth (*obhāṭacumbaṭā*), 7) A female slave (*dāsi*), 8) A female worker (*kammakāri*), 9) A captured wife (*dhajāhaṭā*), 10) A temporary wife (*muhuttikā*). This reference from the Vinaya texts concerns the Saṅghādisesa training (*Continued on page 47*)

Four Causes of Evil

“What are the four causes through which he does not do evil deeds? Taking a wrong course through desire (*chandāgatiṃ*), one commits evil; taking a wrong course through anger (*dosāgatiṃ*), one commits evil; taking a wrong course through delusion (*mohāgatiṃ*), one commits evil; and taking a wrong course through fear (*bhayagatiṃ*), one commits evil. However, householder’s son, a noble disciple does not commit evil taking a wrong course through these four causes.

Thus said the Blessed One. After the Fortunate One had spoken these words, the Teacher added:–

“Whoever transgresses the Dhamma due to desire, anger, fear, or delusion, His fame declines like the moon in the waning half of the month.

“Whoever does not transgress the Dhamma due to desire, anger, fear or delusion, His fame increases like the moon in the waxing half of the month.”

Six Ways of Dissipating Wealth

“What are the six ways of dissipating wealth that he does not follow?

“Indulgence in intoxicants that cause heedlessness,¹ householder’s son, leads to the dissipation of wealth. Sauntering in streets at unseemly hours leads to the dissipation of wealth. Indulgence in visiting shows leads to the dissipation of wealth. Indulgence in gambling that causes heedlessness leads to the dissipation of wealth. Associating with evil friends leads to the dissipation of wealth. Indulgence in laziness leads to the dissipation of wealth.”

¹ Indulgence in intoxicants that cause heedlessness (*surāmerayamajjappamādaṭṭhānānuyoge*). Spirits (*surā*), fermented drinks (*meraya*), that intoxicate (*majja*), and cause heedlessness (*pamādaṭṭhāna*), indulgence in, indulging in or having the habit of (*anuyoga*). The fifth precept is an undertaking to abstain from taking intoxicants, not an undertaking to refrain from getting intoxicated. A number of misinformed Buddhists think that taking a little alcohol does not break the precept, but virtuous Buddhist are teetotalers. The precepts are a voluntary undertaking, not commandments. An occasional drink does not lead to a lay person’s downfall. However, drinking intoxicants habitually, being addicted to them, and indulgence clearly leads to the dissipation of one’s wealth for all of the reasons stated. Nothing more need be said regarding drugs. It should be obvious that both legal and illegal drugs that cause heedlessness should be included here.

(Continued from page 46) rule about acting as a match-maker, but it can also be applied to the context of avoiding sexual misconduct. An unmarried couple living together through affection are not committing sexual misconduct, unless the girl is one of the ten protected by her relatives, etc., or one of the ten kinds of wives. That is, if couples are unmarried, they should remain faithful to each other.

Six Dangers of Indulgence in Intoxicants

“There are these six dangers, householder’s son, of indulgence in intoxicants that cause heedlessness. The immediate loss of wealth, an increase in quarrels, diseases of the sense-faculties, he gets a bad reputation, indecent exposure of his body, the impairment of wisdom. These, householder’s son, are the six dangers of indulgence in intoxicants that cause heedlessness.”

Six Dangers of Sauntering in Streets

“There are these six dangers, householder’s son, of sauntering in streets at unseemly hours. He himself is unprotected, his wife and children are unprotected, his property is unprotected, he is suspected of committing evil deeds, he is subject to false accusations, he encounters many painful things. These, householder’s son, are the six dangers of sauntering in streets at unseemly hours.”

Six Dangers of Visiting Shows

“There are these six dangers,¹ householder’s son, of visiting shows (*samajjābhicarāṇa*). ‘Where is there dancing (*naccaṃ*)? Where is there singing (*gītaṃ*)? Where is there music (*vāḍitaṃ*)? Where is there story-telling (*akkhānaṃ*)? Where is there playing of tabla (*pāṇissaraṃ*)? Where is there drumming (*kumbhathunaṃ*)?’ These, householder’s son, are the six dangers of visiting shows.”

Six Dangers of Gambling

“There are these six dangers of addiction (*anuyoga*)² to gambling that causes heedlessness. Winning begets enmity, the loser grieves over his loss, there is immediate loss of wealth, his word is not trusted in a court of law, he is despised by his friends and associates, he is not sought as a marriage partner because people say, ‘He is a gambler, he cannot support a wife.’ These, householder’s son, are the six dangers of addiction to gambling that causes heedlessness.”

