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**THE STOREHOUSE OF
SUNDRY VALUABLES**



BDK English Tripiṭaka 10-I

**THE STOREHOUSE OF
SUNDRY VALUABLES**

Translated from the Chinese of Kikkāya
and Liu Hsiao-piao (Compiled by T'an-yao)

(Taishō, Volume 4, Number 203)

by

Charles Willemen

**Numata Center
for Buddhist Translation and Research
1994**

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A Message on the Publication of the English Tripitaka

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,

Message

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.

August 7, 1991

NUMATA Yehan
Founder of the English
Tripiṭaka Project

Editorial Foreword

In January, 1982, Mr. NUMATA Yehan, the founder of the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), decided to begin the monumental task of the complete translation of the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon into the English language. Under his leadership, a special preparatory committee was organized in April, 1982, and by July of the same year the Translation Committee of the English Tripiṭaka (Scriptures) was officially convened.

The initial Committee consisted of the following thirteen members: HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairman); BANDŌ Shōjun; ISHIGAMI Zennō; KAMATA Shigeo; KANAOKA Shūyū; MAYEDA Sengaku; NARA Yasuaki; SAYEKI Shinkō; (late) SHIOIRI Ryōtatsu; TAMARU Noriyoshi; (late) TAMURA Kwansei; 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.

Holding planning meetings on a monthly basis, the Committee has selected one hundred thirty-nine scriptures and texts for the First Series of translations, an estimated one hundred printed volumes in all. Scriptures and texts selected are not necessarily limited to those originally written in India but also include works written or composed in China or Japan. All the volumes in the First Series are scheduled for publication within the twentieth century. While the publication of the First Series proceeds, the scriptures and texts for the Second Series, which is expected to be published in the following ten- or twenty-year period, will be selected from among the remaining works; this process will continue until all the scriptures and texts, in Japanese as well as in Chinese, have been published.

Frankly speaking, it will take perhaps one hundred years or more to accomplish the English translation of the complete

Chinese and Japanese scriptures and texts, which consist of thousands of works. Nevertheless, as Mr. NUMATA wished, it is the sincere hope of the Committee that this project will continue unto completion, even after all its present members have passed away.

It must be mentioned here that the final object of this project is not academic fulfillment but the transmission of the teaching of the Buddha to the whole world in order to create harmony and peace among mankind.

More than eighty Buddhist scholars in the West and in the East, all well qualified to be translators of the Chinese and Japanese scriptures and texts, have agreed to translate certain selected works. It is really a great pleasure for the Committee to announce that more than forty-five translations have already been received as of the end of September, 1992.

The present members of the Translation Committee of the BDK English Tripiṭaka are HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairman); BANDŌ Shōjun; ISHIGAMI Zennō; ICHISHIMA Shōshin; KAMATA Shigeo; KANAOKA Shūyū; MAYEDA Sengaku; NARA Yasuaki; SAYEKI Shinkō; TAMARU Noriyoshi; URYŪZU Ryūshin; and YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members are WATANABE Shōgo and SUZUKI Kōshin.

Commemorating the ninety-fourth birthday of Mr. NUMATA Yehan, the Committee published the following three texts in a limited edition in April, 1991:

- (1) *The Lotus Sutra* (Taishō No. 262)
- (2) *The Sutra on Upāsaka Precepts* (Taishō No. 1488)
- (3) *The Summary of the Great Vehicle* (Taishō No. 1593)

In December, 1991, the Publication Committee headed by Prof. Philip Yampolsky was organized. New editions of the above volumes and the remaining texts will be published under the supervision of this Committee.

HANAYAMA Shōyū
Chairman
Translation Committee of
the BDK English Tripiṭaka

September 10, 1992

Publisher's Foreword

It was in December, 1991, at the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research in Berkeley, California, that a publication committee was established for the purpose of seeing into print the translations of the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist works in the BDK English Tripiṭaka Series. This committee will perform the duties of copyediting, formatting, proofreading, indexing, consulting with the translators on questionable passages, and so on—the routine duties of any publishing house. Represented on the committee are specialists in Sanskrit, Chinese, and Japanese, who will attempt to ensure that fidelity to the texts is maintained.

This Publication Committee is dedicated to the production of lucid and readable works that will do justice to the vision of Mr. NUMATA Yehan in his desire to make available to Western readers the major works of the Chinese and Japanese Buddhist canon.

“Taishō” refers to the *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* (Newly Revised Tripiṭaka Inaugurated in the Taishō Era), which was published during the period from 1924 to 1934. This consists of one hundred volumes, in which as many as 3,360 scriptures in both Chinese and Japanese are included. This edition is acknowledged to be the most complete Tripiṭaka of the Northern tradition of Buddhism ever published in the Chinese and Japanese languages.

The series number on the spine and title page of each volume will correspond to the number assigned to the work by the Translation Committee of the BDK English Tripiṭaka in Tokyo. A list of the volume numbers is appended at the end of the text. For the convenience of scholars who may wish to turn to the original texts, Taishō page and column numbers are provided in the left-hand margins of each volume. No attempt will be made to standardize

Publisher's Foreword

the English translations of Buddhist technical terms; these are left to the discretion of the individual translators.

Those participating in the work of this committee are Diane Ames, William Ames, Brian Galloway, David Hall, Nobuo Haneda, and Rev. Kiyoshi S. Yamashita.

September 10, 1992

Philip Yampolsky
Chairman
Publication Committee

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Translator's Introduction

This text, the *Tsa-pao-tsang-ching*, is dated Yen-hsing 2 (A.D. 472); it contains 121 parables or stories (Skt. *avadāna*). It was compiled in China, near the Northern Wei capital of P'ing-ch'eng. Based on Indian materials, the text was compiled and composed by the chief monk T'an-yao and translated by Kikkāya (Chi Chia-yeh) and Liu Hsiao-piao.

Title of the Text

There is no Indian original of the complete text, but many stories have parallels in Sanskrit or Pali. A Sanskrit translation of the Chinese title would be *Kṣudraka (tsa) piṭaka (pao-tsang)*. Minor texts, such as *avadānas*, *jātakas* (birth stories), and so on, may be included in a fifth *āgama*, the *Kṣudrakāgama* or *Kṣudrakapiṭaka*. This seems to have been the case in the canon of the Dharmaguptaka school. The Sarvāstivāda school had a fourth *piṭaka* called the *Kṣudrakapiṭaka*. Its contents may have been the Buddha's teaching in twelve divisions, containing such divisions as *avadāna*, *jātaka*, *gāthā*, and so on. Both schools had equally popular *vinayas* (monastic rules) in China in the fifth century. The content of our text resembles the content of a *Kṣudrakapiṭaka*. It is certainly not a complete *Kṣudrakapiṭaka*, but it bears all the marks of a text in a *Kṣudrakapiṭaka*.

The Authors

The initiative for the translation and the arranging of the Indian material that forms our text came from T'an-yao. The translators were Kikkāya and Liu Hsiao-piao.

Kikkāya came from the Western Region (west of Tun-huang). He is also said to have come from Hsi-t'ien or T'ien-chu, India in the West. He may have come from Gandhāra (Gandhavati), Kaśmīr, or Bactria, since the Indian materials he used point to this region. The Chinese translation of his name is Ho-shih, which would correspond to Skt. Kimkārya. In the Taishō five texts are ascribed to him: Nos. 203, 308, 434, 1632, and 2058.

T'an-yao may have lived in Liang-chou, called Ku-tsang, during the period of the Northern Liang (397-439), a dynasty that ruled over Tun-huang, the gateway to the regions west of China. When the Wei emperor Wu conquered the Northern Liang, he moved about three thousand monks to his capital P'ing-ch'eng, near present-day Ta-t'ung in Shan-hsi Province. T'an-yao may have been one of them. In 446, Emperor Wu persecuted Buddhism, ordering that all monks be killed. T'an-yao survived and was eventually appointed chief monk under Emperor Wen-ch'eng (452-465), who protected Buddhism. T'an-yao remained as chief monk until about 490. He also played a crucial role in the construction of the Yün-kang caves and temples. This project took shape during the early years of the Emperor Hsiao-wen (471-499), when our text was composed. T'an-yao solved the problem of relations between the Buddhist community and the emperor, who was now considered to be the Tathāgata. It may also be mentioned that T'an-yao is said to have been a follower of meditation practices. It is known that meditation practices relied heavily on Sarvāstivāda scholasticism. Fei Ch'ang-fang's *Li-tai-san-pao-chi* (597) uses the word "again" to qualify the translation of our text, which suggests that this was not the first translation. This is certainly true for a number of the stories. Kikkāya himself may have started translating some of them before our text was actually organized.

Structure of the Text

The Taishō edition of the text comprises ten *chüan*; each *chüan* has been made into a chapter in this book. The so-called Three

Editions contain eight *chüan*. The text consists of parables numbered 1 to 121. There are about ten manuscripts from Tun-huang that contain parts of our text; for instance, the Chinese Tun-huang manuscript kept at Ōtani University in Kyōto contains parables 117–121, although they are not numbered in that manuscript. Chapters 1 and 2 are about filial piety, thus providing an ideal opening for a Chinese text. Chapter 3 is about slander. This may be because there had recently been a wave of persecutions when the compilation or translation was being made. Chapters 4–7, or *chüan* 4–6 in the Three Editions, are about liberality and the giving of alms, a necessity especially when the Yün-kang temples were being built. Chapters 8–10, or Three Editions *chüan* 7 and 8, teach us about instructing and converting. The final parables (118–121) warn against cheating and strife.

Materials Used

The opening parable is about King Daśaratha, who is supposed to have been an ancestor of Śākyamuni, the Tathāgata.

It is striking that many parables are set in Gandhāra and Kāśmīr. Kaniṣka (ca. 128–151) and Puruṣapura occur in parables 93 and 94. Nāgasena and King Menandros (ca. 163–150 B.C.) converse in 111. Vasubandhu of the *Abhidharmakośa* appears to have been familiar with this particular version of the well-known encounter. Parable 25, about the gelded bulls, is set in the time of Kaniṣka, as the *Mahāvibhāṣā* informs us. Āṭavaka (parable 97) is well known from Gandhāran images; and the Chinese may have had a special reason for including the story, in which King Bimbisāra of Magadha pardoned five hundred bandits who agreed to work for the Buddhist community; T'an-yao organized Buddha-households in the same way using criminals and slaves. Kaniṣka's physician, Caraka, is mentioned in 94. We know that the use of mantras (spells) was well represented in the medical practice of the time. This can be seen in 75, which tells of curing eye diseases with a spell. Many more parables are set in Gandhāra, such as 45

and 42, in which Khāṇu arranges for food. Finally there are some well-known texts among the 121, such as the *Śakrapraśnasūtra* (72) and the story of King Udayana (116).

Doctrinal Affiliation

The Hinayana or "lesser vehicle," especially the Sarvāstivāda, was popular in Gandhāra and Kaśmīr during and after Kanīṣka. Whenever doctrinal points are raised, one can find them and their context in e.g. the *Abhidharmahṛdayaśāstra* (*A-p'i-t'an-hsin-lun*), Taishō No. 1550. This is the case for 114, where the path of development (*bhāvanāmārga*) and the four fruitions of the *śramaṇa* (*śrāmaṇyaphala*) are mentioned. The Sarvāstivādins claimed to go back to Rāhula, the Buddha's son, and his story is given as 117. More than once one can read a stanza that comes from the *Udānavarga*, the Sarvāstivāda *Dharmapada*, as in 37 (Uv. XIII 1) and 49 (Uv. I 1).

In this translation, the titles of the parables as given at the beginning of each chapter do not always agree exactly with the titles of the parables in the text. These inconsistencies are in the Chinese and have been reproduced here. A few names have been left in Chinese because their Sanskrit originals are unknown.

Chapter I

- Parable 1: King Daśaratha
Parable 2: The Prince Who Saved His Parents with His
Own Flesh
Parable 3: The Little Parrot That Supported Its Blind
Parents
Parable 4: The Country Called Rejection-of-the-Aged
Parable 5: The Buddha Expounds the Doctrine to His
Mother Māyā in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven
Parable 6: The Buddha's Explanation about His Former
Mother Kacaṅgalā
Parable 7: Maitrakanyaka
Parable 8: The Lady Padmāvati
Parable 9: The Lady Mṛgāṅkavati

Parable 1: King Daśaratha

Long ago, when people lived ten thousand years, there was a king called Daśaratha who was the ruler of Jambudvīpa. The king's principal wife bore him a son called Rāma. His second wife had a son called Lakṣmaṇa. Crown Prince Rāma, who had the power of Nārāyaṇa, was very brave. He also had *candra* (splendor). Hearing his voice or seeing his appearance could be harmful. None could equal him. Then the third wife bore a son called Bharata. The fourth wife bore a son named Śatrughna.

The king was very fond of his third wife. He said to her, "Now, as far as you are concerned, I do not begrudge you any of my possessions. If you need anything, you have but to wish for it." His wife replied, "I do not seek anything. Later, if I wish anything, then I shall tell you."

Then the king fell ill, and his life was in danger. He immediately installed the crown prince, Rāma, as king in his place. So he tied [Rāma's] hair and put the celestial cap on his head. The ceremony was held according to the regulations pertaining to the enthronement of a king. Then, seeing that [the king] had recovered somewhat from his illness, the king's younger wife became self-willed. Seeing that Rāma had succeeded his father, she grew jealous; and so she told the king that she wanted him to fulfill the promise he had made, "I want you to make my son king and dismiss Rāma!"

Upon hearing these words, the king felt as if choked: he could neither swallow nor spit. He felt bound to dismiss his elder son; but having installed him as king, he quite rightly did not want to dismiss him. However, he had agreed earlier to grant her wish. Never since his childhood had King Daśaratha gone back on his given word. Moreover, the king's rules did not allow double standards. Once he had given his word, he could not go back on it.

Bearing this in mind, he dismissed Rāma, taking garment and cap away from him. Then his brother Lakṣmaṇa said to his eldest brother, "Brother, you have great strength and you also have *candra*. Why did you not use them in the face of this shame and

disgrace?" He replied to his younger brother, "I cannot be called a pious son if I go against my father's wish. Yes, even though this mother may not have borne me, my father treats her with respect. She is like my own mother. I am on very good terms with my brother Bharata. We really have no disagreements. I may have great strength and *candra*, but I would rather agree with an improper action of my parents and brother than want to harm them." When his younger brother heard these words, he became silent.

Then King Daśaratha sent his two sons to a remote place in the mountains. After twelve years they were to be allowed to return. Rāma and his brother complied with their father's order. Without resentment they took leave of their parents and went deep into the mountains. Then Bharata, who had been staying abroad until then, was summoned back and made king. But Bharata always was at peace with and obliging towards his two elder brothers. He remained deeply deferential to them. Only after his return home and after the king, his father, had died, did he know that his mother's trickery had caused the dismissal of Rāma from the throne and that it had expelled his two brothers to a far-away place. He objected that his mother's action was against his principles.

Not making obeisance or kneeling before her, he said to his mother, "Mother, why did you in your action demand the contrary of what is right, and why did you bring distress to our family?" Making obeisance before his eldest mother, he showed respect and filial obedience twice as profound as usual.

Then Bharata led an army to the foot of the mountains. He left his troops behind and went on by himself. While his younger brother was coming, Lakṣmaṇa said to his elder brother, "In the past you have always praised our younger brother Bharata's righteousness and respect, but today he leads his soldiers here and wants to exterminate us, his brothers." The elder brother said to Bharata, "Brother, why do you now lead these troops here?" Bharata answered his elder brother, "I led my troops here because I was afraid of an encounter with bandits on the way. They are for

my protection. I do not have anything else in mind but the wish that you, O brother, return home and take charge of the government." Rāma replied to his younger brother, "I was once ordered by my father to move to this faraway place. Why should I now return so precipitously? If I return too quickly, it will not be called the righteousness of a benevolent son and a pious relative."

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Such steadfastness did not deter Bharata's heartfelt request, but his brother's mind was unshakable and his determination fixed. When the younger brother knew that his brother's mind would never change, he asked him for his shoes. Disappointed and sorrowful, he returned home with them. Taking control of the government, he always kept the shoes on the throne. Day and night he called on [the shoes] to make inquiries, just as if they were his brother himself. He also sent messengers to the mountains to invite his brother to return. But because their father had ordered them to return [only] after twelve years, the two brothers, being utterly pious and completely loyal, did not dare disobey the order, the appointed time having not yet come.

Later, when the years had gradually passed, they knew that their younger brother had diligently sent invitations time and again; and they also knew that he paid respect to the shoes as if they were a real person. Convinced of the genuineness of their brother's feelings, they returned home. Upon their arrival, Bharata even abdicated in favor of his elder brother. The elder brother then resigned and said, "My father once gave you the throne. It is not fitting for me to accept it." The younger brother then resigned and said, "Brother, you are the eldest son of the first wife. The one to bear the burden of care and responsibility for his father's affairs should rightly be his eldest son." Thus they talked back and forth, each bowing compliantly to the other. The eldest brother could not counter the argument, and so he became king after all.

The brothers were cordial and friendly, and their virtuous example was widely followed. Influenced by their morality, the masses relied on them. Influenced by their loyalty and piety, people spurred themselves on to do their filial duty. Even though Bharata's mother had devised a most evil plan, they did not harbor

any resentment. Because of this loyalty and piety, wind and rain came in the right seasons and the five cereals were abundant. Men suffered no epidemics, and all the people in Jambudvīpa were ten times more numerous and prosperous than usual.

**Parable 2: The Prince Who Saved His Parents with
His Own Flesh**

Thus have I heard. Once when the Buddha was in Śrāvastī, Ānanda entered the city to beg for food, wearing his robe and holding his alms bowl. He saw a boy whose parents were blind. When the boy had obtained some food by begging, he offered the fine food to his parents and ate the coarse food himself. Ānanda said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, this boy is truly wonderful! He presents the fine food he has begged to his parents, and he picks the coarse food for himself.” The Buddha said, “This is not so hard! When I supported my parents in the past, that was extremely hard indeed!” Ānanda said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, how was it that you supported your parents in the past?”

The Buddha said, “Long ago there was a great king who ruled over the land. The king had six sons. Each one ruled over one state. There was a high official then called Rāhulagupta, who schemed and raised an army. He killed the great king and five of his sons. [Before he could kill] the sixth, the youngest son, a spirit came who told him, ‘Your father, the great king, and your five brothers have all been killed by the high official Rāhulagupta. He will come for you next!’”

“On hearing this, the prince returned home. The prince’s wife saw that he did not look the same as usual but that he appeared distressed. She asked her husband, ‘Why are you like that?’ The husband replied to his wife, ‘It’s a man’s business! I cannot tell you.’ His wife said, ‘O prince, I now share life and death with you. What anxiety afflicts you that you do not speak to me?’ The husband replied to his wife, ‘Recently a spirit came to me and said,

“Your father, the great king, and your five brothers have all been killed by someone. He will come for you next!” That is why I am distressed. I am at a loss as to what to do!”

“The prince and his wife made a plan. They took their son, and they all fled to another country. They took provisions for seven days, calculating that this would suffice to reach their destination. Led by their fear, they followed a wrong road by mistake. They traveled for ten days, but still they had not arrived. Their food was used up. They were weary and starving; their death was imminent. The prince thought, ‘If all three of us remain alive, the suffering will be enormous. It would be better to kill one and to keep two alive.’ He immediately drew his sword and was about to kill his wife when the son turned his head and saw his father. He brought his palms together and said, ‘O father, please do not kill my mother now. I prefer that you kill me instead of taking my mother’s life.’”

“Because of the boy’s words the father wanted to kill his son. The son then said, ‘Do not take my life! If you take my life, my flesh will rot before long. I doubt whether mother will have reached her destination by then. If you do not take my life, I shall instantly slice a piece of myself. Eat a little every day!’”

“They had not yet reached a village, and there were only three slices left of his body’s flesh. The son said to his parents, ‘O father and mother, eat these two slices of flesh! Leave me the remaining slice!’ Rejecting their child and leaving him on the ground, his parents traveled on. Then Śakra *devānām indra*, his palace shaking, saw this, [and he wondered] why. Seeing this boy’s extraordinary behavior, he took the form of a starving wolf and came to demand meat from him. The boy thought, ‘If I eat this meat, my life will end; but if I do not eat it, I shall die as well.’ So he left the meat to the starving wolf. Śakra *devānām indra* then took the form of a man, and he said to the boy, ‘You sliced up your flesh and gave it to your parents. Do you feel any regret now?’ He answered that he did not regret it. [Indra] then said, ‘You are in pain now. Who would believe that you do not feel any regret?’ The boy then spoke the true words, ‘If I feel no regret, then may my flesh grow again, becoming as it was before. If I feel regret, then may I die.’ After he

said this, his body recovered. It was not different from the way it had been before.

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“Śakra *devānām indra*, leading the son and his parents, saw to it that they had a place to stay. He saw that the heart of the king was filled with grief and joy. Moved by this extreme piety and admiring its uniqueness, he provided him with an army and gave him back his former country. With the gradual support of Śakra *devānām indra*, he became king of Jambudvīpa. I was that boy then. The parents at that time are my present parents.”

The Buddha said, “It is not only today that I praise compassion and piety. For immeasurable kalpas I have always praised them.” The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, how was it that you supported your parents in the past?” The Buddha said, “Long ago, in the land of the king of Kāśī, there was a high mountain. In it there lived a sage by the name of Śyāmaka. His parents were old and they were both blind. He used to offer them delicious fruit, fresh blossoms, and fine water. He arranged a quiet place for them where they would not be afraid. Whatever he did, in his every movement, whether going or staying, he first told his parents. Having informed his parents, he went to fetch water.

“Then king Brahmadatta went on a hunting trip. When he saw a deer drinking water, he pulled his bow and shot at it. The poisoned arrow hit Śyāmaka by mistake. Suffering from the poisoned arrow, he called out loudly, ‘One arrow has killed three people. How severe is this pain!’ When the king heard his voice, he threw his bow and arrows on the ground and went over to have a look at the one who had spoken these words. ‘I hear that in these mountains there is a sage called Śyāmaka, who is compassionate, benevolent, and pious and who supports his blind parents. He is praised everywhere in the world. Now, are you not Śyāmaka?’ He replied, ‘Yes, I am.’ He said to the king, ‘My body does not think of pain now. I only worry that my parents are old and see darkness. Henceforth they will suffer hunger, having no one to support them!’ The king then asked, ‘Where are your blind parents now?’ ‘They are in yonder thatched hut,’ Śyāmaka said, pointing it out to the king.

“The king went to where the blind parents were. Śyāmaka’s father then said to his wife, ‘My eyes twitch. Is our pious son Śyāmaka in some trouble?’ The wife then said to her husband, ‘My breast is alarmed, too. Has some misfortune befallen our son?’ Then the blind parents heard the king coming. They were apprehensive and frightened in their hearts. ‘It is not our son’s step. Who is it?’ The king came in front of them, and he greeted them in a clear voice. The blind parents said, ‘Our eyes see nothing. Who greets us?’ He answered, ‘I am the king of Kāśī.’ Then the blind parents bade the king to sit down. ‘If our son were here, he would offer you, O king, fine blossoms and fruit. At dawn our son went to fetch water. It has become late. We have waited for a long time, but he has not come.’ The king then wept sadly and spoke the stanzas:

1. I am the king of this land. Hunting in these mountains,
I only wanted to shoot birds and beasts. Without realizing it, I hit a man.
2. I now give up the king’s throne to serve his blind parents.
I shall do just as your son. Please do not feel any sorrow!

The blind parents replied to the king with the stanzas:

1. The compassion and pious obedience of our son does not exist in heaven or among people. O king, you may show pity, but how can you be like our son?
2. O king, show pity! We want you to lead us to where our son is. If we can be by our child’s side, we shall share satisfaction of mind in our combined destinies.

Thereupon the king led the blind parents to Śyāmaka. When they had reached the place where their child was, they beat their breasts in grief. They said with bitter tears, ‘Our son was compassionate and benevolent. His pious obedience was beyond compare.’ The spirits of heaven and of earth, the spirits of mountains and of trees, the spirits of rivers and of lakes, all spirits spoke the stanza:

O Śakra, Brahmā, and Ruler of the World, why do you not bring assistance? You let our pious son suffer so. Be deeply moved by our pious son and quickly save his life!

Then Śakra *devānām indra*, his palace shaking, heard with his heavenly ear the sad words of the blind parents; and he descended from heaven. He went to where they were and said to Śyāmaka, ‘Do you have ill feelings toward the king?’ He answered, ‘Truly, I do not have ill feelings.’ Śakra *devānām indra* said, ‘Who would believe that you do not have ill feelings?’ Śyāmaka answered, ‘If I have ill feelings toward the king, may the poison spread through my body. That is how I shall die. If I do not have ill feelings toward the king, may the poisoned arrow leave my body and the wound heal.’

“Then, just as he had said, the poisoned arrow came out by itself, and he recovered, becoming as he had been before. The king was very glad. His joy was endless. He then issued an order, announcing it throughout the country, that one should cultivate compassion and benevolence and piously serve one’s parents. Śyāmaka had always supported his parents with compassion, benevolence, and pious obedience.

449a “If you want to know who the blind father at that time was, he is the present king Śuddhodana. The blind mother at that time is his wife Māyā. Śyāmaka is now I. The king of Kāśī is Śāriputra. The one who was Śakra *devānām indra* is Mahākāśyapa.”

Parable 3: The Little Parrot That Supported Its Blind Parents

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, he told the *bhikṣus*, “There are two kinds of misbehaving people who will fall into hell as swiftly as one can hit a ball. Which two? The first kind do not support their parents, and the second kind commit evil acts against their parents. There are two kinds of people who conduct themselves properly and who will be born in heaven as swiftly as one can hit a ball.

Which two? The first kind support their parents, and the second kind perform beneficial acts for their parents.”

The *bhikṣus* said, “It is wonderful, O World-honored One, that you, the Tathāgata, so highly praise parents!”

The Buddha said, “Not only now! In the past, in the Snowy Mountains, there was a parrot whose parents were both blind. He used to bring fine blossoms and fruit and offer them first to his parents. Then there was a farmer. When he had just sown his grain, he made a vow that he would share the grain he had sown with all beings. But while that farmer started out with generous thoughts, the little parrot often came and picked grain out of the field in order to give it to its parents.

“When the farmer examined his crop and saw where insects and birds had been at his grain, he became angry and vexed. He put up a net and caught the parrot. The little parrot said, ‘O farmer, you started out with good intentions, being generous and not stingy. That is why I ventured to approach to pick the grain. Why am I now caught in your net? Suppose that a field were a mother, that the seed were a father, and that their fruit were the son. If the farmer were a king, he should protect them.’

“When the parrot had spoken these words, the farmer was glad. He asked the parrot, ‘When you take this grain, for whom is it really?’ The parrot answered, ‘I have blind parents. I wish to give the grain to them.’ The farmer answered, ‘From now on you can always have the grain. Do not expect any more trouble!’”

The Buddha said, “Parrots enjoy the seeds of many fruits, and so does a field. At that time I was that parrot. The farmer was Śāriputra. The blind father was king Śuddhodana. The blind mother was Māyā.”

Parable 4: The Country Called Rejection-of-the-Aged

The Buddha was in Śrāvastī. Then the World-honored One said these words, “Honoring the aged is very beneficial. You may never have heard this, but you will understand it. One’s fame reaches far,

449b and one is respected by the wise." The *bhikṣus* said, "O Tathāgata, World-honored One, you always praise respect for one's parents, for the old and the aged." The Buddha said, "Not only now! In past immeasurable kalpas I have always honored my parents, the old, and the aged."

The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "How is it that you honored them in the past?" The Buddha said, "In the past, long ago, there was a country called Rejection-of-the-Aged. All the old people were driven out far away. There was a high official whose father had grown old, and according to the law of the country he had to send him away. But the high official's pious obedience could not allow that. So he dug deep into the earth and made a secret room. He placed his father in it and cared for him at all times.

"Then a heavenly spirit seized two snakes, put them in the king's palace, and said, 'If you can tell the male from the female, your country will be at peace. If you cannot do that, you and your whole country will be destroyed after seven days.' Upon hearing this, the king felt distressed and consulted his ministers about this matter. All apologized for not being able to tell them apart. Then he made an appeal to the country saying, 'Who can tell them apart? We shall generously reward him with high rank!' The high official returned home and went to ask his father. The father answered his son, 'It is easy to tell them apart. Catch them with something fine and soft. The one who makes trouble, know that he is the male one. The one who does not move, know that she is the female one.' The son did as he had been told, and he could indeed tell the male from the female.

"The heavenly spirit then asked, 'Who is called awakened by the sleeping? Who is called asleep by the awakened?'

"The king and his ministers again could not give an explanation. He again appealed to the country, but nobody could answer the question. The high official asked his father, 'What do these words mean?' His father said, 'This refers to the one in training. By the common people he is called awakened, and by the arhats he is called asleep.'

"In accordance with these words, he then replied to the heavenly spirit, who further asked, 'What is the weight of this big white

elephant?' The ministers talked it over, but no one knew. He appealed to the country, too, but again they did not know. The high official asked his father, and his father said, 'Put the elephant on a boat and place it on a great lake. Draw a mark on the boat at water level [to see] how deep it is. Then measure the displacement by placing rocks in the boat. When it sinks into the water down to the mark, you will know the weight.'

"With this knowledge he then gave the answer to the heavenly spirit, who further asked, 'With one scoop of water one has more than the ocean. Who knows this?' The ministers talked it over, but again they could not solve it. Again he appealed everywhere, but no one knew. The high official asked his father, 'What do these words mean?' His father said:

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These words are easy to solve. If someone who is very devout and pure gives a scoop of water to the Buddha and his Sangha, to his parents, and to the sick in distress, this meritorious deed counts for an indefinite number of kalpas. The merit he will experience is inexhaustible. There may be a great deal of water in the sea, but that does not surpass one kalpa. It follows from this that one can say that one scoop of water is infinitely bigger than the ocean.

The high official then gave these words as a reply to the heavenly spirit.

"The heavenly spirit then changed to a starving man. Laboriously dragging his weary limbs, he asked, 'Are there any people in the world hungrier and leaner than I?' The ministers thought it over, but again could not answer. The high official then went to ask this of his father. His father answered:

In the world there are people who are stingy and envious. They do not believe in the three precious things, and they do not support their parents nor their masters. In a future world they will fall among the hungry ghosts. For an infinite number of years they will not hear [even] the words water and grain. Their bodies will be like Mount T'ai, and their bellies will be like big valleys. Their throats will be like fine

needles and their hair like awls, entwining their bodies down to the feet. When they move, their limbs will feel as if consumed by fire. Such people are infinitely worse off than you who suffer from hunger.

With these words the official then answered the heavenly spirit.

“The heavenly spirit then changed to a man whose hands and feet were in shackles and who had chains around his neck. Fire emerged from his body, and his whole figure was scorched. He asked, ‘Are there people in the world who suffer more than I?’ The ministers were in a flurry, and no one knew the answer. The high official again asked his father, and his father answered:

In the world there are people who are not pious toward their parents and who hurt their masters. They rebel against their husbands and defame the three honorable things. In a future world they will fall into hell, where there are mountains that are swords, trees with swords, a blazing wagon, burning coals, a salty river, bubbling excrement, a blade-strewn path, and a blazing path. Thus is their suffering: immeasurable, endless, and untold. By comparison, their suffering is infinitely worse than yours.

The official then answered the heavenly spirit with these words.

“The heavenly spirit then changed into a woman. She was upright and admirable, excelling everyone. She asked, ‘Is there anyone in the world more upright than I?’ The ministers were silent. No one could answer. The high official again asked his father. His father then answered:

In the world there are people who believe in and respect the three precious things. They show pious obedience toward their parents. They are generous, forbearing, vigorous, and moral. They will be born in heaven. They are particularly upright people, infinitely more so than you. By comparison, you are like a blind monkey.

[The official] then answered the heavenly spirit with these words.

450a “The heavenly spirit then asked about a perfectly square piece of sandalwood, ‘Which is the top?’ Not one of the ministers had sufficient knowledge to answer. The official then asked his father, and his father replied, ‘That is easy to find out! Put it in water. The root end will surely sink and the tail end will surely come up.’ The official gave these words as a reply to the heavenly spirit.

“The heavenly spirit then asked about two white mares that looked identical, ‘Which is the mother and which is the child?’ The ministers again could not answer. [The official] again asked his father, and his father replied, ‘Give them grass to eat. The mother will surely refuse the grass and give it to her child.’

“He answered all these questions, and the heavenly spirit was pleased. He left a large amount of valuables and wealth for the king and said to him, ‘I shall protect your country now, so that no foreign enemy can raid it.’ When the king heard this, he was extremely happy and asked his official, ‘Did you know all this yourself, or did someone instruct you? Relying on your vast knowledge, my country will remain at peace. I have obtained riches, and I also have a promise that we will be protected. This I owe to you.’ The official answered the king, ‘It is not my knowledge. If you will please see to it that I do not have to be afraid, I will be so bold as to give a full explanation.’ The king said, ‘Even if you had committed a crime ten thousand times punishable by death, it still would not matter, let alone a small transgression.’ The official informed the king, ‘In our country there is a regulation that does not allow us to take care of the aged. I have an old father. I could not bear leaving him behind. I have offended against the king’s law and I have kept him hidden under the ground. When I came to give you the answers, they were all my father’s knowledge. You do not owe it to me. I wish that you, O great king, would allow the whole country to take care of the aged.’

“The king immediately gave his consent. His heart was glad, and he respectfully took care of his official’s father. He respected him as his master. ‘You have saved my nation and the lives of all its people. Such beneficence is beyond my knowledge.’ He immediately proclaimed and announced everywhere in the world that one

must not leave the aged behind. He commanded that one should piously take care of them. Those who lacked piety toward their parents or who did not respect their masters had to undergo heavy punishment.

“At that time, I was that father. The official was Śāriputra. The king was Ajātaśatru. The heavenly spirit was Ānanda.”

Parable 5: The Buddha Expounds the Doctrine to His Mother Māyā in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven

When the Buddha was in Śrāvastī, he informed the *bhikṣus*, “I now want to go to the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven and stay there for the summer retreat, to expound the Doctrine to my mother. Those of you, O *bhikṣus*, who would like to come, follow me!” Having said this, he went to the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. He stayed underneath a tree for the summer retreat, expounding the Doctrine to his mother Māyā and to countless gods. When they had all gained insight into the Truths, he returned to Jambudvīpa. The *bhikṣus* said, “Wonderful, O World-honored One, that you can stay in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven for ninety days for the sake of your mother!” The Buddha said, “Not only now, but also in the past have I removed suffering from my mother.”

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Then the *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, “What is it that you have done in the past?” The Buddha said, “In the past, long ago, in the Snowy Mountains, there was a monkey king who ruled over five hundred monkeys. Then a monkey hunter spread his nets, surrounded them, and captured them. The monkey king said, ‘Don’t be afraid now! I shall destroy these nets for you! You monkeys all come with me!’ He immediately broke the nets and all were released.

“There was an old monkey who lost her footing while carrying her child and fell into a deep pit. The monkey king, searching for the mother, did not know where she was. Seeing a deep pit, he went over to its edge to have a look. He saw that the mother was down below and said to the monkeys, ‘You should all make the effort;

together we can help the mother to get out.’ The monkeys then grasped each other by the tail and reached the bottom of the pit. They pulled the mother up and she got out, freed from her hardship. How much more have I now pulled my mother out of her hardship. At that time they pulled her out from the hardship of a deep pit, but now I have pulled my mother out of the hardship of the three unwholesome destinations.”

The Buddha informed the *bhikṣus*, “Saving one’s parents has great merit. Because I have pulled out my mother, I shall always be free from hardship, having brought about my realization of Buddhahood. Therefore, O *bhikṣus*, you must all take care of your parents with pious obedience!”

Parable 6: The Buddha’s Explanation about His Former Mother Kacaṅgalā

At that time the Buddha was on a journey. When he arrived in Chū-he-lo he sat down under a tree along the road. There was an old woman called Kacaṅgalā, who was dependent on someone else. She was drawing water from a well. The Buddha told Ānanda to go and ask her for water. When the old woman heard that the Buddha had asked for water, she took the pitcher herself. When she reached the Buddha’s place, she put the pitcher on the ground and went straight to the Buddha to take him in her arms. Ānanda wanted to block the way, but the Buddha said, “Do not block her way! This old woman was my mother for five hundred births. She has not yet stopped loving me. That is why she takes me in her arms. If you block her way, the blood will come gushing from her mouth and her life will end immediately.”

After she had taken the Buddha in her arms, she touched his hands and feet and stood aside. The Buddha told Ānanda to go and call her master. When her master arrived, he made a deep bow and withdrew and stood aside. The Buddha said to the master, “Let this old woman go, so that she can become a nun. If she becomes a nun, she will attain arhatship.” The master then let her go. The Buddha told Ānanda to hand her over to the *bhikṣuṇī* Prajāpatī, so that she

would be converted to the homeless state. Soon after, she obtained the path of arhatship. Among *bhikṣuṇīs* she had the best understanding of the sutras.

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The *bhikṣus* wondered about this and said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, for what reason was she dependent on someone else, and why did she obtain arhatship?” The Buddha said, “At the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, she left her home to study the path. For this reason she has obtained arhatship. At that time she was at the head of a crowd scolding noble and excellent nuns as though they were servants. For this reason she is now dependent on someone else. Through five hundred births she has always remained my mother, stingy and envious, checking my generosity. For this reason she always lives in poverty. It is not only now that I have pulled her out of her poverty.”

The *bhikṣus* said, “We are wondering how you pulled her out of poverty in the past!” The Buddha said, “In the past, in Benares, there was a poor family: a mother and her son living together. The son used to support his mother with his wages. They had some wealth and could meet their everyday expenses. Then the son said to his mother, ‘I now want to go on a far journey with merchants to trade.’ His mother agreed. Thereupon he left. After the son had left, bandits came and destroyed the house. They stole the family’s possessions and also drove the old woman out to sell her to someone else. After the son had returned, he made inquiries about his mother. When he found out where she was, he offered a large sum of money for her and redeemed her with great effort. Now back in their homeland, they had sufficient wealth, twice as much as before.

“The mother at that time is now Kacaṅgalā. I was the son. That was the time I pulled my mother out of misery.”

Parable 7: Maitrakanyaka

Once the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, and he told the *bhikṣus*, “If one supports his parents even a little, the merit obtained is immeasurable. If one is even a little disobedient, the evil obtained is immeasurable.”

The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, what are these evil or meritorious retributions?" The Buddha said, "When I lived in the past, a long time ago, in Benares, there was a child of a venerable person, called Maitrakanyaka. His father had died early, and all the money had been spent. He sold firewood for a living. When he got two cash per day, he presented them to his mother. As his plans and devices gradually improved, he got four cash per day and offered them to his mother. Thereupon he again improved little by little. He got eight cash a day and presented them to his mother. He gradually became trusted by everyone. From far and near they went to him, and the profits he made grew more and more. When he had sixteen cash a day, he presented them to his mother. Everyone saw that he was bright and virtuous, and they advised him, 'When your father was alive, he used to go to sea to gather riches. Why do you not go to sea now?'"

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"Having heard these words, he said to his mother, 'When my father was alive, what used to be his occupation?' His mother said, 'When your father was alive, he went to sea to collect riches.' He then said to his mother, 'If my father went to sea to collect riches then, why don't I go to sea now?' Seeing that her child was compassionate and benevolent, that he was pious and obedient, the mother thought that he would not go, so she said jokingly, 'It's alright for you to go.' Hearing these words from his mother, he told her that his mind was made up. Wanting to go to sea, he deliberated with his companions.

"When the preparations were finished, he took leave of his mother. The mother then said, 'My only child, wait until I have died! How can I let you go!' The son replied to his mother, 'If you had not given me your permission first, I would have presumed my plan to be wrong. When you gave me your permission, what further obstacle could there be? I hope I shall die having established my trustworthiness in this life! Since permission has been granted, I do not have to stay any longer.'

"The mother saw her child's determination. Clasping his feet and weeping, she said, 'How can you go away without waiting for my death?' But the child was determined. He pulled her away from

his feet with his hands, pulling out dozens of his mother's hairs. The mother feared that her child had committed an offense and let him go.

"Together with merchants, he then went to sea. They reached a wealthy island and obtained a great many precious things. Together with his companions, he then started on his way back. There were two routes. One way went by sea, and one way went over land. Everyone said to take the overland route, and so they followed the way over land. There was a rule in that country that when brigands robbed merchants and captured their leader, all the merchants and their goods would belong to the brigands. If they did not capture the leader of the merchants, even though they had taken the goods, they would return all the goods when the merchants' leader had returned. For that reason Maitrakanyaka always left their camp and lodged elsewhere for the night. When the merchants got up in the morning, they came to meet him and took him along.

"One night there had been a storm and the merchants got up in a hurry, forgetting to take him along. The leader of the merchants stayed behind and was left unaccompanied. He did not know the way. Seeing that there was a mountain, he went to its top and saw that in the distance there was a town, its color that of dark lapis lazuli. Exhausted by hunger and thirst, he hurried to it. In that town there were four beautiful girls. They all came out to welcome him with wish-granting gems, songs, and music. He experienced great joy for four times ten thousand years. Then he naturally grew weary and wanted to leave. The beautiful girls said, 'You people of Jambudvīpa are so ungrateful. Having lived with us for four times ten thousand years, how can you abandon us one morning and go away!' He did not care for their words and left.

"He saw a crystal-like town. There were eight beautiful girls who welcomed him also with wish-granting gems and music. He was extremely happy for eight times ten thousand years, but he became bored and abandoned them and went away.

"He reached a silver-colored town. There were sixteen beautiful girls who welcomed him as before with sixteen wish-granting

gems. He experienced great joy for sixteen times ten thousand years. Yet he abandoned them too.

“He reached a golden city. There were thirty-two beautiful girls who welcomed him as before with thirty-two wish-granting gems. Again he experienced great joy for thirty-two times ten thousand years. Yet he wanted to abandon them, too. The beautiful girls said, ‘Wherever you have dwelt, you have always found a nicer place. From here on you will not find a nicer place anymore. You had better stay!’ Upon hearing these words, he thought them over, saying, ‘The beautiful girls say these words because they are fond of me. If I keep going, there shall certainly be a nicer place.’ He then went away.

“In the distance he saw an iron city. He became suspicious and thought, ‘It may be iron on the outside, but it may be very nice inside.’ He went on slowly and approached the city. But there was no beautiful girl to welcome him. He again thought, ‘They are probably very happy in the city. That is why they do not come out to welcome me.’ He continued on his way and entered the iron city. When the barrier of the gate had come down, there was someone inside with a burning wheel on his head. He took this burning wheel off, put it on the head of [Maitra]kanyaka, and immediately went away.

“Maitrakanyaka asked the jailer, ‘When can I get rid of this wheel I am carrying?’ The jailer answered, ‘When there is someone in the world who has done evil as well as meritorious acts, as you have done, when he has gone to sea to gather riches and has passed through cities, no matter whether this was long ago or recently, as in your case, only then will he come here and experience this evil instead of you. This iron wheel will never fall on the ground.’

“Maitrakanyaka asked, ‘What merits did I perform, and what evil did I do?’ The jailer answered, ‘Formerly, in Jambudvīpa, you supported your mother with your two cash a day. Therefore you got a city of lapis lazuli, four wish-granting gems, and four beautiful girls. For four times ten thousand years you experienced their delights. Because you supported your mother with four cash, you got a crystal-like town, eight wish-granting gems, and eight

beautiful girls. For eight times ten thousand years you experienced their joys. Because you supported your mother with eight cash, you got a silver-colored city, sixteen wish-granting gems, and sixteen beautiful girls. For sixteen times ten thousand years, you experienced happiness. Because you supported your mother with sixteen cash, you got a golden city, thirty-two wish-granting gems, and thirty-two beautiful girls. For thirty-two times ten thousand years you experienced great joy. Because you pulled out your mother's hair, you now have to carry a burning wheel of iron that has never fallen on the ground. When someone comes to take your place, then you may discard it.'

