

THE CANONICAL BOOK OF THE
BUDDHA'S LENGTHY DISCOURSES
VOLUME III

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BDK English Tripiṭaka Series

**THE CANONICAL BOOK
OF THE BUDDHA'S
LENGTHY DISCOURSES
VOLUME III**

(Taishō Volume 1, Number 1)

Translated from the Chinese

by

Shohei Ichimura

BDK America, Inc.

2018

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A Message on the Publication of the English Tripiṭaka

The Buddhist canon is said to contain eighty-four thousand different teachings. I believe that this is because the Buddha's basic approach was to prescribe a different treatment for every spiritual ailment, much as a doctor prescribes a different medicine for every medical ailment. Thus his teachings were always appropriate for the particular suffering individual and for the time at which the teaching was given, and over the ages not one of his prescriptions has failed to relieve the suffering to which it was addressed.

Ever since the Buddha's Great Demise over twenty-five hundred years ago, his message of wisdom and compassion has spread throughout the world. Yet no one has ever attempted to translate the entire Buddhist canon into English throughout the history of Japan. It is my greatest wish to see this done and to make the translations available to the many English-speaking people who have never had the opportunity to learn about the Buddha's teachings.

Of course, it would be impossible to translate all of the Buddha's eighty-four thousand teachings in a few years. I have, therefore, had one hundred thirty-nine of the scriptural texts in the prodigious Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon selected for inclusion in the First Series of this translation project.

It is in the nature of this undertaking that the results are bound to be criticized. Nonetheless, I am convinced that unless someone takes it upon himself or herself to initiate this project, it will never be done. At the same time, I hope that an improved, revised edition will appear in the future.

It is most gratifying that, thanks to the efforts of more than a hundred Buddhist scholars from the East and the West, this monumental project has finally gotten off the ground. May the rays of the Wisdom of the Compassionate One reach each and every person in the world.

NUMATA Yehan
Founder of the English
Tripiṭaka Project

August 7, 1991

Editorial Foreword

In the long history of Buddhist transmission throughout East Asia, translations of Buddhist texts were often carried out as national projects supported and funded by emperors and political leaders. The BDK English Tripiṭaka project, on the other hand, began as a result of the dream and commitment of one man. In January 1982 Dr. NUMATA Yehan, founder of Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), initiated the monumental task of translating the complete Taishō shinshū daizōkyō edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka (Buddhist canon) into the English language. Under his leadership, a special preparatory committee was organized in April 1982. By July of the same year the Translation Committee of the English Tripiṭaka was officially convened.

The initial Committee included the following members: (late) HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairperson), (late) BANDŌ Shōjun, ISHIGAMI Zennō, (late) KAMATA Shigeo, (late) KANAOKA Shūyū, MAYEDA Sengaku, NARA Yasuaki, (late) SAYEKI Shinkō, (late) SHIOIRI Ryōtatsu, TAMARU Noriyoshi, (late) TAMURA Kwansei, (late) URYŪZU Ryūshin, and YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members of the Committee were as follows: KANAZAWA Atsushi, WATANABE Shōgo, Rolf Giebel of New Zealand, and Rudy Smet of Belgium.

After holding planning meetings on a monthly basis, the Committee selected one hundred and thirty-nine texts for the First Series of the project, estimated to be one hundred printed volumes in all. The texts selected were not limited to those originally written in India but also included works composed in China and Japan. While the publication of the First Series proceeds, the texts for the Second Series will be selected from among the remaining works; this process will continue until all the texts, in Japanese as well as in Chinese, have been published. Given the huge scope of this project, accomplishing the English translations of all the Chinese and Japanese texts in the Taishō canon may take as long as one hundred years or more. Nevertheless, as Dr. NUMATA wished, it is the sincere hope of the Committee that this project will continue until completion, even after all the present members have passed away.

Dr. NUMATA passed away on May 5, 1994, at the age of ninety-seven. He entrusted his son, Mr. NUMATA Toshihide with the continuation and completion of the English Tripiṭaka project. Mr. Numata served for twenty-three years, leading the project forward with enormous progress before his sudden passing on February 16, 2017, at the age of eighty-four. The Committee previously lost its able and devoted first Chairperson, Professor HANAYAMA Shōyū, on June 16, 1995, at the age of sixty-three. In October 1995 the Committee elected Professor MAYEDA Sengaku (then Vice President of Musashino Women's College) as Chairperson, and upon the retirement of Professor Mayeda in July 2016, the torch was passed to me to serve as the third Chairperson. Despite these losses and changes we, the Editorial Committee members, have renewed our determination to carry out the noble ideals set by Dr. NUMATA. Present members of the Committee are Kenneth K. Tanaka (Chairperson), MAYEDA Sengaku, ICHISHIMA Shōshin, ISHIGAMI Zennō, KATSURA Shōryū, NARA Yasuaki, SAITŌ Akira, SHIMODA Masahiro, WATANABE Shōgo, and YONEZAWA Yoshiyasu.

The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research was established in November 1984, in Berkeley, California, U.S.A., to assist in the publication of the translated texts. The Publication Committee was organized at the Numata Center in December 1991. In 2010, the Numata Center's operations were merged with Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai America, Inc. (BDK America), and BDK America continues to oversee the publication side of the English Tripiṭaka project in close cooperation with the Editorial Committee in Tokyo.

At the time of this writing, in February 2017, the project has completed about sixty percent of the seven thousand one hundred and eighty-five Taishō pages of texts selected for the First Series. Much work still lies ahead of us but we are committed to the completion of the remaining texts in order to realize the grand vision of Dr. Numata, shared by Mr. Numata and Professor Hanayama, to make the Buddhist canon more readily accessible to the English-speaking world.

Kenneth K. Tanaka
Chairperson
Editorial Committee of
the BDK English Tripiṭaka

Publisher's Foreword

On behalf of the members of the Publication Committee, I am happy to present this volume as the latest contribution to the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series. The Publication Committee members have worked to ensure that this volume, as all other volumes in the series, has gone through a rigorous process of editorial efforts.

The initial translation and editing of the Buddhist scriptures found in this and other BDK English Tripiṭaka volumes are performed under the direction of the Editorial Committee in Tokyo, Japan. Both the Editorial Committee in Tokyo and the Publication Committee, headquartered in Moraga, California, are dedicated to the production of accurate and readable English translations of the Buddhist canon. In doing so, the members of both committees and associated staff work to honor the deep faith, spirit, and concern of the late Reverend Dr. Yehan Numata, who founded the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series in order to disseminate the Buddhist teachings throughout the world.

The long-term goal of our project is the translation and publication of the texts in the one hundred-volume Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon, along with a number of influential extracanonical Japanese Buddhist texts. The list of texts selected for the First Series of this translation project may be found at the end of each volume in the series.

As Chair of the Publication Committee, I am deeply honored to serve as the fifth person in a post previously held by leading figures in the field of Buddhist studies, most recently by my predecessor, John R. McRae.

In conclusion, I wish to thank the members of the Publication Committee for their dedicated and expert work undertaken in the course of preparing this volume for publication: Managing Editor Marianne Dresser, Dr. Hudaya Kandahjaya, Dr. Carl Bielefeldt, Dr. Robert Sharf, and Rev. Brian Kensho Nagata, Director of the BDK English Tripiṭaka Project.

A. Charles Muller
Chairperson
Publication Committee

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Translator's Introduction

The Textual Origin and Contents of the *Canonical Collection of Lengthy Discourses*

The complex historical context in which the textual translation of the *Dīrgha Āgama* took place is beyond the scope of this brief introduction. I attempt to provide here, however, an evaluation of three major features of this canonical tradition: the nature of this sutra collection and its contents, the translators and the times of translation, and the canonical legacy from the point of view of the premodern and modern contemporary Tripiṭaka Buddhist library.

The *Chang ahan jing* (Skt. *Dīrgha Āgama*), or the *Canonical Collection of Lengthy Discourses*, is one of the four canonical collections that were upheld by the orthodox Dharmaguptaka school. Since this school descended from the Sthāvira orthodoxy that had a prominent position in the few centuries around the Third Buddhist Council, held around 250 to 236 B.C.E.,¹ centuries after the Buddha's demise, the origin of this school's canonical tradition (Āgamas) may be traced back to some scriptural matrix² whose contents had been compiled and authenticated by the time of the Third Council.

There were three or four general councils during Buddhism's early centuries. The First Council was held at Rājagṛha (present-day Rājgīr, Bihar) immediately after Śākyamuni's passing (485 or 486 B.C.E.) in order to assure the oral preservation of the core teachings Śākyamuni Buddha taught directly to his disciples. The Second Council was held at Vaiśālī (Vesālī) a century later to settle some controversies on the Vinaya rules and disciplines set forth by Śākyamuni as the moral and spiritual codes for Buddhist monks and their communities. This council contributed to the ascertainment of legality on the nature of Vinaya codes, despite some challenges and disputes raised by changing historical and social contexts. At that time, it is said that some elder monks still remembered how some of the first-generation disciples had upheld the discipline while remaining active in daily life.

Though our knowledge of it is confined to Theravāda documents,³ the Third Council was held under the auspices of the Mauryan Buddhist ruler Aśoka in the seventeenth year of his reign (251 B.C.E.) at the capital city Pāṭaliputra (Patna, Bihar). Although this council failed in its intended goal of preventing schism from sectarian movements, the Third Council was pivotal to the subsequent history of the Buddhist canonical tradition for two reasons. First, since the Buddha's teaching and organization evolved in various forms during the initial two and a half centuries of its development, Buddhist leaders were compelled to reexamine their canonical traditions and establish an authenticated standard to prevent sectarian diversion and doctrinal variation. Second, it was during this council that Buddhist scriptures were formally classified into the threefold categories of Sutra (teaching), Vinaya (discipline), and Abhidharma (doctrine), i.e., the threefold canonical baskets (Skt. Tripiṭaka; Pāli Tipiṭaka). From that time on, the Tripiṭaka served as the basic categorization of Buddhist literature.

The last general conference was held in Kāśmīra under the auspices of King Kaniṣka, the Kuṣāṇa ruler (known in China as Great Yüejī), toward the end of the first century C.E., and it centered on the Hinayana orthodoxy, the Sthāvira-Sarvāstivāda school. Though the historical veracity of this conference is not conclusive, the likelihood of its occurrence can be argued based on the detailed Abhidharma discussions recorded in the *Mahāvibhāṣā-śāstra*,⁴ and especially in the epilogue left by its translator Xuanzang, as well as the historical fact of the massive Hindu reaction which spurred efforts to compile their literary legacy in the early second century C.E.⁵ In any case, after the Fourth Council meeting in Kāśmīra, Kuṣāṇa monks began to reach the continent of China during the Late Han period.

The Synopsis between the Sanskrit *Dīrgha Āgama* and the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya*

The *Canonical Collection of Lengthy Discourses* was one of the four Āgamas essential to the Sutra-*piṭaka* that was preserved by the Dharmaguptaka school. To explain the nature of this Āgama, it is best to show the synopsis between the content of the *Dīrgha Āgama* and that of the *Dīgha Nikāya* (DN), upheld by the Theravāda school as part of the fivefold *sutta-piṭaka*. The Theravāda school prospered in Sri Lanka, and its descendants in Southeast Asia (Burma, Thailand, and Indochina) preserved the fivefold Nikāyas through the Pāli canonical language.

The Dharmaguptaka school, one of the descendants of the Sthāvira-Sarvāstivāda school that prospered in Northern India, inherited the *Dīrgha Āgama* as part of their Sutra-*piṭaka* through the canonical language of Sanskrit or, more precisely, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit.⁶

The fourfold Āgamas that constitute the Sutra-*piṭaka* of the Hinayana orthodoxy were preserved throughout the medieval period as part of the Mahayana Tripiṭaka corpus through the Chinese versions since the fifth century C.E. The following is a chart of the synopsis between the four Dharmaguptaka Āgamas originally in Sanskrit and the five Nikāyas (Pāli *sutta* collections) preserved by the Theravāda school.

Four Sanskrit Āgamas (Dharmaguptaka)	Five Pāli Nikāyas (Theravāda)
1. <i>Dīrgha Āgama</i> (<i>Lengthy Discourses</i>)	1. <i>Dīgha Nikāya</i> (<i>Lengthy Discourses</i>)
2. <i>Madhyama Āgama</i> (<i>Middle-length Discourses</i>)	2. <i>Majjhima Nikāya</i> (<i>Middle-length Discourses</i>)
3. <i>Samyukta Āgama</i> (<i>Mixed Discourses</i>)	3. <i>Samyutta Nikāya</i> (<i>Mixed Discourses</i>)
4. <i>Ekottarika Āgama</i> (<i>Gradually Increased Discourses</i>)	4. <i>Anguttara Nikāya</i> (<i>Increasing Each by a Doctrine</i>)
	5. <i>Khuddaka Nikāya</i> (<i>Short Discourses</i>)

As can be inferred from this table, the Sanskrit *Dīrgha Āgama* and the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya* have many synoptic parallels in their respective content, namely, between the thirty sutras of the *Chang ahan jing* and the thirty-four *suttantas* of the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya*.⁷ There are twenty-seven sutras that are identified with the twenty-seven *suttantas*, but differences in their respective ordering and arrangement of scriptures must be recognized. Seven *suttantas*⁸ are omitted in the *Chang ahan jing*, but this includes a sutra that is not found in the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Because of this close synoptic correlations, it is reasonable to assume that the Sanskrit *Dīrgha Āgama* and the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya* had a common canonical matrix that could have been determined as standard during the Third Buddhist Council.

The *Chang ahan jing* is unique in two ways. First, the editors of the Āgama in organizing the sutras set forth four major sections, reflecting their major concerns:

(1) the centrality of Śākyamuni Buddha as the primary subject, (2) the importance of the Dharma and doctrine, (3) the resultant practice, discipline, and advanced spiritual states, and (4) a record of the cosmological origins of the world. Second, the “Sutra on Buddhist Cosmology,” which is totally absent in the *Dīgha Nikāya* of the Pāli canon, was added as the last text in the collection in order to present the Buddha's teaching more effectively and attractively to a non-Buddhist Hindu audience. According to some scholars, the underlying principle of the *Chang ahan jing* reflects a conciliatory impulse that was intended to bridge the original Buddha's teaching (the ninefold or twelvefold categories of discourses) on the one hand, and early Mahayana Buddhist teaching and scriptures on the other.⁹

The correlations between the two scriptural traditions, the sutras of the *Chang ahan jing* and the *suttantas* of the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya*, are presented below. In addition, the corresponding texts are noted at the beginning of each sutra in this translation.

Four Sutras on the Subject of Śākyamuni Buddha

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. The Great Origin (<i>Daban jing</i>) | DN 14: <i>Mahāpadāna Suttanta</i> |
| 2. Last Journey and Sojourns,
Parts 1, 2, 3 | DN 16: <i>Mahāpariṇibbāna Suttanta</i> |
| 3. A Great Treasury Councilor | DN 19: <i>Mahāgovinda Suttanta</i> |
| 4. Janavasabha's Exhortation | DN 18: <i>Janavasabha Suttanta</i> |

Fifteen Sutras on the Subject of Dharma and Doctrine

- | | |
|---|--|
| 5. Lesser Causality | DN 27: <i>Aggañña Suttanta</i> |
| 6. Universal Ruler (<i>Cakravartin</i>)'s
Practice | DN 26: <i>Cakkavatti-sīhanāda Suttanta</i> |
| 7. Pāyāsi[’s Dialogue] | DN 23: <i>Pāyāsi Suttanta</i> |
| 8. Sandhāna | DN 25: <i>Udumbarika-sīhanāda Suttanta</i> |
| 9. Numerically Assembled Doctrines | DN 33: <i>Sanḅgīti Suttanta</i> |
| 10. Ten Progressively Classified
Doctrines | DN 34: <i>Dasuttara-Suttanta</i> |
| 11. Gradual Increase of Doctrines
by One | No Parallel in DN |
| 12. Doctrines in Groups of Three | No Parallel in DN |
| 13. Greater Causality | DN 15: <i>Mahānidāna Suttanta</i> |
| 14. Indra's Question on Causality | DN 21: <i>Sakkapañha Suttanta</i> |

15. Anupiya Episode	DN 24: <i>Pāṭika Suttanta</i>
16. Kalyāṇa-jātika	DN 31: <i>Sīṅgālovāda Suttanta</i>
17. Purity	DN 29: <i>Pāsādika Suttanta</i>
18. Happiness Caused by Oneself	DN 28: <i>Sam̐pasānīya Suttanta</i>
19. Great Assembly	DN 20: <i>Mahāsamaya Suttanta</i>

Ten Sutras on the Subject of Practice and Resulting Spiritual States

20. Ambaṭṭha	DN 3: <i>Ambaṭṭha Suttanta</i>
21. Brahmā's [Net]	DN 1: <i>Brahmajāla Suttanta</i>
22. One Who Cultivates Virtues	DN 4: <i>Soṇadaṇḍa Suttanta</i>
23. <i>Brāhmaṇa</i> Kūṭadanta	DN 5: <i>Kūṭadanta Suttanta</i>
24. Kevaddha	DN 11: <i>Kevaṭṭha Suttanta</i>
25. A Naked <i>Brāhmaṇa</i> Ascetic	DN 8: <i>Kassapa-sīhanāda Suttanta</i>
26. Knowledge of Three Vedas	DN 13: <i>Tevijja Suttanta</i>
27. The Rewards of the Life of a <i>Śramaṇa</i>	DN 2: <i>Sāmañña-phala Suttanta</i>
28. Poṭṭhapāda	DN 9: <i>Poṭṭhapāda Suttanta</i>
29. Lohitya	DN 12: <i>Lohicca Suttanta</i>

Sutra 30 on the Subject of Cosmology (No Parallel in DN)

- | | |
|---|---|
| A | 1. The Land of Jambudvīpa |
| | 2. The Land of Uttarakuru |
| | 3. The Universal Ruler (<i>Cakravartin</i>) |
| B | 4. The Worlds of the Hells |
| | 5. Dragons and Birds |
| C | 6. The <i>Asura</i> Demigods |
| | 7. The Four Guardian Gods of Heaven |
| | 8. The Trāyastriṃśa Heavens |
| D | 9. Three Kinds of Disasters |
| | 10. The <i>Asura</i> Demigods |
| | 11. Three Kinds of Medium-length Eons (<i>Kalpas</i>) |

**Translators and
Historical Times**

The translator of the *Chang ahan jing* was the *śramaṇa* Buddhayaśas, a native of Kāśmīra who moved to Khotan in Central Asia, where he resided for some

time before he was invited to Chang'an specifically to engage in scriptural translation. There are two stories of how Buddhayaśas was invited to Chang'an and what contribution his translation was to accomplish.

Fifth-century China was divided into northern and southern political regions separated by the Yangzi River. In the north were Louyang and Chang'an, which were the two major government seats of the Han and Tang dynasties, as well as several other political and cultural centers. Since the north was dominated by the descendants of the five racially foreign regimes, resulting in the short-lived Sixteen States period, Buddhism had a fair chance to develop its influence despite competition from indigenous Confucian and Daoist traditions. Two centuries from the initial introduction of Buddhism to China during the Late Han period, Chinese Buddhists began to be aware that they needed more scriptural sources for deeper understanding as well as for consolidating their communities through Buddhist ethical and moral practice.

According to one story, Buddhayaśas was invited to the capital by the ruler of the Late Qin, Yaoxing (r. 394–415 C.E.), with the assistance of Kumārajīva, his religious counselor. Kumārajīva (344–413) was a scholar-monk from the country of Kuccha in Eastern Turkestan. Born to Indian and Central Asian parents, he excelled in training in Buddhist studies in Kāśmīra and acquired linguistic skill in Chinese. He had been brought to Liangzhou as the captive of Fujian's general, Lüguang, and was subsequently invited to Chang'an in 401 to serve as Yaoxing's religious counselor and lead the government's Buddhist translation project. Buddhayaśas had been Kumārajīva's teacher on the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya (the *Daśabhāṇavāra-vinaya*, the subject of Abhidharma treatises) more than two decades previously.¹⁰ Because he had once been Kumārajīva's teacher, Buddhayaśas was reverentially nicknamed the "red-bearded professor" or the "senior doctrinal professor" (Vaibhāṣika) in Chang'an.

It is said that, in part, Kumārajīva needed Buddhayaśas' help in collaborating on completing the translation of the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* (*Sūtra on the Ten Stages of the Bodhisattva Career*), and that the ruler Yaoxing also requested the *śramaṇa* in 410 C.E. to translate both the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya (*Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*; *Sifen lü*; *Vinaya in Four Divisions*) and the *Dīrgha Āgama* of the same school. The Vinaya translation was completed 412 C.E. The next year, 413, Buddhayaśas began to translate the *Dīrgha Āgama* with Zhu Fonian, a *śramaṇa* of Liangzhou, as co-translator, and the translation was completed that same year.

As for the reasons the *Chang ahan jing* originally belonged to the Dharmaguptaka school, we have four indirect proofs. First, the editorial point of view of the *Chang ahan jing* itself coincides with the Dharmaguptaka tradition in which the principle of the centrality of the Buddha is emphasized in terms of veneration for Śākyamuni as founder of the religion. Second, the text displays a great emphasis on the merit to be accrued by the cult worship of the sacred relics enshrined in stupas (commemorative towers). Third, the text's translator, Buddhayaśas, who also translated the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*, was a *bhikṣu* affiliated with the Dharmaguptaka school. Finally, the Vinaya text, especially its fifty-fourth chapter, refers to seven sutras that were included in the *Chang ahan jing*, including the "Sutra on Buddhist Cosmology" that is not found in the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya*.¹¹

The second story comes from the introduction to the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya*, which gives a somewhat different version. Zhi Faling, a Chinese *śramaṇa*, traveled to the Central Asia on the instructions of his master, Huiyüen, to search for Vinaya texts, and happened to meet Buddhayaśas in Khotan, where he was already renowned as a Mahayana Tripiṭaka master. With due respect, Faling requested him to visit Chang'an and accompanied him there, transporting Uighur textual sources. Faling's master Huiyüen was a close friend of Kumārajīva, and is known to have organized the Lotus Association at Lushan in the Pure Land sectarian faith, whose adherents devoted their lives to the ideal of rebirth in the Pure Land. There was a growing concern among Chinese Buddhists at the time to consolidate their growing communities and regulate the conduct of their followers, and so there was a need for the *Vinaya-piṭaka*. As requested, Buddhayaśas immediately began to translate the *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya* with the assistance of three hundred monks and scholars involved in the project. Zhi Faling is said to have had his own disciple, Huibian, participate in the sessions as he had excellent knowledge of Central Asian languages. The fact that active pursuit of Vinaya texts was the major trend of the time can be attested by the independent case of the monk Faxian's (339–420) risky journey to India in search of Vinaya texts.¹²

Buddhayaśas did not extend his stay in Chang'an upon completion of the translation project and soon returned to Kāśmīra. Kumārajīva likely suffered an illness (Huangshi, thirteenth year) soon after completing the translation of the *Satyasiddhi-śāstra* (*Cheng shi lun; Treatise on the Establishment of Truth*) and passed away in 413 (Huangshi, fifteenth year). Yaoxing abdicated his rule in the seventeenth year of Huangshi (415 C.E.). Buddhayaśas is said to have sent the

Xukongyun pusa jing (*Ākāśagarbha-sūtra; Sutra on Ākāśagarbha Bodhisattva*) as a gift to the sangha of Liangzhou through a traveling messenger. In fact, the translation of this text ascribed to him is recorded in the *Chu sanzang ji ji* (*Collection of the Tripiṭaka Textual Records*) (Taishō vol. 13, no. 405) compiled by Sengyou (445–518).

The Significance of the Text in the New Taishō Tripiṭaka Edition

The *Chang ahan jing* is placed at the very beginning of the first volume of the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* (*Taishō New Tripiṭaka Edition*) compiled by Japanese Buddhists from 1924–1934 (Taishō 13 to Shōwa 9). This may represent an entirely different reorganization of the Buddhist canon from all of the preceding Tripiṭaka editions. The format of the preceding editions were based on the classification order of Mahayana first, Hinayana second, each of which was again divided into the order of Sutra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma texts. The historical legacy of the *Chang ahan jing* should be examined as to what the text is meant to represent in the modern Taishō edition.

The earliest reliable catalogue of Buddhist texts was due to the work of Dao'an (314–385), author of the *Zhongjing mulu* (*Comprehensive Record of the Textual Catalogues*), and Sengyou, author of the *Chu sanzang ji ji*. Of the two, Dao'an's catalogues formed the core foundation of Sengyou's enlarged record of textual catalogues. These two sets of catalogues thus mark the reliable beginning of all subsequent Chinese Tripiṭaka editions.

By the turn of the fifth century, Buddhist communities in Chang'an began to exercise their own choices in the history of Buddhist affairs. This change was a natural development, because Buddhist leaders were more or less trained in Confucian academism or Daoist philosophical training. Dao'an was invited to Chang'an to serve as the religious counselor of Fujian (Yaoxing's predecessor) from the capital of a southern state. Dao'an profoundly regretted that the Buddhist communities in China had not been properly equipped with the Tripiṭaka divisions of Sutra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma. He actively promoted study on the Mahayana Wisdom sutras, especially the Prajñāpāramitā sutras, and he recruited talented young Buddhist converts to engage in exploration of their philosophical and spiritual meaning. It is within this historical circumstance that Kumārajīva was

invited to Chang'an in 401 by Yaoxing (Fujian's successor) as his religious counselor. Sengzhao (374–414), a young Buddhist convert from a Daoist background, became Kumārajīva's dedicated disciple and quickly proved himself to be an excellent scholar-monk among the Chang'an academic community. His monograph, the *Zhao lun*, was praised as exhibiting superb comprehension of *prajñā* insight and the philosophy of emptiness (*śūnyatā*), second only to that of his master.

Sengzhao's introduction to the *Chang ahan jing* reflects Dao'an's cherished objective. At the outset he calls attention to the Tripiṭaka canonical tradition:

The great teaching consisted of three [basic] divisions. For regulating physical and verbal behavior there is the collection of injunctive disciplines (Vinaya). For guiding human conduct by distinguishing good and bad there is the collection of doctrinal scriptures (Sutra). For differentiating subtle and delicate subject matter, there is the collection of analytical characteristics of the mental and conscious elements (Abhidharma). Thus, there came to be the three baskets of scriptures (Tripiṭaka).

Buddhayaśas' translation of the *Chang ahan jing* was perhaps partial fulfillment of the goal sought by Dao'an.

Following Dao'an's and Sengyou's catalogues, a series of records of Buddhist textual catalogues was compiled in the *Gezhong qinding zhongjing mulu* (*Buddhist Canonical Textual Catalogues* or *Complete Buddhist Tripiṭaka Library*, literally, "Great Textual Storehouse"). During the sixth century, the four catalogues came to exist under the auspices of four different regimes. Unlike Dao'an's and Sengyou's catalogues, which placed the texts by the translators' names in chronological order, these state-supported enterprises adopted the new order of classification by placing the Mahayana Tripiṭaka catalogues first, followed by those of the Hinayana Tripiṭaka. The short-lived Sui dynasty (which dissolved at the unification of north and south into an empire in 589), twice supported the compilation of the entire inclusive catalogues of the Tripiṭaka library: first, the *Sui Kaihuang lidai sanbao ji* (*Sui Kaihuang Record of the Threefold Buddhist Treasures of the Successive Dynasties*) in 598, followed by its revised edition, the *Renshou zhongjing mulu* (*Renshou Record of Textual Catalogues*) in 602, which streamlined the preexistent catalogues and scrutinized the authenticity of each text. The *Renshou zhongjing mulu* became the basic model of all subsequent Buddhist Tripiṭaka libraries.

The filing of the catalogues of the Tripiṭaka library reached its apex during the Tang period. The dynastic enterprises successfully compiled seven major editions together with their respective records of catalogues. Any record of catalogues is supposed to provide not only the basic principles of textual classification and those texts already catalogued as authentic, but also include new translations and new discoveries as well as exclude suspicious and fraudulent texts. For instance, the *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* (*Kaiyuan Record of Buddhist Textual Catalogues*), compiled in 731, is said to have represented the best model format, so that all subsequent editions followed it in recording catalogues of hand-copied texts as well as printed texts. The classification order, however, was unchanged from the Sui-era *Renshou zhongjing mulu* of 602, following the format of: (1) Mahayana sutras, (2) Mahayana Vinaya texts, (3) Mahayana Abhidharma texts, (4) Hinayana sutras, (5) Hinayana Vinaya texts, (6) Hinayana Abhidharma texts, and (7) works written by the “wise and saints.” We know, therefore, that the *Renshou zhongjing mulu* model and that of *Kaiyuan shijiao lu* together became the standard format of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka library as a whole, of which very little had changed until the modern Taishō Tripiṭaka edition.

This extremely conservative nature developed due to two reasons. First, toward the end of Tang dynasty the dissemination of the complete Tripiṭaka library was based on hand-copied texts made under government supervision. Second, from the Northern Song period on, the dissemination of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka was based on printed texts, for which printing blocks had to be carved, a laborious and expensive process. In the Northern Song, for instance, a 972 decree stipulated the production of the entire set of textual woodcut prints and the carving of one hundred and thirty thousand woodblocks by the year 983. The dissemination of the Buddhist scriptures was under government supervision for centuries but gradually transferred to a number of Buddhist temples. While the main task of carving woodblocks was still carried out by dynastic enterprises, private temple versions began to appear and the distribution of texts was soon widely localized and even spread beyond the Chinese border. This was roughly the history of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka library through the Song, Yuan, Ming, and Qing periods.

The Taishō Tripiṭaka edition shows a striking innovation, especially in the change of classification order that follows the general historical development of Buddhism. The method of detailed examination of textual contents for the

sake of new classifications also developed more precision due to modern scholarship. First, the Taishō Tripiṭaka editors changed the order by placing the Hinayana Sutra-*piṭaka* before the Mahayana texts. They set the Hinayana canon of the four Āgamas and individual texts bearing their strains in the first two volumes, under the Āgama section. Second, they created a new classification under the name of “original causality” to collect those texts in which the bodhisattva ideal and career is germinated in reference to early Mahayana history. Third, the remaining Mahayana sutras are classified, more or less, similarly to those of preceding editions, but each is assigned to different volumes by specifying type or class:

1. Prajñā section: Taishō Tripiṭaka vols. 5–8;
2. Lotus and Huayan section: vol. 9 (both groups) and vol. 10 (Huayan only);
3. Ratnakūṭa and Nirvana section: vol. 11 (Ratnakūṭa only) and vol. 12 (both groups);
4. *Mahāsaṃnipāta-sutra* (*Great Collection Sutra*) section: vol. 13;
5. Sutra collection (Hinayana and Mahayana) section: vols. 14–17;
6. Esoteric sutras section: vols. 18–21.

Fourth, the Taishō Tripiṭaka editors also placed the Vinaya- and Abhidharma-*piṭakas* after the Sutra-*piṭaka* in the order of Hinayana first, then Mahayana:

1. Vinaya section: vols. 22–23 (all Hinayana) and vol. 24 (both Hinayana and Mahayana);
2. Sutra expository treatise section: vols. 25–26 (partial Abhidharma);
3. Abhidharma section: vols. 27–29;
4. Madhyamaka-Yōgācāra section: vol. 30 (Madhyamaka only), vol. 31 (partially Yōgācāra), and vol. 32 (Yōgācāra only);
5. Collected logical treatises section: vol. 32.

From here, the Taishō Tripiṭaka places texts written as commentaries on sutras and treatises (*śāstras*),¹³ sectarian documents and writings, and so forth up to the one-hundredth volume, but for the purpose of evaluating the legacy of the *Chang ahan jing*, these can be excluded from consideration.

Modern scholarship focuses on the fundamental spirituality of Śākyamuni Buddha, because his spiritual insight and evangelical life were the foundation of all the doctrines and practices that developed in the later history of Buddhism.

In medieval China, every Tripiṭaka library started with the class of Wisdom texts (Prajñāpāramitā sutras) under the Mahayana category, beginning with the massive, six hundred-fascicle *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Great Perfection of Wisdom Sūtra*) translated by Xuanzang. In contrast, the Hinayana Āgamas, which are supposed to comprise the original, earliest sources and present Śākyamuni's life and teaching as closely as possible to his original time and social context, were all buried amid thousands of files of textual catalogues or among the books and fascicles in the Hinayana section. Finally, after many centuries, the Taishō edition restored the proper place for the Hinayana Āgamas by moving this text to the very beginning of the collection.

In his preface to the *Chang ahan jing*, Sengzhao defines *Ahan* (Āgama) as “the authority to which the laws return” (*fa-gui*). The “authority to which laws return” means, in all probability, the profound collection of all that is good upheld by the secluded cloister of contemplative recollection (*dhāraṇī*). These are made into the collection of sutras as the source of authority. It was in this sense that Chang'an's Buddhist communities, by the turn of the fifth century, were motivated to have the Prajñāpāramitā texts translated rapidly, within a decade, and to also have the earliest canonical Sūtra-*piṭaka* translated along with the Vinaya texts. Most of all, this active motivation arose from the critical study of textual records of translation and visually corroborated reliable textual collections.

Modern Buddhist studies began in the mid-nineteenth century, based on the method of text criticism and aided by scholars' knowledge of Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan, and it has successfully promoted Buddhist studies throughout the world. It benefited contemporary Japanese Buddhists in publishing the Taishō Tripiṭaka library and its catalogue, with some success in reforming and improving the longstanding Tripiṭaka traditions. Nearly three quarters of a century after publication of the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō*, Dr. Yehan Numata and his associates established the project to put the entire corpus of texts collected in the Taishō Tripiṭaka into English translation, with the global cooperation of Buddhist scholars. When this massive project is completed, there will be a new demand to build another edifice of the Buddhist Tripiṭaka library for the sake of Buddhist and human communities worldwide. Once again, the *Chang ahan jing* will be highlighted as representing the earliest phase of Buddhism that marked its beginning.

Epilogue

I would like to make a few points regarding the way in which this translation has been accomplished. First, since the original Sanskrit text is no longer extant, I relied almost exclusively on the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya* and its English translation, especially that rendered by the founding members of the Pali Text Society, as the sole corroborative references for the Chinese text.¹⁴ For instance, it is extremely difficult to identify from Chinese transliteration what a given proper name or proper noun might be in the Sanskrit original. Second, I preferred a straightforward style of narration to the Chinese idiomatic definitive style. As a cognate language of Sanskrit, though to a lesser degree, Pāli has an intricate case system to specify the contextual relationships between things that are referred to by words through case indicatives, whereas Chinese expression often relies on word order alone, without case indicative changes. Hence, in my English presentation of the *Chang ahan jing*, I have relied on the English version of the *Dīgha Nikāya* presented in scholarly translations of the text. This English version of the *Chang ahan jing* may thus appear to be more like a translation made from the Pāli *Dīgha Nikāya* than a directly rendered English version vis-à-vis the Chinese original. As English is not my native language, I did not consider that presenting the textual contents only through a grammatically learned second language would be successful. This is the final volume of the translation, containing sutras 21–30. Volume I (published in 2015) includes the Preface by Shi Sengzhao and contains sutras 1–10; Volume II (published in 2016) contains sutras 11–20.

I looked for a model narrative format to translate foundational Buddhist texts, such as the *Chang ahan jing*. After searching for a feasible format among various samples of translations of Buddhist texts, I finally decided that it was best to follow the traditions established by the Pali Text Society in dealing with ancient Buddhist literature by means of modern languages. I am, however, obliged to assert that this translation has been produced totally based on my own understanding of Buddhism accrued through my lifelong study and practice of the religion.

Śākyamuni's religion began with a dialectical insight underling the fourfold truths of the life process. While engaged in final revision of this translation, I personally encountered the messengers of old age, illness, and death, and my attention was drawn to these messengers more acutely because of my engagement in rereading the draft translation. It is my hope that readers of this text will

Translator's Introduction

realize the fundamental wisdom of Buddhist spirituality in regard to these serious matters. May the reader discover from this text his or her successful pathway toward liberation.

THE CANONICAL BOOK OF THE BUDDHA'S
LENGTHY DISCOURSES
VOLUME III

Brahmā's Net

(*Dīgha Nikāya 1: Brahmājāla Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was visiting the communities of the country of Magadha, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty disciples (*bhikṣus*), he stopped at the king's pavilion in the bamboo forest for an overnight stay. A *brāhmaṇa* ascetic called Suppiya, accompanied by his student Brahmadata, always followed the Buddha on his travels. The teacher Suppiya denigrated the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in various ways, but his student Brahmadata praised the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in innumerable ways. Thus, teacher and student, having different minds, were in opposition to each other. Why did they behave in this way? It was because they differed in their customs, views, and manner of making known their views.

On this occasion, a number of *bhikṣus*, having completed almsrounds, gathered in the lecture hall and began to talk [about current events]:

It is marvelous, indeed marvelous, that the World-honored One commands great supernatural powers and is endowed with the meritorious virtue of knowing what sentient beings wish for and their destinies. Yet this *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Suppiya and his student Brahmadata always follow the Tathāgata and the assembly of his disciples. Suppiya denigrates the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha of the *bhikṣus* in innumerable ways, while Brahmadata praises the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in innumerable ways. Thus, teacher and student are of different minds and oppose one another. Why is this so? It is because they have different customs, views, and ways of making their views known.

While this was going on, the World-honored One, meditating in seclusion, heard what the *bhikṣus* were saying through a supernatural power of hearing exceeding the capacity of ordinary people. The World-honored One stood up from his seat, proceeded to the lecture hall, sat down before the group of

88c *bhikṣus*, and though he already knew what they were discussing, deliberately asked them, “O *bhikṣus*, why have you gathered in this hall? What are you discussing?”

The *bhikṣus* replied to the Buddha:

Having returned from almsrounds we gathered in this hall to discuss a topic of [current] concern: “It is marvelous, indeed marvelous, that the World-honored One commands great supernormal powers and is endowed with the meritorious virtue of knowing what sentient beings wish for and their destinies. Yet the *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Suppiya and his student Brahma-datta always follow the Tathāgata and the assembly of disciples. While Suppiya denigrates the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in innumerable ways, Brahma-datta praises the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in innumerable ways. Teacher and student are of different minds and oppose one another. Why are they different? They have different customs and views and also differ in their manner of making their views known.” We have been engaged in discussion about this matter, sir.

The World-honored One said to the *bhikṣus*:

Even if the person in question deliberately denigrates the Tathāgata, the Dharma, and the Sangha, you should neither become angry nor have ill intent against him. Why? If you become angry and have ill intent because he has denigrated the Tathāgata, Dharma, and Sangha, you will have become entrapped and fallen into a pit. To avoid this danger you should never generate ill intent against him. And if he were to praise the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, you should not feel delight or gratification. Why? If you were delighted or gratified, you would have become entrapped and fallen into a pit again. To avoid this danger you should never be swayed by such sweet words. Why? When a person either denigrates or praises something, his words are brought about only by lesser factors of conduct or moral discipline. An ordinary person, with little learning, cannot reach a deeper level of understanding. He takes whatever he observes externally as real and, because of this, praises it.

What do “lesser factors of conduct or moral discipline” mean? An ordinary person, with little learning, cannot understand any deeper meaning.

He takes whatever he observes externally as real. Because of this, he praises it. He may praise me: “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has discarded the sword and cane (i.e., weapons), removed any intent to harm life, and extinguished every action that injures life, extending compassion in good conscience to all sentient beings.” What these words praise are only lesser factors of conduct or moral discipline. An ordinary person, with little learning, praises the Buddha because of these external factors.

A person may again praise me: “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has removed any intention to commit theft, extinguished every desire to take what is not given, and is totally free from any thought of theft.” Or he may offer this kind of praise: “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abandoned carnal desire and adheres to the genuine practice of austerity, upholds the precepts, avoids dissolute behavior, and maintains pure and genuine conduct.” Or [he may offer this praise:] “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abandoned and eradicated false speech; whenever he speaks he does so with utmost sincerity. Whatever he says is true and factual, and he never deceives the people of the world.” Or [he may offer this praise:] “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abandoned and eradicated duplicitous speech; he never harms anyone by repeating to them another’s words, [or vice versa]. If two people are in a dispute he tries to reconcile them, and when they are reconciled he is even more greatly pleased. If he wishes to say something to either party, he does so with both of them together before him. He knows the right time for whatever he does.” Or [he may offer this praise:] “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abandoned and eradicated harsh speech. When spoken, harsh words may hurt the feelings of listeners and give rise to enmity in those to whom such speech is directed. Since harsh words can aggravate feelings of affliction or malice, he never utters them. He always uses good words, pleasing the one to whom they are directed. Thus he endears himself to all members of the sangha, who never tire of listening to his words. Such is the nature of whatever he says.” Or [he may offer this praise:] “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abandoned and eradicated flattery. He speaks when it is the right time; he utters words that correspond to facts, words that benefit others, words that are in compliance with the Dharma, words that are in compliance with the rules of Vinaya discipline, and words that forbid evil. Such is the nature of whatever he says.”

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Or [he may offer this praise:] “The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abandoned the use of intoxicants and distanced himself from them. He uses no perfumes or flowers as ornaments, he does not attend theatrical entertainments involving song and dance, he does not use a high, wide couch [for a bed], nor does he partake of food other than at the proper time each day. He neither accepts nor keeps money in gold and silver coins, nor does he marry or live with a woman, or keep a servant or maid, or an elephant, horse, boar, sheep, hen, dog, or any other bird or animal. He does not keep an army, whether a division of elephants, or cavalry, chariots, or foot soldiers, nor does he own rice fields or residential houses, or plant the five kinds of crops for harvest. He does not threaten others with his hands and fists, nor does he cheat others by using rigged scales for weights and quantities, engage in usury, or haggle over the price [for goods]. He does not neglect repayment after receiving a request for payment of a debt, nor does he conspire against anyone. He never acts at an improper time and he nurtures his health to lengthen his life span and takes only the proper amount of food for his needs. Wherever he goes his robe and almsbowl accompany him, just as a bird's feathers never leave it when it flies.” All these are lesser factors of moral discipline. An ordinary person, with little learning, praises the Buddha for such externally observable things.

[Such an ordinary person may also praise the Tathāgata in regard to these minor points:] “Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having received charity from their devotees, actively seek more and more in order to store up extra goods, knowing no limit or contentment in regard to clothing, food, and drink. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in this behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having received charity from their devotees, engage in various means of livelihood as well as planting crops, thus inviting evil spirits. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having received charity from their devotees, use expedient means to acquire various material goods such as ivory and other precious items, high and comfortable beds, embroidered cloth, carpets, bamboo floor mats, and cushions. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having received charity from their devotees, vainly seek to improve their appearance [to impress their devotees], using various measures such as applying thyme-seed oil to the body, bathing in scented water, wearing scented powder on the body, applying fragrant hair oil, wearing a flower garland, using blue eye shadow and applying makeup to their faces, wearing a shiny clasp ring and string on their garments, examining their appearance in a mirror, donning a pair of multicolored shoes and a white upper garment, holding a canopy over their heads, carrying a fly whisk, and decorating their carriages with banners. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, [having received charity from their devotees,] engage in various games and amusements such as chess, checkers played on boards of eight or ten squares, and gambling in as many as a hundred thousand ways. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in idle talk that obstructs religious pursuits, such as gossiping about royal affairs or various battles or the uses of cavalry, or how well certain bureaucrats and ministers ride their horses when they go on excursions, going to and from parks and pleasure gardens; or they talk about the daily activities of women, such as when they are lying down, sitting, and walking; or [they talk] about clothing, food, and drink, or the behavior of relatives, or the activities of sea divers and their collections of treasures from the ocean. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

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“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, seek wrong livelihood through innumerable devices, such as engaging in flattery or slander, thereby seeking to take advantage of one another. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in disputes wherever they may be, whether in a pleasure grove, a bathing pond, or pavilion, accusing each other as to who is right or wrong. They say, ‘I know the text and rules but you have little knowledge of them. I am on the right course but yours is a deviation. Your

argument is confused, asserting too late what should have been stated earlier, while giving out too early what should have been saved for later. I am able to tolerate you but you cannot tolerate me. Whatever you say is neither true nor real. Whenever you feel some doubt about your position, come and ask me about it. I surely can answer all your questions.' The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, seek greater [rewards or benefits] by contriving various measures. For instance, they may carry an official communication or private message on behalf of a king or a minister, or a *brāhmaṇa* or a householder, going from place to place while traveling about. They may carry letters for clients, delivering them to their designated recipients, and convey the replies to their clients. Or they may even give instruction about how to conduct the business of mail delivery for their own sake or for others. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, are engaged solely in learning the ins and outs of military strategy, warfare, and conflict; or learning about armaments such as swords, canes, bows and arrows; or learning how to make domestic animals, such as roosters, dogs, boars, or goats, fight; or how to stage fights between men and women; or how to perform various skills, such as making the sound of a multitude [of soldiers] by blowing conch shells, beating drums, singing, dancing, brandishing streamers; and all sorts of other activities. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, are engaged in ignoble ways of life (lit., “animalistic behavior”), learning false paths [that obstruct the authentic path of religion] and taking up wrong livelihoods, such as fortune-telling for male or female clients for material gain. Interpreting auspicious or ominous signs, they predict whether their clients will be handsome or ugly and make similar predictions regarding animals [for their clients in the husbandry business]. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in ignoble ways of life by learning false paths that obstruct [the authentic path of religion] and taking up wrong livelihoods,

such as performing magical incantations to invoke the presence of ghostly spirits or to drive them away, or to cause them to linger with various repugnant spells. Thus, through many strategies, they may threaten people and cause them to feel extreme fear, or draw people together or disperse them, or torment them, or bring them pleasure. They may use incantations to calm a pregnant woman, providing a [magical] garment for the safety of her fetus, or to change a human being into a donkey, or to cause someone to become totally deaf and dumb. Displaying a multitude of techniques, they may be seen facing the sun or moon, holding it in both hands, and performing various ascetic feats to solicit material gain. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

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“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in ignoble ways of life by learning false paths that obstruct [the authentic path of religion] and taking up wrong livelihoods, such as chanting magical spells for curing illness or applying evil spells or good spells, or giving medical treatment, acupuncture, moxa cautery, or medicines to treat various illnesses [in order to obtain material gain]. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in ignoble ways of life by learning false paths that obstruct [the authentic path of religion] and taking up wrong livelihoods, such as casting magical spells for water or fire, or to summon a ghostly spirit, or to assure victory in a political or military campaign, or for elephants, or bodily limbs, or a talisman to ensure the safety of a residence, or for recovery from burns, or to effect a cure from rat bites. They may intone a written incantation to discern the life or death of the concerned person, or to decipher dreams, or they may read palms (chiromancy) and facial features (physiognomy), or chant astronomical texts or the alphabetical characters. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in ignoble ways of life by learning false paths that obstruct [the authentic path of religion] and taking up wrong livelihoods, such as observing the weather and the cycle of the seasons in order to predict whether or not it will rain, whether the price of crops will go up or down, whether there will be an epidemic, whether a fearful event will

take place, or whether there will be peace and safety. Or they may predict earthquakes or the appearance of a comet, a solar or lunar eclipse, or a stellar eclipse, or the nonappearance of such an eclipse, in order to determine whether it is a good or bad omen. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.

“Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having subsisted on charity from their devotees, engage in ignoble ways of life by learning false paths that obstruct [the authentic path of religion] and taking up wrong livelihoods, such as asserting that this country is superior to that country, or that that is not like this, or that another country is superior to this country, or that this is not like that. Observing good or bad omens, they predict the fortunes and fates of those countries with which they are concerned. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has never engaged in such behavior.”

O *bhikṣus*, all of the foregoing are invariably lesser moral virtues and factors. An ordinary person, with little learning, praises the Buddha on account of such [observable] virtues.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There is, however, a greater insight (i.e., the Dharma), most profound and subtle, and far more radiant. Only wise and saintly disciples can praise the Tathāgata by referring to this greater insight. What is this greater insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant, on account of which the wise and saintly disciples alone can praise the Tathāgata?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* have conjectured, in relation to the initial eon (*kalpa*) of the past and the final eon of the future, innumerable varieties of views as freely as they may wish, but all the theories they have thus advanced, without exception, fall into sixty-two variations. All these philosophical views, insofar as they are speculative in regard to the initial eon of the past and the final eon of the future, no matter how numerous and obsessively formulated, never exceed sixty-two variations. Why are these philosophical views formulated in regard to the initial eon and the final eon, no matter how numerous and obsessively speculative, invariably limited to sixty-two variations, never exceeding that number?

[Moreover,] regardless of the innumerable varieties of views advanced by *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, insofar as these views are speculative and

asserted in relation to the initial eon of the world, all these theories can be classified exhaustively into eighteen variations. Any philosophical views, insofar as they are conjectured in regard to the initial eon of the past, no matter how numerous and obsessively formulated, are invariably limited to eighteen variations and never exceed that number. Why are these philosophical views formulated in regard to the initial eon, no matter how numerous and obsessively conjectured and asserted, invariably limited to eighteen variations, never exceeding that number?

Many *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, while speculating about the initial eon of the past, propose an eternalist view (*śāśvata-vāda*), asserting that “the self and the world are permanent.” Any theory that asserts this eternalist view falls within four variations and does not exceed those four. Why is the eternalist view proposed by those *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* concerning the initial eon of the past, namely, that “the self and the world are permanent,” limited to four variations without exceeding that number?

Again, a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*, having entered mental concentration by various means, recollects with a concentrated mind the twenty evolving and devolving eons. He then asserts his theory: “The self and the world are permanent. This theory is true while the rest is false. Why? Because I entered the state of mental concentration through various means and with a concentrated mind recollected twenty evolving and devolving eons. The sentient beings of the world have neither increased nor decreased throughout those eons. They always assembled together and never dispersed. Because of this, I know that the self and the world are permanent. This theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the first variation. On the basis of this assertion, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* conjectured that the self and the world are permanent. This theory is limited to four variations, however, and does not exceed that number.

Again, a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*, having entered mental concentration through various means, recollects with a concentrated mind forty evolving and devolving eons and asserts his theory: “The self and the world are permanent. This theory is true while the rest is false. Why? Because I entered mental concentration through various means and with a concentrated mind recollected forty evolving and devolving eons. The sentient beings in the world neither increased nor decreased; they always assembled together

and never dispersed. Because of this, I know that the self and the world are permanent, and this theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the second variation. Thus, on the foregoing assertion concerning the initial eon, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* conjectured that the self and the world are permanent. But this theory is limited to four variations and does not exceed that number.

90b Again, a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*, having entered mental concentration through various means, recollects with a concentrated mind eighty evolving and devolving eons and asserts his theory: “The self and the world are permanent. This theory is true while the rest is false. Why? Because I entered mental concentration through various means and with a concentrated mind recollected eighty evolving and devolving eons. The sentient beings of the world neither increased nor decreased; they always assembled together and never dispersed. Because of this I know that the self and the world are permanent, and this theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the third variation. Thus, on the foregoing assertion concerning the initial eon, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* conjectured that the self and the world are permanent. But this theory is limited to four variations and does not exceed that number.

Again, a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* with a rationally skeptical mind examines the case carefully and investigates the theories in various ways through his knowledge of logic and sophistry. He says that these theories require examination. Based on his own view and on the rhetoric of reason, he theorizes: “The self and the world are permanent, and this theory has four variations.” Similar *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* have conjectured in relation to the initial eon that the self and the world are permanent. On account of there being four variations of the [eternalist] view, this theory does not go beyond them. Originally each *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* speculated about the initial eon and theorized that the self and the world are permanent. In this manner, all the theories previously advanced fall into four variations and do not exceed that number.

The Tathāgata alone, however, knows the basis of the views held by the eternalists, to which they are attached, and from which they receive [theoretical] retribution. The Tathāgata's knowledge goes beyond these variations because he knows the very basis of these eternalist views but

does not become attached to such views. Since he is not attached to such a view, he is in a state of quiescence and cessation (i.e., free from conceptualization). He knows the arising of sensation (*vedanā*), its dissolution (*bhaṅga*), its taste (*āsvāda*), its danger (*ādīnara*), and the method of transcending it (*niḥsaraṇa*). Thus he is liberated [from eternalist speculation] because of his nonattachment (*anupādāya-vimukti*) [to the basis of that view] through the very insight of seeing things universally as they really are (*yathābhuccaṃ samā*). Therefore he is called the Tathāgata. This is the great insight, most profound and subtle, and far more radiant. In reference to this insight wise and saintly disciples can properly praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant, in reference to which wise and saintly disciples can [properly] praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are. What is this insight?

Many *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* propose an eternalist view in their speculations on the initial eon of the past and assert that “the self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent.” On the basis of this theory, other *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* speculated about the initial eon of the past and asserted that the self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent. But this theory essentially coincides with the four variations and does not go beyond them. At the beginning, when this eon began to evolve, the remaining sentient beings, having exhausted their merits, life spans, and predispositional forces, died in Ābhāsvara Heaven (the highest attainable in the second *dhyāna*) and were reborn in the vast empty space of Brahmā Heaven. They became fond of that abode and wished to be born there again together with other sentient beings. In this way, the [first generation] of sentient beings there already conceived an attachment to that abode. As other sentient beings ended their life in Ābhāsvara Heaven and were reborn in the vast, empty space of Brahmā Heaven, those who were already there thought to themselves, “I am Brahmā, the great Brahmā. By nature I exist and there is no one who can create me. I am omniscient and control a thousand worlds in which I am the absolutely free presider and the noblest and most honorable, for I have the miraculous power of changing forms. I alone have been here before as father of all

90c sentient beings prior to their appearance, because they appeared here after I did, and those beings are ones whom I created.”

Those who came after the first generation thought to themselves, “He is the great Brahmā, he has created himself and no one else could create him. He is omniscient and controls a thousand worlds where he is the absolutely free and most honorable presider, for he has the miraculous power of changing forms. He alone has been here before us as the father of all sentient beings prior to our appearance. We came to be born after him and were created by him.” Some of the gods of Brahmā Heaven, having ended their life spans and exhausted all their predispositions, were then born in the human world and gradually grew to adolescence. They shaved their hair and beards, donned the three robes, and renounced domestic life to take up religious practice. Having entered mental concentration, some came to know with a concentrated mind their original nature and asserted, “That great Brahmā created himself; no one else could create him. He is omniscient and controls a thousand worlds where he is the absolutely free and most honorable presider. He has the miraculous power of changing forms and is the father of all sentient beings. He is the one that is permanent and, as Brahmā, he created us, we human beings who are impermanent, subject to change, and mortal, unable to exist forever.” Because of this, they asserted, “The self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent. This theory is true while the rest is false.” This is called the first view. On the basis of this theory, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed their own theories concerning the initial eon. But this “in part permanent and in part impermanent” theory is identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

Again, some sentient beings in Brahmā Heaven enjoyed amusements (lit., “played and laughed”) and wanted a leisurely life. They played games and sought amusement frequently, enjoying their [heavenly] lives. In pursuit of that life, they eventually fell into exhaustion and lost consciousness, and their life spans came to an end. Being reborn in the human world, they gradually grew to adolescence and shaved their hair and beards, donned the three robes, and renounced domestic life for a life of religious practice. Entering mental concentration, some of them came to know their origin with a concentrated mind and said, “Some sentient beings (i.e., the

gods of Brahmā Heaven) are not born in the human world as often as we are, nor do they pursue fun and amusement, and so they remain forever in that heaven, without any change at all. On the other hand, we often seek fun and engage in the pursuit of amusement, and so we are subject to change and the law of impermanence.” Because of this, they asserted, “The self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent. This theory is true while the rest is false.” This is the second variation. On the basis of this view, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed theories about the initial eon and asserted that “the self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent.” Yet this theory is essentially identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

Again, some sentient beings [in Brahmā Heaven] engaged in meditation or mutual reflection and, while doing so, lost consciousness. Ending their lives in this manner, they were born in the human world. Growing to adolescence, they shaved their hair and beards, donned the three robes, and renounced domestic life for religious practice. Entering mental concentration, some of them came to know their origin with a concentrated mind and said, “Some sentient beings (i.e., the gods of Brahmā Heaven) do not meditate or mutually reflect upon each other and so do not lose consciousness. They therefore remain [in that heaven], unchanged at all times. [Unlike them,] we looked at each other often and in doing so we lost consciousness. This was due to the impermanence of all things and in compliance with the law of change. Because of this, we know that the self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent. This theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the third variation. On the basis of this view, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed theories about the initial eon and asserted, “The self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent.” But this theory is identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

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Again, a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* with a rationally skeptical mind examines the case carefully and investigates the theories in various ways through his knowledge of logic and sophistry. He asserts, “The self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent. This theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the fourth variation. On the basis of this view, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed theories concerning the

initial eon of the past and asserted, "The self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent." But this theory is identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

Thus, in relation to the initial eon, some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed theories that the self and the world are in part permanent and in part impermanent, and this view is limited to four variations and does not go beyond them. Only the Tathāgata, however, knows the very basis of the [common] view to which those who espouse the foregoing four theories hold fast, to which they become attached, and from which they receive its [theoretical] retribution. The Tathāgata's knowledge goes beyond the confines of these variations because he knows the very basis of the eternalist view but he does not become attached to such a view. Since he is not attached to this view, he is in a state of quiescence and cessation (i.e., free from conceptualization). He knows the causal concatenation of sensation and its cessation, its gratification and danger, and the method of transcending it. Thus he is liberated [from eternalist speculation] because of his nonattachment [to the basis of that view] through the very insight of seeing things universally as they really are. Therefore he is called the Tathāgata. This is the great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. In reference to this insight, wise and saintly disciples can properly praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant, in reference to which wise and saintly disciples can [properly] praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are. What is this insight? Many *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed a speculative view of the initial eon of the past and asserted, "The self and the world are limited and limitless." Other *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*, relying on this view, speculated further about the initial eon of the past and asserted that the self and the world are limited and limitless. [Again,] this theory is essentially identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

For instance, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*, having entered mental concentration through various means, observed the world with a concentrated mind and formulated the thought that there is a limit to this world. They asserted the theory, "This world has a limit, and this alone is true

while the rest is false. Why? Because I entered mental concentration through various means and with a concentrated mind intuited the limit of this world. Therefore this world is limited. This theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the first variation. Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having relied on this view, speculated about the initial eon of the past and proposed the same theory that the self and the world are limited, but this theory is essentially identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*, having entered mental concentration through various means, observed the world with a concentrated mind and formulated the thought that this world is limitless; thus they asserted the theory “This world is limitless, and this alone is true while the rest is false. Why? Because I entered mental concentration through various means and with a concentrated mind intuited no limit to this world. Therefore this world is limitless. This alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the second variation. Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having relied on this view, speculated about the initial eon of the past and proposed similar theories that the self and the world are limitless. But these theories are essentially identical with the others within the four variations and do not range beyond them.

91b

Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*, having entered mental concentration through various means, observed the world with a concentrated mind and formulated the thought that the world is limited vertically in the upward direction but has no limit in all four horizontal directions, and thus they asserted, “The world is both limited and limitless. This alone is true while the rest is false. Why? Because I entered mental concentration through various means and with a concentrated mind intuited that this world has a limit in the upward direction but has no limit in all four horizontal directions. Therefore [the self and] this world are both limited and limitless. This theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is the third variation. Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, having relied on this view, speculated about the initial eon of the past and proposed theories that [the self and] the world are both limited and limitless. But these theories are essentially identical with the others within the four variations and do not range beyond them.

Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* examined the case carefully with a rationally skeptical mind and investigated the theories in various ways through their knowledge of logic and sophistry. They said, “The self and the world are neither limited nor limitless. This alone is true and the rest is false.” This is the fourth variation. On the basis of this theory, [however,] other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* proposed similar theories about the initial eon and asserted, “The self and the world are both limited and limitless.” Yet these theories are identical with the others within the four variations and do not range beyond them.

Thus the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* formulated their theories about the initial eon and asserted that the self and the world are both limited and limitless, yet all of this falls within the four variations without exceeding that number. Only the Tathāgata, however, knows the very basis of the [common] view to which those who espouse the foregoing four theories hold fast, to which they are attached, and from which they receive [theoretical] retribution. The Tathāgata's knowledge exceeds these variations because he knows the very basis of their views but does not become attached to such a view. Since he is not attached to this view, he is in a state of quiescence and cessation (i.e., free from conceptualization). He knows the causal concatenation of sensation and its cessation, its gratification and danger, and the method of transcending it. Thus he is liberated [from eternalist speculation] because of his nonattachment [to the basis of that view] through the very insight of seeing things universally as they really are. Therefore he is called the Tathāgata. This is the great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. In reference to this insight, wise and saintly disciples can properly praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant, in reference to which wise and saintly disciples can properly praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are. What is this insight? Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* raise inconsistent questions and reply with inconsistent answers. When one asks an incongruent question of another, the latter replies to the former with an incongruent answer. Within the four variations of this view, each theory is essentially identical and does not go beyond the limit of those variations. On

the basis of this view, *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* raise incongruent questions and reply with incongruent answers while speculating about the initial eon of the past. Any of their theories is identical with the others within the four variations and does not go beyond them.

For instance, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* formulate a theory and assert, “I have neither seen nor known whether there is a resulting effect for good or bad [conduct, respectively]. Since I have neither seen nor known [such an effect], I raise this question [in formulating the theory]: ‘Are there causal effects for good and bad [conduct], respectively?’ In this world there are *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* who are learned and erudite, sagacious and knowledgeable, who are always delighted to stay in a secluded place, who are excellent in speech and precise in debate, and so [these *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*] are honored in this world. With their wisdom they can analyze a multiplicity of worldly views [into some type of a system]. [They say, however,] ‘If I am asked a question that involves profound meanings, I may not be able to give an answer. I feel ashamed before the questioner and I am afraid. [So] I give my answer in a certain manner that I regard as my refuge, my island, my shelter, and my ultimate path.’ Whenever someone like that asks me a [profound] question, I answer in the following manner: (1) ‘This fact is like this.’ (2) ‘This fact is identical (i.e., true).’ (3) ‘This fact is different.’ (4) ‘This fact is not different.’ (5) ‘This fact is neither different nor not different.’” This is the first question-and-answer variation. Based on these responses, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* may also reply with incongruent answers to incongruent questions. These [theoretical] answers are identical with the others within the four variations, however, and do not range beyond them.

Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* formulate a theory and assert: “I have neither seen nor known [personally] whether or not there is an afterlife. Many *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* are able to see things at remote distances through their supernormal vision and power of reading others’ minds. Even when they are approached by other people they do not see them. That kind of person should be able to know whether or not there is an afterlife. I myself have neither seen nor known [personally] whether or not there is an afterlife. If I were to express my view [in either the affirmative or the negative], I am afraid that my answer is bound to be false.

Therefore, I regard ['non-assertion'] as my refuge, my island, my shelter, and my ultimate path. If such a person were to ask me a [profound] question, I would answer in the following manner: (1) 'This fact is like this.' (2) 'This fact is identical (i.e., true).' (3) 'This fact is different.' (4) 'This fact is not different.' (5) 'This fact is neither different nor not different.'" This is the second question-and-answer variation. Based on these responses, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* may reply with an incongruent answer when the question is incongruent. But these [theoretical] answers are identical with the others within the four variations and do not range beyond them.

Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* formulate a theory and assert: "I have neither seen nor known what is good and what is not good. I do not know nor have I encountered a theory that asserts 'This is good' or 'This is bad.' Because I do not know either one, I feel desire [for a certain thing]; because of this desire, I feel anger. Whenever there is desire and anger I am bound to have a sensation [about a certain thing]. I wish to annihilate this sensation. Therefore, I have renounced domestic life for religious practice." [In this case,] such a person is very much afraid of incurring sensation and regards [the absence of sensation] as a refuge, an island, a shelter, and an ultimate path, saying, "If someone asks me a question [about what is good and what is bad], I shall reply to him in the following manner: (1) 'This fact is like this.' (2) 'This fact is identical (i.e., true).' (3) 'This fact is different.' (4) 'This fact is not different.' (5) 'This fact is neither different nor not different.'" This is the third question-and-answer variation. Based on these responses, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* may reply with an incongruent answer when the question is incongruent. Yet these [theoretical] answers are identical with the others within the four variations and do not range beyond them.