¹ Whatever kind of show it is that one likes, the disadvantage is that one must make inquiries to find out where and when they are going to happen, then make plans to go there. While away from one’s house, one’s property is unguarded, which is the danger. Wealth is dissipated in buying tickets or gifts to offer to the performers, the cost of travelling there, and the loss of earnings. In the crowds that gather at such events there will also be thieves looking for a chance to steal from or rob victims, perhaps using violence.

² The word “*anuyoga*” means applying oneself to something, being intent on it, and devoted to it. Buying lottery tickets is also gambling, and it also dissipates one’s wealth a little, but most people are not addicted to gambling in a harmful way. In this context, it refers to habitual gambling, which soon leads to poverty and indebtedness so I have translated it as “addiction.” Others (Nārada) translate it as “indulgence in.” In the context of laziness I have translated the same word, *anuyoga*, as “habitual,” and in the context of drinking intoxicants as “indulgence in.”

Six Dangers of Evil Friends

“There are these six dangers of associating with evil friends. Those who are gamblers (*dhuttā*), those who are libertines (*soṇḍā*), those who are drunkards (*pipāsā*), those who are fraudsters (*nekatikā*), those who are cheats (*vañcanikā*), and those who are thugs (*sāhasikā*); form his circle of friends. These, householder’s son, are the six dangers of associating with evil friends.

Six Dangers of Laziness

“There are these six dangers of habitual¹ laziness: thinking ‘It is too cold,’ he does no work, thinking ‘It is too hot,’ he does no work, thinking ‘It is too late,’ he does no work, thinking ‘It is too early,’ he does no work, thinking ‘I am too hungry,’ he does no work, thinking ‘I am too full,’ he does no work. Thus many duties are left undone, not acquiring new wealth, but dissipating such wealth as he has already accumulated. These are the six dangers, householder’s son, of habitual laziness.

Thus said the Blessed One. After the Fortunate One had spoken these words, the Teacher added:–

“There are those called drinking companions,
who are friends only in one's presence.
One who is a friend in times of crisis is a true friend.”

“Sleeping until the sun is high; committing adultery;
Making enemies and engaging in unbeneficial activities;
Evil friendship and being very selfish. These six causes bring ruin.”

“Evil friends and associates of evil conduct and resorts
Leads to ruin in this world and the next.”

“Playing dice, womanising, dancing and singing;
Sleeping during the day; wandering at the wrong time;
Evil friends and selfishness; these six causes bring ruin.”

“Playing dice; indulgence in drinking;
Misbehaving with women who are as dear as life to other men,
With women sought after by the vile but shunned by the mature;
His fame declines like the moon in the waning half of the month.

¹ The similes of a bee collecting nectar to make honey and termites collecting grains of sand to build up the termite mound make it clear that becoming wealthy is a gradual process. Getting rich by taking advantage of others, while disregarding their true welfare, may be much quicker, but using only honest trading or hard labour it takes time. Nevertheless, great wealth will gradually accumulate if one is frugal and honest. Whether one’s business prospers slowly or quickly also depends on one’s past kamma, but the importance of present kamma and hard work cannot be overstated.

“The destitute drunkard,
 Longing to drink, frequents drinking dens.
 As a stone sinks in water, he becomes immersed in debt.
 He is quickly disowned and rejected by his relatives.

“He who sleeps in the day, and is lazy at night,
 Always drunk and lustful, cannot manage a household.

“Saying ‘It is too cold, too hot, too late,’
 Thus leaving work undone, many opportunities pass the young man by.”

“For him who considers cold and heat as no more than a blade of grass,
 Who dutifully attends to the affairs of men,
 Happiness and prosperity do not decline.”

Enemies Disguised as Friends

“These four, householder’s son, should be regarded as enemies disguised as friends. A friend who only takes should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend; a friend who makes empty promises should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend; a friend who flatters should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend; and a friend who is a wastrel should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.

A Friend Who Only Takes

“For four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who only takes should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He only takes, wanting much but giving little; he does things only out of fear; he follows only for his own advantage. For these four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who only takes should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.”

A Friend Who Makes Empty Promises

“For four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who makes empty promises should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He speaks about what he would have done in the past; he speaks about what he would do in the future; he tries to please one with empty promises; when an occasion arises to help, he shows his inability. For these four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who makes empty promises should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.”

A Friend Who Flatters

“For four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who flatters should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He approves of your evil deeds; he also approves of your good deeds; he speaks of your virtues in your presence; he

speaks of your faults in your absence. For these four reasons, householder's son, a friend who flatters should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend."