451c "[Maitrakanyaka] further asked, 'Are there now in this prison some who experience their own evil the way I do?' The jailer replied, 'Countless hundreds and thousands. Their number is incalculable!' Having heard these words, he thought, 'I shall never escape! I wish that all who have to experience suffering would put their entire burden on myself!' When he had had this thought, the iron wheel fell on the ground. Maitrakanyaka said to the jailer, 'You said that his wheel has never fallen. Why did it fall now?' The jailer became angry, and he beat [Maitra]kanyaka on the head with an iron prong. His life subsequently came to an end, and he was reborn in the Tuṣita Heaven.

"If you want to know, Maitrakanyaka was myself. O *bhikṣus*, you must know that a small unwholesome deed done to one's parents leads to a considerable unpleasant retribution. The merit one obtains for giving them a little support is immeasurable. You must carry out this duty: bring offerings to your parents diligently and with all your heart!"

Parable 8: The Lady Padmāvati

When the Buddha was in Śrāvastī, he told the *bhikṣus*, "The angry thoughts one produces toward his parents or toward the Buddha and his disciples will make one fall into the Kālasūtra Hell. The suffering one will experience is immeasurable and without end."

The *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "O World-honored One, one may respect one's parents, but if one is disrespectful toward one's parents and does something unwholesome, what then?"

The Buddha said, "Countless ages ago in the past there was a sage in the Snowy Mountains called Dvaipāyana. He was of the Brahman caste. It was a rule for Brahmans that if they did not have a son or daughter they could not be reborn in heaven. This Brahman used to urinate on the rocks. Containing semen, [the urine] dripped into a rocky cave. There was a doe that came to lick the place, and she became pregnant. When the time had come, she came to the foot of the sage's cave dwelling and gave birth to a daughter. She left her mother's womb wrapped in flowers. She was upright and very beautiful. When the sage realized that she was his daughter, he took her in and fed her. Gradually she grew up. When she could walk, lotus flowers sprang up wherever her feet touched the ground.

"It was a rule for Brahmans always to keep a fire burning at night. One night by accident the fire went out and disappeared. The girl went to another house to ask for fire. When the neighbor saw that there were lotus flowers in her footprints, he said, 'If you go seven times around my house, I shall give you fire.' She then made seven rounds and returned home with the fire.

452a "When King Udayana went on a hunting trip, he saw that that man's house had seven rows of lotus flowers. Finding this strange, he asked him, 'Why does your house have these lotus flowers?' The man then replied to the king, 'The daughter of the Brahman in the mountains came to ask for fire. These lotus flowers sprang up under her feet.' Following her footprints to where the sage was, the king saw that the girl was upright and very beautiful. He said to the sage, 'Give me this girl!' So he gave her and said to the king, 'She will bear you five hundred sons,' whereupon the king installed her as his wife. Among the five hundred ladies of the palace, she was the best by far.

"The first wife of the king was very jealous of the daughter of the doe, and she said, 'O king, you love her now, but if she bears you five hundred sons, you will respect her twice as much.' Not long

thereafter the daughter of the doe produced five hundred eggs and put them in a basket. Then the first wife took five hundred lumps of wheat flour and put them in place of the eggs. She sealed up a basket, marked it, and threw it into the River Ganges. When the king asked his wife what the daughter of the doe had produced, she answered that she had produced only lumps of wheat flour. The king said, 'The sage has lied!' He relieved his [new] wife of her official duties, and she did not meet the king anymore.

"Then, downstream, King Śaptabhū was enjoying himself with his court ladies on the banks of the river. He saw the basket coming and said, 'This basket belongs to me!' The ladies said, 'O king, take the basket now! We shall take what is in the basket.' He sent someone to take the basket.

"To each of his five hundred ladies he gave an egg. The eggs opened by themselves, and in them there were fine looking boys. They were raised and grew, each having the strength of a very strong warrior. They established a banner of five hundred warriors.

"King Udayana used to demand tribute from King Śaptabhū. Receiving a demand for tribute, King Śaptabhū felt dejected and unhappy. The sons said, 'Why do you feel sad?' The king said, 'The world I live in now is oppressed by someone.' The sons asked, 'By whom is it oppressed?' The king said, 'King Udayana. He always persecutes me with demands for tribute.' The sons said, 'If you want to demand tribute from all the kings of Jambudvīpa, we can make them pay tribute to you, O king! Why, O king, should you pay tribute to someone else?' Thereupon the five hundred warriors led their army to attack King Udayana.

"King Udayana was afraid, and he said, 'I could not withstand even one warrior, let alone five hundred warriors.' Then he made an appeal in the country for someone who might be capable of driving away this enemy. That sage again came to his mind. He might know or find a way! He went to where the sage was and said to the sage, 'The country is in great peril. How can it be driven off?' The sage replied, 'Do you have an enemy who opposes you?' The king said, 'King Śaptabhū has five hundred warriors. They all lead an army to attack me, and I do not have the warriors to confront

them. Do you know a stratagem that can drive away the enemy?' The sage answered, 'You might ask the lady Padmāvati back. She can drive away the enemy.'

452b "The king said, 'How can she drive them away?' The sage answered, 'Those five hundred warriors are all your sons. The lady Padmāvati bore them. Your first wife was jealous. She rejected the sons borne by Padmāvati and placed them on the river. King Śaptabhū took them out downstream and raised them till they attained manhood. O king, have the lady Padmāvati mount a big elephant now. Place it in front of your army. They will submit by themselves.' In agreement with the sage's words, the king then returned and confessed his faults to the lady Padmāvati.

"After confessing his faults, he adorned the lady and gave her fine clothes to wear. He made her mount a big white elephant and placed it in front of his army. The five hundred warriors raised their bows to shoot, but their hands stiffened of themselves and they could not bend [the bows] anymore. They were very startled. The sage came flying in the sky and said to the warriors, 'Do not raise your hands! Do not feel any malice! If you feel malice, you will all fall into hell! This king and his lady are your parents.' The mother then put her hands on her breasts. Each breast had two hundred fifty nipples, which all went into the mouths of her sons. They then showed repentance to their parents, and they felt ashamed. They all became *pratyekabuddhas*. The two kings also spontaneously reached awakening, and they too became *pratyekabuddhas*.

"I was that sage. At that time I protected the sons so that they did not feel malice toward their parents, and they became *pratyekabuddhas*. Now I also praise the virtue of supporting one's parents."

Parable 9: The Lady Mṛgāṅkavati

The Buddha informed the *bhikṣus* on Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa near Rājagṛha, "There are two ways for men to succeed quickly at becoming a man or a god or reaching the happiness of nirvana.

There are two ways that quickly make a man fall into the three unwholesome destinations, experiencing terrible suffering." [They asked,] "Which are the two ways for men to succeed quickly at becoming a man or a god or reaching the happiness of nirvana?" The Buddha said, "One [way] is to support one's parents, and the other is to honor the noble." "What are the two ways that quickly make men fall into the three unwholesome destinations, experiencing terrible suffering?" The Buddha said, "One is to do any evil to one's parents, and the other is to do evil to the noble."

The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, how is this quick accomplishment of the wholesome and the unwholesome achieved?" The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*, "In the past, uncountable ages ago, there was a country called Benares. In this country there was a mountain called Mount Sage. At that time a Brahman lived on the mountain. He used to urinate on a rock. Afterwards there was some semen that fell on the place of urination. A doe came to lick it and immediately became pregnant. When the time had come, [the doe] came to where the sage was and gave birth to a daughter. She was upright and very beautiful; but her feet were like a deer's feet. The Brahman took her in, fed her, and let her grow up.

"It is a rule for Brahmans always to serve the fire so that it does not go out. While the girl was keeping the fire burning, she became distracted and let the fire go out. She was afraid, fearing the Brahman's anger. There was another Brahman who lived one *krośa* away from there. The girl hurried to that Brahman and asked him for fire. When the Brahman saw that there were lotus flowers in her footprints, he said to the girl, 'If you go seven times around my house, I shall give you fire. When you leave, also make seven rounds, but do not walk in your first footprints. Go back along another road.' Having done as he asked, she went away with the fire.

"Then, when King Brahmadata was out on a hunting trip, he saw that the house of that Brahman was completely surrounded by fourteen rows of lotus flowers. He also saw two roads, each with a row of lotus flowers, and he wondered why. He asked the

Brahman, 'You have no pond at all. How did you come by these lovely lotus flowers?' He answered, 'Over there, where the sage lives, there is a girl. She came to ask me for fire. In each of this girl's footprints lotus flowers grew. So I told her, "If you want fire, go around my house seven times. When you leave, make seven more rounds." That is how I came by these rows of lotus flowers.'

"The king followed the footprints with flowers to where the Brahman was, and he asked to see his daughter. Seeing that she was upright, he was very pleased; and he asked the Brahman for this daughter. So the Brahman gave her to the king, and the king installed her as his second wife. In her youth, the sage had raised the girl to be endowed with a decent nature. She did not understand woman's bewitching evil. After a while she became pregnant, and the diviner foretold that she would give birth to a thousand sons.

"When the first wife of the king heard these words, she became jealous and devised a scheme. In her great kindness, she called the attendants who were near the lady Mṛgāṅkavati and gave them many riches and precious things. Then, when the time had come, the lady Mṛgāṅkavati gave birth to a lotus with a thousand petals. When she was about to give birth, the first wife blindfolded her and did not allow her to see for herself. She took putrid horse lungs and placed them underneath her. She put the lotus with a thousand petals in a box, and she threw it into a river. Upon her return, she removed the blindfold and said, 'Look what you have borne!' The lady saw only a lump of putrid horse lungs. The king sent someone to ask what she had borne, and the messenger replied, 'She just bore some putrid horse lungs.' Then the first wife said to the king, 'O king, do you enjoy being fooled by what this animal has borne? It was raised by a sage, but it has borne this inauspicious filthy thing.' The king's first wife then relieved this lady of her official duties and forbade her any further audience.

"Then, as King Udayana was enjoying himself downstream with his attendants, wives, and court ladies, he saw a yellow cover with clouds floating on the river, drifting along on the water. The king thought, 'Under this cover with clouds there is sure to be something divine.' He sent someone to go and look. The person saw

that under the clouds there was a box, and he immediately took it to the king. He opened it and saw the lotus with a thousand petals. In every petal there was a little boy. He took them and raised them, and they gradually grew up. Each had the strength of a very strong warrior.

“King Udayana used to give yearly tribute to King Brahmadatta. He had collected the tribute and was about to dispatch it by messenger. When he was about to leave, the sons said, ‘What are you going to do?’ The king then replied, ‘I am going to pay tribute to King Brahmadatta.’ The sons all said, ‘If you had one son, you might hope to subdue the world, so that tribute would come to you! But having us, a thousand sons, why must you pay tribute to somebody else?’

“The thousand sons immediately led their army to subdue several countries, and they gradually came to the land of King Brahmadatta. When the king heard that the army was there, he made an appeal in his country for someone who could drive away such an enemy. Not a single person could drive them away. When the second wife received the appeal, she said, ‘I can drive them away!’ When asked, ‘How can you drive them away?’ the wife replied, ‘Just make a platform one thousand feet high for me. When I sit on it, I am certain that I can drive them away!’

“When they had made the platform, the second wife sat down on it. Then, when the thousand sons wanted to raise their bows to shoot, they could not raise their hands. The wife said, ‘Do not raise your hands against your parents! I am your mother.’ The thousand sons asked, ‘By what proof can we know our mother?’ She answered, ‘If I put my hands on my breasts, and if each breast has five hundred nipples that all go into your mouths, I am your mother. If this is not so, I am not your mother.’ Then she put both hands on her breasts. On each breast there were five hundred nipples. They went into the mouths of the thousand sons. Nobody in the rest of the army could do this. The thousand sons submitted and showed repentance toward their parents.

“Thereupon the sons were in harmonious union, and there was no enmity between the two countries any more. They agreed that

five hundred sons stay with their real parents and that five hundred sons stay with their foster parents. Then the two kings divided Jambudvīpa, each raising five hundred sons.”

453b The Buddha said, “If you want to know, the thousand sons at that time are the thousand Buddhas of the *bhadrakalpa*. The jealous wife who blindfolded the other’s eyes is a scaly, blind dragon. The father was Śuddhodana, and the mother was his wife Māyā.”

The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, “What reason was there that this girl was born from the womb of a doe and that lotus flowers grew under her feet? Furthermore, why did she become a king’s wife?”

The Buddha said, “In the past this girl was born into a poor family. Both mother and daughter were weeding the field when they saw a *pratyekabuddha* begging for food with his alms bowl. The mother said to her daughter, ‘I want to take my share of food from the house and give it to this fine man.’ The daughter said, ‘Take my share, too, and give it to him!’ The mother returned home to take the shares of food of both mother and daughter and to give them to the *pratyekabuddha*. The daughter gathered plants and flowers and spread them out to make a seat for him. She scattered the flowers for him and bade the *pratyekabuddha* sit down.

“The daughter wondered why her mother was late, and she climbed to a high place. She saw her mother in the distance. Having seen her mother, she said to her, ‘Why don’t you hurry? [You are] coming with a deer’s gait!’ When her mother had arrived, she objected to her mother’s slowness. So she was irritated and said, ‘I would rather be born to a doe than to my mother!’

“The mother then gave the two shares of food to the *pratyekabuddha*. Mother and daughter both ate what was left. When the *pratyekabuddha* had finished eating, he threw his bowl into the air and flew away. In the air he changed his appearance eighteen times. The mother was delighted and made a vow, ‘May I always have noble children in the future, just like the noble one now!’

“Through this karmic causality, she later gave birth to five hundred children who all became *pratyekabuddhas*. While on the

one hand she was a foster mother, on the other hand she was the mother of those she had given birth to. Because of her remark mentioning her mother's deer gait, she was conceived in a doe's womb, her feet resembling the hooves of a deer. Because she had gathered flowers and scattered them for a *pratyekabuddha*, a hundred lotus flowers grew in her footsteps. Because she had spread out the plants, she always got to be a king's wife. The mother later became King Brahmadata, and the daughter later became the lady Mṛgāṅkavatī. Through this karmic causality she later gave birth to the thousand noble ones of the *bhadra kalpa*. Through the power of the vow she always bore noble ones." Having heard these words, the *bhikṣus* were glad and paid their respects.



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Chapter II

Parable 25: A Palace Attendant Redeems Bulls That
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Parable 26: Two Palace Attendants Have an Argument

Parable 10: The White Elephant with Six Tusks

Formerly in Śrāvastī there was a very honorable man who had a daughter who remembered her previous lives. Soon after her birth she was able to talk and she spoke these words, "Unwholesome deeds, impious deeds, shameless deeds, harmful and ungrateful deeds!" Having said these words she stopped, remaining silent. When this girl was born she had great merits, and they gave her the name Bhadrā. As she grew up, she had great respect for the *kaṣāya* (monk's robe). Because of her respect for the *kaṣāya*, she left home and became a *bhikṣuṇī*. She did not meet the Buddha, but through diligent development she obtained arhatship. Since she regretted not having met the Buddha, she went to where the Buddha was and expressed her regret to the Buddha. The Buddha said, "I have already accepted your regret at another time." The *bhikṣus* were surprised and asked the Buddha, "Why did this excellent *bhikṣuṇī* never meet the Buddha after she left home? Today she meets the Buddha and expresses regret. Why?" The Buddha then explained why.

"Long ago there was a white elephant with six tusks who had many herds. This white elephant had two wives. One was called Bhadrā and the other Subhadrā. Roaming through the forest he came across lotus flowers, and he wanted to give them to Bhadrā, but Subhadrā took them away. When Bhadrā saw that Subhadrā took the flowers, she became jealous. 'That elephant loves Subhadrā and he does not love me!'

"In those mountains there was a Buddhist pagoda where Bhadrā used to gather flowers and offer them. And she made a vow, saying, 'When I am born among people, I shall remember my previous life and pull out the tusks of this white elephant.' So she went to the top of a mountain, hit herself, and died. Later she was born as a daughter in the family of the king of Videha, and she remembered her previous life.

"When she had grown up, she became the wife of King Brahma-datta. Remembering her previous resentment, she said to Brahma-datta, 'If you give me ivory for my couch, I shall be very lively. If

not, I cannot be lively.' King Brahmadata then summoned hunters, saying that if anyone could come back with ivory, he would give him a hundred taels of gold. Immediately a hunter deceptively put on a *kaṣāya*, took his bow and poisoned arrows under his arm, and went to where the elephants were.

"Then the elephant wife Subhadrā saw the hunter, and she said to the elephant king, 'Someone is coming.' The elephant king asked, 'What clothes does he wear?' She answered, 'He wears a *kaṣāya*.' The elephant king said, 'In the *kaṣāya* there is sure to be goodness and no evil.' Thus the hunter could come nearer, and he shot a poisoned arrow. Subhadrā said to her husband, 'You said that there is goodness in the *kaṣāya*, not evil! What of this then?' He answered, 'It is not the *kaṣāya*'s fault. It is the fault of mental vexation!' Subhadrā then wanted to hurt that hunter, but the elephant king spoke all manner of soothing words, preaching the Dharma; and he did not let her hurt him. Furthermore, he was afraid that his herd of five hundred elephants would surely kill this hunter, and he hid him under a precipice. He sent the entire herd of five hundred elephants far away.

454b "He asked the hunter, 'What do you want by shooting me?' He answered, 'I do not want anything. Because King Brahmadata wants your tusks, I came wishing to take them away.' The elephant said, 'Take them quickly!' The hunter replied, 'I do not dare take them myself. Such is the compassion I was brought up with, that if I take them myself, my hands will become inflamed and fall off.' The white elephant immediately turned toward a place with tall trees and pulled out his tusks himself, twisting them with his trunk. He gave them, making a vow, 'With the gift of my tusks, I vow that in the future I shall pull out the tusks of the three poisons from all living beings!'

"The hunter took the tusks and gave them to King Brahmadata. When his wife received these tusks, she began to feel regret, and she said, 'How could I take the tusks of this excellent one possessed of a pure morality?' Greatly developing her virtues, she pledged, 'I wish that in the future he may attain the moment of

becoming a Buddha! For his Doctrine I shall leave my family to apply myself to the path, obtaining arhatship!

“You should know that I was that white elephant. Devadatta was the hunter at that time. Bhadrā is [now] the present *bhikṣuṇī*. *Bhikṣuṇī* Yaśodharā was Subhadrā.”

Parable 11: The Hare That Roasted Itself and Offered Itself to a Great Sage

In Śrāvastī there was an elder's son who had left his family to devote himself to the Buddha's Doctrine, but he always liked his kinsmen in his neighborhood. He did not like to work with men of the path, nor did he like to read scriptural texts or to practice the path. The Buddha ordered this *bhikṣu* to go to an *āraṇyaka* (forest) place, diligently develop himself, and obtain arhatship endowed with the six superknowledges. The *bhikṣus* were surprised and said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, your appearance in the world is wonderful! It is extraordinary! You can accommodate such an elder's son, making him obtain arhatship in an *āraṇyaka* place and become endowed with the six superknowledges.” The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*, “It is not only now that I can accommodate someone; I did so already long ago.”

The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, “We wonder how you, O World-honored One, accommodated someone in the past!” The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*, “In the past there was a sage who lived in a mountain forest. Then there was a severe drought and the fruits of the trees and plants, the roots and stalks, and the branches and leaves all withered away in the mountains. At that time the sage was friendly with a hare, and he said to the hare, ‘I want to go to the village to beg for food.’ The hare said, ‘Do not go! I shall give you food.’ Thereupon the hare collected a stack of firewood and said to the sage, ‘You must take my food! The rain will come. Stay for three days and the flowers and fruits will come out again! Then you can gather food. Do not go to where people are!’ Having said these words, it lit a great fire and threw itself in it.

454c When the sage saw this, he thought, 'This hare is friendly and benevolent. It is my best companion. It gave up its life to be my food. That is truly a difficult feat.' Then the sage became very miserable, and he took the hare and ate it.

"Because the bodhisattva had done this arduous and painful deed, the palace of Śakra *devānām indra* shook; and he thought, 'Why does my palace shake now?' He looked into the matter, and he knew that the hare had indeed done a difficult deed. He was moved by its deed, and he immediately caused it to rain. The sage subsequently went and ate fruits again. He then developed himself and obtained the five superknowledges.

"If you want to know who the sage with the five superknowledges was, he is the present *bhikṣu*. I was the hare at that time. Because I gave myself up, I made the sage stay in an *āraṇyaka* place, and I let him obtain the five superknowledges. Why should I not today be able to make this *bhikṣu* leave his kinsmen and stay in an *āraṇyaka* place, letting him gain arhatship and obtain the six superknowledges!"

Parable 12: The Good Monkey and the Evil Monkey

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, the *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, if one relies on Devadatta, one always obtains suffering. But if one relies on you, O Tathāgata, World-honored One, one obtains happiness now, and later one is born in a wholesome place and obtains the path of deliverance."

The Buddha informed the *bhikṣus*, "Not only now! In the past there were two monkeys who each had five hundred dependents. A prince of Kāśī happened to be on a hunting trip. He surrounded them and was going to get at them. One, a good monkey, said to the other, an evil monkey, 'If we cross this river now, we can escape from our difficulties.' The evil monkey said, 'I cannot cross it.' The good monkey said to his monkeys, 'The trunk and branches of the *vetra* tree are very long. So grasp its branches!' He let his five hundred dependents cross. The evil monkey's dependents were caught by the prince because they did not cross.

“At that time the good monkey was myself. The evil monkey was Devadatta, and the dependents he led knew suffering at that time. For those who rely on him now, it is the same. Those who relied on me then experienced happiness for a long time. Now they obtain fame, and they are honored. In the future they will obtain deliverance as men or gods. Those who relied on Devadatta experienced decay for a long time. In their present existence they obtain a bad reputation, and people do not honor them. In the future they will fall into the three unwholesome destinations.

“Therefore, O *bhikṣus*, stay away from evil acquaintances and befriend virtuous ones. A virtuous acquaintance gives others safety and happiness for a long time. Therefore one should befriend a virtuous acquaintance. Stay away from an evil acquaintance! Why? An evil acquaintance torments and consumes you. In the present world and in the next world he is a mass of suffering.”

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Parable 13: The Buddha Extinguishes Three Fires with the Water of His Knowledge

There was a country called Dakṣiṇacala. The Buddha wanted to go to that country. On the way, he reached a village where he could spend the night. There the villagers happened to organize a meeting to commemorate an auspicious occasion. Drunk from consuming wine, they did not notice a fire that set the village ablaze. The people were afraid. No one knew where to go; and they all said to each other, “Only if we trust in the Buddha can we escape from fiery ruin.” So they said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, we wish to be saved!” The Buddha said, “All living beings have three fires: the fires of desire, hatred, and delusion. With the water of my knowledge I shall extinguish these three fires. If these words are true, this fire will be extinguished.”

After he said this, the fire was immediately extinguished. Everybody was happy, and they faithfully respected the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to them and they obtained the path of the *srotāpanna*. The *bhikṣus* were surprised. “Your appearance in the world, O World-honored One, is wonderful and

extraordinary! You have brought considerable benefit to this village. The fire in the village is extinguished, and the villagers' mental impurities are extinguished as well."

The Buddha said, "Not only now do I bring benefit. In the past I have also brought considerable benefit to others." The *bhikṣus* asked, "We are wondering, O World-honored One, about this bringing of benefit in the past. How did you do that?" The Buddha said, "In the past, somewhere in the Snowy Mountains, there was a large bamboo forest. Many birds and animals lived in that forest. There was a parrot called Joyneck. As the wind blew in the forest, two bamboos rubbed against each other and started a fire, setting the bamboo forest ablaze. The birds and animals feared that they might not be able to escape. The parrot had deep compassion and felt pity for those birds and animals. He plunged his wings into water and sprinkled it onto the fire. He was diligent in his compassion, and so he moved Indra, making his palace shake vehemently.

"Śakra *devānām indra* looked with his divine eye. 'Why does my palace move?' He saw that in the world there was a parrot who showed great compassion and who wanted to rescue others from a fire. He went to the limit of his strength, but he could not extinguish the fire. Śakra *devānām indra* then turned to the parrot and said, 'This bamboo forest is large; it extends thousands, tens of thousands of miles! The water taken up by your wings is just a few drops. How can you extinguish such a big fire?' The parrot answered, 'If I am diligent and not idle in my magnanimity I shall surely extinguish the fire. If I cannot extinguish it in this life, when I receive a body in the future, I swear I shall surely extinguish it!' Śakra *devānām indra* was moved by his determination. He let rain come pouring down, and the fire was extinguished.

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"At that time, the parrot was myself. The birds and animals in the forest are now the people in the big towns. Then I extinguished the fire for them and let them gain happiness. Now, also, I extinguish the fire so that they may gain happiness." Furthermore, asked for what reason the villagers obtained the path where the Truths are seen, the Buddha said, "In the time of Kāśyapa Buddha

these people observed the five precepts. For that reason they have now seen the Truths and obtained the path of the *srotāpanna*.”

**Parable 14: In Benares There Was an Elder's Son
Who, Together with a Celestial Spirit,
Moved the King to Pious Conduct**

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha was in Śrāvastī. He said to the *bhikṣus*, “If someone wants King Brahmā to stay in his house, Brahmā will stay in his house if he takes pious care of his parents. If he wants to make Indra stay in his house, Indra will stay in his house if he takes pious care of his parents. If he wants all celestial spirits to stay in his house, he just has to support his parents, and you must know that all celestial spirits are already in his house. Only if he supports his parents will his *upādhyāya* stay in his house. If he wants his *ācārya* to stay in his house, his *ācārya* will stay in his house if he only supports his parents. If he wants to support the nobles and the Buddha, the nobles and the Buddha will stay in his house if he supports his parents.” The *bhikṣus* asked, “O Tathāgata, World-honored One, respect for one's parents is marvelous.” The Buddha said, “Not only is respect for one's parents marvelous now. In the past, also, it has been wonderful to respect one's parents.”

The *bhikṣus* said, “How was this being respectful in the past?” The Buddha said, “Long ago, in Benares, there was a poor man who had only one son. But this one son had many children. His family was poor. Then there was famine in the world. He buried his parents alive under the ground and nourished his living children. A neighbor asked, ‘Where are your parents?’ He answered, ‘My parents were old. They were sure to die soon. So I buried them, and with my parents' share of the food, I want to feed my children so that they can grow up.’ A second family heard this, and they said that this was reasonable. Thus it spread, and all over Benares it became the rule.

455c "Now there was an elder who also had a son. When this son heard this, he considered it to be wrong, and he thought, 'By what means can I abolish this wrong rule?' Consequently he informed his father, 'Father, you must now go far away to study, so that you may know the scriptural commentaries.' So his father went. When he had obtained some learning, he returned home, but he had grown older still. His son dug a pit for him, making it a nice place to stay. He placed his father there and gave him fine food and drink. He thought, 'Who will help me abolish this wrong rule?'

"A celestial spirit appeared to him and said, 'I shall be your partner now.' The celestial spirit wrote a statement asking the king four things, 'If you can solve the questions in this statement, I shall protect you. However, if you do not solve them, after seven days I shall make your head, O king, split into seven parts!' The four questions were these: What is the greatest wealth? What is the greatest happiness? What is the most excellent among flavors? What is the best thing in life? The document was put on the king's gate. When the king obtained it, he made inquiries in the land as to who might answer these questions. If someone answered them, his every wish, whatever he wanted, would be fulfilled.

"The elder's son received this document and he explained its meaning, saying, 'Faith is the greatest wealth. The Right Doctrine is the greatest happiness. Truthfulness is the best flavor. Wisdom is the best thing in life.' Having explained the meaning, he put it back on the king's gate. When the celestial spirit saw it, he felt great joy. The king felt great joy, too.

"The king asked the elder's son, 'Who instructed you with these words?' He replied, 'My father instructed me.' The king said, 'Where is your father?' The elder's son said:

Please, O king, take away my fear! Because my father is very old, I have kept him underground, offending against the rule of the land. Please listen to my words, O great king! Our indebtedness to our parents is as important as heaven and earth. They nursed us for ten months, cleaned away our feces, and removed our urine. They suckled and nourished us and taught us the ways of humans. Our accomplishments

all come from our parents. That we can see the sun and moon, and [achieve] life's accomplishments, is the work of our parents. If we carried our fathers on our left shoulders and our mothers on our right shoulders for a hundred years, giving them all manner of further support, we still could not repay our debts to our parents.

Then the king asked, 'What do you want?' He replied, 'I do not want anything else, but I do wish that you, O great king, would abolish this evil rule.' The king agreed with his words and proclaimed in the land that if anyone lacked piety toward his parents, he would receive heavy punishment.

456a "If you want to know who that elder's son was, it is I now. At that time I removed the evil rule from that country, instituting the rule of pious obedience. That is why I have become a Buddha. That is why I still praise the rule of pious obedience today."

Parable 15: The White Fragrant Elephant of the King of Kāśī Nourishes His Blind Parents and Conciliates Two Countries

Long ago, the Buddha was in Śrāvastī. He informed the *bhikṣus*, "There are eight kinds of people to whom one definitely should give freely! Do not doubt this any longer! They are one's father, one's mother, the Buddha, his disciples, people who come from afar, people who go on a long journey, the sick, and those who attend the sick." The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "O Tathāgata, World-honored One, wonderful! Extraordinary is your constant praise for respect toward one's parents!" The Buddha said, "Not only now, but since olden times, have I always honored and respected them." The *bhikṣus* asked, "How did you praise respect?"

The Buddha said, "Long ago there were two kings. One was the king of Kāśī and the other was the king of Videha. The king of Videha had a big fragrant elephant. With the power of the fragrant elephant he destroyed the army of the king of Kāśī. The king of Kāśī thought, 'Now, how shall I catch a fragrant elephant and

destroy the army of the king of Videha?" Then someone said, 'I have seen that there is a white fragrant elephant in the mountains.' When the king heard this, he immediately sent out an appeal: 'I shall generously reward the person who can catch this fragrant elephant.'

"Someone responded to the appeal. He formed a large army and went out to catch the elephant. The elephant thought, 'Though I may go far away, and though my parents are blind and old, it would be better to comply and go to the king.' Then the troops led the fragrant elephant to the king. The king was very happy. He had a fine dwelling built for [the elephant]. He spread out a mat and a rug of fine felt under him, and he had a host of skilled ladies play the harp and the lute to amuse him. He gave the elephant food and drink, but the latter did not want to take it. Then the one who tended to the elephant came to tell the king, 'The elephant does not want to eat.' The king himself went to the elephant.

"In high antiquity all animals could talk like people. The king asked the elephant, 'Why do you not eat?' The elephant answered, 'I have a father and mother who are old and blind. If no one gives them water and grass, my parents will not eat. How then can I eat!' The elephant said to the king, 'If I wanted to go, your army could not hold me back, O king. Although my parents are blind and old, I came here to you, O king. O king, let me return now and support them. When their lives have ended I shall come back by myself.' When the king heard these words he was extremely happy [and he said], 'We are like elephants with human heads, but this elephant is a person with an elephant's head.' Previously the people of Kāśī treated their parents with contempt and without any respect, but because of this elephant the king issued a command throughout the whole country that if anyone did not piously support and respect his parents he would be severely punished. Consequently he let the elephant return to his parents. He supported his parents for the length of their lives, and when his parents had died he came back to the king.

"Then the king was very happy with the white elephant and adorned him. When he wanted to attack the other country, the

elephant said to the king, 'Do not fight them! As a general rule, when there is fighting, there are many wounded.' The king said, 'They have treated us harshly.' The elephant said, 'Please, let me go, so that the enemy will not dare annoy you!' The king said, 'If you go, you may not be able to return.' He answered, 'No one can hold me back or keep me from returning.' Thereupon the elephant went to the other country.

"When the king of Videha heard of the elephant's arrival, he was very happy and went out himself to welcome him. When he saw the elephant, he said to him, 'Stay in my country now!' The elephant said to the king, 'I cannot stay now. Never in my life have I broken my word. I made a prior promise to the other king that I would return to his country. You two kings should cease your enmity and bring peace to your countries. Would this not be joyful?' He then spoke the stanza:

Gaining a victory adds to hatred, and a defeat increases suffering. He who does not fight over winning or losing has the greatest happiness.

When the elephant had spoken this stanza, he returned to Kāśī. Ever since, the two countries have been at peace.

"He who was the king of Kāśī is now King Prasenajit. The king of Videha is King Ajātaśatru. I was that white elephant. Because I piously supported my parents, I have caused many beings to support their parents piously. And I was then able to make two countries agree to be at peace, just as they are today."

**Parable 16: In Benares a Younger Brother Mildly
Reproves His Older Brother;
Consequently They Get Through to the
Prime Minister and Urge the King to
Convert the World**

Once the World-honored One said to the *bhikṣus*, "You must know that in the past, in Benares, there was a time when an evil rule was

prevalent. When a father had reached the age of sixty, a rug was spread out for him by the door so that he could keep watch. There were two brothers, and the elder one said to the younger one, 'Spread out a rug for our father, so that he may keep watch by the door.' There was only one rug in the house. The younger brother then cut it in two and gave one half to his father. He said to his father, 'My elder brother gives this to you, father. It is not I who gives it. My elder brother instructs you, father, to keep watch by the door.'

"The elder brother said to the younger one, 'Why didn't you give him the whole rug, but cut it in two and gave him half?' The younger brother replied, 'We just had one rug. If I did not cut it in two for him, where could I get another later?' The elder brother asked, 'To whom do you want to give another one?' The younger brother said, 'How could I not keep one for you, brother?' The elder brother said, 'Why for me?' The younger brother said, 'You will grow old, and your son will also place you by the door.'

"When the elder brother heard these words, he was startled and said, 'Will it be the same with me?' The younger brother said, 'Who will take your place?' Then he said to his elder brother, 'One ought to abolish such an evil rule altogether.' So the brothers went together to the prime minister and they repeated this discussion to the state councillor. The state councillor replied, 'Truly so! All of us will grow old, too.' The state councillor informed the king, and the king agreed with these words. He issued a command throughout the land that one should piously support one's parents. He no longer allowed the evil rule to be observed and abolished it."

Parable 17: Brahmadata's Wife Is Jealous and Hurts Her Son Dharmapāla

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha, and he said to Devadatta, "I have always felt profound kindness for you, and I am without evil toward you in body, speech, and mind. Now let us be forgiving!"

Devadatta cursed and went away. The *bhikṣus* said, "Why is it, Tathāgata, that you are so kind, but Devadatta still scolds you?" The Buddha said, "Not only now! In the past, in Benares, there was a king called Brahmadata. His wife's name was Durmati. They had a son, Dharmapāla. He was intelligent and kind and studied with his teacher. Then King Brahmadata led his ladies into the park, and he was entertained and happy. He sent the wine that was left over to his wife in order that she might drink it. His wife became angry and said, 'I would rather stab Dharmapāla in the throat and drink his blood than drink this wine.' When the king heard these words, he said in anger, 'Call Dharmapāla back from his studies!' When Dharmapāla had come, the king wanted to cut his throat. The son said to his father, 'I have committed no crime. O king, you only have one son. Why would you kill me?' The king said, 'I do not kill you. It is your mother's intention! You can tell your mother. Forgiveness will make her happy, and I shall never kill you.' The son was then forgiving toward his mother and said, 'I am your only son, and I have done nothing wrong. Why would you kill me?' When his mother did not accept her son's forgiveness, the king stabbed his son's throat and gave her the blood to drink."

457a The Buddha said, "Kokālika was that father, the king. Devadatta was that mother. I was that son. I had absolutely no evil thoughts then, but my forgiveness was not accepted. It is the same now. My forgiveness is not accepted. Even though I was killed then, I felt no resentment whatsoever. Still less would I be angry now and harbor evil thoughts!"

Parable 18: The *Bhikṣu* Darva Is Slandered

Once there was a *bhikṣu* called Darva. He had the strength of someone with great power. Having gone forth with diligence, he had obtained arhatship and was endowed with majesty. He always managed the monks' affairs. His five fingers sent out light, so he spread out the monks' various mats. Because of this, the Buddha called him the best caretaker.

The *bhikṣu* Maitrakanyaka had little merit himself. At the next meeting of the congregation, the food was coarse, so he turned back and said in anger, "If this Darva takes care of the monks' affairs, never in my life shall I get good food. I must find some means to do something about this." He had a sister who was a *bhikṣuṇī*. He went to salute her and told her to slander Darva three times. Darva grew weary and ascended into the sky, undergoing the eighteen transformations. He entered the *samādhi* with the glow of fire. When the blaze of fire was extinguished in the sky, nothing remained of him. If slander in regard to desire can make even a noble one extinguish his appearance, how much more so for a common man! Therefore a wise one should be cautious about slander and never speak lightly.

Then the *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "Why was the *bhikṣu* Darva slandered? And why did he obtain this great power? Furthermore, why did he obtain arhatship?" The Buddha said, "In former times, when man lived twenty thousand years, there was a Buddha called Kāśyapa. At the time, during Kāśyapa Buddha's existence, there was a young *bhikṣu* whose countenance was fine and whose appearance was beautiful. This young *bhikṣu* went to beg for alms. Before he returned, there was a girl who had been moved by his beauty. She looked at this *bhikṣu* and could not take her eyes from him. The *bhikṣu* Darva was then superintendent of provisions. He happened to see this girl following the *bhikṣu*, her eyes constantly upon him, so he spoke out in defamation, 'For certain, this woman had intercourse with that *bhikṣu*.' For that reason he fell into the three unwholesome destinations. The suffering he experienced was immeasurable. Even now his misfortune is not over. He is still slandered. Because in the past, at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, he went forth to study the path, he has now obtained arhatship. Because in the past, when he managed the monks' affairs, he pulled free a donkey that was carrying rice flour and had sunk deep into the mud, he got the strength of someone with great power."

Parable 19: Revata Is Slandered

457b Once upon a time in Kaśmir, there was an arhat [named] Revata. He sat in meditation in the mountains. Someone lost an ox and was following its tracks. The track led him to Revata, who happened to be making an herbal decoction to dye his garment. The garment changed by itself into the skin of an ox and the dye changed into its blood. The decocted herbs changed into the flesh of an ox, and the bowl in his hands changed into the head of an ox. When the herdsman saw this, he seized Revata, tied him up, and led him to the king, who put him into prison. For twelve years he remained in jail, feeding the horses and cleaning up their manure.

Among the disciples of Revata, five hundred had obtained arhatship. Looking for their master, they did not know his whereabouts. When his karmic condition was about to end, there was one disciple who saw that his master was in prison in Kaśmīr. So he came to tell the king, "My master, Revata, is in your prison, O king. May our meeting set this matter straight!" So the king sent someone to the prison to investigate.

When the king's man arrived at the prison, he saw only someone whose stern appearance was downcast. His beard and his hair were very long; and he fed the horses and cleaned their manure as would a jailed inmate. He returned and said to the king, "There is no religious person, no *śramaṇa* (ascetic) at all in prison. There is only a prisoner."

The *bhikṣu*, the disciple, again said to the king, "I wish that you would simply give instructions that all *bhikṣus* are allowed to leave prison." Then the king issued the command that all religious persons could leave prison. In his prison the beard and the hair of the Venerable Revata fell off by themselves and a *kaṣāya* covered his body. He jumped into the air and experienced the eighteen transformations. When the king saw this, he sighed at this marvel. Bowing down in deepest respect, he said to the venerable one, "Please accept my repentance." Revata immediately came down and received the king's repentance.

The king then asked, "For what karmic condition were you in prison and experiencing suffering through the years?" The venerable one replied, "Formerly I also lost my ox. I followed its tracks and arrived at a mountain. I saw a *pratyekabuddha* sitting in meditation in a lonely spot, and I immediately accused him falsely for one day and a night. For that reason I fell into the three unwholesome destinations. My suffering was immeasurable, but I still had misfortune left. It was not over. Even after I obtained arhatship, I was still slandered."

Parable 20: Rādhikā, the Ugly Daughter of King Prasenajit

Once King Prasenajit had a daughter called Rādhikā. She had the eighteen deformities and looked like no other human. All who saw her were appalled. King Prasenajit then ordered that all those among the elders' sons of good family in the land who were impoverished and alone be brought to him.

457c At that time, near the marketplace, there was an elder's son who was all alone. He provided for his livelihood by begging. When those who went out to summon the sons saw him, they took him to the king. The king led this man into his park in the back and made a proposal, saying, "I have one daughter. Her appearance is ugly. It will not do to show her in public. I want to give her in marriage to you now, sir. Can you agree to it?" Then the elder's son said to the king, "Whatever the king has decided, even if it concerned a dog, I still would not refuse. How much less could I fail to agree to marry your daughter, O king." Consequently the king gave her in marriage to him and built him a palace. He told the elder's son, "This woman looks awful. Do not show her to anyone! When you go out, lock the gate, and when you are in, keep the door shut! Consider this a constant rule!"

There were many elders' sons who, as common friends, organized banquets and distractions. Whenever they met, the wives of the elders' sons all joined the party. However, this royal daughter

alone did not come. Thereupon they all made an agreement that when they met again later, they had to bring their wives. If one did not come, a heavy fine would be levied.

Subsequently they organized another meeting, but the poor elder's son still did not bring his wife, just as before. Then they all charged him a heavy fine. The elder's son politely accepted being fined. They made a new agreement to meet again the next day and if he did not bring his wife, he would have to pay another heavy fine. Thus he was fined three times, and he still did not bring her to the meetings. When the poor elder's son later arrived home, he said to his wife, "I have often been condemned to pay a fine because of you." When his wife asked why, her husband said, "We all have an agreement that, on a day when we meet to drink, we must all bring our wives to the meeting. Because I was told by the king not to take you and show you to the people outside, I have been fined frequently."

When his wife heard these words she was utterly mortified and deeply afflicted. Night and day she called upon the Buddha. Later on, another banquet was organized and the husband again went alone. The wife doubled her good faith at home and she pronounced the wish, "When the Tathāgata appears in the world, many are benefitted, but I am blamed. I alone do not benefit." The Buddha was moved by her determination, and he leaped out of the ground. First she saw the Buddha's hair. She was full of reverence and joy, and her own hair changed into beautiful hair. Then she saw the Buddha's forehead, and she saw his eyebrows, his eyes, ears, nose, body, and mouth. As she saw them, her joy became more and more profound, and her body changed. Her ugliness vanished completely and she looked like a goddess.

The elders' sons talked things over in secret, saying, "As for the reason why the king's daughter does not come to our meetings, it is certainly because her beauty is greater than average, or else because she is so terribly ugly, that she does not come. We shall now make her husband drunk so that he loses consciousness. We shall take away his keys, open the gate, and have a look." Then they drank and made him drunk; they took his keys, and they went in

each other's company. When they opened the gate and had a look, they saw that this king's daughter was beautiful beyond compare. Then they left, closing the gate, and went back to the place from which they had come. As the husband still had not regained consciousness, they returned his keys, attaching them to his waist.

When the husband came to he returned home. When he opened the gate, he saw his wife's extraordinary beauty. He was surprised and asked her, "What deity are you, staying in my home?" His wife said, "I am your wife, Rādhikā." The husband was surprised and asked her the reason for this unexpected event. The wife then replied, "When I heard that you were often condemned and fined because of me, I felt mortified. In my affliction I called upon the Buddha. Then I saw the Tathāgata leap out of the ground. Seeing him, I felt joy, and my body became beautiful." The poor elder's son was extremely happy. He then went to the king and told him, "The body of your daughter, O king, has of itself become beautiful. She wants to see you now, O king."