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Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* are unintelligent and stupid. If someone questions them, they reply according to someone else's answer, namely, (1) "This fact is like this." (2) "This fact is identical (i.e., true)." (3) "This fact is different." (4) "This fact is not different." (5) "This fact is neither different nor not different." This is the fourth question-and-answer variation. Based on these responses, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* may reply with an incongruent answer when the question is incongruent.

Their [theoretical] answers are identical with the others within the four variations, however, and do not range beyond them.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* raise inconsistent questions and reply with inconsistent answers in regard to the initial eon of the past. These theoretical answers are limited to the four variations, are [essentially] identical, and do not exceed that limit. Only the Tathāgata knows the very basis of the [common] answers to which the foregoing four theorists hold fast, to which they are attached, and from which they [theoretically] receive retribution. The Tathāgata's knowledge exceeds these variations because he knows the very basis of their views but does not become attached to such a view. Since he is not attached to this view, he is in a state of quiescence and cessation (i.e., free from conceptualization). He knows the causal concatenation of sensation and its cessation, its gratification and danger, and the method of transcending it. Thus he is liberated [from eternalist speculation] because of his nonattachment [to the basis of that view] through the very insight of seeing things universally as they really are. Therefore he is called the Tathāgata. This is the great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. In reference to this insight, wise and saintly disciples can properly praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant, in reference to which wise and saintly disciples can properly praise the Tathāgata for the universal insight that sees things as they really are. What is this insight? Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate about the initial eon of the past and assert, "This world has arisen without a cause." This view is confined to two variations. When they propose that "this world has arisen without a cause," this theory is confined to two variations and does not exceed that number. But why should the theory that "the world has arisen without a cause" be confined to two variations without exceeding that number?

Some sentient beings (here, "some gods," *devas*) have no thought or knowledge. No sooner do they give rise to a thought than they come to the end of their life span. Once born in this human world, they gradually grow into adolescence, shave their hair and beards, don the three robes,

and renounce domestic life for religious practice. Some of them, entering into mental concentration, recognize with a concentrated mind the origin of their birth and say, "I did not exist originally but now I have suddenly appeared. This world was nonexistent originally but now it exists. This theory is true, while the rest is false." This is the first variation. On the basis of this view, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate about the initial eon of the past and assert that the world exists without a cause. This theory is identical with the other of the two variations.

Again, some *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*, with a rationally skeptical mind, examine the case carefully and investigate the theory in various ways through their knowledge of logic and sophistry. They assert, "This world exists without cause. This theory alone is true while the rest is false." This is the second variation. On the basis of this theory, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* propose a theory concerning the initial eon of the past and assert, "This world exists without cause." This theory is identical with the other variation and does not go beyond it. So while the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* thus formulate their theory concerning the initial eon of the past, asserting that this world exists without cause, the theory is limited to two variations and does not exceed that number. Only the Tathāgata knows the very basis of the [common] view, and so on, just as has been repeatedly stated.

92b

Other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* conjecture theories about the initial eon of the past in innumerable and obsessive ways. But all the theories thus asserted can be classified exhaustively into eighteen kinds of views. Whatever these views may be, insofar as they are speculative concerning the initial eon of the past, no matter how numerous and obsessively formulated, they will invariably be classified into eighteen variations without exceeding that number. Again, the Buddha alone knows the very basis of those theories, and so on, just as has been repeatedly stated.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. What is this insight? While some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* form innumerable speculations about the final eon of the future, as freely as they may wish, all the theories thus asserted can be classified exhaustively into forty-four kinds of views. Whatever those views may be, insofar as they are speculative concerning the final eon of the future, no matter how numerous and obsessively theorized, they can all invariably be classified

into forty-four types of views without exceeding that number. Why should the theories of those *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate about the final eon of the future without limit be exhaustively classified into forty-four variations without exceeding that number?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate in regard to the final eon of the future and form the theory that individual consciousness exists after death, thus asserting the existence of individual consciousness in the world after death. Any theory that asserts the existence of consciousness in the world after death falls into sixteen variations without exceeding that number. Why should the theories of those *śramaṇa* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate about the final eon of the future and assert that consciousness exists in the world after death be confined to sixteen variations without exceeding that number?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculatively form this view: “After my death a consciousness that has a form (i.e., a self with form and consciousness) will exist. This theory alone is true while the rest is false.” This is called the first view. Based on this view, other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate in regard to the final eon of the future hold this theory of the existence of consciousness, asserting that consciousness will exist in the world after their death. This theory belongs to the sixteen variations and does not range beyond them.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, “After my death there will be a formless consciousness (i.e., a self without form but with consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, “After my death there will be a consciousness with both form and formlessness (i.e., a self with consciousness and with both form and nonform). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, “After my death there will be a consciousness that has neither form nor formlessness (i.e., a self with consciousness but with neither form nor nonform). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, “After my death there will be a consciousness with a limit [or end] (i.e., a self having an end). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a consciousness that has no limit (i.e., a self with no limit or end). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a consciousness that has both a limit and no limit (i.e., a self with consciousness that also has both a limit and no limit). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a consciousness that has neither a limit nor no limit (i.e., a self with consciousness that also has neither a limit nor no limit). This alone is true while the rest is false."

92c Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a consciousness that is one-sidedly happy (i.e., a self with a one-sidedly happy consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a consciousness that one-sidedly suffers (i.e., a self with a one-sidedly suffering consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a consciousness that both is happy and suffers (i.e., a self with a consciousness that is happy and that suffers). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there be a consciousness that neither is happy nor suffers (i.e., a self with a consciousness that neither is happy nor suffers). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a singular consciousness (*yi xiang; ekatta-saṃjñī ātmā*, i.e., a self with a unified consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death, there will be a multiple consciousness (*re gan xiang; nānatta-saṃjñī ātmā*, i.e., a self with equivocal or multiple consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, "After my death there will be a small consciousness (*shao xiang; parīṭṭa-saṃjñīn*, i.e., a self with a small separate consciousness)."

Some other *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert, “After my death there will be an immeasurable consciousness (i.e., a self with an immeasurable consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

The foregoing groups of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* all formulate theories in regard to the final eon of the future, asserting that there will be consciousness after death, but all their theories fall into sixteen variations without exceeding that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of their theories, and so on, just as has been repeated before.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. What is this insight? Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* formulate various theories in regard to the final eon of the future and assert that there will be no consciousness in the world after death. Any theories that speculate about the final eon of the future can be classified exhaustively into eight variations without exceeding that number. Why should the theories of those *śramaṇa* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate about the final eon of the future, asserting that there is no consciousness in the world after death, be confined to only eight variations? Why don't they exceed that number?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculatively form this view: “After my death there will be no consciousness other than a form [of a self] (i.e., a self with a form but no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A second group of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* asserts, “After my death there will be neither consciousness nor a form [of a self] (i.e., a self with no form and no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A third group asserts, “After my death there will be no consciousness other than [a self] that has both form and formlessness (*rūpī ca arūpī ca ātmā asaṃjñī*, i.e., a self with form and nonform and no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A fourth group asserts, “After my death there will be no consciousness other than a self that has neither form nor formlessness (*n'eva rūpī nārūpī ca ātmā asaṃjñī*, i.e., a self that does not have form, nonform, or consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A fifth group asserts, “After my death there will be no consciousness other than a self with a limit [or end] (i.e., a self that has an end or limit but no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A sixth group asserts, "After my death there will be no consciousness [other than a self] with no limit or end (i.e., a self with no end or limit and no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

A seventh group asserts, "After my death there will be no consciousness [other than a self] with both an end and no end (i.e., a self with both an end and no end, and no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

An eighth group asserts, "After my death there will be no consciousness [other than a self] with neither an end nor no end (i.e., a self with neither an end nor no end, and no consciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

The foregoing are the eight variations of the theories with which *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate in regard to the final eon of the future, asserting that there will be no consciousness in the world after death. All the theories fall into these eight variations and do not exceed that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of these theories, and so on, just as has been repeated before.

93a Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. What is this insight? Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate about the final eon of the future and frame a theory of "neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness," asserting that there will be neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness in the world after death. These theories too can be classified exhaustively into eight variations without exceeding that number. On what basis can the speculative theories about the final eon of the future be classified exhaustively into eight variations without exceeding that number? On what basis can the theories of those *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate in regard to the final eon of the future, asserting that there is neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness in the world after death, be confined to only eight variations? Why don't they exceed that number?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculatively form this view, "After the end of my life there will be [a self] with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness (i.e., a self with a form but with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness). This alone is true while the rest is false."

A second group of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* asserts, “After my death there will be [a self] with no form and neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness. This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A third group asserts, “After my death, there will be [a self] with both a form and no form and with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness. This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A fourth group asserts, “After my death, there will be [a self] with neither form nor no form and with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness. This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A fifth group asserts, “After my death, there will be [a self] with an end (i.e., a limit) but with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness. This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A sixth group asserts, “After my death, there will be [a self] with no end (i.e., no limit) and with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness. This alone is true while the rest is false.”

A seventh group asserts, “After my death, there will be [a self] with both an end and no end and with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness. This alone is true while the rest is false.”

An eighth group asserts, “After my death, there will be [a self] with neither an end nor no end and with neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness (*n’eva antavā-anantavā ātmā n’eva saṃjñi-nāsaṃjñi*). This alone is true while the rest is false.”

These are the eight variations of speculative theories held by *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* in regard to the final eon of the future, asserting that there will be neither consciousness nor nonconsciousness in the world after death. They all form eight variations and do not exceed that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of these theories, and so on, just as has been stated repeatedly.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. What is this insight? Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate in regard to the final eon of the future and form a theory of annihilationism, asserting that living beings are completely destroyed after their deaths [or after the dissolution of their bodies], without remainder. This kind of theory can be classified into seven variations without exceeding that number. On

what basis can the theories of the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate in regard to the final eon of the future, asserting that there is no self after death, be classified into seven variations and not exceed that number?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculatively form this view, “My body consists of four material principles and six cognitive faculties, and it was born of my father and mother, reared initially by milk, and later sustained by food and clothing and physically protected. The result, however, is subject to change and will eventually be destroyed and obliterated. As it is like this, it is called annihilation.” This is the first theory of annihilationism.

93b A second group of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* asserts, “This may not be total annihilation [of a sentient being]. Only when one reaches the heaven in the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*) is the body totally annihilated after death.”

A third group asserts, “This may not be total annihilation [of a sentient being]. The body that takes shape in the realm of form (*rūpadhātu*) is endowed with all cognitive faculties. Only when these faculties are destroyed and obliterated after one's death can the dissolution of faculties be regarded as total annihilation.”

A fourth group asserts, “This may not be total annihilation [of a sentient being]. Only when one reaches the formless realm (*arūpyadhātu*) of infinite space can it be regarded as total annihilation.”

A fifth group asserts, “This may not be total annihilation [of a sentient being]. Only when one reaches the formless realm of infinite consciousness can it be regarded as total annihilation.”

A sixth group asserts, “This may not be total annihilation [of a sentient being]. Only when one reaches the formless realm of nothingness can it be regarded as total annihilation.”

A seventh group asserts, “This may not be total annihilation [of a sentient being]. Only when one reaches the formless realm, namely, the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, can it be regarded as total annihilation.”

These are the seven variations of the theories held by those *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate in regard to the final eon of the future, asserting that there is total destruction and obliteration of living beings after their death. The theories all fall into seven variations and do not exceed that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of these theories, and so on, as has been stated repeatedly.

Again, there is another great insight, most profound and subtle and far more radiant. What is this insight? Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate about the final eon of the future assert a theory of nirvana and hold that living beings should acquire nirvana in their present lives. This kind of theory can be classified into five variations without exceeding that number. On what basis, however, do the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who speculate about the final eon of the future assert that living beings should acquire nirvana in their present lives? How can this theory be classified into five variations and not exceed that number?

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculatively form this view, “Since I am able to enjoy all five senses as freely as I wish, I regard this as the realization of nirvana in this present life.” This is the first variation.

A second group of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* asserts, “I think that this is the nirvana acquired in the present life and I cannot deny this subtle state. You may not understand this as I alone have experienced it. If you forsake all evil desires and all that is not good, even though there may be awareness of an object (*you jia; vitarka*) and the act of examining (*you guan; vicāra*), you will acquire the sense of joy (*prīti*) and bliss (*sukha*) that removes the cause of birth. You will enter the first meditative state of absorption (*dhyāna*). This may be regarded as nirvana acquired in the present life.” This is the second variation.

A third group asserts, “I think that this is the nirvana acquired in the present life and I cannot deny this subtle state. You may not understand it as I alone have experienced it. If you eliminate awareness of an object and the subjective act of examination, with increasing tranquility or self-confidence (Pāli *saṃpasādana*) and continual application of mental concentration, you will proceed to the second meditative state of absorption. According to my experience, this may be regarded as nirvana acquired in the present life.” This is the third variation.

A fourth group asserts, “I think that this is the nirvana acquired in the present life and I cannot deny this state of subtlety. You may not understand it as I alone have experienced it. If you eliminate defiled affectations and forsake the feeling of delight while remaining mindful of the blissful state and experience it in the body, which the wise and saintly disciples commend, you will then enter the third meditative state of absorption. According to

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my experience, this may be regarded as nirvana acquired in the present life." This is the fourth variation.

A fifth group asserts, "I think that this is the nirvana acquired in this present life and I cannot deny this subtle state. You may not understand it as I alone have experienced it. If you eradicate feelings of happiness and suffering and remove sorrow and joy, as I have done, you will realize the state of equanimity in which neither suffering nor pleasure is experienced, and thus enter the fourth meditative state of absorption, which is primary nirvana." This is the fifth variation.

When *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* speculate in regard to the final eon of the future and assert these views of nirvana that may be acquired in the present life, their theories can be classified into five variations without exceeding that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of these theories, and so on, just as has been stated repeatedly.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* obsessively assert innumerable speculative views about the final eon of the future, but the various theories they advance about the final eon of the future can invariably be classified into forty-four variations without exceeding that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of these theories, and so on, just as has been stated repeatedly.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* obsessively assert innumerable views about the initial eon of the past and the final eon of the future, but the various theories they advance about the initial eon of the past and the final eon of the future can be classified exhaustively into sixty-two variations without exceeding that number. Once again, only the Buddha knows the very basis of these theories, and so on, just as has been stated repeatedly.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, speculating about the initial eon of the past, assert a theory of eternalism and hold that the self and the world are permanent. On the basis of this theory, these *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* acquire knowledge, namely, heretical notions of belief, desire, learning, [causal] conditions, sensation, view, concentration, and acknowledgment. They then acquire knowledge from these [heretical notions], namely, the notion of sensation and so on, up to the notion of nirvana as well.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, speculating about the initial eon of the past, assert a theory of eternalism and hold that the self and the world

are permanent. Since these theories are invariably occasioned by the contact of the senses [with their respective objects], it is impossible to advance any of these theories apart from the fact of sense contact. This holds true even with the theory of nirvana acquired in the present life.

Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* assert innumerable views about the initial eon of the past and the final eon of the future. Whatever theories they advance concerning the initial eon of the past and the final eon of the future are invariably accomplished within these sixty-two variations. Therefore, whatever speculative view one may assert as a theory is confined to these sixty-two variations [and can never be accomplished outside these variations]. This state of affairs can be compared to the situation of a skillful fisherman who casts a fine-meshed net over a small pond and covers it entirely. It should be understood that whatever creatures exist within that small pond will invariably be trapped in the net and cannot escape from it; they are all contained within it and cannot go beyond it. The *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* are also like this. All the various speculative theories they hold concerning the initial eon of the past and the final eon of the future are invariably confined within the fine-meshed net of these sixty-two variations and may equal but never go beyond them.

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If a *bhikṣu* acquires insight into the causal concatenation of the six senses and contact with their objects (i.e., sensation, its cessation, its gratification, its danger, and the method of its transcendence), universally as they really are, this would be his highest achievement, [precisely] because this insight goes beyond the theories contained within the sixty-two variations. The Tathāgata has directly experienced in the present life that the cause of birth and death has been exhausted. The only reason he continues to appear in this world is because of his [resolution] to help gods and humans realize the goal of nirvana. Without this [great] resolution, there would be no one in this world on whom gods and humans can rely as their refuge. Such a state of affairs can be compared to the *tāla* tree: if the top is chopped off, the tree never revives. In case of the Buddha, too, because he has already terminated the cause of life and birth, once he enters nirvana he will never again return to this world.

The time this discourse was completed must have been the right time for the Buddha, because the entire earth quaked three times in six different ways.

At that moment Ānanda was standing behind the Buddha, fanning him. He rearranged his outer robe to expose his right shoulder and, kneeling with his palms joined, he said to the Buddha, “The foregoing discourse is very profound, sir. What title should be given to this discourse? And how can this discourse be sustained and carried out, sir?”

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “This sutra should be called the net of meanings, the net of insights, the net of views, the net of catching evil ones, and the net of Brahmā.”

At that, having heard the Buddha's teaching, Ānanda was delighted to receive it, and he reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 21: Brahmā's Net]

Sutra 22

One Who Cultivates Virtue (*Dīgha Nikāya 4: Soṇadaṇḍa Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was traveling through the communities of the country of Aṅga, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty disciples, he stopped overnight by the bank of Queen Gaggarā's lotus pond near the city of Campā.

A *brāhmaṇa* called Soṇadaṇḍa resided in Campā, a well-populated and prosperous city with abundant greenery. King Prasenajit [of Kauśala]¹⁵ had granted the city to the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa as a fief, exempting it from taxation. This *brāhmaṇa* had been born into a pure family line of seven generations and had never been slighted by anyone in society. He was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and had detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. He was also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. He had five hundred student disciples and never tired of teaching them.

On this occasion, many of the *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy householders of the city were duly informed:

The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, has been traveling through the communities of the country of Aṅga and has [now] reached the bank of Queen Gaggarā's lotus pond in the city of Campā. Gautama's good name is renowned and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all lands under the sky, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely One Perfected in Practice (Tathāgata), One Liberated from Attachment (Arhat), Perfectly Enlightened One (Samyak-saṃbuddha), and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced

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the realization of enlightenment and has been teaching others [how to realize that goal]. When he expounds on religion his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity.

[Each of them was struck by the same thought:] “I too have heard that we should visit this sage and pay our respects. I will go to see this man together with the others.” Thereupon, all of the citizens, *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy householders alike, immediately departed to go to the place where the Buddha was resting, [resulting in a great exodus from the city].

The *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa, observing from atop his high tower the passage of a multitude of citizens [through the streets], asked his attendants, “Why are all these people gathered together and where are they going?”

The attendants replied:

94c I have heard, sir: “The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, has been traveling through the communities of the country of Aṅga and has [now] reached the bank of Queen Gaggarā's lotus pond in the city of Campā. Gautama's good name is renowned and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all lands under the sky, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice (Tathāgata), One Liberated from Attachment (Arhat), Perfectly Enlightened One (Samyak-sambuddha), and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment. When he expounds on religion his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his pure and genuine practice of austerity.”

The *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy householders all wish to see the *śramaṇa* Gautama and pay him their respects. The crowds are nothing other than the procession of those who wish to go see the *śramaṇa* Gautama, sir.

The *brāhmaṇa* then instructed his attendants: “Go quickly and carry my

message to the people. Tell them: ‘Gentlemen, please wait for a moment while I come to join you. Let us all go together to Gautama’s resting place.’”

One of the attendants immediately went out and said to the people: “Good people, please wait for a moment for [the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa] to join you. He wishes to accompany you to Gautama’s resting place.”

The townspeople responded to the attendant: “Please return quickly to the *brāhmaṇa* and tell him: ‘The most auspicious moment is at hand. Let us [now] go together.’”

The attendant returned and reported: “The people are waiting, sir. They say, ‘The most auspicious moment is at hand. Let us [now] go together.’”

The *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa right away descended from the high tower and went to the middle gate. It so happened that his five hundred students had gathered at the gate, attending to a minor matter. Seeing their [teacher] *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa approaching, they stood up in unison and greeted him, “O great *brāhmaṇa*, where are you going, sir?”

Soṇadaṇḍa replied:

The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, is here. Having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, he has been traveling through the communities of the country of Aṅga and has [now] reached the bank of Queen Gaggarā’s lotus pond in the city of Campā. Gautama’s good name is renowned and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all lands under the sky, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice (Tathāgata), One Liberated from Attachment (Arhat), Perfectly Enlightened One (Samyak-saṃbuddha), and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment. When he expounds on religion his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his pure and genuine practice of asuterity. Everyone should go to see this sage, and I too wish to visit the *śramaṇa* Gautama and pay my respects.

The five hundred student disciples then spoke to Soṇadaṇḍa, advising him:

May you not be so bold as to visit him. Why? Sir, he will come here instead, and so Your Reverence need not go to him.

A great *brāhmaṇa* like Your Reverence, who comes from a line of pure parentage of seven generations, should never be slighted by anyone in society. If you uphold [the prestige of] your pure family line, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Therefore, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Moreover, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is well established: you are thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and have detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures, as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. Your Reverence is also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. If you uphold [the preeminence of] one who possesses such [extraordinary] abilities, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is reflected in your handsome countenance, which bears the likeness and coloring of the god Brahmā. If you uphold [the prestige of] this [extraordinary] likeness, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is proven by the fine moral quality of your ever-increasing virtues and store of acquired wisdom. If you maintain [the dignity inherent in] this [extraordinary] achievement, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is apparent in your gentle manner of speech and you are endowed with the highest rhetorical skill, as every word is imbued with pure and genuine meanings and essences. If you rest in [the propriety flowing from] this [extraordinary] ability, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is evidenced in your position as a great master with many disciple followers. If you affirm this [extraordinary]

attainment, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is shown in your ability to teach five hundred students at all times. If you affirm this [extraordinary] quality, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is reflected in your capacity to give consultation to scholars seeking it from all quarters of the continent, and to provide them with clear, detailed answers to questions about sacrificial rites and proceedings. If you affirm this [extraordinary] quality, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is reflected in the respect and recognition accorded you by both King Prasenajit (of Kauśala) and King Bimbisāra (of Magadha). If you uphold [the status conveyed by] these [extraordinary] honors, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is confirmed by your wealth and your storehouses filled with treasure. If you maintain [the standing of] one so [extraordinarily] endowed with wealth, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is revealed in your intelligence; you possess complete understanding and command the power of universally beneficial speech that is totally free from inconsistency. If you rest on [the preeminence given by] this [extraordinary] quality, [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Soṇadaṇḍa then replied:

Yes, it is as you have said. What you have just said is indeed correct. I do possess the qualities you have enumerated; I do not deny it. Listen to me, however. [You should know that] the *śramaṇa* Gautama is replete with every [excellent] meritorious virtue, and also that I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

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The *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a line of pure parentage of seven generations, which must not be slighted by anyone in society. Since he is from such a pure family, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a *kṣatriya* family and has a handsome appearance. As he is marked by this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a noble family, but having renounced his worldly fortune he has realized the ultimate goal of religion. Since he has realized this goal, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, born from a pure family line and endowed with a fair, bright complexion, has renounced domestic life and engaged in religious practice. Since he has decisively taken up the path of religion, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a wealthy and privileged family, yet despite the strength of that position, he has renounced domestic life and realized the goal of religious practice. Since he has realized this goal, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is endowed with all [moral and spiritual] precepts (*śīlavant ārya-śīlin kuśala-śīlena samannāgata*) and has attained the perfection of transcendental insight. Since he has realized this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is skilled in the use of appropriate language and [his manner] is gentle, harmonious, and refined. Since he has realized this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is a teacher of teachers and has a multitude of disciples (*bahūnām ācārya-prācārya*). Since he has realized this excellence, we should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama has [thoroughly] terminated all desires and passions with no inconstancy whatsoever (*kṣīṇa-kāma-rāga-vigata-cāpalya*). Having eradicated all anxiety and fear, his bearing is neither stiff nor artificial but pleasingly harmonious and delightful. He praises the goodness in others, teaches the principle of moral retribution (*karma-vādin kriyā-vādin*), and honors [the practice of] non-harm (Pāli *apāpa-purekkhāra*).

Since he has realized this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is respected, adored, given offerings, and shown tender concern by King Prasenajit and King Bimbisāra. Since he has been accorded this status, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is respected, adored, given offerings, and shown tender concern by the *brāhmaṇa* Puṣkarasvādi (Pokkharasādi), and also by *brāhmaṇas* such as Brahmā, Tārukkha, Kūṭadanta, and Sukamāṇavatodeyya. Since he has attained this eminence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is revered, respected, adored, given offerings, and shown tender concern not only by the saintly disciples (*śrāvaka-antevāsika*) but also by the gods and other legions of spirits, and is followed with devotion by clanspeople from the Śākya, Kaulya, Uttarakā, Vṛji, Malla, and Somanā clans. Since he has attained this eminence, we should go to him; he will not come to see us here. 95b

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama convinced both King Prasenajit and King Bimbisāra to receive lay ordination by taking refuge in the Three Treasures (Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha) and adhering to the five moral precepts. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama convinced the *brāhmaṇa* Puṣkarasvādi and others to receive lay ordination by taking refuge in the Three Treasures and adhering to the five moral precepts. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama not only granted his disciples the higher ordination that consists of taking refuge in the Three Treasures and adhering to the five precepts, but also offered the invariable refuge of the Three Treasures and the five precepts to the gods, to the Śākya and Kaulya clanspeople, and so on. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, whenever and wherever he is traveling through our communities, has always been respected, given offerings,

and shown tender concern by all the people. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, in whatever town or village he happens to visit, is always respected, given offerings, and shown tender concern by the townspeople and villagers. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, wherever he travels, has never been disturbed by nonhuman spirits. Since he is constantly accompanied by this miracle, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, wherever he happens to be, empowers the people of that locality to perceive a heavenly radiance and hear celestial music. Since he is always accompanied by this miracle, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, wherever he sojourns on his travels, invariably endears himself to the people so that when he departs they weep when parting from him, wishing that he would stay longer. Since he has always endeared himself to everyone, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, when the *śramaṇa* Gautama first renounced domestic life, his loving father and mother were brought to tears and they grieved bitterly at his departure and yearned for him to return. Because he has attained the goal of his renunciation, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, on renouncing domestic life, cast away all his jewelry, elephants, horses, chariots, and every object of gratification for the five senses even though he was in the youthful prime of life. Since he has fulfilled the path of renunciation, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama abandoned the throne of universal kingship (*cakravartin*) to enter religious practice. Had he pursued the life of a householder he would have reigned over the four quarters of the earth as the sovereign of all people and all worldly things, and we all would have been his subjects. Since he has fulfilled the path of religion [instead of that other path of glory,] I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama thoroughly understands the reforming principle of excommunication (*fanfa*; *brahmādaṇḍa*) as practiced in

Brahmā Heaven; he communicates with Brahmā and commends the efficacy of this principle to others. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is endowed with the thirty-two eminent marks of a great person without exception. Since he is endowed with all these excellent marks, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama possesses the penetrating intelligence of complete understanding and is totally free from any mental unsteadiness. Since he is endowed with this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

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Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama has just now arrived on the bank of Queen Gaggarā's lotus pond. He is the Honored One for me and a cherished guest [of this region]. I should go to him to form a close association.

The five hundred students then said to Soṇadaṇḍa:

This is truly marvelous—indeed, truly marvelous, sir! Can [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] possess all of the meritorious virtues? If he possessed just one of them, he could not be expected to come to us. How much less could he be expected to come to us when he is so fully endowed with every distinction! Will Your Reverence allow us to accompany you to greet the Tathāgata?

Soṇadaṇḍa replied, “If you wish, now is the time to come along with me.” The *brāhmaṇa*'s carriage was prepared and, surrounded by his five hundred students and the *brāhmaṇas* and householders of the city of Campā, he journeyed to Queen Gaggarā's [lotus] pond.

Not far from the pond, Soṇadaṇḍa thought to himself:

If I ask Gautama something, I could be admonished if my question is inappropriate and counter to the way he thinks. He may say, “You should ask me that question in this way, and not like that.” Those who are in attendance on this occasion will then surely think of me as ignorant and my reputation will be damaged. If the *śramaṇa* Gautama asks me a question about the meaning of my doctrines and my answer does not appear to conform to his thinking, he may say, “You should reply in this manner, and not like that.” Those who are in attendance on this occasion will then

surely think of me as ignorant and my reputation will be damaged. Yet if I return from this occasion without exchanging any words with Gautama, those who have accompanied me may say, "The [*brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa] has little knowledge. He did not dare to exchange words with the *śramaṇa* Gautama." My reputation will thus be damaged. If, however, the *śramaṇa* Gautama should ask me about the meritorious virtues that *brāhmaṇas* are obliged to fulfill, then I can answer in a way that I hope will be in accord with his line of inquiry."

Having run through these thoughts while approaching Queen Gaggara's [lotus] pond, the *brāhmaṇa* dismounted from his carriage and went on foot to the resting place of the World-honored One, where he bowed and took a seat to one side. The *brāhmaṇas* and householders of Campā also sat down, some of them venerating the Buddha before doing so. Some greeted him with a bow, while others called out their names or simply joined their palms together to pay their respects, quietly without a word.

When they had all settled in their seats, the Buddha at once knew the mind of the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa and said to him, "What you have thought is in accordance with your wish."

The Buddha then asked Soṇadaṇḍa:

O *brāhmaṇa*, how many meritorious virtues must you, as a *brāhmaṇa*, be endowed with so that whatever a *brāhmaṇa* such as yourself may say is said with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood?

At that moment, Soṇadaṇḍa thought to himself:

Quite marvelous—indeed, marvelous! The *śramaṇa* Gautama evidently has the great supernatural power of reading the minds of others as easily as I know my own thoughts: he has put a question about exactly what I wish to be asked about!

[Soṇadaṇḍa] then assumed a correct posture and, looking out over the audience with a smile, replied to the Buddha:

96a As a *brāhmaṇa* I have fulfilled the five meritorious virtues, so whatever I say is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood, sir. What are these five virtues? First, a *brāhmaṇa* must be from a pure family line

of seven generations, and must not be slighted by anyone in society. Second, he should be thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and have detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature; moreover, he should be well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. Third, he should be endowed with a handsome countenance [with a fair and bright complexion]. Fourth, he should uphold perfect adherence to the moral precepts. Fifth, he should possess the wisdom of complete understanding. These are the five meritorious virtues. O Gautama, a *brāhmaṇa* must be endowed with these five meritorious virtues so that whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood, sir.

The Buddha said to the *brāhmaṇa*:

Very good, O *brāhmaṇa*. [Now] of these five virtues, can someone who has accomplished four of them while not fulfilling one still be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, such that whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood?

The *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa replied:

Yes, sir. Why? O Gautama, a *brāhmaṇa* is not required to fulfill any condition related to the lineage of his birth. One who fulfills the remaining four [virtues] can be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, and whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood. [First,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must be thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and possess detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature; he must also be well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. [Second,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must be endowed with a handsome countenance [with a fair and bright complexion]. [Third,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must uphold perfect adherence to the moral precepts. [Fourth,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must possess the wisdom of complete understanding.

The Buddha said to the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa:

Very good. [Now] of those [remaining] four virtues, can one who has accomplished three of them while not fulfilling one still be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, such that whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood?

The *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa replied:

Yes, sir. Why? O Gautama, just as a *brāhmaṇa* is not required to fulfill any condition of lineage related to his birth, he also is not required to fulfill any condition related to various forms of chanting. One who fulfills the remaining three [virtues] may be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, and whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood. [First,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must be endowed with a handsome countenance, [with a fair and bright complexion]. [Second,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must uphold perfect adherence to the moral precepts. [Third,] such a *brāhmaṇa* must possess the wisdom of complete understanding.

The Buddha continued:

Very good. [Now] of these three virtues, can one who has accomplished two of them while not fulfilling one still be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, such that whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood?

The *brāhmaṇa* replied:

Yes, sir. Why? O Gautama, just as a *brāhmaṇa* is not required to fulfill any conditions related to his birth lineage or to various forms of chanting, he also need not fulfill the condition requiring a handsome countenance with a fair complexion.

At that moment, the five hundred *brāhmaṇa* students shouted out in protest to Soṇadaṇḍa:

Why does Your Reverence cast aside fulfillment of the conditions of birth [from pure lineage], of [proficiency in scriptural] chanting, and of possessing physical attractiveness [due to heredity]?

At once, the World-honored One said to them:

If the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa, your teacher, was unbecoming in his facial features, if he came from a humble family background and was unable to chant the scriptures, or speak intelligently and eloquently, and hence unable to exchange words with me, then you could speak out [on his behalf]. If, however, Soṇadaṇḍa does have a handsome countenance, comes from an appropriate family background, and is not only proficient in chanting scriptures but also able to exchange arguments intelligently and eloquently, and capable of engaging in debate with me, you should remain silent and listen to what he says.

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At that moment, the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa said to the Buddha, “May I request, O Gautama, that you not press [my disciples] for a moment. I shall teach them myself.” Soṇadaṇḍa then asked the five hundred *brāhmaṇas*:

Aṅgamāṇava is among this multitude of students, like yourselves. He is one of my nephews from my wife’s side. Do you all see how handsome he is? With the singular exception of the World-honored One, [whose noble appearance is beyond comparison,] there is no one in this assembly whose attractiveness can match that of this young fellow Aṅgamāṇava. Yet he is a moral degenerate—he commits murder, theft, and sexual abuse; he is rude and engages in falsehood and deceit. He has committed evil by transgressing norms and has murdered people by burning them with fire. O *brāhmaṇas*, this man Aṅgamāṇava concentrates within himself all evils. So even though he is capable and proficient in chanting scriptures, of what use is that?

The five hundred *brāhmaṇas* remained silent, [raising no objections]. Soṇadaṇḍa then said to the Buddha:

Sir, with one who upholds perfect adherence to the moral precepts and also possesses the wisdom of complete understanding, whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood. Such a person can be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, sir.

The Buddha said:

Very good. How do you reply [now], O Soṇadaṇḍa? If one of the two virtues is not fulfilled but the other is perfected, and if whatever is said

is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood, can such a person be called a [true] *brāhmaṇa*?

Soṇadaṇḍa replied:

No, sir. Why? Perfect moral discipline is wisdom, and wisdom means the perfection of moral conduct. He who has perfected adherence to the moral precepts is in possession of wisdom. As a result, whatever he says is spoken with utmost sincerity, involving no falsehood. Thus I assert that such a person is a [true] *brāhmaṇa*, sir.

The Buddha said:

Very good. It is exactly as you have said. One who is endowed with moral perfection is endowed with wisdom; one who possesses wisdom is morally perfect. Moral discipline can purify wisdom, and vice versa. O Soṇadaṇḍa, just as all people use both hands when they wash their hands, so is it with moral discipline and wisdom. With the left hand, one cleans the right hand; with the right hand, one cleans the left hand. It is the same with wisdom and moral discipline. One who possesses wisdom is also endowed with moral discipline; one who is morally disciplined also possesses wisdom. Moral discipline can purify and perfect wisdom, and perfect wisdom can purify and perfect moral discipline. O *brāhmaṇa*, one who possesses both moral discipline and wisdom, I call that person a *bhikṣu*.

Soṇadaṇḍa then said to the Buddha, “What are the moral precepts [to which you refer], sir?”

The Buddha said, “Listen carefully and keep in mind what I explain. I shall explain each one analytically.”

Soṇadaṇḍa replied, “Yes, sir. This is what I have come to hear.”

The World-honored One then said to the *brāhmaṇa*:

When the Tathāgata appears in this world, he bears the [ten] epithets of (1) One Liberated from Attachment, (2) Perfectly Enlightened One, (3) One Harmoniously Endowed with Insight and Practice, (4) Well-gone One (who will not be reborn into the cycles of rebirth), (5) Knower of the World, (6) Unrivaled Leader, (7) Trainer of Human Devotion, (8) Teacher of Gods and Humans, (9) Enlightened One, and (10) World-honored One.

Among all the gods and humans, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment and teaches others [how to realize it]. [When he expounds on religion] his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his pure and genuine practice of austerity.

When householders and their offspring listen to the right Dharma, they will be motivated to give rise to pure and genuine tranquil faith [in the Tathāgata]. Having given rise to faith [in the Tathāgata], they will reflect upon their lives:

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The life of a householder is not easy, it is [like being bound in] a rack of chains. Even as I wish to pursue the path of austerity, I cannot be free [as long as I am bound to a householder's life]. I should now shave my hair and beard, don the three robes of a mendicant, and renounce domestic life for religious practice.

Later, such a person may abandon his household and wealth, dissociate himself from his family and relations, shave his hair and beard, and don the three robes. Casting aside all finery, chanting the precepts and disciplines in the Vinaya texts, adhering to the rule of abstaining from taking life, and so on, even up to the realization of the fourth meditative state of absorption, he may thereby acquire supreme bliss. How is this so? This realization is only possible through a sustained effort of concentration, comprising constant mindfulness of enjoying practice as a recluse. O *brāhmaṇa*, this is regarded as the endowment of the higher ordination consisting of adherence to the Vinaya precepts and disciplines.

The *brāhmaṇa* then asked, “What is the wisdom [to which Your Reverence refers], sir?”

The Buddha replied:

When a *bhikṣu* realizes a pure and genuine state of mental concentration that is gentle, well controlled, able to abide in immovability, and so on, it opens up three kinds of supernormal powers: knowledge of past lives, knowledge of future destinies, and the eradication of defilements. It thus

terminates the state of ignorance, causing insight to arise together with the light of wisdom, the eradication of darkness, and the supreme illumination—all by going beyond the insight gained from the eradication of defilement. How is this so? This realization is only possible through a sustained effort of concentration, comprising constant mindfulness of one's point of observation and the acquisition of a state of equanimity accompanied by an increasingly subtle sense of bliss. O *brāhmaṇa*, this is regarded as the endowment of perfect knowledge of the Vinaya precepts and disciplines.

Thereupon, the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa said to the Buddha:

Now I am resolved to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and the holy *bhikṣus*' Sangha. I earnestly request to be permitted to become a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the dissolution of the body and end of life, I will uphold the five precepts, refraining from taking life, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from immoral sexual conduct, refraining from speaking falsehoods, and refraining from ingesting intoxicants.

Having heard the Buddha's teaching, the *brāhmaṇa* Soṇadaṇḍa was delighted to receive it and carried it out as taught by the Buddha.

[End of Sutra 22: One Who Cultivates Virtue]

Sutra 23

Brāhmaṇa Kūṭadanta

(Dīgha Nikāya 5: Kūṭadanta Suttanta)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was visiting the communities in the country of Kauśala, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty disciples, he stopped overnight in a *śiṃśapā* tree forest to the north of a *brāhmaṇa* village called Khānumata. A *brāhmaṇa* named Kūṭadanta resided in the village, which was well populated and verdant with groves of [shade] trees and bathing ponds giving off a welcome coolness to any observer. King Prasenajit had given this village to Kūṭadanta as a fief, exempting it from taxation. The *brāhmaṇa* was from a pure family line of seven generations and had never been slighted by anyone in society. He was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas), and had detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. He was also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. He had five hundred student disciples and never tired of teaching them. To conduct a grand sacrificial rite, he would obtain no fewer than five hundred bulls, five hundred cows, five hundred male calves, five hundred female calves, five hundred ewes, and five hundred rams.

On this occasion, many of the *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy householders of the village were duly informed: 97a

The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, has been visiting the communities of the country of Kauśala and has [now] arrived at the *śiṃśapā* tree forest north of the village of Khānumata for an overnight stay. Gautama's good name is renowned, and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all countries, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice (Tathāgata), One Liberated from Attachment

(Arhat), Perfectly Enlightened One (Samyak-saṃbuddha), and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment and has been teaching others [how to realize that goal]. When he expounds on religion his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity.

[Everyone who heard this had the same thought:] “I have heard that we should visit this sage and pay our respects. I will go to see this man together with the others.” Thereupon, all of the villagers, *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy householders alike, immediately departed together, [resulting in a great exodus].

The *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta, observing from atop his high tower the passage of the villagers, asked his attendants, “Why have these people gathered and where are they going?”

The attendants replied:

I have heard, sir: “The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, has been visiting the communities of the country of Kauśala and has [now] reached the *śiṃśapā* forest north of the village. Gautama's good name is renowned, and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all countries, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice, One Liberated from Attachment, Perfectly Enlightened One, and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment and has been teaching others how to realize [that goal]. When he expounds on religion, his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity.”

The *brāhmaṇas* and wealthy householders of the village all wish to visit the *śramaṇa* Gautama and pay him their respects. The crowd is nothing but the procession of those who wish to see the *śramaṇa* Gautama, sir.

The *brāhmaṇa* then instructed his attendants, “Go quickly and carry my message to the people. Tell them ‘Please wait for a moment while I come to join you. Let us all go together to Gautama’s resting place.’”

One of the attendants immediately went out and said to the people, “Good people, please wait for a moment [for the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta] to join you. He wishes to accompany you to Gautama’s resting place.”

The townspeople responded to the attendant, “Please return quickly to the *brāhmaṇa* and tell him ‘The most auspicious moment is at hand. Let us [now] go together.’”

The attendant returned and reported: “The people are waiting, sir. They say, ‘The most auspicious moment is at hand. Let us [now] go together.’”

The *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta came down from the high tower immediately and went to the middle gate. It so happened that his five hundred students had gathered outside the gate to assist him in the preparations for a great sacrificial rite. Seeing their [teacher] approaching, they stood up in unison and greeted him, “O great *brāhmaṇa*, where are you going, sir.”

The *brāhmaṇa* replied:

I have heard about the *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan. Having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, he has been visiting the communities of the country of Kauśala and has [now] reached the *śiṃśapā* forest to the north of this village. Gautama’s good name is renowned, and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all countries, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice, One Liberated from Attachment, Perfectly Enlightened One, and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment and has been teaching others [how to realize that goal]. When he expounds on religion, his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity. Everyone should go to see this sage.

O *brāhmaṇas*, all of you, I have also heard that Gautama is knowledgeable concerning the threefold sacrificial rite [as to cattle, calves, and

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sheep] as well as the sixteen sacrificial requisites. Even my senior colleagues and elders have little knowledge of these subjects. Now, it is my wish that we [successfully] carry out the great sacrificial rite that is approaching. Since we have enough cattle and sheep, I will visit the *śramaṇa* Gautama to inquire further about the threefold sacrificial rite and the sixteen requisites. By fulfilling what is required on that occasion, I will acquire new merit and my name will be renowned even to the farthest distances.

The five hundred student disciples then spoke to Kūṭadanta, advising him:

May you not be so bold as to visit him. Why? Sir, he will come here instead, and so Your Reverence need not go to him.

A great *brāhmaṇa* like Your Reverence, who comes from a pure line of seven generations, should never be slighted by anyone in society. If you uphold [the prestige of] your pure family line, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Therefore, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Moreover, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is well known. You are thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and have detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. Your reverence is also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omen, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. If you uphold [the preeminence of] one who possesses this [extraordinary] knowledge, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is reflected in your handsome countenance, which bears the likeness and coloring of the god Brahmā. If you uphold [the prestige of] this [extraordinary] likeness, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is proven by the fine moral quality of your ever-increasing virtues and store of acquired wisdom. If you maintain [the dignity inherent in] this [extraordinary] achievement, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is apparent in your gentle manner of speech and you are endowed with the highest rhetorical skill, as every word is imbued with pure and genuine meanings and essences. If you rest

in [the propriety inherent in] this [extraordinary] ability, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is evidenced in your position as a great teacher of teachers (*ācārya-prācārya*). If you maintain [the dignity associated with] this [extraordinary] standing, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is shown in your ability to teach five hundred students at all times. If you affirm this [extraordinary] quality, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is reflected in your capacity to give consultation to scholars seeking it from all quarters of the continent, and to give them clear detailed answers to questions about sacrificial rites and proceedings. If you affirm this [extraordinary] quality, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is reflected in the respect and recognition accorded you by King Bimbisāra (of Magadha) and King Prasenajit (of Kauśāla). If you uphold [the status conveyed by] these [extraordinary] honors, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is confirmed by your wealth and your storehouses filled with treasure. If you maintain [the standing of] one so [extraordinary] endowed with wealth, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

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Again, your greatness as a *brāhmaṇa* is revealed in your intelligence; you possess complete understanding and command the power of universally beneficial speech that is totally free from inconsistency. If you rest in [the preeminence given by] this [extraordinary] quality, he will [eventually] come to see you, sir. Hence, Your Reverence should not go to him.

O great teacher, since you are endowed with all eleven of these meritorious virtues, he will come to see you, and Your Reverence should not go to him.

Kūṭadanta then replied:

Yes, it is as you have said. What you have just said is indeed correct. I do possess the qualities you have enumerated; I do not deny it. Listen to me,

however. [If you know] the kinds of meritorious virtues the *śramaṇa* Gautama is endowed with, together with what he has accomplished, you will also know that I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

The *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a pure line of seven generations, which must not be slighted by anyone in society. Since he is from such a pure family, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a *kṣatriya* family and has a handsome appearance. As he is marked by this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a noble family, but having renounced his worldly fortune he has realized the ultimate goal of religion. Since he has realized this goal, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, born from a pure family line and endowed with a fair, bright complexion, has renounced domestic life and engaged in religious practice. Since he has decisively taken up the path of religion, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama was born into a wealthy and privileged family, yet despite the strength of that position, he has renounced domestic life and has realized the goal of religious practice. Since he has realized this goal, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is endowed with all [moral and spiritual] precepts (*śīlavant ārya-śīlin kuśala-śīlena samannāgata*) and has attained the perfection of transcendental insight. Since he has realized this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is skilled in the use of appropriate language and [his manner] is gentle, harmonious, and refined. Since he has realized this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is a teacher of teachers and has a multitude of disciples (*bahūnām ācārya-prācārya*). Since he has realized this excellence, we should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama has [thoroughly] terminated all desires and passions with no inconstancy whatsoever. Having eradicated all anxiety and fear, his bearing is neither stiff nor artificial but pleasingly harmonious and delightful. He praises the goodness in others, teaches the principle of

moral retribution, and honors [the practice of] non-harm. Since he has realized this excellence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is respected, adored, given offerings, and shown tender concern by King Bimbisāra and King Prasenajit. Since he has been accorded this status, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is respected, adored, given offerings, and shown tender concern by the *brāhmaṇa* Puṣkarasvādi, and also by *brāhmaṇas* such as Brahmā, Tārukkha, and Sukamāṇavatodeyya. Since he has attained this eminence, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is revered, respected, adored, given offerings, and shown tender concern not only by the saintly disciples but also by the gods and other legions of spirits, and is followed with devotion by clanspeople from the Śākya, Kaulya, Uttarakā, Vṛji, Malla, and Somanā clans. Since he has attained this eminence, we should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

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Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama convinced both King Bimbisāra and King Prasenajit to receive lay ordination by taking refuge in the Three Treasures and adhering to the five moral precepts. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama convinced the *brāhmaṇa* Puṣkarasvādi and others to receive lay ordination by taking refuge in the Three Treasures and adhering to the five moral precepts. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama not only granted his disciples the higher ordination that consists of taking refuge in the Three Treasures and adhering to the five precepts, but also offered the refuge of the Three Treasures and the five precepts to the gods, to the Śākya and Kaulya clanspeople, and so on. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, whenever and wherever he is visiting in our communities, has always been respected, given offerings, and shown tender concern by all the people. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, in whatever town or village he happens to visit, is always respected, given offerings, and shown tender concern

by the townspeople and villagers. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, wherever he travels, has never been disturbed by nonhuman spirits. Since he is constantly accompanied by this miracle, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, wherever he happens to be, empowers the people of that locality to perceive a heavenly radiance and hear celestial music. Since he is always accompanied by this miracle, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, wherever he sojourns on his travels, invariably endears himself to the people so that when he departs they weep when parting from him, wishing that he would stay longer. Since he has always endeared himself to everyone, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, when the *śramaṇa* Gautama first renounced domestic life, his loving father and mother were brought to tears and they grieved bitterly at his departure and yearned for him to return. Because he has attained the goal of his renunciation, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama, on renouncing domestic life, cast away all his jewelry, elephants, horses, chariots, and every object of gratification for the five senses even though he was in the youthful prime of life. Since he has fulfilled the path of renunciation, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama abandoned the throne of universal kingship (*cakravartin*) to enter religious practice. Had he pursued the life of a householder he would have reigned over the four quarters of the earth as the sovereign of all people and all worldly things, and we all would have been his subjects. Since he has fulfilled the path of religion [instead of that other path of glory,] I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama thoroughly understands the reforming principle of excommunication (*fanfa*; *brahmādaṇḍa*) as practiced in Brahmā Heaven; he converses with Brahmā and commends the efficacy of this principle to others. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is knowledgeable concerning the threefold sacrificial rite and the sixteen requisites; all my senior colleagues and elders lack this knowledge. Since he has attained this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama is endowed with the thirty-two eminent marks of a great person without exception. Since he is endowed with all these excellent marks, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama possesses the penetrating intelligence of complete understanding and is totally free from any mental unsteadiness. Since he is endowed with this distinction, I should go to him; he will not come to see us here.

Again, the *śramaṇa* Gautama has just now arrived at the *śimśapā* forest north of this village. He is the Honored One for me and a cherished guest [of this region]. I should go to him and form a close association.

The five hundred students then said to Kūṭadanta:

This is truly marvelous—indeed, truly marvelous, sir! Can [the *śramaṇa* Gautama] possess all of the meritorious virtues? If he possessed just one of them he could not be expected to come to us. How much less could he be expected to come to us when he is so fully endowed with every distinction! Will Your Reverence allow us to go with you to greet the Tathāgata?

Kūṭadanta replied, “If that is your wish, now is the time to come along with me.” The *brāhmaṇa*’s carriage was made ready, and surrounded by his five hundred students and the *brāhmaṇas* and householders of the village of Khānumata, he journeyed to the *śimśapā* forest. Upon his arrival, he dismounted from his carriage and went on foot to the resting place of the World-honored One, whom he greeted with a bow before taking a seat to one side.

The *brāhmaṇas* and householders of the village also sat down, some of them venerating the Buddha before doing so. Some greeted him with a bow, while others called out their names or simply joined their palms together to pay their respects, quietly without a word.

When they had all settled into their seats, the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta said to the Buddha, “I have a question, sir. If Your Reverence will permit me, I would like to ask it.”

The Buddha replied, "O *brāhmaṇa*, you may ask your question, as you please."

Thereupon, the *brāhmaṇa* said to the Buddha:

I have been informed that Gautama is knowledgeable concerning the three kinds of sacrificial rites and the sixteen sacrificial requisites. Sir, of these matters, neither myself nor my senior colleagues and elders are well informed. In order to fulfill a [longstanding] wish to conduct the great sacrificial rite, I have so far obtained five hundred bulls, five hundred cows, five hundred male calves, five hundred female calves, five hundred ewes, and five hundred rams. Today I have come to ask Your Reverence how the three kinds of sacrificial rite are to be conducted and the nature of the sixteen sacrificial requisites. If fortune is with me and I can complete a great sacrificial rite, I will gain great merit and my name will be renowned far and wide, and will even be respected by the heavenly gods, sir.

At once, the World-honored One said to the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta, "Listen carefully and keep in mind what I explain. I shall answer your question."

The *brāhmaṇa* replied, "Yes, sir. This is what I have come to hear."

Thereupon, the Buddha said to Kūṭadanta:

98c In the immemorial past, there was once a *ksatriya* king, [properly] anointed for his throne. As he wished to conduct a great sacrificial rite, he assembled his *brāhmaṇa* ministers and said to them: "I have amassed great wealth and treasure. However, while enjoying all the faculties of the five senses, I have also been growing old. My soldiers are strong and valiant without any cowardice, and my storehouses are filled with treasure. It is now a good time for me to conduct a universal sacrificial rite. Please explain how we may proceed. What will be required?"

The ministers replied, "It is true, O great king. As Your Majesty has said, our country's wealth has increased, along with the might of its army. But, sire, much of that wealth is squandered and constantly being misappropriated by those who harbor ill intent. If a great sacrifice should now be conducted, we cannot expect the intended result to occur. It would be like sending a band of robbers to chase away another band of robbers; it will not serve, sire. O great king, do not think that you can rely on your

subjects to apprehend the robbers in order to stop and punish them, or even have them executed. Instead, you must try to provide the faithful who serve Your Majesty's interest with all the things they need: see to it that those who aspire to conduct trade and business are supplied with sufficient capital, give those who farm the fields and cultivate the land both seeds to plant and breeding cattle, and let all of them manage their affairs by themselves. O Your Majesty, if one refrains from oppressing the people with taxes and regulations, they will feel safe and secure and be able to raise their offspring and enjoy their lives."

The Buddha continued:

Listening to his ministers' advice, the king made sure to provide his closest subjects with regular supplies of food and clothing, furnished capital from the royal coffers to those who aspired to operate various businesses, and gave seeds and cattle to those who wished to cultivate the land. Thereafter, the citizens ceased to interfere with each other through criminal acts; they managed their own affairs, raised their children, and enjoyed their lives.

The Buddha went on:

The king once again called his ministers and said, "My country is prosperous, my army is strong, and my storehouses are filled with treasure. I have provided the citizens with whatever they needed and enabled them to feel free from any kind of deprivation. They are raising their families and enjoying their own lives. Therefore, I now wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite. Please explain how we should proceed. What will be required?"

The ministers replied, "It is exactly as Your Majesty has said. The country is prosperous, the army is strong, and the treasury is full. Your majesty has provided the people with whatever they needed and freed them from any kind of deprivation. They are raising their families and enjoying their own lives. O great king, if Your Majesty wishes to conduct a great sacrificial rite, this may be announced in the queens' palace quarters."

Following the ministers' advice, the king announced his intent before his queens and their palace ladies, "My country is prosperous, my army is strong, and my storehouses are filled with treasure. I plan to conduct a great sacrificial rite."

The queens responded, "Yes, sire. As Your Majesty has said, the country is prosperous, the army is strong, and the storehouses are filled with money and treasure. If Your Majesty wishes to conduct a great sacrificial rite, this is now the right time."

Returning from the queens' palace, the king reported to his ministers, "My country has been prosperous, my army continues to be strong, and my storehouses are replete with treasure. I have provided the citizens with whatever they needed and enabled them to feel free from any kind of deprivation. They are raising their families and enjoying their own lives. As I now wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, I have announced my intent to my queens in their quarters. Please explain how we can proceed. What will be required?"

99a The ministers replied, "It is exactly as Your Majesty has said. Wishing to conduct a great sacrificial rite, Your Majesty has announced the matter in the queens' palace quarters. Sire, it must still be announced before the crown prince and princes, the ministerial officials, and your generals and their officers. May it please Your Majesty to make the announcement before them."

Listening to the advice of his ministers, the king said to the crown prince and princes, the ministerial officials, and the generals and their officers, "My country is prosperous, my army is strong, and my storehouses are filled with treasure. I plan to conduct a great sacrificial rite."

The crown prince and princes, the officials, and the generals and officers responded, "Yes, sire. It is exactly as Your Majesty has said. The country is prosperous, the army is strong, and the storehouses are filled with treasure. If Your Majesty wishes to conduct a great sacrificial rite, this should now be the right time."

Once again, the king said to the ministers, "My country is prosperous, my army is strong, and my storehouses are filled with treasure. I wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite. I have announced the matter to my queens in their quarters, to the crown prince and princes, and so on, including to my generals and their officers. It is now the right time to conduct a great sacrificial rite. What will be required?"

The ministers replied, "It is exactly as Your Majesty has said. If Your Majesty wishes to conduct a great sacrificial rite, this must now be the right time."

Having received the king's decree, the ministers at once constructed a new pavilion in the eastern part of the capital. The king entered the new pavilion covered in deer hide, his body rubbed with scented butter oil; on his head he wore a cap with deer's antlers, and he sat on the ground where cow dung had been plastered. The first queen and a *brāhmaṇa* minister selected a yellow cow. A portion of its milk became the king's food, a second portion the queen's food, a third portion the minister's food, and a fourth portion was offered to the multitude, with the remainder given to its calf.

The king was then to fulfill eight norms, while the minister had to qualify with four norms. What were the eight norms the king was obliged to fulfill? A king of the *kṣatriya* class had to be from a pure family line of seven generations, and could not be slighted by anyone in society. This fulfilled the first norm. The king had to have a handsome appearance as befits the *kṣatriya* class. This fulfilled the second norm. The king had to be endowed with ever-increasing wisdom and virtue. This fulfilled the third norm. The king had to be trained in martial arts such as elephant riding and driving a horse-drawn chariot, and he had to be skilled in using the sword, spear, bow and arrow, and other methods of combat, in detail without exception. This fulfilled the fourth norm. The king had to possess a regal presence so as to command the allegiance of subject kings. This fulfilled the fifth norm. The king had to be skilled in speech, gentle and patient in his manner of persuasion, and use words endowed with true meanings and real essences. This fulfilled the sixth norm. The king had to possess great wealth and storehouses filled with treasure. This fulfilled the seventh norm. The king had to be valiant and decisive, endowed with strategic brilliance and wisdom, and without infirmities at all. This fulfilled the eighth norm. Indeed, the *kṣatriya* king was well qualified in all eight norms.

What were the four norms required of the *brāhmaṇa* minister? The *brāhmaṇa* minister had to be from a pure family line of seven generations and could not be slighted by anyone in society. That was the first norm. The minister had to be thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and have detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. He also had to be well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting

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ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. That was the second norm. The minister had to be skilled in the use of language, gentle and patient in his manner of persuasion, and use words endowed with true meanings and real essences. That was the third norm. The minister had to be valiant and decisive, endowed with strategic brilliance and wisdom, and without infirmities at all. Insofar as the sacrificial rite was concerned, his knowledge had to be comprehensive. That was the fourth norm.

Thus, the king proved to be well qualified in all eight norms, and the minister in four norms. In addition, the king was required to be in command of the four assistances, the threefold sacrificial rite, and the sixteen sacrificial requisites. The *brāhmaṇa* minister had to understand the king's frame of mind and eradicate the king's doubt in respect of the sixteen requisites. What are the sixteen requisites?

(1) Suppose the minister said to the king: "If someone says, 'Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class wishes to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he was not born into a pure family line of seven generations and is always slighted by others'—even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king truly was born into a pure family line of seven generations and is never slighted by others.

(2) "Again, someone might say, 'Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but his countenance is unattractive since he is not of the *kṣatriya* class.' Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king's countenance is handsome as befits the *kṣatriya* class.

(3) "Again, someone might say, 'Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he is not endowed with ever-increasing virtue or wisdom.' Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king's virtues are ever increasing, as is his wisdom.

(4) "Again, someone might say, 'Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he is not well trained in the martial arts, is incapable of riding an elephant or driving a horse-drawn chariot, and cannot understand various military strategies.' Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because

the king is skilled in various martial arts, and there is nothing he does not know about military and battleground strategy.

(5) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but despite his great authority, he is unable to command the allegiance of lesser kings.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king commands great authority and the allegiance of those subject kings.

(6) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he is not skilled in language, is rough and impatient when trying to persuade, and uses words that are not endowed with true meanings and real essences.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king is skilled in language, gentle and patient in his manner of persuasion, and uses words endowed with true meanings and real essences.

(7) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he has little treasure.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king has a great deal of wealth and storehouses filled with treasure.

(8) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he has little strategic brilliance or wisdom and is plagued by infirmities regarding the goal of his striving.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king is valiant and decisive, endowed with strategic brilliance and wisdom, and without any infirmities whatsoever.

(9) [The following four are the four assistances:] “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he has not announced his intent in his queens’ quarters.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king, wishing to conduct a great sacrificial rite, has already announced it in his queens’ quarters.

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(10) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he has not announced his intent before the crown prince and princes.’ Even if there were such a

rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king, wishing to conduct a great sacrificial rite, has already announced it before the crown prince and princes.

(11) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he has not announced his intent before his officials.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king, wishing to conduct a great sacrificial rite, has already announced it before his officials.

(12) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class wishes to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but he has not announced his intent before his generals and their officers.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because the king, wishing to conduct a great sacrificial rite, has already announced it before his generals and their officers.

(13) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but his *brāhmaṇa* minister is not from a pure family line of seven generations and is always slighted by others.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because I was born into a pure family line of seven generations that has never been slighted by others.

(14) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but his *brāhmaṇa* minister, while thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas), does not understand them, nor can he distinguish the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures or say anything about the subtleties of secular literature. He is not trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities or in divining good and bad omens, or in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because I am thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and have detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. I am also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites.

(15) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but his *brāhmaṇa* minister is not skilled in the use of language, is rough and impatient in his manner of persuasion, and his words not endowed with any true meanings or real essences.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because I am skilled in the use of language, gentle and patient in persuasion, and my words are endowed with true meanings and real essences.

(16) “Again, someone might say, ‘Now the king of the *kṣatriya* class may wish to conduct a great sacrificial rite, but his *brāhmaṇa* minister is not endowed with strategic brilliance or wisdom, he has no knowledge of the sacrificial rite, and is plagued by infirmity.’ Even if there were such a rumor, that cannot disgrace the king. Why? Sire, it is because I am valiant and decisive, endowed with strategic brilliance and wisdom, and without any infirmities at all. Insofar as the sacrificial rite is concerned, there is no aspect of it that I do not know.”

The Buddha said to Kūṭadanta:

As you see, when the king experienced doubt concerning the foregoing sixteen requisites, the *brāhmaṇa* minister resolved his doubt by confirming that the king was fully qualified to fulfill all the conditions for the success of his sacrificial rite.

The Buddha continued:

Then the minister encouraged and delighted the king further by describing the ten norms of conduct. What are the ten norms of conduct? The minister said, “When the king conducts a sacrificial rite, his beneficence should be extended equally to all those who have come for the occasion, irrespective of whether they live by way of killing (i.e., hunting, fishing, etc.) or of non-killing (i.e., farming, trading, etc.). If the former sort come, generosity should be extended while educating them to reflect upon the wrongness of their lifestyle. If the latter sort come, benefactions should be given to encourage them in the rightness of their livelihood. In this manner, the king’s beneficence should consist not only of material gifts but also of

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moral edification. If again some people should come to participate in the sacrificial rite while persisting in immoral conduct such as theft, sexual misbehavior, false speech or double-talk, or speaking harshly, or using flattery, and thus conveying a covetous mind, or malicious intent, or attachment to wrong views, material gifts should still be given to them while simultaneously encouraging reform in their way of life. On the other hand, if some people should participate in the assembly while upholding proper moral standards such as non-theft and so forth, so as to engender the right view, material gifts should be given to them to commend their good conduct and to support and encourage the awakening of their conscience.”

The Buddha went on, “By instructing the king about the ten norms of beneficence, the *brāhmaṇa* minister indeed encouraged, benefited, and delighted him.”

Again, the Buddha said to the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta:

The *kṣatriya* king was troubled by three kinds of regret during his stay in the new pavilion [during the course of the sacrificial rite], and it was the minister's task to resolve them. What were the three regrets that troubled the king? At various moments, as the king thought to himself, “I will [soon] conduct the rite,” “I am now conducting the sacrificial rite,” and “I have just completed the great sacrificial rite,” [his awareness of the enormous expenditure for the rite] caused each thought to be followed by a pang of regret: “I will lose . . .,” “I am losing . . .,” “I have just lost a great portion of my wealth and treasure because of this sacrificial rite.” Each time the king felt such a regret, the minister eradicated it from his mind by saying, “Sire, do not regret the meritorious rite through which Your Majesty will perform . . ., is now performing . . ., and has performed such a great benevolence. O great king, Your Majesty has just completed the great sacrificial rite.” Thus did the minister assist the king to resolve his three regrets.

The Buddha said to the *brāhmaṇa*:

On the fifteenth night, under a full moon, the *kṣatriya* king came out of the new pavilion properly anointed for his throne and built a great bonfire in the open area before the building. He held a pitcher of oil in his hand and poured it over the fire and loudly announced: “Now is the time of

beneficence, it is the time for beneficence!” Hearing this announcement, the queens and palace ladies, carrying various articles from the palace in their hands, appeared before the king and said, “Sire, may these riches and treasures be of assistance in Your Majesty’s benevolent sacrificial rite.”