A Friend Who Is a Wastrel

"For four reasons, householder's son, a friend who is a wastrel should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He is a companion when indulging in intoxicants that cause heedlessness; He is a companion when sauntering in streets at unseemly hours; He is a companion when frequenting shows; He is a companion when indulging in gambling, which causes heedlessness. For these four reasons, householder's son, a friend who is a wastrel should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend."

Thus said the Blessed One. After the Fortunate One had spoken these words, the Teacher added:-

"The friend who only takes, the friend who makes empty promises,
The friend who flatters, and the friend who is a wastrel —
The wise knowing these four as enemies,
Avoid them like a dangerous road."

Good-hearted Friends

"These four, householder's son, should be known as good-hearted (*suhado*) friends: he who is helpful (*upakāro*); he who is the same in prosperity and adversity (*samānasukhadukkho*); he who gives good counsel (*atthakhāyī*); and he who is compassionate (*anukampaka*).

A Friend Who Is Helpful

"For four reasons, householder's son, a friend who is helpful should be known as a good-hearted friend: he protects you when you are heedless (*pamattaṇi*); he protects your property when you are heedless; he is a refuge when you are afraid; when something needs to be done he gives you twice what you need. For these four reasons, householder's son, a friend who is helpful should be known as a good-hearted friend."

A Friend Who Is Loyal

"For four reasons, householder's son, a friend who is the same in prosperity and adversity should be known as a good-hearted friend: he tells you his secrets; he keeps your secrets; he does not forsake you in adversity; he will even sacrifice his life for you. For these four reasons, householder's son, a friend who is loyal should be known as a good-hearted friend."

A Friend Who Gives Good Counsel

“For four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who gives good counsel should be known as a good-hearted friend: he restrains you from evil; he exhorts you to do good; he tells you what you do not know; he shows you the way to heaven. For these four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who gives good counsel should be known as a good-hearted friend.”

A Friend Who Is Compassionate

“For four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who is compassionate should be known as a good-hearted friend: he does not rejoice in your misfortune; he rejoices in your prosperity; he restrains those who speak about your faults; he praises those who speak about your virtues. For these four reasons, householder’s son, a friend who is compassionate should be known as a good-hearted friend.”

Thus said the Blessed One. After the Fortunate One had spoken these words, the Teacher added:—

“The friend who is helpful, the friend who is loyal,
The friend who gives good counsel, and the friend who is compassionate
The wise should know these four as good-hearted friends.
Care for them with devotion as a mother cares for her own child.

“The wise man endowed with virtue shines bright like a blazing fire.
The wealth acquired harmlessly, as a bee gathers nectar from flowers
Grow as a termite mound grows⁷ higher and higher.

“Having acquired wealth in this way, a man who can set up a household
Should divide his wealth into four portions; thus he can gather friends.
He should spend one portion; use two to run his business;
The fourth should be reserved for emergencies.”

Securing the Six Directions

“How, householder’s son, does the noble disciple secure the six directions? These six directions should be known. The parents should be known as the east, teachers should be known as the south, wife and children should be known as the west, friends and associates should be known as the north, slaves¹ (*dasā*) and employees (*kammakarā*) should be known as the nadir and recluses and priests should be known as the zenith.

¹ Slaves in the Buddha’s time seem to have been common-place. They were bonded labourers born into a household rather than slaves traded by human traffickers. They were part of the household and provided with food and somewhere to live, but were not entitled to wages. They would have been highly dependent on the good-will of their owner. Employees (*kammakarā*) were hired for a wage and so were free to come and go as they pleased.

Parents as the East

“In five ways, householder’s son, should a son minister to his parents as the east. My parents have supported me, I will support them in turn; I will manage affairs on their behalf; I will maintain the family traditions; I will be worthy of my inheritance; I will offer alms on behalf of my departed parents.

“In five ways, householder’s son, the parents ministered to as the east by a son show him compassion. They restrain him from evil, they exhort him to do good, they train him to acquire skills, they seek a suitable wife for him, they give him his inheritance when the time comes. In these five ways, householder’s son, the parents ministered to as the east by a son show him compassion. Thus the eastern direction is made secure, peaceful, and free from dangers.”

Teachers as the South

“In five ways, householder’s son, should a son minister to his teachers as the south. By standing up to greet them; by attending on and waiting on them daily; by obeying their instructions; by performing personal services; by acquiring their skill thoroughly.

“In five ways, householder’s son, the teacher ministered to as the south by a pupil shows him compassion. He trains him well, he makes him master his skill, he teaches him everything he knows about his skill, he introduces him to his friends and associates, he protects him from all directions. In these five ways, householder’s son, the teacher ministered to as the south by a pupil shows him compassion. Thus the southern direction is made secure, peaceful, and free from dangers.”