When the king heard this, he was happy and so he invited her. Although he was happy upon seeing her, he felt very perplexed. He had it in mind to go to the Buddha, and he said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, why was this daughter born in my palace with an ugly body, startling anyone who saw her? Furthermore, why has she now suddenly become beautiful?" The Buddha said to the king, "Once in the past there was a *pratyekabuddha*. Every day he begged his food. He arrived in front of the gate of an elder. The elder's daughter then took some food to give it to the *pratyekabuddha*; but seeing that the *pratyekabuddha*'s body was ugly, she said, 'This one is awful! His body looks as if it had the skin of a fish. His hair is like a horse's tail.'

"That elder's daughter is your daughter now. Because she gave food, she was born in your palace. Because she defamed a *pratyekabuddha*, her body was ugly. Because she was mortified and afflicted, she could meet me; and because she became happy, her body became beautiful." When the congregation heard the Buddha's explanation, they received it with joy and respectfully made obeisance.

Parable 21: King Prasenajit's Daughter Suprabhā

Once King Prasenajit had a daughter called Suprabhā who was intelligent and fair. Her parents felt kindly toward her and the whole palace loved her reverently. The father said to his daughter, "It is because of me that the whole palace loves you reverently." The daughter answered her father, "I have the karmic power. It is not because of you, my father and king." Though he asked her three times in this way, her answer remained the same.

458b Then the king became angry. "I shall now put it to the test whether you have your own karmic power or not." He ordered his attendants to look for a very poor and lowly beggar in the town. So they carried out the king's instructions and set out on their search. They found a poor man and took him to the king. The king then gave his daughter Suprabhā to the poor man, saying to his daughter, "From now on you may know by factual verification whether it is your own karmic power rather than my power." His daughter still replied, "I have the karmic power." So she left together with the poor man.

She asked her husband, "You must have had parents?" The poor man answered, "My father used to be the highest elder in Śrāvastī. I lived at home with my parents, but it all came to an end when they died. I do not have anyone to depend on, and so I am destitute." Suprabhā asked him, "Would you know now where your old home was?" He replied, "I know where it was, but the buildings are destroyed. So there is only an empty space." Suprabhā then went with her husband to where the old dwelling had been. They looked everywhere. As they came to a particular place, the ground split open by itself and a treasure hidden in the ground appeared, just like that. With these valuables, they hired people to build a dwelling. In less than a month the palace and the houses had all been completed. They were filled with palace attendants and singing girls, with countless female and male servants.

The king suddenly remembered, "I wonder how my daughter Suprabhā is." Someone answered, "Her palace and her wealth are no less than yours, O king." The king said, "The Buddha's words

are true. When one performs good or evil, one will experience its reward." That same day the king's daughter sent her husband with an invitation to the king. The king accepted the invitation; and he saw that in her house carpets and rugs adorned the dwellings, excelling those in his own palace. When the king saw this, he sighed at this marvel. The daughter knew that her words were true, and she said, "For the good I have performed, I experienced this recompense."

The king went to ask the Buddha, "What meritorious action did this daughter perform in a previous existence, that she has obtained birth in a royal family and that her body is bright?" The Buddha replied to the king, "Ninety-one kalpas ago there was a Buddha called Vipāśyin. At that time there was a king called Bandhumat. The king had a first wife. After Vipāśyin Buddha had entered nirvana, King Bandhumat erected a pagoda of the seven precious things for the Buddha's relics. The king's first wife placed the plume adornment of her celestial crown on the head of Vipāśyin Buddha's image, and she attached the wish-granting gem in her celestial crown to his crest. Its brightness illuminated the world. So she pronounced the wish, 'May my future body be bright, the color of pure purple gold, honorable and aristocratic, and may I not fall into the three unwholesome destinations or the eight difficult conditions!'

458c "That first wife of the king at that time is now Suprabhā. At the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, she worshipped Kāśyapa Tathāgata and his four great disciples with savory food; but her husband stopped her. His wife earnestly requested him, 'Do not stop me! I ask you to let me supply them well.' The husband then gave his wife permission, and she completed her worship. The husband at that time is her present husband; that wife is his present wife. Because the husband then stopped his wife, he remained poor. Because he then gave her permission, he obtained great wealth, essentially because of his wife. When he was without his wife, he was later poor again. Good or evil actions follow you, always, without fail!" When the king heard the Buddha's explanation, he gained deep understanding about one's actions. Without any

self-conceit, he achieved a profound, pious insight and went away pleased.

Parable 22: Once Two Brothers, Sons of a King, Were Expelled from Their Country

Once there were two brothers, sons of a king, who were expelled from their country. When they arrived at a deserted area, their provisions were completely used up. The younger brother killed his wife and shared her flesh with his brother and his wife, so that they might eat. When the elder brother obtained this flesh, he hid it and did not eat it. He took a slice of the flesh of his own leg and he and his wife ate that. When the flesh of the younger brother's wife was all used up, he wanted to obtain some by killing his elder brother's wife. His elder brother said, "Do not kill her! I shall give you back the flesh that I hid away. Eat that!" When they had passed beyond the deserted area, they reached the dwelling of a divine seer. Gathering fruits, they nourished themselves. Afterward the younger brother died of illness, and only the elder brother was left behind all by himself. Then the prince saw a criminal whose hands and feet had been cut off as in punishment. He felt compassionate and gathered fruits to provide for the crippled man's livelihood.

In his conduct as a man, the prince scarcely knew lust. Once when he had gone to gather fruits and his wife had stayed behind, she had intercourse with the criminal. She herself had private feelings and disliked her husband intensely. One day she followed her husband to gather fruits. Upon reaching the bank of a river she said to her husband, "Take the fruit at the top of the tree!" The husband said to his wife, "Underneath there is a deep river. I might fall into it." The wife said, "Tie a rope around your waist! I shall pull the rope while you go a little closer to the bank!" The wife gave her husband a push and he fell into the river. Because of the wholesome power of his compassion, he drifted away with the water and did not drown.

Downstream there was a country whose king had passed away. The diviners of that country were investigating who should become king in the land. In the distance they saw a yellow cloud cover on the river. After the diviners had interpreted this to mean that under the yellow cloud cover there had to be a divine being, they sent someone on the water to go and welcome him; and they installed him as their king.

Carrying the crippled man and wandering from place to place to beg, the king's former wife arrived in the king's adoptive country. The people in the land declared that here was a fine woman who carried her crippled husband, respectfully displaying pious obedience. So they made this known to the king. When the king heard about it, he sent someone to invite her to come to his palace. The king asked the woman, "Is this crippled man really your husband?" She answered, "Truly!" Then the king said, "Do you know me?" She answered, "I do not know you." The king said, "Do you know a certain . . . ?" She looked closely at the king, and only then did she become ashamed. So the king felt compassion, and he had someone provide for their livelihood.

The Buddha said, "If you want to know, that king is [now] myself. Ciñcā was that wife, the daughter of a Brahman. She slandered me, strapping a wooden bowl around her waist, [pretending to be pregnant by me]. The one who at that time had his hands and feet cut off was Devadatta."

**Parable 23: The Wife of Sudatta the Elder Nourishes
the Buddha, and the Couple Are
Recompensed**

Once, when the Buddha was in the world, Sudatta the elder ended up in poverty. All his riches were used up. He was engaged as a servant and received three pecks of rice. He and his wife steamed it and prepared a meal. Then when they had steamed it, Aniruddha happened to come by to beg for food. Sudatta's wife took his bowl, filled it up with rice, and gave it to him. Afterwards, Subhūti,

Mahākāśyapa, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, and Śāriputra, one after the other, came by to beg. The wife took the bowl of each, filled it with rice, and gave it to them. Finally, the World-honored One himself came to beg for food. She gave him a full bowl, too. Thereupon Sudatta, who had been away, returned and asked his wife for food. The wife answered her husband, "Supposing that the reverend Aniruddha came, would you eat the food yourself or give it to the reverend?" He replied, "I would rather abstain from eating and give food to the reverend." "And if Kāśyapa, Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Subhūti, Śāriputra, and even the Buddha came, what would you do?" He answered, "I would rather abstain from eating and give it all to them." The wife said to her husband, "Since this morning, all these noble ones came to ask for food. All the food we had I gave to them." The husband said to his wife, "Our misfortune has come to an end, and our good fortune will grow." Then he opened up his storehouse; and it was completely filled with grain, silk, food, and drink. When they used it up, it filled up again.

**Parable 24: Sāraṇa Bhikṣu Is Beaten by King
Caṇḍapradhyota**

Long ago the son of King Udayana, called Sāraṇa, found delight in the Buddha's Doctrine. He went forth to study the path, and he practiced the asceticism of the *dhūtaguṇas*. He was sitting in meditation with settled mindfulness underneath a tree in a mountain grove when King Caṇḍapradhyota passed by with his ladies on a pleasure trip. Reaching this grove, the king halted his carriage to rest and immediately fell asleep. Because the king was asleep, the ladies amused themselves. They saw that there was a *bhikṣu* sitting in meditation underneath a tree, his mind settled. They went over to him, paid their respects, and made inquiries. Then the *bhikṣu* expounded the Doctrine to them.

When the king later woke up, he looked for his ladies and saw that in the distance there was a *bhikṣu* underneath a tree. His appearance was handsome, and he was in the flower of his youth.

459b The ladies were in front of him, listening to the Doctrine. The king went to him and asked, "Have you obtained arhatship?" He replied, "I have not." "Are you an *anāgāmin*?" He answered, "I am not." "Did you obtain *srotāpatti*?" He answered, "I did not." "Do you contemplate impurity?" He answered, "I do not." Then the king became very angry, and he said, "You have absolutely nothing at all. Why do you sit here with my ladies, since you are a common man in the cycle of birth and death?" He grabbed him and gave him a beating, hurting him all over his body. When the ladies said, "This *bhikṣu* has done nothing wrong," the king became angrier still and gave him another beating. They all cried with distress, and the king became twice as angry.

At that moment the *bhikṣu* thought to himself, "Because the Buddhas of the past were forbearing they obtained the unsurpassed path. Furthermore, in the past Kṣāntivādin had his ears, nose, hands, and feet cut off by someone; but he was still forbearing. Should I not be all the more forbearing today, being of sound body?" Reflecting thus, he endured in silence.

After he had received the beating, he hurt all over his body. It got worse and worse, and he could no longer stand the pain. Again he thought, "If I were among the laity, as the son of the king of the land, I would succeed to the royal throne. The strength of my troops would not be inferior to that of any other king. Today, as I am alone, having gone forth, I am oppressed." He felt deep distress, and he wanted to discontinue the path and return to his family. So he took his leave of his *upādhyāya*, Kātyāyana, wishing to return to the laity. His *upādhyāya* replied, "You have just received a thorough and painful beating. Wait until tomorrow! Stay a while to rest. Then you may go." Then, when Sāraṇa had received his instruction, he stayed for the night.

Late at night the Venerable Kātyāyana showed him a dream in which Sāraṇa saw himself discontinuing the path and returning to his family. After the death of the king, his father, he succeeded to the royal throne. He assembled his four troops and attacked King Caṇḍapradya. When he had reached the other country, he drew [the armies] up in array, and they fought a battle. He was

defeated, and his army was destroyed. He himself was taken prisoner. Then, when King Caṇḍapradya had seized Sāraṇa, he sent someone with a sword in order to do away with him. Sāraṇa was utterly terrified then, and the thought occurred to him that he wished to meet his *upādhyāya*. Although someone was about to kill him, he did not feel any malice.

At that time the *upādhyāya* was aware of what Sāraṇa had in mind. Holding his staff and his alms bowl, he was about to go on his begging round. Appearing in front of Sāraṇa he said, "My son, I have constantly expounded the Doctrine to you in various ways. If you seek victory in a quarrel, you can never gain it. If you have no need for my teaching, you know what may happen!" He answered his *upādhyāya*, "If you save your disciple's life now, I shall not dare do it again." Then Kātyāyana said to the king's men on behalf of Sāraṇa, "I wish you would desist for a while. Allow me to inform the king and save his life!" Having said this, he went to where the king was but the king's men did not want to delay any further, and they planned to do away with him. When they were about to let the sword drop, he was terrified and could not utter a sound. Then, he woke up.

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When he awoke, he told his *upādhyāya* everything he had seen in his dream. His *upādhyāya* replied:

In life (i.e., samsaric existence) there is absolutely no victory in strife. Why? As a rule in warfare, one considers the destruction of the enemy to be a victory. Although on the path of destruction, one may, with foolish emotions, today take delight in one's mind, in the future world one will fall into the three unwholesome destinations, experiencing immeasurable suffering. If one loses and is ruined by someone else, one loses one's life, and misfortune comes to the common people. One increases other serious offenses, so that one falls into hell. Enemies do not stop their mutual killing, and they revolve endlessly in the five destinations. Consider this over and over again!

If one examines one's pain, what is it that mends the sores of the body? If you want to leave the fear of birth and death

now or the agony of a beating, you should contemplate your own body in order to stop hating. Why? The body is the wellspring of all suffering. It is encroached upon by hunger, thirst, cold, warmth, birth, old age, sickness and death, mosquitos, gadflies, poison, and animals. Such enemies are numerous and immeasurable. You cannot wipe them out. Why do you want to wipe out only King Caṇḍapradya? If you want to destroy your enemy, you must destroy affliction. The enemy, affliction, hurts countless bodies. An enemy in the world may be serious, but he hurts only one body; the enemy, affliction, hurts a multitude of good qualities. An enemy in the world may be fierce, but he hurts only an impure and filthy body. If one looks at it from this viewpoint, affliction is the basis of the rise of enmity. If you do not attack the enemy affliction now, how will you attack King Caṇḍapradya?

Thus he explained the Doctrine in various ways.

When Sāraṇa heard these words, his thoughts became clear and his mind understood. He became a *srotāpanna* and he felt profound joy in the Great Law. He doubled his vigorous pursuit; and having practiced the path for a short while, he became an arhat.

**Parable 25: A Palace Attendant Redeems Bulls That
Were to Be Gelded and Regains His
Manhood**

Long ago in Gandhāra there was a butcher who wanted to geld all of his five hundred young bulls. A palace attendant [who was a eunuch] then redeemed the bulls with his own money and turned the herd loose. Because of these circumstances, he regained his manhood. He returned to the king's house and sent someone to make it known that a certain person was outside. The king said, "He is my domestic. Let him come in as he wishes. He never used to announce himself before. Why does he do so now?"

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When the king asked this, the attendant replied to the king, "When, some time ago, I saw a butcher who was about to geld his five hundred young bulls, I redeemed them and set them free. That is why my body became complete. So I dare not enter."

Upon hearing this, the king was pleased. He had a deep belief in and respect for the Buddha's Doctrine. If he was thus affected by a splendid recompense, his later recompense will surely be immeasurable!

Parable 26: Two Palace Attendants Have an Argument

Long ago, when King Prasenajit was lying down to sleep, he overheard two palace attendants having an argument. One said, "My livelihood depends on the king." The other answered, "I depend on no one. I live by the power of my deeds." When the king heard this, he approved of the one whose livelihood depended on the king, and he wanted to reward him. So he sent a servant to say to his wife, "I shall send someone now. Give plenty of money, clothes, and jewelry to the one who will come!"

Thereupon he sent the one whose livelihood depended on the king to give his wife the rest of the wine he had been drinking. As that attendant went out of the door with the wine, his nose started to bleed and he could not go on. He happened to meet again the one who lived by the power of his deeds, and he had him go and take the wine to the wife. When the wife saw him, she recalled the king's words and bestowed money, clothes, and jewelry upon him.

Upon his return to the king, the king saw him and was greatly surprised. So he called the one whose livelihood depended on the king and asked him, "I sent you. Why did you not go?" He answered, "When I went out of the door, my nose suddenly started to bleed. I could not bear it, so I had the other one take the rest of your wine, O king, and give it to your wife."

Chapter II

Then the king sighed and said, "Now I know that the Buddha's words are the truth: one performs his own deeds and must experience their recompense. One cannot take it away. Looking at it from this vantage point, a wholesome or an evil recompense is brought about by one's deeds. Neither a god nor a king can bestow it."

Chapter III

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Parable 27: Two Brothers Both Go Forth

460b Once upon a time there were two brothers who found their happiness in the Buddha's Doctrine. They went forth and applied themselves to the path. The elder brother was diligent, and he developed many good qualities. He practiced *āraṇyaka* conduct and shortly afterward obtained arhatship. The younger brother was intelligent. His learning was extensive, and he recited the scriptural texts of the Tripiṭaka. Later he was invited by the state councillor to be his tutor and received a great deal of money. The councillor commissioned him to construct monks' quarters and a temple with a pagoda. The master of the Tripiṭaka Doctrine accepted the riches, and he had people measure out the area to build a temple with a pagoda. The pagoda was dignified, and the buildings were magnificent. Their construction was a piece of wondrous craftsmanship. When the state councillor saw the temple, his respect increased twofold. He granted the *bhikṣu* honors.

Encouraged by this, and finding himself better off, the Tripiṭaka *bhikṣu* saw that the councillor was kindly disposed. So he thought, "The monastery may be completed, but it is still necessary that monks dwell in the monastery. I shall speak to the state councillor, so that he may invite my elder brother." Having had this thought, he addressed the state councillor, "I have a brother who lives elsewhere. He gave up his home to enter the path. Diligent and zealous, he has practiced *āraṇyaka* conduct. O *dānapati*, you might now invite him to stay in the monastery." The state councillor answered, "That which is decided by my teacher, a regular *bhikṣu*, I dare not oppose. This is still more so for my teacher's elder brother, an *āraṇyaka*."

He immediately sent someone with an urgent invitation. Upon the elder brother's arrival, the state councillor saw his diligent behavior, and he increased his homage twofold. Later the state councillor gave the *āraṇyaka bhikṣu* a fine piece of cloth of inestimable value, but the *āraṇyaka bhikṣu* was not willing to accept it. 460c Only when insistently urged to accept it did he do so, formulating

the following consideration, "My younger brother manages things. When he needs anything valuable, I shall give it to him."

Afterwards the state councillor gave a piece of coarse cloth to the Tripitaka master (younger brother). Upon receiving it, he became very angry. And later the state councillor again gave the elder brother, the *āraṇyaka*, a priceless piece of fine cloth. When the elder brother received it, he passed it on to his younger brother. When the younger brother saw it, he became twice as jealous. So he took this piece of cloth, went to the beloved daughter of the state councillor, and said to her, "Your father, the state councillor, treated me generously before. Now, ever since my elder brother came, perhaps he has in some way deceived your father, who is now no longer generous toward me. I give this cloth to you. Take it before the state councillor and stitch it to make a garment. If he asks questions, answer, 'The *āraṇyaka* whom you, O father, hold in esteem, has taken this and given it to me.' The state councillor is bound to become angry, but do not talk with him." The daughter said to the Tripitaka master, "My father is now generous and reverential toward that *bhikṣu*, holding him as dear as his own eyes or a bright pearl. Why should I suddenly slander him?" The Tripitaka master then said, "If you do not do so, I shall break with you forever!" The daughter replied, "Why be so precipitate? There must be a better way!" As the situation could not be resolved, she accepted that cloth and cut it in front of her father, making it into a garment. Then when the state councillor saw the cloth, he recognized it and thought to himself, "That so-called *bhikṣu* (the elder brother) is a very evil man. Obtaining my piece of cloth, he did not keep it for himself, but he deceives a woman, my child, with it."

After that, whenever the *āraṇyaka* came, he no longer went out to welcome him any more and his countenance changed. Then, when the elder brother saw how the state councillor behaved, he thought to himself, "Someone must have slandered me so that he is acting like this." Then he ascended into the sky and made the eighteen transformations. When the state councillor saw this, he felt profound respect and obedience. With his wife, he fell at the

bhikṣu's feet and confessed. His respect and affection were twice as great as before. He then expelled the Tripitaka master and his own daughter. He had them both leave the country.

The Buddha said, "At that time I was the Tripitaka master. Because I slandered someone, I experienced great suffering during countless kalpas. Even now I am slandered by Sundarī. The girl is expelled now because she slandered a noble one, and she is needy, begging for a living. Therefore you people should always think carefully! Do not slander lightly, because you will thus bring punishment on yourself!"

Parable 28: Kokālika Slanders Śāriputra

461a Long ago, the Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana were wandering from town to town. Arriving at a potter's workshop, they encountered a rain storm, so they stayed there for the night. It happened that a cowherd girl had arrived at the pottery first. She was staying deep in the back; and because disciples are no different from common men when they have not entered concentration, they did not notice her. When the cowherd girl saw that the looks of Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana were fine, she was deluded inside and she lost impurity. The Venerable Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana left the pottery. Kokālika was well versed in judging facial expressions. Upon examining someone's countenance, he knew whether or not that person had given way to desire. He saw the cowherd girl leave after them, and the countenance of the girl suggested that she had fulfilled her desire. He did not know that the girl had deluded herself and lost impurity. So he slandered the Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana, accusing them of debauching the cowherd girl. He widely proclaimed this to the *bhikṣus*. Then the *bhikṣus* remonstrated three times, "Do not slander the Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana!" Kokālika then become angry, and his anger grew and grew.

There was an elder called Baka. The Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana had explained to him the essentials of the Doctrine, and he had become an *anāgāmin*. When his life had ended, he was born in the Brahma Heaven, so they called him Baka-brāhmaṇa. Then Baka-brāhmaṇa directly knew in heaven that Kokālika had slandered the Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana, and he descended into Kokālika's house. Kokālika asked, "Who are you?" He answered, "I am Baka-brāhmaṇa." "Why did you come?" The *brāhmaṇa* said, "With my heavenly ear I have heard you slander the Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana. Do not say that these venerables have done such things!" Thus he remonstrated three times. He remonstrated with him, but Kokālika did not stop. He replied, "You, O Baka-brāhmaṇa, say that you are an *anāgāmin*. *Anāgāmin* means one who does not return. Why did you come to me? If you are like that, the Buddha's words are untrue." The *brāhmaṇa* said, "Not to return means not to return to the realm of desire and to experience birth."

Then Kokālika got nasty boils as big as beans all over his body, from head to toe. He went to where the Buddha was, and he said to the Buddha, "Why did Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana debauch the cowherd girl?" The Buddha remonstrated, too, saying, "Do not accuse Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana of that!" Hearing these words spoken by the Buddha, he became twice as angry. Then his nasty boils gradually became as big as crab apples. He asked the Buddha a second time. The Buddha again remonstrated, saying, "Do not say this!" His boils gradually became as big as fists. He did not desist from asking a third time, and his boils gradually became as big as gourds. He got a fierce fever and jumped into a cool pool, which caused it to start boiling vigorously. His boils all burst open. His life immediately ended and he fell into the Mahotpala Hell.

Then the *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, why did someone gravely slander the Venerable Śāriputra and the Venerable Maudgalyāyana?" The Buddha said, "In a past kalpa Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana were common men. They saw a *pratyekabuddha* leave a potter's workshop. A cowherd girl also

happened to be there. She left after him, and they immediately slandered him, saying, 'That so-called *bhikṣu* certainly had intercourse with this girl!' Because of this deed, they fell into the three unwholesome destinations and experienced immeasurable suffering. Though they have become noble now, their previous karmic causality had not ended. They were still slandered. Know that *śrāvakas* cannot be great teachers to sentient beings. Why? If Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana had shown any element of supernatural power for Kokālika's sake, Kokālika would surely have escaped hell. Because they did not show it for him, they let Kokālika fall into hell."

The Buddha explained that event in this manner: "In the case of a bodhisattva it would be just as in the time of Krakucchanda Buddha. There was a sage called Dīpaṃkara. He lived together with five hundred sages in a thatched cave in a mountain forest. A woman accidentally passed there. It happened to be raining, and the wind and cold were extreme. She did not have a place to shelter herself against the rain, so she turned to where the sage Dīpaṃkara was and spent the night there. The next morning she went away. When the sages saw her, they immediately slandered him and said, 'This sage, Dīpaṃkara, certainly committed impure behavior with that woman!' Dīpaṃkara knew then what was on their minds. Apprehensive that their slander would cause them to fall into hell, he ascended seven *tāla* trees high in the sky and made the eighteen transformations. When the sages saw this they said, 'When one's body can leave the ground to the distance of four fingers' length, it is free from lust. How much less would Dīpaṃkara, who, having ascended into the sky, makes these great magic transformations, have sensuous delight! How could we slander a pure person!' Then the five hundred sages threw themselves to the ground. They bent down and repented. For this reason they escaped heavy punishment. Know that a bodhisattva has great expedient means. He is truly a good teacher to sentient beings."

The Buddha said, "The sage Dīpaṃkara is now Maitreya. The five hundred sages are now the elders, the five hundred *bhikṣus*."

Parable 29: The Stanzas of the Dragon Kings

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When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, Devadatta went to where the Buddha was and scolded him with foul words. When Ānanda heard this, he became extremely angry. He drove Devadatta away, ordering him to leave. He said to him, "If you come again, I will see to it that you suffer greatly!" When the *bhikṣus* had seen this, they said to the Buddha, "Strange, O World-honored One! You, O Tathāgata, always have compassionate thoughts for Devadatta; but Devadatta always harbors evil thoughts toward you, O Tathāgata. Ānanda became angry. He drove him away and made him leave."

The Buddha said, "Not only now! In the past it was also like this. Long ago in the land of Kāśī there were two brothers, dragon kings. One was called Dardara and the other Upadardara. They always let it rain in the right season, so that the vegetation in that land grew abundantly. The five cereals ripened, and the animals drank water. They all became fat. The number of oxen and sheep grew. The king of the land then often had oxen and sheep killed. He went to where the dragons were and sacrificed the animals to the dragons. The dragons appeared and said to the king, 'Since we do not eat them, what is the use of killing these creatures and sacrificing them to us?' Although they repeated these words, it was to no avail.

"The two brothers then went away together and avoided that place. They arrived at the dwelling of a small dragon called Dundubhi. The dragon Dundubhi was always angry. He scolded them with foul words. Dardara said to him, 'Don't get angry! We shall soon be gone.' Upadardara was extremely angry and said, 'You are just a petty dragon that always eats frogs. If I gave vent to my anger, I would blow you and your relatives away so that you would all be extinguished!' Dardara said to his younger brother, 'Don't be angry! We shall return to our former place. The king of Kāśī is longing for us.' The king of Kāśī said these words, 'If the two dragons come, I shall bring them sacrifices of curds according to their needs, and I shall not slaughter any beings any more!' When

the dragon kings heard this, they returned to their former place. Thereupon Dardara spoke these stanzas:

1. May you all be in harmony and listen attentively! It is extremely wholesome to purify one's mental dharmas. Listen to the deeds explaining the bodhisattva's former karmic causality and to ancient stanzas about the appearance of the present Buddha!
2. When the god among gods, the *Sam̐buddha*, the Tathāgata, was in the world, the *bhikṣus* still uttered evil words and derided one another. The One with Great Compassion heard such words.
3. He assembled the Sangha of *bhikṣus* and spoke thus, "O *bhikṣus*, you have left your homes, relying on me. You must not do wrong deeds, but you all speak harsh words.
4. "You slander each other, harming yourselves. Do you know that one who seeks *bodhi* must develop friendly forbearance, a difficult and hard practice? If you want to rely on the Buddha's Doctrine,
5. "You must practice the sixfold respectful behavior. The wise one listens well when applying himself to the Buddha's path! Because he wants to benefit and bring peace to beings, he vexes absolutely no one.
6. "If he is learned in his practice, he must shun evil. When someone who has gone forth raises strife, it is like ice water coming out of a fire. I was a dragon king in the past.
7. "I and my younger brother lived together. If you want to comply with the rules of going forth, you must do away with strife and behave in agreement with the path. One brother, the elder one, was called Dardara.
8. "The other was called Upadardara. They both did not kill any living being and maintained the precepts in purity.

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Having mighty qualities, they disliked their dragonlike appearances. Constantly turning toward a wholesome destination, they sought to become men.

9. "When they met a *śramaṇa* or Brahman, one who practiced the precepts in purity or who was learned, they changed their appearances and honored him, devotedly serving him. On the eighth day, the fourteenth day, and the fifteenth day
10. "They observed the eight precepts and checked their minds. They left their dwelling and went elsewhere. There was a dragon called Dundubhi who saw the mighty qualities of us two dragons.
11. "He knew he was inferior and he became envious. He kept scolding us with harsh words. With swollen jaws and swollen mouth, he breathed heavily. His mind was filled with hatred and his body was inflated.
12. "What he uttered were nasty sounds and slanderous words. He was seized by deception and falsehood. Hearing this infamous scolding by the evil dragon, Upadardara was extremely angry.
13. "He insistently said to his elder brother, Dardara, 'I am slandered by these foul words. He always eats frogs and lives near the water. How dare this insignificant creature scold me!
14. " "In the water he annoys the water animals, and on land he vexes people. Hearing this foulness, I would like to be patient, but it is hard to bear. I shall now destroy him and his relatives.
15. " "When all are destroyed, let us go back to our place!' When the dragon king with great power heard his younger brother's words, the fine stanzas that he expounded were praised by the wise. 'If at the place where one stays one night

16. "One is poorly equipped but sleeps peacefully, one must not think evil thoughts there. Thankfulness and gratefulness are praised by the noble. If one rests under a tree with little shade,
17. "One must not destroy its branches and leaves or its flowers and fruits. If one does some evil to relatives, one will never find happiness. If the kindness of one meal is repaid with evil,
18. "One is an ungrateful evildoer. His wholesome fruit does not grow but is extinguished again. If a forest is burned and scorched, it later grows again, as before,
- 462b 19. "But the good of an ungrateful person does not grow. If one cares for an evil person with a hundred offerings, he will never be grateful; he will certainly repay with evil, just as in the case of the sage on whom an elephant cow relied.
20. "She had a son and died. The sage kept the son alive; but when grown he became deranged and killed the sage, trampling his wooden dwelling to pieces. Such is the ingratitude of an evil person.
21. "His mind is fickle and unstable, just like a tree in a whirlpool. He does not develop friendliness nor does he return any kindness. He is like a white cloth, as distinguished from a skillfully dyed one.
22. "If one wants to repay hatred, one should increase goodness. One must not harm with evil! The wise repay hatred with friendliness. One may carry the burden of heaven and earth, of mountains and seas;
23. "But this burden is lighter than the weight of ingratitude. Equal friendliness toward all beings, this is the highest and most excellent happiness. When one helps someone cross a ford and pass in uttermost safety,

24. "The twofold happiness of such friendliness is like this: not to harm one's friend means happiness, and doing away with one's arrogance also means happiness. If internally one has no virtuous conduct and externally one is negligent,
25. "One is truly ignorant and produces arrogance. If one likes violent strife and is friendly with evil friends, one's fame is spoiled and one has a bad name. Orphans, old people, sick people,
26. "The weak who have recently lost their riches and honor, a lord who has lost his land, who is destitute and poor, those who are distressed by loneliness and have no support—if for those who are distressed by calamities
27. "One does not feel pity, one is not called benevolent. If one reaches another country, without any relatives, forbearance means happiness when one meets with any foul scolding. Restraining any foulness, strife is appeased.
28. "It is better to stay in another country where people do not know you than to be in one's own state scorned by all. If one is respected in another country, people will all come and be close to you, not creating any angry strife,
29. "Like one's friends and relatives in one's own country. The happiness of riches and honors in the world is very little. The sufferings of decay are very many. If one sees that beings all give in
30. "And are unable to restrain themselves, silence means happiness. "The enemy's power is superior and I am weak. Since my friends are few, I have no one to rely on." If one considers thus, silence means happiness.
31. "Unrighteous people desire and are stingy. They do not trust, are shameless, and do not accept a word. Silence toward those evil ones means happiness. They have a great deal of hatred and the harm they bring is evil.

32. "They like to bring distress to beings. Near such people silence means happiness. They do not trust, are overbearing, and like to be conceited. When they meet with opposition, they simulate, mislead, and deceive.
33. "Silence toward such people means happiness. They break the precepts and are malignant. They do not bother with forbearance. They always do what is wrong and never walk in faith. Silence toward these people means happiness.
34. "They lie and have no moral dread. They like slander, wrong views, harsh words, and frivolous talk. They are haughty and conceited, and they count on their egos. They are extremely stingy and cherish envy.
35. "Silence toward these people brings happiness. If people do not know you in some other place, and if they do not distinguish your different characteristics and conduct, you must not be conceited and feel pride.
36. "On reaching another region and staying there, one looks to others for clothing and food; one is not self-sufficient. If one is reviled, one must bear it all. If, while staying in another region and expecting clothing and food,
37. "One wants happiness in one's undertakings, one must also be forbearing, just as I mentioned earlier. If one stays in another region and expects clothing and food, even if a vile person comes to despise you,
38. "The wise person ought to bear this. If an evil friend lives in another region, a foolish one may dwell together with the vile person. A wise one brings himself to safety, as when covering over a fire.
39. "Just as when a blustering gale blows over a blazing fire, the flames spread through the forest and burn everything, so hatred burns oneself and the others, just like fire. This is known as the damage of utter evil.

40. "Hatred and desire are eliminated by the wise person. If one develops compassion and so forth, hatred will gradually be extinguished. He who has never lived with goodness, but who claims it at once, having always been near evil, is a deluded person.
41. "He who does not contemplate his faults, but denies them at once, he who performs such deeds, is not a wise one. If there were no foolishness, wisdom would not be manifest. Just as when a bird has a broken wing and cannot fly,
42. "A wise one is just like that if there are no fools. Because of one's ample foolishness and ignorance, one cannot understand that wisdom has power. Because of this [power] intelligent ones,
43. "Having extensive knowledge and being learned, can dwell in happiness. When a wise one gains an advantage, his mind is not exalted; and when he loses an advantage, he is not dejected, being free from delusion. The principles he explains are praised as explanations of the truth.
44. "His every word is a protection against evil. His eloquence is for happiness and benefit. He gives explanations to bring about the necessary understanding. When a wise one hears about something, he does not immediately act.
45. "He considers and deliberates, and he investigates whether it is true. He acts only after he has understood whether it is right. This is called benefitting oneself and benefitting others. The wise one never
46. "Performs an unwholesome action or an unprincipled deed for his own sake. He does not offend against the Right Doctrine because of suffering or happiness, and he never forsakes right conduct for his own sake. The wise one is not stingy, and he is free from envy.

47. "He also finds evil unsuitable, and he is free from foolishness. When peril is imminent, he does not fear. He never vilifies another to gain advantage. He is neither fierce nor timid,
- 463a 48. "Nor is he inferior, but he stays exactly in the middle. Such deeds are characteristic of a wise one. Fierceness produces jealousy, and timidity is despised by others. Rid of these two extremes, his behavior holds to the middle.
49. "Sometimes he is silent, as if he were dumb. Sometimes he kills with words, as if he were a king. Sometimes he brings cold, like the snow, and sometimes he offers heat, like a blazing fire.
50. "Sometimes he is as lofty as Sumeru. Sometimes he looks as low as ground covering. Sometimes he is as illustrious as a king, and sometimes he is quiet, as if released.
51. "Sometimes he bears the hardships of hunger and thirst. Sometimes he bears what is painful or pleasant. All wealth is like excrement to him. In his mastery he subdues all hatred.
52. "Sometimes he relaxes with music in merrymaking. Sometimes he is as frightened as a deer, and sometimes he is as fierce as a tiger or a wolf. He contemplates the right time and the wrong time, power and powerlessness.
53. "He contemplates riches and honor and their decline. To bear the unbearable, this is true forbearance. To forbear the bearable, this is ordinary forbearance. One must also be forbearing toward the weak.
54. "When riches and honors are abundant, one should always be humbly forbearing. Forbearance of the unbearable, this is called forbearance. One must bear no grudge because of what may be resented. Among people who hate, one's mind must always be pure.

55. "If one sees someone doing evil, one must not do it oneself. Forbearance toward someone who is victorious over you is called forbearance from fear. Forbearance toward someone who is your equal means one is afraid of strife. Forbearance toward one who is inferior is called extensive forbearance.
56. "The fool cannot bear foul scolding and defamation, feeling as if he had two stones in his eyes. Experiencing foul scolding and grave defamation, a wise one can bear it, [like] an elephant in a shower of flowers.
57. "If he is gravely defamed by foul scolding, the wise one can bear it with his eye of wisdom, just as, when rain falls on a big rock, the rock suffers no damage and is not destroyed.
58. "Bad words or good words, painful or pleasant deeds, the wise one bears them, also, as if he were a rock. If one is reproached with the truth, one may not be angry over a man's true words.
59. "If someone reproaches you with untrue statements, that person makes a fool of himself through his own nonsense. The wise person understands and feels no anger in either event. When, for the sake of wealth or of profit,
60. "One endures suffering or happiness and defamation through foul scolding, or when one can endure, not expecting wealth or profit, even if the evil person has a hundred, a thousand precious objects, one should quickly leave him.
61. "When the branches of a tree are broken off, one cannot climb it. When someone's thoughts are dispersed, he must not be befriended. Then follow another road and leave him far away. The world will be full of potential friends.

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62. "When one is first respectful and then haughty, one is despised, one is not praised, and one does not get any respect. Just like a white crane that swiftly flies away, the wise person stays away from the fool and should leave him quickly.
63. "When a person likes strife and cherishes crookedness, when he is happy to see someone else's wrong, when he slanders, lies, speaks harsh and frivolous words, when he despises and defames sentient beings,
64. "When furthermore he utters painful words, penetrating to the marrow, and when he does not guard his corporal, verbal, and mental actions, the wise one should leave for somewhere else. An evil person who is envious does not have wholesome thoughts.
65. "When he sees someone else's profit, happiness, and fame, vexation and great bitterness arise in his mind. His speech may be soft, but his mind is utterly evil. Yes, a wise one must leave him and go somewhere else!
66. "When people find happiness in foul desire and covet advantages and honors, when they are crooked and need something to cling to, lacking any shame, when inwardly they are not pure, and likewise outwardly, a wise person must quickly leave and go somewhere else!
67. "When someone has no reverential thoughts, when he is taken in by pride but cannot be instructed, when he calls himself a wise one but is a fool in reality, a wise person must leave him and go somewhere else!
68. "When one has food and drink here, and bedding and clothing on life's road, one must guard them and remember this kindness, like a kind mother who saves her only child.
69. "Craving increases all suffering. First, abandon craving and leave hatred! They can lead all people to an

unwholesome destination. Haughtiness and pride must be abandoned, too!

70. “When you are rich, you have friends, but when you are poor, they leave. Quickly leave such friends! If it is for the sake of one family, give up one person. Give up one family for one village.
71. “Give up one village for a country. Give up the world for your own person. Give up your own person for the Right Doctrine. Give up present riches for one finger.
72. “Give up your four limbs for your life. Give up everything for the True Doctrine. The Right Doctrine is your shelter against the rain, as if it were an umbrella. Those who practice the Doctrine are protected by the Doctrine.
73. “Through the power of practicing the Doctrine, one avoids any unwholesome destination. Practicing the Doctrine is just like finding shade in the scorching heat of spring. Be on your way together with the wise!
74. “If one does not consider the possession of ample riches as joyful, if one does not consider the loss of important valuables as sorrowful, and if one does not constantly toil and seek, one is called a strong hero.
75. “If one gives away one’s riches and is very happy, if worldly wrong is swiftly given up, if one establishes oneself in peace even deeper than the sea, one is called a vigorous, superior man.
76. “If one understands what is meaningful, [if one is] skillful in everything, if one is pliable as a person dwelling in happiness, everybody will praise him as a fine man.’

“Upadardara said these words:

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77. I shall double my devotion to my brother now. If I meet with hardship, if I am extremely distressed, I shall

never do anything wrong again. Whether dying or living,
[whether] I gain riches

78. Or lose riches, I shall do no evil. O brother, know now that I shall serve you! I would rather die because of moral conduct than live because of immoral conduct.
79. Why should one live a whole life and be negligent and do evil? Between birth and death one must not be negligent! In my birth and death I have done what is not good.
80. I have met evil friends and done what is not right, but upon meeting with a virtuous friend, I have ceased all this.’”

With his knowledge of his previous lives, the Buddha expounded these *gāthās* to the *bhikṣus*:

81. I was Dardara and Upadardara is Ānanda. Know that Dundubhi is now Devadatta!
82. O *bhikṣus*, you must know that the practice of this application is explained in collections of terms and in compilations of the Doctrine! You must widely comply with the utmost respect! O *bhikṣus* of the Sangha, practice this Dharma!

Parable 30: Devadatta Wants to Harm the Buddha

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, he said to Devadatta, “Do not harbor excessively obnoxious thoughts toward me, the Tathāgata! You will sustain loss, fall prey to unhappiness, and yourself experience its suffering.”

The *bhikṣus* said, “It is extraordinary, O World-honored One, that Devadatta always has evil thoughts for you, O Tathāgata; but for a long time you, World-honored One, have had friendly thoughts and pity [toward him]. You talk to him gently.” The Buddha said, “Not only now, but also in the past! In the land of Kāśī, in the city of Benares, there was a great dragon king by the

name of Cāmpeya. He used to bring seasonal rain so that the grains would ripen. On the fourteenth and on the fifteenth day he changed into a man and kept the five precepts, practiced liberality, and listened to the Doctrine.

“At the time, in southern India, there was a master of spells. He came and planted an arrow and made an incantation, taking hold of the dragon king Cāmpeya. Then a celestial spirit said to the king of Kāśī that there was a master of spells who was going to take the dragon king Cāmpeya away from Kāśī. The king immediately brought out his troops and went out to chase him. That Brahman [the spell master] then made another incantation so that the king’s troops could not move at all. The king spent a fortune to redeem the dragon king. The Brahman came a second time to take the dragon king with his incantation, but the relatives of the dragon raised clouds and made it rain. Thunder crashed, and they wanted to kill the Brahman; but the dragon king was kind at heart and said to the crowd of dragons, ‘Do not take his life!’ He soothed them with his goodness and let the man return. When he came back a third time, the dragons immediately wanted to kill him; but the dragon king protected him and did not let them kill him. He let him go.

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“That dragon king is now I. The master of spells is now Devadatta. Even when I was a dragon, I could be kind at heart, and I frequently rescued others. How much less would I lack friendliness now!”

Parable 31: The *Jivaṃjīvaka* Bird

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, the *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, “O World-honored One, Devadatta is your brother (i.e., cousin), O Tathāgata. Why does he always want to find fault with you, O Buddha?”

The Buddha said, “Not only now! In the past, in the Snowy Mountains, there was a bird called *jivaṃjīvaka*. He had one body and two heads. One head used to eat fine fruits and wanted the body to be safe. The other head became jealous and said, ‘Why does

he always eat fine fruits while I never get them?' He then picked a poisonous fruit and ate it so that the two heads both died.

"If you want to know who is the one who ate the sweet fruit at that time, it was myself. The one who ate poisonous fruit then was Devadatta. Formerly he shared one body with me, but he still had evil thoughts. Now he is my brother in the same way."

Parable 32: The White Swan King

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. Devadatta pushed [rocks from] a mountain to crush the Buddha. He let the elephant Dhanapāla loose, wanting him to trample upon the Buddha. His bad reputation was spreading. In front of a crowd Devadatta repented toward the Buddha, touching the Tathāgata's feet; but when there was no crowd he spoke foul words among the *bhikṣus* and reviled the Buddha. Everyone said, "Devadatta repents toward the Buddha. His mind is well subdued. There is no reason for the spread of his bad reputation." The *bhikṣus* said, "Extraordinary, O World-honored One, is Devadatta's ability to be treacherous. In front of a crowd he is subdued toward the Buddha; but when he is in a secluded spot, he has evil thoughts and reviles the Buddha."