O *brāhmaṇa*, the king replied to his queens and palace ladies, “Please go no further. Your assistance has already been provided in the mere offer. I possess enough wealth and treasure for this benevolent rite.” But the queens and palace ladies thought to themselves: “We must not take these treasures back to our quarters. When the king conducts another rite in the eastern region, his majesty will be able to use our assistance in his benevolence.”

O *brāhmaṇa*, when the king came to conduct another rite in the eastern region, his queens and palace ladies did indeed assist his rite with their treasures.

[Again,] on the fifteenth night, under a full moon, the king came out of a new pavilion and built a great bonfire in the open area before the building. He poured oil over the fire from a pitcher in his hand and loudly proclaimed: “Now is the time of beneficence, it is the time for beneficence!” Hearing the king’s announcement, the crown prince and princes, carrying their riches and treasures, appeared before the king and said, “Sire, let these things provide assistance in Your Majesty’s benevolent rite.” The king replied, “Please go no further. Your assistance has already been provided in the mere offer. I possess enough wealth and treasure for this benevolent rite.” But the crown prince and princes thought to themselves, “We must not take back these treasures. When the king conducts another rite in the southern region, his majesty will be able to use our assistance in his benevolence.”

100b

In a similar manner, the ministers [and officials] assisted the king when he later conducted a sacrificial rite in the western region, and so did the generals and their officers when the king conducted another rite in the northern region.

The Buddha said to the *brāhmaṇa*:

At the time of the great sacrificial rite the king did not slaughter cattle and sheep or any other living beings; he only used butter and milk, hemp oil, honey, black raw sugar, and molasses to perform the rite.

The Buddha continued:

When the king conducted the great sacrificial rite there was delight at the beginning, there was delight in the middle, and there was delight at the end of the rite. This became the standard method of preparing and performing the sacrificial rite.

The Buddha went on:

The *kṣatriya* king, having completed the sacrificial rite, shaved his head and beard, put on the three robes of a mendicant, abdicated his throne to pursue the path of religion, and engaged in the practice of the four immeasurables of the mind (*catur-apramāṇas*); when he died, he was reborn in the highest realm of Brahmā Heaven. The *brāhmaṇa* minister too, having assisted the king in performing sacrificial rites in the four regions, conducted a sacrificial rite on his own and then shaved his head and beard, put on the three robes of the mendicant, renounced domestic life to practice the four kinds of austerity, and when he died, he was reborn in the highest realm of Brahmā Heaven.

The Buddha then said to the *brāhmaṇa*:

The king performed the great sacrificial rite by following the practices of the threefold sacrificial rite and observing the sixteen requisites. Now, what do you think about these matters that I have explained?

Kūṭadanta had listened to what the Buddha had explained, but he remained silent and did not reply immediately. His five hundred student disciples said to him, “The words of the *śramaṇa* Gautama are indeed subtle. Sir, why does Your Reverence not reply to his words and only remain silent?”

Kūṭadanta then said to the Buddha:

What the *śramaṇa* Gautama has explained is truly subtle. I agree with the other *brāhmaṇas*; I do not differ from them at all. I have only remained silent because I have been deep in thought. The *śramaṇa* Gautama has explained everything, but not in the way of one that has learned from others through tradition. I have been wondering, “Could it be that the *śramaṇa* Gautama was himself that king of the *kṣatriya* class? Or was he the *brāhmaṇa* minister?”

Thereupon, the World-honored One said:

Good, very good, you have rightly perceived the Tathāgata in the most appropriate terms. The *kṣatriya* king who conducted the great sacrificial rite was no one other, and in no way different, than myself. At that time, a great deal of universal charity was produced [for all sentient beings].

Kūṭadanta said to the Buddha, “Is there any deed that can produce merit superior to that of the threefold sacrificial rite and sixteen requisites?”

The Buddha replied, “Yes, there is.”

The *brāhmaṇa* asked, “What is it, sir?”

The Buddha replied:

While performing the threefold sacrificial rite with the sixteen requisites, if one can continue to serve the *bhikṣus*’ sangha with offerings without hiatus, the merit acquired would be superior to that of the sacrificial rite. 100c

The *brāhmaṇa* again asked:

Is there any deed that can produce merit superior to that of offerings and continual service to the sangha combined with that of the sacrificial rite and sixteen requisites?

The Buddha replied, “Yes, there is.”

Again, he asked, “What is it, sir?”

The Buddha replied:

Even if one served the sangha through the sacrificial rite and the sixteen requisites without hiatus, it would be far more meritorious for a person to build a monastery consisting of rooms, pavilions, and halls [with an open door to *bhikṣus* coming from any region] for the sake of the universal sangha. This contribution would be the best of all for acquiring merit.

Again, Kūṭadanta asked:

While performing the threefold sacrificial rite with the sixteen requisites, if one continues to serve the sangha with offerings without hiatus, and if one also builds a monastery consisting of rooms, pavilions, and halls for the sake of the universal sangha, one would thereby acquire the best and

highest merit, as I have understood. But is there another way to acquire superior merit, sir?

The Buddha replied, "Yes, there is."

Again, he asked, "What is it, sir?"

The Buddha replied:

Even while performing the threefold sacrificial rite with the sixteen requisites, and continuing to serve the sangha with offerings without hiatus, and building a monastery consisting of rooms, pavilions, and halls for the sake of the universal sangha, it surely would be better if one could also raise a thought of joy and delight and utter the words: "I take my refuge in the Buddha, I take my refuge in the Dharma, and I take my refuge in the Sangha." The merit from that would be higher still.

Again, Kūṭadanta asked:

I understand that the threefold resolution combined with the sacrificial rite, and so on, would bring about a higher merit, but is there anything superior to that, sir?

The Buddha replied, "Yes, there is."

[Kūṭadanta] then asked, "What is it, sir?"

The Buddha replied:

If one upholds the five precepts—namely, refraining from taking life, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from indulging in sexual pleasure, refraining from speaking falsehoods, and refraining from ingesting intoxicants—until the dissolution of the body and end of life, the merit acquired is higher.

Again, Kūṭadanta asked:

I understand that by combining the threefold sacrificial rite, and so on, up to adhering to the five precepts, one may acquire superior merit, but is there another way to bring still higher superior merit, sir?

The Buddha replied, "Yes, there is."

[Kūṭadanta] then asked, "What is it, sir?"

The Buddha replied:

Extending one's compassion universally toward all sentient beings, as if one were pulling cow's milk into a bucket and pouring it out to all the sentient beings [in the world]—the merit from that is still higher.

Again, Kūṭadanta asked:

I understand that by combining the threefold sacrificial rite and so on, up to extending universal compassion, one may acquire even higher superior merit, but is there another way to bring still higher superior merit, sir?

The Buddha replied, "Yes, there is."

[Kūṭadanta] then asked, "What is it, sir?"

The Buddha replied:

When the Tathāgata, who is totally free from defilement and perfectly enlightened, appears in this world, those who renounce domestic life, enter into practice of the Buddhist religion, become endowed with all the meritorious virtues without exception, and so on, up to being endowed with three kinds of supernormal power (knowledge of past lives, knowledge of future destinies, and total eradication of defilements), can terminate all ignorance and delusion and acquire wisdom and illumination. Because they are in a state of seclusion and transcendence, their merit is indeed the highest.

Again, Kūṭadanta said to the Buddha:

O Gautama, now I have put together all the requisites of the sacrificial rite. I shall forsake all my cattle and sheep, five hundred of each, and let them each go in their own way to seek their grass and water. I shall take my refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May Your Reverence permit me to become a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the dissolution of the body and end of life, I shall uphold the five precepts, refraining from taking life, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from indulging in sexual pleasure, refraining from speaking falsehoods, and refraining from ingesting intoxicants. May I request that Your Reverence and the members of the sangha accept my invitation for almsfood [tomorrow].

101a The World-honored One remained silent, granting his wish. Seeing the World-honored One remaining silent, the *brāhmaṇa* stood up, venerated the Buddha, circumambulating him three times, and went away. Returning home, he prepared many varieties of delicious food, and in the early morning when everything was ready, he sent word to the Buddha and the sangha. Thereupon, the World-honored One put on his outer robe, took up his almsbowl, and proceeded to the *brāhmaṇa*'s residence accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*. There he took a seat where it had been prepared and was served, along with the members of the sangha, with various foods out of the *brāhmaṇa*'s own hand. At the conclusion of the meal, after the serving vessels had been taken away, cleansing water was served.

[Thereupon], the Buddha recited these verses for the *brāhmaṇa*:

In the sacrificial rite, fire is of the highest rank,
In chanting, reading is of the highest rank,
Among humans, the king is of the highest rank,
Among rivers, the ocean is of the highest rank,
Among stars, the moon is of the highest rank,
Among all that shines bright, the sun is of the highest rank,
In all four directions, and above and below,
Among all sentient beings, and humans and gods,
The Buddha alone is of the highest rank.
If one wishes to acquire the greatest merit,
One should make offerings for the Three Treasures.

Kūṭadanta then brought out a small cushion and took his seat before the Buddha. The World-honored One gradually began his teaching, and with it, he encouraged, benefited, and delighted the *brāhmaṇa*. He taught him the doctrine pertaining to charity, the doctrine pertaining to morality, the doctrine pertaining to rebirth in heaven, the doctrine that being bound to craving and desire is the greatest danger, and that impure defilements are the obstruction, and that the right method of practice to transcend obstacles is of primary importance. He detailed the varieties of practice, those that are pure and genuine, and explained them to satisfy the *brāhmaṇa*'s understanding.

Then the World-honored One, observing the *brāhmaṇa*'s mind becoming receptive, the five kinds of obstacles becoming lighter to the point of vanishing

in him, and his whole being turning ripe for conversion, followed the practice of the buddhas by introducing [the Four Noble Truths]: (1) the doctrine of the noble truth of suffering, explaining it in detail and opening it to his understanding. He then set forth the remaining three truths, each in turn, giving appropriate commentary: (2) the noble truth of the cause of suffering, (3) the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, and (4) the noble truth of the path to the cessation of suffering. At that moment, the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta eradicated all defilements and acquired genuine insight into the nature of the Dharma, just as a white cloth can be dyed any color.

Exactly like that, the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta saw the Dharma, acquired the Dharma, and abided there. Without need for any other assurance, he realized the state of absolute confidence, and then said to the Buddha:

May I once again repeat my vow: I take my refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May Your Reverence permit me to become a lay devotee in the right Dharma, and from this moment until the dissolution of the body at the end of life I shall uphold the five precepts, refraining from taking life, refraining from taking what is not given, refraining from indulging in sexual pleasure, refraining from speaking falsehoods, and refraining from ingesting intoxicants.

Then he added, “May I also request Your Reverence and the members of the sangha to accept my invitation for almsfood for the duration of seven days.”

The World-honored One remained silent, granting his wish.

For seven days the *brāhmaṇa* served the Buddha and the members of the sangha with provisions out of his own hand, until the World-honored One departed to visit other communities. Not long after the Buddha’s departure the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta fell ill and passed away.

101b

The members of the sangha soon heard that the *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta, who had served them with provisions for seven days, had fallen ill and passed away. All of the *bhikṣus* wondered, “At the end of his life, where has that *brāhmaṇa* gone for his rebirth?”

Some of the *bhikṣus* went to the World-honored One. After bowing their heads to ground at his feet, they sat to one side and said, “The *brāhmaṇa* Kūṭadanta has passed away. Sir, where would such a person be reborn?”

The Buddha replied:

That person, by practicing pure and genuine austerity, realized the truth of the Dharma and can never again be subject to doubt. He terminated the five kinds of defilement that bind sentient beings to the lower realm of desire¹⁶ and will enter final nirvana (*parinirvāṇa*) from the heaven where he is reborn, not returning to this world.

Having heard the Buddha's teaching, all the *bhikṣus* were delighted to receive it, and they reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 23: *Brāhmaṇa Kūṭadanta*]

Sutra 24

Kevaddha

(*Dīgha Nikāya 11: Kevaṭṭa Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha sojourned in the Pāvārikamba forest near the town of Nālandā, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*, a son of a wealthy family, who was called Kevaddha, visited the Buddha's resting place. After bowing his head at the Buddha's feet he took a seat to one side. Then Kevaddha, the son of a wealthy family, said to the Buddha:

Very good, sir. O World-honored One, I beseech Your Reverence to command the venerable *bhikṣus* to manifest their superhuman faculties and demonstrate their supernormal powers before the *brāhmaṇas* and sons of wealthy families and householders who have come to visit you.

The Buddha replied:

[O Kevaddha,] I do not give my disciples any superhuman faculties or supernormal powers so that they can demonstrate them before *brāhmaṇas*, sons [or daughters] of wealthy families, or householders. I only teach them how to contemplate the path in seclusion, and if they make progress [in the path], to keep it to themselves, and if they should transgress while on the path, to explicitly acknowledge it [in public].

Kevaddha, son of the wealthy man Changxiao, again said to the Buddha:

O World-honored One, I beseech Your Reverence to command the venerable *bhikṣus* to manifest their superhuman faculties and demonstrate their supernormal powers before the *brāhmaṇas*, the sons [and daughters] of wealthy families, and householders who have come to visit you, sir.

The Buddha again replied:

[O Kevaddha,] I do not give my disciples any superhuman faculties or supernormal powers so that they can demonstrate them before *brāhmaṇas*,

101c the sons [and daughters] of wealthy families, or householders. I only teach them how to contemplate the path in seclusion, and if they make progress [in the path], to keep it to themselves, and if they should transgress while on the path, to explicitly acknowledge it [in public].

Kevaddha, son of the wealthy man Changxiao, said to the Buddha:

I have no doubt whatsoever about the superhuman faculties [that have been attributed to Your Reverence and the venerable *bhikṣus*], sir. However, in this town of Nālandā, which is prosperous and whose populace is large, I thought it would be beneficial to show your supernormal powers to the people, since the propagation of the Dharma can be accomplished [far more quickly] when such demonstrations convince the people to convert, sir.

The Buddha again replied:

I do not give my disciples any superhuman faculties or supernormal powers so that they can demonstrate them before *brāhmaṇas*, the sons [and daughters] of wealthy families, or householders. I only teach them how to contemplate the path in seclusion, and if they make progress [in the path], to keep it to themselves, and if they transgress while on the path, to explicitly acknowledge it [in public].

Why? Because there are three kinds of supernormal power (*prātihārya*): namely, (1) magical performance (*rddhi-pāda-prātihārya*), (2) reading others' minds while preaching (*ādeśanā-prātihārya*), and (3) the miracle of teaching (*anuśāsani-prātihārya*, destroying the vices of the admonished).

What is magical performance? O son of the wealthy, some *bhikṣus* acquire this supernormal power in order [to change their physical form into other forms]. From their one body, they can generate multiple identical bodies or collapse the many back to one. They can [instantaneously] cross rivers and hills as freely as they wish, be it near or far, and go through walls and rocks without obstruction, just like flying through the air. They can leap up and fold their legs to sit in the lotus posture in midair, like a flying bird. They can disappear into the ground or reappear out of it, as if it were the surface of water. They can walk on water as if walking on the ground, or emit fiery flames from their body like a huge bonfire, or

grasp the sun and moon by the hand and reach to the height of Brahmā Heaven. To wealthy people or householders endowed with devotion and good faith, such a *bhikṣu* could demonstrate the innumerable kinds of supernormal power even to the point of reaching up to Brahmā Heaven. He could influence a devotee to say to another householder, a nonbeliever, “I have seen a *bhikṣu* demonstrate his supernormal power even to the point of reaching up to Brahmā Heaven.” The nonbeliever, however, could reply, “I have heard of a Gāndhārī magic that enables a person, as you have witnessed, to show off innumerable magical transformations, even to the point of reaching up to Brahmā Heaven.”

The Buddha continued, “Don’t you find the words of the nonbeliever to be derogatory in nature?”

Kevaddha replied, “Yes, I do indeed regard his words as derogatory, sir.”
The Buddha said:

For this very reason, I have not permitted the *bhikṣus* to reveal supernormal capacities to anyone. I only teach them how to contemplate the path in seclusion, and if they make progress [in the path], to keep it to themselves, and if they should transgress on the path, to explicitly acknowledge it [in public]. This is how it has been.

O son of a wealthy family, their [compliance with my teaching] is itself a manifestation of their supernormal power.

What is the second supernormal power, that of reading others’ minds while preaching (*ādeśanā-rddhipāda*)? Through this power, *bhikṣus* can manifest innumerable ways to read the mind of others. They can know the entire content of their thoughts, even their hidden, undisclosed deeds, without exception. To wealthy people or householders endowed with devotion and good faith, such a *bhikṣu* could offer to demonstrate the innumerable kinds of supernormal power by reading the minds of others. He could thus influence a devotee to say to another householder, a nonbeliever, “I have seen a *bhikṣu* demonstrate his supernormal power by reading the minds of others.” The nonbeliever, however, could reply, “I have heard of a Gāndhārī magic that enables a person, as you have witnessed, to exhibit supernormal power by reading the minds of others, so that everything, even hidden, undisclosed deeds, is known without exception.”

102a

What do you think, O son of a wealthy family? Don't you find these words to be derogatory in nature?

Kevaddha replied, "Yes, I do indeed regard those words as derogatory, sir." The Buddha said:

For this very reason, I have not permitted the *bhikkhus* to reveal supernormal capacities to anyone. I only teach them how to contemplate the path in seclusion, and if they make progress [in the path], to keep it to themselves, and if they should transgress while on the path, to explicitly acknowledge it [in public]. This is how it has been. O son of the wealthy, their [compliance with my teaching] is itself a manifestation of their supernormal power.

What is the miracle of teaching? O son of a wealthy family, suppose that a Buddha who is recognized with the ten supreme titles, such as One Perfected in Practice, One Liberated from Attachment, Perfectly Enlightened One, and so on, should appear in this world, and that among all the gods and humans, and all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment and has been teaching others [how to realize that goal]. When he expounds on religion, his words should be good in the beginning, good in the middle, and also good in the end. All the words he utters should invariably be endowed with true meanings and real essences, and in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity. If anyone, whether a wealthy person or a householder, is inspired to hold a serene conviction in the Buddha's words after listening to this teaching, and having acquired that conviction, looks to the substance of his life and thinks, "I should not remain a householder. If I continue in domestic life, I will always have to deny my convictions and will never take up the practice of pure and genuine austerity—no, I would rather shave my head, moustache, and beard, put on the three robes of a mendicant, and leave the householder's life to follow the discipline of the path. I will strive to attain all the meritorious virtues, even up to realizing the three supernormal powers, so that the state of darkness and ignorance can be annihilated to produce the great wisdom and illumination. Why? Because this final realization can only be achieved through the mindfulness and concentration found in diligent endeavor, practice in seclusion, and freedom from worldly mentality"—if

one should think in this way, O son of a wealthy family, that is the miracle of teaching as manifested by the *bhikṣus*.

Thereupon, Kevaddha, the son of a wealthy family, said to the Buddha, “Sir, supposing that is the case, is every *bhikṣu* endowed with these three supernormal powers?”

The Buddha replied:

I did not say that I have many *bhikṣus* and some of them have acquired the three supernormal powers, O son of a wealthy family. Among the members of the sangha there are some *bhikṣus* who think to themselves, “How can the four material elements, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to cessation?” One of the *bhikṣus* immediately set out for heaven, and at the abode of the four guardian princes asked them the same question, “How can the four material elements, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to cessation?” O son of a wealthy family, the four guardian princes replied, “We do not know how the four material elements can be brought to cessation. There is another heaven above us, called Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, whose resident gods are known for their subtle intelligence and great wisdom. [We are certain] they would know how the four material elements can be brought to cessation.”

102b

After receiving this answer, the *bhikṣu* once again set off toward a higher heaven. Upon reaching Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, he asked the resident gods, “How can the four material elements of this body be brought to cessation?” The Trāyastriṃśa gods replied, “I do not know how the four material elements can be brought to cessation. There is another heaven above us, called Yama Heaven, where the resident gods are known to have subtle intelligence and great wisdom. [We are certain] they would know how the four material elements can be brought to cessation.”

At once, the *bhikṣu* went up higher [to Yama Heaven] and asked the same question, only to receive the same reply: they did not know. In this manner, he continued to travel upward, questioning the gods of Tuṣita Heaven, Nirmāṇarati Heaven, and Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven. All of them made the same reply, including the last, “We do not know how the four material elements can be brought to cessation. There is another heaven above us, called Brahmakāyika Heaven, whose resident gods are known

to have subtle intelligence and great wisdom. They are called the Brahmakāyika gods, and [we are certain] they would know how the four material elements can be brought to [total] cessation once for all."

The *bhikṣu* promptly set off again to reach Brahmā Heaven, and upon his arrival he asked the same question to the residents of that heaven, "How can the four material elements, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to total cessation?" The resident gods replied, "We do not know how the four material elements can be brought to cessation. But the great Brahmā, who rules a thousand worlds and has no equal, who is honorable, heroic, rich, and noble and has absolute freedom as the creator of all things and the one ancestor of all sentient beings, [certainly] must know how the four material elements can be brought to total cessation."

So the *bhikṣu* asked, "Where is the great lord Brahmā?" And the resident gods of Brahmā's realm replied, "We do not know where he is right now. We expect that he will appear before too long."

In a moment, the great lord Brahmā suddenly appeared. O son of a wealthy family, the *bhikṣu* approached Brahmā and asked the same question, "Sir, how can the four material elements of this body, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to total cessation?"

Lord Brahmā replied, "I am Lord Brahmā, whom no one can surpass. I rule a thousand worlds as the honorable, heroic, rich, and noble creator of all things, who is endowed with absolute freedom and is the one ancestor of all sentient beings."

The *bhikṣu* said to Lord Brahmā, "That was not the answer to my question, sir. I asked, 'How can the four material elements, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to total cessation?'"

O son of a wealthy family, Lord Brahmā once again made the same reply, "I am Lord Brahmā, whom no one can surpass. I rule a thousand worlds as the honorable, heroic, rich, and noble creator of all things, who is endowed with absolute freedom and is the one ancestor of all sentient beings."

The *bhikṣu* said again, "That was not the answer to my question, sir. What I asked was, 'How can the four material elements, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to total cessation?'"

O son of a wealthy family, even on the third exchange, Lord Brahmā could not tell the *bhikṣu* how the four material elements could be brought to total cessation.

The great lord Brahmā then took the *bhikṣu* by his right hand and led him to a secluded place, where he said, “O *bhikṣu*, since the residents of this Brahmā Heaven all say in unison that I have supreme wisdom and there is nothing I do not know, I cannot tell you in public that I do not know how the four material elements can be brought to total cessation, nor can I say in public that I cannot tell you that.”

102c

Again, he continued, “You are foolish to have left the Tathāgata behind while coming to pose this question to the heavenly gods. You should return to the Tathāgata and ask him your question. Whatever the Buddha may say in reply you must keep it in mind.

Again, he went on, “The Buddha is now at rest in Anāthapiṇḍika Monastery in Prince Jeta’s Grove near the city of Śrāvastī. You should go there and ask him your question.”

O son of a wealthy family, that *bhikṣu* immediately disappeared from Brahmā Heaven and in an instant, as swiftly as a wrestler can bend his arm and straighten it, returned to Anāthapiṇḍika Monastery in Prince Jeta’s Grove near the city of Śrāvastī. He came to me, and after bowing his head to my feet, he took a seat to one side and asked, “O World-honored One, how can those four material elements, namely, earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to total cessation?”

I replied, “O *bhikṣu*, you have acted like a merchant who carries a falcon perched on his elbow and to practice falconry he takes a boat out to sea and releases it from the middle of the ocean. When the bird is released it will fly to the east, west, north, and south, and once it finds land it will stop; if there is no land, it will return to the boat. O *bhikṣu*, you are just like that—you went higher and higher to pose an inquiry to Brahmā, yet you were unable to obtain the right answer and now you have come back to me. I shall let you come to rest with your question.”

I then composed a verse for the *bhikṣu*:

How can the four material elements,
Earth, water, wind, and fire, be brought to total cessation?

How can anything that is neither rough nor fine,
Neither long nor short, neither beautiful nor ugly,
Be brought to total cessation?
How can anything that is neither sentient nor material
Be brought to total cessation, without remainder?
The answer should be given:
Consciousness has no form and is immeasurable and self-luminous.
When consciousness ceases to be,
The four material elements also cease, and
So do rough and fine, beautiful and ugly, equally cease to be.
Here both sentient principle and material elements cease to be.
When consciousness ceases to be, the rest also ceases to be.

Kevaddha, the son of a wealthy family, said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, what is that *bhikṣu*'s name? Under what title should I keep this sutra, sir?"

The Buddha replied, "That *bhikṣu* is called Ashiyi, and under that name you should keep this sutra in mind."

Then, having heard the Buddha's teaching, Kevaddha, the son of a wealthy family, was delighted to receive it, and he reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 24: Kevaddha]

Sutra 25

A Naked *Brāhmaṇa* Ascetic

(*Dīgha Nikāya 8: Kassapa-sīhanāda Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was staying in the Deer Forest near Kaṇṇakaṭṭha in the country of Ujuṅṇā, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikkhus*, a naked *brāhmaṇa* ascetic whose family name was Kāśyapa (Pāli Kassapa) came to visit the World-honored One. He bowed cordially and took a seat to one side. Then he said:

Sir, I have heard the following: “The *śramaṇa* Gautama rejects any and all kinds of sacrificial rites and disparages those engaged in ascetic practice as vulgar and impure.” O Gautama, when someone says, “The *śramaṇa* Gautama rejects any and all kinds of sacrificial rites and disparages those engaged in ascetic practice as vulgar and impure,” is he really speaking the truth and demonstrating the truth of the Dharma, or is he slandering the *śramaṇa* Gautama? 103a

The Buddha replied:

O Kāśyapa, if anyone says, “The *śramaṇa* Gautama rejects any and all kinds of sacrificial rites and disparages those engaged in ascetic practice as vulgar and impure,” he is neither speaking truth nor demonstrating the truth of the Dharma and is entirely intent on slandering me. It is not true. Why? O Kāśyapa, when I observe those engaged in ascetic practice, I know that some will fall into a hell after the dissolution of the body at the end of life, while others who have a good destiny will be reborn in a heaven. I also see that even though some might enjoy their ascetic practice, after the dissolution of the body at the end of life, they are still destined for a hell, while others who enjoy their ascetic life and have a good destiny will be reborn in one of the heavens after the dissolution of the body at the end of life.

O Kāśyapa, I have observed and comprehended those born with two opposing destinies as their reward for life on earth. How could I criticize

those ascetics as vulgar and impure? When I assert correctly that something is right, someone may say that it is not right, and if I assert correctly that something is not right, he will say that it is right.

O Kāśyapa, in speaking of the truth of religion, *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* have something in common, yet there is a difference between their religious truths.

O Kāśyapa, I have not spoken about the difference between their two truths because *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* do not see that aspect of the truth in the same way.

Those who are learned may think to themselves, “As to the elements [of the mind] that the *śramaṇa* Gautama and teachers of other schools agree are evil (*akuśala*), ignoble, corrupt, and unfit for the wise and saintly, which of them (i.e., the Buddha or the teachers of other schools) can really terminate those evils?”

O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence examine the problem in this manner and arrive at a conclusion (*jian; dṛṣṭi*), they say, “The *śramaṇa* Gautama alone can terminate those evils.” O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence observe the problem, make deductions, and arrive at their conclusion in this manner, my name is praised.

Again, O Kāśyapa, those who are learned may think to themselves, “As to the elements [of the mind] that the disciples of the *śramaṇa* Gautama and the disciples of teachers of other schools agree are evil, ignoble, corrupt, and unfit for the wise and saintly, which group of disciples can really terminate those evils?”

O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence examine the problem in this manner and arrive at a conclusion, they say, “Only the disciples of the *śramaṇa* Gautama can terminate those evils.” O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence observe the problem, make deductions, and arrive at their conclusion in this manner, it is my disciples whose names are praised.

103b Then, O Kāśyapa, those who are learned may think to themselves, “As to the elements [of the mind] that the *śramaṇa* Gautama and teachers of other schools agree are clean, genuine, subtle, and fit for the wise and saintly, which of them (i.e., the Buddha or the teachers of other schools) can really promote the good [elements] in the disciplines they practice?”

O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence examine the problem in this manner and arrive at a conclusion, they say, “The *śramaṇa* Gautama alone can promote those good [elements].” O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence observe the problem, make deductions, and arrive at their conclusion in this manner, my name is praised.

Again, O Kāśyapa, those who are learned may think to themselves, “As to the elements [of the mind] that the disciples of the *śramaṇa* Gautama and the disciples of teachers of other schools agree are clean, genuine, subtle, and fit for the wise and saintly, which of the two [groups of disciples] can really promote the good [elements] in the disciplines they practice?”

O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence examine the problem in this manner and arrive at a conclusion, they say, “Only the disciples of the *śramaṇa* Gautama can promote the good [elements].” O Kāśyapa, when people of intelligence observe the problem, make deductions, and arrive at their conclusion in this manner, it is my disciples whose names are praised.

O Kāśyapa, when there is a path, there are corresponding methods of practice. When a *bhikṣu* follows the [prescribed] methods of practice on the path, he will know and see for himself that the *śramaṇa* Gautama is “one who speaks the truth,” “one who speaks at the proper time,” “one who speaks with useful words,” “one who speaks in accord with the doctrine,” and “one who speaks in accord with the rules of conduct.”

However, there are impure forms of ascetic practice through which some obtain the title of *brāhmaṇa* or *śramaṇa*. What are the impure forms of ascetic practice through which some obtain the title of *brāhmaṇa* or *śramaṇa*? O Gautama, some of them go about naked, cover the front of their bodies with both hands, and accept neither evening food nor leftover food, or food placed within a threshold, or between two people, two canes, or two plates (a mortar and pestle?), or from a family who have eaten together, or from any house with a pregnant woman inside, or a dog in front, or where flies are swarming; they will not take food to which they have been invited or from a family that is acquainted with any other ascetic, and they will not accept fish, meat, intoxicants, or anything placed on two plates.

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They will accept a meal and a drink, and so on, up to the seventh (i.e., to swallow), and then they stop. When they accept almsfood or other helpings,

they do not go beyond the seventh (i.e., swallowing the food). They may partake of one meal a day or a single meal every two or three or four or five or six or seven days. In addition to berries, they may partake of potherbs, rice scum, sesame seeds (or hemp grain), wild rice, cow dung, or antelope dung. From plants, they may partake of roots, leaves, and branches, and hanging fruit or windfall.

They will wear any clothing of poor quality, including those made from *sha* grass (*kuśa* grass?) fibers; they will wear bark garments, cover the body with grass, or put on an antelope hide; they will let their hair grow until it covers the body, or wear discarded clothing from a corpse. Some will keep their arms raised at all times, and never sit on a couch or chair, squatting instead; some will retain both moustache and beard even when their head is shaved, or lie down on a bed of thorns or a floor strewn with plant shells, or lie naked on cow dung, or bathe three times a day or three times in a night. Thus do they torture their bodies with extreme physical pain and suffering. O Gautama, these are the ascetic practices that are vulgar and impure, on account of which some obtain the title of *śramaṇa* or even that of *brāhmaṇa*.

The Buddha said:

O Kāśyapa, those naked ascetics who wear no clothing torture their bodies with innumerable practices. In their way of life no one is endowed with moral virtue or credited with doctrinal insight. In their way of life they are unable to exercise the mind of endeavor, nor can they propagate that way of life universally.

Kāśyapa said to the Buddha:

Sir, what is the [true] state of the *śramaṇa* and *brāhmaṇa* endowed with moral virtue and doctrinal insight who seem to surpass all ascetic practices and to abide in the utmost subtlety?

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa, “Listen attentively to what I say and examine it carefully. I will explain them.”

Kāśyapa replied, “Yes, O Gautama. It is an opportune time.”

The Buddha said:

When the Tathāgata, One Who is Free From Defilement (Arhat), appears in this world, he directly experiences the subtle bliss that is present throughout the four meditative states of absorption. Why? Through his own effort he maintains concentrated mindfulness, enjoying the transcendence within his mind without slackening in his discipline. O Kāśyapa, this is the state of being endowed with moral virtue and doctrinal insight, and it is of the utmost subtlety, far surpassing all ascetic practices.

Kāśyapa said to the Buddha:

O Gautama, even though a *bhikṣu* endowed with moral virtue and doctrinal insight may surpass all ascetic practices, which discipline is more difficult, that which we have spoken of or that of the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, which itself is reputed to be very difficult?

The Buddha replied:

O Kāśyapa, the truths of this world are incommensurate with the Dharma of the Tathāgata. The so-called disciplines of the *śramaṇa* and *brāhmaṇa* appear to be difficult, and ascetic practices are obviously difficult, as even a laywoman can know, since the naked ascetics live without clothing and so on, torturing their bodies in every possible way. But what ordinary people cannot know is whether the minds of those ascetics are free of anger or defiled by it whether from hatred or malice. If they should come to know the minds of the ascetics they would not call them *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas*. Instead, they simply assume that ascetic practices are difficult to do, and because they do not know the minds of the practitioners, they accept that the way of life of the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* must also be difficult.

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Thereupon, Kāśyapa said:

Then, sir, please tell me about the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who are endowed with moral virtue and doctrinal insight and regarded as superior beings of the utmost subtlety.

Then the Buddha said to Kāśyapa, “Listen attentively and consider what I say carefully. I shall explain it to you.”

Kāśyapa replied, "Sir, I am ready to hear it."

The Buddha said:

O Kāśyapa, with a concentrated mind and so on, a *bhikṣu* comes to realize three kinds of supernormal knowledge; and with the eradication of various forms of ignorance and delusion comes the acquisition of insight, bringing with it the awareness of the total eradication of defilements. How so? Because in the solitary quiescence of a concentrated mind, when discipline and effort do not slacken, this is the result. O Kāśyapa, this is called the acquisition of moral virtue and doctrinal insight by a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*, and it is of the highest and utmost subtlety.

Kāśyapa said:

O Gautama, although this is why the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who acquire moral virtue and doctrinal insight as you have explained are said to be superior to the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who follow ascetic practice, the latter's discipline is extremely difficult, so much so that a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* can hardly tell how difficult it is.

The Buddha replied:

Some lay devotees also practice asceticism. They say, "I shall wear no clothing from this day forward, and so on, and subject this body of mine to all kinds of torture." Someone who subjects his body to austerities, however, cannot be called a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* just on that basis. If, because of his ascetic practice, he can be called a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*, then it cannot be said that the way of life of a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* is very difficult at all. Instead, it is because no one can be called a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* on account of their ascetic practice that the way of life of a *śramaṇa* and *brāhmaṇa* is said to be difficult.

The Buddha continued:

Once, long ago, I was in the city of Rājagṛha. In the Saptaparvata cave on the high hill, I taught the *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Nyagrodha the practice of pure and genuine austerity. He was delighted and knew the serenity of genuine faith. He served me offerings with tender care and praised me, and his praise was the primary offering.

Kāśyapa said:

O Gautama, who would not be delighted, have genuine faith, and praise and serve Gautama with offerings? I too am enraptured and wholeheartedly savor this genuine faith in Gautama. With offerings and praise I will take my refuge in Gautama!

The Buddha said:

Know that there is no moral virtue of any kind or in any human world that can match this most efficacious moral virtue, let alone surpass it. There is no realization of mental concentration, perfect knowledge, apprehension of deliverance, and culminating insight that can be compared to the mental concentration, perfect knowledge, apprehension of deliverance, and culminating insight that is imbued with the most efficacious moral virtue, let alone surpass it.

O Kāśyapa, the lion is a metaphor for the Tathāgata, who has eradicated all defilements and is perfectly enlightened. The Tathāgata is called a lion because when he teaches the Dharma to the assembly of *bhikṣus* he is totally free of self-regard and free from any fear whatsoever.

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What do you think, O Kāśyapa? Do you say it is not valiant when the Tathāgata expresses the lion's roar in teaching the Dharma? Do not dare to think so. For the [lion's] roar of the Tathāgata when he teaches is valiant and totally without fear.

O Kāśyapa, do you say that when the Tathāgata valiantly expresses the lion's roar he does not stand within the assembly? Do not dare to think so. For the Tathāgata valiantly expresses the lion's roar from within the assembly of *bhikṣus*.

O Kāśyapa, do you say that the Tathāgata cannot valiantly express the lion's roar to teach the Dharma from within the assembly of *bhikṣus*? Do not dare to think so. For the Tathāgata can valiantly express the lion's roar very well to teach the Dharma from within the assembly of *bhikṣus*.

What do you think, O Kāśyapa? Do you say that when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar to teach the Dharma very well to the assembly of *bhikṣus*, the audience has no unified mind? Do not dare to think so. Why? Because when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar to teach the Dharma very well to the assembly of

bhikṣus, the minds of those who have come to the assembly have listened to the teaching as with one unified mind.

What do you think, O Kāśyapa? Do you say that when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar to teach the Dharma very well to the assembly of *bhikṣus*, the minds of those who have come to the assembly and listened to the teaching with one unified mind are neither enraptured nor capable of receiving the teaching and faithfully putting it into practice? Do not dare to think so. Why? Because when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar to teach the Dharma very well to the assembly of *bhikṣus*, the minds of those who have come to the assembly and listened to the teaching with one unified mind are [thoroughly] enraptured to receive the teaching and faithfully put it into practice.

O Kāśyapa, do you say that when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar to teach the Dharma very well to the assembly of *bhikṣus*, those who have come to the assembly and been enraptured to faithfully receive the teaching do not then serve the Tathāgata with offerings? Do not dare to think so. For when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar and so forth, [those who have come to the assembly] and been enraptured to faithfully receive the teaching do establish an occasion to make offerings.

O Kāśyapa, do you say that when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar and so forth, [those who have come to the assembly] and faithfully received the teaching and established an occasion to make offerings do not then shave their hair and beards, or don the three robes of a mendicant, or renounce domestic life for the path of religion? Do not dare to think so. Why? Because when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar and so forth, [those who have come to the assembly] shave their hair and beards, don the three robes of a mendicant, and renounce domestic life for the path of religion.

O Kāśyapa, do you say that when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar and so forth, [those who have come to the assembly] and renounced domestic life for the path of religion neither perfect the practice of austerity to reach the ultimate abode of peace and safety, nor realize final nirvana? Do not dare to think so. Why? Because when the Tathāgata valiantly and fearlessly expresses the lion's roar and so

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forth, [those who have come to the assembly] and renounced domestic life for the path of religion perfect the practice of austerity to reach the ultimate abode of peace and safety, where they realize final nirvana.

Thereupon, Kāśyapa said to the Buddha:

What does Your Reverence think, O Gautama? May I renounce domestic life to live in accord with this teaching (i.e., the Dharma), and may I receive higher ordination?

The Buddha replied:

When a follower of a different religious order comes to my sangha and wishes to renounce domestic life to pursue the path in accordance with my teaching, he must remain a probationer for a period of four months, observing [how to conduct the life of the sangha] and must receive the appraisal of its members. After that, he may be allowed to renounce domestic life and receive higher ordination. O Kāśyapa, this is the regular proceeding, and it is simply for the sake of examining the character of a new convert.

Kāśyapa said:

[I understand that] when a follower of a different religious order comes to the sangha of the Buddha and wishes to renounce domestic life to pursue the practice of austerity in accordance with his teaching, he must remain a probationer for a period of four months, observing [how to conduct the life of the sangha] and receive the appraisal of its members. After that, he may be allowed to renounce domestic life and receive higher ordination. Now I am willing to take four years to observe [how to conduct the life of the sangha] and receive the appraisal of its members, and only after that will I forsake domestic life and accept higher ordination.

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa, “I have already said that it [this process] is only to appraise the character of a new convert.”

At the right time, Kāśyapa renounced his former way of life and received higher ordination. Not long after he began his matchless practice of austerity, which he pursued with a pure and faithful mind, he directly experienced the termination of the cause of birth and death in the present life; his practice of

austerity was complete; that which must be done [for religious salvation] was accomplished; and, having realized the ultimate state of arhatship, there was for him no more [re]birth.

Then, having heard the Buddha's teaching, Kāśyapa was delighted to receive it, and he reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 25: A Naked *Brāhmaṇa* Ascetic]

Sutra 26

Knowledge of the Three Vedas

(*Dīgha Nikāya 13: Tevijja Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was visiting the communities of the country of Kauśāla, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*, he stopped overnight in a *brāhmaṇa* village called Icchānaṅkala. There was a *brāhmaṇa* called Puṣkarasvādi in that village. It happened that a fellow *brāhmaṇa* called Tārukka was visiting Icchānaṅkala at that time to take care of some business. Puṣkarasvādi had been born into a pure family line of seven generations and had never been slighted by anyone. He was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and had detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. He was also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. He had five hundred student disciples and never tired of teaching them.

His most able student, called Vāseṭṭha, had also been born into a pure family line of seven generations and was never slighted by anyone. He too was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas), well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites, and [like his teacher] he also had five hundred student disciples and never tired of teaching them.

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The *brāhmaṇa* Tārukka too was from a pure family line of seven generations and was not slighted by anyone in society. He was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and had detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. He was also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens,

and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites. He had five hundred student disciples and never tired of teaching them.

His most able student, called Bhāradvāja, was also from a pure family line of seven generations and was never slighted by anyone. He too was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas), well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites, and [like his teacher] he also had five hundred student disciples and never tired of teaching them.

One morning, the two students Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja got together in a [nearby] grove and engaged in argument, mutually criticizing each other as to whose doctrine was right and whose was wrong. Vāseṭṭha said to Bhāradvāja:

The path I follow must be right because it will enable us, when we leave this world, to reach Brahmā Heaven. That is the doctrine [my great teacher] Puṣkarasvādi teaches.

Bhāradvāja said:

The path I follow must be right because it will enable us, when we leave this world, to reach Brahmā Heaven. That is the doctrine my great teacher Tārukkha teaches.

Vāseṭṭha resolutely maintained the absolute truth of his path, while Bhāradvāja too resolutely maintained the absolute truth of his path. Arguing in this manner, they could not determine who was right and who was wrong.

Vāseṭṭha then said to Bhāradvāja:

The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate goal of religion, has been visiting the communities of Kauśala and is staying over in the forest outside the village. Gautama is renowned and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all lands under the sky, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice (Tathāgata), One Liberated from Attachment (Arhat), Perfectly Enlightened One (Samyak-saṃbuddha), and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment. When he expounds on religion,

his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with true meanings and real essences, and they are in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity. We should visit this sage and pay him our respects. I have also heard that the *śramaṇa* Gautama knows the path that leads to Brahmā Heaven and can teach it to others, since he is always conversing with Lord Brahmā. Why don't we visit him to settle our dispute? Whatever the *śramaṇa* Gautama tells us, we will accept it with due respect and carry it out.

After walking out to the forest together, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja reached the World-honored One and greeted him with a bow, then sat to one side. The World-honored One immediately knew the thoughts in their minds and said to Vāseṭṭha:

You two have been in the grove since early this morning engaging in argument and criticizing each other as to who is right and who is wrong. When one of you asserted, "The path I follow must be right, because it will enable us, when we leave this world, to reach Brahmā Heaven. That is the doctrine [my great teacher] Puṣkarasvādi teaches," the other also asserted, "The path I follow must be right, because it will enable us, when we leave this world, to reach Brahmā Heaven. That is the doctrine my great teacher Tārukkha teaches." In this manner, both of you have repeatedly criticized each other as to whose path represents the absolute truth. Is this not so?

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Hearing these words of the Buddha, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were frightened, and every hair on their bodies stood on end. They thought to themselves, "The *śramaṇa* Gautama has supernatural powers and knows the minds of others. He has already stated the subject of our dispute."

Then Vāseṭṭha said to the Buddha:

The path that I follow and the path that [my colleague] follows each claim to be absolutely true, giving us the ability to reach Brahmā Heaven when we leave this world. Sir, should the doctrine that Puṣkarasvādi teaches be regarded as absolutely true, or should the doctrine that the *brāhmaṇa* Tārukkha teaches be regarded as absolutely true?

The Buddha replied:

O Vāseṭṭha, since it is you who asks if this path and the other path each claim to be absolutely true, enabling anyone who leaves this world to reach Brahmā Heaven, why did you two have to go off into a grove from early this morning to engage in repeated argument as to whose path is true and whose is false?

Vāseṭṭha replied:

The *brāhmaṇas* who are well versed in the three Vedas teach different paths, such as the path willed by the omnipotent Īśvara (*chizaiyudao*), or the path of self-will (*chizuodao*), or the path of Brahmā, and these paths are regarded as equally leading to Brahmā Heaven. O Gautama, the different paths are like roads maintained by different villages, yet they all eventually reach the capital.

The Buddha said, “Are you sure that the different paths are really depicted as equally reaching Brahmā Heaven?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, all of them [eventually] reach Brahmā Heaven, sir.”

The Buddha repeated the question, “Do the different paths really lead to Brahmā Heaven without exception?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, sir.”

After verifying his answer, the Buddha said to Vāseṭṭha, “Among the *brāhmaṇas* who are well versed in the three Vedas, is there anyone who has really seen Brahmā?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, no one has seen that god, sir.”

The Buddha continued, “What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Did anyone who preceded the experts who are well versed in the three Vedas see Brahmā?”

Again he replied, “No, none of them has seen Brahmā, sir.”

The Buddha said:

What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Did any of the ancient *brāhmaṇas* who excelled in chanting the Vedic hymns or teaching the hymns, songs, and verses really witness Brahmā [with their own eyes]? For instance, did the sages Aṣṭaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vaiśyāmitra, Aṅgīrasa, Yamataggi (Pāli), Boboxi, and Kāśyapa, Aruṇa, Gautama, Shouzhi, and Poluosuntuo themselves all see Brahmā?

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, they did not, sir.”

The Buddha continued:

If none of the *brāhmaṇas* who were well versed in the three Vedas saw 105c
Brahmā, nor any of their teachers, or any of the ancient sages such as
Aṣṭaka and so on, then you should realize that the doctrines they teach
must all be considered unreal.

The Buddha continued:

It is just like a philanderer bragging about his conquest of some imaginary
beauty by praising her sexual prowess. When others ask, “How do you
know her? Is she in the east, west, north, or south?” he replies, “I don’t
know.” Again, when others ask, “Where can she be found—in what town,
district, or village?” he replies, “I don’t know.” When they ask, “What is
her family? Is she from a *kṣatriya* family, or from a *brāhmaṇa*, *vaiśya*, or
sūdra family?” he again replies, “I don’t know.” And when they ask, “How
does she look? Is she tall or short, stout or delicate, dark or light? Is she
beautiful or ugly?” he again replies, “I don’t know.”

O Vāseṭṭha, could the woman about whom the man is bragging really
be regarded as real?

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, she cannot be regarded as real, sir.”

The Buddha said, “Exactly, O Vāseṭṭha. In [just the same way,] the god
Brahmā whom the *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas praise cannot be
considered real.”

[The Buddha continued:]

What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Suppose the *brāhmaṇa* experts in the
three Vedas watch the sun and moon as they rise and set, and pay their
respects to those heavenly bodies with both palms joined and with offer-
ings, and then assert their doctrine that one can leave this world and reach
the abode of the sun and moon by following practices similar to theirs,
do you agree that their path is absolutely true and will enable you to leave
this world to reach the abode of those heavenly bodies?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied:

Sir, the *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas, despite watching the sun and moon as they rise and set and paying respects to the heavenly bodies with both palms joined and with offerings, cannot claim that their path is absolutely true and will enable us to leave this world and reach the abode of those heavenly bodies.

[The Buddha continued:]

Exactly, O Vāseṭṭha. The *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas watch the sun and moon as they rise and set, pay their respects to these heavenly bodies with both palms joined and with offerings, and assert the doctrine that one can leave this world and reach the abode of the sun and moon by following practices similar to theirs. However, they cannot claim that their path is absolutely true and will enable their followers to leave this world and reach the abode of those heavenly bodies. Yet wouldn't there be something specious in continuing to follow the same practice of paying respects [to the heavenly bodies as they rise and set] by joining palms and making offerings?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "Exactly, O Gautama. It would be specious, sir." The Buddha went on:

Taking another example: Suppose a man sets up a ladder in an empty spot. Others ask, "What are you doing setting up a ladder in an empty spot?" The man replies, "I wish to ascend to the next floor of the building." The others ask, "What building? Is it in the east, west, north, or south?" He replies, "I do not know." What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Wouldn't it be fanciful to set up a ladder in an empty spot and try to climb to the next floor of an imaginary building?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "Exactly, sir. Such behavior is fanciful."

The Buddha said:

It is the same as with the *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas. What they teach is fanciful and unreal.

O Vāseṭṭha, the five kinds of desirable sense objects are [fundamentally] undefiled and can be enjoyed [in ordinary life]. What are the five? The visual faculty in the eyes perceives its object and the sense of sight is gratified. In

a similar manner, the [sense] faculties of the ear, nose, tongue, and physical body come into contact with their respective objects, and the senses of sound, smell, taste, and touch are gratified. The subjective agent or “self,” however, brings about attachment, bondage, and entrapment. Those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas are defiled by the five kinds of sensual desire; they are strongly attached [to the sense objects] but cannot see this fault, nor do they know the means of transcendence, and thus they are bound by the five kinds of sensual desire. While they may conduct their ceremonial rites correctly in reference to the sun and moon, water and fire, and chant, “May you come to me and take me to be born in Brahmā Heaven,” it would be impossible.

O Vāseṭṭha, it is like crossing the Aciravatī River. When the water is placid even ravens on its bank and other birds can drink from it. Suppose, however, that a person who is heavily chained on one side of the river calls out to the yonder shore, “Come, come to me. I want to cross over to the other bank.” How could that yonder shore come any nearer? Could that person really cross the river in that way?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, “It would be impossible, sir.”

The Buddha continued:

O Vāseṭṭha, the five kinds of desirable sense objects are [fundamentally] undefiled and can gratify the senses. From the standpoint of rules for the wise and saintly, however, the objects of the senses can be forms of bondage. The *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas are entrapped by them. Thoroughly bound, they do not see their fault or know how to transcend it. While they may conduct their ceremonial rites correctly in reference to the sun and moon, water and fire, and chant, “May you come to me and take me to be born in Brahmā Heaven,” that, after all, would be impossible.

O Vāseṭṭha, it is like crossing the Aciravatī River. When the water is placid even ravens on its bank and other birds can drink from it. Suppose, however, that someone wishes to cross the river; could he ever do so if he will neither use his own hands [to swim], nor rely on a boat or raft?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, “He cannot do so, sir.”

[The Buddha continued:]

It is just the same with the *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas, because without following the path of pure and genuine austerity of the *śramaṇas*, they wish instead to reach Brahmā Heaven by relying on defective practices that are neither pure nor genuine, and it is impossible.

O Vāseṭṭha, it is like when the river floods because of a sudden torrent in the mountains, which can sweep people away if there is neither a boat, a raft, or a bridge available. Now suppose a traveler wishes to cross the river, but he sees the river flooding because of the sudden torrent in the mountains and people being swept away for lack of a boat, raft, or bridge. He thinks to himself, "I can build a raft by gathering wood and grass and tying it together tightly, and then by using my own strength I should be able to cross the river." He immediately finds the materials, ties them together very tightly, and applies his own strength to cross the river safely.

O Vāseṭṭha, it is the same with the case in question. If a *bhikṣu* abandons practices that are neither suitable for a *śramaṇa* nor pure and genuine, and adopts the pure and genuine practice that is suitable for a *śramaṇa*, it is then possible for him to be born in Brahmā Heaven.

[The Buddha continued,] "What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is there anger in Brahmā?"

Vāseṭṭha replied, "No, sir."

[The Buddha] again asked, "Is there anger in those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas?"

Vāseṭṭha replied, "Yes, sir."

[The Buddha continued:]

106b O Vāseṭṭha, Brahmā has no anger whereas those [*brāhmaṇas* invariably] have anger. Those who have no anger and those who have anger cannot be mixed together, nor can they realize deliverance together, nor can they share the same destiny. Because of these differences, the god Brahmā and those *brāhmaṇas* cannot abide in the same place.

[The Buddha continued,] "What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is there hatred in Brahmā?"

Vāseṭṭha replied, "No, sir."

"Is there hatred in those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas?"

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, sir.”

[The Buddha continued:]

O Vāseṭṭha, Brahmā has no hatred, whereas those [*brāhmaṇas* invariably] have anger. Those who have no hatred and those who have hatred cannot be mixed together, nor can they realize deliverance together, nor can they share the same destiny. Because of these differences, the god Brahmā and those *brāhmaṇas* cannot abide in the same place.

[The Buddha continued,] “What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is there resentment in Brahmā?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] again asked, “Is there resentment in those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, sir.”

[The Buddha continued:]

O Vāseṭṭha, Brahmā has no resentment whereas those [*brāhmaṇas* invariably] have resentment. Those who have no resentment and those who have resentment cannot be mixed together, nor can they realize deliverance together, nor can they share the same destiny. Because of these differences, the god Brahmā and those *brāhmaṇas* cannot abide in the same place.

[The Buddha continued,] “What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Does Brahmā enjoy family and wealth?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] again asked, “Do those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas enjoy family and wealth?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, sir.”

[The Buddha continued:]

O Vāseṭṭha, Brahmā has neither family nor wealth, whereas those [*brāhmaṇas* invariably] have both. Those who have neither family nor wealth and those who have family and wealth cannot be mixed together, they cannot realize deliverance together, and they cannot share the same destiny. Because of these differences, the god Brahmā and those *brāhmaṇas* cannot abide in the same place.

[The Buddha continued,] “What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Does Brahmā have total freedom?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, sir.”

[The Buddha] again asked, “Do those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas have total freedom?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha continued:]

O Vāseṭṭha, Lord Brahmā has total freedom whereas those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas have no freedom. Those who have total freedom and those who have no freedom cannot be mixed together, they cannot realize deliverance together, and they cannot share the same destiny. Because of these differences, the god Brahmā and those *brāhmaṇas* cannot abide in the same place. Those *brāhmaṇa* experts in the three Vedas might not be able to reply in detail when others pose questions on something profound. Is that not so?

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, that is correct, sir.”

Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja then spoke in unison:

Setting these matters aside for a moment, we have heard that the *śramaṇa* Gautama knows the path that leads to Brahmā Heaven and can teach it to others, since he is always conversing with Lord Brahmā. O *śramaṇa* Gautama, we earnestly request that Your Reverence reveal to us the path to Brahmā Heaven and explain it in detail on our behalf.

The Buddha said to Vāseṭṭha, “Now I shall ask you, and you must answer. What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is the country of Manasākaṭa near or far from here?”

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, “It is rather near, sir.”

[The Buddha continued:]

106c If a person has grown up in that country and others ask him about the roads there, what do you think, Vāseṭṭha? When the person who has grown up in that country answers a question about the roads there, should anyone doubt his answer?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, “No, there should be no doubt whatsoever. Why is this? Because that person grew up in that country, sir.”

The Buddha said:

Even if the person had really grown up in that country, others might still raise some doubt about his answer. But when someone comes to ask me about the path to Brahmā Heaven, there should be no doubt whatsoever. Why? Precisely because I am always teaching the path to Brahmā Heaven.

Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja then said in unison:

Setting these matters aside for a moment, we have heard that the *śramaṇa* Gautama knows the path that leads to Brahmā Heaven and can teach it to others, since he is always conversing with Lord Brahmā. O *śramaṇa* Gautama, we earnestly request that Your Reverence, with compassion, reveal to us the path to Brahmā Heaven and explain it in detail on our behalf.

The Buddha said, “Listen attentively, and carefully consider what I will explain.”

They replied, “Sir, it is an opportune time.”

The Buddha continued:

When the Tathāgata, who is totally free from defilement and perfectly enlightened, appears in this world he directly experiences subtle bliss that is present throughout the four meditative states of absorption. Why? Through his own effort he maintains concentrated mindfulness, enjoying the transcendence within his mind without any slackening of discipline. Through contemplation, he practices the four kinds of immeasurable mind (*brahmavihāras*), first by permeating friendly love (*maitrī*) infinitely in one direction, and then likewise in the remaining three directions. Thus he extends his immeasurable mind of benevolence universally in all directions, neither [divided] nor bound to limitation. Casting away various feelings of hatred, leaving no ill-will (*vyāpāda*) in his mind, the Tathāgata enjoys the state of tranquility and silence. He also completes the remaining three practices, namely, the immeasurable mind of compassion (*karuṇā*), the immeasurable mind of sympathetic joy (*muditā*), and the immeasurable mind of equanimity (*upekṣā*), first permeating infinitely in one direction, and then likewise in the remaining three directions. Thus he extends his immeasurable mind of benevolence, joy, and equanimity universally in all directions, neither [divided] nor bound to limitation. Casting away various feelings of hatred,

leaving no ill-will in his mind, the Tathāgata enjoys the state of tranquility and silence. What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is there anger in Brahmā?

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "There is no feeling of anger in Lord Brahmā, sir."

Again [the Buddha] asked, "Is there anger in the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "No, sir."

The Buddha said:

Neither Brahmā nor the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love has any feeling of anger. Since both have no anger, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* share the same destiny (*gati*) and the same deliverance. Because of this, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* can act together anywhere. What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is there hatred in Brahmā?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "There is no hatred in Lord Brahmā, sir."

Again [the Buddha] said, "Is there hatred in the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "No, sir."

The Buddha said:

Neither Brahmā nor the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love has any feeling of hatred. Since both have no hatred, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* share the same destiny and the same deliverance. Because of this, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* can act together anywhere."

The Buddha again asked, "What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Is there resentment in Brahmā?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "There is no resentment in Lord Brahmā, sir."

The Buddha asked again, "Is there resentment in the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, "No, sir."

The Buddha said:

Neither Brahmā nor the *bhikṣu* has any feeling of resentment. Since neither have any resentment, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* share the same destiny and the same deliverance. Because of this, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* can act together anywhere.

[The Buddha continued,] “What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Does Brahmā enjoy family and wealth?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] again asked: “Does the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love enjoy family and wealth?”

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, “No, sir.”

The Buddha said:

Neither Brahmā nor the *bhikṣu* has family or wealth. Since neither have any family or wealth, they share the same destiny and deliverance. Because of this, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* can act together anywhere.

[The Buddha continued,] “What do you think, O Vāseṭṭha? Does Brahmā have total freedom?”

[Vāseṭṭha] replied, “Yes, sir.”

[The Buddha] again asked, “Does the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love have total freedom?”

Vāseṭṭha replied, “Yes, sir.”

The Buddha said:

Both Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* have attained total freedom equally, and they share the same destiny and deliverance. Because of this, Brahmā and the *bhikṣu* can act together anywhere.

The Buddha said to Vāseṭṭha:

You should know that the *bhikṣu* who permeates a mind of friendly love will be born in Brahmā Heaven on the dissolution of his body at the end of life, as swiftly as an arrow striking its target.

When the Buddha completed this teaching, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja realized at that moment the termination of all defilements, thereby acquiring genuine insight into the nature of the Dharma. Having heard the Buddha’s teaching, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were delighted to receive it, and they reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 26: Knowledge
of the Three Vedas]

Sutra 27

The Rewards of the Life of a Śramaṇa

(*Dīgha Nikāya 2: Sāmañña-phala Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was visiting the city of Rājagṛha, he stayed in a grove of mango trees belonging to the master of medicine Prince Jīvaka, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*. On that occasion, on the night of the full moon, King Ajātaśatru, the son of the queen mother from Videha,¹⁷ summoned his principal queen and said, “Tonight’s moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Tell me your wishes.”

The queen replied:

Yes, sire. Tonight’s moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. My wish is that Your Majesty’s hair be washed and that Your Majesty be bathed and made immaculate, so that we may enjoy some entertainment together with the palace ladies.

The king then summoned his eldest son, Crown Prince Udāyibhadra, and said, “Tonight’s moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Tell me your wishes.”

The crown prince replied to the king:

Yes, sire. Tonight’s moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. My wish is that the four divisions of the army are called to assemble and the plan [of an expedition] is laid out and discussed, so that we may punish the rebels on the frontier and then return to enjoy [the victorious feast] together. 107b

Again, King Ajātaśatru summoned his military commander, who had a distinguished record of courage and valor, and said, “Tonight’s moon, on the

fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Tell me your wishes.”

The general replied:

Yes, sire. Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. My wish is that the four divisions of the army assemble and intelligence is gathered on the disturbances along the frontier, so that we may declare throughout the land [the results of] rebellion and of obedience, respectively.

Again, the king summoned his prime minister, Varṣakāra, and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

The prime minister replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called Purāṇa Kāśyapa, who guides his school of disciples. He is an erudite man and renowned in even the most distant regions. Just as a great ocean receives everything that flows into it, he is shown the respect of a great many offerings from a multitude of people. O great king, may Your Majesty pay your respects by visiting this master. When you see him there might be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened (*pasīdeyya*).

Again, King Ajātaśatru summoned Varṣakāra's brother, Suniddha, and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

Suniddha replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called Maskarin Gośālīputra¹⁸ who guides his school of disciples. He is

an erudite man and renowned in even the most distant regions. Just as a great ocean receives everything that flows into it, he receives the respect of offerings from a multitude of people. O great king, may Your Majesty pay your respects by visiting this master. When you see him there might be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened.

Again, the king summoned his minister of religious rites (*dianzuo*; *purohita*) and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

The minister of religious rites replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called Ajita-keśakambalin, who guides his school of disciples. He is an erudite man and renowned in even the most distant regions. Just as a great ocean receives everything that flow into it, he receives the respect of offerings from a multitude of people. O great king, may Your Majesty pay your respects by visiting this master. When you see him there might be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened.

Again, King Ajātaśatru summoned the officer in charge of the palace gate and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

The officer in charge of the palace gate replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called Kakuda-katyāyana, who guides his school of disciples. He is an erudite man and renowned in even the most distant regions. Just as a great ocean receives everything that flows into it, he receives the respect of offerings from a multitude of people. O great king, may Your Majesty

107c pay your respects by visiting this master. When you see him there might be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened.

Again, King Ajātaśatru summoned Udāyin, the son of Maṇḍikā, and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

Udāyin replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called Sañjayī Vairāṭṭiputra, who guides his school of disciples. He is an erudite man and renowned in even the most distant regions. Just as a great ocean receives everything that flows into it, he receives the respect of offerings from a multitude of people. O great king, may Your Majesty pay your respects by visiting this master. When you see him there might be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened.

Again, the king summoned his [step]brother, Prince Abhaya, and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

Prince Abhaya, the king's brother, replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called Nirgrantha Jñātiputra, who guides his school of disciples. He is an erudite man and renowned in even the most distant regions. Just as a great ocean receives everything that flow into it, he receives the respect of offerings from a multitude of people. O great king, may Your Majesty pay your respects by visiting this master. When you see him there might be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened.

Again, the king summoned his master of medicine, Prince Jīvaka, and said:

Tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there

seems to be no difference between day and night. Among the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, whom should I visit in order to have my mind enlightened?

Prince Jīvaka replied:

Sire, tonight's moon, on the fifteenth of the month, is so clear and bright there seems to be no difference between day and night. There is a master called the Buddha. Your Majesty should pay your respects by visiting him. When you see him there will surely be an opportunity for Your Majesty to be enlightened.

The king commanded his master of medicine, "Please make my elephant and another five hundred white elephants ready."

Jīvaka had the royal elephant and five hundred white elephants made ready at once, and then reported to the king, "The carriages are ready, sire. Please let us know the time for departure."

King Ajātaśatru rode on the royal elephant and his five hundred queens rode on the five hundred female elephants. All carried torches to demonstrate the regal authority of the procession and they went out of the city of Rājagṛha.

On the way to the Buddha's resting place the king [halted the procession and] said to Jīvaka, "Are you not betraying me into the hands of my adversaries and joining their side to take the members of this procession prisoner?"

Jīvaka replied:

O great king, I would not dare betray Your Majesty, nor would I dare to plot your demise, nor wish to join with Your Majesty's adversaries to lead this royal procession astray. Please proceed and you will surely find an occasion for happiness.

The king continued for a while, but again said to Jīvaka, "Are you not betraying me now into the hands of my adversaries and joining their side to lead the members of this procession astray?" This was repeated a third time.