Wife as the West

“In five ways, householder’s son, should a husband minister to his wife as the west. By honouring her (*sammānanāya*); by not disrespecting her (*anavamānāya*);¹ by not being unfaithful to her (*anaticariyāya*); by relinquishing control to her in domestic matters (*issariyavossaggena*); by providing her with ornaments (*alaṅkāraṇuppadānena*).

“In five ways, householder’s son, the wife ministered to as the west by a husband shows him compassion. She performs her work well (*susamvhitakammantā*), she treats the members of the household well (*saṅgahitaparijanā*), she is not unfaithful (*anaticārini*), she carefully protects what her husband brings home (*sambhatañca anurakkhati*), she is skilled (*dakkhā*) and not lazy (*analaṣā*) in performing all of her duties (*sabbakicesu*). In these five ways, householder’s son, a wife ministered to as the west by a husband shows

¹ He should not treat her like a slave or employee, by beating or threatening her.

him compassion. Thus the western direction is made secure, peaceful, and free from dangers.”

Friends as the North

“In five ways, householder’s son, should a son of a good family (*kulaputta*) minister to friends and associations as the north. By generosity; by courteous speech; by being helpful; by being impartial; by being true to his word.

“In five ways, householder’s son, the friends and associates ministered to as the north by a son of a good family show him compassion. They protect him when he is heedless, they protect his property when he is heedless, they are a refuge when he afraid, they do not forsake him when he faces adversity, they help his descendants. In these five ways, householder’s son, the friends and associates ministered to as the north by the son of a good family show him compassion. Thus the northern direction is made secure, peaceful, and free from dangers.”

Employees as the Nadir

“In five ways, householder’s son, should an employer minister to slaves and employees as the nadir. By assigning them work according to their strength; by giving them food and wages; by caring for them when sick; by sharing delicious unexpected treats; by granting them leave at times.

“In five ways, householder’s son, the employees ministered to as the nadir by an employer show him compassion. They rise before him, they sleep after him, they take only what is given, they perform their duties well, they spread his good reputation. In these five ways, householder’s son, the employees ministered to as the nadir by the employer show him compassion. Thus the nadir is made secure, peaceful, and free from dangers.”

Recluses and Priests as the Zenith

“In five ways, householder’s son, should the son of a good family minister to recluses (*samaṇa*) and priests (*brāhmaṇā*) as the zenith. By kind actions; by kind speech; by kind thoughts; by keeping an open door for them; by providing their material needs.

“In six ways, householder’s son, the recluses and priests ministered to as the zenith by the son of a good family show him compassion. They restrain him from evil, they exhort him to do good, they maintain a compassionate mind towards him, they teach him what he have not heard, they explain what he has heard already, they point out the path to heaven. In these six ways, householder’s son, the recluses and priests ministered to as the zenith

by the son of a good family show him compassion. Thus the zenith is made secure, peaceful, and free from dangers.”

Thus said the Blessed One. After the Fortunate One had spoken these words, the Teacher added:—

“Mother and father as the east, teachers as the south,
Wife and children as the west, friends and associates as the north
Slaves and employees as the zenith, recluses and priests above.
These six directions a truly good householder should honour.

“The wise and virtuous man
who is gentle (*saṅho*) and quick-witted (*paṭibhānavā*),
Humble (*nivātavutti*) and prudent (*atthaddho*), such a one gains fame.

“Diligent (*uṭṭhānako*) and not lazy (*analamo*),
not shaken (*vedhati*) in adversity (*āpadāsu*),
Constantly employed and intelligent, such a one gains fame.

“Benevolent and friendly, he understands what is said, free from meanness,
He leads with helpful counsel and well-reasoned advice.

“Generosity and amiable speech, and helping others here,
Treating others impartially, just as he would treat himself,
These four benevolent practices in this world are like the yoke of a chariot,

“If these did not exist in the world,
Parents would not be respected by their children.

“Because they are rightly esteemed by the wise,
Therefore they reach eminence and are universally praised.”

When this had been said, Siṅgāla the householder’s son said this to the Blessed One: “It is excellent, venerable sir! It is marvellous, venerable sir! What was overturned has been set upright, what was hidden has been revealed, the right path has been pointed out to one who was lost, a light has been brought into the darkness so that those with eyes can see forms. Thus the Blessed One has explained the Dhamma in various ways. I go to the Blessed One for refuge, to the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha. May the Blessed One regard me as a lay disciple from today onwards as long as life lasts.”

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