The Buddha said, "Not only now, but also in long bygone times. There was a lotus pond in which lived many water birds, among them a stork. He slowly stepped around in the pond, lifting his feet. All the birds said, 'This bird behaves well; there is dignity in his upbringing. He does not disturb the water animals.' Then there was a white swan who spoke the *gāthā*:

Lifting his feet he takes slow steps. His voice is very soft. He fools the world. Who does not know his treachery!

464b The stork said, 'Why do you say these words? Come and be friends with me!' The white swan replied, 'I know your treachery. I shall never be your friend!'

"If you want to know, the swan king was myself. The stork of that time is now Devadatta."

Parable 33: The Big Tortoise

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. Devadatta constantly harbored malicious feelings. He wanted to harm the World-honored One. So he engaged five hundred Brahmans who could shoot well. He had them go to the World-honored One with bows and arrows to shoot the Buddha with their bows, but the arrows they shot changed to *kumuda* flowers, *puṇḍarīka* flowers, *padma* flowers, and *utpala* flowers. When the five hundred Brahmans saw this divine change, they all grew very frightened and put aside their bows and arrows. They worshipped the Buddha, repented, and sat down on one side. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to them and they all became *srotāpannas*.

They further said to the Buddha, "Please let us go forth to study the path!" The Buddha said, "You have come well, O *bhikṣus*!" Their hair fell off, and they donned the robe of the Doctrine. Again he expounded the Doctrine to them, and they became arhats. The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, your divine power is miraculous! Devadatta always wants to harm you, O Buddha, but you, O Buddha, always show great friendliness."

The Buddha said, "Not only now! In the past in Benares there was a merchant chief called Akṛtajña. He went to sea with five hundred traders to gather valuable objects. Having obtained them, he returned and was caught in a whirlpool. His ships were seized by a water *rākṣasa*, and he could not go any further. The merchants were extremely frightened. They all called out. 'O spirits of heaven and spirits of earth, spirits of sun and moon, who would be so kind as to rescue us from our distress?'

"There was a big tortoise whose back was a mile wide. It felt compassion and approached the ships. Carrying all the men on its back, they were able to cross. Then the tortoise grew a little sleepy and Akṛtajña wanted to hit the tortoise on the head with a large stone and kill it. The merchants said, 'We are alive, saved from danger by the tortoise. To kill it is unlucky and ungrateful.' Akṛtajña said, 'I am starving; who is going to worry about

gratitude?' He immediately killed the tortoise and ate its flesh. That same night a herd of elephants trampled them all to death.

"At that time, the big tortoise was myself. The one who was Akṛtajña is Devadatta. The five hundred merchants are the five hundred Brahmans who went forth and obtained the path. I rescued them from their distress in the past, and now I have again pulled them out of the misery of birth and death."

Parable 34: Two Scheming State Councillors

464c When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, Devadatta wanted to see the Buddha killed for all kinds of reasons, but he did not succeed. Then there was a Brahman who came from southern India. He was an expert in magical skills and was able to compound poisonous drugs. Devadatta then compounded a poisonous drug at the Brahman's place and scattered it on the Buddha. The wind blew the drug away, making it fall back on Devadatta's own head so that he was stupefied on the spot. He crawled on the ground and was about to die. A doctor could not heal him. Ānanda said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, Devadatta is about to die because of the poison." Out of pity the Buddha explained to him the truth: "From the time I achieved Buddhahood as a bodhisattva, I have always felt compassion for Devadatta, without any ill-feeling. Devadatta's poison will be dissipated by itself." After he spoke these words, the poison was immediately dissipated. The *bhikṣus* said, "Extraordinary, O World-honored One! Devadatta always has evil in mind for you, O Tathāgata; but you, O Tathāgata, intend to keep him alive still."

The Buddha said, "Not only now does he have evil in mind for me. In the past he was the same." So they asked the Buddha, "What were these evil intentions toward you, O Buddha?" The Buddha said, "In a time gone by, in Kāśī, in the city of Benares, there were two state councillors. One was called Senaka and the other was called Durmati. Senaka always behaved according to the law, but

Durmati always performed evil deeds. He liked to scheme, and he said to the king, 'Senaka wants to perform a rebellious act.' So the king had [Senaka] put away. The good spirits of heaven spoke out in the sky and said, 'Such a worthy man! He really has not committed any crime. Why do you keep him under arrest?' The dragons then spoke in similar fashion and the officials and the people also spoke in the same way. So the king set [Senaka] free.

"Then Durmati stole from the king's treasury and put [what he had taken] in Senaka's home. But the king did not believe Durmati and said to him, 'Being envious of him, you have acted in this unreasonable manner.' The king ordered that Durmati be apprehended and handed over to Senaka, who was instructed to pronounce judgment on him.

"Senaka instructed Durmati to show repentance toward the king, but Durmati, knowing his own guilt, fled to the king of Videha. He prepared a jeweled box and filled it with two vicious snakes, knowing that they were poisonous. He had a messenger of the king of Videha send it to the other country. Both the king and Senaka were to look at it together, and not to show it to anyone else. When the king saw the jeweled box, he felt great joy on account of its excellent decoration. So he called Senaka; he wanted to open it for both of them to see together. Senaka answered, 'When something comes from afar, one ought not to look at it oneself. When fruit comes from afar, one ought not to eat it immediately. Why? There are evil people there. It may be that they come with evil to see you hurt.' The king said, 'I do want to have a look!'

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"Senaka emphatically warned him three times, but the king did not heed his words. He again said to the king, 'If you do not accept my words, you may look at it yourself, O king! I cannot look at it.' The king then opened it. Both his eyes were blinded and he could see nothing. Senaka was mortified; he could have died of anxiety. He sent people forth to the four directions to pass through every country, to search for a good medicine far and wide. When he had obtained fine medicine, the king's eyes were cured and his

sight restored. They were healed and just as before. The king at that time is Śāriputra now.

“The Senaka of that time is myself. Durmati is Devadatta.”

Parable 35: The Wild Cock King

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, Devadatta went to where the Buddha was and said these words, “O Tathāgata, now is the time for you to dwell in a quiet place. Let me take charge of this great assembly!” The Buddha said, “Swallow your spittle, foolish fellow! I would not commit any great assembly even to Śāriputra or Maudgalyāyana. How could I commit one to you!” Devadatta went away cursing. The *bhikṣus* said, “O World-honored One, Devadatta wants to cause you, O Buddha, all kinds of distress. He is full of ways to deceive you, O Tathāgata.”

“The Buddha said, “Not only now! In the past, by the Snowy Mountains, there was a cock king, who was the leader of a multitude of chickens. His comb was extremely red and his body absolutely white. He said to the chickens, ‘Stay away from towns and villages! Do not let yourselves be eaten by people! We have many enemies. Watch out for yourselves!’

“Then there was a cat in a village that heard about the presence of the cock. So she went to him. She crawled slowly underneath the trees, looking downward, and said to the cock, ‘I shall be your wife, and you will be my husband. Your looks are proper and enchanting. The comb on your head is red and your body is all white. If we do this, we shall be safe and happy.’ The cock then spoke the *gāthā*:

The cat’s yellow eyes may fool a small being.

Stimulated by this and harboring malignity,

[The cat] wants to eat [me].

I have never seen anyone whose life was safe, caring for
such a wife.

The cock at that time was myself; the cat Devadatta. Formerly, in the past, he wanted to entrap me, and now he wants to entrap me again.”

Parable 36: The *Kṛkara* Bird

465b The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. Devadatta then thought, "The Buddha has five hundred spirits in dark garments constantly guarding him. The Buddha has ten powers. A hundred, a thousand Nārāyaṇas cannot equal them. I cannot hurt him now. I shall serve him still. When I hurt him, having observed his essential traits, I may be able to kill him."

So he repented toward the Buddha in the great assembly of *bhikṣus*, *bhikṣuṇīs*, *upāsakas*, and *upāsikās*, and he thought: "If he accepts my repentance, I can make convenient use of it. If he does not accept my repentance, this will make the Tathāgata's bad name spread." So he said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, accept my repentance! I want to develop the determination [for practice] in that solitary place." The Buddha said, "My Doctrine is free from deceit. All who deceive are without my Doctrine." The six heretical teachers said, "Devadatta kindly repents toward the Buddha, but the Buddha does not accept this repentance." The *bhikṣus* said, "Devadatta turns to the Buddha with deceit."

The Buddha said, "Not only now! In the past, long ago, there was a king in Benares called Brahmadaṭṭa. He had made a rule to stop killing. There was a hunter then. Wearing the garment of a seer, he was killing deer and birds. No one knew about it; but there was a *kṛkara* bird who said to the people, 'This very evil person may wear the garment of a seer, but in reality he is a hunter. He constantly commits killings, but people do not know it.' Everybody believed the *kṛkara* bird, that the truth was as it had said.

"At that time, the *kṛkara* bird was myself. The hunter was Devadatta. The king was Śāriputra."

Parable 37: The Aged Seer

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. King Ajātaśatru then sent five hundred large measures of food a day to Devadatta, and Devadatta was greatly honored. The *bhikṣus* all said to the World-honored

One, "King Ajātaśatru sends five hundred large measures of food a day to Devadatta." The Buddha said, "O *bhikṣus*, do not extol the fact that Devadatta has obtained honors." And he spoke the stanza:

The plantain withers when it bears fruit.
For bamboo it is the same with its reeds.
The mule dies when big with young,
And the same applies to the *hinny*.
The fool is hurt by his desire for honors,
But the wise one laughs at him.

465c Having spoken this stanza, he said to the *bhikṣus*, "Not only now is Devadatta hurt by honors. He does not slander me only now. It was the same in the past." The *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "What do you mean by the past?"

The Buddha said, "Formerly, in Benares, on the Seer Mountains, there were two seers. One of them was aged and had obtained the five superknowledges. The other one was in the prime of life and had obtained absolutely nothing. Then the aged seer went to [the northern continent of] Uttarakuru through his supernatural power. He came back with ripe rice, and they both ate it. He later went to the *jambu* tree. He also came back with *jambu* fruit, and they both ate it. Having arrived in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, he came back with divine *sudhā*; and they both tasted it. When the young seer had seen this, his mind started longing and he said to the aged one, 'I wish you would teach me how to develop the five superknowledges.' The aged seer said, 'If you are good-hearted, you will obtain the five superknowledges and certainly be benefitted. If you are not good-hearted, you will, on the contrary, experience damage.'

"He still zealously stated his desire, 'O please, teach me!' Then the aged seer taught the five superknowledges and the younger seer consequently obtained them. After he had obtained the five superknowledges, he showed all kinds of supernatural power in front of a crowd. After that he became very famous and honored, and so he became envious of the aged one. Slandering him

everywhere, he lost his supernatural powers. When all had heard this, they said, 'The aged seer has had these qualities for a long time and the young seer slanders him unreasonably!' So they were all angry at him. They blocked his way at the gate of the city and did not let him in. So he lost his honors.

"If you want to know, the aged seer then is [now] myself. The young seer then is [now] Devadatta."

Parable 38: The Two Traders

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. Those then among the *bhikṣus* who took the Buddha's words to heart all obtained nirvana or the destination of gods and humans. Those who took Devadatta's words to heart all fell into hell and experienced great suffering.

The Buddha said, "Not only now do those who receive my teaching get considerable gain and those who follow Devadatta's words get considerable suffering. It was the same in the past. In the past, there were two traders who both led five hundred merchants. In the desert there was a *yakṣa* demon who had taken on the appearance of a youth. He wore fine clothes and on his head he wore a garland of flowers. He was walking while playing the lute. He said to the traders, 'Aren't you completely exhausted? What is the use of all the water plants you are carrying? Right ahead of you there are fine water plants. If you come with me, I shall show you the way.'

"One merchant leader consequently believed his words. 'Let us now throw away the water plants we are carrying so that we may travel light.' He went on ahead of the others. The other trader said, 'We do not see water plants now. Do not throw them away!' The one who threw the water plants away died of thirst. The one who did not throw them away reached his destination.

"The one who did not throw away the water plants then is [now] myself. The one who threw away the water plants is [now] Devadatta."

Parable 39: Eight Gods, One after the Other, Ask about the Doctrine

Formerly, when the Buddha was in the world, eight gods, one after the other, suddenly came late at night to where the World-honored One was. The appearance of the one who came first was dignified and his luminescence shone for a whole mile. With ten goddesses as his retinue, he came to the Buddha. He bowed most reverently and withdrew to one side. The Buddha said to the god, "Because of the merits you have developed, you have received a celestial body, rejoice in the five desires, and readily obtain happiness." Then the god said to the Buddha:

O World-honored One, I was born and live in heaven, but my heart is always sad. Why? Although in my behavior in my former existence I was loyal and pious toward my parents, toward my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, although I felt respect for them, still I could not be diligent toward them when paying respect or worshipping [them], when welcoming them or seeing them off. Because of this action, my recompense is truly little, less than that of other gods. Because it is less, I myself disapprove of my conduct, being unable to find satisfaction.

There was another god. The appearance of his body was brilliant, and his retinue excelled ten times that of the previous one. He came to the Buddha, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew to one side. The Buddha said to the god, "Being born in heaven, you readily obtain happiness." The god said to the Buddha:

O World-honored One, I was born and live in heaven, yet I am always sad. Why? Although in my behavior in the previous world I was loyal and pious toward my parents, toward my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, although I was respectful and worshiped [them], still I could not give them a smooth mat for a bed or a seat. Because of this action, the recompense I now obtain is less than that of other gods. Because it is less, I myself

disapprove of the karmic cause I developed, being unable to find satisfaction.

There was another god whose appearance was brilliant and whose retinue excelled ten times that of the previous one. He came to the Buddha, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew to one side. The Buddha said to the god, "Experiencing a celestial body, you readily obtain happiness." The god said to the Buddha:

I was born and live in a celestial palace; still I always feel sadness. Why? Although in my former existence I was very loyal and pious toward my parents, toward my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, although I was respectful and worshiped [them] and gave them bedding, still I could not arrange for enough savory food and drink with which to honor them. Because of this action, the recompense I now obtain is less than that of other gods. Because it is less, I reproach myself that the karmic cause I have developed is not complete. Therefore I am sad.

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There was another god whose appearance was brilliant and whose retinue excelled ten times that of the previous one. He came to the Buddha, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew to one side. The Buddha said to the god, "Experiencing a celestial body, you readily obtain happiness." The god said to the Buddha:

I was born in heaven, yet my heart is always sad. Why? Although in the past I was loyal and pious toward my parents, toward my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, although I was respectful, worshiped [them], and gave them mats, food, and drink, still I did not listen to the Doctrine. Because of this, the recompense I now obtain is less than that of other gods. Because it is less, I constantly reprimand myself that the karmic cause I developed is not satisfying. Therefore I am sad.

There was yet another god whose appearance was brilliant and whose retinue excelled ten times that of the previous one. He came to the Buddha, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew to one side.

The Buddha said to the god, "Experiencing a celestial body, you readily obtain happiness." The god said to the Buddha:

I was born in heaven, yet I always feel sad. Why? Although in my former existence I was loyal and pious toward my ruler, my parents, my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, although I was respectful and worshiped [them], spread out mats, gave food and drink, and listened to the Doctrine, I still did not understand its meaning. Because I did not understand it, the recompense I now obtain is less than that of other gods. Because it is less, I constantly reproach myself that the karmic cause I developed is not satisfying. Therefore I am sad.

There was yet another god whose appearance was brilliant, and whose retinue excelled ten times that of the previous one. He came to the Buddha, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew to one side. The Buddha said to the god, "Experiencing a celestial body, you readily obtain happiness." The god said to the Buddha:

I was born and live in a celestial abode, yet I am always sad. Why? Although in my behavior in my former existence I was loyal and pious toward my ruler, my parents, and my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, although I was respectful and worshiped [them], spread out mats, gave food and drink, listened to the Doctrine and understood its meaning, still I could not behave according to the explanation. Because of this action, the recompense I now obtain is less than that of other gods. Because it is less, I profoundly reprimand myself that the karmic cause I developed is not satisfying. Therefore I am sad.

There was yet another god whose appearance was brilliant and whose retinue excelled ten times that of the previous one. He came to the Buddha, made a deep obeisance, and withdrew to one side. The Buddha said to the god, "Experiencing a celestial body, you readily obtain happiness." The god said to the Buddha:

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I now live in a celestial palace, rejoicing in the five desires. Whatever I want is here the moment I think about it. I am really happy, without any sorrow. Why? Because when I was developing a karmic cause in the previous world, I was loyal and pious toward my parents, toward my masters, and toward *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, because I was respectful and worshiped [them], spread out mats, gave food and drink, listened to the Doctrine, understood its meaning, and behaved according to the explanation; because of this, I have obtained recompense as a god. My appearance is fine, and its brilliance is very beautiful. My retinue is numerous and excels that of other gods. Because I have practiced this conduct, the recompense I have obtained is satisfying. Because it is satisfying, I have obtained the most excellent recompense. Because I have obtained the most excellent recompense, no one among all gods can equal me. As no one can equal me, my heart is full of happiness.

Chapter IV

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Parable 40: A Poor Man Gives Lumps of Parched Barley Flour and Presently Obtains His Recompense

467a Once there was a man whose family was destitute. Toiling for others, he had obtained six pints of parched barley flour. He took it back home to support his wife and children. On the way he happened to meet a man of the path. Taking his alms bowl and holding his staff, he went along begging for food. The laborer immediately started thinking, "That *śramaṇa*'s appearance is fine, and his dignity shows his upbringing. He is very worthy of respect. Even if I can give him only one bite, would that not make me happy?" The man of the path knew what he was thinking. Following after the poor man, he reached the bank of a river. The poor man then said to the man of the path, "I have some parched barley flour with me. I want to give some to you. Would you eat it?" The man of the path answered, "Only after I have gotten it!"

Then [the poor man] spread out his garment for him on the bank, so that the man of the path might sit on it. He mixed one pint of flour [with water], made a lump with it and gave it to him. He thought, "If this man of the path has obtained the path by maintaining the precepts in purity, may he now make me king of a small country." When the man of the path had gotten the flour, he said to the poor man, "Why so little? Why so little?"

He thought the man of the path was a big eater; and he mixed one more pint and made a lump with it. He gave it to him and he uttered the prayer, "If this man of the path has obtained the path by maintaining the precepts in purity, may he see to it that I become king of two small countries." The man of the path again said, "Why so little? Why so little?"

The poor man thought, "He may be a man of the path, but he looks like a very big eater. Even if I give him this much flour, he still complains that it is too little. However, I have invited him. Everything must be provided to him." He mixed two more pints of

flour, made a lump with it, and gave it to him. He then thought, "If this man of the path has obtained the path by maintaining the precepts in purity, may he see to it that I become king of four small countries." The man of the path again said, "Why so little? Why so little?"

[The laborer] had two pints left. He mixed it all, made a lump, and gave it to the man of the path. He further uttered the prayer, "Now if this man of the path is someone who maintains the precepts in purity, may he see to it that I become the king of Benares, command four small countries, and obtain the path of insight into the Truths." Because the man of the path, when obtaining flour, [always] complained that it was too little, the poor man said, "I do wish that you would eat now! If it is not sufficient, I shall take off my garment, trade it for food and drink, and give it to you." But when the man of the path had [finished] eating, he had only used up one pint, and he gave the rest back to its owner. The poor man asked him, "O venerable one, you previously complained that there was much too little flour. Why do you not use up the food now?" The man of the path answered, "When you first gave me a lump of flour, you wanted to be the king of a small country, so I said that your heart's wish was too small. With the second lump of flour, you wished to be the king of two small countries, so I said that you wished for too little. With the third lump of flour, you wished to be the king of four small countries, so I said that your heart's wish was too small. With the fourth lump of flour, you wanted to be the king of Benares and command four small countries, obtaining later the fruit of the path of insight into the Truths. That was why I said that your wish was too small. I did not object that it was too little because the quantity was not enough."

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Then the poor man started doubting, "If I can now rule five countries, this is no small matter. I fear it isn't true!" He further considered, "If he can know my thoughts, he must be a noble man, a great field of merit. Surely he does not deceive me!" The man of the path knew this. He threw his alms bowl into the sky and then

flew away. He was transformed into a large body, filling the sky. He then changed into a body as small as a particle. With one body he changed to innumerable bodies, and he united his innumerable bodies into one. Water emerged above his person and fire came out beneath him. He walked on water as on earth, and he walked on earth as on water. Making the eighteen transformations, he said to the poor man, "You have uttered your great wish well! Have no doubts about it!" He then rendered himself invisible and departed.

Then the poor man went to the city of Benares, and on the way he met a state councillor. When the state councillor saw him, he carefully looked him over and said to him, "Are you not the son of Mr. So-and-so?" He answered, "Yes, I am." He asked him, "Why are you so shabby?" He answered, "When I was young, I lost those on whom I relied. In my family all have died and there is no one to look up to. Therefore I am in poverty and so shabby." The state councillor then informed the king of Benares, "The son of Mr. So-and-so, your dear friend, O king, is now outside the gate. He is completely impoverished." The king subsequently ordered that the man be brought before him. Asking full details, he knew he was a dear friend. The king then informed him, "Be very close to me! Beware, do not leave me!"

Seven days later the king fell ill, and his life ended. The ministers started planning and said, "The king has no heir. Yes, this poor boy was dear to our king. It is fitting that we promote him to be the king of Benares." When he got command over four countries, he became cruel.

Then that previous man of the path [appeared] sitting in full lotus posture in the sky in front of the king's palace, and he said, "In the past you uttered a prayer to see the Truths. Why do you do all this evil now, disregarding the past?" He further explained the Doctrine in several ways to the king. When the king heard the Doctrine, he regretted the evil he had done before. He gave up his errors and felt shame. He practiced the path with special zeal and became a *srotāpanna*.

**Parable 41: A Poor Girl Gives Her Two Coins and
Obtains Her Recompense**

Formerly on Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa there were many noble ones, monks living in seclusion. The reputation of that mountain was well-known throughout the countries spreading in all directions. Those who brought offerings were numerous. There was an elder who took his relatives and went to submit offerings. A poor beggar woman thought: "The elders are bringing contributions to the mountain now. They are going to hold a gathering, I am sure. I shall
467c go there to beg." So she went to the mountain.

Upon her arrival on the mountain, where she saw the elders arranging all manner of delicacies and offering them to the monks, she thought to herself, "They have developed merit in their previous existences and are rich now. If they now perform meritorious acts again, they will achieve excellence. I have not performed anything in my previous existence. In this world, I am poor. If I do not perform anything now, I shall be even worse off in the future." Thinking this, she cried and was unhappy. She further thought, "I once picked up two coins out of some manure. I have always saved them for the time when my begging would be unsatisfactory. I was going to exchange them for food and drink and support myself with them. Now I shall take them and give them to the monks. I may not obtain food or drink for a day or two, but that will not kill me after all." She waited until the monks had finished their meal, took the two coins, and presented them.

The monks on the mountain had a rule that when someone had given something, the *karmadāna* would stand in front of the monks and offer a prayer for the benefit of the donor. The senior monk did not let the *karmadāna* pronounce the prayer then, but uttered one himself. His inferiors were very displeased and thought: "Our senior lacks self-respect. Just for two small coins from that beggar woman he pronounces his prayer. Why does he not do as he usually does when he sees money?"

The senior subsequently left half of his food for this woman. All saw that the senior gave a great deal to the woman, and they too gave her much. The woman could then carry away a great deal of food and she was extremely happy. "I just happened to give and now I am recompensed." So she returned from the mountain carrying the food. Arriving under a tree, she lay down to sleep and rested.

The king's principal wife happened to have been dead for seven days. The king sent messengers to search throughout the land for anyone who had enough merits to become his wife. The diviners foretold that under a yellow cloud cover there had to be a worthy person. So they all went and, arriving at that tree, they saw that the woman's beauty was luminous with the mark of merits. The tree cast a twisting shadow, but light and shadow did not change. The diviners said, "This woman's merits are adequate to make her the wife." So they bathed her in fragrant water and gave her the wife's clothes, which were neither too big nor too small but just right for her. Guided by an escort of a thousand chariots and ten thousand riders, she was led to the palace. When the king saw her, he was happy and he felt respect in his heart.

Thus some time passed. She thought to herself, "The reason I obtained this prosperity is that I gave the coins. Those monks have done me an enormous favor." So she said to the king, "I was poor before, but I was brought forward by you, O king. As I have come to be someone, let me repay the kindness of the monks!" When the king told her to do as she wished, his wife immediately went to the mountain with cartloads of food and even precious things. After she had given the food to the monks, she gave the precious things, but the senior monk did not rise. He sent the *karmadāna* to pronounce the prayer and did not pronounce the prayer himself. The king's wife said, "For my two coins in the past, you uttered a prayer for me; but now that I bring you cartloads of precious things, you do not utter a prayer for me." All the young *bhikṣus* were displeased with the senior monk. "Before, when a poor woman gave two coins, he pronounced his prayer; but now that the king's wife brings cartloads of precious things, he does not pronounce a prayer. Is this because he is getting old?"

Then the senior monk expounded the Right Doctrine to the king's wife, and he said, "Woman, in your heart you are displeased with me, thinking, 'Before, when I gave two coins, he pronounced a prayer for me, but now that I bring cartloads of precious things, he does not pronounce a prayer.' Concerning the Buddha's Doctrine, I do not prize precious things. I prize only wholesome thoughts. Woman, when you gave two coins before, your wholesome thoughts were very excellent. Afterwards you gave precious things, but your ego was proud. Therefore I do not pronounce a prayer for you now. Young men of the path, do not be displeased with me either! You must profoundly understand the thought of going forth!"

The young men of the path were all ashamed, and they all became *srotāpannas*. When the king's wife heard the Law, she was ashamed but happy. She too became a *srotāpanna*. Having heard the Law, she made obeisance and withdrew.

**Parable 42: Khāṇu, a Painter from Gandhāra,
Arranges for Food and Obtains His
Recompense**

Formerly in Gandhāra there was a painter by the name of Khāṇu. For three years of employment he earned thirty ounces of gold. He was about to return home when he saw that in some other region they were holding the great quinquennial assembly (*pañcavārṣika*). He asked the *karmadāna*, "How much might you need to arrange for an assembly for one day?" The *karmadāna* replied, "For thirty ounces of gold, you can obtain an assembly for one day." So he thought to himself, "Because I did not plant meritorious deeds in my former life, I have received this retribution and must make my living as an employee. Now I have met the field of merit. Why not support it?" So he said to the *karmadāna*, "Please let me be a disciple. Sound the mallet and convene the order! I want to arrange for an assembly." After he had arranged for the assembly, he was happy and joyful. He immediately returned home. When he reached home, his wife asked him where the money for his three

years of employment was. Her husband answered, "All of the money I have earned is now put in a secure repository." His wife then asked, "Where is this secure repository?" The man said, "In the Sangha!"

468b His wife then blamed him, and she called a meeting of their home town. They tied up her husband, and she went to a judge and said, "We, mother and child, are poor and suffer hardship. We have no clothes and no food; but when my husband has earned money, he spends it elsewhere and does not bring it back home. Would you please investigate why?" The judge then asked her husband, "Why so?" He answered, "Just like the flash of lightning, my body does not shine for long. Also, just like the early dew of morning, it disappears after a short while. Therefore I was fearful and I said to myself deeply that I now met with hardship and was in need of clothing and food because I had not performed meritorious acts in my previous existences. Therefore, because I saw that they were holding the *pañcavāṣika* in Puṣkaravatī and that the community was pure, I felt joy. Devout faith arose inside of me, and I asked the *karmadāna* how much it would take to provide them with food for one day. The *karmadāna* answered that with thirty ounces of gold I could provide for one day. I gave the *karmadāna* what I had earned for three years of work, and I let him provide the order with food for one day."

When the judge heard these words, he rejoiced and felt compassion for him. He renounced his own garment, his necklace, his saddle horse, and all his chariot equipment; and he gave it all to Khāṇu. He then selected a village and granted it to him. Such was his splendid recompense. His fruition would come later.

**Parable 43: Kapila and His Wife Sell Themselves,
Arrange a Gathering, and Presently
Obtain Their Recompense**

Once there was a man called Kapila. He and his wife were extremely poor. He provided for their livelihood by hiring himself

out. He saw that others, the elders, all went to the temple to hold a great almsgiving gathering. When he returned home, he lay down to rest for the night with his wife. His head lying on his wife's arm, he thought to himself, "I am poor now because I did not perform meritorious acts in my previous existence. Someone like that elder has performed meritorious acts both in his previous existence and now. I do not have any merit now, and in the future world I shall suffer even more." Having thought this, he wept with unhappiness; and his tears fell on the arm of his wife. The wife asked her husband, "Why do you cry?" He answered, "I see that when someone develops merit, he is always happy; but I myself am low and poor. I have nothing to develop merit with. That is why my tears fall." The wife said, "What good does it do to weep? You may sell me to someone else and perform meritorious acts with the money." The husband said, "If I were to sell you, how could I stay alive myself?" The wife said, "If I am not driven out because you fear for your livelihood, let us both, you and I, sell ourselves now and develop merit!"

Thereupon the man and his wife both went away to a wealthy family. They said, "We, man and wife, now ask you to trade these worthless persons for money." The master asked them, "How much money do you want?" They replied, "We want ten pieces of gold." The master said, "I shall give you the money now, but if after seven days you cannot repay me, I shall take you and your wife as my slaves." They expressed their agreement and settled the matter. Carrying the money, they went away and came to that temple. With the gift they arranged to provide for a gathering, but the husband and wife both pounded rice themselves. They encouraged one another, saying, "Now we have to do our best and perform meritorious deeds. Later, when we belong to another family, how can we comply with our intentions?" Thereupon, night and day, they diligently made preparations for the gathering.

When the sixth day had arrived and they were going to provide for the gathering, the lord of the country also happened to want to provide for a gathering. Upon arrival they quarreled about the day. The monks all said, "We have accepted the poor one, so we cannot

change." The lord of the country heard this, and he said, "What kind of a small man is he that he can quarrel with me about the day of the gathering!" So he sent someone to say to Kapila, "Leave my day to me!" Kapila replied, "I really will not give way for you!" The messenger returned three times in this way, bringing back the same refusal as the first time.

The king wondered why. He went himself to the monastery and said [to Kapila], "Why do you not arrange it for a later day? Why do you quarrel with me about the day?" He replied, "I am my own master for just one day more. After that I shall belong to another family and be unable to provide any more!" The king asked why he could not, and the one who had sold himself said, "We considered that we had not performed meritorious deeds in our previous existence, and that we are poor now. If we do not perform them now, we fear we may suffer more later. Moved by this fact, we just sold ourselves, trading ourselves for money. Performing meritorious acts with it, we want to end this suffering. If we have no property to repay the other party after seven days, we shall be slaves. Now it is the sixth day, so tomorrow it will be over. Therefore we quarreled about the day, risking our lives."

When the king heard these words, he felt profound pity and sighed at this unheard-of event, "You truly understand the hardship of poverty! You can change an insecure body for a secure body. You change insecure riches for secure riches. You change an insecure life for a secure life." Then he let them arrange for the gathering. The king took off his own and his wife's garments and their necklaces and gave them to Kapila and his wife. He ceded ten villages to them and enfeoffed them for their merit.

As for him who develops merit with all his heart, however splendid his presently obtained recompense may be, how much greater will be the recompense he obtains in the future! Looking at it from this standpoint, all people in the world want to escape from suffering. They must diligently develop merit! How can they be self-indulgent, lazy, and heedless?

Parable 44: A Śrāmaṇera Saves Ants from Water and Is Recompensed with Long Life

Once there was a man of the path, an arhat, who was bringing up a *śrāmaṇera* (novice). He knew that this *śrāmaṇera*'s life was sure to end after seven days. He gave him a leave of absence and let him return home. He told him to come back on the seventh day. The *śrāmaṇera* took leave of his master and went home.

469a On his way he saw many ants floating about on the water. Their life was about to come to an end, and he had compassionate thoughts. He took off his *kaṣāya*, filled it with earth, made a dam in the water, and rescued the ants. He put them up in a high and dry place, so that they all could live. When he returned to his master on the seventh day, his master was very astonished. The master subsequently entered into concentration. Contemplating with his heavenly eye, he knew that [the *śrāmaṇera*] had no longer had any remainder of merit, but that he had obtained [merit] by saving the ants. He did not die on the seventh day but prolonged his life.

Parable 45: The King of Gandhāra Attends to an Old Pagoda, and His Life Is Prolonged

Long ago there was a lord in the land of Gandhāra. And there was a wise diviner who predicted that the king's life was sure to end in seven days' time. The king set out on a hunting trip and saw an old pagoda, dilapidated and in ruins. So he and his ministers had it restored. When the restoration was completed, he returned to his palace in good spirits; and for seven days he lived uneventfully. When the diviner saw that the king had lived through the seven days, he wondered why, and he asked the king, "What meritorious act did you perform?" The king answered, "I did not do anything in particular. There was a ruined pagoda that I restored with plaster." His merit was due to his restoration of the pagoda.

Parable 46: A *Bhikṣu* Repairs a Hole in a Temple Wall, and as a Recompense His Life Is Prolonged

Long ago there was a *bhikṣu*. The time of his death was upon him. There happened to be a heretic, a Brahman, who saw [certain] signs [on him] and knew that within seven days the life of this *bhikṣu* was sure to end. Then when this *bhikṣu* entered a monastery, he saw that there was a hole in the wall. He immediately made a lump of plaster and filled it in. Because of this merit he lengthened his life and was able to live through the seven days.

When the Brahman saw this, he wondered why, and he asked him, "What merit did you cultivate?" The *bhikṣu* answered, "I did not cultivate anything in particular. Yesterday, when I entered the monastery, I saw that there was a hole in the wall. I just repaired it." The Brahman said with a sigh, "The field of merit of the Sangha is most important. It can let a *bhikṣu* who is about to die live on and prolong his life."

Parable 47: An Elder's Son Meets the Buddha and Asks to Lengthen His Life

469b Once the Buddha was in the world. A diviner predicted that although the five- or six-year-old son of an elder was endowed with good qualities, his life would be short. The elder led him to the six heretical teachers, expecting that they might lengthen his life; but not one of those six teachers could provide a way to prolong it, and he was angry. He led [his son] to the Buddha and said, "Please, O World-honored One, prolong this boy's short life for me!" The Buddha said, "There is no way I can give him a long life." Again he said to the Buddha, "Please show us a means!" The Buddha then instructed him, "Go to the gate of the city! When you see anyone leave, have the child greet him! Greet those who enter, too!"

There was then a demon who had taken the appearance of a Brahman. He was about to come and enter the city. The child

greeted him. With an incantation the demon spoke the wish, "May you live long!" This demon was the demon who killed children. But the way of a demon does not allow a double standard. Because he had allowed him a long life, he could not kill him any more. This being the case, he humbly restrained himself and was respectful. The son was able to prolong his life.

**Parable 48: An Elder's Son Becomes a Servant,
Arranges a Gathering, and Obtains His
Present Recompense**

Once, when the Buddha was in the world, there was an elder's son who had lost his parents early. Alone, destitute, and solitary, he provided for his living by being a servant. He heard people say that in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven there was extreme happiness. He also heard others say that if one worships the Buddha and his Sangha, one will surely be born [in that heaven]. So he asked someone, "How much does it take to be able to worship the Buddha and his Order?" Then someone said, "For thirty ounces of gold you can organize a gathering." So he came to the marketplace, seeking a post as a servant. Near the marketplace there was a very wealthy elder who could engage him as a servant. The elder asked him, "Well, what can you do?" He answered, "I can do any task." "How much do you ask for three years of service?" He answered, "I ask thirty ounces of gold." When the elder heard that he could do anything, he hired his services.

His conduct was upright. In gold and silver, in copper and iron, and in every kind of business he made twice the usual amount of profit. When the time had come, he asked the elder his price in gold for his services. The elder asked him, "Now that you have the gold, what will you do with it?" He answered, "I want to worship the Buddha and his Sangha." The elder said, "I shall assist you now. I shall give you all sorts of vessels and rice and flour to prepare the food. You just invite the Buddha and his Order!" So he went to the monastery to invite the Buddha and his Sangha. The Buddha saw

to it that his whole Order accepted his invitation. The Buddha stayed in his own quarters, but the monks all accepted the invitation of the son [who had lost his parents].

On the day of the big event, many people sent all kinds of food and drink to be given to the Order. The monks had already eaten their fill when they arrived at the abode of the son. The son then served the food with his own hands, but the abbot said to give just a little. They all in turn said to give just a little, down to the lowest rank. The son was distressed and lamented, "I have toiled for three years to arrange for this food and drink, hoping that the Sangha would eat it, but the monks do not take the food. I want to be born in heaven, but I shall certainly not be born there." He went to the Buddha and said, "As the monks do not eat my offerings, my wish will certainly not be realized." The Buddha said, "Did they eat something?" He answered, "They all ate something." The Buddha said, "Even if they had not eaten anything, your wish would surely be fulfilled. How would it not be fulfilled when they have eaten something!" The youth was glad, and he returned to eat and drink. At that moment the monks had finished their meal and gone back.

Then five hundred merchants came back from the sea. They entered the city and asked for food and drink. There was a dearth of food at that time. Nobody gave anything. Someone said, "The son arranged for a gathering today. He is sure to have food and drink." When the son heard that there were merchants, he was happy to give them food. All five hundred merchants ate their fill. All their attendants were fully satiated, too. The lowest merchant gave him a pearl worth ten thousand ounces of gold. The highest one gave him a pearl worth a hundred thousand ounces of gold. Every one of the five hundred merchants gave a pearl, and they also gave him a brass basin. Although they gave this to the son, he did not dare take it. He went to ask the Buddha about it, and the Buddha said, "This is your splendid recompense. Just take it without anxiety! Later you will certainly be born in heaven; have no fear!"

The elder who had employed him had no son; he just had a daughter. So he gave her to the youth, and in this way the family possessions increased manyfold. Thus his [family] became the first

in Śrāvastī. At the end of the elder's life, King Prasenañit heard that he was clever and wise; and he asked the elder to give the youth all the family possessions. Such was his splendid recompense. His fruition followed.

**Parable 49: Pūrṇa Gives the Buddha a Bowl of Food
and Obtains His Present Recompense**

Long ago, when the Buddha was in the world, there were five Brahman brothers. One was called Yaśas; the second was called Vimala; the third was called Gavāṃpati; and the fourth was called Sodāyin. These four brothers had gone into the mountains to apply themselves to the path. They obtained the five superknowledges.

The youngest brother was called Pūrṇa. When he saw the Buddha asking for alms, he filled his bowl with fine white rice and gave it to the Buddha. At that time, plowing and sowing were Pūrṇa's regular occupations. So when his plowing and sowing were finished, he went back to his house.

Once, when he left for his field, he saw that the crop growing in his field had changed to golden grain several feet high. After he had harvested it, the crop grew again as before. The king heard this, and he too came to reap; but he could not gather it all. In the same way, none of all those who came to collect it could gather it all.

The brothers thought, "Is our younger brother Pūrṇa making a living, or is he poor?" So they all came to look into the matter. When they saw that their brother's occupation was more prosperous than the king's, they said to their brother, "You used to be poor. Why are you rich all of a sudden?" He replied, "When I met Gautama, I gave him a bowl of rice and obtained this recompense."

470a When the four brothers heard this, they were overjoyed. They further said to their brother, "Now, prepare lumps of sweetmeat for us! Each of the four of us will take one lump and offer it to Gautama, with the wish to be born in heaven." Not having listened to his Doctrine, they [thought that they] did not need deliverance.

Each one thereupon took a lump of sweetmeat and went to where the Buddha was. The eldest brother grasped one lump and put it into the Buddha's bowl. The Buddha said, "All formations are impermanent." When the second one then put his lump of sweetmeat into the Buddha's bowl, the Buddha spoke these words, "They are of the nature that they rise and pass away." When the third one then put his lump of sweetmeat into the Buddha's bowl, the Buddha spoke these words, "When their coming into existence and passing away have ended . . ." When the fourth one then put his lump of sweetmeat into the Buddha's bowl, the Buddha spoke these words, "Their allayment means happiness." So they returned home. Having reached a solitary place, they asked one another, "Did you hear what he said?" The first brother said, "I heard, 'All formations are impermanent.'" The second one had heard, "They are of the nature that they rise and pass away." The next one had heard, "When their coming into existence and passing away have ended . . ." The fourth one had heard, "Their allayment means happiness." While the four brothers all considered this stanza, they became *anāgāmins*; and they all came to where the Buddha was. They asked for the homeless state and obtained arhatship.

**Parable 50: Mahāprajāpatī, Who Gives the Buddha a
Garment Made of a Golden Fabric, and
the Craftsman Who Pierces Pearls**

Once when the Buddha was in the world, Mahāprajāpatī made a garment for the Buddha out of a fabric with golden threads; and she took it and offered it to the Buddha. The Buddha then said, "Give it to my Sangha!" Mahāprajāpatī said, "I suckled and raised you, O World-honored One. I have made this garment myself. And so I offer it to you, O Buddha. I hoped that you, O Tathāgata, would accept it from me. Why did you say just now to give it to your Sangha?" The Buddha said, "I would like to let my aunt obtain great merit. Why? The field of merit of the Sangha is vast and

endless. That is why I have exhorted you. If you follow my advice, you will already have brought an offering to the Buddha."

Mahāprajāpatī then took this garment and went to the Sangha. She started with the abbot, but no one ventured to take it. Next it was Maitreya's turn, and Maitreya accepted the garment. He put it on and went to the city to beg for alms. Maitreya's body had the thirty-two marks and the color of pure purple gold. After his arrival in the city, everybody strove to see him; but nobody gave him food.

There was a craftsman who pierced pearls. He saw that not one person gave [Maitreya] food. So he knelt before him and invited him. He led Maitreya to his home and gave him food. When Maitreya had finished his meal, the craftsman who pierced pearls then spread a small seat in front of him and beseeched him to tell about the Doctrine. Maitreya had the four powers of eloquence. So he explained the Good Law to him in several ways. The craftsman who pierced pearls then wished to listen and was happy to hear it. He could not hear enough.

470b Previously there had been an elder who wanted to give his daughter in marriage. He had engaged the craftsman who pierced pearls to pierce one precious pearl for a hundred thousand coins. At that moment, the family who gave the daughter in marriage sent someone to ask for the pearl. As the craftsman who pierced pearls was just then listening intently to the Doctrine, he did not have time to pierce it. So he answered, "Could you wait just a little while?" [The messenger] came a second time with his request. He even came a third time, but he still did not obtain it. The elder became angry, and he returned to take away all his money and his pearl. The wife of the craftsman who pierced pearls was angry at her husband, and she said, "Don't you have anything else to do? If you had pierced the pearl instantly, we should have gained a hundred thousand coins. Why did you listen to the beautiful explanation of this man of the path?"

When her husband heard this, he felt bitter in his mind. At that moment, Maitreya knew his bitterness, and he asked him, "Can you follow me to the temple?" He answered, "Yes." So he followed Maitreya to the monastery. Maitreya asked the abbot, "Suppose

someone obtains a hundred thousand catties of gold. Would it be better to listen with joy to an explanation of the Doctrine?" Kaunḍinya said, "Even if someone had obtained a hundred thousand catties of gold, it would be better if he gave a bowl of food to one who observes the moral precepts. All the more so if he could listen for a moment with devout thoughts to an explanation of the Doctrine; he would then surpass him a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand times."

Thereupon he asked the question of a second venerable, and the venerable answered, "If someone had obtained a hundred thousand chariots filled with gold, it still would be better to give one bowl of food to one who observes the moral precepts. All the more so if he were happy listening to the Doctrine."

In due time he further asked his question of a third venerable, and the venerable answered, "If someone had obtained a hundred thousand sheds filled with gold, it still would be better to give one bowl of food to a person who observes the moral precepts. All the more so if he listens to the Dharma."

He further asked his question of a fourth venerable, and the venerable answered, "If one had obtained a hundred thousand states filled with gold, it still would be better to give one bowl of food to a person who observes the moral precepts. All the more so if he listened to the Doctrine; it would be a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand times better."