Why was the king so suspicious? Because there was no sound whatsoever in the entire area, despite there being one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus* attending the Buddha. The complete silence made the king suspect a plot.

Again, Jīvaka repeated:

108a O great king, I would not dare betray Your Majesty, nor would I dare to plot your demise, nor wish to join with Your Majesty's adversaries to lead this royal procession astray. Please proceed and Your Majesty will surely find an occasion for happiness. Why? Because *śramaṇas* prefer quiet and remain always in seclusion. Because of this, there are no sounds of conversation, sire. May Your Majesty please proceed, for we are in sight of the mango grove, sire.

Reaching the entrance to the grove, King Ajātaśatru dismounted from his elephant and then disarmed, leaving his sword, his parasol, and the five symbols of his kingship at the gate. He entered the grove on foot and said to Jīvaka, "Now, where is the Buddha, the World-honored One?"

Jīvaka replied, "O great king, the Buddha is in the lecture hall. There is a light outside the building. The World-honored One is seated in the lion throne, facing south, sire."

The king proceeded and saw the World-honored One sitting by himself. Seeing this, King Ajātaśatru washed his feet outside the building and stepped into the hall. Looking around, he was delighted and thought to himself:

Now, see how the *śramaṇas* absorbed in silent meditation permeate [the place with] such calmness and introspection. It is my wish that Crown Prince Udāyibhadra should become equally endowed with a calm and introspective mind.

At that moment, the World-honored One said to King Ajātaśatru:

Thinking of your son, you have said that you wish Crown Prince Udāyibhadra would become equally endowed with a calm and introspective mind. Please come and take a seat before me.

King Ajātaśatru went forward, and after touching the ground at the Buddha's feet with his forehead, he took a seat to one side and said to the Buddha, "I have a question, sir. If Your Reverence can spare me a moment, I would like to ask my question."

The Buddha replied, "O great king, if you have a question, feel free to ask it."

The king then said:

O World-honored One, just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot and learn battle strategies as well as the use of a dagger, spear, sword, bow and arrow, and fighting cane, today every prince, strongman, great wrestler, messenger, leathermaker, barber, clothmaker, carriage driver, brickmaker, and bamboo or reed craftsman all earn their respective livelihoods by mastering their profession and using it attain happiness in life as well as they can. In like manner, each father and mother, wife and husband, maid and servant, and errand boy too enjoys their own kind of happiness in life. In this way, everyone fulfills their own life and enjoys the fruit of their own happiness. Now, many *śramaṇas*, like the ones here, are engaged in the practice of austerity. Do they acquire anything good as a result of their practice of austerity, sir?

The Buddha said to the king, “Have you asked this question of any other *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* before?”

King Ajātaśatru replied:

Yes, I have visited a number of *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* and asked them this same question, sir. I recall that I once visited Purāṇa Kāśyapa and said to him, “Just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now can your followers, who are all engaged in the pursuit of your path, acquire any results in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people?”

That teacher replied, “If Your Majesty acts or lets others act to inflict agonies and torment people, whether by injuring, cutting, and dismembering [their bodies] or by burning, pulverizing, and destroying [their homes], or to commit other transgressions such as lying, stealing, trespassing, plundering, destroying evidence, arson, murder, sexual abuse, and so on—despite all of this, [understand that] no one is really doing anything evil.

108b

“O great king, if someone were to flay human beings with a sharp knife, creating a pile of flesh and then scattering it all over the ground, this would not constitute an evil, nor would such an action produce any moral retribution, good or bad. Irrespective of whether one chops up human bodies

on the southern bank of the Ganges River or promotes universal benevolence on the northern bank of the river, there is no difference whatsoever between benefiting everyone on one bank and destroying everyone on the other bank, nor are there any results therefrom.”

The king continued:

Suppose someone asks about a melon and the other person talks about a plum, or when the former asks about a plum and the latter replies in terms of a melon—that teacher's reply was just like that. When I asked him if those who practice his path realize a certain result in this life, that *śramaṇa* replied that there is no such thing as reward or retribution regardless of whether one's actions are good or bad. I could not help thinking, “I am a *kṣatriya*, properly anointed to kingship's throne. Yet I [should refrain from] exercising my power to arrest, exile, or execute any of these practitioners who have renounced domestic life. Nonetheless, I feel dissatisfied with this teacher's answer.” With those thoughts, I left his place for good.

King Ajātaśatru again said to the Buddha:

On another occasion, I visited the teacher Maskarin Gośālīputra's place and asked him the same question, “Just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now can your followers, who are all engaged in the pursuit of your path, acquire any results in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people?”

That teacher replied, “O great king, there is no meaning in charity, none whatsoever in an act of giving, nor is there any meaning in any of the sacrificial rites; there are neither good act nor bad acts, nor is there any moral retribution, good or bad, derived therefrom. There is neither life here and now nor an afterlife, nor is there a father or mother, or a god, a spirit, or a living being. Moreover, there is neither a *śramaṇa* nor a *brāhmaṇa* to proclaim the equality [of everything]. Nor is there anyone who, in this world or the afterlife, directly experiences [any kind of realization], or anyone who can teach it to others. Whoever speaks of anything as ‘existent’ is a liar, and the words he utters lack all reality.”

O World-honored One, suppose someone asks about a melon and the other person talks about a plum, or when the former asks about a plum and the latter replies in terms of a melon—that teacher’s reply was just like that. When I asked him if those who practice his path realize a certain result in this life, he replied that the question was meaningless. Again I thought to myself, “I am a *kṣatriya*, properly anointed to kingship’s throne. Yet I [should refrain from] exercising my power to arrest, exile, or execute any of these practitioners who have renounced domestic life. Nonetheless, I feel dissatisfied with this teacher’s answer.” With those thoughts, I left his place for good.

Again, the king said to the Buddha:

On another occasion, I visited Ajita-keśakambalin’s place and asked him the same question, “O virtuous one, just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot, and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now can your followers, who are all engaged in the pursuit of your path, acquire any results in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people?”

That teacher replied, “For all who receive a body consisting of the four elements, when life ends the earth element in the body returns to the earth, the water element returns to water, the wind element returns to the wind, and the fire element returns to fire. Thus every element of the body devolves and every faculty therein dissolves and returns to nothingness. When people die their bodies are placed on a funeral platform or left out among the cemetery mounds; when fire consumes the skeleton it turns dull white or into ashes. Whether one is wise or a fool, when their life ends everyone’s [body], without exception, decomposes, manifesting the law of total annihilation.”

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O World-honored One, suppose someone asks about a melon and the other person talks about a plum, or when the former asks about a plum and the latter replies in terms of a melon—that teacher’s reply was just like that. When I asked him if those who practice his path realize a certain result in this life, he replied that there was nothing but total annihilation. Again I thought to myself, “I am a *kṣatriya*, properly anointed to kingship’s throne. Yet I [should refrain from] exercising my power to arrest, exile,

or execute any of these practitioners who have renounced domestic life. Nonetheless, I feel dissatisfied with this teacher's answer." With those thoughts, I left his place for good.

Again, King Ajātaśatru said to the Buddha:

On another occasion, I visited Kakuda-katyāyana's place and asked him the same question, "O virtuous one, just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now can your followers, who are all engaged in the pursuit of your path, acquire any results in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people?"

That teacher replied, "O great king, those who lack strength and virility have little power for action as well as little concept of expediency. Some people may become attached [to things] without due cause or conditions, while others remain free from attachments, their pure and genuine [practice also] coming about without due cause or conditions. Those sentient beings who are endowed with life invariably lack the power that would enable them to realize their own freedom. Hence, no harm or blame. For them, constancy lies in the midst of numbers, undergoing the six kinds of life cycles and experiencing both pleasure and pain."

O World-honored One, suppose someone asks about a melon and the other person talks about a plum, or when the former asks about a plum and the latter replies in terms of a melon—that teacher's reply was just like that. When I asked him if those who practice his path realize a certain result in this life, he replied that living beings lack the power [to gain their own freedom]. Again I thought to myself, "I am a *kṣatriya*, properly anointed to kingship's throne. Yet I [should refrain from] exercising my power to arrest, exile, or execute any of these practitioners who have renounced domestic life. Nonetheless, I feel dissatisfied with this teacher's answer." With those thoughts, I left his place for good.

Again, the king said to the Buddha:

On another occasion, I visited Sañjayī Vairaṭṭiputra's place and asked him the same question, "O virtuous one, just as we ride on an elephant, horse,

or chariot and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now can your followers, who are all engaged in the pursuit of your path, acquire any results in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people?”

That teacher replied, “O great king, if Your Majesty asks, ‘Do *śramaṇas* have some reward in this life?’, this may be answered in the following manner: (1) This is identical (i.e., true; *zishishi*); (2) this is different (*zishiyi*); (3) this is not different (*zishifeiyi*); (4) this is not not-different (*zishifeibuyi*). This is the first question-and-answer variation.

“On the other hand, if Your Majesty asks, ‘Do *śramaṇas* have no reward in this life?’, this may be answered in the following manner: (1) This is identical (true); (2) this is different; (3) this is not different; (4) this is not not-different.

“If again Your Majesty asks, ‘Do *śramaṇas* have neither any reward, nor no reward in this life?’, this may be answered in the following manner: (1) This is identical (true); (2) this is different; (3) this is not different; (4) this is not not-different.”

O World-honored One, suppose someone asks about a melon and the other person talks about a plum, or when the former asks about a plum and the latter replies in terms of a melon—that teacher’s reply was just like that. When I asked him if those who practice his path realize a certain goal in this present life, he again replied by speaking in terms of difference (i.e., always in terms of something else). Again I thought to myself, “I am a *kṣatriya*, properly anointed to kingship’s throne. Yet I [should refrain from] exercising my power to arrest, exile, or execute any of these practitioners who have renounced domestic life. Nonetheless, I feel dissatisfied with this teacher’s answer.” With those thoughts, I left his place for good.

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Again, King Ajātaśatru said to the Buddha:

On another occasion, I visited Nirgrantha Jñātiputra’s place and asked him the same question, “O virtuous one, just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now can your followers, who are all engaged in the pursuit

of your path, acquire any results in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people?"

That teacher replied, "O great king, I know all things, have insight into all things, and I know all that is, without exception. Irrespective of whether I am standing, sitting, or lying down, I am aware of all things without exception. All-inclusive (absolute) knowledge is present before me at all times."

O World-honored One, suppose someone asks about a melon and the other talks person about a plum, or when the former asks about a plum and the latter replies in terms of a melon—that teacher's reply was just like that. When I asked him if those who practice his path acquire a certain reward in this life, he answered by talking about his "all-inclusive knowledge." Again I thought to myself, "I am a *kṣatriya*, properly anointed to kingship's throne. Yet I [should refrain from] exercising my power to arrest, exile, or execute any of these practitioners who have renounced domestic life. Nonetheless, I feel dissatisfied with this teacher's answer." With those thoughts, I left his place for good.

O World-honored One, because of these experiences, I have come with the intent to ask Your Reverence the same question, namely, "Just as we ride on an elephant, horse, or chariot and learn battlefield strategies and so on, other people carry on with the means of their livelihood and enjoy the fruits of their own happiness. Now do the *śramaṇas* (disciples of the Buddha) who are engaged in the pursuit of your path acquire rewards in this life like the satisfactions gained by other people, sir?"

The Buddha said to King Ajātaśatru:

I would now like to ask Your Majesty a question. You may answer as you please. What do you think, O great king? Suppose that on the night of the full moon some of the boys and other workers in the royal household observe the king having his hair washed and his body bathed and then enjoying some entertainment together with the palace ladies in the royal pavilion. One of them thinks, "What irony! After that affair¹⁹ this is the reward. Here is King Ajātaśatru, on the night of the full moon, having his hair washed and his body bathed and gratifying all his senses with the palace ladies in the pavilion. Who can ever know the reward that will fall to one from his conduct?" Later on, that man shaves his hair, moustache,

and beard, puts on the three robes of a mendicant, renounces domestic life, and applies himself to the practice of equanimity (the principle of equality).

Now, O great king, if you see this *bhikṣu* approaching, do you think to yourself, “Well, isn’t this one of my former servants from the palace?”

The king replied, “No, O World-honored One. If I see a monk approaching, I will stand to welcome him and ask him to take a seat alongside me.”

The Buddha said, “Indeed, is that not a real reward that a *bhikṣu* attains in this present life?”

The king replied, “Exactly so, O World-honored One. That is a reward that comes from being a *śramaṇa*.”

Again, the Buddha said:

O great king, some of the household guests who depend on the king’s munificence may have observed on the night of the full moon the king having his hair washed and his body bathed and then enjoying some entertainment together with the palace ladies in the royal pavilion. One of them may have thought, “What irony! After those events this is the reward. Who can ever know the reward that will fall to one from his conduct?” Later on, that guest shaves his hair, moustache, and beard, puts on the three robes of a mendicant, renounces domestic life, and applies himself to the practice of equanimity. Now, O great king, what do you think? If you see this *bhikṣu* approaching, do you think to yourself, “Well, isn’t this one of my guests to whom I gave an allowance?”

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King Ajātaśatru replied, “No, O World-honored One. If I see a monk approaching, I will stand to welcome him with a bow and ask him to take a seat alongside me.”

The Buddha said, “What does Your Majesty think? O great king, is that indeed not a real reward that a *bhikṣu* attains in this present life?”

The king replied, “Exactly so, O World-honored One. That is a reward that comes from being a *śramaṇa*.”

Again, the Buddha said:

O great king, the Tathāgata appears in this world as one who is totally free from defilement and perfectly enlightened. Those who enter his path

should be able to acquire three kinds of supernormal knowledge²⁰ that annihilates ignorance and allows the illumination of insight, eliminating all forms of darkness and delusion to realize the total eradication of defilements and reveal the great light of the Dharma. How is this so? Because this fundamental realization can only be achieved through constant endeavor without any slackening, through freedom from all worldly mentality, practice in seclusion, diligent mindfulness, and mental concentration. What does Your Majesty think? O great king, is that indeed not a real reward that a *bhikṣu* attains in this present life?

The king replied, “Exactly so, O World-honored One. That is a reward that comes from being a *śramaṇa*.”

Thereupon, King Ajātaśatru stood up, bowed his forehead to the ground at the Buddha's feet, and said:

May I earnestly request that the World-honored One hear my repentance. I was insane—stupid, ignorant, and without any awareness of decency. My father, King Vidmiśāra²¹ of Magadha, ruled the country according to our laws and was always upright and impartial. But driven mad by the desires of the [five] senses, I murdered my father, the king. May Your Reverence, with compassion and pity, accept my earnest repentance.

The Buddha said:

Having been stupid, ignorant, and lacking any awareness of decency in the past, you murdered your father, the king, but now you have repented from the depth of your heart. According to the spiritual law of the wise and saintly disciples, if you have now thoroughly repented for what you have done, something beneficial will come to you. Because I have compassion for you I will accept your repentance.

At that, King Ajātaśatru venerated [by bowing to] the Buddha's feet. He then withdrew to one side and took his seat. Thereupon, the Buddha gave him a discourse on the Dharma, imparting instruction, benefit, and delight.

After hearing the discourse, the king said to the Buddha:

Sir, I now take my refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May Your Reverence accept me as a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this

moment until the dissolution of my body at the end of life I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking things that are not given, I will refrain from indulging in sexual pleasure, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.²² May I earnestly request the World-honored One and the members of the sangha to unequivocally accept my vow.

The World-honored One remained silent for a moment, granting the king's request. Seeing this, the king stood up, venerated the Buddha, circumambulated him three times, and returned to the palace.

Not long after the king's departure, the Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

King Ajātaśatru has atoned for his past transgressions and mitigated the burden of his sins. If the king had not murdered his father he could have acquired genuine insight (*ārya-dharma-caṅkṣus-viśuddha*) into the nature of the Dharma. However, King Ajātaśatru has repented and has atoned for his grievous transgression.

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King Ajātaśatru, for his part, said to Prince Jīvaka on his way back to the palace:

It was good that you have served me so well. It was you who first told me about the Tathāgata's teaching and then took me to meet him, and my mind has been opened. I am indebted to you and will not forget it.

When the king reached the palace he ordered the preparation of various dishes of food and drink, and the next morning it was reported to the Buddha that the meal was ready. Thereupon, the World-honored One donned his outer robe and with almsbowl in hand visited the palace accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*. Taking his seat in the place that had been prepared for him, the Buddha, together with the members of the sangha, was served by the king himself.

At the conclusion of the meal, the bowls were cleaned and rinsing water was served. Then the king venerated the Buddha [by bowing to his] feet and said:

I have repented my past transgressions again and again, sir. I was insane—stupid, ignorant, and without any awareness of decency. My father, King Vidmisāra of Magadha, ruled the country according to our laws and was

always upright and impartial. But driven mad by the desires of the [five] senses, I murdered my father, the king. May Your Reverence, with compassion and pity, accept my earnest repentance.

The Buddha replied:

Having been stupid, ignorant, and without any awareness of decency, you murdered your father, the king, but now you have repented from the depth of your heart. According to the spiritual law of the wise and saintly disciples, if you have now thoroughly repented for what you have done, something beneficial will come to you. Because I have compassion for you I will accept your repentance.

At that, King Ajātaśatru venerated the Buddha [by bowing to his] feet. Then he brought out a small cushion and seated himself before the Buddha. Thereupon, the Buddha gave him a discourse on the Dharma, imparting instruction, benefit, and delight.

After hearing the discourse, the king again said to the Buddha:

Once again, I take my refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May Your Reverence accept me as a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the dissolution of my body at the end of life I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking things not given, I will refrain from indulging in sexual pleasure, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.

After completing the teaching given for King Ajātaśatru, thus imparting instruction, benefit, and delight, the World-honored One stood up and left the palace. Having heard the Buddha's teaching, King Ajātaśatru and the master of medicine, Prince Jīvaka, were delighted to receive it, and they reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 27: The Rewards of
the Life of a *Śramaṇa*]

Sutra 28

Poṭṭhapāda

(Dīgha Nikāya 9: Poṭṭhapāda Suttanta)

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha was staying in Anāthapiṇḍika Monastery in Prince Jeta’s Grove near the city of Śrāvastī, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*. The World-honored One put on his outer robe and with his almsbowl in hand went into the city of Śrāvastī in the early morning. As he walked, the World-honored One thought:

It is still a bit early for the almsround. I will visit the *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Poṭṭhapāda in the forest to see how he is doing. I can stay there until it is time for the almsround.

The World-honored One went to the forest. The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Poṭṭhapāda had seen the Buddha approaching from a distance, and he stood up at once to greet him, “Welcome, *śramaṇa* Gautama. I have not seen you for some time. What has prompted Your Reverence to come this way? Please take the seat in front.” 110a

The World-honored One took the seat that was offered and said to Poṭṭhapāda, “Now that I am here, tell me what you have been discussing.” The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic replied:

O World-honored One, many *brāhmaṇa* ascetics, *śramaṇas*, and lay *brāhmaṇas* gathered in the Brahmā Hall yesterday and talked about a number of things, arguing back and forth over their different views. O Gautama, one *brāhmaṇa* ascetic proposed this theory: “Thoughts form in the mind apart from any causes or conditions. Thoughts also perish from the mind without cause or condition. Thoughts are known by their coming and going. When they come, they arise in the mind, and when they go, they perish from the mind.”

O Gautama, another *brāhmaṇa* ascetic argued for this idea: “The self knows the presence of a thought through its arising, and also knows its

absence through its perishing. Each thought is known by its coming and going. When it comes the thought arises, and when it goes the thought perishes.”

O Gautama, a third *brāhmaṇa* ascetic presented the following notion: “The foregoing two theories are impossible. Thoughts arise only through the activity of a great spirit whose boundless power brings forth each thought and also takes it away. When he produces it a thought arises, and when he takes it away the thought perishes. My thoughts arise because of the activity of that spirit.”

O Gautama, if one can grasp the meaning of those theories, one might begin to discern how the cessation of thinking and knowing may take place.

The World-honored One said to the *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Poṭṭhapāda:

According to what you have said, all three theorists are culpable of committing an error. First, that thoughts form in the mind apart from any causes or conditions, and also perish from the mind without cause or condition; thoughts are known by their coming and going, and when they come they arise in the mind, and when they go they perish from the mind. Second, that the self knows the presence of a thought through its arising, and also knows its absence through its perishing; each thought is known by its coming and going, and when it comes the thought arises, and when it goes the thought perishes. Third, that thoughts only arise through the activity of a great spirit whose boundless power brings forth each thought as well as takes it away; when [the spirit] produces it a thought arises, and when [the spirit] takes it away it perishes. Those who assert these theories are necessarily culpable of committing an error. Why? Because thoughts arise when there is a causal dependence for their creation, and they perish when there is a causal dependence for their cessation.

When the Tathāgata appears in this world, he is endowed with ten supreme titles, such as One Liberated from Attachment, Perfectly Enlightened One, and so on. If someone renounces domestic life in accord with the Buddha's path and applies himself to the practice of austerity, and so on, he eradicates the five kinds of moral and spiritual hindrance, namely, (1) sexual desire, (2) malice, (3) drowsiness and sloth, (4) worry and agitation, and (5) doubt. Having removed desires and unfavorable elements,

he or she is still aware of an object and of the act of examining but the cause of birth has been removed (i.e., reaching the supramundane realm) and he enters the first meditative state of absorption, giving rise to a sense of joy and bliss. Here he eradicates all thought of desire, increasing the sense of joy and bliss. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Now,] eliminating awareness of an object as well as awareness of the subjective act of examining, he enters the second meditative state of absorption with increasing tranquility and self-confidence, and experiences a predominant sense of joy and bliss in the emergent state of concentration. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, he observed that thoughts ceased in the first meditative state of absorption and [now] a thought arises in the second meditative state of absorption. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Next,] as the sense of joy fades, he enters the third meditative state of absorption, mindful of the sense of equanimity, and is fully aware of the subtler bliss in pure and genuine mindfulness and equanimity that the wise and holy speak of as indispensable. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, he observed that thoughts ceased in the second meditative state of absorption and [now] a thought arises in the third meditative state of absorption. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

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[Next,] transcending both pleasure and pain and removing joy and sorrow, he enters the fourth meditative state of absorption, which is the equanimity that consolidates pure and genuine mindfulness. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, he observed that thoughts ceased in the third meditative state of absorption and [now] a thought arises in the fourth meditative state of absorption. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Next,] removing all thought of external forms, he terminates anger without conjuring further thought and enters the [formless] realm of infinite space, which is the first formless state of concentration. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, he observes all sense of form ending in this formless concentration, and [now] an awareness of the realm of infinite space arises. Because of

this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Next,] transcending the realm of infinite space, he enters the [formless] realm of infinite consciousness, which is the second formless state of concentration. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, he observes the thought of the realm of infinite space ending as an awareness of the realm of infinite consciousness arises. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Next,] transcending the realm of infinite consciousness, he enters the [formless] realm of nothingness or nonutility, which is the third formless state of concentration. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, as the thought of the realm of infinite consciousness ends an awareness of the realm of nothingness arises. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Next,] transcending the realm of nothingness, he enters the [formless] realm of neither thought nor nought, which is the fourth formless state of concentration. O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, as the thought of the realm of nothingness ends an awareness of the realm of neither thought nor nought arises. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

[Next,] transcending the realm of neither thought nor nought, he enters the final state of cessation, beyond all thought and sensation. This is the third saintly state, that of the nonreturner (*anāgāmin*). O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, when awareness of the [formless] realm of neither thought nor nought ends he enters the state of concentration in which all thoughts and sensations [totally] cease. Because of this, he knows that thoughts arise due to causal dependence and also cease due to causal dependence.

Having acquired this insight, he may think: "It is not good to project a thought or idea in the mind; moreover, it is good not to project a thought or idea in the mind." If he thinks in this way, a subtle form of thinking remains (i.e., is not annihilated), causing gross forms to arise. Again, he may think: "I should not engage in imagining anything, nor should I pursue any thoughts." By not imagining or pursuing thoughts, subtle thinking comes to an end and no gross form arises. That is, when he does not engage in imagining anything, his habitual pursuit of thought does not emerge.

Accomplishing this, he enters the final state of concentration in which all thoughts and sensations completely cease.

What do you think? O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, in your prior training, was this kind of causality ever mentioned to explain the gradual cessation of ideation?

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic replied, “Sir, I have never before heard of this kind of causality in the gradual cessation of ideation, but I believe my prior training helps me understand it.”

Again, Poṭṭhapāda said to the Buddha:

Now, [as explained by the World-honored One,] when I produce a thought [in my mind] it appears either as a thought of existence or as a thought of nonexistence. But then another thought arises. When it too is gone, I think to myself: “It is not good to project a thought or idea in the mind; moreover, it is good not to project a thought or idea in the mind.” When I come to this insight, however, I have not terminated the process of subtle projection and this causes gross forms of thinking to arise. So I say to myself: “I should not engage in imagining anything, nor should I pursue any thoughts. By not imagining or pursuing thoughts, subtle projection comes to an end and no gross forms arise. That is, when I neither imagine anything nor pursue any thoughts, the process of subtle thought formation ends, eliminating the cause of gross forms, and I enter the final state of concentration in which all thoughts and sensations are totally annihilated.”

110c

The Buddha said, “Very good. This is called the state of concentration in which one realizes the gradual cessation of ideation, as practiced by the wise and saintly disciples.”

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic asked, “Sir, of those ideas, which is the highest?”

The Buddha replied, “The idea of the realm of nothingness is the highest.”

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic asked again, “Of those ideas, which is supreme?”

The Buddha replied:

In terms of the varieties of ideas of existence and of nonexistence, proceeding gradually [by stages] and realizing the final state of concentration in which all thoughts and sensations completely cease is called the supreme idea.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic again asked, “Sir, is it a single supreme idea or multiple?”

The Buddha replied, “It is a single idea, not multiple.”

[Poṭṭhapāda] again asked:

Does an idea arise first, and then comes knowledge (*jñāna*)? Or is it that knowledge comes first and then the idea is formed, or that knowledge and the idea arise simultaneously?

The Buddha replied, “An idea arises first, and then comes knowledge (*jñāna*). When thinking occurs, knowledge follows.”

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic again asked, “Sir, is the selfhood of a person (*puruṣasya ātman*) an idea?”

The Buddha replied, “In your view, what do you regard as the selfhood of a person?”

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic replied:

I do not say that the self is a person. I regard myself as consisting of a physical body composed of four material elements (*mahābhūtas*) and six sense faculties (*āyatana*s), all of which were inherited at birth from my mother and father and nurtured through childhood. But it is nothing more than an embodiment of impermanence, which will become worn out and [eventually] perish. As the embodiment of impermanence, I say that such a person has a self.

The Buddha said:

O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, what you refer to as your impermanent body composed of four material elements and six sense faculties that were inherited from your mother and father and nurtured through childhood—do you say that this is your self? O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, you should discard the idea of a self, [because] it is only the idea of a person that arises and perishes.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic said, “Sir, I do not say that the self is a person. It is rather the person's heavenly body [that belongs to] the realm of desire.”

The Buddha said:

You should discard the idea that the self is the person's heavenly body [that belongs to] the realm of desire, [because] it is only the idea of a person that arises and perishes.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic said:

I do not say that the self is a person. It is rather the person's heavenly body [that belongs to] the realm of form, [which is higher than the realm of desire].

The Buddha said:

You should discard the idea that the self is the person's heavenly body [that belongs to] the realm of form, [because] it is only the idea of a person that arises and perishes.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic said:

I do not say that the self is a person. It is rather the person's heavenly body [that belongs to] the formless realms (*ārūpyadhātu*), namely, the realms of infinite space, of infinite consciousness, of nothingness, and of neither thought nor nought.

The Buddha said:

You should discard the idea that the self is the person's heavenly body [that belongs to] the formless realms, namely, the realms of infinite space, of infinite consciousness, of nothingness, and of neither thought nor nought, [because] it is only the idea of a person that arises and perishes.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic said to the Buddha, "What do you think, O Gautama? Will I be able to grasp why it is only the idea of a person that arises and perishes?"

The Buddha replied:

Though you may wish to understand why it is only the idea of a person that arises and perishes, it will be difficult for you to grasp this, precisely because you have been influenced by different views, a different teacher and school, a different training [toward a different goal], a different tolerance, and a different attitude toward pleasure.

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Poṭṭhapāda said:

Exactly, sir. O Gautama, I have been influenced by different views, a different teacher and school, a different training [toward a different goal], a

different tolerance, and a different attitude toward pleasure, and it is very difficult for me to grasp why only the idea of a person arises and perishes. Why? Precisely because of the following views: (1) The self and the world are permanent; this alone is true while the rest is false. (2) The self and the world are impermanent; this alone is true while the rest is false. (3) The self and the world are both permanent and impermanent; this alone is true while the rest is false. (4) The self and the world are neither permanent nor impermanent; this alone is true while the rest is false. (5) The self and the world are limited [and have an end]; this alone is true while the rest is false. (6) The self and the world are limitless [and have no end]; this alone is true while the rest is false. (7) The self and the world are both limited and limitless; this alone is true while the rest is false. (8) The self and the world are neither limited nor limitless; this alone is true while the rest is false. (9) This life principle is the body itself; this alone is true while the rest is false. (10) If there is another life principle, there is another body; this alone is true while the rest is false. (11) The life principle and the body are neither different nor nondifferent; this alone is true while the rest is false. (12) If there is no life principle, there is no [living] body; this alone is true while the rest is false. (13) The Tathāgata has an end; this alone is true while the rest is false. (14) The Tathāgata has no end; this alone is true while the rest is false. (15) The Tathāgata has an end as well as no end; this alone is true while the rest is false. (16) The Tathāgata has neither an end nor no end; this alone is true while the rest is false.

The Buddha said to the *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, “I do not subscribe to any views holding that ‘the self and the world are permanent’ and so on, up to ‘the Tathāgata has neither end nor no end.’

Poṭṭhapāda said, “O Gautama, why don't you subscribe to the view that the self and the world are permanent, or to any of those other views?”

The Buddha replied:

Because they do not accord with true meanings, do not accord with the doctrine, have nothing to do with the practice of austerity as the foundation, and do not represent the eradication of desire, or the state of cessation, or the state of quiescence, or the goal of perfect enlightenment (*anuttara*

samyaksambodhi), or the life of *śramaṇas*, or the state of nirvana. For these reasons I do not subscribe to any of these views.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic again asked:

What are the views that accord with true meanings, accord with the doctrine, relate to the practice of austerity, represent the eradication of desire, the state of cessation, the state of quiescence, the goal of perfect enlightenment, the life of *śramaṇas*, and the state of nirvana? And what does it mean to “subscribe” to a view, sir?

The Buddha replied:

I subscribe to the doctrine of the truth of suffering, of [the truth of the] causal aggregates [of suffering], of [the truth of the] cessation [of suffering], and of the [truth of the] essential path to liberation [from suffering] (i.e., the Four Noble Truths). Why? Because this doctrine accords with true meanings, accords with the teaching, has the practice of austerity as its foundation, and represents the eradication of desire, the state of cessation, the state of quiescence, the goal of perfect enlightenment, the life of *śramaṇas*, and the state of nirvana. Because of this, I subscribe [to the doctrine of the Four Noble Truths].

Thereupon, the World-honored One gave Poṭṭhapāda a discourse on the Dharma, imparting instruction, benefit, and delight, and then stood up and left his place.

Not long after the Buddha’s departure some of the other *brāhmaṇa* ascetics criticized the *brāhmaṇa* Poṭṭhapāda:

How can you listen to the words of the *śramaṇa* Gautama and accept them as right? When he says “I do not subscribe to any views holding that ‘the self and the world are permanent’ and so on, up to ‘the Tathāgata has neither an end nor no end,’ because they do not accord with true meanings,” how can you accept such a statement? We do not consider these words to be acceptable. 111b

Poṭṭhapāda said to the *brāhmaṇa* ascetics:

The *śramaṇa* Gautama explained that he does not subscribe to views holding that the self and the world are permanent and so on, up to “the Tathāgata has neither an end nor no end,” because they do not accord with true meanings. I do not necessarily accept that statement, [just as you do not,] but [I know that] the *śramaṇa* Gautama has realized deliverance, abides in the Dharma, and that all his statements are in accord with the Dharma. On what grounds could I oppose these words that reflect his wisdom? When the *śramaṇa* Gautama expresses truthful words with such subtlety, you cannot oppose them just to be contradictory.

On another occasion, the *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Poṭṭhapāda visited the World-honored One in the company of Hastiśāriputra. The latter greeted the Buddha with a bow and took a seat to one side. Then Poṭṭhapāda venerated the Buddha and Hastiśāriputra and also took a seat to one side. Poṭṭhapāda said to the Buddha:

O World-honored One, not long after Your Reverence left my place after your last visit, some of the *brāhmaṇa* ascetics criticized me. They said, “How can you listen to the words of the *śramaṇa* Gautama and accept them as right? When he says, ‘I do not subscribe to any views holding that the self and the world are permanent and so on, up to ‘the Tathāgata has neither an end nor no end,’ because they do not accord with true meanings,’ how can you accept such a statement? We do not consider these words to be acceptable.”

I told those *brāhmaṇa* ascetics, “The *śramaṇa* Gautama explained that he does not subscribe to views holding that the self and the world are permanent and so on, up to ‘the Tathāgata has neither an end nor no end,’ because they do not accord with true meanings. I do not necessarily accept that statement, [just as you do not,] but [I know that] the *śramaṇa* Gautama has realized deliverance, abides in the Dharma, and that all his statements are in accord with the Dharma. On what grounds could I oppose words that reflect his wisdom? When the *śramaṇa* Gautama expresses truthful words with such subtlety, you cannot oppose them just to be contradictory.”

The Buddha said:

The words of censure uttered by those *brāhmaṇa* ascetics against you,

such as, “How can you listen to the words of the *śramaṇa* Gautama and accept them as right,” are at fault. Why? Because in my teaching I distinguish between two types of truth: (1) absolutely determinate truth and (2) indeterminate truth. What is indeterminate truth? The views that have been repeated, namely, that the self and the world are permanent and so on, up to “the Tathāgata has neither an end nor no end,” belong to the indeterminate category. I too use these views when teaching doctrine, but I use them only as indeterminate truths. The reason they are indeterminate is that they do not accord with true meanings, do not accord with the doctrine, have nothing to do with the practice of austerity as the foundation, and do not represent the eradication of desire, or the state of cessation, or the state of quiescence, or the goal of perfect enlightenment, or the life of *śramaṇas*, or the state of nirvana. For this reason, O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, even though I use these views when teaching doctrine, I do not regard them as determinate truths. What views, then, are determinate? I consider the truths of suffering, of causal aggregates, of cessation, and of the essential path of liberation [from suffering] as determinate truths. The reason they are determinate is that they accord with true meanings, accord with the doctrine, have the practice of austerity as their foundation, and represent the eradication of desire, the state of cessation, the state of quiescence, the goal of perfect enlightenment, the life of *śramaṇas*, and the state of nirvana. Therefore, I teach the Four Noble Truths as determinate truths. 111c

O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, there are some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who believe in attaining absolute happiness in a world in the afterlife. I asked one of them, “Do you believe in attaining absolute happiness in a world in the afterlife?” He replied, “Yes, I do, just as you have said.” I again asked, “Have you ever known or seen this state of absolute happiness in such a world?” He replied, “No, I have neither known nor seen it.” I again asked, “The gods of that world enjoy the state of absolute happiness. Have you ever seen them?” He replied, “No, I have neither known nor seen them.” I again asked, “Do you meet with the gods of that world, and do you converse with them or practice meditation together?” He replied, “No, I don’t.” I again asked, “Has any one of the gods who enjoy absolute happiness in that world ever come to say to you: ‘Since your conduct has been honest and direct, you will be reborn in the world of absolute happiness.

I was honest and direct and I was born there, and I have been enjoying life there ever since. Let us enjoy life there together?" He replied, "No, no one has." I again asked, "Have you been able to use the supernormal power of your mind to create another body composed of the four material elements and endowed with all the sense faculties and physical limbs without exception?" He replied, "No, I have not."

What do you think, O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic? Should the words of those *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* be regarded as honest and truthful?

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic Poṭṭhapāda replied, "Their words are neither honest nor truthful, sir."

The Buddha said:

It is just like a philanderer bragging about his conquest of some imaginary beauty by praising her sexual prowess. When others ask, "How do you know her? Is she from the east, west, north, or south?", he replies, "I don't know." Again, when others ask, "Where can she be found—in what town, district, or village?", he replies, "I don't know." When they ask, "What about her family? Is she from a *kṣatriya* family, or from a *brāhmaṇa*, *vaiśya*, or *sūdra* family?", he again replies, "I don't know." And when they ask, "What does she look like? Is she tall or short, stout or delicate, dark or light? Is she beautiful or ugly?", he again replies, "I don't know." O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, could the story [of the woman] told by that man be regarded as honest and truthful?

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic replied, "No, sir. It could not be regarded as honest or true."

[The Buddha continued:]

O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, suppose a man sets up a ladder in an empty spot. Someone asks, "Why are you setting up a ladder in an empty spot?" The man replies, "I wish to ascend to the next floor of the building." Others ask, "What building? Is it in the east, west, north, or south?" He replies, "I do not know." What do you think, O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic? Wouldn't it be far-fetched to set up a ladder in an empty spot and try to ascend to the next floor of an imaginary building?

[The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic] replied, “Exactly, sir. Such behavior would be far-fetched.”

The Buddha said, “It is the same with the beliefs of the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*. What they teach is fanciful and unreal. 112a

The Buddha said to Poṭṭhapāda:

You said previously that your physical body is composed of four material elements and six sense faculties that were inherited from your mother and father and nurtured through childhood, and hence is nothing but an embodiment of impermanence, which will become worn out and [eventually] perish; and that it would be such a person that has a self. Now, I teach that this corporeal body [in which you assumed the existence of a self] is defiled, [yet] its purity and genuineness can be realized, together with deliverance from suffering. In your thinking, perhaps you would assert that defilements cannot be annihilated and that no pure and genuine elements can arise [where there continue to be defilements]. Do not ever fall prey to this [pessimistic] thought when you are in the midst of suffering. Why? Because defilements can be annihilated, causing pure and genuine elements to arise. When you experience delight and realize the state of joy and bliss and abide therein, your knowledge will expand through genuine mindfulness and mental concentration.

O *brāhmaṇa* ascetic, I teach that defilements are found not only in the heavenly body belonging to the realms of desire and form, but also in the heavenly body in the [formless] realms of infinite space, of infinite consciousness, of nothingness, and of neither thought nor nought. Yet I also teach that the purity and genuineness of that heavenly body can be realized, along with deliverance from suffering. In your thinking, perhaps you would assert that the defilements cannot be annihilated and that no pure and genuine elements can arise [where there continue to be defilements]. Do not ever fall prey to this [pessimistic] thought when you are in the midst of suffering. Why? Because defilements can be annihilated, causing pure and genuine elements to arise. When you experience delight and realize the state of joy and bliss and abide therein, your knowledge will expand through genuine mindfulness and mental concentration.

Then Hastiśāriputra asked the Buddha:

O World-honored One, when a person's physical body in the realm of desire is composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties, does that person simultaneously have a heavenly body in the realms of desire and form, as well as in the formless realms of infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and neither thought nor nonthought? O World-honored One, when a person's heavenly body is in the realm of desire, does the person simultaneously have a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties in the realm of desire, and a heavenly body in the realm of form as well as in the formless realms of infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and neither thought nor nonthought? O World-honored One, when a person's heavenly body is in the realm of form, does the person simultaneously have a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties in the realm of desire, and a heavenly body in the realm of desire as well as in the formless realms of infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and neither thought nor nonthought? Continuing in this manner, when a person's heavenly body belongs to the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, does the person simultaneously have a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire and a heavenly body belonging to the realm of desire as well as to the realms of form, infinite space, infinite consciousness, and nothingness?

The Buddha replied:

When there is a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire, it is only the physical body composed of the four gross elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire, and not a heavenly body belonging to the realms of desire or form, or one belonging to the formless realms of infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness, and neither thought nor nonthought. Continuing in this manner, when a person's heavenly body belongs to the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, it is only the heavenly body of that person that belongs to the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, and not a physical body composed of the four

material elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire, or a heavenly body belonging to the realms of desire or form or to the formless realms of infinite space, infinite consciousness, and nothingness.

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O Hastiśāriputra, it is like the changing states that occur in milk. Milk (*kṣīra*) changes to become cheese, then cheese changes to become fresh butter, fresh butter changes to become butter, [and finally] butter changes to become ghee (clarified butter). Ghee is the best of all. O Hastiśāriputra, when milk is in the state of milk, it is called milk and not called cheese, butter, or ghee. Continuing in this manner, when there is clarified butter it is called ghee and not milk, cheese, or fresh butter.

O Hastiśāriputra, your question can be answered in precisely the same way. When there is a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire, it is not a heavenly body belonging to the realm of desire or a heavenly body belonging to the realm of form, and so on, up to the formless realm of neither thought nor nonthought. Similarly, when there is a heavenly body in the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, it is only a heavenly body and not a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties in the realm of desire, or any heavenly body in the realm of desire, in the realm of form, and so on, up to the realm of nothingness.

O Hastiśāriputra, how do you reply when others ask, “Is your body in the past simultaneously your body in the present as well as your future body?” Or “Is your future body simultaneously your past body as well as your body in the present?” Or “Is your present body simultaneously your body in the past as well as your future body?” What do you say to such questions?

Hastiśāriputra replied:

Sir, if I am plied with such questions, I reply as follows. The past body belongs to the past and is neither the body in the present nor the future body. Again, the future body belongs to the future and is neither the past body nor the body in the present. Again, the present body belongs to the present and is neither the past body nor the future body.

The Buddha said to Hastiśāriputra:

O Hastiśāriputra, your previous question can be answered in precisely the same way. When there is a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire, it is not a heavenly body belonging to the realm of desire or a heavenly body belonging to the realm of form, and so on, up to the formless realm of neither thought nor nonthought. Similarly, when there is a heavenly body in the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, it is only a heavenly body and not a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties in the realm of desire, or any heavenly body in the realm of desire, and so on, up to the [formless] realm of nothingness.

Again, O Hastiśāriputra, if others ask, “Did you perish in the past, will you come again in the future, and are you now in the present?”, what do you say to them?

Hastiśāriputra replied:

If I am so questioned, I shall reply: “I once perished in the past, and I was not nonexistent. I will come into existence in the future, and I will not be nonexistent. I now exist in the present, and I am not nonexistent.”

The Buddha said:

112c O Hastiśāriputra, your previous question can be answered in the same way. When there is a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties belonging to the realm of desire, it is not a heavenly body belonging to the realm of desire and so on, or a heavenly body belonging to the formless realm of neither thought nor nonthought. Similarly, when there is a heavenly body in the realm of neither thought nor nonthought, it is not a physical body composed of the four material elements and six sense faculties in the realm of desire, or any heavenly body in the realm of desire, and so on, up to the [formless] realm of nothingness.

Then Hastiśāriputra said to the Buddha:

O World-honored One, now I take my refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. As I wish to become a lay devotee, may Your Reverence accept me as a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the dissolution

of my body at the end of life, I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking what is not given, I will refrain from indulging in sexual pleasure, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.

Poṭṭhapāda then asked the Buddha, “Sir, is it possible for me to renounce domestic life and receive higher ordination?”

The Buddha replied:

If someone who has followed a different religious order wishes to be ordained in this Dharma, he must remain a probationer for a period of four months, observing [how to go about the life of the sangha] and receiving appraisal of its members. After that, he may be allowed to renounce domestic life and receive higher ordination. This is the regular proceeding, and it is simply for the sake of examining the character of a new convert.

The *brāhmaṇa* ascetic said:

[Sir, I understand that] someone who has followed a different religious order and wishes to renounce domestic life to receive higher ordination in the Buddha’s religion must remain a probationer for a period of four months, observing [how to go about the life of the sangha] and receiving the appraisal of its members. After that, he may be allowed to renounce domestic life and receive higher ordination. For my part, I would not mind remaining a probationer for four years if I could take the vow of renunciation and receive higher ordination after thoroughly observing how to go about the life of the sangha and receiving the due approval of its members.

The Buddha said:

I spoke about the rule because there is such a rule, but it is only for evaluating the character of a new convert. [In your case, no probationary period is needed.]

Poṭṭhapāda was allowed to immediately renounce domestic life and receive higher ordination, and he carried out the practice of pure and genuine austerity with firm determination. Before too long, he directly experienced the termination of the cause of birth and death in the present life; his practice of

austerity was complete; that which must be done [for religious salvation] was accomplished; and, having realized the ultimate state of arhatship, for him there was no more birth.

At that time, having heard the Buddha's teaching, Poṭṭhapāda was delighted to receive it and reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

[End of Sutra 28: Poṭṭhapāda]

Sutra 29

Lohitya

(*Dīgha Nikāya 12: Lohicca Suttanta*)

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was visiting the communities of the country of Kauśala, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*, he stopped overnight in a *śiṃśapā* forest north of a *brāhmaṇa* village called Sālavatikā. A *brāhmaṇa* called Lohitya resided in a grove of *śāla* trees in the village, which was well populated and prosperous because King Prasenajit had granted it to the *brāhmaṇa* as a fief, exempting it from taxation. Lohitya was from a pure family line of seven generations and was never slighted by anyone in society. He was thoroughly versed in the three ancient collections of hymns (Vedas) and had detailed knowledge of the various *brāhmaṇa* scriptures, as well as a comprehensive command of the subtleties of secular literature. He was also well trained in reading the physiognomy of magnanimous personalities, in divining good and bad omens, and in conducting ceremonial proceedings and sacrificial rites.

On that occasion, the *brāhmaṇa* was duly informed:

The *śramaṇa* Gautama, son of the Śākya clan, having renounced domestic life and realized the ultimate spiritual goal, has been visiting the communities of the country of Kauśala and has [now] reached the *śiṃśapā* forest. Gautama's good name is renowned and [his accomplishment] has been proclaimed everywhere, in all lands under the sky, as worthy of the ten supreme titles, namely, One Perfected in Practice, One Liberated from Attachment, Perfectly Enlightened One, and so on. Among all the gods and humans, as well as all the evil ones and their lord, and the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* too, he alone has directly experienced the realization of enlightenment and teaches others [how to realize it]. When he expounds on the Dharma his words are good in the beginning, good in the middle, and good in the end. All the words he utters are invariably endowed with

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true meanings and real essences, and are in accord with his practice of pure and genuine austerity.

“Everyone should visit this sage and pay him their respects,” the *brāhmaṇa* said to himself. “I must now go and see him along with the others.”

With these thoughts, the *brāhmaṇa* left the village and soon arrived at the *śiṃśapā* forest. After greeting the Buddha with a bow, he took a seat to one side. Thereupon, the Buddha taught him the Dharma, imparting instruction, benefit, and delight.

Having heard the teaching, the *brāhmaṇa* said, “Sir, may I request that the World-honored One and the members of the sangha accept my invitation for almsfood tomorrow.”

The World-honored One remained silent, accepting the invitation. Observing the Buddha's silence, the *brāhmaṇa* understood that his invitation had been accepted. He arose from his seat, circumambulated the Buddha three times, and then departed for home.

Shortly after leaving the Buddha's resting place, Lohitya erroneously thought to himself:

Many *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* acquire precious knowledge and receive a lofty spiritual experience, but they should not try to teach others about what they acquired or experienced. If they keep those realizations to themselves there is no need to teach others. It would be like destroying an old prison only to build another one anew, which would be worthless and wrong.

The *brāhmaṇa* returned to the *sāla* grove and prepared various dishes of food and drink throughout the night. When the meal was ready, he said to his barber, “Take this message to the *śiṃśapā* forest and tell the *śramaṇa* Gautama, ‘Everything is ready, sir.’”

The barber soon reached the resting place of the Buddha and, after venerating him, conveyed the message. The World-honored One put on his outer robe, and with almsbowl in hand walked to the *sāla* grove accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*. On the way, the barber, who had stayed in close attendance to the Buddha, rearranged his outer clothing to bare his right elbow and respectfully joined his palms together. Then he kneeled with his left knee on the ground and said to the Buddha:

Not long after leaving the Buddha's resting place, the *brāhmaṇa* Lohitya had the misconception that *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who acquire precious knowledge and receive a lofty spiritual experience should not try to teach others about what they acquired or experienced. If they keep those realizations to themselves there is no need to teach others. It would be like destroying an old prison only to build another one anew, which would be worthless and wrong. May I request that the World-honored One relieve [the *brāhmaṇa* Lohitya] of this wrong view.

The Buddha replied, "That is a minor offense that can be removed very easily."

With that, the World-honored One arrived at the *brāhmaṇa*'s house and took his seat at the place that had been made ready. Then the *brāhmaṇa* served the Buddha and the members of the sangha various dishes from his own hands. When the meal was finished, the bowls were cleaned and rinsing water was served. The *brāhmaṇa* brought out a small cushion and sat down before the Buddha. The Buddha said to Lohitya:

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Not long after you left my place last night, you had the misconception that *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* who acquire precious knowledge and receive a lofty spiritual experience should not try to teach others about what they acquired or experienced. If they keep those realizations to themselves there is no need to teach others, as the attempt would be worthless and wrong. Now is this really what you thought?

Lohitya replied, "Yes, it is, sir."

The Buddha said:

You should not entertain such a mistaken view. Why? Because what you thought applies only to three kinds of [faulty] teaching. You may find some guidance in these examples.

What are the three kinds of [faulty] teaching? Those who shave their hair and beard, put on the three robes [of a mendicant], renounce domestic life, and apply themselves to the practice of austerity should eradicate all defilements in this life and advance on the path to realizing the insight that transcends ordinary existence. The first example of [faulty] teaching is by those who neither eradicate defilements in this life nor acquire the

insight that transcends ordinary existence, yet they presume to teach students without having completed their own realization. Students will not respect such a teacher, nor will they offer him due service. Because of this, this type of teacher and his students should merely reside together and rely on someone else's guidance.

O Lohitya, those students may say, "O teacher, since you have shaved your hair and beard, donned the three robes, renounced domestic life, and applied yourself to the practice of austerity, you should have eradicated all defilements and realized the insight that transcends ordinary existence. However, you have not been able to do so, and you have been teaching us without having completed your own realization."

Thus, those students will not respect [that teacher], nor will they offer him due service as their teacher, and both teacher and students will merely be residing together.

The Buddha said:

O Lohitya, this is like destroying an old prison only to build another one anew. It is a corrupt way to proceed and one should take caution, because it bears on how the rules of the Vinaya discipline and the precepts of the wise and saintly disciples are observed in both timing and deportment.

Again, the Buddha said to Lohitya:

The second type of [faulty] teaching is by those who have shaved their hair and beards, put on the three robes of a mendicant, renounced domestic life, and applied themselves to the practice of austerity, but they have not yet been able to eradicate all defilements even though they have managed to gain some degree of understanding regarding the insight that transcends ordinary existence. They still teach students without having completed their own realization. Again, a teacher and students in such a situation should merely reside together and rely on someone else's guidance.

O Lohitya, these students may say, "Our teacher has shaved his hair and beard, donned the three robes, renounced domestic life, and applied himself to the practice of austerity. He should have eradicated defilements and realized the insight that transcends ordinary existence, but he has not been able to eradicate all defilements. Although he has gained some degree

of understanding regarding the insight that transcends ordinary existence, he has been teaching us without having eradicated all defilements, and this has caused us to not respect him or offer him due service, and we are all merely residing together.”

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The Buddha said:

This is like walking behind another person and rubbing that person's back with your hand. It is a corrupt way to proceed and one should take caution, because it bears on how the rules of the Vinaya discipline and the precepts of the wise and saintly disciples are observed in both timing and deportment.

Again, the Buddha said:

The third type of [faulty] teaching is by those who have shaved their hair and beards, put on the three robes of a mendicant, renounced domestic life, and applied themselves to the practice of austerity, but they have not yet been able to eradicate all defilements even though they have managed to gain some degree of understanding regarding the insight that transcends ordinary existence. Still they teach students without having completed their own realization. The students, however, respect the teacher and offer him due service, and teacher and students reside together.

O Lohitya, those students may say, “Our teacher has shaved his hair and beard, donned the three robes, renounced domestic life, and applied himself to the practice of austerity, and he should have eradicated defilements and realized the insight that transcends ordinary existence, but he has not been able to eradicate all defilements. Even though he has gained some degree of understanding regarding the insight that transcends ordinary existence, he has been teaching us without having eradicated all defilements. However, we still respect him and offer him due service as our teacher, and thus we reside together.”

The Buddha said:

O Lohitya, this is like neglecting the field where one should be sowing seeds and going off to weed another field. It is a corrupt way to proceed and one should take caution, because it bears on how the rules of the

Vinaya discipline and the precepts of the wise and saintly disciples are observed in both timing and deportment.

O Lohitya, there is just one supreme World-honored One in this world, [and not two.] Before his appearance in the world there can be no upheaval. Why is the World-honored One exceptional and supreme? The Tathāgata appears in this world as one who is totally free from defilement and perfectly enlightened, and so on. He has acquired the three kinds of supernatural knowledge that annihilates ignorance and allows the illumination of insight, eliminating all forms of darkness and delusion to realize the total eradication of defilements and reveal the great light of the Dharma. Why? Because this fundamental realization can only be achieved through constant endeavor without any slackening, and through freedom from all worldly mentality, practice in seclusion, diligent mindfulness, and mental concentration. O Lohitya, the truth is that there can be no upheaval in this world without the appearance of the supreme World-honored One.

O Lohitya, there are four results (*phala*) in the life of a *śramaṇa*. What are the four? They are the saintly states of the stream-enterer (*srota-āppana*), once-returner (*sakṛdāgāmin*), nonreturner (*anāgāmin*), and arhat. What do you think, O Lohitya? Suppose that one could realize the fruits of the four saintly states by listening to a discourse on the Dharma; and suppose also that someone interrupts the discourse, saying “Stop this talk about the Dharma,” and the teacher obeys and stops teaching. Would anyone listening to the discourse attain the intended result?

Lohitya answered, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] asked again, “Without attaining the result, can one attain rebirth in heaven?”

Lohitya answered, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] asked again:

So the person who stops the teacher's discourse on the Dharma cannot attain the result, and his [or her] rebirth in heaven becomes impossible. Would such a mind be considered good or evil?

Lohitya answered “Sir, it is an evil mind.”

The Buddha asked again, “When someone with a mind that is not good is reborn, is it into a good destiny or an evil one?”

Lohitya answered, “He will be born into an evil course of life, sir.”
[The Buddha continued:]

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O Lohitya, it is as if someone were to say to King Prasenajit, “The king should alone enjoy all the wealth of the lands and states that he rules, and should not share any of it with others.” What do you think, O Lohitya? If the king agreed with this advice he would cut off all the grants he has made to others, wouldn’t he?

Lohitya answered, “Yes, sir. He would do that.”

[The Buddha asked again,] “Would a mind that would terminate all grants and gifts to others be regarded as a good mind or an evil one?”

Lohitya answered, “It is a mind that is up to no good, sir.”

[The Buddha] asked again, “With a mind that is not good, would one be born into a good destiny or an evil one?”

Lohitya answered, “They will be born into an evil course of life, sir.”

The Buddha said to Lohitya:

It is just the same with someone who stops his teacher’s discourse on the Dharma, especially when those who are listening to the teaching are intended to realize the four results of the life of a *śramāṇa*. Now, if someone obstructs a teacher’s discourse by saying “Stop this talk about the Dharma,” and the teacher obeys and stops teaching, does anyone listening to the discourse attain the intended result?

Lohitya answered, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] asked again, “Without attaining the result, can one attain rebirth in heaven?”

Lohitya answered, “No, sir.”

[The Buddha] asked again:

So the person who stops the teacher’s discourse on the Dharma cannot attain the result and his rebirth in heaven becomes impossible. Would such a mind be considered good or evil?

Lohitya answered, “Sir, it is an evil mind.”

The Buddha asked again, “When someone with a mind that is not good is reborn, is it into a good destiny or an evil one?”

Lohitya answered, "He will be born into an evil course of life, sir."
[The Buddha continued:]

O Lohitya, if someone says to you, "The property that belongs to the village of Sālavatikā is your fief [granted by the king]. You alone should enjoy it, as it is only for your own use and not for others. What good does it do to give anything to others?" What do you think, O Lohitya? If you were to follow this advice you would stop all gifts and payments to others, wouldn't you?

[Lohitya] replied, "Yes, I would."

[The Buddha] asked again, "When someone advises another person to terminate all gifts and payments to others, is that a good or evil mind?"

[Lohitya] replied, "It is an evil mind, sir."

[The Buddha] asked again, "With a mind that is not good, would one be born into a good destiny or an evil one?"

Lohitya answered, "They will be born into an evil course of life, sir."
[The Buddha continued:]

It is just the same with anyone who stops the discourse of a Dharma teacher, especially when there are others listening to the discourse in order to attain the fruit of the four saintly states. If the teacher allows the disruption [and stops the discourse], will the listeners reach the goal of the four saintly states?

[Lohitya] replied, "No, sir."

[The Buddha] asked again, "If the listeners cannot attain the fruit of the saintly states, will they be reborn in heaven?"

[Lohitya] replied, "No, sir."

[The Buddha] asked again, "When someone stops a Dharma discourse and prevents others from attaining the fruit of the saintly states, and thus from rebirth in heaven, is that a good or evil mind?"

[Lohitya] replied, "An evil mind, sir."

[The Buddha] asked again, "With a mind that is not good, would one be born into a good destiny or an evil one?"

Lohitya answered, "He will be born into an evil course of life, sir."

At that moment, the *brāhmaṇa* said to the Buddha:

O World-honored One, I take my refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. As I wish to become a lay devotee, may Your Reverence accept me as a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the dissolution of the body at the end of life, I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking what is not given, I will refrain from indulging in sexual pleasure, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.

The Buddha completed his discourse on the Dharma. The *brāhmaṇa* Lohitya, having heard the Buddha's teaching, was delighted to receive it and reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught. 114b

[End of Sutra 29: Lohitya]

Sutra 30

A Buddhist Cosmology (No Parallel in *Dīgha Nikāya*)

Article 1: The Land of Jambudvīpa

Thus have I heard. Once, when the Buddha was visiting the city of Śrāvastī, accompanied by one thousand two hundred and fifty *bhikṣus*, he stayed at the Kareri-kuṭīkā cloister of Anāthapiṇḍika Monastery in Prince Jeta's Grove. After the morning almsround a few of the *bhikṣus* met in the lecture hall to talk, saying:

Venerables, it is beyond our imagining how and why this world could be slated for destruction and then reconstruction. What will become of the myriad homes of sentient beings?"

The World-honored One was meditating in seclusion but through his supernatural power of crystal-clear hearing he overheard the discussion among the *bhikṣus* gathered in the lecture hall. He immediately got up from his seat in the Kareri-kuṭīkā cloister, went to the lecture hall, and took his place. Though he already knew [what they had been talking about], the World-honored One asked, "O *bhikṣus*, what have you been discussing?"

The *bhikṣus* recounted their discussion to the Buddha:

Sir, we were meeting after the day's meal and someone asked, "Venerables, it is beyond our imagining how this world could be slated for destruction and then recreation. What will become of the myriad homes of sentient beings?"

At that, the World-honored One said:

Very good, very good. Those who renounce domestic life take up two kinds of practice: first, silent introspection as practiced by the wise and

saintly disciples, and second, analysis of religious doctrine. As you have met in this hall, you must not only follow the meditation practice of the wise and saintly disciples but also discuss and debate doctrinal issues. O *bhikṣus*, would you like to hear the Tathāgata's recollection of the creation and destruction of this world and the fate of the lands and communities where sentient beings reside?

The *bhikṣus* replied, "Yes, O World-honored One. We are eager to hear your account. Anything you reveal will be gratefully received and we shall observe it carefully."

The Buddha said, "Listen attentively, you must retain what I say and keep it in mind. I will give you the very core of the matter."

With that, the Buddha began his discourse:

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The sun and moon regularly pass over the four continents and illuminate them, [as we have always experienced]. Yet there are a thousand worlds just like this [in the universe]. In these worlds there are a thousand suns and moons passing over a thousand lofty Mount Sumerus, as well as four thousand smaller lands and four thousand larger lands, four thousand oceans and four thousand greater oceans, four thousand *nāgas* (dragons) and four thousand greater *nāgas*, four thousand *garuḍas* (mythological bird) and four thousand greater *garuḍas*, four thousand evil paths and four thousand greater evil paths, four thousand kings and four thousand greater kings, and seven thousand great trees, eight thousand great hells, ten thousand great mountains, a thousand lords of Yama, a thousand appearances of the four guardian gods, a thousand occurrences of the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods (Trāyastriṃśa), a thousand Yama Heavens, a thousand Tuṣita Heavens, a thousand Nirmāṇarati Heavens, where the residents enjoy pleasures of their own creation, a thousand Paranirmitavaśavartin Heavens, where the inhabitants enjoy pleasures created by others, and a thousand Brahmā Heavens. Together, all these make up the small universe, which consists of a thousand such worlds.

[Now,] there is also a larger universe, consisting of a thousand of these small universes, called the middle universe. [In addition,] there is a great universe that consists of a thousand middle universes. This is called the triple thousand-great universe (*sanqian taqian shijie*). All of the great

universe [that comprises many thousands of middle and small universes] undergoes the cycle of creation and destruction, and each locality where sentient beings reside is called a buddha land (*buddha-kṣetra*).

The Buddha continued:

The depth of this great earth is one hundred and sixty-eight thousand *yojanas*²³ and its circumference is beyond measure. The earth rests on a layer of water three thousand and thirty *yojanas* deep, whose circumference is immeasurable. The water rides over a layer of airy wind that is six thousand and forty *yojanas* deep with an immeasurable circumference. O *bhikṣus*, the depth of the great ocean is eighty-four thousand *yojanas* and its circumference is immeasurable. The part of Mount Sumeru that is submerged in the ocean is eighty-four thousand *yojanas* deep, and the part that rises above the ocean's surface into the atmosphere is eighty-four thousand *yojanas* high. The base of the mountain adheres to a foundation of very hard earth. On the mountain's summit no rough or uneven terrain can be found and many varieties of trees grow, emitting exquisite fragrance that permeates the forest. A number of wise and saintly hermits live in this forest, which is [also] the abode of the great god Yama. A layer of pure gold sand runs through the foundation of the mountain, and on its four sides, rising as high as seven hundred *yojanas*, are hillocks in the variegated hues of seven kinds of precious stones, which gradually fall away in a long curve to reveal the expanse of the ocean beyond.

The pathway on Mount Sumeru is a stairway strewn with seven precious stones. At its broadest, on the lower slope of the mountain, it is sixty *yojanas* wide. On both sides of the pathway are sevenfold walls made of precious stones, embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees. The golden wall is endowed with silver gates, the silver wall with golden gates, the quartz wall with lapis gates, the lapis wall with quartz gates, the ruby wall with agate gates, the agate wall with ruby gates, and the emerald wall with gates decorated with many kinds of precious stones. The railings are similarly decorated: the golden railing is ornamented with ropes made of silver, the silver railing with ropes made of gold, the quartz railing with ropes made of lapis, the lapis railing with ropes made of quartz, the ruby railing with ropes made of agate, the agate

railing with ropes made of rubies, and the emerald railing with a variety of precious stones. Over these railings are hung decorative nets strung with various ornaments. From the golden net hangs a silver bell; from the silver net hangs a golden bell; from the lapis net hangs a quartz bell; from the quartz net hangs a lapis bell; from the ruby net hangs an agate bell; from the agate net hangs a ruby bell; and from the emerald net hangs a bell inlaid with various precious stones.

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The golden trees have golden trunks and branches and silver flowers and fruit. The silver trees have silver trunks and branches and golden flowers and fruit. The quartz trees have quartz trunks and branches and lapis flowers and leaves, while the lapis trees have lapis trunks and branches and quartz flowers and leaves. The ruby trees have ruby trunks and branches and agate flowers and leaves, while the agate trees have agate trunks and branches and flowers and leaves made of rubies. The emerald trees have emerald trunks and branches and flowers and leaves made of a variety of precious stones.

Each of the seven walls has four gates, protected by barriers. Each wall, topped with a pavilion and veranda, encloses a bathing pond and pleasure garden filled with foliage and flowers made of precious treasures. The trees standing in lines are also made of precious treasures, and bear flowers and fruit in abundance. Exquisite fragrance arises in all directions, pleasing everyone. Wild ducks and hawks; mandarin ducks, both male and female; and a host of innumerable rare birds sing harmoniously together.

The pathway on the middle slope of Mount Sumeru is forty *yojanas* wide. Here too, on both sides, are sevenfold walls made of precious stones, embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, seven lines of trees, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as below. On the upper slope the pathway is twenty *yojanas* wide, with sevenfold walls made of precious stones on either side, embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, seven lines of trees, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as below.

The Buddha [continued] his discourse to the *bhikṣus*:

Along the pathway on the lower slope lives a bird called the *garuḍa*. On the middle slope lives a deity called Mālādhāra, and on the upper slope

lives the deity Sadāmatta. The foothills [around the mountain] are forty-two thousand *yojanas* high, and the palaces of the four guardian gods [located] on them are ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees adorned with bells made of precious stones, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

On top of Mount Sumeru are the palaces of the thirty-three gods, also ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, with golden walls and silver gates, and silver walls and golden gates, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of the god Yama. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of the gods of Tuṣita Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Nirmāṇarati Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Brahmakāyika Heaven.

Between Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven and Brahmakāyika Heaven is the palace of the lord of the evil ones, Māra, an area of sixty thousand *yojanas* surrounded by sevenfold walls with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, and so on, with innumerable birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

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Beyond the Brahmakāyika Heaven, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Ābhāsvara Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Śubhakarṣna Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Anabraka Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Puṇyaprasava Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Asaṃjñīsattva Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Bṛhatphala Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Abṛha Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Atapa Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Sudṛśa Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Sudarśana Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, is the palace of Akaniṣṭha Heaven. Beyond this, one *yojana* higher, are the gods of Ākāśānantyāyatana Heaven, the gods of Vijñānānantyāyatana Heaven, the gods of Ākiṃcanyāyatana Heaven, and the gods of Naivasamjñānāsamjñāyātana Heaven. All of this constitutes the abodes of

sentient beings who are confined to their respective realms. All sentient beings are inherently subject to the law of birth, old age, illness, and death, they invariably acquire a configuration of the five psychophysical elements, and thus they receive nothing more nor less than an existential becoming.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

To the north of Mount Sumeru is a land called Uttarakuru, a square area measuring ten thousand *yojanas* on each side. The faces of the people there also are square, reflecting the shape of their land. To the east of Mount Sumeru is a land called Pūrvavideha, which is round with a radius of nine thousand *yojana*. The faces of the people there also are round, reflecting the form of their land. To the west of Mount Sumeru is a land called Aparagodānīya, shaped like a half moon, with a radius of eight thousand *yojana*. The faces of the people there similarly reflect the form of their land. To the south of Mount Sumeru is a land called Jambudvīpa, which is narrower in the south and broad and open in the north, measuring seven thousand *yojanas* in length and breadth. The faces of the people of Jambudvīpa also reflect the form of their land. In the northern sky above Mount Sumeru a golden source of light illuminates the northern region. In the eastern sky above Mount Sumeru a silvery source of light illuminates the eastern region. In the western sky above Mount Sumeru a quartz source of light illuminates the western region. In the southern sky above Mount Sumeru a source of light made of lapis illuminates the southern region.

In the northern land of Uttarakuru there is a great tree called Mango, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, rising to a height of one hundred *yojanas*, whose branches and leaves spread out in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. In the eastern land of Pūrvavideha there is a great tree called Jiēlanfou, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, a height of one hundred *yojanas*, and branches and leaves spreading out in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. In the western land of Aparagodānīya there is a great tree called Jintí, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, a height of one hundred *yojanas*, and branches and leaves spreading out in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. Under this tree there is a rock tower one *yojana* high, on which is carved an image of cattle. In the southern land of Jambudvīpa there is a great tree called Jambu, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, a height of one

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hundred *yojanas*, and branches and leaves spreading out in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. The trees of the *garuḍa* king and of the *nāga* king are called Julishanpoluo, and each has a diameter of seven *yojanas*, a height of one hundred *yojanas*, and branches and leaves spreading in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. The *asura* king also has a tree, called Shanhua, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, a height of one hundred *yojanas*, and branches and leaves spreading in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. The tree in Trāyastriṃśa Heaven is called Zhoudu, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, a height of one hundred *yojanas*, and branches and leaves spreading out in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*.

Near Mount Sumeru there is a mountain called Qutoluo, whose height, length, and breadth all measure forty-two thousand *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of eighty-four thousand *yojanas* from Mount Sumeru, and the area between them is filled with many water lilies, including blue (*utpala*), pink (*padma*), red (*kumuda*), and white (*punḍarīka*) varieties, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Yishatoluo, whose height, length, and breadth all measure twenty-one thousand *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of forty-two thousand *yojanas* from Mount Qu, and the area between them is filled with many water lilies, including blue, pink, red, and white varieties, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Shuchentoluo, with a height of one thousand *yojanas* and a length and breadth of two thousand *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of twenty-one thousand *yojanas* from Mount Yisha, and the area between them is filled with four varieties of water lilies, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Sudarśana, with a height of six thousand *yojanas* and a length and breadth of six thousand *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of twelve thousand *yojanas* from Mount Shuchen, and the area between them is filled with four varieties of water lilies, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Mashishang, with a height of three thousand *yojanas* and a length and breadth of three thousand *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of sixty thousand *yojanas* from Mount Sudarśana, and the area between them is filled with four varieties of water lilies, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

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Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Nimintoluo, with a height of twelve hundred *yojanas* and a length and breadth of twelve hundred *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of three thousand *yojanas* from Mount Mashi, and the area between them is filled with four varieties of water lilies, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Diaofu, with a height of six hundred *yojanas* and a length and breadth of six hundred *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of twelve hundred *yojanas* from Mount Nimin, and the area between them is filled with four varieties of water lilies, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is another mountain, called Jingangwei, with a height of three hundred *yojanas* and a length and breadth of three hundred *yojanas*. The foothills of this mountain also extend far and wide

and glitter with the variegated colors produced by the seven kinds of treasure. This mountain is located at a distance of six hundred *yojanas* from Mount Diaofu, and the area between them is filled with four varieties of water lilies, with reeds, pine trees, and bamboo growing among them, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance.

Not far from this mountain is a great ocean. On the northern shore of this ocean is a great tree called Jambu, with a diameter of seven *yojanas*, rising to a height of a hundred *yojanas*, with branches and leaves spreading out in all directions to a distance of fifty *yojanas*. There is a [vast] expanse of land in the neighborhood of this tree, where there are groves of [many] kinds of trees, such as mango trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *yenpo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *śāla* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *tāla* (palm) trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *nadoluo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *weinan* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *weini* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *nanni* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *sanna* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; sandalwood trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *quchouluo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *bonapoluo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *piluo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *xiangna* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *weili* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *anshiliu* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *weigan* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *helilei* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *pixilei* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *amolei* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; and *na* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*.

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[There are also] *ganzhe* (sugar cane) spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; reeds spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; bamboo spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *śāla* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *mugua* plants spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *damugua* plants spreading

over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *jietuo* flower trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *zhanpo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *poluoluo* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *xiumona* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *poshi* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *duoluoli* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; *jiaya* trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*; and grape trees spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*.

Beyond these many kinds of groves and far out to the horizon, the ground is covered by innumerable ponds, each spreading over a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas* and filled with pink, red, and white lotus blossoms, with poisonous snakes among them. Beyond these ponds lies a vast expanse consisting of a great lake called Udyāna (Youzhanna). Under the surface of the water in this lake is the passageway used by the *cakravartin* (universal ruler), measuring twelve *yojanas* wide. On both sides of this road are sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. When the *cakravartin* appears in the land of Jambudvīpa the water automatically recedes so that the expanse of the passageway stands [ready to be used].

116c Not far from this lake is a mountain called Youzhan. The mountain is beautiful and filled with luxuriant vegetation, abundant flowers and fruit, and much exquisite fragrance. All the different kinds of birds and animals, without exception, live here. Not far from Mount Youzhan is another mountain, called Suvamvaraṇa (“Golden Wall”), which has eighty thousand caves in which eighty thousand royal elephants reside. These elephants have white hides and multicolored heads, and each has six tusks and gold fillings in their teeth.

Beyond this mountain is another mountain, called Himalaya (“Snow Mountain”), five hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth, which plunges into the sea along its eastern and western edges to a depth of five hundred *yojanas*. Within the interior of this snowy mountain is a treasure mountain twenty *yojanas* high, as well as [several] hills that are a hundred *yojanas* high. On top of the snowy mountain is a lake known as Anavatapta, with a length and breadth of fifty *yojanas*, and spotlessly clean, transparent,

and pure water. Leading into [the lake] are stone terraces made from the seven kinds of treasure, protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all shining with the variegated colors of the seven kinds of treasure.

The railings are multihued: the golden railing is decorated with silver ropes, the silver railing with golden ropes, the quartz railing with lapis ropes, the lapis railing with quartz ropes, the ruby railing with agate ropes, the agate railing with ropes of rubies, and the emerald railing with ropes of various precious stones. Ornamental nets are draped over these railings; the golden net has a pendant silver bell, the silver net has a golden bell, the lapis net has a quartz bell, the quartz net has a lapis bell, the ruby net has an agate bell, the agate net has a ruby bell, and the net made of emeralds has a bell inlaid with various precious stones.

The golden *tāla* tree has golden roots and branches and silver leaves, flowers, and fruit. The silver *tāla* tree has silver roots and branches and golden leaves, flowers, and fruit. The quartz tree has quartz roots and branches and lapis leaves, flowers, and fruit, while the lapis tree has lapis roots and branches and quartz leaves, flowers, and fruit. The ruby tree has ruby roots and branches and agate leaves, flowers, and fruit, while the agate tree has agate roots and branches and ruby flowers, leaves, and fruit, and the emerald tree has emerald roots and branches and leaves, flowers, and fruit made of various precious stones. Around Anavatapta Lake are pleasant pavilions amid bathing ponds, many kinds of flowers blooming in thick layers, and many different kinds of flourishing trees with distinctive leaves, flowers, and fruit, all filling the air with exquisite fragrance, and many different kinds of rare birds singing harmoniously together.

The bottom of Anavatapta Lake is golden sand. Stairways made from the seven kinds of treasure enter the four sides of the lake: the golden stairway is lined with silver ropes, the silver stairway is lined with golden ropes, the lapis stairway is lined with quartz ropes, the quartz stairway is lined with lapis ropes, the agate stairway is lined with ruby ropes, the ruby stairway is lined with agate ropes, and the emerald stairway is lined with ropes made of various precious stones. All around the lake are [continuous] railings; the four kinds of water lilies show their blue, yellow, red, and white blossoms, and their variegated colors compose the image

of a wheel, with the roots forming the center. The roots emit sap as white as milk and sweet as honey. Again, around the lake are pleasant pavilions set amid bathing ponds and pleasure gardens, with many kinds of flowers blooming in thick layers, and many different kinds of trees with distinctive leaves, flowers, and fruit.

117a To the east of Anavatapta Lake the Ganges River flows from the mouth of a cow, and with its five hundred tributaries enters the eastern sea. To the south of the lake the Indus River flows from the mouth of a lion, and with its five hundred tributaries enters the southern sea. To the west of the lake the Pochahe River flows from the mouth of a horse, and with its five hundred tributaries enters the western sea. To the north of the lake the Situohé River flows from the mouth of an elephant, and with its five hundred tributaries enters the northern sea. In Anavatapta Palace there is a [pentagonal] pavilion with five pillars, where the *nāga* king has always lived.

The Buddha continued:

Why is [the lake] called Anavatapta? What does this name mean? Every *nāga* king in Jambudvīpa suffers from three kinds of trouble, except for the *nāga* king of this lake, who alone does not suffer from any trouble. What are the three? First, the *nāga* kings in the [southern] land of Jambudvīpa suffer from hot wind and sand that burns their skin and flesh, even down to the bone and marrow, when it comes into contact with their bodies, causing excruciating pain. Only the *nāga* king of Anavatapta Lake has no trouble of this kind. Second, evil winds sometimes tear through the palaces of the *nāga* kings, stripping away their fine clothing and exposing their naked bodies, to their embarrassment. Only the *nāga* king of Anavatapta Lake has no trouble of this kind. Third, the *nāga* kings constantly fear the giant *garuḍa*'s predatory raids on their palaces at times when they are vulnerable; their horror at the thought of being seized and eaten by this bird is most intense, leaving them in anguish. Only the *nāga* king of Anavatapta Lake has no trouble of this kind, because *garuḍas* that try to enter the lake all perish. Hence, the lake is called Anavatapta, which in Chinese means "absence of feverish agony."

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

To the right of Snow Mountain is a city called Vaiśālī, and there are seven dark hills north of this city. Lying north of these hills is Fragrant Mountain, where the sounds of music, song, and dance are always heard. There are two caves in that mountain; one is called Noon and the other Forenoon, and they have been furnished with seven heavenly treasures. [The air in the caves is] soft and gentle, fragrant and pure, like the touch of a heavenly garment. The master of music, king of all *gandharva* musicians, accompanied by an orchestra of five hundred [musicians], resides in these caves.

To the north of the two caves is the king of *śāla* trees, called Shanju, surrounded by eight thousand trees spreading out in all directions. Under this majestic *śāla* tree the king of the royal elephants, also called Shanju, abides. His powerful body is white and he can fly through the air and go everywhere. [When he appears] the hairs on his ruddy head shine with variegated colors, and his golden teeth contrast with his six tusks. This [elephant] king has a retinue of eight thousand royal elephants, who reside in the forest of eight thousand trees.

To the north of Shanju is a grand bathing pond called Motuoyan, fifty *yojanas* long and wide, around which eight thousand smaller ponds are arranged in a circle. The water in the pond is spotlessly clean and cool. [The pond] is surrounded by stone terraces made from the seven kinds of treasure, with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. The gold railing is ornamented with silver ropes, the silver railing with golden ropes, the quartz railing with lapis ropes, the lapis railing with quartz ropes, the ruby railing with agate ropes, the agate railing with ropes made of rubies, and the emerald railing with ropes made of various precious stones. Ornamental nets adorned with a variety of bells hang over the railings. The gold net has a pendant silver bell, the silver net has a golden bell, the lapis net has a quartz bell, the quartz net has a lapis bell, the ruby net has an agate bell, the agate net has a ruby bell, and the emerald net has a bell inlaid with various precious stones.

117b

The gold trees have golden roots and branches and silver leaves, flowers, and fruit. The silver tree has silver roots and branches and golden leaves, flowers, and fruit. The quartz tree has quartz roots and branches and lapis leaves, flowers, and fruit, while the lapis tree has lapis roots and branches

and quartz leaves, flowers, and fruit. The ruby tree has ruby roots and branches and agate leaves, flowers, and fruit, while the agate tree has agate roots and branches and ruby leaves, flowers, and fruit. The emerald tree has emerald roots and branches and leaves, flowers, and fruit made of various precious stones.

At the bottom of Anavatapta Lake is golden sand. Stairways made from the seven kinds of treasure enter the four sides of the lake: the golden stairway is lined with silver ropes, the silver stairway with golden ropes, the lapis stairway with quartz ropes, the quartz stairway with lapis ropes, the agate stairway with ruby ropes, the ruby stairway with agate ropes, and the emerald stairway with ropes made of various precious stones. All around the lake are [continuous] railings; the four kinds of water lilies show their blue, yellow, red, and white blossoms, and their variegated colors compose the image of a wheel, with the roots forming the center. The roots emit sap as white as milk and sweet as honey. Again, around the lake are pleasant pavilions set amid bathing ponds and pleasure gardens with many kinds of flowers blooming in thick layers and cool shade provided by many different kinds of trees with distinctive leaves, flowers, and fruit, and innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together.

The royal elephant king Shanju, wishing to visit the great pond to bathe and play, extends that wish to his retinue, and eight thousand elephants in turn become aware of the thought, "King Shanju is thinking of us; we need to see him." So the eight thousand elephants array themselves before their king. The elephant king then walks to Motuoyan Pond accompanied by his retinue of eight thousand. Some hold a canopy over the king to shade him, while others cool him with a fan, and still others play music to lead the procession. At the pond, the elephant king Shanju regally enters the water and, together with his company, enjoys a performance of royal music and dance. Some of the elephants wash his trunk while others cleanse his mouth, head, tusks, ears, stomach, back, tail, and feet. Some go off to pluck the roots of flowers, which they wash and offer to the king to eat. Others gather flowers and scatter them over the king.

The elephant king Shanju, having bathed and fed and enjoyed the royal entertainment with his company, now leaves the water and stands on the bank, facing the tree called Shanju, his abode. All eight thousand elephants

enter the pond to bathe, feed, and frolic with each other before lining up to follow their king. The elephant king, accompanied by attendants before and after, then returns to the tree called Shanju. As before, some elephants hold a canopy to shade the king, while others cool him with a fan, and still others play music to lead the procession. Returning to the tree, the elephant king now sits, lies down, or walks about as he pleases. The other elephants retire to their respective trees to sit, lie down, or walk about as they please.

Among those eight thousand trees, some are as large as eight *xin*,²⁴ while others measure ten to fifteen *xin*, but only the *śāla* tree of the elephant king Shanju is as large as sixteen *xin*. When the leaves of the eight thousand *śāla* trees fall to the ground, the wind rises and carries them outside the forest. And when the eight thousand elephants urinate and excrete, ghostly *yakṣas* carry those deposits out of the forest.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The elephant king Shanju has indeed gained meritorious blessings to this extraordinary degree. Even though it is only an animal, even an elephant is capable of receiving such uncommon rewards because of its [previous] merit.

Article 2: The Land of Uttarakuru

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

In the land of Uttarakuru there are many mountains, and many pleasure gardens with pavilions and bathing ponds alongside. Flowers bloom in profusion and the trees and plants, thriving in the cool, clean air, produce abundant fruit and flowers. Among them are many varieties of birds, singing harmoniously together. Many streams flow gently through these mountains without strong currents, and myriad flowers hang down from the bank to the water's surface as the river flows calmly and expansively. Trees shade both banks of the stream, their branches heavy with fruit and flowers. The ground is covered with soft grass, moistened by dew so that [the blades of grass] all turn to the right with the softness of a heavenly garment, with a sheen like the colors of a hummingbird and a delicate scent like jasmine (*poshijia*). When you step on the grass your foot sinks

down about four inches and the grass springs back after you lift your foot. Yet the ground has no unseen bumps or depressions and is as level as the surface of the palm of your hand.

118a O *bhikṣus*, on each of the four sides of the land of Uttarakuru there is an Anavatapta Lake. Each lake is one hundred *yojanas* long and wide, with spotlessly clean, transparent, and pure water. The lakes are surrounded by stone terraces made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together. The features of these lakes are indeed no different than those of the grand pond of Motuoyan. From the four lakes issue four rivers, each ten *yojanas* in breadth, flowing gently with no turbulence. Myriad flowers reach down from the bank as the river flows by, calmly and expansively. Both the riverbanks are shaded by trees, their branches heavy with fruit and flowers. The ground is covered with soft grass, moistened by dew so that [the blades] all turn to the right with the softness of a heavenly garment, with a sheen like the colors of a hummingbird and a delicate scent like jasmine. When you step on the grass your foot sinks down about four inches yet the grass springs back when you removes your foot. Yet the ground has no unseen bumps or depressions and is as level as the surface of the palm of your hand.

There are no mountain torrents or ditches, no pits or dark holes, no thorny plants or unexpected tree stumps or trunks, no insects such as mosquitoes or gadflies, no water lizards or snakes, no bees or grubs, no dangerous beasts such as leopards or tigers. The ground is naturally fertile, pure, and without any pebbles or stones. The negative and positive forces [of nature] are harmonized, and so too are the four seasons gentle and peaceful, neither [too] cold or hot. The land is free of storms and various misfortunes and is everywhere fertile and abundant, without filth or defilement or even a single clod of flying dirt, as if the ground had been brushed with the finest oil.

In the absence of winter and summer many varieties of grasses grow year around. Trees and plants grow luxuriously and produce abundant fruit and flowers. The ground is covered with soft grass, moistened by dew so that [the blades] all turn to the right with the softness of a heavenly garment, with a sheen like the colors of a hummingbird and a delicate

scent like jasmine. When you step on the grass your foot sinks down about four inches yet the grass springs back when you lift your foot. Yet the ground has no unseen bumps or depressions and is as level as the surface of the palm of your hand.

In that land rice grows naturally, without husks or any need for seeding. It appears like piles of tiny white flowers and is permeated with all good flavors, like the food of the Trāyastriṃśa gods. In that land there is a cooking pot that emits heavenly fragrance and a magical gem (*maṇi*), known as *yanguang*, that will heat any pot placed over it and automatically stop when the meal is cooked, without need for a fire or for any handling. In that land there is also a kind of tree, known as *qugong*, with such thickly layered foliage that no rain can leak through, and the people of that land know to take shelter under it overnight.

There are trees as tall as seventy *li*,²⁵ with abundant flowers and fruit and a beguiling scent. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, emitting [an exquisite] fragrance. Some trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruit, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, emitting [an exquisite] fragrance.

There are trees as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit that provide cloth. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of cloth. Some of the trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruit, and when their fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of cloth.

There are trees as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit that provide curios. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of ornaments. Some of the trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruit, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of ornaments.

There are trees as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit that provide flower garlands. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging various garlands. Some of the trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce

abundant flowers and fruit, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of flower garlands.

118b There are trees as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit that provide a variety of vessels. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of vessels. Some of the trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruit, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging various vessels.

There are trees as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit that produce a variety of nuts. As each fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of nuts. Some of the trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruits, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of nuts.

There are trees, as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit that provide musical instruments. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of musical instruments. Some of the trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruit, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of musical instruments.

In that land there is a lake known as Sudarśana, one hundred *yojanas* long and wide, with spotlessly clean, transparent, and pure water. The lake is surrounded by stone terraces made from the seven kinds of treasure, with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together. At the north end of the lake there is a tree known as Mango (*anmoluo*), with a circumference of seven *li* and a height of one hundred *li*. Its branches and leaves spread out in all directions to a distance of fifty *li*.

From the eastern side of the lake the Shandao River flows out, expanding to a width of one *yojana*. The river flows ever gently, showing no sign of turbulence. Myriad flowers hang down from the bank to touch the river's surface as the water flows by, calmly and expansively. Both riverbanks are shaded by trees, their branches heavy with fruit and flowers. The ground is covered with soft grass, moistened by dew so that [the blades] all turn to the right with the softness of a heavenly garment, and

a sheen like the colors of a hummingbird and a delicate scent like jasmine. When you step on the grass your foot sinks down about four inches yet the grass springs back when you lift your foot. Yet the ground has no unseen bumps or depressions and is as level as the surface of the palm of your hand.

Richly decorated boats ply the river. When the people of that land wish to bathe and play in the water they leave their clothing on the bank, board a boat, and, after bathing and playing midstream, they cross the river [to the other side] and don any pieces of clothing they may come upon without bothering to retrieve [their own clothes that they had left behind]. When they [first] come to the trees with a beguiling scent, they bend over to collect whatever scented powder they like and spread it over their bodies. Next, on coming to the trees that provide cloth, they bend over to pick up whatever kinds of cloth they like and wind it around their bodies freely. Next, reaching the trees that provide curios, they bend over to pick up the curios they like and display them on their bodies. Next, on coming to the trees that provide flower garlands, they bend over to pick up whatever garlands they like and drape them around their heads. Next, on coming to the trees that provide vessels, they bend over to pick up whatever vessels they like [and use them] to carry [things]. Next, on coming to the trees that produce nuts, they bend over to pick up different kinds of nuts, both to savor their taste or to extract their oils. Next, on coming to the trees that provide musical instruments, they bend over to pick up whatever instruments they like to play, tune them accordingly, and proceed to play. Singing in good voice with musical accompaniment, they go on to find a grove where they can stop to enjoy their amusements for a day or two, or even up to a week. After all, when they leave the grove they have no particular home to which to return.

118c

From the southern side of Sudarśana Lake the Miaoti River flows out, from the western side the Miaomi River flows out, and from the northern side the Guangying River flows out, just as always. To the east of the lake is a pleasure garden, also called Sudarśana, one hundred *yojanas* long and wide, around which are seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees. The mix of colors it presents is due to the seven kinds of treasure used to build it.

On the four sides of this garden are large gates ringed by seven railings, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. Inside, the garden is immaculate—there are no hidden thorns among the vines and the ground is even, with no bumps, holes, or pitfalls. There are no mosquitoes or gadflies, flies, fleas, or lice; no water lizards, snakes, bees, grubs, or threatening beasts such as leopards and tigers.

The ground is fresh, naturally fertile, and without any stones or pebbles. Both the malignant and beneficial influences [of nature] are in harmony, and so are the four seasons. The land is gentle and peaceful, not [too] hot or cold, always free of any kind of trouble, and fruitful and abundant without any sign of filth or defilement, as if the ground had been covered with balm.

In the absence of winter or summer grasses grow year round, and plants and trees spread profusely, producing lavish quantities of flowers and fruit. The ground is covered with a carpet of soft grass, moistened by dew so that [the blades] all turn to the right with the softness of a heavenly garment, and a sheen like the colors of a hummingbird and a delicate scent like jasmine. When you step on the grass your foot sinks about down four inches but the grass springs back when you lift your foot. Yet the ground has no unseen bumps or depressions and is as level as the surface of the palm of your hand.

In that land rice grows naturally without husks or any need for seeding. It appears like piles of tiny white flowers and is permeated with all good flavors, like the food of the Trāyastriṃśa gods. In that land there is a cooking pot that emits heavenly fragrances, and a magical gem, known as *yen-guang*, that will heat any pot placed over it and automatically stop when the meal is cooked, without need for a fire or any handling. In that land there is also a kind of tree, known as *qugong*, with thickly layered foliage that no rainfall can leak through, and the people of that land know to take shelter under it overnight.

There is also a tree as tall as seventy *li*, with abundant flowers and fruit and a beguiling scent. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, emitting [an exquisite] fragrance. Some of these trees are as high as sixty, fifty, or forty *li*, and even the smallest of them reaches five *li*. All the trees produce abundant flowers and fruit, and when the fruit ripens the skin opens by itself, emitting an [exquisite] fragrance. And so on, as already described, including a kind of tree that provides musical instruments.

The people of that land come to the garden and enjoy amusements for a day or two, or even up to a week. There is no guard in the Sudarśana pleasure garden. Those who come to the garden freely enjoy their time there and then depart. South of Sudarśana Lake is a garden called Mahā-sudarśana, to the west of the lake is a garden called Yuluo, and to the north of the lake is a garden called Denghua. All of these are similar to what has already been described.

119a

In that land, during the middle and late watches of the night, or whenever required, the *nāga* king causes fresh clouds to waft up and permeate the sky, with rainshowers falling like drops of nectar to the herds of cattle below. The liquid itself is rich, blending eight distinct tastes. Just as a garland maker scatters water over his flowers to keep them fresh and prevent withering, the water does not linger on the ground in puddles, so muddy roads cannot form. When it stays clear and there is no rain during the night, a bright moon traverses the sky, causing cool breezes to rise from the ocean. Clean and pure, each breeze gently caresses one's body, creating a most delightful sensation.

The land is well populated and prosperous. When people wish to cook a meal they put some rice in a pot and place a *yanguong* gem beneath it. The heat rising from the gem automatically stops when the rice is cooked. Anyone who comes along, even if the pot's owner is absent, can share the meal since the food is never used up. When the owner is present, those who also wish to partake are welcome to do so. The cooked rice is as appealing as a cluster of tiny white flowers, permeated with all good flavors, like the food of the Trāyastriṃśa gods. All those who eat this food remain free from illness, never succumb to exhaustion, and are very vigorous, with a gentle and pleasant appearance.

Again, the residents of that land all look the same in both bodily and facial features, resembling young people of twenty years of age in Jambudvīpa. Their teeth are even, without any gaps, and clean and white. Their hair is dark blue, not discolored by dirt or filth, and they wear their hair shoulder-length, neither long nor short. If a man of that land desires a woman, he gazes intently at her but does not accost her. If the woman then follows him to a nearby grove or garden, the trees will refuse to give them shelter and shade if the couple's bloodlines are too closely related.

119b

Consequently, the two would then [separate] and go their respective ways. If the couple is not too closely related so that an intimate relationship would be incestuous, however, the tree branches shield them from public sight. After enjoying conjugal union for a day or two, or as long as a week, the two will depart and go their respective ways. If the woman becomes pregnant the baby will be delivered within seven or eight days. Regardless of whether the baby is male or female, the mother will leave the child at a major crossroads and depart. People passing by will clean out the baby's mouth with a finger and give it sweet milk, and after seven days the child will have matured to adulthood. A male will join the group of men, and a female will join the group of women. Even when someone dies there are no cries of lamentation. The dead body is ornamented and placed at a major crossroads, and after doing this the people go away. Then a bird called *youweichanjia* collects the corpse and transports it to another region. Also, when the people of that land relieve themselves, the ground automatically opens to receive it, and closes over it again when they have finished. The residents of that land do not remember others with affection, nor do they save anything [for an emergency, or the like]. Their life span is always predetermined, and when they die they are invariably reborn in a heaven.

Why do the people of that land have a predetermined life span? It is because their birth in the land of Uttarakuru is the result of having practiced the ten norms of moral conduct. This practice gave them all life spans of exactly a thousand years, and every member of the society is equal in that respect. Now, someone who murders another human being will fall into an evil course of life, while those who have refrained from committing murder will be born into a good course of life. In a similar manner, those who commit theft or sexual abuse, or who speak harshly or deceptively, or speak falsehoods, and those who indulge in frivolous sycophancy while harboring wrong views, a covetous frame of mind, and malicious intent are bound to fall into an evil course of life [after death]. On the other hand, those who have been born into a good course of life who have refrained from murder, theft, and sexual abuse, and from speaking harshly and deceptively, or speaking falsehoods, and have not indulged in frivolous sycophancy while harboring wrong views, a covetous frame of mind, and malicious intent, are bound to be born in the land of Uttarakuru after the

dissolution of their bodies at the end of life, and they are predetermined to live exactly one thousand years. Because of this, the people of that land all have equal life spans.

Again, one who is covetous, stingy, and does not give alms will fall into an evil course of life after death. Those who are open-minded and free from parsimony, and who offer alms liberally, will enter a good course of life after death. Those who liberally give alms to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* and engage in charitable acts on behalf of the destitute, beggar children, and the ill, who are covered with sores or who have succumbed to various difficulties, providing them with clothing, food, transportation, flower garlands, incense, and a couch, blanket, or shelter, and who also offer oil lamps and candles and build commemorative towers (stupas) and shrines, are all bound to be born in the land of Uttarakuru after the dissolution of their bodies at the end of life, and they are predetermined to live a thousand years, no more and no less. Hence the people of that land are totally equal in their life spans.

Why is that land called Uttarakuru? It is because the people there are superior [to all other human beings]. While they do not receive the ten norms as their vow of precepts, their behavior is naturally in accord with these ten normative standards, and thus they are certain to be born in a heavenly domain after the dissolution of their bodies at the end of life. Because of this, the people in that land are called Uttarakuru. What is the meaning of this term? Of the three continents [besides Jambudvīpa], this land surpasses the others and so is called Uttarā, which in the Indian language means “highest.”

Article 3: The Universal Ruler

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The universal ruler (*cakravartin*) who turns the sacred wheel in this world is endowed with four supernormal blessings and seven treasures. What does it mean to say that the universal ruler is endowed with seven treasures? The seven treasures are (1) the golden wheel, (2) the white elephant, (3) the dark blue horse, (4) the divine gem, (5) the jadelike queen, (6) the [gentleman] householder, and (7) the military commander.

119c

How did the universal ruler come to use his first treasure, the golden wheel? When the *cakravartin* first appeared in the land of Jambudvīpa he was from the *kṣatriya* class and his head was anointed with sacred water for the throne. He bathed in scented water on the full moon day, the fifteenth of the month, and ascended to the top of a pavilion surrounded by the palace ladies. The sacred wheel, with a thousand spokes of rich color and splendor, then appeared of its own accord before the king. It was built by a heavenly master and did not belong to the human world. Made of genuine gold, it had a diameter of thirty-two feet.

Seeing it, the king quietly thought to himself, "I once heard from my virtuous elders the following words: 'When a king of the *kṣatriya* class, anointed on his head for the throne, takes a scented bath on the full moon day, the fifteenth of the month, and ascends to the top of the pavilion surrounded by the palace ladies, then at that moment the golden wheel will appear before him of its own accord. The wheel has a thousand spokes of rich color and splendor. It was built by a heavenly master and does not belong to this world. It is made of genuine gold and has a diameter of thirty-two feet. Thereupon, the king is called the *cakravartin*, 'one who turns the sacred wheel.' Now I see this wheel before me, but who knows if it really works. I should now test this golden treasure wheel."

The *cakravartin* called the four divisions of the army to assemble. He faced the golden wheel directly and, rearranging his garment to expose his right shoulder and kneeling with his right knee on the ground, he rubbed the wheel with his right hand and said to it, "Let the wheel turn itself toward the east, turning as it should, without losing regularity." The wheel at once began to roll toward the east. Leading the four divisions of his army, King Mahāsudarśana followed it. As the golden wheel rolled forward the four gods were in charge of guiding it. Wherever the wheel stopped, the king stopped his chariot.

At that time, having seen the great king approaching, the rulers of the small countries in the eastern regions prepared a golden bowl filled with silver grains and a silver bowl filled with golden grains. [When the king arrived] they stepped forward to approach him and, with heads bowed, said, "Welcome, great king. The eastern countries are blessed with an abundance of harvests and produce, the people are prosperous, the nature

of the populace is friendly and harmonious, and all are filial to their parents and loyal to their rulers. O holy ruler, Your Majesty is recommended to govern these lands through offices established here. We shall closely attend Your Majesty and will execute your commands as you wish, sir.”

At that time, the *cakravartin* replied to the rulers of the small countries, “Enough, dear wise kings, your offerings are already appreciated by me. Your kingships rule these countries on the basis of the right Dharma, so that neither injustice nor wrong action can take place in your countries. May your kingships adhere to the vow of not taking life, and do not permit any of your subjects to commit murder, theft, or sexual abuse, or speak harshly or deceptively, or to speak falsehoods, or to indulge in frivolous sycophancy while holding wrong views, a covetous frame of mind, and malicious intent. I say that these [ten] principles encapsulate my governance.”

After listening to his exhortation, the kings of the small countries accompanied him on his inspection tour until they reached the eastern ocean. Next, the great king proceeded toward the south, then to the west, and then to the north; in whatever direction the wheel rolled the [king and his army] followed. The kings of the small countries in these regions all abnegated their dominions for the sake of the great ruler, just as the eastern rulers had done.

The land of Jambudvīpa, renowned for its fertile soil, produced many precious things. In a vast expanse of forest where the waters ran pure and clean, the golden wheel delineated the boundaries of a territory measuring twelve *yojanas* from east to west and ten *yojanas* from north to south. During the night heavenly gods built a city protected by seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all adorned with the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together. Having measured the city structure, the golden wheel marked out an area within it that measured four *yojanas* from east to west and two *yojanas* from north to south. Once again, during the night heavenly gods built a royal palace with sevenfold walls embellished with the seven kinds of treasure and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. When the palace was completed the golden wheel hovered in midair above the palace gate, poised [in readiness] but not turning. Rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed,

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“This treasure, the golden wheel, is indeed a blessing! Now I am truly the one who turns the sacred wheel.” This is called the realization of the first treasure, the golden wheel.

How did the king come to use his second treasure, the white elephant? Early in the morning when the *cakravartin* was seated in the main hall of the palace, the white elephant suddenly appeared before him of its own accord. The color of its hair was pure white, the seven parts of its body (four feet, two shoulders, and neck) were well developed and proportional, and it could fly in midair. It had variegated colors on its neck and its six delicate tusks were studded with pieces of real gold. Seeing the elephant, the king thought to himself, “This elephant is said to be wise and good-natured. If it is well trained it can serve me as a mount for riding.” He immediately set about to see if the elephant could be trained and found that it was capable for all training. Wishing to take his first morning ride, the *cakravartin* mounted the elephant, went out of the capital, made a round of all four oceans, and had already returned to the palace by breakfast time. Rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed, “This white elephant is indeed a blessing! Now I am truly the one who turns the sacred wheel.” This is called the realization of the second treasure, the white elephant.

How did the king come to use his third treasure, the dark blue horse? Early in the morning when the *cakravartin* was seated in the main hall of the palace, the horse suddenly appeared before him of its own accord. Its body was dark blue but its long mane and tail were red. Its head and neck were like those of an elephant, and it could fly in midair. Seeing this treasure of a horse, the king thought to himself, “This horse is said to be wise and good-natured. If it is well trained it can serve as my steed.” He immediately set about to see if the horse could be trained and found that it was capable for all training. Then, wishing to take his first morning ride, the king mounted the horse, went out of the capital, made a round of all four oceans, and returned to the palace by breakfast time. Rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed, “This dark blue horse is indeed a blessing! Now I am truly the one who turns the sacred wheel.” This is called the realization of the third treasure, the dark blue horse.

How did the king come to use his fourth treasure, the divine gem? Early in the morning when the *cakravartin* was seated in the main hall of

the palace, the divine gem suddenly appeared before him of its own accord. Its quality and color were clear and transparent, and it was spotless. Seeing this divine gem, the king thought to himself, “This gem is very appealing and mysterious at the same time; it is said to be able to illuminate an area as wide as this entire palace compound when a light is shined upon it.” Then, wishing to test the gem himself, the *cakravartin* immediately mustered the four divisions of his army and placed the gem on top of a flagpole. As he carried the flagpole out of the city in the darkness, the gem emitted a ray of light that illuminated the entire army as if it were daylight. Rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed, “This treasure of a gem is indeed a blessing! Now I am truly the one who turns the sacred wheel.” This is called the realization of the fourth treasure, the divine gem.

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How did the king come to be served by his fifth treasure, the jadelike queen? When the queenly treasure suddenly appeared before the king, he saw that she was beautiful, with a fine complexion, and she was neither too tall nor too short, neither stout nor thin, her skin was neither too light nor too dark, her features neither hard nor soft, and her body was able to remain warm in winter and cool in summer. A sandalwood scent emerged from the roots of her hair, enveloping her body, and the fragrance of a blue lotus emanated from her mouth. Her words and manner of speech were invariably gentle and her demeanor was calm; she never failed to awake before the king or to stay awake until he fell asleep. The king had realized purity [by extinguishing defilements] so he was totally free from attachment and did not obsess about her in his mind even for a moment; how much less would he have approached her physically [as an object of sexual desire]. Rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed, “This treasure, the jadelike queen, is indeed a blessing! Now I am truly the one who turns the sacred wheel.” This is called the realization of the fifth treasure, the jadelike queen.

How did the king come to be assisted by his sixth treasure, the gentleman householder? When the householder suddenly appeared before the king of his own accord, the royal storehouses were automatically filled with immeasurable riches and treasures. This person had been endowed with special vision due to his past merit, namely, the ability to see any treasure buried underground, no matter to whom it belonged. He did not

take the treasure owned by some, while turning over to the king's treasury any treasure that had no owner. The householder came to the king and said, "O great king, please do not think about paying me any stipend. I am able to manage by myself, sir." The king decided to test the well-bred treasurer and arranged an excursion on a pleasure boat. While aboard, the king said to the gentleman householder, "I am in need of some pieces of gold. Provide them at once." The treasurer replied, "O great king, give me some time to go ashore." Pressing him further, the king said, "I cannot stop this boat. I need the golden treasure right away." Hearing the king's urgent order, the householder knelt and dipped his right hand into the water. A succession of urns filled with treasure arose from the water, following his hand upward just like insects clinging to tree branches. Then the other treasurers all joined in, dipping their hands into the water to draw up an equal amount of immeasurable riches, so that the boat was soon filled with treasure. The gentleman householder then asked, "Your Majesty needed some gold pieces before; how much more will you need, sir?" The *cakravartin* replied, "That is enough. I do not need any more. I only wished to test your ability. Your service is much appreciated." On hearing the king's words, the householder returned all the treasure to the water. Then, rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed, "This treasure of a householder is indeed a blessing! Now I am truly the one who turns the sacred wheel." This is called the realization of the sixth treasure, the householder.

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How did the king come to be assisted by his seventh treasure, the military commander? When the brilliant, decisive military commander, whose expertise in strategy was equaled by his valor and strength, suddenly appeared before the king, he said, "Great king, may Your Majesty be free from worry. When you wish to attack any country, sire, I shall willingly accomplish it." The *cakravartin* decided to test him at once and mustered the four divisions of the army. He said to his general, "Make sure the entire army is ready for battle. Those who have not come out should assemble; those who have already come can be dismissed. Those who are untrained should prepare themselves for battle; those who are ready can be dismissed. Let those who are here on duty return home, and let those who are already at home remain there." Upon hearing the king's words,

the military commander promptly assembled those who had not come forth and released those who had already assembled; he began to train those who were ill prepared and released those who were already qualified. Those who were on duty he let return home, and those who had already gone home were allowed to remain there. Then, rejoicing, leaping and dancing, the *cakravartin* exclaimed, “This treasure, my military commander, is a blessing! Now I am now truly the one who turns the sacred wheel.”

What are the four blessings that pertain to the universal ruler? First, as the universal king, he has longevity and will never meet with an early death; in this, no one can match the king. Second, he has a strong physical body and never contracts illness; in this, no one can match the king. Third, he has a most handsome appearance; in this, no one can match the king. Fourth, his storehouses are filled with treasure; in this, no one can match the king. The foregoing are the seven treasures and four blessings that pertain to the universal ruler.

After a time, the *cakravartin* had his carriage prepared for a visit to the royal park grove. He said to his charioteer, “Proceed deliberately while driving the carriage. I wish to ascertain whether the kingdom is safe and our citizens are at ease.” At the same time, those who saw the king asked his attendant, “Please drive slowly, for we wish to see the face of the holy ruler.” The great *cakravartin* was as attentive to the well-being of his people as to their material needs, just as a father is concerned for his children, and the people felt affection toward the king as if he were their father. They presented all sorts of rare items to the king, saying, “May Your Majesty accept this” and “May this be of use to Your Majesty.” The king would always reply, “Bring me no more precious items, my dear subjects. I have my own treasures. You should keep these things for yourselves.”

When the *cakravartin* is in command of the land of Jambudvīpa, the terrain is even, having neither thorny plants nor pits or ditches, nor any bumpy protrusions at all. There are no poisonous creatures such as mosquitoes, gadflies, bees, grubs, flies, fleas, snakes, or water lizards. Sand and rocks, forming inscriptions, automatically sink into the ground, while gold, silver, and precious gems rise to the surface. The four seasons are harmonized into a gentle calm state that is neither hot nor cold. The soil is soft and malleable, with no filth or defilement. As if bathed in oil, it is

clean and pure, with a rich luster and no pollution at all. The earth [here] will be the same when the *cakravartin* rules this world. The springwater that flows out of the ground is clean and pure and will never dry up, producing fields of soft grass that stay green throughout the year, summer and winter.

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Plants and trees grow profusely, producing lavish quantities of flowers and fruits. The ground is covered with a carpet of grass, moistened by dew so that [the blades] all turn to the right with the softness of a heavenly garment, and a sheen like the colors of a hummingbird and a delicate scent like jasmine. When you step on it your foot sinks down about four inches and yet the grass springs back when you lift your foot. Rice grows naturally without husks and is permeated with all good flavors. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that produce a beguiling scent. As each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, emitting [an exquisite] fragrance. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that provide cloth; as each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of cloth. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that provide ornaments; as each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging a variety of curios. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that provide flower garlands; as each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging various flower garlands. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that provide a variety of vessels; as each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of vessels. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that produce a variety of nuts; as each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging different kinds of nuts. There are trees with abundant flowers and fruit that provide musical instruments; as each fruit ripens its skin opens by itself, discharging various musical instruments.

When the *cakravartin* rules the world, the *nāga* king of Anavatapta Lake causes heavy clouds to rise and permeate the sky after midnight, and rainshowers to fall to the cattle being herded below. The abundant rainwater, blending eight distinct tastes, falls everywhere. And just as a garland maker scatters water over his flowers to keep them fresh without withering, the copious rain causes the grasses and trees to grow luxuriantly, without any standing water to form puddles or muddy roads. When it stays clear [without any rain during the night], a bright moon traverses

the sky, causing cool breezes to rise from the ocean. Clean and pure, each breeze gently caresses one's body, creating a most delightful sensation.

When the *cakravartin* rules the world, the land of Jambudvīpa is blessed with an abundant harvest of every crop (lit., “five kinds of grain”), the people enjoy growth and prosperity, with universal affluence and wealth without deficiency. So long as the *cakravartin* governs justly there is never a cause of grievance. When the king himself adheres to the ten norms of moral conduct, his subjects will also cherish right views and uphold the ten normative standards. And when, after a long time, the king finally succumbs to illness and reaches the end of life, like a man who has enjoyed his food perhaps a little more than necessary, making it a little less suited to his body, he passes away and is reborn in Brahmā Heaven.

Thereupon, the treasured [jadelike] queen, the [gentleman] householder, and the military commander lead all the people of the land in the *cakravartin's* funeral rite, conducted with music and dance. They cleanse the king's body with warm scented water, cover it with [new] cotton cloth, and wrap it in a shroud as long as five hundred pairs of garments. Then they put the body into a golden coffin, pour sesame oil over it, and seal the coffin inside an iron vault, which is enclosed within a sandalwood vault, then covered with incense and cremated. [After retrieving the ashes,] the people erect a commemorative tower, built out of the seven treasures, at each major crossroads, filling an area measuring one *yojana* long and wide with the variegated colors of the seven kinds of treasure. On each of the tower's four sides is a single gate protected by a barrier made from the seven kinds of treasure, and from each side an open space extends as far as five *yojanas* in length and breadth. The tower walls are sevenfold, with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees.

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The golden wall is endowed with silver gates, the silver wall with golden gates, the quartz wall with lapis gates, the lapis wall with quartz gates, the ruby wall with agate gates, the agate wall with ruby gates, and the emerald wall with gates decorated with many kinds of precious stones. The railings are similarly decorated: the golden railing is hung with ropes made of silver, the silver railing with ropes made of gold, the quartz railing with ropes made of lapis, the lapis railing with ropes made of quartz, the ruby railing with ropes made of agate, the agate railing with ropes made

of rubies, and the emerald railing with a variety of precious stones. Over these railings decorative nets, on which various ornaments are attached, are suspended. From the golden net hangs a silver bell; from the silver net hangs a golden bell; from the lapis net hangs a quartz bell; from the quartz net hangs a lapis bell; from the ruby net hangs an agate bell; from the agate net hangs a ruby bell; and from the emerald net hangs a bell inlaid with a variety of precious stones.

The golden trees have silver flowers and fruit. The silver trees have golden flowers and fruit. The quartz trees have lapis flowers and leaves, while the lapis trees have quartz flowers and leaves. The ruby trees have agate flowers and leaves, while the agate trees have flowers and leaves made of rubies. The emerald trees have flowers and leaves made of various precious stones.

Each of the seven walls has four gates, protected by barriers. Each wall, topped with a pavilion and veranda, encloses a flowing spring with a bathing pond and a pleasure garden filled with a variety of flowers and trees laden with abundant fruit. Exquisite fragrance arises in all directions, and a host of rare birds sing harmoniously together.

When the commemorative tower is complete the treasured [jadelike] queen, the [gentleman] householder, and the military commander, together with all the people of the land, pay their respects with a variety of offerings and [simultaneously] engage in charitable acts without distinction, providing food to those who lack food, clothing if they need clothing, and even [offering] the treasured horses and elephants of the deceased *cakravartin* if they need transportation, each according to their own wish. These are the super-normal blessings and merits ascribed to the universal *cakravartin*.

Article 4: The Hells

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

- 121c There are eight thousand worlds surrounding the four continents, and these eight thousand worlds are further surrounded by a great ocean. Around this ocean is a great mountain [range] made of diamonds, and beyond it looms a second great diamond [range]. The region between them is dark and hidden; even heavenly gods like the sun and moon are

unable to illuminate there despite their great brightness. In that darkness are eight great hells, each containing sixteen smaller hells. The first great hell is called Conscious Recovery; the second is called Black Rope; the third, Compression; the fourth, Screaming; the fifth, Great Screaming; the sixth, Fiery Heat; the seventh, Great Fiery Heat; and the eighth, Unremitting Suffering. In that first hell are sixteen smaller hells, each measuring five hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth. These minor hells are called (1) Black Sands (coal pit), (2) Boiling Excrement, (3) Five Hundred Nailings, (4) Starvation, (5) Thirst, (6) Copper Cauldron, (7) Copper Cauldrons, (8) Grindstone, (9) Blood and Pus, (10) Fire Tending, (11) River of Ashes, (12) Iron Fetters, (13) Axes and Hatchets, (14) Wolf Pack, (15) Bladed Trees, and (16) Cold and Icy.

Why is the first great hell called Conscious Recovery? Iron nails grow on the hands of the sentient beings who fall into this hell. They use these long and sharp nails to injure and kill each other when they become angry. Tearing at one another, they strip away pieces of flesh and clean off bones, until they eventually collapse as if dead. But when a cool breeze passes over their bodies, the skin and flesh regenerates as they were before. Then these [hell] beings stand up and think, “I have come back to life,” and the others around them say, “We see that you have come back to life.” Because of this, the first hell is called Conscious Recovery.

Again, since the sentient beings who fall into this hell [have a tendency to] irritate each other, they take up any knives or swords that may be available and use them to injure or kill. The knives and swords pierce and slice; skin is cut away, flesh is sliced open, bodies are severed and fall insensate to the ground. Yet with cool breezes the skin and flesh regrow and the bodies return to life. Standing up, they think, “I have come back to life,” and others say, “I see that you have come back to life.” For this reason, the first hell is called Conscious Recovery.

Again, when the sentient beings who fall into this hell irritate each other, they seize *youyingdao* knives²⁶ intending to injure and kill. The sharp knives pierce and slice; skin is cut away, flesh is sliced open, bodies are severed and fall insensate to the ground. Yet with cool breezes the skin and flesh regrow and the bodies return to life. Standing up, they think,

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"I have come back to life," and others say, "I see that you have come back to life." For this reason, the first hell is called Conscious Recovery.

Again, when the sentient beings who fall into this hell irritate each other, they take up [small] daggers with the intent to injure and kill. The sharp daggers pierce and slice; skin is cut away, flesh is sliced open, bodies are severed and fall insensate to the ground. Yet with cool breezes the skin and flesh regrow and the bodies return to life. Standing up, they think, "I have come back to life," and others say, "I see that you have returned to life." For this reason, the first hell is called Conscious Recovery.

(1) Sentient beings who complete their respective periods of punishment emerge from [Conscious Recovery] hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, where a hot wind rages, blowing up clouds of hot black sand. Not only does the sand stick to their bodies, turning them as dark as black clouds, but it sears the skin, eating away the flesh and penetrating to the bone. Now their bodies send up a dark smoke, which revolves around the body and returns back into it, eating at it from within. Malefactors necessarily undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(2) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Black Sands hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Boiling Excrement, where hot iron balls lie in wait. When malefactors enter the iron balls appear and cannot be evaded; as soon as it touches them the intense heat burns every part of their bodies. The malefactors cannot help opening their mouths, and then the hot balls scald their lips and tongue and throat, down to the stomach. Wherever the iron balls touch them, they eat away [the flesh]. [Moreover,] there are vermin [in that hell] that feed on iron and they gnaw on the bodies, penetrating the bones and marrow. The malefactors experience immeasurable hardship and suffering, but they must undergo this punishment for their past actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(3) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Boiling Excrement hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Five Hundred Nailings. When they enter the guards immediately hurl them to the ground. One by one, they are taken and stretched out over hot irons and nails are fastened through their hands and feet and every part of their bodies, numbering five hundred in all. The malefactors scream in agony for there is no end to their distress, but they must undergo this punishment and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(4) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Five Hundred Nailings hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Starvation. When they enter the guards ask, "Now you are here, what is it you want?" They reply, "Sir, we are starving." At once the guards throw them down and stretch their bodies one after another over hot irons; they pull their mouths open with iron hooks and pour in hot iron balls that scald their lips, tongues, and throats, down to their stomachs. Wherever the iron balls touch their bodies they eat away at everything. The malefactors scream in agony, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

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(5) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Starvation hell and flee in terror, seeking refuge and protection. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Thirst. When they enter the guards ask, "Now you are here, what is it you want?" They each reply, "Sir, I am thirsty." At once the guards throw them down and stretch out their bodies on hot irons; they open their mouths with iron hooks and pour in melted copper that scalds their lips, tongues, and throats, down to their stomachs. Wherever the melted copper touches their bodies, it eats away at everything. The malefactors scream in agony, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(6) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Thirst hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Copper Cauldron hell. The angry guards glare and seize the offenders by the feet, throwing them into the cauldron. As the liquid in the cauldron comes to a boil, their bodies slowly revolve from the surface down to the bottom and back again, sometimes hovering in the middle, like beans circulating in boiling water until they are cooked. The malefactors, tossed like beans [in hot broth,] scream and howl, crying out in bitter suffering, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(7) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Copper Cauldron hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Copper Cauldrons. The guards, glaring in anger, seize the offenders by the feet and throw them into other cauldrons. As the liquid comes to a boil, their bodies slowly revolve from the surface to the bottom and back again, sometimes hovering in the middle, like beans circulating in boiling water until they are cooked. The malefactors are tossed like beans as they plunge to the bottom and come up again, their hands and feet sometimes appearing at the surface, or their hips and bellies, or sometimes just their heads and faces. The guards use iron hooks to spike the bodies and pull them out, tossing them [from one cauldron] to another. The malefactors scream and howl, crying in bitter suffering, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(8) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Copper Cauldrons hell and flee in terror, seeking refuge and protection. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Grindstone hell, which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide. The guards, glaring fiercely, throw the offenders down onto hot stone slabs and slowly stretch them out, using heated boulders to grind their bodies into tiny fragments of flesh and bone, producing torrents of blood and pus. The malefactors scream and howl, crying in extreme bitter

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suffering, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(9) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Grindstone hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Blood and Pus, stretching five hundred *yojanas* long and wide, with boiling springs of blood and pus steaming in the air. The malefactors run wildly through the boiling liquid and their hands and feet, and then their heads, faces, and entire bodies, are consumed by the heat. Ingesting the boiling liquid, their lips, tongues, and throats are scalded, down to their stomachs, and wherever their bodies are touched by the blood and pus [their flesh] boils away. The malefactors must undergo this punishment for their actions, however, and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(10) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from Blood and Pus hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Fire Tending, five hundred *yojanas* long and wide, where a gigantic bonfire burns from within. Erupting in flames when they appear, the fire emits intense heat as the offenders are rounded up by fierce guards and forced to pick up hot iron rods to tend the fiery pile. As they work on the fire, they suffer extreme burns not only on their hands and feet but all over their bodies. The heat is excruciating and they cry out in their suffering, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(11) After undergoing these torments for a long time, they emerge from Fire Tending hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at River of Ashes hell, five hundred *yojanas* in length, breadth, and depth, where boiling waves of hot ash gush forth, filling the place with putrid air. The sound of the churning waves crashing over them is terrifying, and as they come to the surface the waves turn into iron needles, like eight-inch spearheads. [Moreover,] long swords are lined up on

the riverbank, and wolves and guards lie in wait in a forest of trees whose branches, leaves, and fruit resemble swords and daggers with eight-inch blades. When the malefactors enter the river their bodies sink and float as they are tossed by the waves, and they are pierced repeatedly by the iron spears, which tear open their rotting skin and flesh, releasing torrents of blood and pus. The malefactors scream in agony from the excruciating pain in every part of their bodies, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

123a After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, they emerge from River of Ashes hell and as they crawl up over the bank, their bodies slashed and grievously wounded, they are met by sharp swords set up on the bank that slice their hands and feet. The guards ask, "Now you are here, what is it you want?" They reply, "Sir, we are starving." Immediately the guards strike the offenders down and stretch their bodies one after another over hot irons; they pull their mouths open with iron hooks and pour in molten copper that scalds their lips, tongues, and throats, down to their stomachs. Wherever the molten copper touches their bodies it eats away at everything. Even more, wolves with long, sharp fangs tear off pieces of their flesh and devour them as they watch.

After cooking in the River of Ashes and drinking molten copper, the malefactors, pierced by spears and chewed up by wolves, try to flee. Climbing up trees, they encounter sharp blades pointed down that slice their hands; climbing back down, they find the blades all turned upward, slashing their feet. Swords and daggers pierce their bodies and their skin and flesh falls away, amid a stream of blood and pus, until only sinews hold together the bones of the white skeletons that remain. Then iron birds from the trees peck at their skulls to break them open so they can get at the brains. In excruciating pain, the malefactors scream in agony but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(12) Returning to the River of Ashes, they sink and float as they are tossed by the waves. Iron spears pierce their bodies again, tearing away the rotting skin and flesh and releasing jets of blood and pus until only white skeletons are left to drift away. But when a cool breeze blows over

them their skin and flesh regenerate as before. Standing up, they immediately flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Iron Fetters, which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide. When the malefactors enter hot iron fetters suddenly appear and they are forcibly shackled by the guards. The offenders watch their hands and feet burning down to stumps, as their entire bodies are eaten away. In excruciating pain, they scream in agony but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(13) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Iron Fetters hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Axes and Hatchets, which is five hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth. When they enter, guards glaring in anger grab the offenders and throw them down on hot irons; with heated axes and hatchets, they chop off their noses and ears, hands and feet, and hack at their bodies. In excruciating pain, the malefactors scream in agony, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(14) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Axes and Hatchets hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the Wolf Pack hell, stretching five hundred *yojanas* long and wide. When they enter a pack of wolves rushes forward to attack, pulling them down as [they try to] escape. The wolves seize the offenders by their limbs and toss them about viciously, tearing at their flesh and bones while blood and pus pool on the ground. In excruciating pain, the malefactors feel racked in every part of their bodies but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(15) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Wolf Pack hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the hell of Bladed Trees, five

123b

hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth. When they enter they are met by a great storm. Gusts blow through the trees and blade-like leaves fall in a steady stream, severing their hands and feet and piercing every part of their bodies, including their faces and heads, while iron birds swoop down and peck at their eyes. In excruciating pain, the malefactors scream in agony but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated.

(16) After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Bladed Trees hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at the Cold and Icy hell, stretching five hundred *yojanas* long and wide. When they enter they are met by a great blast of cold wind that freezes their bodies. As their skin and flesh fall to the ground, the malefactors scream in agony and thereupon their lives come to an end.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The great Black Rope hell contains sixteen minor hells, each of which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and is enclosed by a fence separating it from Cold and Icy hell. Why is it called Black Rope? The guards [in that hell] throw the malefactors down and stretch their bodies one after another over hot irons. Shackled with hot iron chains, the bodies are kept in a straight line so that the guards, using hot iron hatchets, can slice all of them into pieces, making up a chain of a hundred thousand parts, just as a craftsman uses a sharp hatchet to shape pieces of wood and rope to form them into a chain. Punished in this manner, the malefactors experience pain and suffering beyond measure, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the Black Rope hell.

Again, the guards in this hell throw the malefactors down and stretch their bodies one after another over hot irons. Shackling them with iron chains, the guards saw through their bodies with handsaws, just as a craftsman uses a saw to cut pieces of wood. Punished in this manner, the malefactors experience pain and suffering beyond measure, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying

until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called Black Rope hell.

Again, the guards in this hell throw the malefactors down and stretch their bodies one after another over hot irons. Shackled with hot iron chains, they feel their skin blistering, their flesh burning, their bones melting, and their marrow coming to a boil. Their pain and suffering are beyond measure, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called Black Rope hell.

Again, the guards in this hell suspend hot iron chains, layer upon layer, and hung crosswise as well. They drive the malefactors through these hanging chains, which are tossed by a violent wind. Entangled, the malefactors watch their skin blistering, their flesh burning, their bones melting, and their marrow boiling. Their pain and suffering are beyond measure, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their sins have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called Black Rope hell.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the malefactors and force them to wrap hot iron chains around their bodies and watch as their skin blisters, their flesh burns, their bones melt, and their marrow boils. Their pain and suffering are beyond measure, but they must undergo this punishment for their actions and are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called Black Rope hell.

123c

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors at length emerge from Black Rope hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The great hell of Compression contains sixteen minor hells, each of which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and is enclosed by a fence. Why is it called Compression? Because it is a great mountain of rock that splits open to allow offenders to enter, but when they do the two sides suddenly

come together, crushing them into bits of flesh and bone, and then reopen, like two wooden clappers that rebound after each strike. Punished in this way, the malefactors experience pain and suffering beyond measure but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Compression.

Again, there is a huge iron elephant in this hell that bellows fiercely as it charges. Raging among the offenders, the elephant crushes their bodies into bits of flesh and bone, releasing torrents of blood and pus. In excruciating pain, the malefactors scream in agony but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Compression.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders, placing them in a grindstone and crushing their flesh and bones, releasing torrents of blood and pus. Their pain and suffering are beyond measure but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Compression.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders, putting them face down over a great rock and using another huge rock to crush their bodies into bits of flesh and bone, releasing torrents of blood and pus. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Compression.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders, placing them face down in an iron mortar and methodically applying the pestle, beginning at their feet and moving up to their heads, crushing their bodies into bits of flesh and bone and releasing torrents of blood and pus. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Compression.

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Compression hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The great hell of Screaming contains sixteen minor hells that stretch five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and are enclosed by fences. Why is it known as Screaming? The guards in this hell seize the offenders and toss them into a huge cauldron, where they burn in boiling water. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Screaming. 124a

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders and toss them into a huge iron jar, where they burn in boiling water. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Screaming.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders and stuff them into a small cauldron, where they burn in boiling water. They scream in agony but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Screaming.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders and throw them into a large iron frying pan, where they are repeatedly fried and then boiled. The malefactors scream in agony but they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Screaming.

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Screaming hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The hell of Great Screaming contains sixteen minor hells, each of which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and enclosed by a fence. Why is it known as Great Screaming? The guards in this hell seize the offenders and throw them into a huge cauldron, where they burn in boiling water.

The screaming that erupts is desperate, for the pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Screaming.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders and throw them into an immense iron jar, where they burn in boiling water. The screaming that erupts mounts ever higher because the pain they experience is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Screaming.

124b

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders and throw them into an iron cauldron, where they burn in boiling water. The screaming that erupts mounts ever higher because the pain they experience is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, (124b) it is called the hell of Great Screaming.

Again, the guards in this hell seize the offenders and throw them into a huge frying pan, where they are repeatedly fried and then boiled. The screaming that erupts mounts ever higher because the pain they experience is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Screaming.

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Great Screaming hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The great hell of Fiery Heat contains sixteen minor hells, each of which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and enclosed by a fence. Why is it known as Fiery Heat? The guards in this hell take offenders to an iron castle that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within.

The malefactors are left here and are slowly incinerated, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell take the offenders to an iron room that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell take the offenders to an iron tower that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell throw the offenders into a gigantic iron pot that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell throw the offenders down onto a flat iron plate whose surfaces glow with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Fiery Heat.

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Fiery Heat hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

124c

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The great hell of Great Fiery Heat contains sixteen minor hells, each of which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and enclosed by a fence. Why is it known as Great Fiery Heat? The guards in this hell put the offenders inside an iron castle that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated twice over, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell take the offenders to an iron room that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated twice over, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell take the offenders to an iron tower that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated twice over, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Fiery Heat.

Again, the guards in this hell throw the offenders into a gigantic iron pot that glows, inside and out, with the heat of the fire burning within. There the malefactors are incinerated twice over, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Fiery Heat.

Again, there is a natural firepit in this hell, flanked by two volcanic mountains. The guards seize the offenders, skewer them with an iron rod, and lower them into the firepit. The malefactors are incinerated twice over, their skin and flesh burned away amid mounting pain as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Great Fiery Heat.