Thus he asked his question of one after the other, and then it was Aniruddha's turn. Aniruddha said, "If someone had obtained gold that filled the four continents, it still would be better to give one meal to a person who observes the moral precepts. All the more so if he listens to the Dharma." Maitreya asked him, "Reverend, you say that if one were to give one bowl of food to a *bhikṣu*, it would surpass even the possession of gold that filled the four continents. Why is it so?"

The reverend answered, "I shall certify this with my own person. I recall that nine million kalpas ago there were an elder and his two sons. One was called Riṣṭa, and the other was called Ariṣṭa. He used to tell them, 'The high must come down; the

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permanent must come to an end. That which has come to life will die, and that which has come together will be separated.' The elder fell ill. When his life was nearing its end, he admonished his sons, 'Beware! Do not dwell apart! For instance, one string cannot tie down an elephant, but if one assembles many strings, an elephant cannot break them. If you stay together, you too will be like a bundle of strings.' Then, after the elder had given his last instruction to his sons, he stopped breathing and his life ended.

"Because their father had told them to, the brothers lived together, holding each other in high esteem. Later [the elder brother] let his younger brother marry. Having lived with them for a while, the wife of the younger brother said to her husband, 'You are like his slave. Why? The expenditure of riches and the affairs dealing with guests all depend on your brother. You only get clothing and food! If you are not a slave, then what are you?' She kept saying these words. At this moment, a change of heart happened to the husband and his wife. He asked his elder brother to [let him] live apart. The elder brother said to his younger brother, 'You do not remember our father's words when he was dying.' However, the younger brother did not change, but kept asking him to [let him] live apart.

"When the elder brother saw that his brother's mind was made up, they then separated. All their belongings were divided into two. The younger couple was youthful and given to ease, and their expenditures were extravagant. After a short while the younger brother was poor and in trouble, and he came to beg from his elder brother. His elder brother gave him a hundred thousand coins at that time. Not long after he had left with the money, he spent it all and came with a new demand. Thus he returned six times, and each time he was given a hundred thousand coins. When he returned the seventh time, his elder brother reprimanded him, 'You do not remember our father's words when he was dying. You have asked for a separation, but you are unable to apply yourself to making a living. You keep coming to ask for things. I shall give you a hundred thousand coins once more, but if you cannot do all

right and come with a new demand, I shall no longer give you anything in the future.'

"After these bitter words, husband and wife both applied themselves to making a living. Gradually they became wealthy. The elder brother lost his riches and gradually became poor. He came to beg from his younger brother. His younger brother did not even give his brother a meal and said, 'I say, O brother, you were always rich. Did you become poor too? I once asked you something, brother, but I was bitterly reprimanded. Why do you come today to ask something from me?' When the elder brother had heard this, he was utterly dejected and he thought, 'If even brothers from the same father are like this, it will be all the more so with strangers.' So, disgusted with birth and death, he did not return home but went to the mountains to apply himself to the path. Diligent in his asceticism, he became a *pratyekabuddha*.

"His younger brother afterwards gradually became poor, too; and as the world met with a drought and famine, he made a living selling firewood. The *pratyekabuddha* then came to the city to beg for food. He obtained absolutely nothing and went back to the mountains with an empty bowl. The person who sold firewood then saw the *pratyekabuddha* leave the city with an empty bowl. He wanted to give him the millet gruel he had earned selling firewood. He said to the *pratyekabuddha*, 'Reverend, could you take coarse food?' The *pratyekabuddha* answered, 'It does not make any difference whether it is fine or coarse. It will allow me to sustain myself.'
471a The person who sold firewood then gave it to the *pratyekabuddha*, who accepted it and ate it. When he had eaten it, he flew up in the air, made the eighteen transformations, and returned to the same place.

"The person who sold firewood later went to gather firewood again. On his way he saw a rabbit and seized it with a stick. It changed to a dead person who suddenly rose and came at him and grasped him around the neck. The person with the firewood wanted to push him away any way he could to make him go away, but he could not get rid of him. He took off his garment and gave it as payment to someone to pull him away, but he still could not get rid of him. He tried to rid himself of the [dead] person until dark and came home

carrying him on his back. When he was in his home, the dead man let go and fell to the floor; it was a person made of genuine gold.

“The man who sold firewood then cut off the golden man’s head, upon which the head grew again. He removed his hands and feet, and the hands and the feet grew again. Before long, the golden head and the golden hands filled his room, stacked up as a big pile. The neighbors informed the minister, ‘In the house of this poor man, all by itself, there grew this pile of gold.’

“When the king heard this, he sent a messenger to ascertain what had happened. When he arrived in the room, he saw nothing but the hands, feet, and head of a putrid corpse. The man of the house himself took the golden head and came to present it to the king. Yes, it was genuine gold. The king was very glad. Taking him to be a man of good fortune, he endowed him with a village.

“After that, his life ended and he was reborn in the second heaven as Śakra, lord of the gods. He descended to a rebirth among men as a noble Cakravartin (Wheel-turning King). He was a king of gods or a king of men for ninety-one kalpas without any interruption whatsoever. Now, in his final body, he was reborn in the Śākya clan. On the day he was born, over thirty miles of hidden valuables sprang up all by themselves.

“He gradually grew up, but Śākya Mahānāma, his elder brother, was loved more by his parents. My mother, i.e., Aniruddha’s mother, wanted to put her sons to the test. So she sent word that she had no food. I, Aniruddha, said, ‘Just bring me something without any food!’ So they gave me an empty plate. The empty plate then naturally filled itself with food of a hundred flavors. Even if one used the gold of the four continents to feed oneself, it would not be sufficient for one kalpa, so it certainly could not bring me constant happiness for ninety-one kalpas. As for the reason that I now spontaneously obtained this food, it was just because I had given one bowl of food in a previous life that I now obtained this recompense. From the Buddhas down to the Brahma gods those with pure morality are called people who observe the moral precepts.” When the craftsman who pierced pearls heard these words, he was very glad in his heart.

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Chapter V

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- Parable 70: An Elder Constructs a Lecture Hall for the Buddha and Is Recompensed with Rebirth in Heaven
- Parable 71: An Elder Sees That the King Constructs a Pagoda; He Constructs a Pagoda Too and Is Recompensed with Rebirth in Heaven
- Parable 72: A Merchant Constructs a House, Offers It to the Buddha, and Is Reborn in Heaven

**Parable 51: A Goddess Worships Kāśyapa Buddha's
Pagoda with Her Flower Garland**

471c At that time, Śakra *devānām indra* had heard the Doctrine from the Buddha and had become a *srotāpanna*. He returned to his heaven, called a gathering of all the gods, and praised the Buddha, his Doctrine, and his Sangha. There was a goddess then who wore a flower garland on her head. The brilliance of the flower garland was absolutely dazzling. Together with the crowd of the gods, she came to the gathering in the assembly hall of the Good Law. When the crowd of gods saw this goddess, they were dumbfounded. Śakra *devānām indra* then pronounced these stanzas, asking the goddess:

1. What meritorious act did you perform that your body is fused with pure gold, as it were? Your splendid appearance is like a lotus, and you have an impressive majesty.
2. Your body brings forth a bright splendor, and your face is like a flower in full bloom. Your golden color shines brightly. Through what deed did you obtain this? Please tell me!

Then the goddess spoke a stanza, answering:

Once I offered my flower garland to the pagoda of Kāśyapa Buddha. I am now reborn in heaven. What I obtained was excellent merit. I was reborn among the gods and recompensed with a gold-colored body.

Śakra *devānām indra* pronounced stanzas again, saying in praise:

1. Truly wonderful is a field of merit that has been weeded of all impurity! In that way, an insignificant seed may provide an excellent recompense as a goddess.
2. Who would not honor you, honoring your mass of pure gold? Who would not honor the Buddha, the finest field of merit?

3. Your eyes are very big, resembling blue lotus flowers. You were able to worship the unsurpassed Most-honored One. You have performed a small meritorious deed, but you have gained such a fair complexion!

Then the goddess descended from heaven. With a parasol of flowers in her hand, she came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She became a *srotāpanna* and returned to heaven. The *bhikṣus* wondered why, and they asked the Buddha, "O World-honored One, what meritorious deed did this goddess perform that she obtained this divine body that is so extraordinarily beautiful?"

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The Buddha said, "Long ago she brought worship to Kāśyapa Buddha's pagoda with various flower garlands. For this reason she has now obtained this recompense."

Parable 52: A Goddess Worships Kāśyapa Buddha's Pagoda with Lotus Flowers

At that time there was another goddess. The brilliance of the flower garland on her head was dazzling. Together with a crowd of gods, she came to the gathering in the assembly hall of the Good Law. When the crowd of gods saw this goddess, they were dumbfounded. Then Śakra *devānām indra* asked her in the stanzas:

1. What merit did you previously perform, that your body is like a mass of pure gold? Your splendid appearance is like a lotus, and you have an impressive majesty.
2. Your body brings forth a subtle brightness, and your face is like a flower in full bloom. Your brightness is extremely splendid. Through what deed did you obtain this? Please tell me!

The goddess immediately spoke the stanza, answering:

Once I offered lotus flowers to the pagoda of Kāśyapa Buddha. Today I met the World-honored One. What I obtained was

excellent merit. I was reborn in heaven and what I obtained was this golden recompense.

Śakra *devānām indra* praised her again with the stanzas:

1. Truly wonderful is a field of merit, when one has removed all impurity! Though the cause one plants may be insignificant, one may obtain an excellent recompense!
2. Who would not find happiness in honoring and respecting your mass of pure gold? Who would not honor the Buddha, the finest and most excellent field of merit?
3. Your eyes are big and long. They may be compared to blue lotus flowers. You once were able to worship the highest and most excellent Honored One. You have performed a fine meritorious deed, and you have gained such a recompense.

Then the goddess descended from heaven. With a parasol of flowers in her hand she came to the Buddha. She listened to the Buddha's explanation of the Doctrine, obtained the purity of the eye of the Doctrine, and returned to heaven. The *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "What meritorious deed did this goddess perform in the past, that she has obtained such a recompense?" The Buddha said, "Long ago she worshipped Kāśyapa Buddha's pagoda with beautiful lotus flowers. Therefore she obtained an excellent recompense. She has insight into the path now."

**Parable 53: A Goddess Observes a Fast Day
Following the Eight Precepts and Is
Reborn in Heaven**

472b At that time there was another goddess. She observed a fast day following the eight precepts and was reborn in heaven. She obtained a beautiful recompense. The majestic look of her bright countenance surpassed all. She then came together with all the gods into the assembly hall of the Good Law. When the gods saw

her, they were dumbfounded. Śakra *devānām indra* asked her in the stanzas:

1. What deed did you previously perform, that your body is like a mountain of pure gold? Your bright countenance is extremely splendid. Your appearance is like a pure lotus flower.
2. What you have obtained is excellent splendor. Your body brings forth a great subtle brightness. Through which deed did you obtain this? Please tell me!

Then the goddess answered with the stanza:

In the past, under Kāśyapa Buddha, I observed a fast day following the eight precepts. I am now reborn among the gods, and what I obtained is this beautiful recompense.

Śakra *devānām indra* again praised her with the stanzas:

1. Wonderful is a field of merit! It can produce an excellent recompense. You hardly developed a fine cause in the past, but you are reborn in heaven.
2. Who would not honor such an excellent accumulation of merit? Who would not respect the most excellent Honored One?
3. Those who have heard this should all be very glad! Those who seek rebirth in heaven must maintain the precepts in purity!

With a beautiful parasol in her hand, the goddess then came to the Buddha. The Buddha explained to her the Doctrine, and she obtained the path of insight into the Truths. The *bhikṣus* then asked the Buddha, "What meritorious deed did this goddess perform in the past, that she was reborn in heaven and gained a noble fruition?" The Buddha said, "Once, when she was a person, under Kāśyapa Buddha, she observed a fast day following the eight precepts. Because of this meritorious conduct, she was reborn in heaven and gained insight into the path."

**Parable 54: A Goddess Worships by Lighting a Lamp
and Is Reborn in Heaven**

472c At that time in Rājagṛha, King Bimbisāra had obtained the path in the Buddha's Doctrine. He had gained unwavering faith, and he used to worship the Buddha with the light of lamps. Later on, Devadatta became an evil friend of King Ajātaśatru, who wanted to destroy the Buddha's Doctrine. Therefore fear spread throughout the territory, and people did not dare light any lamp or worship. There was a girl who [nevertheless] kept up these practices; she lit a lamp and worshipped at the Buddha's walking place on the day of relaxation for the Sangha. When King Ajātaśatru heard this, he was very angry. So he killed her, cutting her at the waist with a wheel with double-edged knives. She died and was reborn in a mansion glowing with gems in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. She ascended into this mansion and went to the assembly hall of the Good Law. Lord Śakra asked her in the stanza:

What deed did you previously perform, that your body is like a mass of pure gold? You are like someone with great majesty. Your looks are extremely brilliant!

The goddess immediately answered with the stanzas:

1. Intently observe the true rescue in the three worlds, the great torch in the three periods of time, the Buddha, his body adorned with the primary and secondary marks!
2. For one who excels most in the Doctrine, I lit a bright lamp; I lit the lamp to remove darkness; the torch of the Buddha removes all evil.
3. Seeing that the light of the lamp was as bright as the sun, I truly had devout thoughts. Seeing the glow of the light of the lamp, I was happy and bowed to the Buddha.

Having spoken these stanzas she came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She became a *srotāpanna* and returned to heaven.

The *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "For what reason was she born in the heavenly mansion?" The Buddha said, "When among people, on the day of relaxation for the Sangha, she once lit a lamp and worshipped at the Buddha's walking place. King Ajātaśatru killed her, cutting her in two at the waist. After her life had ended, she was reborn among the gods as a result of this wholesome karmic causality. When she heard the Doctrine from me again, she became zealously devoted and obtained the path of a *srotāpanna*."

**Parable 55: A Goddess Met the Buddha While Riding
in Her Cart; She Was Happy and Went out
of Her Way**

At that time the Buddha was in the land of Śrāvastī, and he entered the city to beg for alms. There was a girl who was taking a ride in her cart. She wanted to go to the park. She happened to meet the Tathāgata on her way. She swerved her cart off the road and was happy in her mind. Later she died and was reborn among the thirty-three gods. She went to a gathering in the assembly hall of the Good Law. Śakra *devānām indra* asked her in the stanzas:

1. What deed did you previously perform, that the color of your body is like that of pure gold? Your bright countenance is extremely splendid, resembling an *utpala*.
2. You have obtained excellent splendor, and you are reborn among the gods. Please explain to me how you came to obtain this.

The goddess immediately answered with the stanza:

I met the Buddha on his way into the city, and I swerved my cart off the road. I was happy and had devout respect. When my life had ended, I was reborn in heaven.

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Having spoken this stanza, she came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She became a *srotāpanna* and returned to her heavenly mansion. The *bhikṣus* asked, "Through

which karmic causality was she reborn in this heaven?" The Buddha said, "When among people, she once swerved her cart to give way to me. Now she is reborn in heaven. When she heard the Doctrine from me again, she accepted it with devotion and realized the fruition of a *srotāpanna*."

Parable 56: A Goddess Scattered Flowers over the Buddha, and They Were Changed to a Parasol of Flowers

At that time in the land of Śrāvastī there was a girl. She had gathered *aśoka* flowers for a festival and she returned to the city. As she happened to meet the Buddha on his way out, she scattered these flowers over the Buddha, and they changed to a parasol of flowers. She was overjoyed, and her thoughts were full of respect. Thereupon, when her life had ended, she was reborn among the thirty-three gods. She ascended to their mansion and went to the assembly hall of the Good Law. Lord Śakra asked her in the stanza:

What deed did you previously perform, that you are reborn among the gods here? Your body's color is like that of pure gold, and your splendor is extremely bright. Through which deed did you obtain this? Please tell me!

The goddess answered in the stanza:

Once when I gathered *aśoka* flowers in Jambudvīpa, I happened to meet the Tathāgata on my way back. So I worshipped the Buddha with them. I was happy and full of respect. When my life had ended, I was reborn in heaven.

Having spoken this stanza, she came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She became a *srotāpanna* and returned to heaven.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "For what reason did this goddess experience the body of a goddess?" The Buddha said, "When among people, she once left the city to gather *aśoka* flowers. On her way

back, she met me. So she worshipped me with her flowers, and she was happy in her mind. After her life had ended she was reborn in heaven as a result of this wholesome karma. When she heard the Doctrine from me again, she was awakened and realized *srotāpatti*.”

Parable 57: Śrīpuṇyamati Worships the Buddha's Pagoda and Is Reborn in Heaven

473b After King Bimbisāra had gained insight into the Truths, he often came to the Buddha. He paid his respects and made inquiries. The ladies in the palace could not come to the Buddha every day then. The king erected a pagoda with a hair of the Buddha in his palace. The people in the palace continually worshipped it. After King Bimbisāra's death, Devadatta became King Ajātaśatru's friend and associate. They had slander in mind, and they did not allow anyone in the palace to worship this pagoda. There was someone in the palace called Śrīpuṇyamati. On a day of relaxation for the Sangha, she recalled the previous practice. So she worshipped this pagoda with fragrant flowers. King Ajātaśatru disliked her worship of the Buddha's pagoda and stabbed her to death with an auger. When her life had ended, she was reborn among the thirty-three gods. She ascended to the mansion of the gods and went to the gathering in the assembly hall of the Good Law. Lord Śakra asked her in the stanza:

What merit did you previously perform that you are reborn among the gods? Your splendor is extremely bright, as if you had the color of pure gold. By performing which deed did you obtain this? Please tell me!

The goddess answered in the stanzas:

1. When among people, I used to be happy, with respectful thoughts. I offered fine fragrant flowers to the Buddha's pagoda.

2. However, I was stabbed to death with an auger by Ajātaśatru. When my life had ended, I was reborn in heaven to experience this extreme happiness.

Having spoken these stanzas, she came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She became a *srotāpanna* and returned to the mansion of the gods.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "For what reason was she reborn among these gods?" The Buddha said, "Previously, when among people, she once worshipped the Buddha's pagoda with fragrant flowers. Because of this wholesome karma, she has obtained the body of a goddess. When she heard the Doctrine from me again, she was awakened and realized *srotāpatti*."

Parable 58: An Elder and His Wife Construct a Stupa and Are Reborn in Heaven

In the land of Śrāvastī there was an elder who had constructed a stupa and a monastery. When the elder fell ill, his life ended; and he was reborn among the thirty-three gods. His wife kept thinking of her husband, and she was sad and grieved. Because she kept thinking of him, she repaired the stupa and the monastery just as it had been when her husband was alive.

The husband reflected alone in heaven, saying, "For what reason was I reborn in this heaven?" He knew that he had come there because of his merit for the construction of the pagoda. Seeing that he decidedly was a god, he was happy in his mind, and he constantly kept thinking of the pagoda. With his heavenly eye he observed who was now taking care of the pagoda he had constructed. He saw that day and night his wife kept thinking of her husband, sad and grieved, and that she had repaired the pagoda for the sake of her husband. The husband thought, "My wife's merit is bigger than mine. I must now go to her, ask how she is doing, and comfort her." He descended from heaven and came to her side. He said to her, "Are you very sad, thinking of me?" His wife said, "Who are you that exhort me?" He replied, "I am your

husband. Because I had constructed a monastery and a pagoda, I was reborn in heaven among the thirty-three gods. Because I saw that you have diligently repaired the pagoda, I have come to you." His wife said, "Come before me and let us have intercourse!" The husband said, "A human body is noisome. I must not approach it again. If you want to be my wife, just zealously worship the Buddha and his Sangha of *bhikṣus*. After your life has ended, you will be reborn in my heavenly mansion; and I shall take you to be my wife."

Because of the words of her husband, the wife worshipped the Buddha and his Sangha, acquiring a great deal of merit, and made a vow that she would be reborn in heaven. Later, after her life had ended, she was reborn in that heavenly mansion. Both husband and wife went to the Buddha together. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to them and they became *srotāpannas*. The *bhikṣus* were dumbfounded as to the reason and they asked, "Through which karmic causality were they reborn in this heaven?" The Buddha said, "When among people, they once constructed a stupa and a monastery, worshipping the Buddha and his Sangha. As a result of this merit, they are now reborn in heaven."

**Parable 59: An Elder and His Wife Are Devoutly
Respectful; She Greets the Buddha and
Is Reborn in Heaven**

There was an elder in Rājagṛha who went to the Buddha every day. His wife became suspicious and thought, "Is he not having intimate relations with another, always going out every day?" So she asked her husband, "Where do you always come from every day?" The husband answered his wife, "I come from the Buddha." She asked, "Can the Buddha overcome you so with his beauty that you constantly go to him?" So the man extolled for his wife the Buddha's various qualities. At that moment, when she heard about the Buddha's qualities, his wife became happy and rode away in her cart. She arrived at the place where the Buddha was; but at

that moment, by the Buddha's side, kings and important ministers were crowding all around him, and she could not go before him. She made obeisance to the Buddha from afar and returned to the city.

Later, when she had parted with her life, she was reborn among the thirty-three gods. She thought to herself, "I was honored by the Buddha's momentous kindness. The merit for one obeisance has allowed me rebirth in heaven." Then she descended from heaven to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her and she became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "For what reason was she reborn in this heaven?" The Buddha said, "When among people, she once made obeisance to me. Through the merit of one obeisance she was reborn in heaven after her death."

**Parable 60: A Heretic Brahman Woman Learns That
the Buddha's Disciples Are Holding a
Fast, and She Is Reborn in Heaven**

474a At that time the Buddha's disciples were in the land of Śrāvastī. The women were holding a regional gathering, and they went to the Buddha in large numbers. A Brahman woman was in their company. She held wrong views and was not a believer. She had never experienced a fast or kept the precepts. When she saw all the women assembling for the fast, she asked, "What auspicious gathering do you hold now? I am your friend, but you do not give me any instructions." The women answered, "We are holding a fast." The Brahman woman said, "It is not now the sixth day of the month, nor is it the twelfth day. According to whose rules do you hold the fast?" The women said, "We hold the Buddha's fast." The Brahman woman said, "If you hold the Buddha's fast, what merit do you gain?" They replied, "We shall gain release and be reborn in heaven."

Because the Brahman woman wanted food and drink, she was given water. After the fast was held, they gave her a delicious broth. According to the rules of a brahmanical fast, one must not drink or

eat. According to the rules of the Buddha's fast, one may take tasty food and drink a delicious broth. As this fasting was pleasant, she became happy in her mind.

Later, when her life had ended, she was reborn in heaven. She came to the Buddha, and the Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "For what reason was she reborn among the gods?" The Buddha said, "When among people, she once saw women assembling to hold a fast. She then enjoyed the fast that was held. Because of this wholesome action she was reborn in heaven."

Parable 61: A Poor Woman Gives Her Piece of Cloth to Sudatta and Is Reborn in Heaven

At that time the elder Sudatta thought: "None of those who are born in my family shall fall into an unwholesome destination after their life has ended. Why? Because I have instructed them all with the pure Doctrine. I shall now instruct the poor and suffering, believers and nonbelievers, with the Good Law, so that they will worship the Buddha and his Sangha." Thereupon he announced all this to King Prasenajit. The king then beat the drum and rang the bell. During the seven days thereafter, the elder Sudatta was to go on his begging round, urging worship of the Triple Jewel. Everyone in the whole population was glad and they offered many gifts.

On the seventh day, when the elder Sudatta had been begging from everyone, urging them to reform, there was a poor woman. She used to ask a price for her labor. She only had one piece of cloth, and she covered her body with that. When she saw Sudatta begging, she immediately gave it to him. When Sudatta had obtained it, he was surprised at what she was capable of. So he supplied the poor woman with whatever she wished, property, money, grain, silk, clothes, and food. Later, when her life was over and had ended, she was reborn in heaven. She came to the Buddha.

The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her, and she became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "For what reason is this goddess now reborn in heaven?" The Buddha said, "When among people, she once met the elder Sudatta, who was on a begging round while teaching. She was happy and immediately gave to Sudatta the piece of white cloth she was wearing. Because of this wholesome deed, she was reborn in heaven. When she heard the Doctrine from me again, she became zealously devoted and became a *srotāpanna*."

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Parable 62: An Elder's Daughter Does Not Believe in the Triple Jewel; Her Father Engages Her with Money to Observe the Precepts, and She Is Reborn in Heaven

At that time there was an elder in the land of Śrāvastī. His name was Puṣya, and he had two daughters. One had gone forth and after strenuous effort obtained arhatship. The other held wrong views. She was full of slander and was not a believer. The father then said to this daughter who was not a believer, "Take refuge in the Buddha now, and I shall pay you a thousand gold pieces! Yes, take refuge in the Doctrine and the Sangha, observe the five precepts, and I shall give you eight thousand gold pieces!" Thereupon she observed the five precepts. Shortly thereafter, her life ended and she was reborn in heaven. She came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her, and she became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "Through which action was this goddess reborn in heaven?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, she took refuge in the Triple Jewel out of desire for her father's money. She observed the five precepts. Because of this, she is now reborn in heaven. Hearing the Doctrine from me again, she obtained the path."

Parable 63: A Girl, Sweeping the Floor, Sees the Buddha; She Is Happy and Is Reborn in Heaven

As a rule in southern India, when there is a girl in the family, she has to rise early and sweep the premises and the area around the gate. There was an elder's daughter who rose early to sweep the floor. She happened to meet the Tathāgata passing by in front of her gate. As she saw him, she was happy and watched the Buddha attentively. Her life was short, and after it had ended she was reborn in heaven.

As a rule, for those who are reborn in heaven, there are three considerations. She thought, "What body did I previously have?" She knew it was a human body. "Where am I reborn now?" She knew for certain it was in heaven. "Which deed did I once perform to be reborn here?" She knew she had obtained this recompense because of the wholesome deed of being happy when she saw the Buddha. Touched by the Buddha's momentous kindness, she came to worship the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her and she became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* said, "For what reason did you let this woman be reborn in heaven and obtain the path?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, she rose early to sweep the floor. I, the Buddha, happened to pass by her gate. She saw me and was happy. Because of this wholesome deed, she was reborn in heaven. She heard the Doctrine from me again and realized the path."

Parable 64: An Elder Constructs a House, Invites the Buddha in Order to Worship Him, Donates His House, and Is Reborn in Heaven

There was an important elder in Rājagṛha who had recently constructed a house. He invited the Buddha in order to worship him. He donated the house and said to the Buddha, "O

474c World-honored One, from now on, when you come to the city, always come here to wash your hands and your bowl!" Later, when his life had ended, the elder was reborn in heaven, ascending to a heavenly mansion. He came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣu*s said, "For what reason was he reborn in heaven?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, he constructed a new house. He invited me, the Buddha, and donated it. Because of this wholesome deed, he was reborn in heaven in a heavenly mansion. Subsequently he heard the Doctrine from me and obtained the path."

Parable 65: A Woman Gives Sugar Cane to an Arhat and Is Reborn in Heaven

In Śrāvastī there once was a *bhikṣu*, an arhat, who entered the city to beg for alms. He came to a family that pressed sugar cane. The wife of the son of the house put a big piece of sugar cane in the *bhikṣu*'s bowl. When her mother-in-law saw this, she was angry at her. So she grabbed a stick and gave her a beating. She happened to hit a vital vein. The woman's life ended immediately, and she was reborn in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven with a female body. The mansion she lived in was made entirely of sugar cane. When a crowd of gods gathered in the assembly hall of the Good Law, that goddess also went to this hall. Lord Śakra asked her in the stanza:

What deed did you previously perform that you have obtained your excellent and beautiful body? The beauty of its brightness is beyond compare. It is like a mass of fused gold.

The goddess answered with the stanza:

When among people, I once gave some sugar cane. Now I have obtained a considerable recompense among the host of gods, and my brightness is extremely radiant.

Parable 66: A Woman Anoints the Buddha's Feet with Perfume and Is Reborn in Heaven

Once there was a woman in Śrāvastī who was sitting on the ground grinding perfume. The Buddha happened to enter the city. When the woman saw the Buddha, she was happy. She anointed the Buddha's feet with the perfume she was grinding. Later, when her life had ended, she was reborn among the gods. The fragrance of her body reached into the distance, penetrating over four thousand miles. She then went to a gathering in the assembly hall of the Good Law. Lord Śakra asked her in the stanza:

What merit did you previously perform, that your body emits an exquisite fragrance? You are reborn among the gods, and your splendid appearance is like fused gold.

The goddess answered in the stanzas:

1. I worshipped the most excellent Honored One with the best perfume. I obtained unequalled splendor.
2. I was reborn among the thirty-three gods, and I experience great joy. The fine fragrances my body emits reach a hundred *yojanas*. All who smell my fragrance gain considerable benefit.

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The goddess immediately went to the World-honored One. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. She obtained the path of a *srotāpanna* and returned to heaven. The *bhikṣus* asked, "What merit did she previously perform that she was reborn among the gods with a body of such fragrance?"

The Buddha said, "Once, among people, this goddess anointed my feet with perfume. For this reason she was reborn in heaven after her death to experience this recompense."

**Parable 67: A Servant of the Elder Sudatta Takes
Refuge in the Triple Jewel and Is Reborn
in Heaven**

At that time, in the land of Śrāvastī, the elder Sudatta engaged people to take refuge in the Buddha for a hundred thousand ounces of gold. There was a servant then who heard the elder's words and took refuge in the Buddha. After her life had ended, she was reborn among the thirty-three gods. Thereupon, she went to a gathering in the assembly hall of the Good Law. Lord Śakra asked her in the stanza:

What merit did you have before that you are reborn among the gods? The beauty of your brightness is exquisite. Please tell me!

The goddess answered in the stanzas:

1. The Most Firm One in the three worlds can pull one out of the suffering of birth and death. True rescue in the three worlds removes the fetters of the three defilers.
2. I once took refuge in the Buddha, in the Doctrine, and in the Sangha. For that reason I have obtained this recompense.

Having spoken these stanzas, she came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her, and she obtained the path of a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "Through which karmic causality did she experience that recompense?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, she took refuge in the Buddha. That is why she is now reborn in heaven. When she heard me expound the Doctrine, she obtained the path of a *srotāpanna*."

Parable 68: A Poor Woman Begg for Food from the Buddha and Is Reborn in Heaven

475b Once there was a woman in Śrāvastī who was poor and in distress. She used to beg for a living at the roadside. Gradually, as time went by, nobody in the whole population looked at her anymore. The Buddha happened to see her on his way. She went to him and asked the Buddha for food. The Buddha felt compassion because the poor woman was about to die, exhausted by hunger. So he ordered Ānanda to give her food. When the poor woman had obtained the food, she was happy. Later her life came to an end, and she was reborn in heaven. Moved by the Buddha's former kindness, she came to worship the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her, and she became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "For what reason is this goddess now reborn in heaven?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, when among people, this goddess was about to die, exhausted by hunger. I, the Buddha, had Ānanda give her food. When she had obtained the food, she was happy. When her life had ended, she was reborn in this heavenly mansion because of that wholesome root. When she heard the Doctrine from me again, she obtained the path."

Parable 69: An Elder's Servant Brings Food to Her Master, Meets the Buddha and Gives It to Him, and Is Recompensed with Rebirth in Heaven

There was an elder's son in the land of Śrāvastī who was enjoying himself in a park together with the sons of elders. When he was about to go there, he said to his family, "Bring me food!" His family then sent a servant to bring him food. When the servant had left the gate, she happened to meet the Buddha. So she offered the food

to the Tathāgata and returned to the house. She took some more food and brought it again. However, on her way she met Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana. So she gave it to them. The third time she gave the food to the elder's son.

After the elder's son had eaten it, he returned home himself. He said to his wife, "Why was the food you sent me today so terribly late?" His wife replied to him, "Three times I sent you food today. Why was it so late?" So they called the servant and they asked her, "You went three times today. Who did you bring the food to?" The servant then answered, "When I brought food the first time, I met the Buddha and gave it to him. When I brought food a second time, I met Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana and I gave it to them. Only when I took food a third time did I give it to you, master." When her master had heard this, he became extremely angry. He beat her with a stick. She then died and was reborn in heaven.

Just when she was reborn in heaven she made all three considerations. First she thought, "Where am I reborn now?" She knew she was reborn in heaven. Second she thought, "From where was I reborn in heaven after my death?" She knew she was reborn in heaven from a human destination. Third she thought, "As a result of which karmic causality was I reborn in heaven?" She knew she had obtained this recompense because she had given food. Then she came to the Buddha to worship him and pay her respects. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her, and she became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked the Buddha, "For what reason was this goddess reborn in heaven now?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, she was the servant of an elder. When she was bringing food to the elder's son, she met me, the Buddha, the Tathāgata. So she gave it to me, the Buddha. Her master was angry, and he beat her to death with a stick. Because of this karmic causality, she was reborn in heaven after her life had ended. She heard the Doctrine from me again, and she realized the path."

Parable 70: An Elder Constructs a Lecture Hall for the Buddha and Is Recompensed with Rebirth in Heaven

At that time in Rājagṛha King Bimbisāra built a stupa and a monastery for the Buddha. There was an elder who also wanted to make a fine dwelling for the Buddha. He could not find a place. So he constructed a lecture hall where the Tathāgata made his promenade, and he opened up the four doors. Afterwards, when his life had ended, he was reborn in heaven and ascended to a heavenly mansion. He came to worship the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "For what reason was this heavenly son reborn in a heavenly mansion?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, he constructed a lecture hall for me. Because of this wholesome cause, he was reborn in heaven after his death. He came to me, and, moved by my kindness, he worshipped me. When he heard an explanation of the Doctrine again, he became a *srotāpanna*."

Parable 71: An Elder Sees That the King Constructs a Pagoda; He Constructs a Pagoda Too and Is Recompensed with Rebirth in Heaven

At that time, on Mt. Gṛdhrakūṭa there was an elder from southern India. He saw that King Bimbisāra constructed a splendid stupa and a monastery for the Buddha. He too invited the Tathāgata and constructed a stupa and a monastery for him to dwell in. Afterwards, when his life had ended, the elder was reborn in heaven. He came to the Buddha. In his gratitude he worshipped him. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

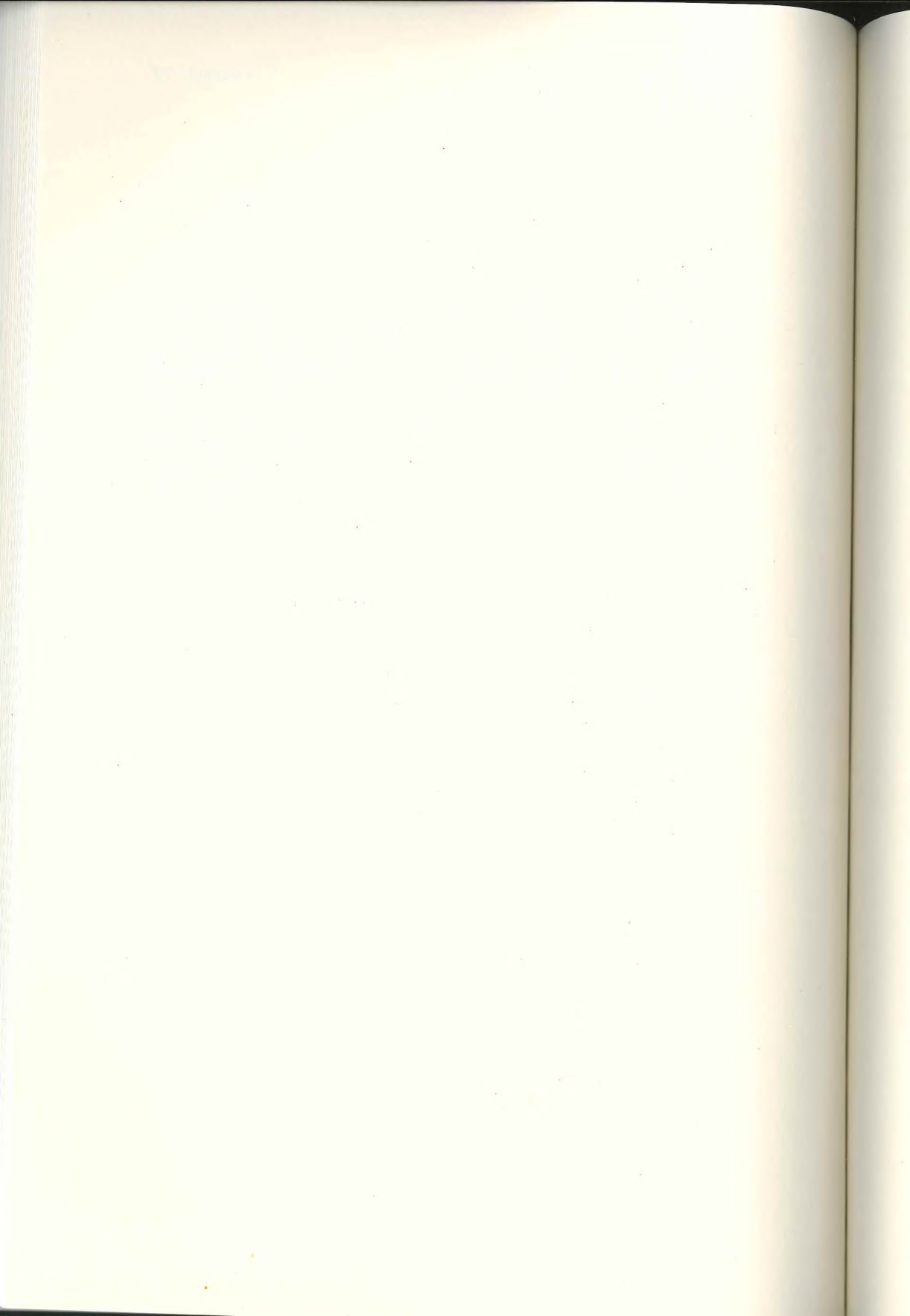
The *bhikṣus* asked, "As a result of what previous karma was this heavenly son reborn in a heavenly mansion?" The Buddha said, "Formerly, among people, he saw that the king erected a

pagoda and grew happy. He invited me, the Tathāgata, and built a stupa. As a result of this wholesome action, he was reborn in heaven. He heard the Doctrine from me again, he was devoutly awakened, and realized *srotāpatti*.”

Parable 72: A Merchant Constructs a House, Offers It to the Buddha, and Is Reborn in Heaven

At that time in the land of Śrāvastī there was a merchant. He went off to trade, but he died and did not return. His mother raised his son. When the son had grown up, he too wanted to go on a far journey. His grandmother said to him, “Your father went away on a far journey, but he died and did not return. Do not go on a far journey! Open a shop in town, in the neighborhood!” He then respected her command and put up a shop in town. He thought, “The people of this city all invite the Buddha. Now I have recently constructed a house. I too shall invite the Tathāgata.” So he went to invite the Buddha. When the Buddha arrived, he said to the Buddha, “I offer you this house, O Tathāgata. From now on, when you come to the city, you may always come to my house to wash your hands and to wash your bowl.” Afterwards, [the merchant’s] life ended, and he was reborn in heaven. He came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

476a The *bhikṣus* asked, “Because of which previous karmic causality was this god reborn in heaven?” The Buddha said, “Formerly, when he was a man, he had just built a shop. He invited me, the Buddha, there. As a result of this wholesome action he is now reborn in heaven. He heard the Doctrine from me again and obtained his recompense.”



Chapter VI

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- Parable 78: An Elder Invites Śāriputra and a *Mahallaka*

Parable 73: Lord Śakra's Questions

Thus I have heard. Once the Buddha was in the land of Magadha. South of Rājagṛha there was a Brahman village called Āmraṣaṇḍa. Lord Śakra heard that the Buddha was then in a rocky cave on Mount Vaidehaka, north of this village. He informed the *gandharva* prince Pañcaśikha, "There is a Brahman village called Āmraṣaṇḍa in the land of Magadha. To the north of this village is Mount Vaidehaka. The World-honored One is there. Let us go there now!" The *gandharva* prince Pañcaśikha answered, "Yes indeed! That would be excellent!" He was happy and gladdened to hear it, so he took his lute of lapis lazuli and followed Lord Śakra to the Buddha.

476b When the gods heard that Lord Śakra was going to the Buddha together with the *gandharva* prince, they adorned themselves. They followed Lord Śakra down from heaven to Mount Vaidehaka. At that moment a bright light was shining on the mountain. The seers in the neighborhood all said it was the light of a fire. Lord Śakra said to the *gandharva* prince, "This place is pure, an *āraṇyaka* place free from all evil. One may safely sit down in meditation. But now a multitude of honorable gods is crowding together at the Buddha's side, filling the space around him. How can we visit the World-honored One now?" Lord Śakra then told the *gandharva* prince, "You may go to the Buddha for me and communicate that we would like to put forward some questions at an audience." The *gandharva* prince received the instructions and went away. When he was neither too far nor too close, he looked up with reverence at the Honorable One's face, took his lute, and played so that the Buddha might hear. He composed the stanzas:

1. When a heart that lusts brings forth longing attachment, it is just like an elephant sunk in the mud or like an elephant that is maddened and impossible to control with a hook.
2. Like an arhat longing for the Wondrous Law, such also is my fondness for your beauty, one who respectfully greets

his father. Because you were born in a noble place, the joy of my love is doubled in my affections.

3. You have the highest power to make my love grow. It is as when a perspiring person meets with a cool breeze, or as when someone who is extremely thirsty obtains a cool drink. Your bearing is most moving.
4. I am like an arhat who finds joy in the Doctrine, or like an ailing person who obtains a fine medicine. I am like the hungry one who obtains delicious food. Quickly extinguish my fever with your coolness! Now my desire prevails. It wants to race on, but it has a grip on my heart and cannot leave.

The Buddha said, "It is marvelous, O Pañcaśikha, how you have managed to bring this music and all the instruments in harmony. You have played this song from the right distance." So Pañcaśikha said to the Buddha, "In the past I met a fine lady called Sūryavarcaśā. She was the daughter of Tumburu, the *gandharva* king. A son of the god Mātali, called Śikhaṇḍin, had already sought this lady for his wife. I was in love with her then. So I spoke these stanzas to her. I now speak these stanzas again in front of you, O Buddha."

Lord Śakra said to himself, "As the Buddha has awakened from his concentration, he is now talking to Pañcaśikha." Lord Śakra further said to Pañcaśikha, "Announce my name now. Bow at the Buddha's feet and make inquiries of the World-honored One. Does he suffer little from illness or vexation, and is his daily life easy? Are his food and drink appropriate, and is his strength at rest? Does he not suffer from any evil, and does he dwell in contentment?" To this Pañcaśikha agreed. Having received Lord Śakra's instructions, he again went to the Buddha and announced Lord Śakra's name. He bowed at the Buddha's feet and made inquiries of the World-honored One with Lord Śakra's words. The Buddha said, "Are Lord Śakra and his gods all in peace?" Pañcaśikha again addressed the Buddha, "O World-honored One, Lord Śakra and the thirty-three gods would like to meet you, O

Buddha. Do you give them your permission to come and meet you?" The Buddha said, "Now is just the right time."

When Lord Śakra and the thirty-three gods heard the Buddha's instruction, they immediately went to the Buddha. They bowed at the Buddha's feet and stood to one side. They said to the Buddha, "O World-honored One, where shall we sit?" The Buddha said, "Sit down on these seats." They said to the Buddha, "This cave is extremely small, and the crowd of gods is extremely numerous." Having said these words, they saw that the rocky cave became wider. Through the Buddha's supernatural power it could contain a crowd.