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time, the malefactors emerge from Great Fiery Heat hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell, and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The great hell of Unremitting Suffering (*wujiantadiyu*; *avīci*) contains sixteen minor hells, each of which is five hundred *yojanas* long and wide and enclosed by a fence. Why is it known as Unremitting Suffering? The guards in this hell seize the offenders, skin them alive from head to toe, and use their flayed skin to lash them to the hot wheels of a chariot, which they drive back and forth across a fiery iron track. Once crushed, the bodies of the malefactors disintegrate into tiny bits of flesh and bone and left scattered along the track. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Unremitting Suffering.

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Again, there is a great iron castle in this hell that is besieged [at times] with blazing fires on all four sides. The flames on the eastern side leap over the castle to the western side, and vice versa; the flames on the southern side reach the northern side, and vice versa. Similarly, the flames in the upper stories reach down to the cellar, and the flames in the cellar rise up without cease, leaving nothing untouched. The malefactors within the castle try to flee but they cannot escape and wherever they turn their skin and flesh are devoured by the flames. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Unremitting Suffering.

Again, the iron castles in this hell burn from within, like fiery caves. The malefactors trapped within the castles are incinerated, their skin and flesh burned away. The pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented

from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Unremitting Suffering.

Again, after being trapped for some time, the malefactors see the gate to this hell begin to open and they rush toward it, desperate [to escape]. As they run, like a strongman carrying a fiery torch and running against the wind, the joints in their limbs feel as if they are being consumed in flames. But when they reach the gate it suddenly closes and they fall onto a sizzling iron floor. As their skin and flesh are burned away, the pain they experience as their distress mounts is as intense as that of all the worst poisons taken together, yet they are prevented from dying until their offenses have been fully expiated. For this reason, it is called the hell of Unremitting Suffering.

Again, everything the malefactors see in this hell is repulsive, everything they hear is grotesque, everything they smell is offensive, everything they touch is painful, and every passing notion is a malevolent thought. There is no letup in their suffering, not even for as brief a moment as a finger snap. For this reason, it is called the hell of Unremitting Suffering.

After undergoing the torments of this hell for a long time the malefactors emerge from Unremitting Suffering hell and flee in terror, seeking to be rescued and protected. Without knowing, however, they are drawn by their past actions and immediately arrive at Black Sands hell and so on, until they reach Cold and Icy hell and subsequently their lives come to an end, just as before.

The World-honored One then continued in verse:

125b Committing evil physical actions,
 And so too evil speech and thought,
 One falls into the hell of Conscious Recovery;
 Fearing this, your hair stands on end.

 When hiding an evil thought, one meets
 One's parents, the Buddha, and his saintly disciples,
 One falls into the Black Rope hell;
 The suffering there is beyond imagination.

 When one commits nothing but the three evils,

Without performing any of the three kinds of good,
One falls into the hell of Compression;
The suffering there is beyond imagination.

When one holds malevolent intent in hatred and anger,
And is defiled with the blood of one's victims
Through many kinds of evil actions,
One falls into the hell of Screaming.

When one follows various evil views,
Bewildered by the bonds of love and lust,
Committing abject [bad] deeds out of blindness,
One falls into the hell of Great Screaming.

Whoever does anything out of passion,
Subjecting other sentient beings to the flames,
[He or she] falls into the hell of Fiery Heat
And suffers there for a long time.

Whoever abandons the actions that promote good
And the purity that leads to a good end,
Committing abject and evil deeds,
[That person] falls into the hell of Great Fiery Heat.

Whoever commits egregious offenses
Creates the power that leads to an evil end
And falls into the hell of Unremitting Suffering;
The punishments therein are beyond imagination.

Conscious Recovery, Black Rope, Compression, Screaming,
Great Screaming, Fiery Heat, Great Fiery Heat, Unremitting Suffering:
The eight great hells are like caves glowing with fire;
Each contains sixteen minor hells for all one's past [evil] actions.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Between the two diamond mountain [ranges] great gusts of wind called *sāṃkhya* [occasionally] rage. If a storm were to sweep over the four continents and their eighty thousand territories, it would race through the air

and smash everything into pieces, blasting the very earth and the great mountains, including the greatest mountain of all, Mount Sumeru, as well as everything else up to ten or a hundred *li* above the ground, just as when one takes a handful of bran and throws it into the air. Such would be the effect if a great storm were to blow through this world. But the two diamond ranges block [this raging wind] from reaching this world.

125c O *bhikṣus*, you should know that the two beneficial diamond ranges are the result of the good conduct of sentient beings. Again, the raging winds between the two ranges blow with intense heat and fiery flames. If those winds were to blow through this world, all the sentient beings, as well as the hills, rivers, inlets, oceans, grasses and trees, bushes and forests, would at once shrivel up and burn, just as live grass withers within an hour when it is cut and left under the hot summer sun. The heat from these raging winds would consume everything in like manner. But the two diamond ranges block them from reaching this world.

O *bhikṣus*, you should know that the two beneficial diamond ranges are the result of the good conduct of sentient beings. Again, the raging winds between the two ranges have a putrid smell, like something extremely foul. If these winds were to blow through this world the noxious stench would cause all sentient beings to lose their sight. But the two diamond ranges block them from reaching this world.

O *bhikṣus*, you should know that the two beneficial diamond ranges are the result of the good conduct of sentient beings. Again, between the two ranges are ten hells, called (1) Thick Cloud, (2) Absent Cloud, (3) Hehe (4) Nahe, (5) Bleating Sheep, (6) Sūgandhika, (7) Utpala, (8) Kumuda, (9) Puṇḍarīka, and (10) Padma.

Why is the first hell called Thick Cloud? The bodies of the offenders who fall into this hell grow of their own accord, just as a heavy cloud [forms of its own]. Hence it is called Thick Cloud. Why is the second [hell] called Absent Cloud? The bodies of the offenders in this hell automatically regrow, like flesh that can be consumed. Hence it is called Absent Cloud. Why is the third [hell] called Hehe? The offenders in this hell utter the sound he he when their flesh is pierced. Hence it is called Hehe. Why is the fourth [hell] called Nahe? Because the offenders who suffer from their flesh being pierced have no rescuers, everyone in this hell mutters,

“*Nahe* (“no one”) to rely on.” Hence it is called *Nahe*. Why is the fifth [hell] called Bleating Sheep? Here the offenders who suffer from their flesh being pierced try to speak but they are unable to move their tongues and can only utter the sound *baaaa*. Hence it is called Bleating Sheep. Why is the sixth [hell] called *Sūgandhika*? Everything in this hell is black, like the color of *sūgandhika* blossoms. Hence it is called *Sūgandhika*. Why is the seventh [hell] called *Utpala*? Everything in this hell is blue, like the color of a blue lotus (*utpala*). Hence it is called *Utpala*. Why is the eighth [hell] called *Kumuda*? Everything in this hell is pink (*kumuda*). Hence it is called *Kumuda*. Why is the ninth [hell] called *Puṇḍarīka*? Everything in this hell is white (*puṇḍarīka*). Hence it is called *Puṇḍarīka*. Why is the tenth [hell] called *Padma*? Everything [in this hell] is red (*padma*). Hence it is called *Padma*.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Take the example of a container that holds sixty-four *hu*²⁷ of grain. Suppose this container was filled with sesame seeds and you were to remove a single seed from the container every one hundred years. Even when all the seeds have been removed, a malefactor in Thick Cloud hell will not yet have completed the term of his atonement. Now, multiply one term in Thick Cloud twenty times and that equals a single term in Absent Cloud hell. Twenty times a term in Absent Cloud equals a single term in Hehe hell. Twenty times a term in Hehe equals a single term in *Nahe* hell. Twenty times a term in *Nahe* equals a single term in Bleating Sheep hell. Twenty times a term in Bleating Sheep equals a single term in *Sūgandhika* hell. Twenty times a term in the *Sūgandhika* equals a single term in *Utpala* hell. Twenty times a term in *Utpala* equals a single term in *Kumuda* hell. Twenty times a term in *Kumuda* equals a single term in *Puṇḍarīka* hell. Twenty times a term in *Puṇḍarīka* equals a single term in *Padma* hell.

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Twenty times a term in *Padma* hell is called a median eon, and twenty median eons make up a major eon. Now the fiery heat in *Padma* is so intense that it can burn the bodies of malefactors even at a distance of one hundred *yojanas*; at sixty *yojanas* the malefactors are totally deafened, and at fifty *yojanas* they are completely blinded, unable to see anything again.

When the *bhikṣu* Kaukālīka slandered the [two great] elders Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana with malevolent intent, he fell into Padma [Hell]. At that moment, the lord of Brahmā Heaven uttered the following verse:

Those who are born hold an ax in their mouth
And slay others with slanderous speech.
Praising someone who should be criticized
And criticizing someone who should be praised
Are equally evil deeds in speech,
And the means of acquiring [multiple] offenses.
Although acquiring wealth through treachery
Only brings a slight misfortune,
Slandering the saintly disciples
Must be counted a grave offense.
For this, one suffers in Thick Cloud [hell]
For a hundred thousand years,
Or forty-one terms in Absent Cloud [hell].
All who slander will receive this retribution
As the result of their evil thought and speech.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The lord of Brahmā Heaven spoke the truth in his verse, and the buddhas also regard it as true. Now, I, the Tathāgata, who has eradicated all defilements and attained perfect enlightenment, give the same teaching expressed in this verse:

126b

Those who are born hold an ax in their mouth
And slay others with slanderous speech.
Praising someone who should be criticized
And criticizing someone who should be praised
Are equally evil deeds in speech,
And the means of acquiring [multiple] offenses.
Although acquiring wealth through treachery
Only brings a slight misfortune,
Slandering the saintly disciples
Must be counted a grave offense.

For this, one suffers in Thick Cloud [hell]
 For a hundred thousand years,
 Or forty-one terms in Absent Cloud [hell].
 All who slander will receive this retribution
 As the result of their evil thought and speech.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

To the south of Jambudvīpa, within the great diamond range, is the palace of the king of the hells [Yamarāja], who rules over an area six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. The castle consists of seven concentric buildings and is ringed by seven railings, seven ornamental nets, seven lines of trees and so forth, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as in the other palatial settings. Thrice each night the king of the hells is confronted with a great copper cauldron that automatically appears before him. When the cauldron appears in the palace the king is terrified and flees the palace grounds in order to get away from it. If he is outside the palace when he sees [the cauldron], he is terrified and returns to the palace, but an imposing guard seizes the king, throws him down on a hot iron, pries his mouth open with an iron hook, and pours molten copper into it. The molten copper scalds his lips, tongue, and throat down to the stomach, eating away at everything. When his atonement is over, the king of the hells resumes his life and once again enjoys his royal status with the palace ladies. The numerous ministers who also enjoy the rewards of their station undergo the same punishment.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are three messengers. What are the three? The first is the messenger of old age, the second is the messenger of illness, and the third is the messenger of death. Any sentient being who has committed evil deeds in thought and speech, as well as with physical actions, falls into the hells at the end of his or her life and the dissolution of the body. The guards in the hells lead them before the king of the hells and report, “It has been deemed proper by the messengers appointed by the heavens that these people should come to this court. May Your Majesty examine them and seek their response.”

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The king of the hells asks an offender, "Did you not see the initial messenger?" The offender replies, "No, sir. I did not notice him." The king asks again, "While you lived among other humans, you must have seen old people whose hair had turned white, whose teeth had fallen out, who had gone blind, whose skin had become loose and wrinkled, whose backs were hunched, and who could walk only with a cane, uttering low moans and groans while their bodies trembled and their spirits declined. Have you not [seen this]?" The offender replies, "Yes, sir. I have seen them." The king asks again, "Did you think that you too would become like them?" The offender says, "I was careless and indulgent and it did not occur to me, sir." The king replies, "Since you were careless and indulgent, [as you admit,] you were unable to control your physical, mental, and verbal actions; nor were you able to reform your evil habits or follow good ones. I must inform you about the suffering that results from careless indulgence in life." The king goes on, "Whatever punishment you must undergo is not due to the fault of your parents, your siblings, the lord of the heavens, your ancestral spirits, your friends, servants, or employees. Nor is it due to the fault of any *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*; it is solely due to your own faults, and so you must now accept the appropriate punishment."

After asking offenders about the first messenger, the king of the hells questions them in relation to the second heavenly messenger, "Didn't you see the second messenger?" An offender replies, "No, sir." The king asks again, "While you lived among other humans, you must have seen people with illnesses so serious that they could only lie on a couch stained with [their own] urine and excretions, unable to sit or stand, completely reliant on the help of others for their food and drink; their hundred joints having become so painful, they moan and groan and shed tears, unable to speak a word. Haven't you seen such people?" The offender replies, "Yes, sir." The king continues, "Why didn't you think that you too would become like them?" The offender says, "I was careless and indulgent and it did not occur to me, sir." The king replies, "Since you were careless and indulgent, you were unable to control your physical, mental, and verbal actions; nor were you able to reform your evil habits or follow good ones. I must inform you about the suffering that results from careless indulgence in life." The king goes on, "Whatever punishment you must undergo is not

due to the fault of your parents, your siblings, the lord of the heavens, your ancestral spirits, your friends, servants, or employees. Nor is it due to the fault of any *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*; it is solely due to your own faults, and so you must now accept the appropriate punishment.”

After asking offenders about the second messenger, the king of the hells questions them in relation to the third heavenly messenger, “Didn’t you see the third messenger?” An offender replies, “No, sir.” The king asks again, “While you lived among other humans, you must have seen people die and their physical bodies dissolved as their life ends; their faculties had ceased to function, their bodies as stiff as dried wood, and either thrown onto a cemetery mound to be pecked at by birds or animals, enclosed in a coffin within an external vault, or cremated in fire. Haven’t you seen this?” The offender replies, “Yes, sir, I have.” The king continues, “Why didn’t you think that you too would become like that?” The offender says, “I was careless and indulgent and it did not occur to me, sir.” The king replies, “Since you were careless and indulgent, you were unable to control your physical, mental, and verbal actions; nor were you able to reform your evil habits or follow good ones. I must inform you about the suffering that results from careless indulgence in life.” The king goes on, “Whatever punishment you must undergo is not due to the fault of your parents, or your siblings, the lord of the heavens, your ancestral spirits, your friends, servants, or employees. Nor is it due to the fault of any *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa*; it is solely due to your own faults, and so you must now accept the appropriate punishment.”

After taking the offenders through detailed questioning in relation to the three heavenly messengers, the king of the hells hands them over to the guards, who lead them down to a great hell measuring a hundred *yojanas* long and wide, and an equal depth below the ground.

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Then the World-honored One uttered the following verse:

Four gates are open to the four directions,
 With all roads and passages leading here.
 Each hell is enclosed in iron walls,
 With an iron net ceiling
 And an iron floor.

Fierce flames blow [into these hells] continually,
Each a hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth,
Firmly set, neither tilting nor shaking.
Dark smoke rises in every part of the chamber,
Making it hard to see through the bright fiery glow.
Sixteen minor hells are attached,
All of them filled with fierce flames,
The heat of which matches the evil actions of the offenders.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The king of the hells thought to himself, “No sentient being in the world is free from ignorance and delusion, and therefore he or she commits evil deeds physically, mentally, and verbally. Having done so, when their lives end there is no one, with few exceptions, who is not subject to these kinds of hellish suffering. If the sentient beings in the world would reform their evil habits, however, and control their physical, mental, and verbal actions and thus engage in good conduct, they would enjoy happiness in a heaven after the end of their life, like the heavenly gods. If I should be born a human after my death and come into the presence of the Tathāgata, I would shave my hair and beard under the guidance of the right Dharma, don the three mendicant robes, renounce domestic life, attain pure faith, and engage in the practice of austerity so as to accomplish what must be done [for salvation], acquire insight into the nature of things as they really are, and realize for myself, in this life, the direct experience that there is no more birth for me ever again.”

Then the World-honored One uttered the following verse:

After seeing the heavenly messengers,
If one carelessly continues to indulge in life,
He or she accumulates worries and is reborn in a lower state.
If one is wise, on seeing the heavenly messengers
He or she will cleave to the Dharma of the saintly disciples
And refrain from careless indulgence in life.
Foreseeing rebirth in old age, illness, and death,
One sees that deliverance only comes when there is no rebirth.

By exhausting the cycle of birth, old age, illness, and death,
 One realizes [eternal] peace and happiness.
 By [resolving to] attain the transcendent goal in this life,
 One overcomes all worries and fears
 And is destined to realize final nirvana.

Article 5: Dragons and Birds

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are four kinds of dragons (*nāgas*). What are the four? (1) Those born from an egg, (2) those born from a womb, (3) those born from moist heat, and (4) those born through transformation. Those are the four ways of birth. There are also four kinds of *garuḍas* (mythological bird), and they too are born from an egg, a womb, moist heat, or transformation.

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At the bottom of the great ocean is the palace of the dragon lord Sāgara-nāgarāja, which is eighty thousand *yojanas* long and wide, ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, as in the palaces already mentioned.

Between Mount Sumeru and Mount Khadira are two palaces belonging to the dragon lords called Nanda and Upananda. Each palace, measuring a thousand *yojanas* long and wide, is ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, as in the palaces already mentioned.

To the north of the great ocean is a gigantic tree, called *kūṭasālmali*, in which both the lord of the *nāgas* and the lord of the *garuḍas* reside. The circumference of this tree is a full seven *yojanas*; it rises to a height of one hundred *yojanas* and its branches and leaves extend out as far as fifty *yojanas*.

To the east of this tree are the palaces of the *nāgas* born from an egg and the palaces of the *garuḍas* born from an egg, each measuring six thousand *yojanas* in length and breadth. Each palace is ringed by sevenfold

walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, as in the other palaces already mentioned. To the south of the *kūṭasālmali* tree are the palaces of the *nāgas* and *garuḍas* born from a womb; each palace is six thousand *yojanas* long and wide, ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, as in the other palaces already mentioned. To the west of the *kūṭasālmali* tree are the palaces of the *nāgas* and *garuḍas* born from a moist heat, which measure six thousand *yojanas* in length and breadth. Each palace is ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, as in the other palaces already mentioned. To the north of the *kūṭasālmali* tree are the palaces of the *nāgas* and *garuḍas* born through transformation, each of which is six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. Each palace is ringed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, as in the other palaces already mentioned.

127c When a *garuḍa* born from an egg wishes to partake of dragon meat, it flies down from an eastern branch of the *kūṭasālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of two hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] the *garuḍa* feeds on the flesh of dragons born from an egg as freely as it wishes. However, it cannot catch the other three kinds of dragons.

When a *garuḍa* born from a womb wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born from an egg, it flies down from an eastern branch of the *kūṭasālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of two hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on the flesh of dragons born from an egg, as freely as it wishes. When a *garuḍa* born from a womb wishes to partake of dragons born from a womb, it flies down from a southern branch of the *kūṭasālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings,

creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of four hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on dragons born from a womb, as freely as it wishes. However, it cannot catch dragons born from moist heat or through transformation.

When a *garuḍa* born from moist heat wishes to partake of the flesh of a dragon born from an egg, it flies down from an eastern branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of two hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on the flesh of dragons born from an egg, as freely as it wishes. When a *garuḍa* born from moist heat wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born from a womb, it flies down from an eastern branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of four hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on the flesh of dragons born from an egg as freely as it wishes. When a *garuḍa* born from moist heat wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born from moist heat, it flies down from a western branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of eight hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on the flesh of dragons born from moist heat, as freely as it wishes. However, it cannot catch dragons born through transformation.

When a *garuḍa* born through incarnation wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born from an egg, it flies down from an eastern branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of two hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on dragons born from an egg, as freely as it wishes. When a *garuḍa* born through transformation wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born from a womb, it flies down from a southern branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of four hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on dragons born from a womb, as freely as it wishes. When a *garuḍa* born through transformation wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born from moist heat, it flies down from a western branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll

out to a distance of eight hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on the flesh of dragons born from moist heat, as freely as it wishes. When a *garuḍa* born through transformation wishes to partake of the flesh of dragons born through transformation, it flies down from a northern branch of the *kūṭaśālmali* tree and strikes the surface of the ocean with its wings, creating waves on both sides that roll out to a distance of sixteen hundred *yojanas*. In the trough [of the wave] it feeds on the flesh of dragons born through transformation, as freely as it wishes. The foregoing [describes] the dragons that are eaten by the *garuḍas*.

128a There are dragons, however, on whom even the *garuḍas* cannot feed. Who are these dragons? They are Sāgaranāgarāja, Nanda, Upananda, Yinapoluo, Titoulaicha, Sudṛśa, Alü, Jiejuluo, Jiapiluo, Aboluo, Jiatsu, Qujiatu, Anavatapta, Supraṭiṣṭhita, Yushanqiebotou, and Dechajia. These are the dragon kings who are not subject to [being consumed by] the *garuḍas*, and those under their care are free from the fate met by the other dragons.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

If a sentient being upholds dragon norms and always observes, in mind and volition, the importance of the rules followed by dragons, that person will be reborn in the dragon world. If a sentient being upholds the norms of *garuḍas* and always observes, in mind and volition, the importance of the rules followed by *garuḍas*, that person will be reborn in the world of the *garuḍas*. If a sentient being upholds the norms of the hare and owl and always observes, in mind and volition, the importance of their rules, that person will [be reborn] into their world. If a sentient being upholds the norms of a dog, cow, deer, or [the norms] of a mute, of Mañibhadra, the sun and moon, of water, fire, or sacrificial fire, or of various ascetic practices, and if that person also thinks, “I have upheld the norms of a mute, of Mañibhadra, of the sun and moon, of water, fire, and sacrificial fire, and of various ascetic practices, and because of those merits I wish to be reborn in heaven”—[what do you think?] Is this a wrong view?

The Buddha continued:

I shall explain that the kind of person who upholds the following wrong views is bound to fall [upon rebirth] into one of two places—either in the

hells or the four kinds of [animal] births. Some *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* theorize that “The self and the world are permanent; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “The self and the world are impermanent; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “The self and the world are both permanent and impermanent; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “The self and the world are limited (i.e., come to an end); this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “The self and the world are limitless (i.e., never come to an end); this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “The self and the world are both limited and limitless; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “The self and the world are neither limited nor limitless; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “This life principle (*jīva*) and this corporeal body [are identical]; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “This life principle is different [from the body], and the body differs [from the life principle]; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “There is neither a life principle nor no life principle; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” or “There is neither a life principle nor a corporeal body; this view alone is true while the rest is false.”

Some assert, “There is a further death beyond this; this view alone is true while the rest is false.” Others assert, “There is no further death beyond this; this view alone is true while the rest is false.” A third group asserts, “There is both a further death beyond this and no further death beyond this; this view alone is true while the rest is false.” A fourth group asserts, “There is neither a further death beyond this, nor no further death beyond this.”

When a *śramaṇa* or *brāhmaṇa* says, “The world is permanent; this view alone is true while the rest is false,” that person is affirming an assumption based on tendencies that predispose him to believe that there is a permanent self (*ātma-dṛṣṭi*) and a permanent life principle (*jīva*), and that the body is the self and the world is permanent. Because of this, he asserts that the self and the world are permanent. When someone says [in opposition], “The world is impermanent,” that person is affirming a similar assumption, in that it is also based on the predisposition to believe that there is a permanent self and a permanent life principle, and that the body is the self and the world is permanent. Thus such a person asserts that the

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self and the world are impermanent. When someone asserts that the world is both permanent and impermanent, that person is also affirming an assumption based on a predisposition to believe that there is a permanent self and a permanent life principle, and that the body is the self and the world is permanent. Thus such a person now asserts that the self and the world are both permanent and impermanent. When someone asserts that the world is neither permanent nor impermanent, this again is affirming an assumption based on a predisposition to believe that there is a permanent self and a permanent life principle, and that the body is the self and the world is permanent. Thus such a person maintains that the self and the world are neither permanent nor impermanent.

When someone asserts that the self and the world are limited, he too is affirming an assumption based on a predisposition to believe that there is a permanent self and a permanent life principle, and that the body is the self and the world is permanent, and also that the life principle, the physical body, and the world are limited. [In this view,] the body consisting of the four gross elements continually transforms itself from the moment of conception until its arrival at the cemetery, sustaining itself over a span of seven lives. When at length the latent tendencies (i.e., predispositional forces) of the physical body and life principle are exhausted, the self enters into a pure state (i.e., a purified aggregate). Thus such a person maintains that the self is limited.

When someone asserts that the self and the world are limitless, this is again affirming an assumption based on a predisposition to believe that the life principle, the physical body, and the world are limitless. The body consisting of the four gross elements continually transforms itself from the moment of conception until its arrival at the cemetery, sustaining itself over a span of seven lives. When at length the latent tendencies of the physical body and life principle are exhausted the self enters into a pure state. Seeing this, such a person maintains that the self is limitless.

When someone asserts that the world is both limited and limitless, this too is affirming an assumption based on their practice, the belief that there is a permanent self and a permanent life principle, that the body is the self and the world is permanent, and that the life principle (*jīva*) is both limited and limitless. The body consisting of the four gross elements continually

transforms itself from the moment of conception until its arrival at the cemetery, sustaining itself over a span of seven lives. When at length the latent tendencies of the physical body and life principle are exhausted the self enters into a pure state. Seeing this, such a person maintains that the self and the world are both limited and limitless.

When someone asserts that the self and the world are neither limited nor limitless, this is affirming an assumption based on a predisposition to believe that the life principle and the physical body are limitless. The body consisting of the four gross elements continually transforms itself from the moment of conception until its arrival at the cemetery, sustaining itself over a span of seven lives. When at length the latent tendencies of the physical body and life principle are exhausted the self enters into a pure state. Seeing this, such a person maintains that the self is neither limited nor limitless.

When someone asserts that the life principle is identical with the physical body, this is affirming the existence of the life principle in relation to this physical body, and [also] its existence in relation to another [different] body. Because of this, such a person maintains that the life principle is identical with the physical body. If they assert, however, that the physical body differs when the life principle differs, they are affirming the existence of the life principle in relation to the physical body but not its existence in relation to another [different] body. Thus such a person maintains that when there is a change in the life principle there is a different physical body.

When someone asserts that the body and the life principle are existent as well as nonexistent, this is affirming an assumption that there is no life principle in relation to the body but that there is a life principle in another body. Because of this, such a person asserts that there is a life principle and also that there is no life principle. If someone asserts that there is neither the body nor a life principle, this is affirming a view that there is neither a life principle in this body nor a life principle in another body. Because of this, such a person asserts that there is neither a life principle nor the corporeal body.

When someone asserts that there is another [different] death than this, this is affirming an assumption that there is a life principle now and [also that] the life principle and [the] body will be active later on (i.e., in an

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afterlife). Because of this, such a person asserts that there is a different death than this. If someone asserts that there is not another death than this, this is affirming an assumption that there is a life principle in this [present] life but that there is no life principle in the afterlife. Because of this, such a person asserts that there is not another death than this. If someone asserts that there is another death than this as well as not another death than this, this is affirming an assumption that the life principle is annihilated in this life but [other] life principles become active in the afterlife. Because of this, such a person asserts both that there is another life principle than this and that there is not another life principle than this. If someone asserts that there is neither another death like this nor not another death like this, this is affirming an assumption that the present life principle and body are annihilated and that the life principle and the body in the afterlife will also be annihilated. Because of this, such a person asserts that there is neither another death than this nor not another death than this.

Then the World-honored One said to the *bhikkhus*:

Once there was a king called Ādarśamukha (or Darpaṇamukha). It happened that a group of blind men had gathered at one spot and the king asked them, “O blind men, do you know what an elephant is?” They replied, “O great king, we do not know, nor would we recognize, what an elephant is.” The king asked again, “Would you like to know how it is shaped?” They replied, “Yes, we would like to know that, sire.” The king instructed his attendant to bring an elephant to them and then asked the blind men to touch it with their hands. One of them touched the animal’s nose, and the king said, “That is an elephant.” The second blind man touched its tusk, the third touched its ear, the fourth touched its head, the fifth touched its back, the sixth touched its belly, the seventh touched its knee, the eighth touched its shoulder, the ninth touched a foot, and the tenth touched the tail. Each time, the king told each blind man, “That is an elephant.”

Then the king had the animal taken away and questioned the blind men: “What is the elephant like?” The first among them, who had touched its nose, replied, “The elephant is like the twisted shaft of a cart, sire”; the second, who had touched its tusk, replied, “It is like a pestle”; the

third, who had touched its ear, replied, “It is like a straw raincoat”; the fourth, who had touched its head, replied, “It is like a [large] kettle”; the fifth, who had touched its back, replied, “It is like a hilltop”; the sixth, who had touched its belly, replied, “It is like a wall”; the seventh, who had touched its knee, replied, “It is like a tree”; the eighth, who had touched its shoulder, replied, “It is like a pillar”; the ninth, who had touched a foot, replied, “It is like a mortar”; and the tenth, who had touched its tail, replied, “It is like a rope.” Then the blind men began to argue, saying, “My description is correct” and “Your description cannot be correct,” and so on. As there was no end to their bickering, they finally came to blows. Seeing this, Darpaṇamukha burst into laughter. Then the king uttered the following verse:

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A multitude of blind men engage in dispute,
 Competing in their different views,
 Yet it is the body of one and the same elephant.
 Indeed, it is only due to different views that
 Both affirmation and negation arise
 [About one and the same thing].

The Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*:

It is just the same with the disputes among the different schools of religion and philosophy. They do not know the truth of suffering, or of its causal aggregation, or of the cessation of that causal aggregation, or of the path of its cessation. Each school, entertaining its own view, disputes with others as to what is right and wrong. Insisting that their own view is correct, they enter into disputes. If, however, *śramaṇas* or *brāhmaṇas* understand the truth of suffering, and of its causal aggregation, and of the cessation of that causal aggregation, and of the essential path of that cessation, they will reflect upon the nature of their own thoughts and attain harmony with others. Receiving one and the same truth, studying under one and the same teacher, associating in one and the same community, integrated like water and milk and remaining ever alert to this awareness, they abide in peace and happiness.

Then the World-honored One uttered this verse:

If one does not know of life's suffering
And the causal origins of this suffering,
Or of the possible cessation of this suffering
And the path of cessation of its causal origination,
One loses the opportunity to liberate the mind,
A liberation based on insight (*prajñā*)
That clarifies the origins of birth, old age, illness, and death.
If, however, one sees the truth of life's suffering,
And of the causal origins of this suffering,
And of the cessation of this suffering,
So will one discern the path of cessation
And deliverance of the mind,
The deliverance based on insight
That clarifies the causal aggregate of suffering,
Thereby exhausting the root cause of birth, old age,
Illness, death, and the [cyclic] will-to-becoming.

O *bhikṣus*, because of this, you should contemplate the truth of suffering, the truth of its causal aggregation, the truth of the cessation of suffering, and the truth of the [eightfold] noble path of cessation and essential liberation from suffering.

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Article 6: The Demigods (*Asuras*)

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

At the bottom of the great ocean, north of Mount Sumeru, is the capital of Rāhvasurin, a spacious city extending eighty thousand *yojanas* long and wide. The city is well designed, with walls that are three thousand *yojanas* high and two thousand *yojanas* [thick], embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees. The gateways are one thousand *yojanas* in height and the same measure in length and breadth. The golden wall is endowed with a silver gate, the silver wall with a golden gate, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. Located within the great city is an inner city, sixty thousand *yojanas* long and wide, that is occupied by the

king of the *asura* demigods; it is called Lunyumobazha and it is protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of precious treasure. The walls are three thousand *yojanas* high and two thousand *yojanas* thick. The gates are two thousand *yojanas* high and one thousand *yojanas* wide. The golden wall is endowed with a silver gate, the silver wall with a golden gate, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

Within the inner city is an assembly hall called Saptasīrasā, which is protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. The building's foundation is made of pure emerald, and its beams and pillars are made from the seven kinds of treasure. The [main] pillar is one thousand *yojanas* in diameter and ten thousand *yojanas* high. Beneath it is the throne called the sudharma seat, heavily engraved with inscriptions, and it measures seven hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth and is made from the seven kinds of treasure. There are four doors to the assembly hall, each protected by sevenfold walls and stairways further embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the north of the assembly hall is the palace that belongs to the king of the *asuras*, which is ten thousand *yojanas* long and wide. The sevenfold palace walls are embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. To the east of the assembly hall is a pleasure grove called Śāla, ten thousand *yojanas* long and wide and protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. To the south of the assembly hall is a pleasure grove called Śobhanatara, also ten thousand *yojanas* long and wide. To the west of the hall is a pleasure grove called Yāma, again ten thousand *yojanas* long and wide; to the north of the hall is a pleasure grove called Abhilāṣa, which has the same dimensions.

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Between the Śāla and Śobhanatara pleasure groves is a tree called Pāri-jāta; the diameter of its trunk is seven *yojanas*, its height is one hundred *yojanas*, and its branches and leaves spread out as far as fifty *yojanas* in every direction. The tree is protected on all sides by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. Between the Yāma and Abhilāṣa pleasure groves is a lake called Upananda, with clean, cool, and spotlessly clear water. The seven dikes encircling the lake are built with precious materials, with stone terraces and seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Four kinds of flowers grow there; their leaves and blossoms extend up to one *yojana* in length and width, and their fragrance can be detected as far away as one *yojana*. Their stalks form the hub of a wheel and sap, as sweet as honey, flows out like white milk. Innumerable rare birds sing harmoniously there, just as before. By the shore of this lake are pavilions seven stories high, each encircled by seven gated walls with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

The palaces occupied by officials serving the *asura* king are as large as ten thousand *yojanas* in length and breadth, down to the smallest, which are one thousand *yojanas* long and wide. All the palaces are protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. The palaces of the *asuras* are smaller, varying from one thousand *yojanas* in length and breadth down to the smallest, which are one hundred *yojanas* [long and wide]. These palaces are also protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the north of the assembly hall is a stairway made of seven precious materials, which leads to the palace compound. There are other stairways that lead to the Śāla, Śobhanatara, Yāma, and Abhilāṣa pleasure groves,

and stairways that lead to the Pārijāta tree, Upananda Lake, and the palaces occupied by ministers and minor officials.

When the *asura* king wishes to make an excursion to the Śāla pleasure grove, he merely thinks of Bhīmacitra, a member of the *asura* royalty, and the latter becomes aware that “King Rāhvasurin has put this thought in my mind.” Bhīmacitra immediately dons formal clothing, and riding in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable attendants, arrives before the king and takes his position to one side. The *asura* king thinks of another royal figure, Prarāhvasurin, and he too becomes aware that “King Rāhvasurin is calling me.” Prarāhvasurin immediately dons formal clothing, and riding in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable attendants, arrives before the king and takes his position to one side. The king then thinks of another royal figure, Yāmarāhvasurin, who too becomes aware that “King Rāhvasurin is calling me,” immediately dons formal clothing, and riding in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable attendants, arrives before the king and takes his position to one side. The king then thinks of his minister Asurin, who becomes aware that “King Rāhvasurin is calling me,” immediately dons formal clothing, and riding in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable attendants, arrives before the king and takes his position to one side. The king now thinks of a minor official, who also becomes aware that “King Rāhvasurin is calling me,” immediately dons formal clothing, and riding in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable attendants, arrives before the king and takes his position to one side.

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Now King Rāhu of the *asuras* (Rāhvasurin) dons a richly decorated garment, mounts his carriage, and surrounded by innumerable attendants, proceeds to the Śāla pleasure grove. When the procession reaches the gate the doors are opened by a sudden gust of wind that sweeps over the grounds within and blows down flower blossoms into a knee-high mound. Rāhvasurin enters the pleasure grove and enjoys his visit for a day or two, and so on, up to a seventh day, when he returns to his palace. When he later visits the Śobhanatara, Yāma, and Abhilāṣa pleasure groves, he follows the same steps that have been described here.

King Rāhu of the *asuras* is always accompanied by five great *asuras*, who guard him closely on all sides. The first is called Tichi, the second

Xiongli, the third Wuyi, the fourth Touju, and the fifth Cuifu. These *asuras* guard him at all times. The palace of King Rāhu is not only sits on the bottom of the great ocean, it also rises to the ocean surface and is held [above the ocean] by the four powers of wind: a steady wind (*zhufeng*), a supporting wind (*chifeng*), an immovable wind (*budong*), and a firm wind (*jiangu*). These four winds hold the great ocean suspended in midair, ten thousand *yojanas* above the *asuras*' palace, never letting it fall, so that it is just like a floating cloud. Indeed, such are the great fortune, merits, and powers that have accrued to the *asura* king.

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Article 7: The Four Guardian Gods

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

To the east of Mount Sumeru, at a distance of a thousand *yojanas*, is the abode of the guardian god Dhṛtarāṣṭra, a city called Xianshangcheng, which is six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. The ramparts around the city are sevenfold and embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the south of Mount Sumeru, at a distance of a thousand *yojanas*, is the abode of the guardian god Virūḍhaka, a city called Sudarśana that measures six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. Its ramparts are sevenfold and embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the west of Mount Sumeru, at a distance of a thousand *yojanas*, is the abode of the guardian god Virūpākṣa, a city called Chūḍasudarśana, which is six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. Its ramparts are sevenfold and embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the north of Mount Sumeru, at a distance of a thousand *yojanas*, is the abode of the guardian god Vaiśravaṇa. This king resides in three cities;

the first is called Bhaya (Heyi), the second, Tianjing, and the third, Zhonggui. Each city measures six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. Their ramparts also are sevenfold and embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the north of Zhonggui is a pleasure grove called Jiapiyantou, four thousand *yojanas* long and wide, protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. In the middle of this pleasure grove is a pond called Nalinni, forty *yojanas* long and wide, with clean and transparent water. The dike [that forms the pond] is made from the seven kinds of treasure, and the pond is ringed by stone terraces with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees made from the seven kinds of treasure. In the pond are many varieties of shining lotus blossoms in blue, yellow, red, white, and variegated hues, whose fragrance can be detected as far as half a *yojana* away. Their stalks form the hub of a wheel and the sap, as sweet as honey, flows out like white milk, and innumerable rare birds sing harmoniously together, just as before.

Apart from the palaces of the sun and moon, those of the guardian gods are forty *yojanas* long and wide, protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. The palaces vary in size but even the smallest measures five *yojanas* long and wide.

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From Zhonggui a stairway leads to Xianshangcheng. Another stairway leads to Bhaya and Tianjing. Even more stairways lead to Jiapiyantou and Nalinni, and to the palaces of the ministers of the four guardian gods. When Vaiśravaṇa [in the northern heaven] wishes to enjoy an excursion to Jiapiyantou, he first thinks of Dhṛtarāṣṭra [in the eastern heaven], and the latter becomes aware that “Vaiśravaṇa has put this thought in my mind.” Dhṛtarāṣṭra immediately dons formal clothing and rides in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by a host of *gandharva* demigods, arriving

before Vaiśravaṇa and taking his position to one side. Vaiśravaṇa then thinks of Virūḍhaka [in the southern heaven], who then becomes aware that “Vaiśravaṇa is calling me.” He immediately dons formal clothing and rides in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable *kumbhāṇḍa* deities, arriving before Vaiśravaṇa and taking his position to one side. Vaiśravaṇa then thinks of Virūpākṣa [in the western heaven], who becomes aware that “Vaiśravaṇa is calling me.” Virūpākṣa immediately dons formal clothing and rides in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable *nāga* deities, arriving before Vaiśravaṇa and taking his position to one side. Vaiśravaṇa then thinks of the ministers of the four guardian gods, and they all become aware that “Vaiśravaṇa is calling me.” Each of them immediately dons formal clothing and rides in a richly decorated carriage, surrounded by innumerable deities, arriving before Vaiśravaṇa and taking a position to one side.

The guardian god Vaiśravaṇa now dons a richly decorated garment, mounts his carriage, and accompanied by innumerable hosts of deities proceeds to the pleasure grove. When the procession reaches the Jiapiyantou gate the doors open by a sudden gust of wind that sweeps the ground within and blows down flower blossoms into a knee-high mound. Vaiśravaṇa enters the pleasure grove, enjoys his visit for a day or two, and so on, up to a seventh day, and then returns to his palace. Vaiśravaṇa is always accompanied by five great spirits, who guard him closely on all sides. The first is called Pañcāla, the second Daṇḍala, the third Hemabhadra, the fourth Dīpaṃkara, and the fifth Xiuyilumo. These five spirits guard him at all times. Indeed, such are the great fortune, merits, and powers that have accrued to the king of the guardian gods.

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Article 8: Trāyastrīṃśa Heaven

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

At the summit of Mount Sumeru is the abode of the thirty-three gods, [Trāyastrīṃśa]. This city extends eighty thousand *yojanas* long and wide, with sevenfold concentric ramparts that are embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven

kinds of treasure. The ramparts are one hundred *yojanas* high and sixty *yojanas* across at the top, with gates that are sixty *yojanas* high and thirty *yojanas* across at the top. Every five hundred *yojanas* from the main gate is another gate where five hundred spirits dwell to protect the thirty-three gods. The golden wall is adorned with a silver gate, the silver wall is adorned with a golden gate, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

Within the great city is an inner city [called Sudarśana], sixty thousand *yojanas* long and wide. Its sevenfold concentric ramparts are embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. The ramparts are one hundred *yojanas* high and sixty *yojanas* across at the top, with gates every five hundred *yojanas* that are sixty *yojanas* high and thirty *yojanas* across at the top. At each gate five hundred spirits dwell to protect the thirty-three gods. The golden wall is adorned with silver gates, [the silver wall with golden gates,] the quartz wall with lapis gates, the lapis wall with quartz gates, the ruby wall with agate gates, the agate wall with ruby gates, and the emerald wall with gates decorated with many kinds of precious stones. The railings are decorated in a similar way: the golden railing is adorned with ropes made of silver, the silver railing with ropes made of gold, the quartz railing with ropes made of lapis, the lapis railing with ropes made of quartz, the ruby railing with ropes made of agate, the agate railing with ropes made of rubies, and the emerald railing with a variety of precious stones. Over these railings are hung decorative nets on which various ornaments are attached. From the golden net hangs a silver bell, from the silver net hangs a golden bell, from the lapis net hangs a quartz bell, from the quartz net hangs a lapis bell, from the ruby net hangs an agate bell, from the agate net hangs a ruby bell, and from the emerald net hangs a bell inlaid with various precious stones.

The golden trees have golden trunks and branches, with silver flowers and fruit. The silver trees have silver trunks and branches, with golden flowers and fruit. The quartz trees have quartz trunks and branches, with lapis flowers and leaves, while the lapis trees have lapis trunks and branches and quartz flowers and leaves. The ruby trees have ruby trunks and branches, with agate flowers and leaves, while the agate trees have agate

trunks and branches and flowers and leaves made of rubies. The emerald trees have emerald trunks and branches, with flowers and leaves made of various precious stones.

131b Each of the seven walls has four gates, one on each side, protected by barriers. Each wall is topped with a pavilion and veranda and encloses a bathing pond and pleasure garden filled with various flowers blooming in a multitude of hues. The verdant trees are laden with abundant flowers and fruit. Exquisite fragrance arises in all directions, pleasing to human senses; hawks, wild ducks, male and female mandarin ducks, and a host of rare birds, numbering in the thousands of species, sing harmoniously together.

In the area outside the inner city is the palace of Irāpatra, lord of the *nāgas*; it extends six thousand *yojanas* long and wide. Its sevenfold walls are embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

At the center of Sudarśana is Sudharma Assembly Hall, one hundred *yojanas* long and wide, adorned with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. The foundation of the hall is pure gold and its roof is made of lapis. The pillars, ten *yojanas* in diameter, rise to a height of one hundred *yojanas*. Centered beneath them is the throne of the lord of the [thirty-three] gods, one *yojana* long and wide, reflecting variegated hues created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. The seat of the throne is delicate, as smooth to the touch as a heavenly garment. On both sides of the throne are sixteen seats. Four gates, adorned with railings made from the seven kinds of treasure, provide entrance to the hall. The stairway leading to the hall is five hundred *yojanas* across and the gateway is protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the north of Sudharma Hall is the palace of the lord of the gods Indra, which is one thousand *yojanas* long and wide. The sevenfold palace walls are embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

To the east of the palace is a pleasure grove called Cuse, one thousand *yojanas* long and wide, which is surrounded by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. Within this pleasure grove are two stone mounds embellished with heavenly gold called Bhadra and Subhadra, respectively; their surfaces are as smooth as a heavenly garment.

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To the south of the palace is another pleasure grove, called Citraprīti, one thousand *yojanas* long and wide, which is enclosed by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. In this pleasure grove are two massive stone mounds embellished with the seven kinds of treasure; they are called Dina and Sudina, respectively, and each is fifty *yojanas* long and wide, with surfaces as smooth as a heavenly garment.

To the west of Sudharma Hall is another pleasure grove, called Za (Samsarga?), one thousand *yojanas* long and wide, protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. In this pleasure grove are two massive stone mounds embellished with the seven kinds of treasure, called Sudarśana (Shanjian) and Anusudarśana (Shunshanjian), respectively; each is gilded with heavenly gold, measures fifty *yojanas* long and wide, and has surfaces as smooth as a heavenly garment.

To the north of Sudharma Hall is another pleasure grove, called Mahāsukha, one thousand *yojanas* long and wide, protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. In this pleasure grove are two massive stone mounds, called Sukha (Xi) and Mahāsukha (Taxi), respectively, measuring fifty *yojanas* long and wide, embellished with the seven kinds of treasure, each gilded with heavenly gold, and whose surfaces are as smooth as a heavenly garment.

Midway between the Cuse and Citraprīti (?) (Huale) pleasure groves is a pond called Nanda, one hundred *yojanas* long and wide, with clear,

spotless water. The dike forming the pond is made from the seven kinds of treasure, and the pond is enclosed by stone terraces with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure. On the four sides of the pond are four stairways with railings adorned with the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. In the pond there are many varieties of shining lotus blossoms in blue, yellow, red, white, and variegated hues, with a fragrance that can be detected as far away as one *yojana*. The shade cast by a single leaf [of a lotus blossom] is as wide as one *yojana*, and the stalks form the hub of a wheel, with sap, sweet as honey, flowing out like white milk. Four other pleasure groves can be found on the four sides of this pond.

Midway between the Saṃsarga and Mahāsukha pleasure groves is a tree called Pārijāta, seven *yojanas* in diameter and one hundred *yojanas* in height, with branches and leaves spreading in all directions as far as fifty *yojanas*. An empty pavilion stands beside this tree, extending five hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth and protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

132a The rest of the palace complex occupies an area one thousand *yojanas* [long and wide], protected by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. Some of the public buildings are as large as eight or nine hundred *yojanas* [long and wide], with the smallest measuring one hundred *yojanas* [in length and breadth], and all are surrounded by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable birds singing harmoniously together, just as before. Some of the small palaces are eighty to one hundred *yojanas* [long and wide], and even the smallest measures twelve *yojanas* [in length and breadth]. These buildings, too, are surrounded by sevenfold walls embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets, and seven lines

of trees, all made from the seven kinds of treasure, and so on, with innumerable birds singing harmoniously together, just as before.

On the north side of Sudharma Hall are two stairways that lead to the palace of Indra, lord of the gods. To the east of the hall are two stairways that lead to the Cuse pleasure grove. Other stairways lead to the Citraprīti, Samsarga, and Mahāsukha pleasure groves, as well as to Nanda Pond, the Pārijāta tree, and the palaces of the other gods, including that of Irāpatra, lord of the *nāgas*.

When the lord of the gods Śakra (Indra) wishes to make an excursion to the Cuse pleasure grove, he has only to think of the thirty-two gods over whom he presides and they immediately become aware that “Lord Śakra is calling me.” They immediately don formal clothing and ride in richly decorated carriages, accompanied by innumerable attendants, arriving before Śakra and taking their positions to one side. Again, Indra thinks of Irāpatra, lord of the *nāgas*, and he immediately becomes aware that “Lord Śakra is calling me.” Irāpatra is immediately transformed into a figure with thirty-three heads, each having six fangs, with seven bathing ponds surrounding each fang. In every pond are seven gigantic lotus blossoms that are supported by one hundred leaves, where seven beautiful maidens play, making music, singing, and dancing. Having produced this supernatural display, the lord of the *nāgas* approaches Indra and takes his position to one side.

Then Śakra, lord of the gods, puts on a necklace richly decorated with precious stones and takes his seat on the main head of Irāpatra, lord of the *nāgas*. Following him, the other gods, sixteen on each side, take their seats on Irāpatra’s [thirty-two] other heads. Lord Indra’s procession goes to the Cuse pleasure grove, accompanied by innumerable hosts of deities. When the procession reaches the gate the doors open by a sudden gust of wind that sweeps the ground within and blows down flower blossoms into a knee-high mound. Śakra, lord of the gods, then takes his seat on either of the two stone mounds called Bhadra and Subhadra, as he pleases. The thirty-two gods follow him, taking their seats one after another.

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Some gods cannot join the procession to the pleasure grove and are unable to satisfy their five senses. Why is this so? The merits they had

individually accrued from their past conduct differ. Again, some gods can see the grove but cannot enter it, and are unable to satisfy their five senses. Why is this so? The merits they had accrued from their past conduct differ. Again, some gods can see and enter the grove but are unable to satisfy their five senses. Why is this so? The merits they had accrued from their past conduct differ. Again, some gods are able to see and enter the grove and satisfy their five senses. Why is this so? The merits they had accrued from their past conduct differ. After enjoying their visit for a day or two, and so on, up to a seventh day, each god then returns to his own palace. When Śakra, lord of the gods, wishes to visit the other pleasure groves of Citraprīti, Samsarga, and Mahāsukha, he proceeds in exactly the same way.

Why is a pleasure grove called Cuse? It is because one's body feels coarse and rough (*cuse*) on entering it. Why is another pleasure grove called Citraprīti? It is because on entering it one's body spontaneously takes on different colors, depending on the scene, satisfying one's senses. Why is another pleasure grove called Samsarga? On the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of each month all the palace ladies except female *asuras* are released to join the gods on their excursion and mingle freely. Because of this, it is called the pleasure-mingling grove. Why is another pleasure grove called Mahāsukha? Because in it one is bound to experience much pleasure and delight; hence it is [called] the grove of great acquired joy. Why is the assembly hall called Sudharma? Because in it one is obliged to contemplate the supreme nature of the Dharma and, through acquiring pure happiness, one calls the hall Sudharma ("Good Dharma"). Why is the tree called Pārijāta? Because a spirit called Manda who lives in this tree enjoys himself by playing musical instruments at all hours, so it is called "Passing the Day" (Zhoudu).

Śakra, the lord of the gods, is accompanied by ten great gods who guard him closely at all times. Who are the ten? They are (1) [the guardians] Indra, (2) Gopaka, (3) Pilou, (4) Piloupoti, (5) Dhāra, (6) Bala, (7) Jīva, (8) Lingxidū, (9) Wuluo, and (10) Nantou. Śakra possesses great supernatural powers as lord of the gods, and the aura of his authority is as has been described. These [guardians] are held in the highest regard by the people of Jambudvīpa.

The flowers that grow in water are water lilies, such as the *utpala*, *padma*, *kumuda*, *puṇḍarīka*, and *sugandha*; they are delicate, fragrant, and pristine. The flowers that grow on land belong to the *mokṣaka*, *campaka*, *pātālī*, *sumanā*, *vārṣika*, and *tongnū* trees. The flowers that grow in the palaces of the *asuras* are water lilies such as the *utpala*, *padma*, *kumuda*, and *puṇḍarīka*, delicate, fragrant, and pristine, and tree flowers such as the *shudishajiali*, *bimbā*, *mahābimbā*, *jiajiali*, *māndāra*, and *mahāmāndāra*. All of these water lilies and tree flowers are greatly appreciated by the four guardian gods of heaven, the thirty-three Trāyastrīṃśa gods, the god Yama, the gods of Tuṣita Heaven, the Nirmāṇarati gods, and the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods.

There are ten laws observed by all the gods: (1) the number of possible disappearances is limitless; (2) the number of possible appearances is limitless; (3) there is no impediment to disappearance; (4) there is no impediment to appearance; (5) there is no flesh and blood, no skin and bones or sinews, in celestial bodies; (6) the impurities of urination or excretion do not occur in celestial bodies; (7) celestial bodies experience no fatigue or exhaustion; (8) there is no procreation in celestial female bodies; (9) celestial eyes do not blink; and (10) celestial bodies can adopt different hues at will, changing to blue if one likes blue, to yellow if one likes yellow, to red if one likes red, and so on. Those are the ten rules observed by heavenly beings. What are the seven skin colors found among human beings? (1) Some have a golden complexion, (2) some have a fiery complexion, (3) some have a blue complexion, (4) some have a yellow complexion, (5) some have a red complexion, (6) some have a black complexion, and (7) some have a white complexion. These skin colors are also found among the gods as well as the *asuras*.

O *bhikṣus*, compared to the light of the firefly, the light of a candle is superior; compared to candlelight, the light of a torch is superior; compared to torchlight, the light of a bonfire is superior; compared to a bonfire, the illumination cast by the four guardians' palaces, castles, necklaces, garments, and physical bodies is superior; compared to the light of that illumination, the light of the thirty-three gods is superior; compared to the light of the thirty-three gods, the light of the god Yama is superior; compared to the

133a light of the god Yama, the light of the Tuṣita gods is superior; compared to the light of the Tuṣita gods, the light of the Nirmāṇarati gods is superior; compared to the light of the Nirmāṇarati gods, the light of the Paranirmī-tavaśavartin gods is superior; compared to the light of the Paranirmī-tavaśavartin gods, the light of the Brahmakāyika gods is superior; compared to the light of the Brahmakāyika gods, the light of the Ābhāsvara gods is superior; compared to the light of the Ābhāsvara gods, the light of the Śubhakarṣna gods is superior; compared to the light of the Śubhakarṣna gods, the light of the Puṇyaprasava gods is superior; compared to the light of the Puṇyaprasava gods, the light of the Asaṃjñika gods is superior; compared to the light of the Asaṃjñika gods, the light of the Avṛha gods is superior; compared to the light of the Avṛha gods, the light of the Atapa gods is superior; compared to the light of the Atapa gods, the light of the Sudṛśa gods is superior; compared to the light of the Sudṛśa gods, the light of the Sudarśana gods is superior; compared to the light of the Sudarśana gods, the light of the Akaniṣṭha gods is superior; compared to the light of the Akaniṣṭha gods, the light of the Bhūmivaśavartin gods is superior; compared to the light of the Bhūmivaśavartin gods, the light of the Buddha is superior. From the firefly's light up to the Buddha's illumination, in comparison with all of these lights, the light of the [Four Noble] Truths of suffering (*duḥkha*), causal aggregation (*samudaya*), cessation (*nirodha*) of causal aggregation, and the path (*mārga*) of cessation is superior. Because of this, O *bhikkhus*, those who wish to acquire illumination should seek the light of the [Four Noble] Truths of suffering, causal aggregation, cessation of causal aggregation, and the path of cessation, engaging themselves in the practice of the path.

The people of Jambudvīpa, [south of Mount Sumeru,] are three and a half hand-to-elbow lengths tall, and their garments should be seven hand-to-elbow lengths long. The people of Aparagodānīya and of Pūrvavideha, [west and east of Mount Sumeru, respectively,] are the same, three and a half hand-to-elbow lengths tall, with garments that are seven hand-to-elbow lengths long and three and a half hand-to-elbow lengths wide. The people of Uttarakuru, [north of Mount Sumeru,] are seven hand-to-elbow lengths tall, and their garments should be fourteen hand-to-elbow lengths long and seven hand-to-elbow lengths wide, and weigh one ounce (Ch. *liang*). The

asuras are one *yojana* tall, and their garments should be two *yojanas* long and one *yojana* wide, weighing six *zhu* (one-quarter of a *liang*). The four guardian gods of heaven are half a *yojana* tall, and their garments should be one *yojana* long and half a *yojana* wide, and weigh half a *liang*. The the Trāyastriṃśa gods are one *yojana* tall, and their garments should be two *yojanas* long and half a *yojanas* wide, weighing six *zhu*. The god Yama is two *yojanas* tall, and his garments should be four *yojanas* long and two *yojanas* wide, with a weight of three *zhu* (one-eighth of a *liang*). The Tuṣita gods are four *yojanas* tall, and their garments should be eight *yojanas* long and four *yojanas* wide, and weigh one and a half *zhu*. The Nirmāṇarati gods are eight *yojanas* tall, and their garments should be sixteen *yojanas* long and eight *yojanas* wide, weighing half a *zhu*. All the other gods should arrange their garments accordingly, depending on their [differing] heights.

The people of Jambudvīpa have a life span of one hundred years, but the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The people of Aparagodānīya have a life span of two hundred years, but the majority also live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The people of Pūrvavideha have a life span of three hundred years, but the majority again live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The people of Uttarakuru have a life span of one thousand years and all enjoy fairly equal longevity. Hungry ghosts have a life span of ten thousand years, but the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The *nāgas* and *garuḍas* have a life span of an eon, but some may live to less than that. The *asuras* have a life span of one thousand years in the celestial scale, but the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The four guardian gods of the heavens have a life span of five hundred years in the celestial scale, but most live to less than that, while the rest live longer. The Trāyastriṃśa gods have a life span of one thousand years in the celestial scale, but again the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The Yama gods have a life span of two thousand years in the celestial scale, but again the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The Tuṣita gods have a life span of four thousand years in the celestial scale, but again the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The Nirmāṇarati

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gods have a life span of eight thousand years in the celestial scale, but again the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The Paranimitavaśavartin gods have a life span of sixteen thousand years in the celestial scale, but again the majority live to less than that, while a small minority live longer. The Brahmakāyika gods have a life span of one eon, but some may live to less than that. The Ābhāsvara gods have a life span of two eons, but some may live to less than that. The Śubhakarṣna gods have a life span of three eons, but some may live to less than that. The Bṛhatphala gods have a life span of four eons, but some may live to less than that. The Asaṃjñīsattva gods have a life span of five hundred eons, but some may live to less than that. The Avṛha gods have a life span of one thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Atapa gods have a life span of two thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Sudṛśa gods have a life span of three thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Sudarśana gods have a life span of four thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Akaniṣṭha gods have a life span of five thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Ākāśānāntyāyatana gods have a life span of ten thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Vijñānānāntyāyatana gods have a life span of twenty-one thousand eons, but some may live to less than that. The Ākīṃcanyāyatana gods have a life span of forty-two eons, but some may live to less than that. The Naivasamjñānāsamjñāyatana gods have a life span of eighty-four thousand eons, but some may live to less than that.

The foregoing are the [categories of] sentient beings, their life spans, their worlds, and their respective psychophysical elements (*skandhas*) in the transmigrations that remain subject to the impermanence of birth, old age, illness, and death.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

All living beings subsist on four kinds of food. What are the four? They are (1) [regular] food served by hand and with utensils with [proper] hygiene through washing, bathing, and [wearing clean] clothing; (2) food created by contact; (3) food created by recollection; and (4) food created by consciousness. Because sentient beings differ the food on which they subsist also differs. The people of Jambudvīpa eat rice, wheat, noodles,

fish, and meat to sustain the health of their bodies and they wash, bathe, and [wear clean] clothing to maintain hygiene and physical comfort. The people of Aparagodānīya and Pūrvavideha also eat rice, wheat, noodles, fish, and meat to sustain the health of their bodies and they also wash, bathe, and [wear clean] clothing to maintain hygiene and physical comfort. The people of Uttarakuru only eat nonglutinous rice that has been naturally harvested, which has a heavenly flavor. They eat [this kind of rice] to sustain the health of their bodies and they also wash, bathe, and [wear clean] clothing for physical comfort. The *nāgas* and *garuḍas* eat gigantic turtles, alligators, and fish to sustain the health of their bodies and they wash, bathe, and [wear clean] clothing for physical comfort. The *asuras* eat purified food to sustain the health of their bodies and they wash, bathe, and [wear clean] clothing for physical comfort. The four guardian gods of heaven, the Trāyastriṃśa gods, the Yama gods, the Tuṣita gods, the Nir-māṇarati gods, and the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods also eat purified food to sustain the health of their bodies and they wash, bathe, and [wear clean] clothing to maintain hygiene and physical comfort. Gods other than those already mentioned subsist in a state of concentration, with happiness and delight as their principal food.

Who are the sentient beings that can subsist on the food created by physical contact? [These beings are] those born from eggs. Who are the sentient beings that can subsist on conscious recollection? Some beings can sustain their existence through conscious recollection. Who are the sentient beings that can subsist on thoughts created by consciousness? Beings who suffer in the hells and gods who abide in the formless realm subsist on the nourishment of thoughts created by consciousness.

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The people of Jambudvīpa make their living by trading in gold, silver, precious stones, cloth, grain, and slaves. The people of Aparagodānīya make their living by bartering cattle, sheep, jewels, and precious stones in the marketplace. The people of Pūrvavideha make their living by bartering pearls, cloth, and grain in the marketplace. The people of Uttarakuru do not engage in trade and make their living by themselves. The people of Jambudvīpa follow the custom of using negotiation to marry their daughters to bridegrooms or to receive brides as wives for their sons. The people of Aparagodānīya and of Pūrvavideha follow similar customs,

sending off their daughters to marry bridegrooms and receiving brides for their sons. The people of Uttarakuru have no marriage customs and do not marry off daughters or receive brides for their sons. Among *nāgas*, *garuḍas*, and *asuras*, males and females also follow the custom of marriage. The same custom is observed among the four guardian gods of heaven, the Trāyastriṃśa gods, and so on, to the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods. There is no such custom, however, among higher gods than those already mentioned, because there is no gender difference in those of higher divinity.

The people of Jambudvīpa, male and female, require sexual union. Through physical contact they fuse positive and negative elements. The people of Aparagodānīya, of Pūrvavideha, and of Uttarakuru also require physical contact to fuse positive and negative elements. The *nāgas* and *garuḍas* are the same, but the *asuras* can reach the same goal [simply] by being in close physical proximity to one another and using mutual awareness. The four guardian gods and the Trāyastriṃśa gods also follow this method. The Yama gods fuse positive and negative elements just by being near each other. The Tuṣita gods accomplish the same end just by holding each other's hands. The Nirmāṇarati gods accomplish it by staring at each other, while the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods accomplish it simply by glancing at each other. Gods beyond those already mentioned do not experience sexual desire.

When sentient beings have committed evil through thought, speech, or action they may thus engender the nascent consciousness of a hellish being, even though their own awareness perishes when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Contingent on that consciousness, name and form (*nāmarūpa*) arise. Contingent on name and form, the six bases of cognition (*saḍāyatana*) arise. Again, when sentient beings have committed evil through acts of body, speech, or mind they may fall into the course of animal life when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Even though their own awareness has perished, they have engendered the nascent consciousness of an animal. Contingent on that consciousness, name and form arise. Contingent on name and form, the six bases of cognition arise. Again, when sentient beings have committed evil through acts of body, speech, or mind they may fall into the course of a [hungry] ghost (*preta*) when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Even though their

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own awareness has perished they have engendered the nascent consciousness of a [hungry] ghost. Contingent on that consciousness, name and form arise. Contingent on name and form, the six bases of cognition arise.

Again, when sentient beings have accomplished good through thought, speech, or action they may be reborn in the course of a human being when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Even though their own awareness has perished they have engendered the nascent consciousness of a human being. Contingent on that consciousness, name and form arise. Contingent on name and form, the six bases of cognition arise. Again, when sentient beings have accomplished good through acts of body, speech, or mind they may be reborn in the life course of the four guardian gods when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Even though their own awareness has perished they have engendered the nascent heavenly consciousness of a guardian god. Contingent on that consciousness, name and form arise. Contingent on name and form, the six bases of cognition arise.

When entering a heaven one is like a young child of one to two years of age. That child, having been reborn through natural transformation, now abides on the lap of a guardian god. The god may say, “This is my child,” but the child already possesses the wisdom of his past conduct and thinks, “By what good conduct have I been born in this heavenly world?” Again the child thinks, “Once, when I was human and accomplished some good through acts of body, speech, and mind I accrued some merit, which has enabled me to be reborn into this celestial life. If my life should end here and I am reborn again among humans, I must work to purify the nature of my acts (*karman*) of body, speech, and mind and try still harder to accomplish some good.”

Not long after rebirth the child feels hunger. Immediately a vessel filled with pure food containing a hundred heavenly tastes appears. If the child’s merit is superior, the meal will consist of white rice; if the child’s merit is average, the meal will consist of blue rice; if his or her merit is little, the meal will consist of red rice. The food is eaten by hand, and once swallowed by the child it is immediately digested, like butter thrown into a fire. When the meal is finished the child feels thirst, and then a vessel filled with nectar appears. If the child’s merit is superior, the juice will be white; if the child’s merit is average, it will be blue; and if his or her merit

is little, it will be red. Once the child has drunk [the juice] it is immediately digested, like butter thrown into a fire. Once the child has finished [the food and juice] he has already grown into an adult god.

134b He then goes to a bathing pond to enjoy washing and bathing. Emerging from the pond, he approaches a tree filled with many fragrances. The tree bends down and he takes some of the fragrance in his hand and rubs it onto his body. Then he sees a tree filled with cotton garments. As it bends down, he takes a garment and puts it on, fitting it to his body. Now he sees a tree filled with many kinds of ornaments. As it bends down, he takes a few [ornaments] to brighten his dress. Then he sees a tree filled with garlands. As it bends down, he takes one and places it upon his head. Then he sees a tree filled with many kinds of vessels. As it bends down, he takes one and carries it to a tree filled with fruit. As [the tree of fruit] bends down, he picks some to taste and eat later. Then he sees a tree filled with musical instruments. As it bends down, he chooses one and plucks its strings while singing in a clear, fine voice. Entering a pleasure grove, he encounters numerous heavenly maidens who cheerfully strum their instruments and tap their drums to entertain him with song and laughter. On this sort of excursion the god gives himself over to such entertainments. When he looks east, he forgets west; when looks west, he forgets east. Although he once wondered "By what actions have I been born into this celestial life?" [by now] he has totally forgotten this train of thought while engaged in the pleasures at hand, and is now surrounded by palace ladies and retainers.

Again, when sentient beings have accomplished some good through thought, speech, and action they may be reborn in the life course of the Trāyastriṃśa gods when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Although their own awareness has perished, they have engendered the nascent heavenly consciousness of a Trāyastriṃśa god. Contingent on that consciousness, name and form arise. Contingent on name and form, the six bases of cognition arise. Entering that heaven, one is like a child in the Jambudvīpa world, two to three years of age. That child, having been reborn through natural transformation, now appears on the lap of a Trāyastriṃśa god, who may say "This is my son" or "This is my daughter," just as before. Or, when sentient beings have accomplished some good

through thought, speech, and action they may be reborn as a Yama god when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Entering that heaven, one is like a child of this world, three to four years of age. Or, when sentient beings have accomplished some good through thought, speech, and action they may be reborn as a Tuṣita god when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Entering that heaven, one is like a child of this world, four to five years of age. Or, when sentient beings have accomplished good through thought, speech, and action they may be reborn as a Nirmāṇarati god when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Entering that heaven, one is like a child of this world, five to six years of age. Or, when sentient beings have accomplished some good through thought, speech, and action they may be reborn as a Paranirmitavaśavartin god when their body dissolves and their life ebbs away. Entering that heaven, one is like a child of this world, six to seven years of age, just as before.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are three days of religious observance in the first half of the month. What are the three? They are the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth days of the month. Why should the eighth be a day of religious observance? On the eighth day of each month it is customary for the four guardian gods to instruct their messengers, “May you all travel through the human world to observe people’s conduct, so that we can be informed as to whether they are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, and obedient to their elders in society, and also whether they adhere religiously to the moral precepts and offer charity to those in need of help.”

After receiving their orders the messengers travel through the human world to investigate in detail whether the people are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help. If they discover that some are neither filial to their parents nor respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, nor are they obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, or generous to those in need of help, they return to report, “O great kings, in the world of humans it is indeed very difficult to find any number of those who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts,

and generous to those in need of help.” On hearing this report the guardian gods reply, “A pity. So is this the real state of affairs? Humans have become so corrupt that they diminish our prospects in this celestial life while advancing those of our adversaries, the *asuras*.”

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If the messengers observe that some in this world are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help, however, they return and report, “O great kings, in the world of humans we have witnessed many who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help.” On hearing this report the guardian gods say, “Splendid, it is a pleasure to hear this! People who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help increase the sense of well-being that we enjoy in this celestial life, while weakening that of the *asuras*.”

Why should the fourteenth be a day of religious observance? On the fourteenth day of each month it is customary for the four guardian gods to instruct their crown princes, “May you all travel through the human world to observe people’s conduct so that we can be informed as to whether they are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, and obedient to their elders in society, and also whether they adhere religiously to the moral precepts and offer charity to those in need of help.”

After receiving their orders, their crown princes travel through the human world to investigate in detail whether people are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help. If they discover that many are neither filial to their parents nor respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, nor are they obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, or generous to those in need of help, the crown princes return to report, “O great kings, in the world of humans it is indeed very difficult to find any number of those who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help.” On hearing this report the guardian gods reply, “A pity. So is this the real state of

affairs? Humans have become so corrupt that they will diminish our prospects in this celestial life while advancing those of our adversaries, the *asuras*.”

If the crown princes observe that some in this world are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help, however, they return to report, “O great kings, in the world of humans we have witnessed many who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help.” On hearing this report the guardian gods say, “Splendid, it is a pleasure to hear this! People who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help increase the sense of well-being that we enjoy in this celestial life, while weakening that of the *asuras*.” Because of this, the fourteenth day of the month is held as a day of religious observance.

Why should the fifteenth be a day of religious observance? On the fifteenth day it is customary for the four guardian gods to travel themselves through the human world to observe people’s conduct and to inform Śakra as to whether they are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, and obedient to their elders in society, and also whether they adhere religiously to the moral precepts and provide charity to those in need of help.

If they discover, however, that not many in the human world are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help, the four guardian gods return to Sudharma Hall and report to Śakra, lord of the gods, “O lord, in the world of humans it is indeed very difficult to find any number of those who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help.” Hearing this report, the Trāyastriṃśa gods exclaim, “A pity. So is this the real state of affairs? Humans have become so corrupt that they will diminish our prospects in this celestial life, while advancing those of our adversaries, the *asuras*.”

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If the four guardian gods observe that people in this world are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help, however, they return to Śakra, lord of the gods, to report, “O lord, in the world of humans we have witnessed many who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help.” Hearing this report, the Trāyastriṃśa gods exclaim in delight, “Splendid! Humans who are filial to their parents, respectful to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas*, obedient to their elders, observant of the moral precepts, and generous to those in need of help increase the sense of well-being that we enjoy, while weakening that of the *asuras*.” Because of this, the fifteenth day of the month is held as a day of religious observance.

At that moment, wishing to renew the gods' delight, Śakra uttered the following verse:

Those who keep the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth
As days of religious observance
Are to be considered identical to me.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Even though this verse was uttered by Śakra, lord of the gods, it should not be generally accepted, nor is it a good teaching. I consider it to be inappropriate. Why? Indra, lord of the gods, has yet to exhaust desire, hatred, and delusion. He is not yet free from the sorrow and suffering of birth, old age, illness, and death. I assert that he has not separated himself from the source of suffering.

If, however, any of my disciples eliminate the destructive force of his defilements (*sāsrava*), perfectly terminating them, and accomplish all that must be done to discard burdens, acquire advantage, and exhaust all attachment to the forms of existence, thus realizing complete liberation [from the state of suffering], he would then be entitled to utter the same verse:

Those who keep the eighth, fourteenth, and fifteenth
As days of religious observance
Are to be considered identical to me.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

When such a disciple utters the verse it should be accepted as a good teaching, and I consider it to be appropriate. Why? Because that disciple has exhausted desire, hatred, and delusion and is free from the sorrow and suffering of birth, old age, illness, and death. I assert that he is liberated from the source of suffering.

The Buddha continued his discourse to the *bhikṣus*:

The houses and residences where people live are all, without exception, occupied by spirits. [Certainly] there is no house or residence where no spirit abides. Spirits are invariably there in every street and crossroads, in butcher shops as well as cemetery mounds, leaving no places [where there are no spirits] at all. Now, insofar as a spirit dwells in a certain place, its name is derived from that place of attachment. Some spirits obtain their names from the names of individual humans. Others obtain their names from the names of villages, cities, countries, or regions, or mountains, rivers, [and so on].

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The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

All trees, even the smallest [whose trunk is only] the size of an axle, are possessed by guardian spirits. There is no tree whatsoever that is without a residing spirit. Each and every man or woman, from the very beginning, has a guardian spirit who keeps watch [over them] throughout their lifetime. When their death approaches, it is their guardian spirit who takes hold at the end of their life.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

If a heretic should say, “Venerables, if you suppose that every man or woman, from the beginning of life, has a guardian spirit who keeps watch [over them] throughout their lifetime, and when their death approaches it is that guardian spirit who takes hold at the end of their life, I would like to ask: Why does it happen that some people are troubled by their [guardian] spirits, while others are not at all influenced by them?” If a heretic should say this, you should reply as follows: “Some people commit wrongs. Influenced by wrong, inverted views, they commit offenses against

the ten norms [of conduct]. Such people, whether a hundred or a thousand of them altogether, have only a single guardian spirit to look out for all of them. Just as a herd of sheep or cattle, a hundred or a thousand in number, likewise has only one shepherd to guard them—it is like that. Committing wrongs, influenced by wrong and inverted views, one has only partial protection from a guardian spirit, as one of a hundred or a thousand. On the other hand, if one does good deeds, and if upholding right views and believing in right action he or she complies with the ten norms of conduct, that person will be protected by a hundred or a thousand guardian spirits. Just as the king of a country or his minister is protected by a hundred or a thousand guards, those who engage in good behavior and comply with the ten norms of conduct are watched over by a hundred or a thousand guardian spirits. It is because of these different causal conditions that some people are troubled by spirits while others are not at all influenced by them.”

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The people of Jambudvīpa people exceed [the capabilities of] the people of [Apara]godānīya in three respects. What are the three? First, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to create karmic actions. Second, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to concentrate on the practice of austerity. Third, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to contribute to the appearance of the Buddha in their land. In these three ways, the people of Jambudvīpa are considered superior to the people of [Apara]godānīya. The people of [Apara]godānīya, however, exceed [the capabilities of] the people of Jambudvīpa in three respects. What are the three? First, they possess many more head of cattle. Second, they possess many more sheep. Third, they possess many more precious jewels. In these three ways, the people of [Apara]godānīya are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa.

135c The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] the people of Pūrvavideha in three respects. What are the three? First, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to create karmic actions. Second, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to concentrate on the practice of austerity. Third, since they

are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to contribute to the appearance of the Buddha in their land. In these three ways, the people of Jambudvīpa are considered superior to the people of Pūrvavideha. The people of Pūrvavideha, however, exceed [the capabilities of] the people of Jambudvīpa in three respects. What are the three? First, their land is vast and expansive. Second, their land is magnificent. Third, their soil is exceedingly rich. In these three ways, the people of Pūrvavideha are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa.

The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] the people of Uttarakuru in three respects. What are the three? First, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to create karmic actions. Second, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to concentrate on the practice of austerity. Third, since they are valiant and endowed with [good] memory, they are able to contribute to the appearance of the Buddha in their land. In these three ways, the people of Jambudvīpa people are considered superior to the people of Uttarakuru. The people of Uttarakuru, however, exceed [the capabilities of] the people of Jambudvīpa in three respects. What are the three? First, they have no family possessions and thus little to which to become attached. Second, they have no personal possessions. Third, they have a life span of precisely one thousand years. In these three ways, the people of Uttarakuru people are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa.

The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] hungry ghosts (*pretas*) in the same three ways, whereas the hungry ghosts [are superior to] the people of Jambudvīpa in three ways. What are the three? First, their life span; second, their physical stature; and third, their tolerance of others' actions. In these three ways, they are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa. The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] *nāgas* and *garuḍas* in the same three ways, whereas the latter [are superior to] the people of Jambudvīpa in three ways. What are the three? First, their life span; second, their physical stature; and third, their palaces. In these three ways, they are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa. The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] the *asuras* in the same three ways, whereas the *asuras* [are superior to] the people of Jambudvīpa in three ways. What are the three? First,

they possess grand and lofty palaces; second, they possess [grand] palatial furnishings and embellishments; and third, their hygiene and cleanliness. In these three ways, they are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa. The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] the four guardian gods in the same three ways, whereas the four guardian gods [are superior to] the people of Jambudvīpa in three ways. What are the three? First, their life span; second, their attractiveness; and third, the variety of pleasures they experience. In these three ways, they are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa. The people of Jambudvīpa also exceed [the capabilities of] the gods of the Trāyastriṃśa, Yama, Tuṣita, Nirmāṇarati, and Paranirmitavaśavartin Heavens in the same three ways, whereas those gods [are superior to] the people of Jambudvīpa in three ways. What are the three? First, their life span; second, their attractiveness; and third, the variety of pleasures they experience. In these three ways, they are considered superior to the people of Jambudvīpa.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

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There are twelve kinds of sentient beings in the realm of desire. What are the twelve? They are (1) hell beings, (2) animals, (3) hungry ghosts, (4) humans, (5) *asuras*, (6) the guardian gods, (7) the Trāyastriṃśa gods, (8) the Yama gods, (9) the Tuṣita gods, (10) the Nirmāṇarati gods, (11) the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods, and (12) the evil ones (Pāpīyas). There are twenty-two kinds of sentient beings in the realm of form: (1) the Brahmakāyika gods, (2) the Brahmāpurohita gods, (3) the Brahmagaṇa gods, (4) the Mahābrahmā gods, (5) the Ābhāsvara gods, (6) the Parītābha gods, (7) the Apramāṇābha gods, (8) Ābhā, (9) the Śubha gods, (10) the Parītaśubha gods, (11) the Apramāṇaśubha gods, (12) the Śubhakṛtsna gods (13) the Anabhraka gods, (14) the Parīta gods, (15) the Apramāṇa gods (16) the Bṛhatphala gods, (17) the Asaṃjñi gods (18) the Avṛha gods, (19) the Atapa gods, (20) the Sudṛśa gods, (21) the Sudarśana gods, and (22) the Akaniṣṭha gods. There are four kinds of sentient beings in the formless realm: (1) the Ākāśajñā gods, (2) the Vijñānajña gods, (3) the Ākiṃcanajña gods, and (4) the Naivasamjñānāsamjñāyātana gods.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are four great divinities. What are the four? They are the gods of (1) earth, (2) water, (3) wind, and (4) fire. The goddess of earth once mistakenly thought, “There is no water, wind, or fire in [my domain of the] earth.” I immediately went to her and said, “Is it true that you think there is no water, wind, or fire in the earth?” The earth goddess replied, “Yes, there is no water, wind, or fire in the earth.” I then said, “You should not think that there is no water, wind, or fire in the earth and ground. Why? Because there is water, there is wind, and there is fire in the earth. It is only because of the great number of elements in the earth and ground that it is identified with its [own] name.”

The Buddha continued:

I continued to teach the earth goddess, gradually removing her wrong views. She was encouraged, helped, and delighted with the doctrine of charity, the doctrine of morality, and the doctrine of rebirth in heaven, and learned to shun desires as temptations into foul and impure conduct. She began to perceive the defilements of passion (*kāmānām kleśa*) as the obstacle, and I commended the path of distancing oneself from both pleasure and suffering as the necessary and best [means to salvation]. I observed then that her mind had become calm, open, receptive, and ready to be educated. So, in accordance with the rule followed by all buddhas, I expounded on her behalf the [Four] Noble Truths of suffering (*ārya-duḥkha-satya*), the cause of suffering (*ārya-duḥkha-samudaya-satya*), the cessation of suffering (*ārya-duḥkha-nirodha-satya*), and the necessary path of cessation (*ārya-duḥkha-nirodha-gāminī-mārga-satya*). Then, with pure and genuine faith, like white cloth that can easily be dyed any color, the earth goddess separated herself from all her defilements and acquired indisputable insight (*ārya-dharma-cakṣus-viśuddha*) into the nature of the Dharma. Realizing the Dharma as she visualized it, she resolved to abide in the right path (*niyata-vyavasthita*) without any retrogression, and realized the state of fearlessness (*vaiśāradya* or *abhaya*). She then said to me, “Now I humbly take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May Your Holiness grant me permission to become a lay devotee. From this moment until the end of life I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking what is not given, I will refrain from immoral sexual

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conduct, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.”

The Buddha continued:

Once, when the water goddess mistakenly thought, “There is no earth, wind, or fire in [my domain of] water,” the earth goddess immediately went to her and said, “Is it true that you think there is no earth, wind, or fire in water?” The [water] goddess replied, “Yes, there is no earth, wind, or fire in water.” The earth goddess then said, “You should not think that there is no earth, wind, or fire in water. Why? Because there is earth, there is wind, and there is fire in water. It is only because of the great number of elements in water that it is identified with its [own] name.”

The earth goddess then continued to teach the water goddess, gradually removing her wrong views. She was encouraged, helped, and delighted with the doctrine of charity, the doctrine of morality, and the doctrine of rebirth in heaven, and learned to shun desires as temptations into foul and impure conduct. She began to perceive the defilements of passion as the obstacle and to understand the path of distancing oneself from both pleasure and suffering as the necessary and best [means to salvation]. The earth goddess then observed that the mind of the water goddess had become calm, open, receptive, and ready to be educated. Then, in accordance with the rule followed by all buddhas, the earth goddess expounded on her behalf the [Four] Noble Truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the necessary path of cessation. Then with pure and genuine faith, like white cloth that can easily be dyed any color, the water goddess separated herself from all her defilements and acquired indisputable insight into the nature of the Dharma. Realizing the Dharma as she visualized it, she resolved to abide in the right path without any retrogression, and realized the state of fearlessness. The water goddess then said to the earth goddess, “Now I humbly take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May I be permitted to become a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the end of life I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking that which is not given, I will refrain from immoral sexual conduct, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.”

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Once, when the fire goddess mistakenly thought, “There is no earth, water, or wind in [my domain of] fire,” the earth and water goddesses immediately went to her and said, “Is it true that you think there is no earth, water, or wind in fire?” The fire goddess replied, “Yes, there is no earth, water, or wind in fire.” The earth and water goddesses then said, “You should not think that there is no earth, water, or wind in fire. Why? Because there is earth, there is water, and there is wind in fire. It is only because of the great number of elements in fire that it is identified with its [own] name.”

The earth and water goddesses then continued to teach the fire goddess, gradually removing her wrong views. She in turn was encouraged, helped, and delighted with the doctrine of charity, the doctrine of morality, and the doctrine of rebirth in heaven, and learned to shun desires as temptations into foul and impure conduct. She began to perceive the defilements of passion as the obstacle, and to understand the path of distancing oneself from both pleasure and suffering as the necessary and best [means to salvation]. The earth and water goddesses then observed that the mind of the fire goddess had become calm, open, and receptive, ready to be educated. Then, in accordance with the rule followed by all buddhas, they expounded on her behalf the [Four] Noble Truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the necessary path of cessation. Then with pure and genuine faith, like white cloth that can easily be dyed any color, the fire goddess separated herself from all her defilements and acquired indisputable insight into the nature of the Dharma. Realizing the Dharma as she visualized it, she resolved to abide in the right path without any retrogression and realized the state of fearlessness. The fire goddess then said to the earth and water goddesses, “Now I humbly take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May I be permitted to become a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the end of life I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking that which is not given, I will refrain from immoral sexual conduct, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants.”

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The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Once, when the wind goddess mistakenly thought, "There is no earth, water, or fire in [my domain of] wind," the goddesses of earth, water, and fire immediately went to her and said, "Is it true that you think there is no earth, water, or fire in wind?" The wind goddess replied, "Yes, there is no earth, water, or fire in wind." The three other goddesses said to the wind goddess, "You should not think that there is no earth, water, or fire in wind. Why? Because there is earth, there is water, and there is fire in wind. It is only because of the great number of elements in wind that it is identified with its [own] name."

The goddesses of earth, water, and fire then continued to teach the water goddess, gradually removing her wrong views. She was encouraged, helped, and delighted with the doctrine of charity, the doctrine of morality, and the doctrine of rebirth in heaven, and learned to shun desires as temptations into foul and impure conduct. She began to perceive the defilements of passion as the obstacle and to understand the path of distancing oneself from both pleasure and suffering as the necessary and best [means to salvation]. The three goddesses then observed that the mind of the wind goddess had become calm, open, and receptive, ready to be educated. Then, in accordance with the rule followed by all buddhas, they expounded on her behalf the [Four] Noble Truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the necessary path of cessation. Then with pure and genuine faith, like white cloth that can easily be dyed any color, the wind goddess separated herself from all her defilements and acquired indisputable insight into the nature of the Dharma. Realizing the Dharma as she visualized it, she resolved to abide in the right path without any retrogression and realized the state of fearlessness. Then the wind goddess said to the goddesses of earth, water, and fire, "Now I humbly take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. May I be permitted to become a lay devotee in the right Dharma. From this moment until the end of life I will refrain from taking life, I will refrain from taking that which is not given, I will refrain from immoral sexual conduct, I will refrain from speaking falsehoods, and I will refrain from ingesting intoxicants. From this moment I will disturb no one and will treat everyone with benevolence."

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are four kinds of clouds. What are the four? They are (1) white, (2) black, (3) red, and (4) pink. White clouds are permeated by earth elements; black clouds are permeated by water; red clouds are permeated by fire; and pink clouds are permeated by wind. Clouds are found ten, twenty, thirty, forty, or [even] four thousand *li* [high], except at the beginning and end of an eon (*kalpa*), when they rise as high as Ābhāsvara Heaven.

There are four kinds of lightning. What are the four? The lightning of the eastern region is called Bodily Light; that of the southern region is called Difficult to Damage; that of the western region is called Flowing Fire; and that of the northern region is called Steady Light. How and why does lightning occur in the midair clouds? At times, Bodily Light touches Difficult to Damage. At times, Bodily Light touches Flowing Fire. At times, Bodily Light touches Steady Light. At times, Difficult to Damage touches Steady Light. At times, Difficult to Damage touches Flowing Fire. At times, Difficult to Damage touches Bodily Light. At times, Flowing Fire touches Steady Light. Because of these occurrences, lightning arises in the midair clouds. Again, how and why does thunder occur in the midair clouds? At times, the earth element touches the water element in midair. At times, the earth element touches the fire element in midair. At times, the earth element touches the wind element in midair. At times, the water element touches the fire element. At times, the water element touches the wind element. Because of these occurrences, thunder resounds through midair.

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The soothsayer of rain considers that there are five factors affecting rainfall. This means that one cannot predict the arrival of rain with any certainty and will likely remain troubled. What are the five factors? (1) When thunder and lightning in the clouds lead to a prediction of rain, the clouds are consumed by overwhelming fire and no rain issues. (2) When thunder and lightning in the clouds lead to a prediction of rain, a great storm arises and blows all the clouds away. (3) When thunder and lightning in the clouds lead to a prediction of rain, the *asuras* gather all the floating clouds within the confines of the ocean, leaving the predictor [of rainfall] anxious and troubled. (4) When thunder and lightning in the clouds lead to a prediction of rain, the master of clouds and that of rain, being undisciplined, indulge in sexual conduct that does not allow the rain to fall, leaving the predictor [of rainfall] anxious and troubled. (5) When thunder

and lightning in the clouds lead to a prediction of rain, the heavens do not release the rain because people are undisciplined, unrighteous, wanton, and influenced by avarice, jealousy, misery, and wrong views. Because of this, the predictor [of rainfall] is left anxious and troubled. These are the five factors that allow no soothsayer to know or predict the coming of rain with any certainty.

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Article 9: Three Disasters

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are four kinds of events that occur over an immeasurably long period of time, which cannot be measured in days, months, or years. What are they? (1) When disasters [continually] occur, portending the destruction of the world, the intervening period is immeasurably long and cannot be enumerated in days, months, or years. (2) When this world has finally been destroyed, the intervening period, a vast emptiness in the absence of the world, is immeasurably long and cannot be enumerated in days, months, or years. (3) When heaven and earth first appear and begin to be formed, the intervening period is immeasurably long and cannot be enumerated in days, months, or years. (4) When heaven and earth have taken form, the period of the world's constant, indestructible presence is immeasurably long and cannot be enumerated in days, months, or years. These four periods are immeasurably long and cannot be enumerated in years.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are three kinds of disasters in this world. What are they? (1) Disaster by fire, (2) disaster by water, and (3) disaster by wind. With these disasters, know that there are upper limits with respect to the regions affected, namely, (1) Ābhāsvara Heaven, (2) Śubhakṛtsna Heaven, and (3) Bṛhatphala Heaven. Disasters by fire can reach as far as Ābhāsvara Heaven and no farther. Disasters by water can reach as far as Śubhakṛtsna Heaven and no farther. Disasters by wind can reach as far as Bṛhatphala Heaven and no farther.

What is a disaster caused by fire? Every person in the world was once fully engaged in practicing the right Dharma, abiding therein without deviation, and they naturally adhered to the ten norms of conduct. One

person, while adhering to these norms, attained the second meditative state of absorption and [suddenly] ascended in midair to continue on the path of disciples (*śrāvakayāna*), the path of heaven, and the path of Brahmā. In a distinct voice, he said, “O Venerables, you must know that there is no awareness of an object or of any subjective action, only [overwhelming] joy and bliss as the second state of absorption emerges—joy and bliss are the second state of concentration!” When the others heard him, they looked up and said, “Very well. Very well, sir. Will you expound for our sake the path that leads to this second state of absorption in which no awareness of an object or any subjective action remains?” The practitioner responded to their request, expounding the path that leads to the state of absorption without awareness of either object or subject.

Hearing this exhortation, the people of this world decided to attain the second meditative state of absorption, and when their bodies dissolved and their lives came to an end they were born in Ābhāsvara Heaven. Then all the sentient beings whose transgressions had been fully expiated in the hell realms were reborn in the human world, and they too took up the practice leading to the second meditative state of absorption; when their bodies dissolved and their lives came to an end they were born in Ābhāsvara Heaven. In a similar manner, sentient beings who had been in the animal realm or in the realms of the hungry ghosts, the *asuras*, the four guardian gods, the Trāyastriṃśa gods, the Yama gods, the Nirmānarati gods, the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods, and [the gods of] Brahmā Heaven all came to be reborn in the human world after their lives ended in their respective realms. They too took up the practice leading to the second meditative state of absorption, and upon the dissolution of their bodies and the end of life they were born in Ābhāsvara Heaven.

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Because of this causal nexus, when the hell realms ended so did the realms of the [hungry] ghosts, the *asuras*, and so on, up to Brahmā Heaven. In other words, as the end of the world approached all the residents of the hells had already died, followed by the deaths of all the animals. When all the animals had died, the deaths of all the hungry ghosts followed. When all the ghosts were dead, the deaths of all the *asuras* followed. When the *asuras* were all dead, the deaths of the four guardian gods followed. When the four guardian gods [and their retainers] were all dead,

the deaths of the Trāyastriṃśa gods followed. When the Trāyastriṃśa gods were all dead, the deaths of the Yama gods followed. When the Yama gods were all dead, the deaths of the Tuṣita gods followed. When the Tuṣita gods were all dead, the deaths of the Nirmāṇarati gods followed. When the Nirmāṇarati gods were all dead, the deaths of the Paranirmī-tavaśavartin gods followed. When the Paranirmī-tavaśavartin gods were all dead, the deaths of the Brahmā gods followed. When the Brahmā gods were all dead, only then did all the humans die, as there were no sentient beings left. When all the humans had died, no one remained. The world was about to be destroyed, an incipient disaster. Soon there was no rain and each and every [blade of] grass, plant, and tree withered away.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

As a result, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements (*skandhas*) that perdure through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

After an indeterminate length of time a great black storm blew up, violently agitating the ocean. The entire body of water, to a depth of eighty-four thousand *yojanas*, was pulled apart and split in two. The sun, entering its palace on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru, hovered at a height of forty-two thousand *yojanas* above the ground for two consecutive days. Now, when the sun heats the world by shining continuously for two days, all the water that remains in gutters and drain spouts, small brooks and streams, wherever it may be, bakes and evaporates without exception.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perdure through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

After some time, another great black storm blew up, violently agitating the ocean. The entire body of water, to a depth of eighty-four thousand

yojanas, was pulled apart and split in two. The sun, entering its palace on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru, hovered at a height of forty-two thousand *yojanas* above the ground for three consecutive days. Now, when the sun heats the world by shining continuously for three days, all the water in large rivers, such as the Gaṅgā (Ganges), Yamunā, Poluo, Aciravatī, Amogīe, Sindhu, and Gushe, wherever [such rivers] may be, bakes and evaporates without exception. Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perish through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

After some time, another great black storm blew up, violently agitating the ocean. The entire body of water, to a depth of eighty-four thousand *yojanas*, was pulled apart and split in two. The sun, entering its palace on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru, hovered at a height of forty-two thousand *yojanas* above the ground for four consecutive days. Now, when the sun heats the world by shining continuously for four days, all the spring-fed water that pools in *utpala*, *kumuda*, or *puṇḍarīka* lotus ponds, as well as every other pond measuring fifty *yojanas* in length and breadth or less, and which collects in lakes such as Sifangyan, the great Anavatapta, and the great Sudarśana, wherever [such ponds and lakes] may be, bakes and evaporates without exception. Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perish through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

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After some time, another great black storm blew up, violently agitating the ocean. The entire body of water, to a depth of eighty-four thousand *yojanas*, was pulled apart and split in two. The sun, entering its palace on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru, hovered at a height of forty-two thousand *yojanas* above the ground for five consecutive days. Now, when the sun heats the world by shining continuously for five days, all the water in the great ocean gradually shrinks, receding [from the shore] by as much as seven hundred *yojanas*. Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on

which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perish through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it."

The water in the great ocean continued to shrink and its depth dropped from seven hundred *yojanas* to six hundred, four hundred, and still further, until it reached a depth of one hundred *yojanas*. Because of this, you must realize that "everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical complexes that perish through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it."

Then the water in the great ocean evaporated even further, and its depth went from seven *yojanas* to six, five, and on down, until it was only one *yojana* deep.

The Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*:

Because of this, you must realize that "everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical complexes that perish through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it."

After that, the water in the great ocean continued to evaporate, going from a depth of seven *tāla* trees, to six, five, and on down, until it was only as deep [as the height] of a single *tāla* tree.

The Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*:

Because of this, you must realize that "everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perish through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it."

Then the ocean water became rapidly shallower, going from the height of seven human beings to six, five, four, three, two, one, and then it dropped to the level of a person's waist, then the knee, and finally the ankle.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

Finally the ocean became only a wet patch on the ground, as if dampened by a spring rainshower. That shrank to a few tiny puddles, like those left by a cow urinating, until all the water evaporated, leaving nothing into which one could even dip a finger.

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The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical complexes that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

After an indeterminate length of time, another great black storm arose, violently churning up the ocean floor down to a depth of eighty-four thousand *yojanas*. All of the sandy [ocean floor] was blown apart and split in two. The sun, entering its palace on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru, hovered at a height of forty-two thousand *yojanas* above the ground for six consecutive days. Now, when the sun heats the world by continuously shining for six days, the four continents and the eighty thousand mountains and mountain ranges, along with Mount Sumeru, all begin to smolder. Just as when a potter stokes a fire to heat the clay, so does the sun’s heat build up over six days.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

After some time, another great black storm arose, violently churning up the ocean floor down to a depth of eighty-four thousand *yojanas*. The sandy sea floor was all blown apart and split in two. The sun, entering its palace on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru, hovered at a height of forty-two thousand *yojanas* for seven consecutive days. Now, when the sun heats the world by shining continuously for seven days, the four continents and the eighty thousand mountains and mountain ranges, along with Mount Sumeru, all catch fire. Just as when a potter heats the kiln [by stoking a fire into] intense flames, so does the sun's heat build up over seven days.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perish through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

The four continents and the eighty thousand mountains and mountain ranges, along with Mount Sumeru, were all consumed in fiery flames. In the same way, the celestial palaces of the four guardian gods, the Trāyastriṃśa gods, the Yama gods, the Tuṣita gods, the Nirmāṇarati gods, the Paranirmita-vaśavartin gods, and the Brahmā gods were all consumed by fiery flames.”

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must realize that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that perish through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

With the four continents and everything up to [the world of] the Brahmā gods in flames, the fire was caught by the wind and blown higher toward Ābhāsvara Heaven. Terrified by the sight of the flames, the offspring of the Ābhāsvara gods clamored, “Ah, what is that?” The older gods explained to the young ones, “Don't be afraid. A fire like that was blown this way once before but it stopped short before reaching us.” It is also because

they recall having seen the fire approaching that they are called the Ābhā-svarasmṛti gods.

With the four continents and everything up to [the world of] the Brahmā gods in flames, Mount Sumeru steadily shrank as it burned, losing hundreds and thousands of *yojanas* from its lofty height until it finally completely collapsed, with nothing remaining.

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The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Because of this, you must understand that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

When the destruction of the earth, the four continents, Mount Sumeru, and everything up to [the world of] the Brahmā gods was finished, not even a single bit of ash remained. Because of this, you must understand that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical complexes that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

When you see the earth [completely] consumed by fire and all the water dispersed by the wind, you will understand that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing on which one can hold to or rely. The psychophysical complexes that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and liberation from it.”

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

During the disaster by fire, hundreds of varieties of plants, grasses, and trees withered and died because there was no rainfall. Only those who have personally witnessed this and known these events can believe it. All the water, not only on the surface of the earth but also the groundwater, had been exhausted as has been described, as was the layer of wind below the water.

Only those who have personally witnessed this and known these events can believe it. The foregoing is [an account of] the disaster caused by fire.

How is it possible to recover from fire? After some time, a great black cloud appeared in the sky. As it rose to Ābhāsvara Heaven, rain poured down like drops from a spinning wheel for incalculable hundreds of thousands of years. The water gradually accumulated, its volume expanding for incalculable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*. When it reached Ābhāsvara Heaven the four powers of wind arose to hold up that mass of water. What are the four winds? They are steady wind, supporting wind, immovable wind, and firm wind. In time, as the water level gradually diminished by hundreds of thousands of *yojanas* and retreated further by incalculable hundreds of millions of *yojanas* [from the previous level], four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew from the four corners of the mass of water, shaking it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of celestial palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the residential palaces of the Brahmakāyika gods came into being.

[Now] as the water level continued to diminish by incalculable hundreds of millions of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew from the four corners of that mass of water, shaking it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of celestial palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the residential palaces of the Paranirmī-tavaśavartin gods came into being.

139a [Again,] as the water level continued to diminish by incalculable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew from the four corners of that mass of water, shaking it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of white water. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of celestial palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the residential palaces of the Nir-māṇarati gods came into being.

[Again,] as the water level continued to diminish by incalculable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew from the four corners of that mass of water, shaking it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of celestial palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the residential palaces of the Tuṣita gods came into being.

[Again,] as the water level continued to diminish by incalculable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew from the four corners of that mass of water, shaking it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of celestial palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the residential palaces of the Yama gods came into being.

[Again,] as the water level continued to diminish by incalculable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, the sparkling foam on the surface of the water was six hundred eight thousand *yojanas* deep and the vastness of that body of water was limitless. Just as springwater flows out with bits of foam on its surface, that vast body of water carried [potential] forms and structures on its surface.

How did Mount Sumeru come into being? Sudden gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into piles, creating a mountain six hundred eight thousand *yojanas* high and eighty-four thousand *yojanas* long and wide, consisting entirely of the four precious materials of gold, silver, quartz, and lapis.

How did the palaces of the *asuras* come into being? After the creation of Mount Sumeru, [similar] gusts of wind blew over the great ocean and from out of the sparkling foam around the mountain great palatial structures came into being on all four sides, each extending eighty thousand *yojanas* long and wide. These structures instantly became palatial buildings richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure.

Again, how did the palaces of the four guardian gods come into being? [Similar] gusts of wind blew the water of the great ocean halfway up the

side of Mount Sumeru, forty-two thousand *yojanas* high, and out of that mass of sparkling foam came palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. This is how the palaces of the four guardian gods came into being.

Again, how did the palaces of the Trāyastriṃśa gods come into being? [Similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam over the summit of Mount Sumeru, instantly forming celestial palaces richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure.

Again, how did Mount Khadira come into being? [Similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Sumeru, and it instantly became a mountain composed of precious materials. That mountain reached down to a depth of forty-two thousand *yojanas* beneath the ground and was forty-two thousand *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, and its variegated colors came from combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Khadira came into being.

Again, how did Mount Yisha come into being? [Similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Khadira, and it instantly became a mountain composed of precious materials that was twenty-one thousand *yojanas* high and twenty-one thousand *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure.

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From similar causes, a mound of sparkling foam not far from Mount Yisha became Mount Shuchen, twelve thousand *yojanas* high and twelve thousand *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Shuchen came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Shuchen, and it became Mount Abanni, six thousand *yojanas* high and six thousand *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Abanni came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Abanni, and it became Mount Milin, three thousand *yojanas* high and three thousand *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with

variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Milin came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Milin, and it became Mount Binito, twelve hundred *yojanas* high and twelve hundred *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Binito came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Binito, and it became Mount Diaofu, six hundred *yojanas* high and six hundred *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Diaofu came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into a mound not far from Mount Binito, and it became Mount Jinganglun, three hundred *yojanas* high and three hundred *yojanas* long and wide, of limitless vastness, with variegated colors created by combinations of the seven kinds of treasure. This is how Mount Jinganglun came into being.

How did the single lunar palace and the seven palaces of the sun appear? [Similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam into piles that instantly became the single palace of the moon and the seven palaces of the sun. Blown by a dark cloud, they returned to their original locations [in the sky]. Thus the palaces of the sun and the moon came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew on the sparkling foam to instantly create the four continents and the eighty thousand territories under heaven. This how the four continents and eighty thousand territories came into being.

Then [similar] gusts of wind blew the sparkling foam to instantly create Mount Dajinganglun, one hundred sixty-eight thousand *yojanas* in height, length, and width, of limitless vastness, composed of solid diamond that cannot be shattered. This is how the great diamond mountain came into being.

Now after some time, clouds began to appear and spread in the sky. Rain poured down like drops from a spinning wheel, and the water inundated the four continents to a depth equal to the height of Mount Sumeru. Then gusts of wind blew and created deep depressions in the ground,

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which filled with salty water and became the oceans. This is how the four great oceans came into being.

There are three reasons given for the saltiness of seawater. What are the three? First, clouds spontaneously appeared and filled the sky as far as Ābhāsvara Heaven, pouring down rain all around. The rain washed over the celestial palaces and thoroughly cleansed everything under the sky, from the palaces of the Brahmakāyika gods, the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods, and the Yama gods to the four continents and the eighty thousand mountains and mountain ranges, including Mount Sumeru. This water collected all the dirty, pungent, and briny scum from the cleansing and washed it downstream to the ocean, forming a single uniform saltiness. This is how seawater became salty. Second, there was once a great sage who cast a spell over the ocean to make its water salty enough for humans to be unable to drink. Because of this, seawater is salty. Third, many creatures live in the ocean, some as large as one or two hundred *yojanas* in size, a few up to seven hundred *yojanas*, and all of these creatures take in and expel the same water, which contains all the waste material from their bodies. Because of this, seawater is salty. The foregoing is [an account of] the disaster caused by fire.

The Buddha spoke to the *bhikkhus*:

What is the disaster caused by water? Once every person in the world was fully engaged in practicing the right Dharma, abiding therein without deviation, and they naturally adhered to the ten norms of conduct. One person, while adhering to these norms, attained the third meditative state of absorption and [suddenly] ascended in midair to continue on the path of disciples, the path of heaven, and the path of Brahmā. In a distinct voice, he said, “O venerables, you must know that joy disappears in the third state of concentration, leaving only overwhelming bliss—bliss alone is the third state of concentration!” When the others heard him, they looked up and said, “Very well. Very well, sir. Will you expound for our sake the path that leads to the state of absorption where there is no joy but bliss alone?” The practitioner responded to their request, expounding the path that leads to the third meditative state of absorption that transcends the feeling of joy.

Hearing this exhortation, all the people of the world decided to attain the third meditative state of absorption, and when their bodies dissolved and their lives came to an end they were born in Śubhakarṣna Heaven. Then all the sentient beings whose transgressions had been fully expiated in the hell realms were reborn in the human world, and they too took up the practice leading to the third meditative state of absorption, and when their bodies dissolved and their lives came to an end, they were born in Śubhakarṣna Heaven. In like manner, sentient beings who had been in the animal realm or the realms of the hungry ghosts, the *asuras*, the four guardian gods, the Trāyastriṃśa gods, the Yama gods, the Nirmāṇarati gods, the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods, and the [gods of the] Brahmā and Ābhāsvara Heavens all came to be born in the human world after their lives came to an end in their respective realms. They too took up the practice leading to the third meditative state of absorption, and upon the dissolution of their bodies at the end of their lives, they were born in Śubhakarṣna Heaven. In this manner, no one remained in the hell realms, or in the animal realm, or in the realms of the hungry ghosts, the *asuras*, the four guardian gods, and so on up to the world of the Ābhāsvara gods.

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In other words, as the end of the world approached all the residents of the hells had already died, followed by the deaths of all the animals. When the animals were all dead, the deaths of all the hungry ghosts followed. When the ghosts were all dead, the deaths of all the *asuras* followed. When the *asuras* were all dead, the deaths of the four guardian gods followed. When the four guardian gods [and their retainers] were all dead, the deaths of the Trāyastriṃśa gods followed. When the Trāyastriṃśa gods were all dead, the deaths of the Yama gods followed. When the Yama gods were all dead, the deaths of the Tuṣita gods followed. When the Tuṣita gods were all dead, the deaths of the Nirmāṇarati gods followed. When the Nirmāṇarati gods were all dead, the deaths of the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods followed. When the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods were all dead, the deaths of the Brahmā gods followed. When the Brahmā gods were all dead, only then did the deaths of the Ābhāsvara gods occur, followed by the deaths of all the humans. And when the humans were all dead no one remained. The world was about to be destroyed, an incipient disaster.

After an indeterminate length of time, a great black cloud loomed in the sky. As it rose to Śubhakarṣna Heaven hot rain began to fall all around. The steaming water fell on the heavenly worlds and boiled them away, leaving no residue. The palaces of the Ābhāsvara gods were totally destroyed, just as when ghee is thrown into a fire nothing remains. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that perdure through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

Then the [steaming] rain fell on the palaces of the Brahmakāyika gods and boiled them away, leaving no residue. Next, the rain drenched the palaces of the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods, the Nirmāṇarati gods, the Tuṣita gods, and the Yama gods, one after another, boiling them all away and leaving no residue, like ghee thrown into a fire. Then the deluge fell on the four continents as well as all the mountains and mountain ranges of the eighty thousand territories, together with Mount Sumeru, boiling them away and leaving no residue, like ghee thrown into a fire. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that perdure through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

Then the [steaming] water boiled away the earth, leaving no residue. The layer of water beneath the ground was gone and the wind below that water was gone too. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that perdure through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

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The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

[You have heard that] the celestial palaces of the Śubhakarṣna gods were boiled away, leaving no residue. Only those who have witnessed it and known these events themselves can believe it. The celestial palaces of the

Brahmakāyika gods, too, were boiled away, totally extinguished, and so on, down to the water beneath the ground and the wind below it, all gone, as has been described. Only those who have witnessed it and known these events themselves can believe it. The foregoing is [an account of] the disaster caused by water.

How is it possible to recover from water? After some time, a great black cloud appeared in the sky, spreading through space. As it rose to Śubhakarṣna Heaven, rain poured down like drops from a spinning wheel for uncountable hundreds of millions of years. The water gradually accumulated, eventually reaching Śubhakarṣna Heaven. Now the four powers of wind arose to hold up that mass of water. What are the four winds? They are a steady wind, a supporting wind, an immovable wind, and a firm wind. In time, as the water level gradually diminished by uncountable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew up from the four corners of the mass of water, agitating it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of the palaces of the Ābhāsvara gods, richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the celestial palaces of the Ābhāsvara gods came into being.

[Now] as the water level continued to diminish by uncountable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew up from the four corners of the mass of water, agitating it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of the palaces of the Brahmakāyika gods, richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. In this manner, [the process of creation] proceeded down to the appearance of ocean water with its uniform saltiness, exactly like the recovery after the disaster caused by fire.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

What is the disaster caused by wind? Once every person in the world was fully engaged in practicing the right Dharma, abiding therein without deviation, and they naturally adhered to the ten norms of conduct. One

person, adhering to these norms, attained the fourth meditative state of absorption, a pure and genuine consolidation of mindfulness, and [suddenly] ascended in midair to continue on the path of disciples, the path of heaven, and the path of Brahmā. In a distinct voice, he said, “O venerables, you must know that the fourth state of absorption is a pure and genuine consolidation of mindfulness.” When the others heard him, they looked up and said, “Very well. Very well, sir. Will you expound for our sake the path that leads to the state of absorption where a pure and genuine mindfulness is consolidated?” The practitioner responded to their request, expounding the path that leads to the fourth meditative state of absorption where a pure and genuine mindfulness is consolidated.

140c Hearing this exhortation, the people of this world decided to attain the fourth meditative state of absorption, and when their bodies dissolved and their lives came to an end they were born in Br̥hatphala Heaven. Then all the sentient beings whose transgressions had been fully expiated in the hell realms were born again in the human world, and they too took up the practice leading to the fourth meditative state of absorption, and when their bodies dissolved and their lives came to an end they were born in Br̥hatphala Heaven. In a similar manner, sentient beings who had been in the animal realm or in the realms of the hungry ghosts, the *asuras*, the four guardian gods, and so on, up to the Śubhakṛtsna gods, all vacated their respective worlds and were reborn in the human world.

All the residents of the hells had already died, followed by the deaths of all the animals. When the animals were all dead, the deaths of all the hungry ghosts followed. When the ghosts were all dead, the deaths of all the *asuras* followed. When the *asuras* were all dead, the deaths of the four guardian gods followed. When the four guardian gods [and their retainers] were all dead, one after another followed in the same manner, all the way to the deaths of the Śubhakṛtsna gods. When these gods were all dead, the deaths of all the humans followed. And when the humans were all dead no one remained. The world was about to be destroyed, an incipient disaster.

After an indeterminate length of time, a great wind called mahāsāṃkhyā gathered, reaching as far as Br̥hatphala Heaven. It stormed in all directions and blew down the palaces of the Śubhakṛtsna and Ābhāsvara gods. Those

celestial structures were hurled together and blown into bits, just as if a strongman had seized two implements made of copper and smashed them together, producing an explosion. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

Then the wind assaulted the palaces of the Brahmakāyika and the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods. Those celestial structures too were hurled together and blown into bits, just as if a strongman had seized two implements made of copper and smashed them together, producing an explosion. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence, there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

Next, the wind assaulted the palaces of the Nirmāṇarati, the Tuṣita, and the Yama gods. Those celestial structures were also hurled together and blown into bits, just as if a strongman had seized two implements made of copper and smashed them together, producing an explosion. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

After that, the wind ravaged the four continents and the eighty thousand territories, blowing the mountains and mountain ranges, together with Mount Sumeru, one hundred thousand *yojanas* into space. Those mountains were hurled together and blown into bits, just as if a strongman had picked up rice bran and scattered it in the air. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one’s defilement are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

141a Then the wind blew away the ground and drained the water beneath the ground and depleted the wind below the water. Because of this, you must know that “everything impermanent is bound for decay and destruction; hence there is nothing that one can hold to or rely on. The psychophysical elements that endure through the influence of one's defilements are to be abhorred. You must seek the path of transcendence out of this world and deliverance from it.”

The Buddha said to the *bhikkhus*:

[You have heard that] the celestial palaces of the Śubhakarṣna and the Ābhāsvara gods were hurled together and blown into bits. Only those who have witnessed it and known these events themselves can believe it. If anyone wishes to believe that the water beneath the ground was drained and the wind below the water depleted, he must himself witness it and know it directly. The foregoing is [an account of] the disaster caused by wind.

How is it possible to recover from wind? After some time, a great black cloud appeared in the sky, spreading through space. As it rose to Br̥hatphala Heaven, rain poured down like drops from a spinning wheel for uncountable hundreds of millions of years. The water gradually accumulated, eventually reaching Br̥hatphala Heaven. Now the four powers of wind arose to hold up that mass of water. What are the four winds? They are a steady wind, a supporting wind, an immovable wind, and a firm wind. In time, as the water level gradually diminished by uncountable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew up from the four corners of the mass of water, agitating it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of the palaces of the Śubhakarṣna gods, richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. Thus the celestial palaces of the Śubhakarṣna gods came into being.

[Now] as the water level continued to diminish by uncountable hundreds of thousands of *yojanas*, four great gusts of wind, called *sāṃkhya*, blew up from the four corners of the mass of water, agitating it violently and creating great thunderous waves that cascaded and broke in towering

sheets of whitewater. The sparkling foam that shot into the air instantly solidified into the forms and structures of the palaces of the Ābhāsvara gods, richly adorned with the seven kinds of treasure. In this manner, [the process of creation] proceeded down to the appearance of ocean water with its uniform saltiness, exactly like the recovery after the disaster caused by water. The foregoing is [an account of] the disaster caused by wind. Altogether, the three disasters are called the threefold cycle.

Article 10: Celestial Wars

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

In ancient times, the heavenly gods engaged in armed battles with the *asuras*. Śakra, lord of the gods, assembled the Trāyastrimśa gods and said, “Let us go to fight the *asuras*. If we are victorious, make sure to capture Vimalacitra, the *asura* general, bind him in five chains and bring him to Sudharma Hall. I want to see him.”

After receiving these commands, the Trāyastrimśa gods readied their armor. At the same time, the leader of the *asuras*, Vimalacitra, gave his orders, “Now let us go to fight them. If we are victorious, capture Śakra, bind him in five chains, and bring him to Saptaparṇa Hall. I want to see him.” After receiving these commands, the *asuras* readied their armor. Then the gods and the *asuras* met on the battlefield and fought each other. The gods were victorious and the *asuras* withdrew.

141b

The leader of the *asuras*, Vimalacitra, was captured, and the Trāyastrimśa gods bound him in chains and brought him to Sudharma Hall, where he was given to Śakra, lord of the gods. As he looked around him, the *asura* general saw the attractions of a celestial life and reflected, “This place is so extraordinary. What would be the point of returning to the *asuras*’ palace?” As soon as he formulated this thought, the five chains fell away and images of the pleasures to be gained through the five senses appeared before him. Whenever his thoughts returned to his palace among the *asuras*, however, the five chains reappeared, the objects of his pleasure disappeared at once, and he found himself back in bondage.

In effect, the leader of the *asuras* was more tightly bound than he would have been by the devil’s own spell. Those who become obsessed with

themselves are likely bound by the devil. Those who never become caught up in themselves are likely free of the devil's bondage. To consider sensation (*vedanā*) as proof that one exists is bondage. Being attached to sensation is bondage. Believing that the self exists is bondage. Believing that the self does not exist is bondage. Believing that material objects (*sarūpa*) exist is bondage. Believing that material objects do not exist is bondage. Believing that material objects both exist and do not exist is bondage. Believing that the self forms ideas is bondage. Believing that the self does not form ideas is bondage. Believing that the self forms and does not form ideas is bondage. The self is the main issue, the thorn and the infection.

Therefore, wise and saintly disciples (*śrāvakas*) realize that the self has become the main problem, the thorn and the infection. One must abandon the idea of a self and adhere to practicing non-self in order to see that the habitual discriminations that one makes between oneself and others are caused by a lack of discipline and constitute the greatest burden. Whether one views a contingent phenomenon (i.e., causally produced) as having a reality of its own (self) or no reality, or a material form (*sarūpa*) of its own or no form, or its own concept or no concept—in all cases, the conviction that a contingent phenomenon exists is the main problem, the thorn and the infection. Because of this, wise and saintly disciples regard the compounding of phenomena as the chief difficulty, the thorn and the infection. Hence, forsaking the realm of phenomena, they adopt the transcendent practice.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

141c Once, when the heavenly gods were at war with the *asuras*, Śakra, lord of the gods, assembled the Trāyastriṃśa gods and said, “Let us go fight the *asuras*. If we are victorious, make sure to capture Vimalacitra, the *asura* general, bind him in five chains, and bring him to Sudharma Hall. I want to see him.” After receiving these commands, the Trāyastriṃśa gods readied their armor. At the same time, the leader of the *asuras*, Vimalacitra, gave his orders, “Now let us go fight them. If we are victorious, capture Śakra, bind him with five chains, and bring him to Saptaparṇa Hall. I want to see him.” After receiving these commands, the *asuras* readied their armor. Then the gods and the *asuras* met on the battlefield and fought each other. The gods were victorious and the *asuras* withdrew.

The leader of the *asuras*, Vimalacitra, was captured, and the Trāyastriṃśa gods bound him in chains and brought him to Sudharma Hall, where he was given to Śakra, lord of the gods. When Indra, lord of the gods, appeared and made his way to the central platform in the hall, the *asura* general shouted at him with many abusive terms. Indra's attendant looked at his lord and asked:

Lord of the gods, what are you afraid of?
Does your hesitation show
Condescension or weakness [to the *asura*]?
How can you listen to the foul words
That the *asura* general says
To your face directly?

Śakra, lord of the gods, immediately composed a verse in reply:

The *asura* is helpless and powerless,
I have no reason to fear him.
How can one who possesses wisdom
Argue with anyone so unworthy?
The attendant responded:
If you don't punish that fool's stupidity now,
You will face more insults later
That will only become harder to abide.
You should let him taste your cudgel
And then correct his own insolence.

The lord of the gods again composed a verse in reply:
As I say, a wise person should never dispute with a fool.
While the foolish aim words of abuse,
Still the wise tolerate them in silence
And thereby win them over.

Then the attendant said to Śakra, lord of the gods:
Your lordship's silence seems to come from a fear
Of besmirching the dignified attitude of the wise,
Yet that stupid one assumes it is from weakness.
Unable to measure his own strength,

That fool believes he is your equal.
Already as good as dead, he demands a fight to the death,
Hoping you will flinch like a bull withdrawing.
Śakra then composed a verse in reply:
That fool, with no knowledge or insight,
Imagines that I am terrified
When I consider the object of highest importance
Is expressing the virtue of silent patience.
The worst vice of all is to pile anger upon anger
When the best fight is to control oneself,
Instead of inflaming anger with anger.
There are two grounds for one's conduct,
142a Either for oneself or for the sake of others.
Many who dispute over a suit
Will consider they have won the case
When one refrains from responding.
[Again,] there are two grounds for one's conduct,
Either for oneself or for the sake of others.
Those who refrain from dispute
May be regarded as ignorant and foolish,
But one who is endowed with real strength
Can tolerate those with the least strength.
That strength is the highest and best part of patience.
While fools think they are strong,
Their strength is not at all real.
Those who possess the strength of patience,
Understanding how it must be expressed,
Have strength indeed that no one can counter.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

You must not think that the lord of the gods of that time was someone else. The Śakra of that time was indeed myself. I was engaged in practicing patience then and refrained from intemperate acts. I also was sure to praise those who could hold fast and persevere. If those who are endowed with

knowledge and insight wish to propagate the path I teach, they must practice the virtue of silent patience and not engage in any form of dispute.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Once, long ago, when the Trāyastriṃśa gods fought with the *asuras*, Śakra, lord of the gods, said to the king of the *asuras*, “Why must we always keep our weapons ready for further belligerence and hostility? Why must we argue and fight? Now, let us conduct our arguments on the grounds of ethics and morality and thereby determine who has won and who has lost.” Citra, the leader of the *asuras*, replied, “Then we will set our weapons aside and stop our disputes. But who will determine which side has won or lost?” The lord of the gods said, “Let us just engage in debate. There are some on your side, as well as those on mine, who are endowed with the wisdom to know who has won and lost.”

The leader of the *asuras* then said, “Please go first and state your position in verse.” The lord of the gods replied, “You are a former resident of heaven. You should speak first.” Then the *asura* Citra at once composed a verse:

If you don't punish the fool's stupidity now,
 You will face more insults later
 That will only become harder to abide.
 You should let him taste your cudgel
 And then correct his own insolence.

When Citra finished his verse, the *asuras* in attendance were greatly delighted and loudly proclaimed that the statement was good. The gods in attendance all remained silent. Then the *asura* leader said to Śakra, “Please compose your verse now.” At once, the lord of the gods gave his verse for the sake of the *asuras*:

As I say, a wise person should never dispute with a fool.
 While the foolish aim words of abuse,
 Still the wise tolerate them in silence.
 And thereby win them over.

142b When Śakra finished his verse, all the Trāyastriṃśa gods were delighted and proclaimed in loud voices that the statement was good. The *asuras*, however, remained silent. Then the lord of the gods said to Citra, “Please compose your next verse.” The *asura* leader composed the following verse:

Your lordship's silence seems to come from a fear
Of besmirching the dignified attitude of the wise.
Yet that stupid one assumes that it is from weakness.
Unable to measure his own strength,
That fool believes he is your equal.
Already as good as dead, he demands a fight to the death,
Hoping you will flinch like a bull withdrawing.

When Citra finished his verse, the *asuras* leapt and danced in delight, proclaiming that the statement was excellent. The Trāyastriṃśa gods all remained silent. The *asura* leader then said to Śakra, “Please compose your next verse.” The lord of the gods uttered this verse:

That fool, with no knowledge or insight,
Imagines that I am terrified
When I consider the object of highest importance
Is expressing the virtue of silent patience.
The worst vice of all is to pile anger upon anger
When the best fight is to control oneself,
Instead of inflaming anger with anger.
There are two grounds for one's conduct,
Either for oneself or for the sake of others.
Many who dispute over a suit
Will consider they have won the case
When one refrains from responding.
[Again,] there are two grounds for one's conduct,
Either for oneself or for the sake of others.
Those who refrain from dispute
May be regarded as ignorant and foolish,
But one who is endowed with real strength
Can tolerate those with the least strength.

That strength is the highest and best part of patience.
 While fools think they are strong,
 Their strength is not at all real,
 Those who possess the strength of patience,
 Understanding how it must be expressed,
 Have strength indeed that no one can counter.

When Śakra finished his verse, the Trāyastriṃśa gods all leapt and danced in delight, loudly proclaiming that it was good. The *asuras* who were present remained silent. The two groups, gods and *asuras*, withdrew after a while and conversed among themselves, “The verses of the *asura* leader constitute an offense because they harp on fighting and arguing, reinforce feelings of injury and resentment, and stir up an appetite for revenge by any means; thus they further embed the root cause of existence in the three spheres. On the other hand, the verses of the lord of the gods do not convey anything offensive. His teaching does not harp on fighting and arguing, or reinforce feelings of injury and resentment, or stir up an appetite for revenge by any means; thus they tend to terminate the root cause of existence in the three spheres. The teaching of the lord of the gods can therefore be deemed good, whereas that of the *asura* leader must be deemed deficient.” This is how the Trāyastriṃśa gods were victorious and the *asuras* defeated.

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The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

You must not think that the lord of the gods of that time was someone else. The Śakra of that time was indeed myself. It was at that time that I won over the band of *asuras* through gentle words.

The Buddha continued:

Once long ago, when the Trāyastriṃśa gods fought with the *asuras*, things turned such that the *asuras* were victorious and the gods defeated. Śakra, lord of the gods, fled in haste, riding a chariot endowed with thousand-spoked wheels. During his escape he saw a bird’s nest on top of an *anpoluo* tree with two chicks in it. At once, he said to his charioteer:

I see two chicks on that tree,
Turn around to avoid colliding with it.
I might have to pay the consequences,
But we must not injure those birds.

Upon hearing his command, the charioteer stopped at once. The chariot was now exposed to the oncoming *asuras*. Seeing the chariot stop, the *asuras* said to each other, "It is Śakra who is in the chariot with the thousand-spoked wheels. He has turned around to face us. He must want to fight. Don't attack him." The *asuras* withdrew. On that day, the Trāyastriṃśa gods were victorious when the *asuras* withdrew.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

You must not think that the lord of the gods of that time was someone else. The Śakra of that time was indeed myself. I was then extending compassion to as many sentient beings as I could. O *bhikṣus*, since you have all renounced domestic life and begun practicing the truths of my religion, you must elevate your sense of compassion and extend it to everyone.

The Buddha continued:

Once long ago, when the Trāyastriṃśa gods fought with the *asuras*, the gods were victorious when the *asuras* withdrew. Śakra, lord of the gods, returned to his palace from the campaign and built an additional pavilion that extended one hundred *yojanas* from east to west in length and sixty *yojanas* wide from north to south. He named it Paramārtha. The pavilion contained one hundred halls, and in each hall were seven raised platforms for seven maidens, each with her own attendant. Śakra, lord of the gods, did not worry about the cost. The maidens were amply provided with garments, food and drink, and jewels. The cost of the hall, along with that of its construction, was borne through the merit earned by his triumphant campaign against the *asuras*, and as the pavilion was built after a joyous victory, it was also given the name Pavilion of the Supreme Victor. No building could equal it in grandeur in all the thousand worlds, so it was called the Paramount Pavilion.

Once long ago, the king of the *asuras* was seized by jealousy: “I wield the power of command and my supernatural powers are not few in number. Yet the sun and the moon and the Trāyastriṃśa gods always abide above me, freely moving over my head. How can I conquer the sun and moon and make them my earrings, revolving as I wish?” His anger was intense.

He thought of the *asura* general Chuida, and at once the latter became aware, “Rāhu is calling me. We must ready our armor.” He ordered his attendants to gather their weapons and rode out in his chariot accompanied before and after by the *asura* legions. When he reached the king of the *asuras*, he took his place to one side.

Again, the king of the *asuras* thought of the *asura* general Shemoli, and at once the latter became aware, “Rāhu is calling me. We must ready our armor.” He ordered his attendants to gather their weapons and rode out in his chariot accompanied before and after by the *asura* legions. When he reached the king of the *asuras*, he took his place to one side.

Again, the king of the *asuras* thought of the *asura* general Vimalacitra, and at once the latter became aware, “Rāhu is calling me. We must ready our armor.” He ordered his attendants to gather their weapons and rode out in his chariot accompanied before and after by the *asura* legions. When he reached the king of the *asuras*, he took his place to one side.

Again, the king of the *asuras* thought of his minister Asurin, and at once the latter became aware, “Rāhu is calling me. We must ready our armor.” He too ordered his attendants to gather their weapons and rode out in his chariot accompanied before and after by the *asura* legions. When he reached the king of the *asuras*, he took his place to one side.

Again, the king of the *asuras* thought of the minor *asura* leaders, and at once the latter became aware, “Rāhu is calling me. We must ready our armor.” They immediately gathered their weapons and led their legions to the king of the *asuras*, where they took their places to one side.

Then Rāhu, king of the *asuras*, prepared his weapons, donned his armor, and rode out in his chariot to lead the hundreds of thousands of *asura* legions to battle. By this time, the *nāga* kings Nanda and Upananda had encircled Mount Sumeru with their bodies seven times for defense, shaking the hills and valleys, unleashing rain from an increasingly overcast sky, and slapping the ocean surface with their tails to send the water high

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over the top of Mount Sumeru. The Trāyastriṃśa gods thought, “The clouds are growing, rain is falling, the ocean is stirring, and the waves are reaching us here. This can only mean that the *asuras* are coming.”

Now the *asuras* met a host of *nāgas* from the ocean, innumerable myriads in heavy armor and carrying pikes, bows and arrows, spears and lances, and daggers and swords. When the battle commenced the *nāga* soldiers pursued the enemy as far as the grounds of the *asura* palace when they had the advantage, but when they were obliged to withdraw they did not return to their own palace but proceeded at once to report to the *garuḍas*: “The *asuras* are on their way to fight the gods. When we tried to block them, they continued to push through. Now you must sharpen your weapons and get ready to fight with us against the *asuras*.”