Lord Śakra then bowed at the Buddha's feet and sat down in front. He said to the Buddha:

For a long time I have constantly wanted to meet you, O Buddha, wanting to hear your Doctrine. In the past, you, O Buddha, were in Śrāvastī; and you had entered the *samādhi* of the glow of fire. At that time there was a waiting maid of Vaiśravaṇa, called Bhujavatī. Bhujavatī was turned towards the Buddha, her hands joined in salutation. I said to that waiting maid of Vaiśravaṇa then, "The Buddha is now in concentration. I do not dare disturb him. Bow at the World-honored One's feet for me, announce my name, and make inquiries." The girl worshipped and made inquiries, as I, Lord Śakra, had told her to.

The Buddha said to Lord Śakra, "At that moment I heard your voices, and quickly rose from my concentration."

Lord Śakra said to the Buddha:

I once heard this from the ancients: When the Tathāgata, the arhat, the *samyaksambuddha* appears in the world, the crowd of gods increases and the crowd of *asuras* decreases. Now I myself am born among the gods. The crowd of gods increases and the [crowd of] *asuras* decreases. I now see that the Buddha's disciples who are reborn in heaven surpass the gods in three respects. Their life span is superior, their splendor is superior, and their fame is superior. So,

Lady Gopikā was born in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. She had been the Buddha's disciple, and she became my son, called the Heavenly Son Gopaka. There were also three *bhikṣus* who were developing pure conduct before the Buddha, but their hearts were not yet free from desire. When their bodies were ruined and their lives had ended, they were reborn in the family of *gandharvas*. Three times every day they served the gods. When the Heavenly Son Gopaka saw these three people acting as servants, he said:

I am not delighted, and I cannot bear it. Formerly, when I was among people, those three men often came to my house and received my worship. Now they are servants of the gods. I cannot bear to see that. These three gods used to be the Buddha's listeners and disciples. When I was a person in the past, they received my respect and worship, food and clothing, but they are inferior now.

[He said to them:]

You heard the Doctrine from the Buddha's mouth and received the Buddha's explanation. Why were you reborn in this vile condition? I used to serve and worship you, but I heard the Doctrine from the Buddha and practiced liberality. Because of the karmic cause of my morality and faith, I am Lord Śakra's son. I possess great majesty, power, and sovereignty. All gods call me Gopaka. You have obtained the Buddha's excellent Doctrine. Why could you not practice it with diligence? Why are you reborn in this vile condition? I cannot bear to see this loathsome thing now. I do not like to see such a thing. Why were you, with one and the same Doctrine, reborn so low, in a condition where a disciple of the Buddha must not be reborn!

When the Heavenly Son Gopaka had made this criticism, the three men felt profound shame, and discontent arose

in their hearts. Joining their hands together, they said to Gopaka, "Just as you, O Heavenly Son, have said, it is really our own fault. We must now do away with that evil of desire, be diligent in our zeal, and develop concentration and wisdom." The three men kept Gautama's Doctrine in mind. Seeing their desires as a calamity, they severed the bonds of their desires. They terminated their desires just as a big elephant breaks his fetters.

Lord Śakra, Īśāna, the multitude of other gods, and the Four Heavenly Kings, protectors of the world, all came to their seats. The three who had done away with their desires ascended in the sky in front of the other gods. Lord Śakra said to the Buddha, "What quality did these three men obtain, that they can exert these various supernatural powers and come to see you, O World-honored One? I should like to ask you what they have obtained." The Buddha said, "Since these three men have rejected that other place, they obtained rebirth in the Brahma world." "I wish that you, O World-honored One, would explain to me how they were reborn in the Brahma Heaven." "Very well, O worthy Lord Śakra, do I discern the uncertainty revealed by your question!" Then the Buddha thought, "Lord Śakra is free from deceit. His question about his doubt is sincere. It is not to embarrass me. I shall answer his questions and give him a detailed explanation."

Lord Śakra asked the Buddha, "Which are the fetters that bind men, gods, *nāgas*, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, and *mahoragas*?" The Buddha then answered, "The two fetters selfishness and jealousy bind men, gods, *asuras*, *gandharvas*, and every kind of beings. They are all tied by selfishness and jealousy." "This is truly so, God among gods! The karmic causes selfishness and jealousy bind everyone. Now that I have heard this explanation from you, O Buddha, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

Lord Śakra was very glad, and he asked a further question. "Why do selfishness and jealousy arise? Because of which cause and from which condition does one feel selfishness and jealousy? How do they arise and how are they extinguished?" "O Kauśika,

selfishness and jealousy arise from unpleasantness or pleasantness. Unpleasantness or pleasantness are their conditions. When there is unpleasantness or pleasantness, one is sure to have selfishness and jealousy. When there is no unpleasantness or pleasantness, selfishness and jealousy are extinguished." "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this explanation from you, O Buddha, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

Lord Śakra was very glad, and he asked a further question, "How do unpleasantness and pleasantness arise, and how are they extinguished?" The Buddha answered, "Unpleasantness and pleasantness arise from delight. If there is no delight, they are extinguished." "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this pious explanation from you, O Buddha, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

477b Lord Śakra was very glad, and he asked a further question, "From which cause does delight arise, and through which condition does it increase? How is it extinguished?" The Buddha said, "Delight arises from false imagining, and it increases through false imagining. If there is false imagining, there is delight. Without false imagining, delight is extinguished." "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this explanation from you, O Buddha, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

Lord Śakra was very glad, and he asked a further question, "Why does false imagining arise, and through what condition does it increase? How is it extinguished?" "False imagining arises from idle fancy, and it increases through idle fancy. If there is no idle fancy, false imagining is extinguished." "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this explanation from you, O Buddha, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

Lord Śakra was very glad, and he asked a further question, "Why does idle fancy grow, and how does one extinguish idle fancy?" The Buddha informed Kauśika, "If you want to extinguish idle fancy, you must develop the eightfold right path: right views, right action, right speech, right livelihood, right application, right mindfulness, right purpose, and right concentration." When Lord Śakra had heard this, he said to the Buddha, "Truly so, God among

gods! Idle fancy is truly extinguished through the eightfold right path. Now that I have heard this explanation from you, O Buddha, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

Lord Śakra was glad, and he asked a further question, "If one wishes to extinguish idle fancy, one may develop the eightfold right path. By relying on which qualities can a *bhikṣu* cause this eightfold right path to increase?" The Buddha said, "Well, there are three qualities: first, will; second, diligence; and third, frequent practice in collecting one's thoughts." Lord Śakra said, "Truly so, God among gods! When we hear this meaningful explanation, the web of uncertainty is removed. When a *bhikṣu* practices these parts of the right path, he causes the path to increase, because he relies on these three elements." Having heard this, he was glad.

Lord Śakra further asked, "When a *bhikṣu* wants to extinguish idle fancy, how many qualities does he have to apply himself to?" The Buddha said, "He must apply himself to three qualities. He must apply himself to making his morality superior, he must apply himself to making his concentration superior, and he must apply himself to making his wisdom superior." When Lord Śakra heard this [he said], "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this explanation, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

He was delighted and glad, and he asked a further question, "If one wants to extinguish idle fancy, how many meaningful things should one understand? I am listening!" The Buddha said, "One should understand six meaningful things: First, the eye's consciousness of form; second, the ear's consciousness of sound; third, the nose's consciousness of smell; fourth, the tongue's consciousness of taste; fifth, the body's consciousness of touch; sixth, the mind's consciousness of the dharmas." When Lord Śakra had
477c heard this [he said], "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this explanation, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

He was delighted and glad, and he asked a further question, "Do all beings have one and the same selfishness, one delight, one intention, and one inclination?" The Buddha said, "O Lord Śakra, all beings do not have the same selfishness, the same delight, the same intention, nor the same inclination either. Beings are

numberless, and the worlds are numberless. Their desires and inclinations are very different. They are not the same. Each holds on to his point of view." When Lord Śakra had heard this [he said], "Truly so, God among gods! Now that I have heard this explanation, the web of my uncertainty is removed."

He was delighted and glad, and he again asked a further question, "Do all *śramaṇas* and Brahmans completely achieve one perfection? Do they achieve one absence of impurity? Do they achieve one perfect *brahmacarya*?" The Buddha said, "Not all *śramaṇas* and Brahmans can completely obtain one perfection and one absence of impurity, nor do they achieve one perfect *brahmacarya*. When a *śramaṇa* or a Brahman has achieved unsurpassed deliverance, having cut the fetter of craving, and when he has achieved right deliverance, then he completely achieves one perfection, one absence of impurity, and one perfect *brahmacarya*." "As you have explained, O Buddha: unsurpassed deliverance, having cut the fetter of craving! One who has achieved right deliverance completely achieves one perfection, one absence of impurity, and one perfect *brahmacarya*. Now that I have heard them from you, O Buddha, I understand these meaningful things. Understanding this Doctrine, I have crossed to the other shore of uncertainty. I have pulled out the poisoned arrows of my wrong views. I have removed my wrong views, and my thoughts will not regress." When he had expounded this scripture, Lord Śakra and his eighty-four thousand gods obtained the purity of the eye of the Doctrine without any stains and free from impurity.

The Buddha said, "Kauśika, you have asked these questions in the past of *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, have you not?" "O World-honored One, I recall that in the past I was once in a gathering of the gods in the assembly hall of the Good Law. I asked the gods if a Buddha had appeared in the world. The gods all said that no Buddha had appeared yet. When the gods had heard that no Buddha had appeared in the world yet, they all broke up the gathering. When the merits of the gods, together with their impressive majesty, had ended, and when their lives had come to an end, then I became afraid. I saw *śramaṇas* and Brahmans in a secluded

place, and so I went over to them. When the *śramaṇas* and Brahmans asked me who I was, I said I was Lord Śakra. I did not salute them; on the contrary, they saluted me. I did not ask them anything, either, but they questioned me. I knew that they were without knowledge. Therefore I did not take refuge in them. From now on I shall take refuge in you, O Buddha, and be your disciple, O Buddha." Then he spoke the stanzas:

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1. I used to be in constant doubt, and my mind was not fulfilled. For a long time I have searched for wisdom that might dispel such doubts.
2. In my search for the Tathāgata I saw *śramaṇas* and Brahmans in secluded places. In my mind I thought that there was the World-honored One.
3. So I went over to them, saluted them respectfully, and made inquiries. I put this question to them, "How does one develop the right path?"
4. Those *śramaṇas* explained neither the right path nor the wrong path. Now I have seen you, World-honored One, and the web of my uncertainty is completely removed.
5. Today there is a Buddha, the greatest teacher in the world. He destroys and subdues the enemy Māra. Having ended affliction, he is most victorious.
6. The World-honored One has appeared in the world, marvelous and unequalled. Among the crowd of gods and demons there is no one like the Buddha.

"O World-honored One, I have become a *srotāpanna*! O Bhagavan, I have become a *srotāpanna*!" The World-honored One informed him, "Excellent! Excellent, Kauśika! If you are not negligent, you will become a *sakṛdāgāmin*."

The Buddha said to Lord Śakra, "Where did you gain this indestructible faith?" Lord Śakra said, "I have gained it here at your side, O World-honored One. I shall obtain the life of a god here again, but I wish for complete understanding!" Having this in

mind, Lord Śakra said, "O World-honored One, I now have this idea: I shall obtain a birth in an aristocratic place among men and have plenty of everything. Then I shall reject the worldly and go forth from my home there, taking refuge in the noble path. If I gain nirvana, that will be absolutely splendid. If I do not gain it, I shall be reborn as a god in a pure abode." Lord Śakra then gathered the crowd of gods together and informed them, "At the three divisions [of the day], I have worshipped the god Brahmā, but from now on I shall stop and not do this. At the three divisions, I shall worship the World-honored One." Lord Śakra then informed the *gandharva* son Pañcaśikha, "You have now done me a momentous kindness, because you have awoken the Buddha, the World-honored One, so that I have learned his deep Doctrine. When I return to heaven, I shall make the noble Sūryavarcaśā, Tumburu's daughter, your wife. I shall also let you take her father's place and be king of the *gandharvas*." Lord Śakra then led the crowd of the gods three times around the Buddha, stepped backwards, and departed. Having reached a serene abode, they all said three times, "Namo Buddhāya," and returned to heaven.

Not long after Lord Śakra's departure, the king of the gods, Brahmā, said this to himself, "Lord Śakra has left. I shall now go to the Buddha." In the time in which an able-bodied person bends and stretches out his arm, he reached the Buddha. Having made obeisance at the Buddha's feet, he sat down to one side. The light of the god Brahmā shone all over Mount Vaidehaka. Then the god

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Brahmā spoke the stanzas:

1. Many are benefitted when these meaningful things are displayed. O Śacīpati, Maghavat,
2. All those around were wise ones when you asked about your doubts, O Vāsava!

He repeated Lord Śakra's questions and returned to heaven. In the morning the Buddha informed the *bhikṣus*, "The king of the gods Brahmā came to me yesterday. Having spoken these stanzas, he returned to heaven." When the Buddha had said these words,

the *bhikṣus* were glad. They respectfully made obeisance at the Buddha's feet and withdrew.

Parable 74: The Saving of Ājñātakauṇḍinya and Others, and an Explanation of the Past

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, his explanation of the Doctrine saved Ājñātakauṇḍinya, Śakra *devānām indra*, and King Bimbisāra. Each was the leader of a multitude of eighty-four thousand, and they all gained the path. The *bhikṣus* thought it strange that each had so many followers pulled out from the three unwholesome destinations.

The Buddha said, "Not only now, but also at one time in the past were they rescued!" The *bhikṣus* said, "How did rescue in the past come about?" The Buddha said, "In the past there once were merchants who went to sea to gather riches. On their way back they ran into a python in a vast wilderness, its body fully six *krośas* high. It encircled the merchants, surrounding them on all four sides, leaving no room to go in or out. So the merchants experienced extreme panic. They all called out, 'Spirits of the heavens, spirits of the earth, if someone is compassionate, save us!' Then there was a white elephant who was a companion of a lion. The lion pounced and crushed the brain of the python, so that the merchants could escape from their peril. At that moment the python hurt the lion and the white elephant with its venomous breath, but their lives did not cease. The merchants said, 'You have rescued us. Do you have any wish?' The animals answered, 'We wish to become Buddhas and to save all people.' The merchants said, 'If you obtain Buddhahood, please may we hear the Doctrine at the very first gathering and obtain the path.' The lives of the lion and of the white elephant ended then. The merchants burnt them and erected a pagoda with their bones."

The Buddha said, "If you want to know who was the lion at that time, it is I. The [being who was the] white elephant at that time is Śāriputra. The leaders of the merchants are [now] Kauṇḍinya,

Lord Śakra, and King Bimbisāra. The multitude of merchants were the gods and men who have presently obtained the path.”

Parable 75: The Śākya Son Kṣema Has an Eye Sickness, but When He Takes Refuge in the Three Precious Things, His Eyes Are Purified

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Thus I have heard. Once the Buddha was in the park of the Śākya clan. At that time, in the city of Cātumā, there was someone of the Śākya family called Kṣema. He had pure faith in the Buddha, pure faith in the Doctrine, and pure faith in the Sangha. He had taken refuge in the Buddha, taken refuge in the Doctrine, and taken refuge in the Sangha. He was all turned toward the Buddha, all turned toward the Doctrine, and all turned toward the Sangha. He did not have any doubts about the Buddha, any doubts about the Doctrine, or any doubts about the Sangha. He did not have any doubts about the Truth of suffering, any doubts about the Truth of origination, any doubts about the Truth of cessation, or any doubts about the Truth of the path. Because he had seen the Truths, he had obtained the fruition of the path as a *srotāpanna*. He could see all that such a one could see. As for *saṃbodhi* (perfect enlightenment), merely after some time he was sure to obtain it.

Because the Śākya son Kṣema had an eye disease, he could not see the various things. So the Śākya son Kṣema intoned names of the World-honored One, “*Namo* to the one who gives eyes; *Namo* to the one who gives brightness; *Namo* to the one who removes darkness; *Namo* to the one who holds a torch; *Namo* to the Bhagavān; *Namo* to the Sugata (Well-departed One).”

The Buddha surpasses human ears with his pure divine ear. Hearing his voice, he said to Ānanda, “Go and help Kṣema the Śākyan with words now! Rescue him, guard him, and take care of him! Do away with his misfortune! Bring gain to the fourfold Sangha, bring them benefit, and let them dwell in happiness.”

Then the World-honored One expounded for Kṣema the Śākyan the sutra for the purification of eyes:

Tadyathā hili mili kili hi heta! Let the eyes of Kṣema the Śākyan be purified with this spell for the purification of eyes, and let his sclerotic membrane be removed, whether it is an air film [over the eye], or a [bilious] heat film, or a phlegm film, or a film of all of these. Let him not feel any burning, boiling, or swelling, any pain, itch, or flowing of tears. With the truth of the precepts, the truth of asceticism, the truth of the seers, the truth of the gods, the truth of healing herbs, the truth of the spell, the truth of karmic causality, the Truth of suffering, the Truth of origination, the Truth of cessation, the Truth of the path, the truth of the arhat, the truth of the *pratyekabuddha*, the truth of the bodhisattva, let the name of Kṣema the Śākyan be called in this way. If one also calls someone else's name in this way, his eyes will be purified. When his eyes are purified, this will remove the darkness and remove the membrane, whether it is an air film, or a heat film, or a cold film, or a film of all these. One will not feel any burning, boiling, swelling, pain, itch, or flowing tears. O Ānanda, in such words from the six Buddhas, World-honored Ones, up to me now as the seventh, we have given this explanation. The Four Heavenly Kings also expound this spell. Lord Śakra expounds it, too. King Brahmā and his Brahman groups also rejoice in it. O Ānanda, I do not see whether one is among the gods or among men, in Māra's or in Brahmā's [realm], among the multitude of *śramaṇas* or the multitude of Brahmans. Men or gods may proclaim these words three times, whether for sclerotic membranes, for darkness, for a swelling, for the pupils of the eyes, or when tears flow from the eyes. It may be caused by a god, by a dragon, a *yakṣa*, an *asura*, a *kumbhāṇḍa*, a hungry ghost, a *piśāca*, or by poison, an evil charm, the way of enchantment, a *vetāla* spell, an evil star, or any constellation.

After Ānanda's arrival, he pronounced the spell three times for Kṣema the Śākyan and Kṣema's eyes were as pure as before. He could see everything. With this spell [Ānanda] then called someone else's name, just as for Kṣema the Śākyan. In all cases he removed darkness; and he removed the membrane of air, of heat, of cold, or of all three. No one felt any burning, boiling, swelling, pain, itch, or flowing tears.

"*Namo Bhagavate namas Tathāgatāyārhate Saṃyaksambuddhāya.*" With the words of this divine spell, a bodhisattva may obtain any auspicious accomplishment. All Brahmans were happy. *Svāhā.*

Parable 76: Seven Kinds of Liberality

The Buddha has said that there are seven kinds of liberality that do not diminish one's possessions but gain one a considerable recompense. The first is called ocular liberality. When one always regards his parents and masters, *śramaṇas* and Brahmans with a friendly eye, not with an evil eye, this is called ocular liberality. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one obtains pure eyes. Upon becoming a Buddha in the future, one obtains the heavenly eye. The Buddha eye is called the first recompense.

The second is called the liberality of a pleasant countenance, that is, not to knit one's brows or show an unpleasant face toward one's parents or masters, toward *śramaṇas* or Brahmans. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one obtains an upright appearance. Upon becoming a Buddha in the future, one obtains an appearance of genuine gold. This is said to be the second recompense.

The third is called liberality of speech, that is, when one utters soft words, not harsh words, to one's parents and masters, to *śramaṇas* and Brahmans. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one's words become eloquent. What one explains is faithfully accepted by others. Upon becoming a Buddha

in the future, one obtains the four analytical knowledges. This is said to be the third recompense.

The fourth is called corporal liberality. Standing up, meeting, and greeting one's parents and masters, *śramaṇas* and Brahmans, this is called corporal liberality. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one obtains an upright body, a tall body, a body respected by others. Becoming a Buddha in the future, one's body is like a *nyagrodha* tree, the top of which one cannot see. This is said to be the fourth recompense.

479b The fifth is called mental liberality. Even though one may offer the above, if one's thoughts are not affable, one does not call it liberality. If one profoundly worships with good-heartedness and affability, this is called mental liberality. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one obtains clear thoughts and no deluded thoughts. Upon becoming a Buddha in the future, one obtains a mind with all kinds of knowledge. This is said to be the fifth recompense, i.e., of mental liberality.

The sixth is called liberality of bedding and seating. When one meets one's parents or masters, *śramaṇas* or Brahmans, one spreads out bedding and seating for them, so that they may sit down. One even asks them to be seated on one's own seat. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one always obtains honorable bedding and seating [adorned with] the seven precious things. Upon becoming a Buddha in the future, one obtains the Lion Throne of the Law. This is said to be the sixth recompense.

The seventh is called liberality of dwelling. When one lets one's former parents and masters, *śramaṇas* and Brahmans come and go, sit, and lie down in one's dwelling, this is called liberality of dwelling. Upon abandoning one's body and then getting another body, one obtains natural housing and lodging. Upon becoming a Buddha in the future, one may obtain any room for meditation. This is said to be the seventh recompense. These are said to be the seven liberalities. They do not diminish one's possessions but gain one a considerable recompense.

**Parable 77: The Land of King Chia-pu Suffers a
Drought, and by Bathing the Buddha, the
People Obtain Rain**

If one plants something wholesome in an excellent field of merit, one is sure to obtain recompense afterward. Formerly, countless, numberless *asaṃkhyeya* kalpas ago, there used to be a king named Chia-pu. He ruled the eighty-four thousand countries of Jambudvīpa. The king had twenty thousand wives but no male offspring. He prayed to the spirits, and after many years his principal wife bore him a crown prince called Candana. He ruled the four quarters as a Wheel-turning King. In his weariness he went forth and realized right awakening.

The diviners in the land then all said that a great drought would last twelve years. With what plan could they avert this calamity? They talked it over and said, "We must make a golden tub now and put it in the marketplace. We must fill it with perfumed water and let the Buddha bathe in it. When we distribute the perfumed water and erect shrines around it, we can avert the calamity." So they invited the Tathāgata to bathe in the perfumed water. They distributed the remainder of the bathing water of the World-honored One in eighty-four thousand precious flasks, which they sent to the eighty-four thousand countries, instructing them to construct shrines around the water. Their worship brought about merit. Because they had constructed shrines and brought about merit, the sky sent ample rain. The five cereals were abundant, and the people were happy. Then there was someone who saw these shrines and was delighted in his heart. So he scattered one handful of flowers over a shrine and obtained a considerable wholesome recompense.

The Buddha said, "When with my Buddha eye I contemplate the shrines with the perfumed water of the Tathāgata Candana in that faraway past, I see that those who were converted by them have all long since become Buddhas and entered nirvana. The one who offered one handful of flowers is myself. Because I had that

479c karmic causality in the past, I have finally brought about my realization of Buddhahood now. Therefore a practitioner should diligently perform meritorious acts. He must not underestimate the smallest wholesome deed!"

Parable 78: An Elder Invites Śāriputra and a Mahallaka

Once in the city of Śrāvastī there was a distinguished elder. His house was extremely wealthy and his riches were immeasurable. He used to invite *śramaṇas* in the sequential order of the Sangha to go to his house to receive worship. So in sequential order of the Sangha it was the turn of Śāriputra and a *mahallaka* (aged monk). They went to the house of the elder. When the elder saw them, he was in very good spirits. Just on that day his traders, who had gone to sea, returned home safely with a great many precious things. At that time, the king of the land had bestowed upon the elder a gift of villages as a fiefdom. His pregnant wife then went on to give birth to a son. These happy occasions all happened at the same time. When Śāriputra and his companion had entered the house, they received offerings from the elder. After the meal, the elder handed around the water and spread out a small seat in front of the reverends. Śāriputra intoned the prayer: "The present day is a lucky time, indeed. You have obtained fine rewards. Riches and pleasant occasions have all come together. You are glad and transported with delight. If, in your devotion and contentment, you produce thoughts of the ten powers, may the future always be like today!" When the elder had heard this prayer, he was very happy and gave two fine, splendid pieces of cloth to Śāriputra; but he gave nothing to the *mahallaka*.

On his way back to the temple the *mahallaka* felt disappointed, and he thought, "The reason Śāriputra has now obtained that cloth is that the prayer he incanted was agreeable to the elder. That is why he obtained that gift. I must now ask for this prayer." So he said to Śāriputra, "Please teach me the prayer you just intoned!"

Śāriputra replied to him, "You must not use this prayer at all times. There are times when you may use it, and there are times when you must not." When the *mahallaka* insistently demanded, "Please, you must teach it to me!", Śāriputra could not refuse his request and taught him the prayer. After he had received the instructions, he then studied it so that he became extremely well-versed in the prayer. He thought, "When will it be my turn to occupy the seat of honor and intone this prayer?"

Later, according to the sequential order of the Sangha, he occupied the seat of honor in the house of the elder. At that time the traders of the elder had gone to sea but had lost their riches. The elder's wife was involved in a lawsuit and moreover his son had died. The *mahallaka* nevertheless intoned the former prayer, wishing that the future would always be like today. When the elder heard these words, he became angry; he gave [the *mahallaka*] a beating and chased him away from the house.

480a After being beaten in anger, [the *mahallaka*] felt very vexed and ran into a field of sesame plants belonging to the king. He trampled on the plants, and snapped them off. The one who took care of the sesame was angry at such behavior. He flogged [the *mahallaka*] with his whip and utterly disgraced him. After the *mahallaka* had received a thorough beating, he then asked the person who had beaten him, "What did I do wrong that I am beaten like this?" The man who took care of the sesame then accused him of trampling on the plants, and he showed him where the road was.

He went on along the road, and after a few miles he met someone else who had mown wheat and piled it up. At that time, it was the custom to go around a stack keeping to the right. Having gone around it, one would set out food and drink to pray for a bountiful crop. If one went around it keeping to the left, it was not considered to be auspicious. The *mahallaka* then went around the stack keeping to his left. The owner of the wheat was angry at him and gave him another beating with his cudgel. The *mahallaka* then asked him, "What did I do wrong that you give me this savage beating with your cudgel?" The owner of the wheat answered, "When you went around the stack, why did you not go around it

keeping to the right, wishing me that much more might be added to it? Because you committed a breach of our rules, I beat you." Then he showed him his way.

After he had proceeded just a little while, he happened to come upon a funeral. He went around the grave mound as he should have gone around the previous stack of wheat, and he uttered the prayer, "May much more be added! May much more be added!" The chief mourner was angry at him. He grabbed him, gave him a beating, and said to him, "When you see someone who has died, you should feel grief and say, 'From now on it must not be like this again!' Why did you say instead, 'May much more be added! May much more be added!'" The *mahallaka* said, "From now on I shall do as you say."

Again he went on and he saw a marriage ceremony. Just as the leader of the funeral had told him, he said, "From now on it must not be like this again!" Those who were being married were angered by his behavior. They again gave him such a flogging that his head split open. He then continued on his way.

Retreating in confusion from this beating, he ran into someone who was catching wild geese. Frightened and scared out of his wits, he touched the net and so startled the geese that they scattered. The hunter was angry, grabbed him, and gave him another beating. Suffering terribly from his beating, the *mahallaka* then said to the hunter, "As I go along my way, I am frequently distressed. I have lost my mind, and my steps are unsteady. I have touched your net, sir, but please be lenient and let me go on!" The hunter answered, "You are extremely inattentive and thus are deceived! Why don't you crawl quietly on your hands and knees?"

So he stuck to the road, crawling on his hands and knees just as the hunter had told him. Further along the way he met someone who was washing clothes. When that person saw him walking on his elbows, she thought he wanted to steal her clothes. She immediately grabbed him and gave him another beating with her cudgel. After he had suffered this hardship, the *mahallaka* then told in detail what had happened and was set free. After his arrival in the Jetavana he said to the *bhikṣus*, "When the other day I intoned

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Śāriputra's prayers, I experienced considerable suffering." He then explained how he was beaten, his skin and body broken, and how he had nearly lost his life. The *bhikṣus* led the *mahallaka* to the Buddha, and they explained why this man was beaten.

The Buddha said, "Not only now does the *mahallaka* have this karmic causality, but it was so also in the past. There was a daughter of a king who had fallen ill. The chief astronomer divined that she should go to a cemetery in order to be cured of her illness. So the king's daughter led her attendants to a cemetery. Along the way there were two merchants who saw the king's daughter and her majestic escort. They became afraid and ran into the cemetery. The king's daughter's servants cut off the ears and nose of one of them. The other one panicked and lay down among the corpses, feigning death.

"Wishing to be cured, the king's daughter then wanted to pick out someone who had died recently, one whose skin was not yet rotten. She was going to sit down on him and wash herself in order to heal her ailment. So she sent some people to look for [such a body]. They found the merchant and touched him with their hands. His body was still pliable, and they thought he was a recent corpse. So she powdered herself with ground mustard and washed herself on top of him. The pungency of the ground mustard entered the merchant's nose. Although he tried to control himself, he could not hold back, gave a loud sneeze, and quickly got to his feet. The servants then thought they had caused a demon to rise from the dead. 'He may bring a calamity upon us!' They closed the gate to ward anyone off.

"The king's daughter desperately tried to hold on to the merchant and would not let him go. He then informed her of the truth, 'I really am no demon!' The king's daughter immediately went to the city together with the merchant. She called out to open the gate of the city and reported the true facts. Although the girl's father, the king, heard her words, he still felt some disbelief. Accompanied by armed men, he had them open the gate and went to have a look. Only then did he know that the merchant was no demon. Her father, the king, said, 'A girl's body may not be seen twice!' So he

gave his daughter to the merchant in marriage. The merchant was glad and his good luck was immeasurable.”

The Buddha said, “The merchant who gained the king’s daughter then is [now] Śāriputra. The one whose ears and nose were cut off is [now] the *mahallaka*. Such is the relationship from past lives. Not only today but from now on. O *bhikṣus*, if you want to expound the Doctrine or intone a prayer, you must understand the time and the occasion. You must develop liberality, morality, patient endurance, strenuousness, meditation, and wisdom. You ought to know the right time and the wrong time for grief or joy. You must not speak rashly!”

Chapter VII

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Chapter VII

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Parable 79: A Brahman Gives His Wish-Granting Gem to the Buddha, Goes Forth, and Attains the Path

The Buddha was in Śrāvastī. At that time in southern India there was a Brahman who knew all about wish-granting gems. He took a wish-granting gem and went from southern India to eastern India. As he traveled through the countries, no one was able to recognize it. Eventually he reached Śrāvastī. Before King Prasenajit he spoke these words, "Who can recognize and know this wish-granting gem?"

King Prasenajit assembled his ministers, but among all the knowledgeable people no one was able to recognize it. King Prasenajit went with him to the Buddha. The Buddha said to the Brahman, "Do you know the gem's name? Do you know where the gem comes from? Do you know the gem's power?" [The Brahman] replied, "Certainly I know." The Buddha said:

This gem comes from the brain of a big *makara* fish. The length of the fish is two hundred eighty thousand miles. This gem is called "Diamond Solid." It has a first power: If any person suffering from poison sees it, the poison totally dissipates. Or if he is touched by its brightness, this also dissipates the poison. A second power: When someone who is ill with fever sees it, he is cured. When its brightness touches him, he is also healed. A third power: Someone may have countless enemies; when he holds onto this gem, they all become his friends.

When the Brahman had heard these words, he was gladdened by them. "The Tathāgata is truly omniscient!" So he presented the gem to the Buddha and asked for the state of going forth. When the Buddha said, "Welcome, O *bhikṣu!*", the man's hair fell off by itself and the robe of the Law enveloped him. Having had the essentials of the Doctrine explained to him, the Brahman became an arhat. The *bhikṣus* said, "You could recognize the gem well, O Tathāgata!

You could also expound the Doctrine, so that he obtained the realization of the path.”

The Buddha said, “Not only now, but also in the past it was like that. Once in the land of Kāśī, in the mountains of the seers, there was a seer with the five superknowledges. Then there was a Brahman who took the leaf of a tree and asked the seer, ‘Of which tree is this a leaf?’ The seer replied, ‘This tree is called “gold-top.” When someone is poisoned, when he is in critical condition and near death, he should sit down under this tree and [the poison] will dissipate. When someone who is ill with a fever resorts to this tree, [the fever] also will be done away with. When someone is touched by the leaves of this tree, any poison or fever will be completely done away with.’ The Brahman was glad and he asked to become the seer’s disciple. Practicing his doctrine, he also obtained the five superknowledges.

“The seer with the five superknowledges at that time is now I. The Brahman who took the leaf of the tree at that time is this present Brahman. At that time I instructed him so that he might be endowed with the five superknowledges. Now he is exempt from the hardship of birth and death too, having become an arhat.”

Parable 80: Daśabala Kāśyapa Stops the Bleeding of the Buddha’s Foot with True Words

At that time the Tathāgata was wounded by the thorn of a *khadira* tree. The thorn wounded his foot, which did not stop bleeding. They smeared it with all kinds of healing herbs, but they could not cure it. The arhats gathered healing herbs in the fragrant mountains; and they applied the ointment, but [the bleeding] still did not diminish. Daśabala Kāśyapa arrived where the World-honored One was, and he said, “If the Buddha, the Tathāgata, has impartial thoughts for all beings, if he is impartial toward Rāhula and Devadatta and does not discriminate between them, the bleeding of his foot must stop!” The bleeding immediately stopped; and the sore healed, too. The *bhikṣus* said admiringly, “All kinds of fine

healing herbs were applied, but the bleeding did not stop. Yet after Kāśyapa's true words, it stopped."

The Buddha said, "Not only now! In the past it was the same. Once there was a Brahman. He had a son called Ahimsaka, who said to his father, 'Do not hurt any sentient being when walking in the fields!' The father said to his son, 'Do you want to be a seer? How could you avoid an insect in that occupation?' The son said, 'I now hope that you may obtain happiness in the present world and happiness in the after world. You do not need any words of mine. What do I have to live for?' So he sat down by the side of the spring belonging to a venomous dragon, wanting to choose death.

"In those days there was a venomous dragon. Seeing it would kill you. When the son of the Brahman saw the venomous dragon, its venom spread throughout his body; and his life was about to end. His father then felt grieved. As he did not know his son's whereabouts, he set out to look for him; and he saw that his son wanted to die. When the father arrived where his son was, he said, 'If my son has never had any harm in his mind, this venom should dissipate!' After he spoke these words, the poison dissipated; and [his son] was restored to his previous state.

"The father at that time is [now] Daśabala Kāśyapa. The son at that time is [now] myself. In the past he could relieve me of my disease with true words. In the present time too he cured my disease with true words."

Parable 81: The Buddha Sits underneath the Bodhi Tree; and Pāpiyān, the Devil King, Wants to Come and Upset Him

Once the Tathāgata was sitting underneath the bodhi tree. Pāpiyān, the evil devil, leading a multitude of eighty million, sought to destroy the Buddha. Arriving where the Tathāgata was, he spoke these words: "Gautama, how can you sit all alone! Get up quickly and leave! If you do not leave, I shall grab you by your feet and throw you into the sea!" The Buddha said, "When I contemplate the

world, [I see that] there is no one who can throw me into the sea. Once in a previous world you were only a temple chief. Having received the eight precepts one day, you gave one bowl of food to a *pratyekabuddha*. Therefore you were reborn in sixth heaven [of the desire world] as a great devil king. I, however, widely developed merit in three *asaṃkhyeya* kalpas. In the first *asaṃkhyeya* kalpa I worshipped countless Buddhas. In the second and third *asaṃkhyeya* kalpas it was the same. The disciples and *pratyekabuddhas* I worshipped cannot be calculated. In the whole territory there is not one thing as big as a needle that was not a bone from my body." The devil said, "Gautama, you say that I once observed the precepts for one day and that I gave food to a *pratyekabuddha*. One may trust this to be true. I know it myself; and you know about me, too. But who is a witness to what you say of yourself?" The Buddha pointed to the earth with his hand and said, "This earth is my witness." When he said these words, the whole earth shook in six ways. The spirit of the earth left his adamantine fastness, joined his hands, and said to the Buddha, "I am your witness. Since this earth first existed, I have always been inside it. What you say, World-honored One, is true, not false!"

The Buddha said to Pāpiyān, "Only if you can first move this water bowl can you throw me into the sea." Then Pāpiyān and his host of eighty million could not move [the water bowl]. The devil king's troops collapsed and fell. They were destroyed and scattered like stars.

The *bhikṣus* said, "Pāpiyān has been distressing the Tathāgata for a long time, but he cannot win." The Buddha said, "Not only now, but equally in the past! Once in the land of Kāśī, in the mountains of the seers, there was a seer with the five super-knowledges. He instructed the youths in the city of Benares, and they were all converted and left home to follow the path of the seer. At that time, the spirit of the city was extremely angry and said to the seer, 'If you come into town and make one more conversion, I shall grab you by your feet and throw you into the sea!' The seer then took a water bowl and said to the spirit of the city, 'First move this bowl, and then throw me out!' The spirit expended the

utmost effort, but he could not move it. He shamefully retreated in submission.

“The seer at that time is [now] myself. The spirit of the city at that time is [now] Pāpiyān.”

Parable 82: The Buddha Explains the Misfortune of Profitable Offerings to the *Bhikṣus*

Once when the Tathāgata was in Śrāvastī, he was burdened with profitable offerings. There was a deep forest called T’an-chuang-yen. Fleeing from the profitable offerings, [the Buddha] went to this forest. In the forest there was a monastery where an arhat called Nāyaka was the head of the temple. During the days after the Buddha’s arrival in that forest, the forest was filled with people worshipping him by bringing him clothes. He said, “I do not need profitable offerings, but these profitable offerings keep following me.”

There were twelve thousand *bhikṣus* who had arrived there, too. The Buddha said to the *bhikṣus*, “So-called profitable offerings are a great misfortune. They may prove to be a burden. Even an arhat is burdened by profitable offerings.” The *bhikṣus* asked, “What burden may they prove to be?” The Buddha said, “The damage of profitable offerings ruins the skin, the flesh, the bone, and the marrow. How do they ruin them? They ruin the skin, which is morality; the flesh, which is concentration; the bone, which is wisdom; and the marrow, which is fine wholesome thoughts.”

The twelve thousand *bhikṣus* arranged their three robes and six objects and became *āraṇyakas*. They did not accept anything else. The Buddha then said in praise, “Excellent, excellent, that you follow the way of the *āraṇyaka*! My way here is a way of little desire, not of many desires. It is a way of satisfaction, not of dissatisfaction. It is a way of happiness in tranquillity, not of happiness in disturbance. It is a way of strenuous pursuit, not a way of laziness. It is a way of right mindfulness, not a way of wrong mindfulness. It is a way of concentrated thoughts, not a way of

disturbed thoughts. It is a way of wisdom, not a way of foolishness." When the *bhikṣus* had heard him say these words, they all obtained arhatship. The *bhikṣus* said to the Buddha, "Wonderful, O World-honored One!"

The Buddha said, "It does not happen only now; it happened also in the past. Once in the land of Kāśī there was a state councillor called Yakṣa. Yakṣa's son, called Yajñadatta, was profoundly aware of impermanence. He went forth to learn from [some] seers. These seers had many desires and they all quarreled about their fruits and herbs. Because he wanted to make them diminish their desires, Yajñadatta gave up the soft herbs and took the tough herbs. He gave up the sweet fruits and took the sour fruits. He gave up his own fresh fruits and took the stale fruits of the others. Just by giving up and taking the fruits, he obtained the five superknowledges. When the twelve thousand seers saw him like this, they applied themselves to diminishing their desires. They no longer sought to obtain many things, and they all obtained the five superknowledges. Through the gradual use of expedient means of salvation, Yajñadatta converted the seers. After his life had ended, he was reborn in the stage without needs (*ākiṃcanyāyatana*).

"Yajñadatta is [now] myself. The twelve thousand seers at that time are the twelve thousand *bhikṣus* present now."

Parable 83: On the Way to His Execution a Thief Sees the Buddha in the Distance; and Being Happy, He Is Reborn in Heaven

Once in Śrāvastī King Prasenajit struck a drum and promulgated an order, "If someone who has committed a robbery is caught, he must be put to death!" Then there was someone who had apprehended a robber and brought him to justice. The king immediately sent the robber out to be executed. Outside of the city, in the distance, the thief happened to see the Tathāgata on his way; and he was happy in his heart. He arrived at the place of his execution and underwent the king's law.

He was subsequently reborn in heaven and fully developed the three recollections. Knowing that he was reborn in heaven after his life had ended because he had been happy seeing the Buddha when he was going to be executed, he was moved by the Buddha's kindness and descended to earth to worship him. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "Because of which karmic cause was he reborn in the heavenly abode?" The Buddha said, "Once, among men, he was executed by the king. On the way to his death he saw me, the Buddha, and rejoiced. Because of this wholesome cause, he was reborn in that heavenly abode. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he gained insight and realized *srotāpatti*."

**Parable 84: Someone Whose Hands and Feet Had
Been Cut Off as a Punishment Is Moved
by the Buddha's Kindness and Is Reborn
in Heaven**

482b Once in the land of Śrāvastī someone had offended against the king's law. They cut off his hands and feet and threw him down by the roadside. On his way, the Buddha saw him, went over to him, and asked, "What do you consider to be most painful now?" The crippled man answered, "I suffer very badly from starvation." So the Buddha ordered Ānanda to give him food.

When the crippled man's life had ended, he was reborn in heaven. Moved by the Buddha's generous kindness, he descended to earth to worship him. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "Through which course of action was he reborn in heaven?" The Buddha said, "Once, [when he was] among men, his hands and feet were cut off as punishment and he was thrown down by the roadside. When I, the Buddha, arrived there, I ordered that he be given food. He was happy in his heart; and when his life had ended, he was reborn in heaven. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he obtained the path."

Parable 85: An Elder Offers Delicious Honey Syrup to Passers-by and Is Reborn in Heaven

Once there was an elder in Śrāvastī who was looking for a [place for a] forest dwelling in the Jetavana. He wanted to construct a dwelling there. But the elder Sudatta had already erected buildings everywhere. There was no more empty space left. So the elder made a drink with fine pure water, using all sorts of honey and all sorts of flour, in the main gate of the Jetavana, and gave it to all who passed by. After ninety days, the Buddha received some, too.

Thereupon the elder's life ended, and he was reborn in heaven. Having great dignity, he ascended to the abode of the gods; but he came down to worship the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "Through which course of action was he reborn in heaven with such splendid dignity?" The Buddha said, "When he was a man once, he made all sorts of drinks at the gate of the Jetavana and gave them to everyone. I, the Buddha, received some myself. For this karmic cause he was reborn in heaven. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he obtained the path."

Parable 86: King Prasenajit Sends Someone to Invite the Buddha, and So the King's Messenger Is Reborn in Heaven

Once, in the land of Śrāvastī, King Prasenajit and the elder Sudatta had not seen the Buddha for a long time and their thoughts longed for him. After the summer retreat they sent a messenger to invite the Buddha. When the messenger reached the Buddha, he paid his respects and said to the Buddha, "The king and the elder would like to see you, O Tathāgata. I wish that you, World-honored One, would mount this carriage and go to Śrāvastī!" The Buddha said, "I do not need a carriage. I have my divine ubiquity. Although I have said these words, I shall go through the air on your carriage, so that you may obtain the merit." The

messenger went ahead and informed the king and also the elder. The king and the elder went out to welcome the Buddha personally, and the messenger also came back with the king to meet the Buddha.

When the messenger's life had ended, he was reborn in heaven. Riding on a precious carriage, he came to the Buddha. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

482c The *bhikṣus* asked, "Why was he reborn in the palace of the gods, and why does he drive this precious carriage?" The Buddha said, "Once, among men, he was sent by the king to me, the Buddha, and he presented me with his carriage to ride in. Because of this deed, he is now reborn in heaven and always drives a precious carriage. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he gained insight and realized *srotāpatti*."