Hearing this report, the *garuḍas* gathered their weapons, donned heavy armor, and joined the *nāgas* to battle against the *asuras*. When they had the advantage they pursued the *asuras* as far as the grounds of the enemy palace, but when they were obliged to withdraw they did not return to their own palace but proceeded at once to report to the Chihua demigods: “The *asuras* are on their way to fight the gods. When we tried to block them, they continued to push through. Now you must sharpen your weapons and get ready to fight with us against the *asuras*.”

Hearing this report, the Chihua demigods gathered their weapons, donned heavy armor, and joined the *garuḍas* and *nāgas* to battle against the *asuras*. When they had the advantage they pursued the *asuras* as far as the grounds of the enemy palace, but when they were obliged to withdraw they did not return to their own palace but proceeded at once to report to the Changle demigods, “The *asuras* are on their way to fight the gods. Although we tried to block them, they continued to push through. Now you must sharpen your weapons and fight with us against the *asuras*.”

Hearing this report, the Changle demigods gathered their weapons, donned heavy armor, and joined the Chihua [demigods], *garuḍas*, and *nāgas* to battle against the *asuras*. When they had the advantage they pursued the *asuras* as far as the grounds of the enemy palace, but when they were obliged to withdraw they did not return to their own palace but proceeded at once to report to the four guardian gods: “The *asuras* are on their way to fight the gods. Although we tried to block them, they continued

to push through. Now you must sharpen your weapons and get ready to fight with us against the *asuras*.”

Hearing this report, the four guardian gods gathered their weapons, donned heavy armor, and joined the innumerable hosts battling the *asuras*. When they had the advantage they pursued the *asuras* as far as the grounds of the enemy palace, but when they were obliged to withdraw they did not return to their own palace but proceeded at once to Sudharma Hall to report to Śakra and the Trāyastriṃśa gods, “The *asuras* are on their way to fight you. Although we tried to block their way, they have had the advantage. Now, sirs, you must gather your weapons and join us in fighting the *asuras*.”

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Now the lord of the gods called one of his attendants and told him, “Carry this message to the gods of the Yama, Tuṣita, Nirmāṇarati, and Paranirmitavaśavartin Heavens. Tell them, ‘The *asuras*, with innumerable legions, have come to fight. The gods of all the heavens must now gather their weapons and join us in fighting the *asuras*.’”

The attendant conveyed the message from Śakra to the Yama gods and so on, as far as the gods of Paranirmitavaśavartin Heaven. Hearing the message, the Yama gods gathered their weapons, donned heavy armor, and rode out in their chariots, accompanied by innumerable myriads of hosts, to establish their camp on the east side of Mount Sumeru. The Tuṣita gods gathered their weapons, donned heavy armor, and rode out in their chariots, accompanied by innumerable myriads of hosts, to establish camp on the south side of Mount Sumeru. The Nirmāṇarati gods, meanwhile, assembled their armies and established camp on the west side of Mount Sumeru, while the Paranirmitavaśavartin gods assembled their armies and established camp on the north side of Mount Sumeru.

Then Śakra, lord of the gods, thought of the Trāyastriṃśa gods, and at once the latter became aware, “Śakra is calling us. We must prepare ourselves as quickly as possible.” Accordingly, they ordered their armies to ready their weapons and rode in their chariots, accompanied before and after by innumerable myriads of gods, to the palace of the lord of the gods and took their places to one side. Śakra then thought of the remaining gods of Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, and at once the latter became aware, “Lord Śakra is calling us. We must prepare ourselves as quickly as possible.”

They ordered their armies to ready their weapons and rode in their chariots, accompanied before and after by innumerable myriads of gods, to the palace of the lord of the gods and took their places to one side.

Then the lord of the gods thought of Viśvakarman and at once the latter became aware, "The lord of the gods is calling me. I must present myself before him." Immediately he stood before Śakra.

144a Finally, the lord of the gods gathered his weapons and put on his armor. He rode on the head of Viśvakarman, accompanied before and after by innumerable gods, demigods, and spirits, out from his celestial palace to do battle with the *asuras*. His armies were armored and well equipped with axes and hatchets, pikes and swords, bows and arrows, halberds and long-handled halberds, lassos, and other weapons, all embellished with the seven kinds of treasure. They attacked the *asuras* fiercely, but the sharp points and edges of their weapons only touched [the *asuras*'] bodies without injuring them. The *asura* armies also wielded axes and hatchets, pikes and swords, bows and arrows, halberds and long-handled halberds, throw nets and other weapons, and they attacked the gods fiercely without injuring them. The heavenly gods and the *asuras* battled out of desire, and their actions were expressed in this manner because of the cause of their desire.

Article 11: Three Medium-length Eons

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

There are three medium-length eons. What are they? The first is the eon of warfare. The second is the eon of famine. The third is the eon of pestilence.

What is the eon of warfare? People of these times originally have a life span of forty thousand years. This later decreases to twenty thousand years, and again to ten thousand years. It further becomes one thousand years, then five hundred years, three hundred, then two hundred. Now people live to be around one hundred years of age. After this, human life spans will further decrease, down to ten years. Young women will be betrothed five months after being born.

All the delicacies of the age, such as ghee, honey, sugar, sorghum, and so forth, will naturally disappear. The five grains will not grow; instead

all there will be is tares. In these times such luxurious fabrics as brocade, fine silk, cotton, and linen will all become unavailable. All there will be is rough textiles and straw clothes.

In these times the earth will produce nothing but thorns, horseflies, hornets, vipers, and venomous insects. Gold, silver, beryl, the seven precious metals, gems, and jewels will naturally be buried underground. The only thing there will be is rocks and sand; the world will be teeming with filth. In these times sentient beings will do nothing but exacerbate the ten kinds of unwholesome behavior. No one will ever even hear mention of the ten kinds of wholesome behavior. There won't even be mention of the word "wholesome"; how could there be such a thing as wholesome behavior? 144b

During these times people do not respect their parents, nor do they respect their teachers. Those who do evil are allowed to make offerings. Their respect [for unwholesome behavior] is like the way present-day people love and obey their parents and respect their teachers, and those who do good are the ones who are able to make offerings. The respect of the people [of this eon] is such that those who do evil are able to make offerings. When the people of these times die they fall into rebirth as animals, the same way that present-day people are able to be reborn in a heaven. When they see each other the people of these times harbor venomous thoughts, thinking only of killing each other. They are just like a hunter who on seeing a herd of deer thinks only of killing them, without one wholesome thought. These people are like this. Desiring only to kill each other, they give rise to not a single wholesome thought.

During these times the earth is covered with ravines, valleys, mountains, and hills—there is no level ground. In these times, people cower in fear and their hair stands on end when others approach them. In these times, people are menaced by swords seven days a week. They grasp hold of plants and trees, tiles and stones, trying to fashion anything into a sword. The swords are so sharp that they cut anything they brush up against, and so people continuously injure each other. Living among them the wise see this continual warfare and run away in fear, hiding in the mountains among steep precipices where there are no other people. Hiding themselves away for seven days, they spontaneously say, "I do not harm others, so

others should not harm me.” During those seven days they survive on grasses and roots. After seven days, they return from the mountains.

Then a person happens to see someone else. Elated, he says, “I see a living person! I see a living person!” Just like parents who have been long separated from their only child, they jump with joy, unable to control themselves. The person [who has just emerged from the mountain hideout] is the same way—jumping for joy, unable to control himself. During these times the people cry with each other seven days of the week, and then for another seven days they amuse each other with games, joyfully congratulating each other. When these people die they all fall into the hells. Why? Because they have always harbored anger and have inflicted harm upon each other. They lack compassion and kindness. This is the eon of warfare.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

144c What is the eon of famine? During these times people move around lawlessly. Under the influence of wrong views and cognitive distortions they carry out the ten kinds of unwholesome behavior. Because of this unwholesome behavior, the heavens offer no rain and all the plants wither and die. The five grains do not mature, remaining as mere stalks. What is famine? In these times, just to survive, people scrape the fields, roads, and highways for garbage and chaff. This is famine. Furthermore, in times of famine people survive by collecting skeletons in the roads, the markets, the slaughterhouses, and burial grounds; they boil them down and drink the broth. This is called famine of starvation.

Furthermore, during an eon of famine the five cultivated grains become extinct, changing into ordinary plants. During these times people gather the blossoms [of these ordinary plants], boil them down, and drink the broth. Furthermore, in times of famine, when the blossoms of plants drop off they become buried under the ground. People survive in these times by digging up the ground to get these blossoms and boiling them down for consumption. This is called the “famine of [surviving on nothing but] plants.” During these times, when people die they fall into rebirth as hungry ghosts. Why? Because people who live during the eon of famine continually harbor avarice, having no inclinations toward generosity. They

do not care to share, nor do they think about the trouble they cause for others. This is the eon of famine.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

What is the eon of pestilence? During these times people cultivate the right Dharma and right views, not mistaken views. While the people are fully carrying out the ten kinds of wholesome behavior, spirits come from other realms. These spirits are unruly and debauched, and they are unable to protect people. These spirits from other realms harass the people of this world. They beat them and flog them, sapping their vitality, causing them to be confused, harassing them and chasing them. It is as if a king had directed his generals to allow brigands from other regions to invade and harass those they are supposed to protect, and the unruly brigands menace towns throughout the country. The spirits from these other realms come and snatch the people of this world, beat them and flog them, sap their vitality, and harass and chase them.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Even if the spirits of this world are not unruly and debauched, mighty spirits will come from other realms and the spirits of this world will be scared and flee. These powerful spirits will harass the people. They will beat them and flog them, sap their vitality, slaughter them, and drive them away.

It is as if a king had banished the generals charged with protecting his citizens. The generals, being pure and honest, are not at all self-indulgent. In another land, however, there are ferocious generals who lead their huge armies to attack the towns and cities, plundering with impunity. Even if the spirits in this world do not dare to be self-indulgent, mighty spirits will come from other realms and the spirits of this realm will flee in fright. Those mighty spirits will harass the people, beat them and flog them, sap their vitality, slaughter them, and drive them away.

People who live during an eon of pestilence are reborn into a heavenly realm when they die. Why? Because people who live during these times have compassion for each other. They continually ask each other, “Are you sick? Are you well? Are you alright? Are you troubled?” Because of

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this, one is able to be reborn into the heavens. Hence it is called the eon of pestilence.

These are the three medium-length eons.

Article 12: The Original Conditions of the World

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

At the beginning, when this eon began to evolve after the destruction of the previous eon by fire, the remaining sentient beings, having exhausted their predispositional forces, merits, and life spans, died in Ābhāsvara Heaven (i.e., the highest attainable heaven in the second meditative state of absorption) and were reborn in the vast empty space of Brahmā Heaven. They became fond of that abode and wished to be born there again together with other sentient beings. In this way, the [first generation] of sentient beings there had already become attached to that abode. As other sentient beings ended their life in Ābhāsvara Heaven and were reborn in the vast empty space of Brahmā Heaven, those who were already there thought to themselves, “I am Brahmā, the great Brahmā. By nature I exist, and there is no one who can create me. I am omniscient and control a thousand worlds in which I am the absolutely free presider, for I have the miraculous power of changing forms and bringing them into being. I am the father and mother of all sentient beings.”

Those who came after the first generation thought to themselves, “Our predecessor, the first Brahmā, is the king of the Brahmā gods, the great king Brahmā. He has created himself and no one else could create him. He is omniscient and controls a thousand worlds where he is the absolutely free and most honorable presider, receiving no orders from anyone, for he has the miraculous power of changing forms and bringing them into being. He is the father and mother of all sentient beings and we were created by him.” The countenance of the king of the Brahmā gods always resembled that of a youth, so he has been called a youth. When this world was evolving, many sentient beings who had been born in it were reborn in Ābhāsvara Heaven. Once there, they flew in the air using supernormal power, their bodies were luminous, and they naturally subsisted on joy.

They enjoyed a life of happiness and ease, free from all obstructions, and their life span was eternal.

Then this world was engulfed in a great flood and totally inundated. Total darkness in heaven and earth prevailed; neither the sun, moon, or stars shone, and there were no days or nights, no months or years, only total darkness. Later, when the water had changed into solid ground, the heavenly beings who had exhausted their predispositional forces, merits, and life spans died in Ābhāsvara Heaven and were reborn in this new world. Yet they still flew in the air with a supernormal power, their bodies remained luminous, and they continued to subsist on joy and to exist in this new world for some time. Though there were distinctions between male and female, noble and ignoble, and those of higher and lower rank, they had no names to distinguish themselves, and since they were born along with other beings they simply called themselves sentient beings.

At that time, out of the compassion of nature, an edible form of clay began to well up and congeal on the ground, like cream turning into butter. The outflow of the edible clay with the texture of raw cheese and a honey-like taste was exactly like that. The second-born sentient beings used their fingers to taste it and once they came to know its taste, they were addicted to its sweetness. The habit spread from one to another with no letup in sight, and soon they were openhandedly partaking of it, scooping it up in big lumps. Other sentient beings observed their behavior and they too began to imitate it; soon their indulgence also turned into addiction. [Before long] the food they were consuming caused their bodies to turn coarse and their luminosity became intermittent. No longer could they fly through the air. There was still no sun or moon, but now the light the sentient beings had brought with them was lost and heaven and earth were as dark as they had been previously. It was no different from how it had been after the flood.

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After an indeterminate length of time, a great storm blew in, ripping the great ocean apart to a depth of eighty-four thousand *yojanas* and creating a palace for the sun on the mid-slope of Mount Sumeru. Now the passage of the sun, arising in the east and setting in the west, rotating over heaven and earth, was set. On the second day, when the sun rose in the east and set in the west, some of the sentient beings said, “This is yesterday.” Others said, “No, this is not yesterday.” On the third day, after going

around Mount Sumeru, the sun arose in the east and set in the west. The sentient beings then said, "Definitely, this has been one whole day." Thus the length of a day is marked by the reappearance of the previous [sun]light. Because of this, it is called "day."

We think of the sun in two ways: (1) as abiding and perpetually traversing, and (2) as the palace [where it abides]. From the palace, all four directions are observable to the farthest distance; hence the palace has a circular shape. The sun is composed, in part, of heavenly gold in which warmth and coldness are mixed, and in part, of glass: (1) the gold is genuine, without admixture, transparent both within and without, and shines its light on the farthest objects; (2) the glass is also genuine, without admixture, transparent within and without, and shines its light on the farthest objects.

The palace of the sun is fifty *yojanas* long and wide. The palace walls, like the thin surface of the ground beneath, resemble the surrounding [seven] lines of trees. The walls are sevenfold and concentric, embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets from which seven bells are suspended, and seven lines of trees, all adorned with seven kinds of treasure. The golden wall is endowed with silver gates, the silver wall with golden gates, the quartz wall with lapis gates, the lapis wall with quartz gates, the ruby wall with agate gates, the agate wall with gates made of rubies, and the emerald wall with gates adorned with a variety of precious stones. The railings are decorated in a similar way: the golden railing is decorated with silver ropes, the silver railing with golden ropes, the quartz railing with lapis ropes, the lapis railing with quartz ropes, the ruby railing with agate ropes, the agate railing with ropes made of rubies, and the emerald railing with a variety of precious stones. Over these railings are draped ornamental nets, on which various treasures are attached. From the golden net hangs a silver bell; from the silver net hangs a golden bell; from the lapis net hangs a quartz bell; from the quartz net hangs a lapis bell; from the ruby net hangs an agate bell; from the agate net hangs a bell made of rubies; and from the emerald net hangs a bell inlaid with various precious stones. The golden trees have silver flowers and fruit. The silver trees have golden flowers and fruit. The quartz trees have lapis flowers and leaves, and the lapis tree has quartz flowers and leaves. The ruby tree has agate flowers and leaves, and the agate tree has flowers and

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leaves made of rubies. The emerald tree has flowers and leaves made of various precious stones. Each of the seven walls has four gates, one on each side, and each gateway stands seven stories high and is protected by railings. On top of each wall is a pavilion with a veranda, and each wall encloses a bathing pond and pleasure garden filled with flowers made of precious materials. The walls are surrounded by fruit trees with flowers and leaves shining in variegated hues, exquisite fragrances waft in all directions, and innumerable rare birds sing harmoniously together.

The palace of the sun is upheld by five kinds of wind: (1) a wind that maintains, (2) a wind that nurtures, (3) a wind that receives, (4) a wind that changes, and (5) a wind that adjusts. The main pavilion, where the sun god dwells, is composed of genuine gold. It is fifteen *yojanas* high and endowed with four gates, one on each side, protected by railings. The throne of the sun god, half a *yojana* long and wide, is made from the seven kinds of treasure. The seat is pure and as soft to the touch as a heavenly garment. From it the sun god shines his light to illumine the golden pavilion. The light reflecting from this pavilion illumines the entire palace of the sun, and the light reflecting from this palace illumines the four heavens and earths of this world. The life span of the sun god is five hundred years in the celestial scale, and there is no gap in the succession of generations. The palace cannot be destroyed by any event, except at the end of each eon.

When the palace of the sun traverses the sky, the sun god makes no effort to accomplish its movement. “Ever progressing on this steady passage,” he says, “I enjoy it as an expression of the five kinds of desire.” As the palace of the sun continues on its journey, innumerable hundreds of thousands of great heavenly spirits participate in the procession before it. There is no end to pleasure, and the sun relishes its swiftness and urgency. Because of this, the sun god is called Swift and Urgent. From his body one thousand lights emanate, five hundred of which illuminate the world below while the other five hundred shine around him in every direction. Being in possession of an array of one thousand lights is his reward for merit accumulated in past lives. Because of this, the sun god is also called Thousand Lights.

What kind of merit accumulates in one’s past? One example is the charity people provide by serving food to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* or

by rescuing people from destitution with food and drink, articles of clothing, perhaps some medicine or transportation on a vehicle, horse, or elephant, or offering a room to stay in, perhaps in a hotel, or a lamp to see or even mere candlelight. In providing charity, one gives things to others in accordance with their needs, and one should not do it hastily but strive to give what is needed without offending the person, serving in this way as a representative of the saintly disciples who adhere to moral discipline (*śīla*). Thus, because of innumerable causes and conditions related to experiences of delight in the Dharma and illumination by the light of wisdom, one's mind gradually becomes imbued with a feeling of joy and a spirit of goodness. It is like the *kṣatriya* king whose head is anointed with water when he ascends the throne for the first time, filling his mind with supreme joy and a spirit of goodwill. Upon his death, based on these causes and conditions, he is reborn as the sun god and accedes to the palace of the sun, endowed with an array of one thousand lights. Thus the proverb says, "Good karma results in the acquisition of a thousand lights."

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Why is the sun regarded as the lights of past karma? Suppose that people adhere to the precepts, such as refraining from taking life, refraining from taking that which is not given, refraining from sexual misconduct, refraining from prevarication, refraining from abusive speech, refraining from speaking falsehoods, refraining from flattery, refraining from avarice, refraining from anger, and refraining from holding wrong views. Based on their causes and conditions, they may acquire a mind of joy and goodness. It is like a great bathing pond at the crossroads of a highway: since it is pure and clean, those who have traveled a long distance and who have become extremely tired and thirsty will come to bathe in it, and they will delight in its coolness that brings happiness and joy. It is exactly like the mind of joy and goodness experienced by those who adhere to the ten norms of conduct. After death, they are reborn as the sun god and reside in the palace of the sun, endowed with an array of a thousand lights. Because of this, the sun god is called the Thousand Lights that result from good karma.

Sixty *kṣaṇas* (moments) make up a single *laya*; thirty *layas* make up a single *muhūrta*, and one hundred *muhūrtas* make up a single *upamā*. The palace of the sun god goes through the southern sky for six months, each day proceeding thirty *li*. The most southerly course does not go

beyond the limits of the continent of Jambudvīpa. The course of the sun through the northern sky is exactly parallel to its southern course.

Why does the [warmth from the] sun feel hot enough to burn? There are ten reasons. What are the ten? (1) Not far from Mount Sumeru is Mount Khadira, forty-two thousand *yojanas* high and forty-two thousand *yojanas* long and wide, with foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the first reason the sun is burning hot. (2) In front of Mount Khadira is Mount Yisha, twenty-one thousand *yojanas* high and twenty-one thousand *yojanas* long and wide, with foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the second reason the sun is burning hot. (3) In front of Mount Yisha lies Mount Shuti, twelve thousand *yojanas* high and twelve thousand *yojanas* long and wide, possessing foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the third reason the sun is burning hot. (4) In front of Mount Shuti lies Mount Sudṛṣa, six thousand *yojanas* high and all of six thousand *yojanas* long and wide, possessing foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the fourth reason the sun is burning hot. (5) In front of Mount Sudṛṣa lies Mount Masi, three thousand *yojanas* high and three thousand *yojanas* long and wide, possessing foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the fifth reason the sun is burning hot. (6) In front of Mount Masi lies Mount Nimi, twelve hundred *yojanas* high and twelve hundred *yojanas* long and wide, possessing foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the sixth reason the sun is burning hot. (7) In front of Mount Nimi lies Mount Diaofu, six hundred *yojanas* high and six hundred *yojanas* long and wide, with foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the seventh reason the sun is burning

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hot. (8) In front of Mount Diaofu lies Mount Jinganglun, three hundred *yojanas* high and three hundred *yojanas* long and wide, with foothills that are limitless in extent, all containing the seven kinds of treasure. When the sun illumines this mountain, heat is created by that contact. This is the eighth reason the sun is burning hot. (9) Again, ten thousand *yojanas* out in space is a celestial palace called the “constellation,” [make endnote and give more information on this] made entirely from lapis lazuli. When the sun illumines this palace, heat is created by that contact. This is the ninth reason the sun is burning hot. (10) Again, light from the palace of the sun illumines the earth and heat is created by its contact with the ground. This is the tenth reason the sun is burning hot.

Then the World-honored One uttered the following verse:

On the basis of these ten reasons,
The sun is called Thousand Lights.
The radiance of the sun's shining
Heats [everything upon contact].
This is the Buddha's discourse on the sun.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

Why is the winter palace of the sun so cold and difficult to be near? Though the sun is shining, why is [the temperature] cool? There are thirteen reasons it is cool in winter even though the sun shines. What are the thirteen? (1) There is water between Mount Sumeru and Mount Khadira, an expanse as great as eighty-four thousand *yojanas* long and wide but of limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water lilies, including the *utpala*, *kumuda*, *padma*, *puṇḍarīka*, and *sugandha*. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the first reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (2) There is water between Mount Khadira and Mount Yisha, an expanse as great as forty-two thousand *yojanas* long and wide but of limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the second reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (3) There is water between Mount Yisha and Mount Shuti, an expanse as great as twenty-one thousand *yojanas* long and wide but of

limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the third reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (4) There is water between Mount Shuti and Mount Sudṛśa, an expanse as great as twelve thousand *yojanas* long and wide but of limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the fourth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (5) There is water between Mount Sudṛśa and Mount Massu, an expanse as great as six thousand *yojanas* long and wide but of limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the fifth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (6) There is water between Mount Massu and Mount Nimin, an expanse as great as twelve hundred *yojanas* long and wide but of limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the sixth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (7) There is water between Mount Nimin and Mount Diaofu, an expanse as great as six hundred *yojanas* in length and breadth but with limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the seventh reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (8) There is water between Mount Diaofu and Mount Jinganglun, an expanse as great as three hundred *yojanas* long and wide but of limitless extent. In this lake grow many varieties of water plants. When the sun shines on the flowers, coolness is created by that contact. This is the eighth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (9) Again, there are great oceans, rivers, and streams on the continent of Jambudvīpa. When the sun shines on them, coolness is created by its contact with those waters. This is the ninth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (10) Although the continent of [Apara-]godānīya has fewer rivers than Jambudvīpa, it contains many water-related objects. When the sun shines on them, coolness is created by that contact. This is the tenth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (11) Although the continent of Pūrvavideha has fewer rivers than [Apara]godānīya, there are many more bodies of water there. When the sun shines on them, coolness is created by that contact. This is the eleventh reason the sun's light

is cool [in winter]. (12) Although the continent of Uttarakuru has fewer rivers than Pūrvavideha, there are many more bodies of water there. When the sun shines on them, coolness is created by that contact. This is the twelfth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter]. (13) Again, light from the palace of the sun shines on the great ocean, and when the sun shines on it coolness is created by that contact. This is the thirteenth reason the sun's light is cool [in winter].

Then the World-honored One uttered the following verse:

On the basis of these thirteen reasons,
The sun is called Thousand Lights.
The sun's shining is clean and cool.
This is the Buddha's discourse on the sun.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The moon has but a single palace, its roundness waxes and wanes, and its light increases and diminishes. Because of this, the palace of the moon is called Juan. We think of the moon in two ways: (1) as abiding and perpetually traversing, and (2) as the palace [where it abides]. From the palace, all four directions are observable to the farthest distance; hence the palace has a circular shape. The moon is composed, in part, of heavenly silver in which coldness and warmth are mixed, and in part, of lapis lazuli: (1) the silver is genuine, without admixture, transparent both within and without, and shines its light on the farthest objects; (2) the lapis is also genuine, without admixture, transparent within and without, and shines its light on the farthest objects.

147a The palace of the moon is forty-nine *yojanas* long and wide. The palace walls, like the thin surface of the ground beneath, resemble the surrounding lines of trees. The walls are sevenfold and concentric, embellished with seven railings, seven ornamental nets from which seven bells are suspended, and seven lines of trees, all adorned with the seven kinds of treasure, with innumerable rare birds singing harmoniously together.

The palace of the moon is upheld by five kinds of wind: (1) a wind that maintains, (2) a wind that nurtures, (3) a wind that receives, (4) a wind that changes, and (5) a wind that adjusts. The main pavilion, where

the moon god dwells, is made of genuine lapis. It is sixteen *yojanas* high and endowed with four gates, one on each side, protected by railings. The throne of the moon god, half a *yojana* long and wide, is made from the seven kinds of treasure. The seat is pure and as soft to the touch as a heavenly garment. From it the moon god shines his light to illumine the lapis pavilion. The light shining from this pavilion illumines the entire palace of the moon, and the light shining from this palace illumines the four heavens and earths of this world. The life span of the moon god is five hundred years in the celestial scale, and there is no gap in the succession of generations. The palace cannot be destroyed by any event, except at the end of each eon.

When the palace of the moon traverses the sky, the moon god makes no effort to accomplish its movement. “Ever progressing on this steady passage,” he says, “I enjoy it as an expression of the five kinds of desire.” As the palace of the moon continues on its journey, innumerable hundreds of thousands of great heavenly spirits participate in the procession before it. There is no end to pleasure, and the moon relishes its swiftness and urgency. Because of this, the moon god is called Swift and Urgent. From his body one thousand lights emanate, five hundred of which illuminate the world below while the other five hundred shine around him in every direction. Being in possession of an array of one thousand lights is his reward for merit accumulated in past lives. Because of this, the moon god is also called Thousand Lights.

What kind of merit accumulates in one’s past? One example is the charity people provide by serving food to *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* or by rescuing people from destitution with food and drink, articles of clothing, perhaps some medicine or transportation on a vehicle, horse, or elephant, or a room to stay in, perhaps in a hotel, or a lamp to see or even mere candlelight. In providing charity, one gives things to others in accordance with their needs, and one should not do it hastily but strive to give what is needed without offending the person, serving in that way as a representative of the saintly disciples who adhere to moral discipline. Thus, because of innumerable causes and conditions related to experiences of delight in the Dharma and illumination by the light of wisdom, one’s mind gradually becomes imbued with a feeling of joy and a spirit of goodness.

147b It is like the *kṣatriya* king whose head is anointed with water when he ascends the throne for the first time, filling his mind with supreme joy and a spirit of goodwill. Upon his death, based on these causes and conditions, he is reborn as the moon god and ascends to the palace of the moon, endowed with an array of one thousand lights. Thus the proverb says, "Good karma results in the acquisition of a thousand lights."

Why is the moon regarded as the lights of past karma? Suppose that people adhere to the precepts, such as refraining from taking life, refraining from taking that which is not given, refraining from sexual misconduct, refraining from prevarication, refraining from abusive speech, refraining from speaking falsehoods, refraining from flattering, refraining from avarice, refraining from anger, and refraining from taking wrong views. Based on their causes and conditions, they may acquire a mind of joyful goodness. It is like a great bathing pond at the crossroads of a highway crossroad: since it is pure and clean, those who have traveled a long distance and who have become extremely tired and thirsty will come to bathe in it and delight in its coolness that brings happiness and joy. It is exactly like the mind of joy and goodness that those who adhere to the ten norms of conduct experience. After death, they are reborn as the moon god and reside in the palace of the moon, endowed with an array of a thousand lights. Because of this, the moon god is called the Thousand Lights resulting from good karma.

Sixty *kṣaṇas* (moments) make up a single *laya*; thirty *layas* make up a single *muhūrta*, and one hundred *muhūrtas* make up a single *upamā*. The palace of the moon god goes through the southern sky for six months, each day proceeding thirty *li*. The most southerly course does not go beyond the limits of the continent of Jambudvīpa. The course of the moon through the northern sky is exactly parallel to its southern course.

Why does the palace of the moon appear to gradually wane? There are three reasons. What are the three? (1) The moon gets out of "Wei."²⁸ This is the first reason that it wanes. (2) Again, there are ministers in the palace of the moon who wear blue garments in proper order, with the garments of each higher position being a deeper blue. Each day, [the number of the ministers in attendance] diminishes, causing it to wane. (3) Again, the palace of the sun illumines the moon's palace with sixty lights. Because of the way light reflects, some portion of the moon does not appear. Since

the moon's appearance depends on the degree of reflection, it wanes. These are the three reasons the moon's light diminishes.

Again, why does the palace of the moon gradually increase? Again, there are three reasons the moon's light increases. What are the three? (1) The moon gradually turns to face us directly. This is the first reason it waxes. (2) All the ministers in the palace of the moon wear blue garments. On the fifteenth day, when the moon god takes his seat at the center to enjoy his meeting with them, his light illumines [the entire palace], outshining the other lunar gods just as a large bonfire [overpowers the light of nearby] candles. This is the second reason it waxes. (3) The sun illumines the moon's palace with sixty lights but on the fifteenth day the moon god illumines his entire palace with his own light, letting no portion fall under a shadow from the sun's illumination. This is the third reason the moon waxes to its full extent.

Again, why does the moon have dark spots? The dark shadows on the moon are caused by shadows cast by Jambu trees.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The mind should be as clean and cool as the heatless moon. When visiting donors' houses your mind must be kept in concentration, so as not to be disturbed. Again, why are there so many great rivers and streams? Temperatures rise because of the sun and moon, and because of their heat, moxa is burned. Burning moxa produces sweat, and from the sweat great rivers and streams are created. Hence there are great rivers and streams in this world.

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Why are there five kinds of seeds in this world? Because a great storm blows seeds to this world from the world where everything is preserved without deterioration, we have (1) roots as seeds, (2) stalks as seeds, (3) nodes as seeds, (4) seeds that are hollow inside, and (5) offspring as seeds. Hence there are five kinds of seed forms in this world.

When it is midday on the continent of Jambudvīpa, the sun is setting on the continent of Pūrvavideha in the east and rising above the continent of [Apara]godānīya in the west, while it is midnight on the continent of Uttarakuru in the north. When it is midday in [Apara]godānīya, the sun is setting in Jambudvīpa and rising in Uttarakuru, while it is midnight in

[Pūrva]videha. When it is midday in Uttarakuru, the sun is setting in [Apara]godānīya and rising in [Pūrva]videha, while it is midnight in Jambudvīpa. When it is midday in [Pūrva]videha, the sun is setting in Uttarakuru and rising in Jambudvīpa, while it is midnight in [Apara]godānīya. Here when Jambudvīpa is in the east [at sunrise], [Pūrva]videha is in the west. If Jambudvīpa is in the west [at sunset], [Pūrva]videha is in the east. If [Apara]godānīya is in the west, Uttarakuru is in the east. If Uttarakuru is in the west, [Apara]godānīya is in the east.

The reason the southern continent is called Jambu[dvīpa] is because there is a large gold mine below ground that is thirty *yojanas* deep. Since there are Jambu trees growing on this continent, the gold there is called *jambu* gold. The fruit of the Jambu tree is like a mushroom and tastes as sweet as honey. Each Jambu tree has five clusters of fruit; four are attached on the four sides of the tree while the fifth is on top. The fruit facing east is eaten by the *gandharva* demigods. The fruit facing south is eaten by the people of the seven countries: (1) Kuru, (2) Kurupa (?), (3) Videha, (4) Śveta (?), (5) Maṇḍa, (6) Bala, and (7) Bali. The fruit facing west is eaten by the creatures of the ocean. The fruit facing north is eaten by birds and animals. The fruit on top is eaten by the gods of the stars and constellations. To the north of the seven countries are seven great dark hills: (1) Luotu, (2) Baihe, (3) Shougong, (4) Xianshan, (5) Gaoshan, (6) Chanshan, and (7) Tushan. On these seven hills live seven *brāhmaṇa* sages and their abodes are called (1) Shanti, (2) Shanguang, (3) Shougong, (4) Xianren, (5) Hegong, (6) Jiana, and (7) Zengyi.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

148a At the outset of the present eon, sentient beings survived by subsisting on a type of mud cake. Those who ate large quantities lost their complexions, while those who ate less retained good complexions. As they began to recognize differences between facial features and complexions, they started to argue about whose was superior, and whose was inferior. “I am superior to you,” they would think. “You do not look like me.” Thus they became aware of differences between themselves and others, and this gave rise to feelings of competition and conflict. As the mud cakes began

to disappear, a new kind of growth in the soil, like a thin rice cake, appeared, and it was fragrant and appetizing.

Since the previous type of food was no longer available, the sentient beings gathered together to beat their breasts and lament, “What a disaster!” This is like people today who enjoy a meal and praise it as good food, and later on, when it is no longer available, they are distressed by the fact that it is no longer available. These cases are exactly alike. The sentient beings refined their taste by eating the new growth in the soil, but those who ate large quantities lost their complexions, while those who ate less retained good complexions. As they began to recognize more differences between facial features and complexions, they argued about whose was superior, and whose was inferior. “I am superior to you,” they thought. “You are not like me.” Thus they became aware of differences between themselves and others, giving rise to feelings of competition and conflict. Then the new food growing in the soil disappeared.

A new kind of product began to grow from the soil, rather thick in appearance but as delicate as a heavenly garment inside, with a color like a celestial lotus blossom and its taste was as sweet as honey. All the sentient beings were able to survive on this food for some length of time, but those who ate large quantities lost their complexions, while those who ate less retained good complexions. Then they began to recognize still more differences between facial features and complexions and features, saying, “I am superior to you” and “You are not like me.” They began to fixate on the differences between themselves and others, accelerating feelings of competition and conflict. Then the new food growing in the soil disappeared.

Again, a form of rice without gluten or chaff began to grow, providing the sentient beings with a new food that could be eaten without seasoning. Still, however, the people gathered together to beat their breasts and lament, “What a disaster!” since the old food could no longer be found. It is like people today who regard as a disaster when a favorite food is no longer available. It is just like that. So the sentient beings began to harvest the new form of rice and subsist on it.

Then their physical forms became coarse and crude, with the advent of male and female sexual organs. Staring at each other, some felt desire

and sought hidden places to engage in sexual intercourse. Observing this, the other sentient beings deplored it: "This is wrong. When we were all born in the same place, how can some of us behave like that?" Seeing their disapproval, the one they condemned regretted his conduct and admitted, "What I have done is wrong." He threw himself to the ground and remained there. [Now] seeing that he would not get up, the woman decided to bring him food. The others asked, "What will you do with this food you have taken?" She replied, "I shall give it to that man who is regretting his fall into wrongdoing." Because of her reply, the term "no-good husband" came into this world, and also the name "wife," from the fact that she brought cooked rice to [the man].

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After that, the sentient beings became increasingly indulgent in sexual behavior, and to hide their conduct they began to build private shelters. Because of this, the term "house" came into use for the first time. Later generations found their sexual desires increasing, and eventually the institution of marriage between husband and wife was introduced. When sentient beings who had exhausted their predispositional forces, merits, and life spans died in Ābhāsvara Heaven, they came to the human world to enter a mother's womb. Because of this, we have the term "fetus" [in which the individual person resides].

The city of Campā was built at that time. Then the city of Vārāṇasī was built in the country of Kāśī. Next, the city of Rājagṛha was built, and it was completed at sunrise. Because of this, we have names for all the cities, towns, villages, and territories the kings ruled.

When the sentient beings of that time harvested rice in the morning for breakfast, the rice grains that remained would ripen again by evening. Even when [the rice] was harvested in the evening, it would be ripe again the next morning, and all the rice would grow without any stalks or stubble.

Then some [lazy] people began to think, "Harvesting rice every day is too much work. Why don't we harvest enough rice for two days?" So they harvested enough to serve two days of meals and put some of it away in storage. Later, when friends would say, "Let us go harvest some rice together," they would reply, "I have already harvested enough for two days. If you wish to go, why don't you go without me?" The friend would then think, "He harvested enough rice for two days and stored the amount

needed. Why don't I harvest and store up enough for three days?" So that man did so, and when another friend came along to ask him to harvest rice together, he replied, "I have already harvested and stored what I need for three days. If you wish to go, why don't you go without me?" That friend also thought, "He has harvested enough rice for three days and stored the amount needed. Why don't I harvest and store enough for five days?" He did so, and soon all the sentient beings were trying to outdo each other in harvesting rice. Thus the rice crop was overharvested and became barren and weed-ridden, and finally it began to produce only husks. Once cut, it would not grow again, leaving only withered stubble.

So the sentient beings gathered together to beat their breasts and lament, "What a series of disasters! Originally, we were superhuman beings, subsisting on thoughts. Our bodies were luminous and we flew through the air and were able to enjoy happiness without any obstacles whatsoever. Then, when food from the ground grew for the first time, we were attracted by its color and taste and we ate it, and it kept us in this world for some time. Those who ate large quantities [of the food], however, saw their skin turn rough and ugly, while those who ate less retained good complexions. This caused us to begin to discriminate between ourselves and others. Those [who appeared handsome] became conceited, saying, 'I am superior to you. Your skin is not like mine.' While we argued about these things our food disappeared.

"New food began to grow, and it was fragrant and pleasing to the eye and had a good taste. We harvested it and continued to survive in this world by subsisting on it. Those who ate large quantities [of the food], however, lost their complexions, while those who ate less retained good complexions. Because of this, some of us became conceited and thought, 'I am superior to you. Your skin is not like mine.' While we argued about these things, the new food disappeared and only something coarse and thick would grow, some of which we could eat, but in much less quantity.

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"We harvested the new food and continued to live. Those who ate too much lost their complexions, while those who ate less retained theirs. Again, we became conceited and thought, 'I am superior to you. Your skin is not like mine.' While we argued about these things the food disappeared. What grew after it was nonglutinous rice that had an attractive

color, scent, and taste. We ate it and began to harvest it. When it was harvested in the morning for breakfast, the remaining rice grains would ripen by evening. When it was harvested in the evening, it would ripen again by morning. The best thing was that it grew without stalks or stubble. But we competed to harvest the crop and put it in storage. Overharvested, the rice became barren and began to form husks. Once cut, it would not grow again, leaving only withered stubble.”

[The sentient beings said to each other,] “Let us divide the land between us.” They created plots belonging to different owners, and once again they began to discriminate between themselves and others. Some began to store their own rice and to steal crops from fields belonging to others. Observing this behavior, the others deplored it: “What you have done is wrong. Since you have your own land, how can you steal crops from the others?” Having reprimanded such a person, they warned him, “You must never do it again.” Yet they could not leave the scandal of the theft behind. Again, they reprimanded the thief, “Your conduct is wrong. You must stop it.” Then they beat him with their fists and with a cane. Then they led him out before an audience and said, “This man, while putting his own rice away, has stolen it from fields belonging to others.” The accused shouted back, “They struck me!”

Distressed, the audience beat their breasts and said, “Sentient beings have become morally degenerate. Because of these crimes, turmoil and filth have afflicted this society. This is why we suffer from birth, old age, illness, and death, and why we have fallen into the three evil courses of life. These disputes arose because the land was divided into separate parcels and because of disagreements over the boundaries. Now, since there is so much animosity between us, none of the disputes can be resolved. We should select a leader [and let him deal with the disputes]. He will protect those worthy of protection, commend those worthy of praise, and punish those in need of punishment. Each member of the community must advance a portion of their rice harvest in payment for the services the appointed person will undertake to deal with our disputes.”

So they chose a person who was tall and physically impressive, handsome, and who carried an aura of authority. They said to him, “We want you to become our elected leader to protect those in need of protection,

commend those worthy of praise, and also to punish those who should be punished. Each of us will collect a portion of our rice harvest to make up your stipend.” Then the person chosen by the community assumed the role of chieftain and began to dispense praise to those worthy of praise and punishment to those in need of punishment. Thus the word *nāyaka* (“people’s guide”) came into being.

In the beginning, the leader Mahāsammata had a son, Ratna by name; Ratna had a son, Surasa by name; Surasa had a son, Jingji by name; Jingji had a son, Sucarita by name; Sucarita had a son, Zhexing by name; Zhexing had a son, Míami by name; Míami had a son, Miti by name; Miti had a son, Shuixian by name; Shuixian had a son, Śatajña by name; Śatajña had a son, Shiyü by name; Shiyü had a son, Shanyü by name; Shanyü had a son, Duanjie by name; Duanjie had a son, Daduanjie by name; Daduanjie had a son, Ratnākara by name; Ratnākara had a son, Mahāratnākara by name; Mahāratnākara had a son, Sudarśana by name; Sudarśana had a son, Mahāsudarśana by name; Mahāsudarśana had a son, Aśoka by name; Aśoka had a son, Zhouzhu by name; Zhouzhu had a son, Zhisheng by name; Zhisheng had a son, Shanyue by name; Shanyue had a son, Shentian by name; Shentian had a son, Yili by name; Yili had a son, Dṛṣharatha (Laoche) by name; Dṛṣharatha had a son, Daśaratha by name; Daśaratha had a son, Śataratha by name; Śataratha had a son, Dṛṣhadhanu by name; Dṛṣhadhanu had a son, Śatadhanu by name; Śatadhanu had a son, Yangmu by name; Yangmu had a son, Shansi by name.

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From Shansi descended ten tribal clans ruled by *cakravartins* in succession without any gap. The names of the ten clans were (1) Kaṇṇagoccha, (2) Doluopo, (3) Aśvajit, (4) Gandhāra, (5) Kaliṅga, (6) Campā, (7) Kaurava, (8) Pañcāla, (9) Mithila, and (10) Ikṣvāku. From King Kaṇṇagoccha five *cakravartins* descended; from King Doluopo five *cakravartins* also descended; from King Aśvajit seven *cakravartins* descended; from King Gandhāra seven *cakravartins* also descended; from King Kaliṅga nine *cakravartins* descended; from King Campā fourteen *cakravartins* descended; from King Kaurava thirty-one *cakravartins* descended; from King Pañcāla thirty-two *cakravartins* descended; from King Mithila eighty-four *cakravartins* descended; and from King Ikṣvāku one hundred and one *cakravartins* descended. The last king was named Anumahā Sujāta

149b (Dashan Shengzong). King Ikṣvāku had a son, Wuluopo by name; King Wuluopo had a son, Kula (Quluo) by name; King Kula had a son, Nikula (Niquluo) by name; this King Nikula had a son, Siṃhahanu by name; King Siṃhahanu had a son, Śuddhodana by name; King Śuddhodana had a son, Bodhisattva (i.e., the Buddha) by name; this Bodhisattva had a son, Rāhula by name. On the basis of the foregoing genealogy, the name *kṣatriya* came into being.

Once, a sentient being said to himself, “Myriad living species have all been afflicted by thorns and infections. I should now forsake all domestic concerns to go off into the mountains to practice meditation.” So he renounced his domestic life, went into the mountains, and practiced meditation, sheltered under various trees, and every day he went into a village for alms. When the villagers saw him they willingly offered food out of respect, and he praised their good conduct. The fact that this man renounced his domestic ties and sought to follow the path by entering the mountains meant that he was freed from involvement in wrong and evil actions. Because of this, he could be called *brāhmaṇa*.

Some *brāhmaṇas* were unable to continue practicing meditation. They came out of the mountains and traveled among human communities, claiming, “I cannot practice meditation.” They called themselves “*brāhmaṇas* without the practice of meditation.” They came down to villages, got involved in wrong practices, and engaged in activities inconsistent with their original aspiration. Because of this, their means of livelihood may be termed “poisonous.” For this reason, a class of *brāhmaṇas* came into being in society who depend on various means of livelihood and make their living among sentient beings. For similar reasons, a social class of householders (*vaiśya*) came into being who learn different arts and skills and in that way make their living among sentient beings. For similar reasons, a social class of those in servitude (*śūdra*) came into being.

Śramaṇa practitioners came into being after the appearance of the Śākya clan in society. Originally a *kṣatriya*, one of them thought to himself, “All worldly love and affection in this society is inevitably defiled and unclean. Why should I be attached to this kind of relationship? I will renounce domestic life, shave my hair and beard, don mendicant robes, and seek the path of religion. I am a *śramaṇa*, I am a *śramaṇa*!” [Now]

among the *brāhmaṇas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras*, some thought to themselves, “All worldly love and affection in this society is inevitably defiled and unclean. Why should I be attached to this kind of relationship? I will renounce domestic life, shave my hair and beard, don mendicant robes, and seek the path of religion. I am a *śramaṇa*, I am a *śramaṇa*!”

If a *kṣatriya* commits wrongful actions in mind, speech, or conduct, he receives appropriate retribution when his body dissolves and his life comes to an end. If *brāhmaṇas*, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras* commit wrongful actions in mind, speech, or conduct, they likewise receive appropriate retribution when their bodies dissolve and their lives end. On the other hand, if a *kṣatriya* adheres to the norms of conduct and does good in mind, speech, or physical action, he is rewarded with absolute happiness when his body dissolves and his life comes to an end. Likewise, if *brāhmaṇas*, *vaiśyas*, or *śūdras* adhere to the norms of conduct and do good in thought, speech, or physical action, they are rewarded with absolute happiness when their bodies dissolve and their lives end. If a *kṣatriya* commits both good and bad actions in mind, speech, or conduct, he receives appropriate retribution when his body dissolves and his life comes to an end. Likewise, if *brāhmaṇas*, *vaiśyas*, or *śūdras* commit both good and bad actions in mind, speech, or conduct they receive appropriate retribution when their bodies dissolve and their lives come to an end.

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If a *kṣatriya* shaves his hair and beard, dons the three mendicant robes, renounces domestic life, and practices the seven auxiliary disciplines in order to seek the path of religion, and if his faith and determination are firm, he should be able to transcend worldly matters, maintain the unsurpassed practice of austerity, and directly experience in this life that the cause of birth and death has been exhausted; the practice of austerity has been accomplished; that which must be done [for religious salvation] has been accomplished; and there is no more birth to suffer ever again. Likewise, if one from the *brāhmaṇa*, *vaiśya*, or *śūdra* classes shaves his hair and beard, dons the three mendicant robes, renounces domestic life, and practices the sevenfold auxiliary disciplines in order to seek the path of religion, and if his faith and determination are firm, he should be able to transcend worldly matters, maintain the unsurpassed practice of austerity, and directly experience in this life that the cause of birth and death has

been exhausted; the practice of austerity has been accomplished; that which must be done [for religious salvation] has been accomplished; and there is no more birth to suffer ever again.

Among the four classes of society, those who have perfected themselves with harmonious practice and insight and realized the state of arhatship (total liberation from attachment) are supreme. At that moment, the god Brahmā utters the following verse:

One born in the *kṣatriya* family is highest,
He can assemble all the races for the practice of religion,
Having perfected himself with harmonious practice and insight,
He is the highest among humans and gods.

The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*:

The god Brahmā has well uttered this verse. It is not said wrongly but is appropriate. His understanding is not wrong but is good. I approve his statement. Why? Because I also utter the same verse as the Tathāgata, totally liberated from defilement and perfectly enlightened:

One born in the *kṣatriya* family is highest,
He can assemble all the classes for the practice of religion.
Having perfected himself with harmonious practice and insight,
He is the highest among humans and gods.

Then, having heard the Buddha's teaching, the *bhikṣus* were delighted to receive it and reverentially carried out what the Buddha taught.

The *Canonical Book of Lengthy Discourses* has been completed in assemblage. Homage to the Omniscient [One]. May all beings abide in peace and happiness. Let all sentient beings abide in the state of transcendence, and may I myself also be in that realm with them.

[End of Sutra 30: Buddhist Cosmology]

Notes

- ¹ Étienne Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism from the Origins to the Śaka Era*, trans. Sara Webb-Boin (Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1988), p. 272.
- ² The ninefold or twelfefold categories of scriptures in which the Buddha's discourses were grouped as an aid for memorization. The Tripiṭaka categories of Sutra, Vinaya, and Abhidharma were a later development.
- ³ Cf. *Dīpavaṃsa* VII, 34–43; *Mahāvāṃsa* V, 267–282.
- ⁴ The *Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣā-śāstra*; the Sanskrit original is lost, and there is no Tibetan translation of this text. There is a Chinese translation by Xuanzang, the *Apidamo da pibosha lun* in two hundred fascicles (Taishō 1545). Xuanzang concludes his epilogue: “Four hundred years after [the Buddha's] nirvana, King Kaniṣka called an assembly of five hundred arhats and Kāśmīri Tripiṭaka masters to discuss the analyses of Abhidharma study.” Canonical revision was accomplished on all three divisions in chapter 3 of Xuanzang's *Xi you ji* (*Record of the Western Regions*, Taishō 2087); see Lamotte, *History of Indian Buddhism*, p. 586. An English translation of Xuanzang's text by Li Rongxi is published under the title *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions* (Moraga, CA: BDK America, 2016, reprint.).
- ⁵ According to Satis Chandra Vidyabhusana, in his renowned work *A History of Indian Logic: Ancient, Mediaeval, and Modern Schools* (Calcutta: Calcutta University Press, 1931), pp. 49–50; p. 49, n. 2, the Hindu literary works, the *Purāṇas* and *Śāstras*, were compiled by the *brāhmaṇa* assemblies in the region of Vidarbha under the leadership of Jātūkarṇya Vyāsa. This movement was inspired by the Fourth Buddhist Council that had been held in Kāśmīra half a century earlier.
- ⁶ See Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1953), esp. Ch. 1, Introduction.
- ⁷ Chizen Akanuma, *Kanpashibushi agon goshōroku* (*The Comparative Catalogue of Chinese Āgamas and Pāli Nikāyas*) (Nagoya: Hajinkaku-shobō, 1929), pp. 3–6.
- ⁸ The missing seven texts are: DN 6, *Mahālī Suttanta*; DN 7, *Jāliya Suttanta*; DN 10, *Subha Suttanta*; DN 22, *Mahā-Satīpaṭṭhāna Suttanta*; DN 30, *Lakkhaṇa Suttanta*; and DN 32, *Āṭṭhāṇiya Suttanta*; and “The Sutra on Buddhist Cosmology,” not found in the *Dīgha Nikāya* (Sutra 30 in this volume).
- ⁹ See Kaijō Ishikawa, *Agon-kyō seiritsu no kenkyū* (*A Study on the Establishment of Āgama Sūtras*) (Tokyo: Gendai-sha, 1982), especially the Conclusion, pp. 246–247.
- ¹⁰ Kumārajīva had been the king's counselor in his native land, Kuccha. General Lüguang destroyed the state in 383 C.E. and brought Kumārajīva as a captive to the neighboring

city of Liangzhou. In 401 Kumārajīva was invited to Chang'an to serve as the religious counselor to Yaoxing.

- ¹¹ Genmyō Ono, et al., eds., *Bussho kaisetsu daijiten (The Expository Dictionary of Buddhist Texts in the Chinese Tripiṭaka Collection)* (Tokyo: Daitō Shuppansha, 1933), Fascicle 6, pp. 45–46.
- ¹² Faxian left Chang'an with a few co-travelers in 399 and returned alone by the sea route in 413, bringing with him copies of the *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya*, the *Samyukta Āgama*, and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, among other texts.
- ¹³ The section of doctrinal commentaries: vols. 33–39; the section of Vinaya commentaries, vol. 40; the section of treatise commentaries, partially sectarian: vols. 41–44; the section of Chinese and Japanese sectarian schools, vols. 45–48; the section of historical traditions, vols. 49–52; the section of incidental and non-Buddhist texts, vols. 53–54 (which comprises both); and the section of textual catalogues, vol. 55.
- ¹⁴ T. W. and C. A. F. Rhys Davids, *The Dialogues of the Buddha*, 3 vols. (London: Pali Text Society, 1899, 1910, 1921).
- ¹⁵ King Bimbisāra of Magadha in the Pāli text.
- ¹⁶ The five kinds of defilement are belief in a self, attachment to practices and observances other than those approved by the Buddha, doubt, sexual desire, and malice.
- ¹⁷ Videha (Pāli: Vaidehī) was the queen of King Ajātaśatru's father, Bimbisāra (Skt. Vidmīśāra).
- ¹⁸ Maskarin Gośālīputra: Pāli Makkhali-gośāla.
- ¹⁹ "That affair" refers to King Ajātaśatru's patricide of his father, King Bimbisāra.
- ²⁰ The three kinds of supernormal knowledge are that derived from knowledge of past lives, from supernormal vision, and from awareness of total freedom from defilements.
- ²¹ Vidmīśāra is Sanskrit for the Pāli Bimbisāra.
- ²² I.e., the five fundamental precepts undertaken by all Buddhists on entering the path.
- ²³ A *yojana* is an ancient Indian unit of measuring distance, roughly equal to seven miles.
- ²⁴ A *xin* is a Chinese unit of measure roughly equal to eight feet.
- ²⁵ A *li* is a Chinese unit of measure roughly equal to one-quarter mile.
- ²⁶ A *youyingdao* is an oil-coated blade or knife.
- ²⁷ A *hu* is a Chinese unit of measure roughly equivalent to a bushel (about eighty pounds of grain).
- ²⁸ "The moon gets out of 'Wei'" means that the moon appears to grow smaller, i.e., a waning moon.

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BDK English Tripiṭaka (First Series)

Abbreviations

<i>Ch.</i> :	Chinese
<i>Skt.</i> :	Sanskrit
<i>Jp.</i> :	Japanese
<i>Eng.</i> :	Published title

Title	Taishō No.
Ch. Chang ahan jing (長阿含經)	1
Skt. Dīrghāgama	
Eng. <i>The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses</i> (Volume I, 2015)	
<i>The Canonical Book of the Buddha's Lengthy Discourses</i> (Volume II, 2016)	
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Ch. Shoulengyan sanmei jing (首楞嚴三昧經) Skt. Śūraṅgamasamādhi-sutra Eng. <i>The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sutra</i> (1998)	642
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Ch. Yulanpen jing (盂蘭盆經) Skt. *Ullambana-sutra Eng. <i>The Ullambana Sutra</i> (in <i>Apocryphal Scriptures</i> , 2005)	685
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Ch. Dafanguang yuanjue xiuduoluo liaoyi jing (大方廣圓覺修多羅了義經) Eng. <i>The Sutra of Perfect Enlightenment</i> (in <i>Apocryphal Scriptures</i> , 2005)	842
Ch. Da Biluzhena chengfo shenbian jiachi jing (大毘盧遮那成佛神變加持經) Skt. Mahāvairocanaḥhisambodhi-vikurvitādhiṣṭhāna-vaipulyasūtreन्द्रa- rājanāma-dharmaparyāya Eng. <i>The Vairocanaḥhisambodhi Sutra</i> (2005)	848
Ch. Jingganding yiqie rulai zhenshi she dasheng xianzheng dajiao wang jing (金剛頂一切如來真實攝大乘現證大教王經) Skt. Sarvatathāgata-tattvasaṃgraha-mahāyānā-bhisamaya-mahākālparāja Eng. <i>The Adamantine Pinnacle Sutra</i> (in <i>Two Esoteric Sutras</i> , 2001)	865
Ch. Suxidi jieluo jing (蘇悉地羯囉經) Skt. Susiddhikara-mahātantra-sādhanaopāyika-ṭaḥala Eng. <i>The Susiddhikara Sutra</i> (in <i>Two Esoteric Sutras</i> , 2001)	893
Ch. Modengqie jing (摩登伽經) Skt. *Mātāṅgī-sutra Eng. <i>The Mātāṅga Sutra</i> (in <i>Esoteric Texts</i> , 2015)	1300

Title	Taishō No.
Ch. Mohe sengqi lü (摩訶僧祇律) Skt. *Mahāsāṃghika-vinaya	1425
Ch. Sifen lü (四分律) Skt. *Dharmaguptaka-vinaya	1428
Ch. Shanjianlü piposha (善見律毘婆沙) Pāli Samantapāsādikā	1462
Ch. Fanwang jing (梵網經) Skt. *Brahmajāla-sutra Eng. <i>The Brahmā's Net Sutra</i> (2017)	1484
Ch. Youposaijie jing (優婆塞戒經) Skt. Upāsakaśīla-sutra Eng. <i>The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts</i> (1994)	1488
Ch. Miaofa lianhua jing youbotishe (妙法蓮華經憂波提舍) Skt. Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-upadeśa Eng. <i>The Commentary on the Lotus Sutra</i> (in <i>Tiantai Lotus Texts</i> , 2013)	1519
Ch. Shizha biposha lun (十住毘婆沙論) Skt. *Daśabhūmika-vibhāṣā	1521
Ch. Fodijing lun (佛地經論) Skt. *Buddhabhūmisutra-śāstra Eng. <i>The Interpretation of the Buddha Land</i> (2002)	1530
Ch. Apidamojushe lun (阿毘達磨俱舍論) Skt. Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya	1558
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Ch. Yüqie shidilun (瑜伽師地論) Skt. Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra	1579
Ch. Cheng weishi lun (成唯識論) Eng. <i>Demonstration of Consciousness Only</i> (in <i>Three Texts on Consciousness Only</i> , 1999)	1585
Ch. Weishi sanshilun song (唯識三十論頌) Skt. Triṃśikā Eng. <i>The Thirty Verses on Consciousness Only</i> (in <i>Three Texts on Consciousness Only</i> , 1999)	1586

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Ch. Weishi ershi lun (唯識二十論) Skt. Viṃśatikā Eng. <i>The Treatise in Twenty Verses on Consciousness Only</i> (in <i>Three Texts on Consciousness Only</i> , 1999)	1590
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Ch. Bian zhongbian lun (辯中邊論) Skt. Madhyāntavibhāga	1600
Ch. Dasheng zhuangyanjing lun (大乘莊嚴經論) Skt. Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra	1604
Ch. Dasheng chengye lun (大乘成業論) Skt. Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa Eng. <i>A Mahayana Demonstration on the Theme of Action</i> (in <i>Three Short Treatises by Vasubandhu, Sengzhao, and Zongmi</i> , 2017)	1609
Ch. Jiuqing yisheng baoxing lun (究竟一乘寶性論) Skt. Ratnagotravibhāga-mahāyānottaratantra-śāstra	1611
Ch. Yinming ruzheng li lun (因明入正理論) Skt. Nyāyapraveśa	1630
Ch. Dasheng ji pusa xue lun (大乘集菩薩學論) Skt. Śikṣāsamuccaya	1636
Ch. Jingangzhen lun (金剛針論) Skt. Vajrasūcī	1642
Ch. Zhang suozhi lun (彰所知論) Eng. <i>The Treatise on the Elucidation of the Knowable</i> (2004)	1645
Ch. Putixing jing (菩提行經) Skt. Bodhicaryāvatāra	1662
Ch. Jingangding yuqie zhongfa anouduoluo sanmiao sanputi xin lun (金剛頂瑜伽中發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心論) Eng. <i>The Bodhicitta Śāstra</i> (in <i>Esoteric Texts</i> , 2015)	1665
Ch. Dasheng qixin lun (大乘起信論) Skt. *Mahāyānaśraddhotpāda-śāstra Eng. <i>The Awakening of Faith</i> (2005)	1666

Title	Taishō No.
Ch. Shimoheyan lun (釋摩訶衍論)	1668
Ch. Naxian biqiu jing (那先比丘經)	1670
Pāli Milindapañhā	
Ch. Banruo boluomiduo xin jing yuzan (般若波羅蜜多心經幽贊)	1710
Eng. <i>A Comprehensive Commentary on the Heart Sutra</i> (<i>Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sutra</i>) (2001)	
Ch. Miaofalianhua jing xuanyi (妙法蓮華經玄義)	1716
Ch. Guan wuliangshou fo jing shu (觀無量壽佛經疏)	1753
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Ch. Dasheng xuan lun (大乘玄論)	1853
Ch. Zhao lun (肇論)	1858
Eng. <i>Essays of Sengzhao</i> (in <i>Three Short Treatises by Vasubandhu, Sengzhao, and Zongmi</i> , 2017)	
Ch. Huayan yisheng jiaoyi fenqi zhang (華嚴一乘教義分齊章)	1866
Ch. Yuanren lun (原人論)	1886
Eng. <i>Treatise on the Origin of Humanity</i> (in <i>Three Short Treatises by Vasubandhu, Sengzhao, and Zongmi</i> , 2017)	
Ch. Mohe zhiguan (摩訶止觀)	1911
Ch. Xiuxi zhiguan zuochan fayao (修習止觀坐禪法要)	1915
Ch. Tiantai sijiao yi (天台四教儀)	1931
Eng. <i>A Guide to the Tiantai Fourfold Teachings</i> (in <i>Tiantai Lotus Texts</i> , 2013)	
Ch. Guoqing bai lu (國清百錄)	1934
Ch. Zhenzhou Linji Huizhao chanshi wulu (鎮州臨濟慧照禪師語錄)	1985
Eng. <i>The Recorded Sayings of Linji</i> (in <i>Three Chan Classics</i> , 1999)	
Ch. Foguo Yuanwu chanshi biyan lu (佛果圓悟禪師碧巖錄)	2003
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Ch. Wumen guan (無門關)	2005
Eng. <i>Women's Gate</i> (in <i>Three Chan Classics</i> , 1999)	
Ch. Liuzu dashi fabao tan jing (六祖大師法寶壇經)	2008
Eng. <i>The Platform Sutra of the Sixth Patriarch</i> (2000)	

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Ch. Xinxin ming (信心銘) Eng. <i>The Faith-Mind Maxim</i> (in <i>Three Chan Classics</i> , 1999)	2010
Ch. Huangboshan Duanji chanshi chuanxin fayao (黃檗山斷際禪師傳心法要) Eng. <i>Essentials of the Transmission of Mind</i> (in <i>Zen Texts</i> , 2005)	2012A
Ch. Yongjia Zhengdao ge (永嘉證道歌)	2014
Ch. Chixiu Baizhang qinggui (勅修百丈清規) Eng. <i>The Baizhang Zen Monastic Regulations</i> (2007)	2025
Ch. Yibuzonglun lun (異部宗輪論) Skt. Samayabhedoparacanacakra Eng. <i>The Cycle of the Formation of the Schismatic Doctrines</i> (2004)	2031
Ch. Ayuwang jing (阿育王經) Skt. Aśokāvadāna Eng. <i>The Biographical Scripture of King Aśoka</i> (1993)	2043
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Ch. Posoupandou fashi zhuan (婆藪槃豆法師傳) Eng. <i>Biography of Dharma Master Vasubandhu</i> (in <i>Lives of Great Monks and Nuns</i> , 2002)	2049
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Ch. Gaoseng zhuan (高僧傳)	2059
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Ch. Datang xiyu ji (大唐西域記) Eng. <i>The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions</i> (1996)	2087
Ch. Youfangjichao: Tangdaheshangdongzheng zhuan (遊方記抄: 唐大和上東征傳)	2089-(7)
Ch. Hongming ji (弘明集) Eng. <i>The Collection for the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism</i> (Volume I, 2015) <i>The Collection for the Propagation and Clarification of Buddhism</i> (Volume II, 2017)	2102
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Ch. Fanyu zaming (梵語雜名)	2135
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Jp. Risshū kōyō (律宗綱要) Eng. <i>The Essentials of the Vinaya Tradition</i> (1995)	2348
Jp. Tendai hokke shūgi shū (天台法華宗義集) Eng. <i>The Collected Teachings of the Tendai Lotus School</i> (1995)	2366
Jp. Kenkairon (顯戒論)	2376
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