**Parable 87: When King Prasenajit Goes Begging,
Urging Conversion, a Poor Man Gives
Him a Cloth and Is Reborn in Heaven**

Once, in the land of Śrāvastī, King Prasenajit said these words, "While Sudatta the elder still can urge all people to perform meritorious deeds, I shall now instruct beings to beg, too, so that they may obtain merit." Thereupon he went on his conversion tour, begging everywhere. There was then someone who was poor and completely destitute. He only had one piece of cloth, and he immediately gave it to King Prasenajit. When the king had received the cloth, he in turn presented it to the Buddha.

Later, the poor man's life ended; and he was reborn in heaven. Moved by the Buddha's great kindness, he came to worship him. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "What deed did he perform once, that he was reborn in that heaven?" The Buddha said, "When he was among men, the king happened to be urging people to reform. So he gave his white piece of cloth to [the king]. Through this

wholesome cause, he has obtained rebirth in heaven. Consequently, having heard the Doctrine from me, he realized the path.”

Parable 88: An Elder Brother Constantly Urges His Younger Brother to Serve the Three Precious Things, but the Younger Brother Does Not Reverently Believe; the Elder Brother Is Reborn in Heaven

Once, in the land of Śrāvastī, there were two brothers. The first one served the Buddha’s Doctrine. The second one served [the heretic] Pūraṇa. The elder brother constantly urged his younger brother to serve the Three Precious Things, but the younger brother did not comply. They quarreled all the time and did not live in harmony. So each lived his own life. The first one worshipped the Buddha.

Later his life ended, and he was reborn in heaven. He then came to the Buddha and worshipped him, showing his gratitude. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, “What deed did he perform in the past that he was reborn in this heavenly palace?” The Buddha said, “Formerly, among men, he found happiness in the True Doctrine, and he served the Three Precious Things. Because of this meritorious cause, he has obtained rebirth in heaven now. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he was zealously devoted; and he realized the fruition of the path.”

Parable 89: A Father Hears That His Sons Have Attained the Path; He Is Glad and Obtains Rebirth in Heaven

Once, in the land of Śrāvastī, there were two brothers who always loved to quarrel and who resented each other. So they went to the king together with a request to pass judgment, but they met the

483a Buddha on the way. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to them, and they became arhats.

When their father heard that his sons had met the Buddha and that they had obtained the path, he was happy in his heart. When later his life had ended, he was reborn in heaven. He came to the Buddha; and when the Buddha had expounded the Doctrine to him, he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "What deed did he perform in the past that he is reborn in heaven now?" The Buddha said, "Once, among men, he heard that I had expounded the Doctrine to his sons and that they had obtained the path. He was in raptures of delight and joy. When his life had ended, he was reborn in heaven. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he was zealously devoted and realized the fruition of the path."

Parable 90: A Son Is Compelled by His Father to Go Forth and Is Reborn in Heaven

Once, in the land of Śrāvastī, there was a man who made his son go forth and serve the Buddha. So the Buddha saved him but made him sweep floors all the time. He could not bear the hardship, ceased following the path, and returned to lay life. His father said, "Just go forth! From now on I shall sweep the floors in your place." So the father went with his son to the Jetavana pure abode.

When the son saw the coolness in the pure abode, he was happy in his heart and said these words, "I would rather kill myself, going forth and sweeping floors, than return to lay life again." Later his life ended, and he was reborn in heaven. He then came to the Buddha; and when the Buddha had expounded the Doctrine to him, he became a *srotāpanna*.

The *bhikṣus* asked, "Because of what deed was he reborn in heaven?" The Buddha said, "Once, among men, he could not bear the hardship of going forth and wanted to return to his family. His father did not give him permission but took his place as a servant, forcing him to go forth. This made him glad. His life ended and he

was reborn in heaven. Having heard the Doctrine from me again, he obtained the path."

**Parable 91: The Arhat Jayanta Chases the Evil
Dragon Far into the Sea**

There once was a reverend arhat called Jayanta. Seven hundred years after the Buddha had left the world, he appeared in Kaśmīr. At that time there was an evil dragon king in Kaśmīr called Aruṇa. It frequently brought about calamities and distressed the nobles. The whole population of the land was distressed by it. There were then two thousand arhats who all exerted their supernatural strength to drive the dragon out, so that he would leave the land. Among them there were five hundred arhats who moved the earth with their supernatural power. Another five hundred emitted a bright light. Another five hundred entered concentration and walked in meditation. Each and every one exerted his supernatural strength but could not make [the dragon] move.

483b Then finally the Reverend Jayanta went to the dragon pond, snapped his fingers three times, and said, "Leave now, dragon! You cannot stay here!" So the dragon left, not daring to stay. The two thousand arhats then said to the reverend, "We and you, reverend, have alike achieved the destruction of our impurities. Our enlightened Dharma bodies are all equal; but although we all exerted our supernatural strength, we could not make the dragon move. How did you, reverend, drive the dragon Aruṇa far away into the ocean with three snaps of your fingers?" The reverend then replied, "Ever since I was a common man, I have observed the prohibitory precepts. I have guarded my evenmindedness concerning any wrongdoings, just as if they were the four most serious ones. The reason that you sages could not move the dragon is that you do not have the same supernatural strength. Therefore you could not move him."

The Reverend Jayanta then went to northern India with his disciples. On his way he met a crow. He looked up at it and smiled.

The disciples said, "We wonder, reverend, why you smiled. Please explain to us what it means!" The reverend replied, "When the right time comes, I shall give you an explanation." Thereupon he went on and he arrived at the city of Takṣaśilā. Having reached the gate of the city, he was dispirited and his complexion changed. When it was time to eat, he entered the city to beg for food. After he had obtained his food, he went back through the gate of the city. Again he was dispirited, and his complexion changed. The disciples kneeled and said, "We wonder why you smiled before, and also why your complexion changed and became sad."

The Reverend Jayanta then answered his disciples, "In the past, ninety-one kalpas after the Buddha Vipāśyin had entered nirvana, I was the son of an elder. At that time I wanted to go forth, but my parents did not let me. They said to me, 'Our family matters are important. If you go forth, who will provide for our posterity? We shall choose you a wife. When she has given birth to an heir, we shall give you permission to go forth.' I immediately got married. After I had taken a wife, I again asked to go forth. My parents again said, 'When you have a son, we shall give you permission to go forth.' Shortly thereafter I had a son. When my son could speak, I again said to my parents, 'I would like your permission first. Allow me to go forth!'

"At that moment my parents were afraid to go against their former words. They secretly instructed the wet nurse to tell their grandchild, 'When your father wants to go forth and leave, you must hold your father back at the gate and say to him, "Do you want to abandon me now, after you have given me [life], and go forth? If you go, please have me killed now before you leave."' I, his father, immediately felt dispirited, changed my mind, and said to my son, 'I shall stay now. I shall not leave any more!' For this reason I have been drifting through birth and death. When I contemplate my former lives with my eye of the path, it is very difficult to meet anyone in heaven, among men, or in the three unwholesome destinations. It may be very difficult to encounter someone, but when I took one look just now, I recognized that the crow I saw a while ago was the grandson from that period.

483c “Now the reason why I was dispirited before and my complexion changed is that I met a hungry demon near the city, who said to me, ‘I have been near this city for seventy years. My mother entered the city to seek food for me, but she has not come out once. I am starving and thirsty now, and I am extremely distressed. Please, reverend, enter the city! If you meet my mother, please tell her for me to come quickly and take care of me.’

“So I entered the city. I met the hungry demon’s mother and said to her, ‘Your son is starving outside, and he is in great distress. He would like to see you!’ The hungry demon’s mother then replied, ‘It has been more than seventy years since I entered this city. My own little merit has recently caused me to become emaciated and without strength. Even though there is such impure food as bloody pus, mucus, and excrement, the very strong take it away first. I cannot get it. When I finally have a mouthful of impure food and I want to take it out through the gate to share it with my son, there are strong demons at the gate again, and they will not let me leave. I wish that you, reverend, would have pity on me and take care of me, so that mother and child may see each other and eat this impure food!’ I, the reverend, then took care of the hungry demon’s mother, and she could leave through the gate of the city. When mother and child saw each other, they shared the impure food. Then I, the reverend, asked this demon, ‘How long have you lived here?’ The demon then answered, ‘I have seen this city destroyed seven times over.’ I, the reverend, then sighed and said, ‘A hungry demon’s life is long and extremely painful.’”

When the disciples heard these words, they were all disgusted with birth and death; and they obtained the path.

Parable 92: Two *Bhikṣus* Visit Jayanta and Are Reborn in Heaven

Once there were two *bhikṣus* in southern India then who had heard that Jayanta had very splendid dignity. They came to Kāśmir,

where he was staying. On their way they saw a *bhikṣu* under the trees whose appearance was very humble. He was in front of a furnace lighting a fire. The two *bhikṣus* asked him, "Do you know the Reverend Jayanta?" He answered, "Yes." The *bhikṣus* said, "Where is he now?" He said, "In the third cave up there."

The two *bhikṣus* then climbed the mountain. When they got to the cave, they saw the *bhikṣu* who had just been lighting a fire. The two *bhikṣus* then wondered why. The *bhikṣus* said, "He has such distinguished virtues. Why should we worry about our inability to arrive here first?" Then one *bhikṣu* wanted to do away with his doubts, and he asked him, "O reverend, you have such dignity; why do you light the fire yourself?" The reverend answered, "I remember the suffering of my past births and deaths. I would burn my head, hands, and feet for the Sangha. All the more would I burn this firewood."

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Then the second *bhikṣu* asked, "I am ignorant of the suffering of your past births and deaths. How were they? I would like to hear about them." The reverend answered, "I remember that five hundred existences ago I was born as a dog. I was constantly distressed by hunger and thirst. There were only two occasions when I was fully satisfied. One was when I met a drunkard who had vomited his wine on the ground, and I was happily satisfied. The other was when I met two people, husband and wife, who made a living together. The husband went to the field, and his wife stayed behind to prepare the food. For some reason she left for a while. I immediately went in and stole that food. The vessel with the food happened to have a small mouth. Although my head did go in, it was difficult to get it out afterward. Although I had eaten my fill, I suffered afterwards. When the husband returned from the field, he cut off my head and it fell into the vessel." When the two *bhikṣus* had heard his exposition of the Doctrine, they were disgusted with birth and death and became *srotāpannas*.

Parable 93: The King of the Kuṣāṇas Meets the Arhat Jayanta

In the land of the Kuṣāṇas there was a king called Candana Kaniṣka. He had heard that in Kaśmir the reverend arhat called Jayanta was very famous, and he wanted to meet him. So he personally went to that country together with his attendants. While on his way the thought secretly arose in his mind, "I am a king now. All people in the world prostrate themselves in reverence before a king. If he himself is not someone with great virtue, how can he bear being worshipped by me?" Having thought this, he then went on his way to the other country. Someone then informed the Reverend Jayanta, "The king of the Kuṣāṇas, called Candana Kaniṣka, is coming from afar with his attendants to meet you. Please, reverend, adjust your clothes and let us do him honor!" The reverend then replied, "I have heard that the Buddha has said that the path of someone who has gone forth is respected and that he is an example for laymen. He devotes all his attention solely to his virtues. How could he go out with personal adornment to welcome someone?" So, saying nothing, he sat quietly in a formal manner and did not go out.

Thereupon the king of the Kuṣāṇas arrived at the place where he was staying, and he met the Reverend Jayanta. When he saw his dignified virtues, his respectful devotion became twice as deep. So he came forward, bowed, and stood aside.

At that moment, the reverend wanted to spit. Without realizing it, the king of the Kuṣāṇas stepped forward and presented a spittoon. So the Reverend Jayanta said to the king, "I, a poor man of the path, am not fit to be a field of merit for you now, O king. Why do you waste your time in coming to see me?" The king of the Kuṣāṇas was profoundly ashamed then [and he thought,] "I previously ventured to have a trifling opinion and he knew my thoughts. If he himself does not have divine qualities, how could he be like that?" And he had enormous respect for the reverend.

Then the Reverend Jayanta immediately gave some instruction to the king, "When you came, O king, your path was fine. May

you go just as you came.” When the king heard these instructions, he immediately returned to his country. While on their way, his ministers were resentful and they said, “We followed you, O king, on a far journey to another country. In the end we did not hear anything. So we return to our country with nothing.” The king of the Kuṣāṇas then declared to his ministers, “Do you blame me now for having gained nothing? The reverend gave me the instructions, ‘When you came, your path was fine. May you go just as you came.’ Do you not understand this? In the past I kept the precepts and practiced liberality. I repaired monasteries and constructed pagodas. Because of these several qualities, I planted the seeds to be a king and I now enjoy this rank. I am now developing further merit and extensively accumulating wholesomeness. In the future world I will surely experience the merit again. That is why he instructed me, saying, ‘When you came, your path was fine. May you go just as you came.’”

When his ministers had heard this, they bowed and apologized. “We are your servants and our knowledge is shallow, so we arrived at a false understanding. We say that the way you came and your divine qualities, O great king, fit well with the purport of your words. Because of the virtues you have accumulated, you enjoy the rank of king.” The ministers were happy. Having said this, they withdrew.

Parable 94: The King of the Kuṣāṇas Has Three Wise Subjects as Virtuous Friends

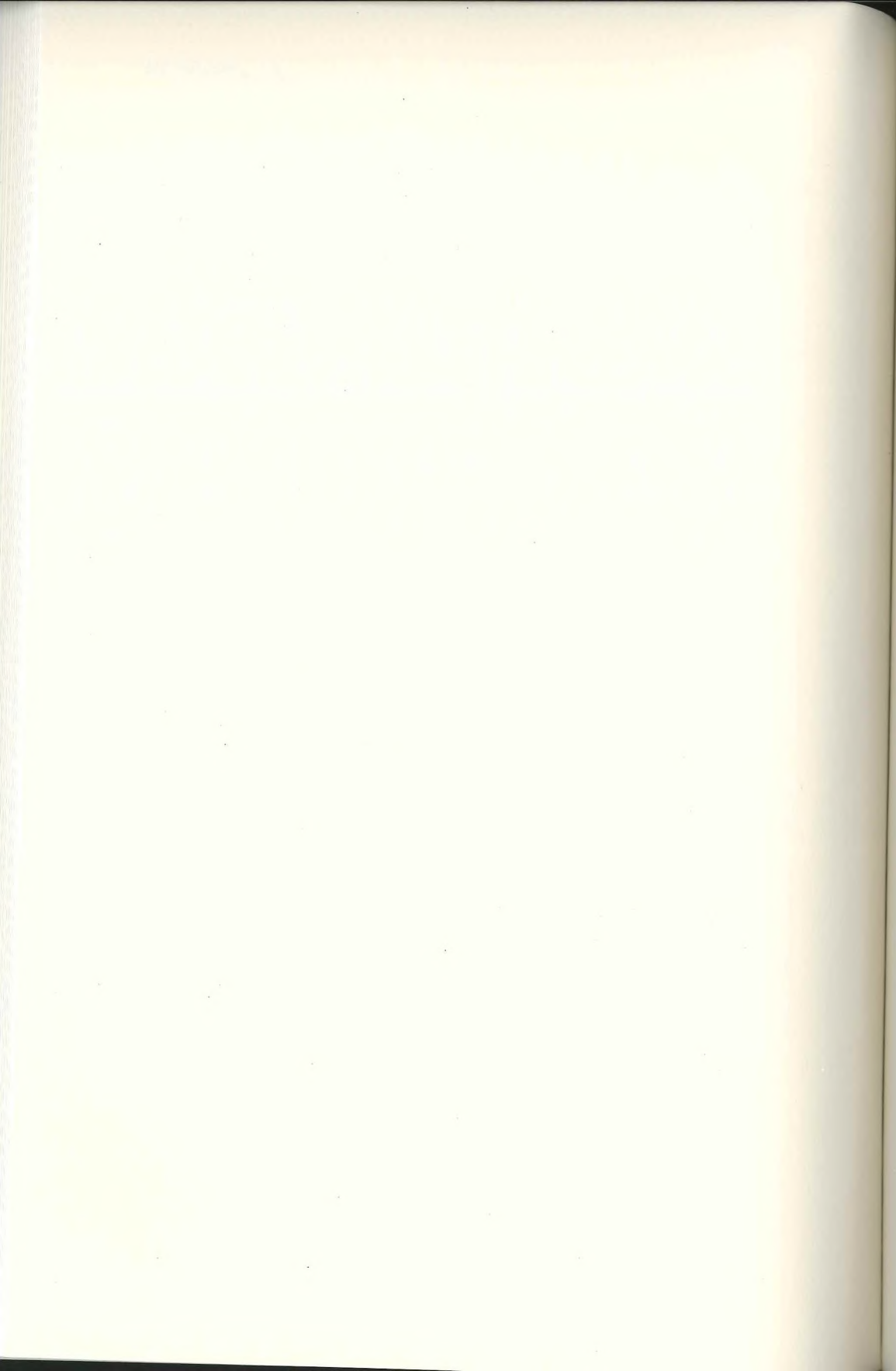
Once the king of the Kuṣāṇas, called Candana Kaniṣka, was befriended by three wise people. The first was called Bodhisattva Aśvaghōṣa. The second was a great minister called Māṭhara. The third was a skillful physician called Caraka. These three people were the king’s friends. He treated them generously, and they were always nearby. Bodhisattva Aśvaghōṣa said to the king, “When you apply my words, it will allow you, O king, to be always accompanied by good in the world into which you are born, to be perpetually free

from any hardship, and to leave the unwholesome destinations permanently." The second one, the great minister, also said to the king, "If you apply my private words, O king, and do not divulge them, you will be able to subdue the whole territory between the four seas." The third one, the skillful physician, further said to the king, "If you apply my words, O great king, it will allow you, O king, never to meet with an untimely death. The hundred flavors will please you, and you will be in good health and free from ailment." The king followed his words, and he never knew even a slight illness.

Thereupon the king applied the words of his great minister. Confronted by his military power, there were none who were not subjugated. Three directions of the territory between the four seas had been subdued, and only the eastern one had not yet been subjected. So he equipped his army and wanted to go and punish it. He sent his people and his white elephants ahead. They led the way, and the king followed behind. He was about to reach the Onion [Pamir] Range and cross a steep pass, but the
484c elephants and horses that he had mounted before did not want to proceed any further. The king was very startled and said to his horses, "Since we began mounting you in military expeditions, three directions have been subdued. Why do you not want to continue on your way now?" The great minister then said to the king, "I told you before not to divulge my private words! You have divulged them now, O king. Your fate will not be far away." The king knew it would be as his great minister had said. He would surely die before long.

In the course of his military expeditions the king had killed more than three hundred thousand people. He knew that his punishment in the future would be severe and that he would certainly undergo it without any doubt. He became afraid, and he was repentant. He developed *dāna* (liberality), kept the precepts, constructed monasteries, and worshipped the Sangha. The four things [clothing, food, bedding, and medicine] were not lacking. Developing his virtues, he was tirelessly diligent.

Then all his ministers said to one another, "The king has committed immense crimes. His massacres go beyond principle. Even though he may perform meritorious deeds now, what good does it do in regard to his past crimes?" The king heard about this. He wanted to do away with their doubtful minds and devised a means. He ordered his subjects, "Heat up a big cauldron and let it boil very hard for seven days and seven nights! Do not let it stop!" The king then threw a ring from his finger into the cauldron, and he told his ministers, "Return the ring in the cauldron to me, sirs!" The ministers said to the king, "We prefer to go to our deaths for some other crime! This ring cannot be gotten." The king said to his ministers, "Might there be a means to get it?" The ministers then replied, "One might put out the fire underneath and add cold water on top. Through this means one might be able to obtain it without hurting one's hand." The king replied, "The evil I have performed before may be compared to that hot cauldron. I am now developing that which is wholesome. I feel shame and remorse, and I shall not do evil any more. Why would I not extinguish it? The three unwholesome destinations may be avoided, and I may become a man or a god." The ministers immediately understood. When they had heard this, they were all glad. The words of a wise man must be put to use.



Chapter VIII

- 485a Parable 95: A State Councillor and His Wife in the Land of Kausāmbi Have Evil Intentions toward the Buddha; but the Buddha Reforms Their Ways, and They Become *Srotāpannas*
- Parable 96: The Buddha's Disciple Nanda Is Compelled by the Buddha to Go Forth, and He Attains the Path
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- Parable 98: A State Councillor Hears the Doctrine and Renounces Desire
- Parable 99: The Nirgrantha Disciples Throw Themselves into a Pool of Fire but Are Saved by the Buddha
- Parable 100: Five Hundred White Wild Geese Hear the Doctrine and Are Reborn in Heaven
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Parable 95: A State Councillor and His Wife in the Land of Kauśāmbi Have Evil Intentions toward the Buddha; but the Buddha Reforms Their Ways, and They Become *Srotāpannas*

When the Buddha was in the land of Kauśāmbi there was a state councillor, a Brahman, who was cruel. His actions were unprincipled. His wife was all viciousness and deceit and no different from himself. The husband told his wife, "The *śramaṇa* Gautama is in this land. If he comes, shut the gate and do not open it!"

One day the Tathāgata suddenly was in her room. When the Brahman's wife saw him, she kept silent and did not say a word to him. So the Buddha said, "You, Brahman woman, are foolish, hold wrong views, and do not believe in the Three Precious Things." When the wife heard these words, she became furious. She ripped off her necklaces, put on a dirty and greasy garment, and sat down on the floor. When her husband came in, he asked her, "Why are you like that?" She answered, "The *śramaṇa* Gautama has abused me. He said something like, 'You, Brahman woman, have wrong views and do not believe.'" The husband said, "Wait for him tomorrow! Open the gate tomorrow and wait for the Buddha to come!"

When the next day the Buddha appeared in his house, the Brahman grabbed his sharp sword and was about to chop the Buddha down; but he could not touch him. Seeing that the Buddha was up in the air, he felt shame, prostrated himself on the floor, and said to the Buddha, "Please, World-honored One, come down and accept my repentance!" So the Buddha came down, accepted his repentance, and expounded the essentials of the Doctrine to him. Both husband and wife obtained the path of the *srotāpanna*. When the *bhikṣus* had heard about the Buddha's subjection of such evil persons, they all said these words, "The appearance of the World-honored One in the world is absolutely marvelous; it is totally exceptional!"

The Buddha informed the *bhikṣus*, "Not only today but also in the past I brought about submission." The *bhikṣus* said to the

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Buddha, "We wonder how this submission in the past was brought about." The Buddha said, "Once, in the land of Kāśī, there was a king by the name of O-shou. He acted wrongly, making his people suffer. His banditry was beyond reason. The finest of the valuables of the merchants from the four distances he appropriated as taxes and did not repay their value. For this reason, the precious objects in the land became [the king's] great riches. Everyone told of this abroad, and [the king's] evil reputation spread.

"At that time there was a parrot king in the woods. He overheard people passing by telling about the king's wickedness. So he thought, 'I am a bird, but I still know what is wrong. I shall now go to him and explain the right path to him. If that king listens to my words, he will certainly say, "He is a king of birds yet he has excellent advice. What if a king of men, rebuked by him, mended his ways!"'

"He subsequently flew up in the air to the king's park. He wheeled around and came down on the top of a tree. The king's wife happened to have gone into the park for a stroll. Clapping his wings and calling out, the parrot then said to her, 'The king is tyrannical, absolutely unprincipled. He oppresses all people. He is even malicious toward birds and animals. They are wailing with anger. People and their animals are outraged. The sound of their sighing is heard throughout the world. You, his wife, are oppressive, no different from the king. How can the parents of the people be like that?'

"When the wife heard this, her rage flared up. 'What is this small bird, its mouth full of reproach for me!' She sent someone to catch it, but at that moment the parrot entered the hands of the birdcatcher, not frightened or afraid. When the wife got the parrot, she gave it to the king. The king said to the parrot, 'Why do you reproach me?' The parrot replied, 'I am only saying that you, O king, are on the wrong path. I want to benefit you. I do not dare to reproach you.' The king then asked, 'What wrong path am I on?' [The parrot] replied, 'You are on a wrong path with seven elements that can endanger your person, O king.' [The king] asked, 'Which seven?' [The parrot] answered:

(1) Besotted with feminine beauty, you do not strive for virtue. (2) Fond of wine, you are befuddled and do not concern yourself with the affairs of the nation. (3) Addicted to games, you do not develop respect for propriety. (4) On hunting trips you kill living beings, and you have no merciful thoughts at all. (5) You like to utter harsh words, and you have never spoken nicely. (6) Your taxes, your levies of service, and your fines are twice as heavy as the common rule. (7) You rob your people's riches beyond the principles of righteousness. You have these seven elements that can endanger your person, O king. There are furthermore three elements that may overthrow your state, O king.

"The king again asked, 'Which three elements do you mean?' [The parrot] replied:

(1) You are befriended by treacherous and deceiving people. (2) You do not depend on excellent people, nor do you accept sincere reproofs. (3) You like to attack other countries, and you do not care for your people. If these three are not done away with, you will be overthrown, if not some morning, then some evening. The whole territory turns to the one who is a king. A king must be like a bridge saving all people. A king must be like a weighing beam. Those who have relations with him are all equal. A king must be like a path, not going against the tracks of the wise. A king shines over all the world, just like the sun. A king brings coolness to things, just like the moon. A king must educate people kindly and be merciful, just like one's parents. A king must cover everything, just like heaven. A king must support all things, just like the earth. A king must burn away trouble for all his people, just like fire. A king must enrich the four directions, just like water. Like the noble monarchs of the past, he must instruct all beings about the ten wholesome paths [of action].

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"Having heard these words, the king felt deeply ashamed. 'Your words, parrot, are utterly honest and utterly sincere. As a king of

men my behavior was unprincipled. Allow me to comply with your instructions, to have the honor to have you as my teacher, and to experience and develop the right path.' When he practiced the teaching, his bad reputation disappeared in the land. His wife and subordinate officials all became loyal and respectful. In the whole population there was none who was not happy. It was like a royal bull crossing over water. When the leader is right, those who follow are right, too.

"The parrot at that time is [now] myself. O-shou, the king of Kāśī at that time, is the present state councillor. The wife at that time is now the state councillor's wife."

**Parable 96: The Buddha's Disciple Nanda Is
Compelled by the Buddha to Go Forth,
and He Attains the Path**

The Buddha was in the land of Kapilavastu. He entered the city to beg for food and arrived at Nanda's house. Nanda happened to be preparing some cosmetics for his wife, some fragrant ointment for between her eyebrows. Hearing that the Buddha was at his gate, he wanted to have a look outside. His wife made an agreement with him, "Go outside and see the Tathāgata, but come back immediately, before the cosmetics on my forehead have dried up!" So Nanda went outside, saw the Buddha, and did obeisance. He took his bowl and went to his house, filled it up with food, and presented it to the Buddha, but the Buddha did not take it. He passed it on to Ānanda. Ānanda did not take it either. Ānanda said, "Return the bowl to its place of origin, to the one you obtained it from!" Thereupon Nanda took the bowl and followed the Buddha to the Nyagrodha pure abode.

The Buddha then ordered a barber to shave Nanda's head, but Nanda did not want him to. Making an angry fist he said to the barber, "You should shave all the heads of the whole population of Kapilavastu now!" The Buddha asked the barber, "Why did you not shave him?" The barber answered, "Because I was afraid, I dared

not shave him." The Buddha and Ānanda themselves went to him. Because Nanda was afraid, he did not dare not be shaved.

Even though he had obtained the tonsure, he always wanted to go back home. The Buddha always took him along, and he could not get away. Later one day, as it was his turn to guard the temple quarters, he was glad. "Now is truly my chance! I can go back home! I shall wait till after the Buddha and the monks have all left and then go back home."

486a After the Buddha had entered the city, Nanda thought, "I shall draw the water from the well for them. Only after I have filled their water bowls shall I return." He subsequently drew water from the well, but as soon as one bowl was full, another was overturned. It continued like that for some time, and he could not fill the bowls. So he said, "I cannot fill them up altogether. I shall let the *bhikṣus* draw the water themselves after they return. I shall just put the bowls in the room now and leave them behind." So he shut the gate of the quarters. Just as one leaf was shut, the other leaf opened again. Just as he had shut one door, the other door opened again. Again he thought, "I cannot shut them all as I might wish; I shall just leave them and go. Even if I lose the clothing and other effects of the *bhikṣus*, I have plenty of possessions, enough to be able to make it up." So he left the monastery, and he thought, "The Buddha will surely pass by here. So I shall go along the other road." The Buddha knew what was in his mind, and he took the other road also. When he saw the Buddha coming in the distance, Nanda hid behind a big tree, but the spirit of the tree lifted the tree up in the air.

The Buddha saw Nanda as he stood there in the open. He led him back to the pure abode and asked him, "Do you think about your wife?" Nanda replied, "I do indeed!" So he took Nanda up on the A-na-po (Anavatapta?) Mountain, and he further asked Nanda, "Is your wife beautiful?" "Yes," he replied. As there was an old blind monkey in the mountains, [the Buddha] further asked, "Your wife, Sundari, is her countenance as beautiful as this monkey's?" Nanda was vexed, and he said in his mind, "Few people equal my wife's beauty. Why do you, the Buddha, compare my wife with this monkey?"

The Buddha next took him up to the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven and showed him around in the palaces of the gods. He saw the gods and the goddesses enjoying themselves. He saw that in one palace there were five hundred goddesses but no god. Nanda returned to ask the Buddha about it, but the Buddha said, "Go and ask them yourself." Nanda went to ask them, "In all the other palaces there are gods. Why is there no god in this place only?" The goddesses answered, "In Jambudvīpa the Buddha's disciple Nanda was compelled by the Buddha to go forth. Because he has gone forth, he will be reborn as our god in this heavenly palace after his life has ended." Nanda answered, "It is I myself!" So he wanted to stay right there, but the goddesses said, "We are goddesses, but you are a man now. When you have given up your human life back there and are reborn here, then you can stay." So he returned to the Buddha and told all this to the World-honored One. The Buddha said to Nanda, "How does your wife's beauty compare with that of the goddesses?" Nanda replied, "Beside those goddesses she is like the blind monkey that you compared to her." The Buddha led Nanda back to Jambudvīpa. In order to be reborn among the gods, Nanda was diligent in his morality. Ānanda then spoke the stanza:

When for instance a ram is fighting, it withdraws when it is going to advance. When you keep the precepts because of desire, it is exactly the same.

486b The Buddha then took Nanda to hell. He saw the cauldrons, all with people boiling in them. He saw just one cauldron standing there empty but boiling. He wondered why and came to ask the Buddha about it. The Buddha informed him, "Go and ask about it yourself." So Nanda went and asked a jailer, "All the cauldrons are boiling sinners. Why is this cauldron empty, without anyone being boiled?" The jailer answered, "In Jambudvīpa there is a disciple of the Tathāgata, called Nanda. Because of his merit for having gone forth, he will obtain rebirth in heaven. But because of his having given up the path out of desire, he will fall into this hell after his heavenly life has ended. That is why I now make the cauldron boil and wait for him." Nanda was alarmed. Fearing that the jailer

might keep him, he said the words, "*Namo Buddhāya*. May you protect me! Take me back to Jambudvīpa!" The Buddha said to Nanda, "You must diligently keep the precepts, developing your heavenly merit!" Nanda answered, "I do not need a rebirth in heaven. I wish not to fall into this hell." The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him, and after the first seven days he became an arhat. The *bhikṣus* said in admiration, "The appearance in the world of the World-honored One is truly marvelous, truly exceptional!"

The Buddha said, "Not only now! It was like that in the past, too." The *bhikṣus* said, "Please tell us how it was the same in the past!" The Buddha said, "Long ago the king of Kāśī was called Pūrṇamukha. In the land of Videha there was a luscious lady of extraordinary beauty. At that time, the two countries had a constant hatred of each other. By the side of the king of Kāśī there was a deceitful minister who said to tempt him that in the other country there was a luscious lady whose beauty was rare in the world. When the king heard these words, he became deluded in his heart and sent a messenger to ask for her, but that country refused. He sent another messenger to say that he wanted to see her for a while and that he would send her back within four or five days. The other king then ordered the luscious lady, 'In your behavior be fully equipped with all your accomplishments; and let the king of Kāśī be deluded by you, so that he cannot leave you for a moment!' Then he sent her away.

"After four or five days he called her back, saying he was going to arrange for an important sacrifice, that he needed this woman, and that after she had returned for a while, he would send her back. So the king of Kāśī sent her back. When the important sacrifice was over, he sent a messenger to ask for her again. The answer was, 'We shall send her tomorrow.' But when the next day came, she still was not sent back again. Such lying went on for many days. As the king was deluded in his heart, he wanted to go to the other country, taking just a few men with him. His ministers strongly protested, but he did not want to take their advice.

486c "In the Seer Mountains there was a monkey king at that time. He was clever, intelligent, and endowed with great knowledge. As his wife had just died, he took a [certain] female monkey. The whole crowd of monkeys angrily blamed him. 'This luscious monkey is our common property. Why do you alone take her?' The monkey king then took the female monkey away to the land of Kāśī and fled to the king. The whole crowd of monkeys all pursued them. When they reached the city, they violated the houses and destroyed the walls. They could not be brought to reason. The king of Kāśī said to the monkey king, 'Why do you not return the female monkey to the monkeys now?' The monkey king said, 'My wife has passed away. I would not have a wife any more. O king, why do you want me to send her back now?' The king said to him, 'Your monkeys are ruining my country now. Why should she not return!' The monkey king said, 'Is this not all right?' The king answered, 'No, it is not all right!' This went on two or three times, but the king kept saying, 'No, it is not all right.'

"Then the monkey king said:

In your palace you have eighty-four thousand wives, but you are not pleased. You want to go to a hostile country in pursuit of a luscious lady. I do not have a wife now. I just took this one, but you say it is not all right. All ten thousand families look up to you for their livelihood. Why do you abandon them for one luscious lady? O king, know that the happiness of lustful deeds is little, and that the suffering is great. For instance, when holding a burning torch against the wind, a fool does not let go and is sure to be burned. Desire is impure, like a heap of dung. Desire shows an outward appearance covered by a thin skin. Desire is ungrateful, like a venomous snake daubed in dung. Desire is like a brigand feigning to be a man's friend. Desire is like a loan that must surely be returned. Desire is distasteful, like a flower growing in a lavatory. Desire is like an inflammation of an itching boil. When one scratches it, it becomes worse. Desire is like a dog gnawing a dry bone. As

his saliva is mingled with it, he thinks it has some taste. His lips and teeth are completely broken, but he cannot get enough of it. Desire is like a thirsty person drinking salty water. It increases his thirst. Desire is like a lump of meat eagerly quarreled over by a flock of birds. Desire is like a fish or an animal. The flavors they are after are extremely small, but their distress is very great.

“The monkey king at that time is [now] myself. The king at that time is [now] Nanda. The luscious lady at that time is [now] Sundarī. At that time I wanted to pull Nanda out of the mud. I want to pull him out of the suffering of birth and death now, too.”

Parable 97: A Fine Athlete Converts a Band of Brigands in the Wilderness

487a Once the Buddha was in Rājagṛha. Between the two countries of Rājagṛha and Vaiśālī there was a band of five hundred brigands. King Bimbisāra’s kindness was ample and fine. He ruled his country with merciful laws, and he did not hurt the life of any being. So he issued an appeal, saying he would copiously reward with nobility anyone who could go and convert the band of five hundred thieves, so that they would not commit any more robberies.

There was an athlete (*malla*) then who came and answered the king’s appeal. He went to the wilderness and pacified the band of brigands. He was able to keep them from committing more robberies. After he had thoroughly subdued them, he built the great city Āṭavī [Forest] with a moat and placed them there. Little by little, their numbers increased and many people entrusted themselves to them. Thereupon they became a great country.

The people of the country all said, “We have received the kindness of the fine athlete’s care now, so that we all can assemble here. Let us make this agreement, ‘From now on, anyone who takes a new wife must offer her first to the athlete.’” So they went to the athlete and said to him, “We have made an agreement that the one who takes a new wife must offer her first to you, O athlete, and for

two reasons: (1) We want to obtain fine sons, so that they may resemble you in strength, O athlete; (2) We want to repay your kindness, O athlete." The athlete answered, "There is no need to do that." When the crowd insisted, he gave in to them. They actually applied this rule.

When quite some time had gone by, there was one woman who was not happy about this. She urinated naked in front of everyone. They all scolded her, saying, "You are shameless. How can a woman urinate standing in front of all the men!" The woman replied, "When a woman urinates naked in front of you, why should she be ashamed? The whole country is made up of women. Only the fine athlete is a man! If it were in front of him, I would be ashamed. Why should I be ashamed in front of you?" So the men said to each other, "This woman's explanation is exactly right." Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana then passed through the wasteland together with five hundred disciples. When the athlete knew this, he invited the two reverends and their five hundred disciples to stay there and stop for the night. He gave them clothes and food. After three days had passed, the people in the land came together and organized a gathering. Drinking wine, they became drunk and they decided to surround the fine athlete's house and burn it down. The athlete asked, "What are you doing this for?" The crowd answered, "Every newly married wife goes to you first. We are men, and we will not stand for this. Therefore we come to burn you down." The athlete answered, "I did not agree before. You forced me to." No one listened to him. So they burned him to death. When his life was about to end, he made the vow, "May I be reborn in this wilderness through my merit for having worshipped Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana, and may I become a very strong demon and annihilate everybody!"

487b When he had said this, his life stopped. He was immediately transformed and reborn as a demon. He spread a vast epidemic and killed a great many people. Occasionally some wise people implored the demon, "You have killed innumerable people now. You cannot eat all the flesh. You let a great deal rot. Please let us kill cows and horses, and give you one person every day." So all in

the land drew lots [to select] one person each day. Then it eventually [came to be] the elder Subhadra's turn. Subhadra had a son who was virtuous and upright. He was to be eaten by the demon next. The elder thought, "The Tathāgata has appeared in the world and is saving all suffering beings. I wish that the World-honored One would save my son from his present distress!"

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. When he knew the elder's thoughts, he immediately came to the demon of the wilderness and sat down in his palace. When the demon of the wilderness came, he saw the World-honored One and became extremely angry. He said to the Buddha, "Śramaṇa, go away!" So the Buddha left. When the demon next entered his palace, [he found that] the Buddha had come again. This happened three times, but the fourth time the Buddha did not leave. The demon said, "If you do not leave, I shall turn you upside down, grab your feet, and throw you into the Ganges!" The Buddha said to him, "I do not know anyone in the world, neither god nor Māra nor Brahmā, who can grab me and do such a thing."

The demon of the wilderness said, "All right, all right! Let me ask you four things, O Tathāgata. Explain them to me! First, who can cross the rapid current? Second, who can cross the ocean? Third, who can do away with all suffering? Fourth, who can obtain purity?" The Buddha replied, "Faith can cross the rapid current. Heedfulness can cross the ocean. Strenuous pursuit can do away with suffering. Wisdom obtains purity." After he had heard these words, the demon took refuge in the Buddha and became the Buddha's disciple. He took the elder Subhadra's son and placed him in the Buddha's bowl. They subsequently called the boy Hastaka Āṭavaka. He grew up little by little. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to him and he became an *anāgāmin*. The *bhikṣus* said, "Your appearance in the world, O World-honored One, is truly wonderful! You could subdue such a very evil demon of the wilderness, O Buddha, and make him an *upāsaka* (lay disciple)."

The Buddha said, "Not only now! Also in a past time there once was a vast wilderness between two countries, the land of Kāśī and

the land of Videha. There was an evil demon called Śleṣaloma. He blocked the road, and no one in the whole population could pass through. There was one leader of merchants called Simha who wanted to take this road with five hundred merchants. They were all frightened and afraid they might not get through. The leader of the merchants said, 'Do not be afraid! Just follow me!' Thereupon he went on.

487c "He reached the place where the demon was, and he said to the demon, 'Have you not heard my name?' [The demon] replied, 'I have heard your name.' [The merchant said,] 'I came with the intention of fighting you!' [The demon] asked, 'What can you do?' So [the merchant] took his bow and arrows and shot at the demon. He shot five hundred arrows, but they all sank into the demon's belly. His bow, sword, and weapons entered the demon's belly, too. He went right up to [the demon] and hit him with his fist, but his fist also went in. When he used his right hand, his right hand got stuck. He kicked him with his right foot, but his right foot also got stuck. When he kicked him with his left foot, his left foot got stuck, too. He also hit him with his head but his head got stuck, too. The demon said in a stanza:

Your hands, your feet, and your head, everything got stuck. What else is there that did not get stuck?

The leader of the merchants replied with the stanzas:

1. Now my hands, my feet, and my head, and all my riches and my weapons [got stuck]. I have only my vigor that did not get stuck in you!
2. If my vigor does not cease, my fight with you will never be given up. My vigor does not cease now. I shall never be afraid of you!

The demon then answered, 'Because of you I shall let all five hundred merchants go now.'

"Simha is now myself. Śleṣaloma is the present demon of the wilderness."

**Parable 98: A State Councillor Hears the Doctrine
and Renounces Desire**

When the Buddha was in Rājagṛha, [King] Bimbisāra had a high-ranking state councillor who often went to the Buddha with his king to listen to the Tathāgata's exposition of the Doctrine of renunciation. After this he had intercourse with his wife only infrequently. His wife conceived evil thoughts. She looked for poison to put in [the Buddha's] food. She invited the Buddha and wanted to give [this food] to him, but her husband was aware that his wife had something evil in mind. When he asked her for the food, his wife did not want to give it but gave him some other food.

After the Buddha's arrival, the husband said to the Buddha, "You must not eat this food!" The Buddha said, "Why must I not eat it?" [The husband] answered, "It is poisoned." The Buddha said, "All the poisons in the world do not surpass the three poisons. When I have dissipated even them, what small poison could there be that could affect me?" So the Buddha ate that food and felt nothing in the least unusual. Then the state councillor's wife had faith, and the Buddha expounded the Doctrine to her. Both husband and wife became *srotāpannas*. The *bhikṣus* marvelled at this wonder.

488a The Buddha said, "Not only now but also in the past have I converted them. Once the king of Kāśī had a wise minister called Vidhūra. He constantly counseled the king and all his ministers according to the law of the path, so that they would all develop what is wholesome. There was a dragon king then called Aruṇa. He often visited Vidhūra, listening to his words of the Doctrine. His intercourse with his wife became rare. The dragon lady was angry, and she said, 'Only when I have sacrificed Vidhūra's heart in fire and drunk his blood can I live!'

"There was a *yakṣa* demon then who visited this dragon king and his wife and who was their friend. Upon hearing the dragon lady's words, he replied, 'I can get you these.' He appeared at the

dragon lady's side as a merchant, carrying a wish-granting gem. He went to the king of Kāśī. He gambled with the king, staking his wish-granting gem. The king put up his country, its treasure, and Vidhūra as his stake against the gem. The *yakṣa* won. He had no need for the country and its treasure. He just chose Vidhūra and gave his gem to the king. The king asked Vidhūra if he wanted to go away, and he answered, 'I want to go.'

"As the *yakṣa* took him away, Vidhūra asked the *yakṣa*, 'What is your intention in coming to ask for me?' The *yakṣa* did not answer, but [Vidhūra] kept asking with such insistence that he said to him, 'The dragon king's wife wants your heart in order to sacrifice it in fire, and she wants your blood to drink.'

"Vidhūra said, 'If she kills me, she will take my heart and blood. The heart and blood of any person are the same. How would you know whose it is? Do not kill me now, but let me go! The one who requires my heart wants my wisdom. The one who requires my blood wants my doctrine.' Having heard these words, the *yakṣa* thought, 'He really is a wise one.' So he took him to the dragons. When the dragons saw [Vidhūra], they were happy. He expounded the Doctrine to them. The dragon king and his wife and all their dependents had respectful and devout thoughts, and they all took the five precepts. Even the crowd of *yakṣas* took the five precepts.

"At that time, the dragons and *yakṣas* in Jambudvīpa offered many precious things and sent them to Vidhūra. When Vidhūra obtained these precious things, he offered them to the king and to the people. Thereupon, the people of Jambudvīpa and the dragon demons took the five precepts and practiced the ten wholesome [paths of action].

"Vidhūra at that time is [now] myself. The dragon king Aruṇa at that time is [now] the state councillor Sudarśana. The dragon lady at that time is [now] the state councillor's wife. The king at that time is [now] Śāriputra. The *yakṣa* at that time is [now] Maudgalyāyana."

**Parable 99: The Nirgrantha Disciples Throw
Themselves into a Pool of Fire but Are
Saved by the Buddha**

488b The Buddha was in Śrāvastī. At that time the Tathāgata had subdued the six heretical teachers with their wrong views and also their followers, so that they were completely ruined. Five hundred Nirgranthas thought, "Our group of disciples is completely ruined and scattered. It would be better to burn ourselves and all go to the afterworld." So they piled up firewood and wanted to burn themselves.

The Tathāgata felt great compassion and wanted to pull them out of their suffering. He was next to the firewood but did not let the fire start and entered the *samādhi* of the fire's glow. When the Nirgrantha disciples saw the great pool of fire they were glad and said, "We do not have to light the fire." They all threw themselves into it. When they were in the pool of fire, their bodies were cool; and they were extremely happy. Seeing the Buddha there, they were twice as joyful. When they asked to go forth, the Buddha said, "Welcome, *bhikṣus!*" Their hair fell off, and they had the garments of the Law on their bodies. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to them, and they became arhats. The *bhikṣus* said, "Wonderful, O World-honored One, that you could pull these Nirgrantha disciples out of the suffering of being burnt, so that they became arhats."

The Buddha said, "Not only now! In the past, in Śrāvastī, there were five hundred traders who went to sea to gather valuables. They had a leader then called Viśākha. He went away with a favorable wind at the head of the group of merchants and arrived where the valuables were. When loading them aboard the ships, all the merchants avariciously took the valuables, placing heavy loads on the ships. Viśākha then said to the merchants, 'Do not load too heavy a cargo of valuables! You will lose your lives!' The merchants did not heed his words. They preferred to die with the valuables rather than to reduce their amount. So the leader of the merchants threw the valuables from his ship into the water and had the merchants come aboard his own ship. The ships with the valuables

all sank in the sea. The spirit of the sea saw that the leader of the merchants could give up his valuables to save the merchants and he was happy. He took the valuables that the leader of the merchants had thrown away and flew ahead with them. After they had come home from the sea, he returned them to the leader of the merchants.

“The merchants said, ‘Why did we not risk our lives for the valuables?’ Seeing their misery Viśākha then felt profound compassion, and he shared with them all the valuables that he had obtained. He expediently practiced the doctrine of going forth on a heterodox path, and he obtained the five superknowledges. The merchants said, ‘Such a great man! He does not covet riches. Practicing his aspirations, he has obtained considerable gain. We must learn from him.’ They all gave up their valuables, went to the seer, and practiced his doctrine. They all obtained the five superknowledges.

“Viśākha at that time is [now] myself. The five hundred merchants at that time are [now] the five hundred Nirgrantha disciples.”

**Parable 100: Five Hundred White Wild Geese Hear
the Doctrine and Are Reborn in Heaven**

488c

The Buddha was in Śrāvastī. At that time, the land of Pañcāla had contributed five hundred white wild geese to King Prasenajit. King Prasenajit gave them to the Jetavana pure abode. When it was time for the monks to eat, they went begging for their food. When the geese saw a multitude of monks, they came closer and stood in front of them. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine with one sound, and the beings all gained understanding according to their kind. The flock of geese also understood the Buddha’s words at that time; and hearing the Doctrine, they were glad. Singing out in harmony, they returned to their pond.

Later, since their feathers had gradually grown, they flew to another place. A hunter covered them all with a net and killed them. When they were caught in the net, one goose made a sound,

and all the geese fell in with him. It was the sound of the time when they had heard the Doctrine. Because of this wholesome thought, they were reborn in the Trāyastrimśa Heaven.

As a rule for rebirth in heaven, there are three considerations. First, one considers where one came from. Second, one considers in which place it has been decided that one would be reborn. Third, one considers what deed one has performed to obtain rebirth in heaven. So they thought this over, and they saw their previous karmic causality. They had only heard the Doctrine with the Buddha's monks; there was nothing else that was a good causality. Having made this thought, the five hundred celestial sons immediately descended to the Tathāgata's side. The Buddha expounded the Doctrine to them, and they all became *srotāpannas*.

Whenever King Prasenajit went to the Buddha, he used to see the five hundred geese spread out in front of the Buddha, but one day he did not see them. So he asked the Buddha, "Where have all those geese gone?" The Buddha said, "Do you want to see the geese?" When the king said, "Yes," the Buddha said, "Previously the geese flew off to somewhere else and they were killed by a hunter. After their lives had ended, they were reborn in heaven. Those five hundred celestial sons are now wearing splendid celestial caps, and they are exceptionally beautiful. Having heard the Doctrine now, they have all become *srotāpannas*."

The king asked the Buddha, "Because of what karmic causality did this flock of geese fall into the animal [destination]? Why were they reborn in heaven after their lives had ended, and why have they attained the path now?" The Buddha said, "Once, in the time of the Buddha Kāśyapa, five hundred women all received the precepts; but their devotion was not strong, and they broke the precepts they had received. Because they had offended against the precepts, they fell among the animals and became these geese. Because they had received the precepts, they met me, the Tathāgata, heard my Doctrine, and obtained the path. Because they had heard the Doctrine as geese, they were reborn in heaven."

**Parable 101: Devadatta Releases the Maddened
Elephant Dhanapāla, Wishing to Harm
the Buddha**

489a

The Buddha was in Rājagṛha. At that time Devadatta released the maddened elephant Dhanapāla, wanting him to harm the Buddha. The five hundred arhats all flew up into the sky. Only Ānanda stayed behind, all alone behind the Buddha. When the Buddha then raised his right hand, the white elephant Dhanapāla saw five hundred lions. The elephant was frightened then and was immediately subdued. The five hundred *bhikṣus* had all left the Buddha, and only Ānanda had stayed behind with him.

The Buddha said, “Not only now! It was the same in the past. Once, in the land of Kāśī, there were five hundred wild geese who all formed a flock. The king of the geese at that time was called [Dhṛta]rāṣṭra. The king of the geese had a minister named Sumukha. When the king of the geese was caught by a hunter, his flock of five hundred geese all flew away. Only Sumukha followed him and did not leave him. He said to the hunter, ‘Please let my king go! I myself shall now take his place.’ But the hunter did not agree; he then gave the king of the geese as a contribution to King Fan-mo-yao.

“The king asked the king of the geese, ‘Do you feel safe?’ The king of the geese answered, ‘I receive great kindness, O king. I obtain clean water from you and I also obtain fine herbs. With these I have a livelihood. I dwell in the land in constant peace. I only wish that you, O great king, would let all geese go, so that they would be free from fear.’ A flock of five hundred geese was crying in the air above the king’s palace. The king then asked, ‘Which geese are they?’ The king of the geese answered, ‘They are my dependents.’ So the king granted them absence of fear. He issued an order that forbade the killing of geese both inside and outside [the city]. The king of the geese said to the king:

Well you should govern the land with the Right Doctrine. The impermanence of the world is just like the mountains of the four quarters. For example, the tallest mountain in

the East is infinitely high, but it comes at you at once. The same applies to [the mountains in] the South, the West, and the North. They crush the world and all sentient beings; men and demons are all destroyed. Without escape and without anything to rely on, they cannot be saved. What would they rely on at that moment? Yet considering such things, one should have friendly thoughts and foster them for everyone! Practice the Right Doctrine and perform meritorious acts! O king, know that all riches are broken down and destroyed. Having come from the four quarters, the mountains reduce them to nothing. The strong have diseases, too. Coming from the four quarters, they ruin the strong. All who are in the prime of life have a mountain of diseases coming from the four quarters and ruining their prime. All who have life have the high mountains of death coming from the four quarters and destroying life. All have these four mountains in common. Gods and dragons, people and demons, all living species are subject to them. Therefore always develop friendly thoughts and diligently practice the True Doctrine! If you can do that, you will have no regrets when you die. Because you will have no regrets, you will obtain rebirth in a wholesome place and certainly meet the noble. Meeting the noble, you will certainly be delivered from birth and death.

489b The king asked Sumukha, 'Why do you keep silent?' Sumukha answered, 'Two kings, a king of geese and a king of men, are talking now. If I were to interrupt, it would be bad manners. I would not show proper respect of subject for superior.' The king said, 'Truly wonderful! You have the body of a goose, but you can practice the restraint of a loyal minister in a manner unequalled by people. You were willing to trade your own life for that of the king of the geese. You furthermore humbly comply and do not interrupt his speech. Such righteousness of a lord and his minister, of you and the king of the geese, is rare in the world!' He gave them all golden neck plates and attached them to their heads. He

dressed the goose king's head up with a beautiful piece of white silk, and he sent them away, saying, 'You expounded the Good Doctrine to me in the past. So I let you go.'

"The goose king is myself. Sumukha is Ānanda. The king of men is King Śuddhodana, my royal father. The hunter is Devadatta."



Chapter IX

- Parable 102: Kātyāyana Explains Eight Dreams to King
Caṇḍapradyaota
- Parable 103: The Golden Cat
- Parable 104: King Caṇḍapradyaota Obtains Five Hundred
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- Parable 105: On Imploring the God Vemacitra, Hoping to
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- Parable 106: Hāriti Loses Her Son
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- Parable 109: A Woman Is Disgusted with Desire and
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- Parable 110: A Son Lacking in Filial Piety Experiences a
Painful Retribution
- Parable 111: The Discussion of King Menandros with
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Harm Her Mother-in-Law, but She Kills
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- Parable 113: The King of Benares Hears Calls from the
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- Parable 114: An Aged *Bhikṣu* Obtains the Four Fruitions
- Parable 115: A Woman Is Utterly Sincere and Obtains
the Fruition of the Path

[In the Chinese, parable heads 105–115 occur later in the text of the chapter. They have been placed here for convenience.]

Parable 102: Kātyāyana Explains Eight Dreams to King Caṇḍapradyaota

In the past, King Caṇḍapradyaota's behavior was cruel. He did not have compassionate thoughts and was filled with heterodox views. In his great compassion, the Tathāgata sent his disciples everywhere to convert other countries. Kātyāyana came from the Brahman caste in the country of King Caṇḍapradyaota. So the Buddha sent Kātyāyana back there to convert its king and its population. When the Reverend Kātyāyana had received the Buddha's instructions, he returned to his country of origin.

King Caṇḍapradyaota did not see what was right and served a heterodox path. In the morning he never wanted to see anyone. He first paid his respects by sacrificing to the gods. Because he wanted to convert King Caṇḍapradyaota, Kātyāyana rose early one clear morning. He changed his appearance so that he looked like a messenger from far away and presented a beautiful figure as he went through the king's gate. When the king saw him, [Kātyāyana] returned to his original appearance and looked like a *śramaṇa*.

489c

The king particularly detested men of the path, people who had taken the tonsure. The king said in great anger, "You must die now!" He sent someone to seize Kātyāyana, wanting him to do him harm. Kātyāyana said to the king, "What did I do wrong that you want to see me harmed?" The king then said, "You, shaven one, just seeing you brings bad luck. That is why I want to kill you now." The Reverend Kātyāyana answered, "The bad luck now is mine, not yours, O king. Why? Even though you have seen me, O king, you have not been harmed; I have been seen by you, O king, and you want to see me killed. The conclusion, one might say, is that I am the one who has the bad luck."

A king, of course, is intelligent. Having heard these words, he understood their meaning. He let Kātyāyana go and he did not harbor any evil thoughts. He secretly sent two men to follow him, to observe where he stayed and what he ate. They saw that Kātyāyana was sitting under a tree and that he ate the food he had begged. When he obtained food, he shared it with the two men.

Whatever was left over, they dumped into the river. When the two men returned, the king asked the whereabouts of the reverend and also about his food. The two men reported in detail to the king what they had seen earlier.

Later the king invited the Reverend Kātyāyana and gave him some coarse food. He sent someone to ask whether this food was to his liking. The reverend answered, "I am nourished by this food." The king then gave him exquisite food of superior flavor. Again he sent someone to ask, "Is it to your liking?" [Kātyāyana] replied, "This food gives me nourishment." The king later asked the reverend, "About the food I gave you, no matter whether it was coarse or exquisite, you always say you are nourished. What does this mean?" The Reverend Kātyāyana answered the king, "One's mouth is like a furnace. It burns both sandalwood and excrement and filth. One's mouth is just the same. Whether the food is coarse or exquisite, it ends up as nourishment." Then he spoke the stanza:

This body is like a wagon:
It does not judge what is good or bad.
Both fragrant oil and stinking grease
Serve equally well [to make it move].

When the king heard these words, he clearly knew [Kātyāyana's] greatness. He then gave coarse and exquisite food to the Brahmans. When the Brahmans at first received the coarse food, they all were angry. They changed color and cursed. When he later gave them exquisite food, they were happy and had words of praise. When the king saw that the Brahmans were either happy or angry depending on the food, his devout respect for Kātyāyana doubled.

490a At that time there was a woman whose descent was not related to that of the reverend. She lived in a Brahman village outside the city. She had very beautiful hair. When the time for the summer retreat came, she dearly liked to worship. She cut off her hair and sold it for five hundred pieces of gold. She invited Kātyāyana and worshipped him during the summer retreat. When the summer retreat was over, the Reverend Kātyāyana returned to the city.

In King Caṇḍapradya's palace it suddenly emerged that there was a dead pheasant, just like the pheasant eaten by a Wheel-turning King. Thus King Caṇḍapradya wanted to eat it. A prudent minister then said to the king, "This pheasant is not fit to be eaten right away. You should test it first." The king followed his advice and had someone cut off a small slice to give to a dog. When the dog got the meat, he liked the taste of the meat so much that he swallowed his tongue at the same time and died. The king then had some meat cut off to try it on a man. When the man was eating the meat, he liked its exciting flavor so much that he even ate his own hand and died. When the king saw this, he became very afraid. He heard some people say about this meat that only a noble Wheel-turning King, someone who had obtained the path with pure knowledge, could eat it. He immediately had someone blend it with fine food and sent it to the Reverend Kātyāyana. After Kātyāyana ate that food, his health was all right. The king later sent someone to observe him. He saw that Kātyāyana's complexion was clear, twice as fine as usual. When the king heard this, he felt deep amazement and his respect grew even more, while he despised the heretical Brahmans.

The king asked Kātyāyana, "O reverend, where did you pass the summer retreat? Where have you come from now?" The reverend gave a detailed explanation about the woman of external descent who had sold her hair, exchanged it for money, and worshipped the Sangha. When the king heard these words, he said, "The hair of the women with the most beautiful hair in my palace is worth no more than a few copper coins. Now you say that that woman's hair was worth five hundred pieces of gold. That woman's hair must have been exceptionally beautiful. Her appearance must be wonderful!" So he asked the name of the woman's parents, and then he sent a messenger to have a look at the woman herself. Her beauty was incomparable, just as he had thought it would be. The king sent messengers to betroth her as his wife, but the family of the woman demanded a great many precious objects, towns, and villages. The king thought it over again, "If I give these things, they will still belong to me after the woman has come." So he gave these

things and received her as his wife. The day he first welcomed her the whole country was in a festive mood. All declared that it was a very auspicious event. In the next days he issued a general amnesty, and he called her Lady Śivakośā. The king was very desirous of pleasing her. Later she gave birth to a crown prince called Gopāla.

490b The king then saw eight things while dreaming in his bed-chamber. First, on his head a fire was burning. Second, two snakes were twisted around his waist. Third, a fine iron network entangled him. Fourth, he saw that two red fishes swallowed both his feet. Fifth, there were four white swans that came flying toward the king. Sixth, walking in bloody mud, he sank into the mud up to his armpits. Seventh, he climbed a great white mountain. Eighth, a stork relieved itself on his head.

When he had woken up from his dreams, he thought they were inauspicious. He was depressed and dispirited. So he went to the Brahmins; and the Brahmins listened to the dreams of the king. They had disliked the king for some time; and they were jealous of the reverend, too. So they said of the king's dreams, "O great king, this is not good luck. If you do not bring satisfactory sacrifices, misfortune will befall your person." When the king heard their words, he believed them to be true, and his sorrow increased. So he asked them, "What is required for me to make satisfactory sacrifices?" The Brahmins said, "What will be needed are those whom you hold most dear, O king. If we tell you, you will certainly not be able to do it, O king." The king then answered, "These dreams are terrible. I only fear that great misfortune will befall my person. I do not have any regard for anyone other than myself. Please tell me what is needed!" When the Brahmins saw his insistence, they knew that he was very serious. So they said to the king:

As for that which you might need, there were eight things in these dreams. You need eight things to be able to avert calamities. First, kill Śivakośā, the wife you respect, O king. Second, kill the crown prince, Gopāla, whom you love, O king. Third, kill your most important minister, your state

councillor. Fourth, kill all your officials, O king. Fifth, kill your elephant that can run three thousand miles in one day. Sixth, kill your camel that can run three thousand miles in one day. Seventh, kill your best horse, O king. Eighth, kill the bald-headed Kātyāyana. After seven days, when you have killed these eight, collect their blood, and when you walk in it, you will do away with the calamities.

When the king heard their words, he immediately gave his permission, because he valued his own life. He returned to his palace, and he was depressed and grieved. His wife asked the king what the matter was. The king answered his wife, stating in detail and explaining his previous inauspicious dreams; and he told her that the Brahmans would bring the sacrifices needed for the dreams. When his wife heard it, she said, "Just see to it that you are contented and without distress, O king. Why waste words about my worthless person!" She then said to the king, "After seven days I shall return to die. Allow me to go to the Reverend Kātyāyana, to observe abstinence, and to listen to the Doctrine during the next six days." The king said she could not go. "If you go to him, you might tell him the real situation. If he knows it, he will leave me and fly away." When his wife insisted, the king could not decline. So he allowed her to go.

490c After his wife came to the reverend, she made obeisance and made [polite] inquiries. Thereupon, after three days, the reverend asked her in astonishment, "The king's wife has come here and never stayed more than two nights. Why is it not the same as usual now?" The wife told him everything about the bad dream of the king. "After seven days, they will kill us to avert calamities by sacrificing us. We just have a little while to live. Therefore I came to listen to the Doctrine." And so she explained the king's dream to the reverend, but the Reverend Kātyāyana said, "These dreams are very auspicious. One should be happy. They are nothing to worry about. The burning fire on the head means that the land of the jewel lord (western Jambudvīpa) will come with a celestial crown worth a hundred thousand taels of gold and offer it to the

king. This is the exact meaning of the dream." The wife was worried, because the seven days were almost over and she would be harmed by the king. She was afraid that it would come too late. She asked the reverend, "When will it arrive?" The reverend answered:

Today, between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M., it is sure to arrive. The two snakes twisted around his waist mean that the king of the Kuṣāṇas will contribute two swords worth a hundred thousand taels of gold. When the sun sets, they will arrive. The fine iron network entangling him means that the king of Mahācīna will contribute a pearl necklace worth a hundred thousand taels of gold. Tomorrow morning it will arrive. The red fishes swallowing his feet mean that the king of Sīṃhala will contribute precious pattens of lapis lazuli (*vaiḍūrya*) worth a hundred thousand taels of gold. The day after tomorrow at mealtime they will arrive. The arrival of the four white swans means that the king of Vṛjī will contribute a precious golden carriage. The day after tomorrow it will arrive at noon. The bloody mud means that the king of Parthia will contribute a garment (*kambala*) of deer hair worth a hundred thousand taels of gold. The day after tomorrow, in the afternoon, it will arrive. Climbing the grand white mountain means that the king of Āṭavi will contribute a large elephant. The day after tomorrow, between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M., it will arrive. The stork relieving itself on his head means that the king and his wife will have some private disagreement. When this happens the day after tomorrow, you will know it.

It was indeed just as the reverend had said. When the stipulated time came, everything that the countries were to contribute arrived. The king was very happy. Lady Śivakośā already had a celestial crown. She put the celestial crown that the land of the jewel lord had offered on top of it. Just to tease, the king took one celestial crown that Lady Śivakośā was wearing and placed it on the head of Lady Suvarṇakeśā. Lady Śivakośā then became angry and said,

“If there is anything bad, I am the first to suffer. Now you give the celestial crown that I got to her!” She then threw a cup of cream at the king’s head and soiled it completely. The king was very angry. He drew his sword and was about to cut his wife down. His wife was afraid of the king, and she ran to her room. She closed the door, and the king could not go any further. The king then realized that this was precisely the private disagreement to which the reverend had alluded when he interpreted the dream.

491a The king and his wife thereupon went to the Reverend Kātyāyana and discussed everything that had occurred. He had believed in wrong and evil words. He had almost done something very evil to those whom he loved: the reverend, his wife and son, and his most important minister. Now that he had heard the reverend’s exposition of the truth, dissipating his blindness, he saw the right path, free from any evil. He then invited the reverend and respectfully worshipped him. He chased the Brahmans away, far from his realm, and he asked the reverend, “Why did these countries offer to me what they each valued most?”

The reverend answered, “In the past, ninety-one kalpas ago, there was a Buddha called Vipāśyin. When that Buddha appeared, there was a country called Bandhumati. The king’s crown prince found devout joy in vigorous pursuit. He went to that Buddha, worshipped him, and made obeisance. He presented the celestial crown that he wore, his precious swords, his necklace, his tall elephant, his precious carriage, and his *kambala* garment to that Buddha. Because of this merit he was honorable in every birth. The precious things he wanted came without his having to ask for them.” When the king had heard this, he had profound and devout respect for the Three Precious Things. He made obeisance and returned to his palace.

Parable 103: The Golden Cat

One day King Caṇḍapradīyā was strolling in his park. In a hall in the garden he saw a golden cat going from the northeastern

corner to the southwestern corner. The king sent some people to excavate there. They found a bronze jar. The jar had a capacity of three bushels, and it was filled with gold coins. As they dug deeper and deeper, they found another jar. And so they eventually found three jars, each containing three bushels. On the off-chance, they started digging nearby, and they recovered more bronze jars. They kept digging, and over an area of fully five *li*, they obtained bronze jars filled with gold coins everywhere. King Caṇḍapradya thought that this was extraordinary, and so he went to the Reverend Kātyāyana and discussed with the reverend how he had obtained the money. "I just took it like that, wanting to use it. There will not be a calamity for me and my people, will there?" The reverend replied, "This is a meritorious recompense obtained because of a previous karmic causality, O king. Just use it. There will be no difficulty." The king then asked, "I wonder about this previous causality: what was that?"

491b The reverend answered, "Listen carefully! Listen carefully! In the past, ninety-one kalpas ago, when the Buddha Vipasyin had left the Doctrine behind, there were *bhikṣus* who set up a high seat at a corner where four roads crossed and placed an alms bowl on it, saying, 'Anyone with worldly possessions who can put his riches into this solid repository and deposit them will find that water cannot dissipate them, fire cannot burn them, the king cannot take them away, and robbers cannot steal them.' There was a poor man who, because he had sold firewood, happened to possess three coins. Hearing these words, he was happy in his heart. So he placed these coins in the alms bowl, one on top of the other, making a sincere vow. He was five *li* from his house, and when he returned home, he was happy at every step. When he arrived at his gate, he entered his house only after he had made an earnest vow toward the place where he had been inspired to turn to Buddhism."

The reverend said, "The poor man at that time is the present king. Because of his former gift of three coins, he obtained noble birth from generation to generation. He has always obtained three jars filled with coins. Because he rejoiced with every step for five

li, he obtained these gold coins throughout five *li*." When the king heard about his previous karmic causality he was glad and left.

Parable 104: King Caṇḍapradyaṭa Obtains Five Hundred Alms Bowls

Once King Caṇḍapradyaṭa went to the city of Ujjayinī. When the gatekeeper opened the gate one morning, there all of a sudden were five hundred wagons outside the gate, each loaded with precious bowls filled with golden grain. Each had a seal, the text of which said, "These bowls are for King Caṇḍapradyaṭa." The gatekeeper reported this to the king, saying, "Outside there are precious bowls. It is written on the bowls that they are for you, O king. I wonder if I may accept them now." The king thought, "These valuables have arrived unexpectedly. They might not bring good luck. If I accept them, might there not be a calamity for my house and country?"

Having thought this, he went to the Reverend Kātyāyana and asked him, "Opening the gate this morning, we suddenly saw precious bowls. The seal on them said, 'For King Caṇḍapradyaṭa.' I do not know whether they mean good luck or bad. May I accept them?" The reverend answered, "They are your recompense for previous merit, O king. Just accept them without any afterthought!" The king said to the reverend, "What merit did I earn previously that brings me this recompense?"

The reverend answered, "In the past, ninety-one kalpas ago, there was a *pratyekabuddha* in the Seer Mountains. He slipped in the rain and broke his earthen bowl. The *pratyekabuddha* then went to a potter and asked him for an earthen bowl. The potter thereupon was happy to give the *pratyekabuddha* five bowls, all filled with water. When the *pratyekabuddha* received them, he threw the bowls in the air, jumped up, and ascended into the air, making eighteen transformations. The potter, his wife and child, and the people who were buying earthenware were all joyful at seeing this miracle, and their happiness was without limit.

"The potter at that time is [now] yourself, O king. His wife at that time is [now] the lady Śivakośā. His son at that time is [now] the crown prince Gopāla. The one who was buying earthenware at that time is [now] the state councillor Fu-lu-k'uei. His wife who was buying earthenware is [now] the state councillor's wife."

491c The king further asked, "I wonder if these bowls appeared by themselves, or did they come from somewhere?" The reverend answered, "These bowls do not exist by themselves. They come from a dragon palace in the River Ganges." "How do you know that?" "Long ago a Brahman, King Rāma's uncle, was practicing pure conduct on the bank of the River Ganges. At that time King Rāma sent food to his uncle daily in a precious bowl. It is a rule for Brahmans not to use a vessel twice. After his meal the uncle threw the bowl in the River Ganges. A blind dragon took the precious bowl, filled it with golden grain, and placed it in his palace. The bowls that were thrown away gradually became more numerous every day. And so he obtained bowls for five hundred wagons. The blind dragon's life ended, and he did not have a son who would keep these bowls. The celestial lord knew your karmic causality, O king, that you had given bowls in the past, so he sent these to you." When the king heard these words, he accepted the precious bowls in order to perform meritorious acts with them. He widely practiced liberality and worshipped the Triple Jewel. Because of this he received an auspicious rebirth.

**Parable 105: On Imploring the God Vemacitra,
Hoping to Gain Considerable Wealth**

There once were two brothers whose family was extremely poor. The elder brother continually, night and day, zealously revered and implored the god Vemacitra, hoping to obtain considerable wealth; but he let his younger brother plow and plant the fields. When [the elder brother] had spent quite some time making such prayers, the god Vemacitra took the form of the younger brother and went to the elder brother. The elder brother was angry at this brother and

said, "Why are you not plowing and sowing? What are you doing here?" The younger brother then replied, "Brother, day and night you pray in the temple of the god, hoping to obtain considerable wealth. I also want to do as you do now. Through abstention and pledges I hope to obtain considerable wealth." The elder brother said to his younger brother, "If you do not plow the fields and plant the seeds, how can we obtain an abundance of property?" The younger brother asked his elder brother, "Do we really gather that by sowing?"

492a When the elder brother could not reply, the god Vemacitra thereupon returned to his celestial form and said to him, "Now, my power may truly help you today. Only if you practice liberality can you be wealthy. Your previous karmic causality has made you poor because you did not practice liberality. That is why you are poor. Even though, day and night, you zealously beg me for abundant wealth and riches, how can you obtain them? Take for example an *āmra* tree. If it is winter you cannot obtain any fruit, even though you may serve a hundred or a thousand heavenly gods to get its fruit. The same applies to you. Because you previously did not develop any karmic causality but still beg me for considerable wealth, you cannot obtain it either. When the fruit is ripe you will naturally obtain it without asking for it." He then spoke the stanzas:

1. Meritorious deeds ripen like fruit:
They are not obtained by sacrificing.
Only when one has mounted the carriage of morality
Can one reach heaven.
2. Concentration and wisdom are like the extinction of a
torch:
They enable one to reach nirvana.
Everything is obtained through formations:
What can imploring a god do about it?

Parable 106: Hārītī Loses Her Son

Hārītī was the wife of the demon king Pāñcika. She had ten thousand sons who all had the strength of fine athletes. The

youngest one was called Piṅgala. This demon mother was inhuman and cruel. She killed people's sons to eat them. People suffered because of her. They appealed to the World-honored One. The World-honored One then took her son Piṅgala and put him at the bottom of his bowl. Hārīti looked everywhere in the world for him for seven days, but she did not find him. She was sorrowful and sad. When she heard others say, "It is said that the Buddha, the World-honored One, is omniscient," she went to the Buddha and asked him where her son was.

The Buddha then answered, "You have ten thousand sons. You have lost only one son. Why do you search for him, suffering and sad? People in the world may have one son, or they may have several sons, but you kill them." Hārīti said to the Buddha, "If I can find Piṅgala now, I shall never kill anyone's son any more." So the Buddha let Hārīti see Piṅgala in his bowl. She exerted her supernatural strength, but she could not pull him out. She implored the Buddha, and the Buddha said, "If you can accept the three refuges and the five precepts now, and never in your life kill any more, I shall return your son." Hārīti did as the Buddha told her to, and she accepted the three refuges and the five precepts. After she had accepted them, he returned her son.

The Buddha said, "Keep the precepts well! In the time of Buddha Kāśyapa you were the seventh, the youngest daughter of King Chieh-chi. You performed acts of great merit, but because you did not keep the precepts you have received the body of a demon."

Parable 107: The Priest in Charge of Sacrifices to a God

492b There once was a Brahman who served the god Maheśvara. Day and night he served him; so the god asked him, "What do you seek?" The Brahman said, "I seek to become [the priest] in charge of sacrifices to you now, O god!" The god said, "Over there is a herd of cattle. Make inquiries of the one walking in front." So, just as the god had said, he went to ask the ox, "What is it like for you now,

painful or pleasant?" The ox then answered, "It is extremely painful. I am stabbed by a pricker, bridled on both sides. The firewood is twisting, and my spine is breaking. I am yoked to a lead cart, and I never find rest anymore." He then further asked, "Why did you receive this body of an ox?" The ox answered him, "I was [the priest] in charge of sacrifices to that god. Uninhibited and very resolute, I offered the victims at the sacrifices to the god. When my life had ended, I became an ox, enduring this suffering."

After he had heard these words, [the Brahman] returned to the god, and the god asked, "Do you want to become [the priest] in charge of sacrifices to me now?" The Brahman said, "When I see this, I really do not dare to." The god said, "When people practice good or evil, they naturally get their retribution." The Brahman repented of his error and he practiced good conduct.

Parable 108: The Sacrifice to the Spirit of a Tree

There once was an old man whose family was very wealthy. This old man wanted to eat meat, and he cunningly devised a means. Pointing to a tree at the end of a field, he said to his sons, "Our family estate is prosperous now because of the bounty of the spirit of that tree. You should now choose a sheep in the herd as a sacrifice to it." His sons then followed the instructions of their father, and they subsequently killed a sheep and offered it to thank this tree. Underneath the tree they erected a shrine to the god.

Later their father's life was over, and he died. Pursued by his actions, he was reborn into the herd of sheep of his own family. His sons then happened to decide to make a sacrifice to the spirit of the tree. So they chose one sheep, and by chance took [the one that had been] their father. When they were about to kill it, the sheep started bleating. It laughed and said, "What spirit could this tree have? Because I wanted meat in the past, I falsely let you make a sacrifice. We all ate the meat together; I alone now have to face retribution for the misdeed."

An arhat happened to arrive there, begging for his food. He saw that the deceased father had received the body of a sheep. So he lent his eye of the path to the owners, so that they might see for themselves. Then they knew that the sheep was their father, and they felt vexed in their hearts. They destroyed the tree and its spirit. They repented of their error and practiced good. They did not kill living beings any more.

Parable 109: A Woman Is Disgusted with Desire and Goes Forth

492c There was once a woman whose beauty was extremely fine. She went forth to follow the doctrine of a heretical teaching and practiced its path. People said to her, "With such a complexion you should have stayed a laywoman. Why did you go forth?"

The woman answered, "As for me, it is not that I am not beautiful these days, but I have gone forth now because for some time I have been disgusted by sexual desire. When I was in my family, my place was quickly allotted because of my beauty. I had a son very early. So my son grew up, and his beauty was beyond compare.

"I noticed that he was losing weight, as if he were ill. So I asked my son what he was suffering from, but he did not dare speak up. As I kept on asking, he had no alternative but to say to his mother, 'If I do not tell the truth, I fear my life will be in jeopardy. [I fear that] if I were to tell you the whole truth, I would make a complete fool of myself.' So he said to me, 'I want to have you to satisfy my sexual desires. Because I do not have you, I am ill.' I said to him, 'Since ancient times there never has been such a thing!' I further thought, 'If I do not comply my son may die. It would be better to go against reason to keep my son alive now.' So I called my son, wanting to comply with his intentions. When he was about to come into my bed, the floor split open; and my son immediately fell in alive. I was frightened and [tried to] pull him back with my hands,

but I got [only] his hair. I still cherish my son's hair in my bosom today. Because I was affected by this event, I went forth."

**Parable 110: A Son Lacking in Filial Piety
Experiences a Painful Retribution**

Once, in the land of Chia-me, there was an aged mother in the village of Kuṭaṣaṇḍa. She had only one son. This son was unmanageable. He did not practice benevolence and piety. Because he was angry at his mother, he raised his hand to her and gave her a thrashing. That same day he went away and ran into a bandit who chopped off his arm. The crime of lacking filial piety was immediately punished with suffering of this kind. His later suffering in hell cannot be measured.

**Parable 111: The Discussion of King Menandros with
Nāgasena**

In the past, King Menandros was intelligent and very perspicacious. There was nothing he was not versed in. He thought that his knowledge was matchless. So he asked his ministers, "Is there anyone who is wise and eloquent, who can answer me when consulted about something I am not sure of?"

There was a minister then whose family had previously worshipped an aged *bhikṣu*. [The *bhikṣu*'s] conduct was pure, but he was not extensively learned. So he talked to the king, and the king asked him, "Do those who attain the path attain it staying in their families or do they attain it [after] having gone forth?" The aged *bhikṣu* then replied to him, "One may obtain the path in both cases." The king further asked him, "If one may obtain it in both cases, what is the use of going forth?" The aged *bhikṣu* remained silent. He did not know what to reply. King Menandros became even more arrogant then.

His ministers said to the king, "Nāgasena's wisdom is superior. He is now in the mountains." Because the king wanted to put

[Nāgasena] to the test, he sent a messenger with a flask filled to the brim with curdled milk. The king's purpose was to say, "My knowledge is complete. Who might be able to add [anything] to it?" When Nāgasena had obtained this milk, he understood its purpose. With his disciples he collected five hundred needles; he put them in the curdled milk, but the milk still did not spill over. He subsequently sent it back to the king. When the king had received it, he knew the meaning of it. He then sent a messenger to invite Nāgasena, who subsequently obeyed the king's call. Nāgasena was tall. Leading his crowd of followers, he stood out among them. The king was overbearing. Finding some reason or other, he went hunting and met [Nāgasena] on the road. When he saw that he was really tall, he pointed to another road from a distance and went away without the exchange of a single word. He secretly wanted to mislead him. Not one elder knew about it. Nāgasena pointed to his breast with his finger and said, "Yes, only I know."

When King Menandros was about to invite him into his palace, he opened up a small room, the door of which was very low. He was hoping to make Nāgasena bend over and bow down to him. But Nāgasena knew that the king wanted to get the better of him. So he refused to enter, and he was not humbled.

King Menandros then prepared food and drink, and he gave Nāgasena all kinds of coarse food. When Nāgasena had eaten three or five spoonfuls, he said that he had had enough. When afterwards he was given delicious food, he ate again. The king asked him, "You said before that you had had enough. Why do you still eat now?" Nāgasena answered, "I had enough of the coarse food. I have not had enough of the delicious food yet." He then said to the king, "You might assemble many people in your hall now, so that it is entirely full." So they called people to fill up every part of it until there was no more space left.

The king came at last. As he was about to enter the hall, everyone drew in his belly out of fear. The area became wider and wider, so that there was room for many people. Nāgasena then said to the king, "Coarse food is like the common people. Delicious food is like a king. When people see the king, who does not step out of

his way?" The king further asked, "Who obtains the path, he who has gone forth or he who stays in his family?" Nāgasena replied, "One may obtain the path in both cases." The king then asked, "If one may obtain it in both cases, why should one go forth?" Nāgasena replied, "Suppose, for example, one sends an able-bodied man to go somewhere more than three thousand miles from here. If one gives him a horse to ride and provisions, and if he has a weapon, will he be able to arrive quickly?" When the king said, "Yes," Nāgasena continued, "If one sends an old man, and if one gives him a jaded horse to ride, without any provisions, will he be able to arrive?" The king said, "Even if one gave him provisions, he probably still would not arrive, let alone without any provisions!" Nāgasena said, "When one who has gone forth obtains the path, he is like the able-bodied person. When one who stays in his family obtains the path, he is like that old man."

The king further asked, "I would like to ask you now about my person. Is the self permanent or impermanent? Give me a satisfactory reply!" Nāgasena replied with the question, "When, for instance, O king, there are fruits on the *āmra* tree in your palace, are they sweet or sour?" The king said, "There is no such tree in my palace at all. Why do you ask me whether the fruits are sweet or sour?" Nāgasena said, "The same applies to the self. Since all five aggregates are specifically without a self, why ask me if the self is permanent or impermanent?"

The king then further asked, "Although in the hells swords cut up the body and disperse it everywhere, its life is still preserved. Is this really the case?" Nāgasena replied, "When, for instance, a woman eats cakes, meat, melons, and vegetables, all the food is digested. When she becomes with child, at the moment [when it is] a *kalala* (early embryo), it is still like fine dust. Why does it become bigger and bigger, without being digested?" The king said that this was through the power of karma. Nāgasena replied, "In the hells it is through the power of karma, too, that life is preserved."

The king further asked, "When the sun is high, it stays basically the same. Why is it very hot in summer and very cold in winter? In summer days are long, and in winter the days are

short." Nāgasena answered, "On Mount Sumeru there is a higher and a lower path. In summer the sun takes the higher path. The road is longer, and the run is slower. It reflects on the golden mountains. Therefore it takes longer, and it is hotter. In winter the sun takes the lower path. The road is shorter, and the run is faster. It reflects on the waters of the oceans. Therefore it does not take so long and it is very cold."

Parable 112: A Woman Lacking in Filial Piety Wants to Harm Her Mother-in-Law, but She Kills Her Husband

Once there was a woman whose disposition was perverse. She did not abide by the rules of propriety. In all her words and actions she was constantly in opposition to her mother-in-law. She was angrily reprimanded by her mother-in-law and was always resentful. Her anger grew and grew, and she plotted to kill her mother-in-law. When later she had devised a plan, she told her husband to kill his mother himself. Her husband was foolish, and he accepted his wife's words. So he led his mother to a deserted place. He tied her hands and feet and was going to do her harm. The seriousness of the crime deeply moved the heavens above. Clouds gathered in the four quarters and brought forth a crash of thunder, striking the son dead.

When the mother returned home, the wife opened the gate. Thinking that it was her husband, she asked, "Is the killing over yet?" The mother-in-law answered that it was over. Only the next day did she know that her husband was dead. Such was his immediate retribution for his unfilial crime. He afterwards went to hell and experienced immeasurable suffering.

Parable 113: The King of Benares Hears Calls from the Cemetery

If one has recourse to appropriate means, everything may be obtained, provided that it may be sought for. If it must not be

sought for, it cannot be obtained at all, no matter how badly one wants to obtain it. It is like crushing sand to press out oil, or trying to obtain ghee by collecting water. Since it cannot be obtained, one toils in vain.

In the land of Benares there once was a king called Brahmaśāśa. Late at night he used to hear a voice calling from the cemetery crying, "O king! O king!" He heard the voice three times each night. When the king heard the strange voice, he was extremely disturbed. The voice did not stop but went on for a long time. The king assembled the Brahmans, his astronomers, and his diviners, and he discussed it with them, saying, "Every night I hear a voice calling me from the cemetery. I always panic. I dare not respond out of fear." They all answered, "There is surely a phantom in the cemetery that makes that sound. You should send a courageous person to the cemetery to have a look." So the king made an appeal, "If someone will go to the cemetery at night, I shall reward him with five hundred pieces of gold."

At that time there was someone who was orphaned, being fatherless. His family was destitute, but he had great courage. So he immediately responded to the appeal. Wearing armor and holding a sword in his hand, he went to the cemetery at night. When he heard the voice calling the king, he called out to it, saying, "Who is it that is shouting?" It answered, "I am Śāṅkhanidhi [God of Treasure]." It said to the one who was summoned [by the king], "You are a strong man. I have constantly called the king at night. If the king would respond to me, I would like to go to his storehouse. But the king is scared, and he has never responded to me. I have seven attendants now. We shall arrive at your house tomorrow at dawn." The one who had been summoned [by the king] asked, "When you come tomorrow, with what shall I welcome you?" Śāṅkha answered, "Just clean up the house and remove any refuse. See to it that it is absolutely clean and adorned with fragrant flowers. Fill eight cups with sweet soup [made of] grapes and ghee gruel. There will be eight men of the path who will eat your offerings. After they have eaten the food, you must knock the senior attendant over the head with a staff and tell him to go to a corner,

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and one by one urge all the others to go to a corner likewise!" When the one who had been summoned heard this, he returned home. He asked for his five hundred pieces of gold from the king and then used them to prepare the offerings. The king asked him, "What was that voice?" The one who had been summoned deceptively replied that it was a demon.

When the one who had been summoned heard Śaṅkha's words he was personally delighted. He summoned a barber in order to take care of his appearance. When the next day arrived his offerings were ready. There were eight men of the path who came for their nourishment. When they had finished eating, he knocked the senior attendant over the head and urged him to go to a corner. [The senior attendant] immediately changed into a vessel full of gold. He urged the others one after the other to go [to a corner], and they became eight vessels full of gold.

Through an opening in the gate the barber saw that [his neighbor] had obtained these treasures. He silently thought to himself, "I understand this method. I shall try it out." He then made preparations as the other man had done, and he invited eight men of the path. After he had prepared the food, he closed the gate and covered the windows. He knocked the senior man over the head, expecting to get an accumulation of valuables, just as had the man who had been summoned. But the head of this man of the path was smashed and his blood was dripping, soaking his bedding and seating. The barber urged him to go to a corner, but he was overcome with fear and lost consciousness. One by one all seven were beaten, and they rolled about on the floor. Among them there was one whose strength was very great. He immediately seized the barber by the hand, pushed him outside, and cried out, shouting, "Our host wants to harm us!" The king then sent someone to have a look. He seized the barber and made a full investigation into the matter. The barber then made a complete statement to the king of what had happened. The king subsequently sent someone to the house of the one who had been summoned. Seeing the treasure of gold, he wanted to tax it fully, but it changed into a poisonous snake, and that changed to a mass of fire.

The king said: "This is your merit. This also applies to ordinary people in the world. Through strenuous perseverance and maintaining the eight precepts, one obtains a wholesome recompense. By gradually practicing the eightfold right [path], one obtains a pure fruition. Even should someone else wish to imitate you and maintain the eight precepts or if he has no true faith within himself and seeks for happiness, not only will he not obtain a wholesome fruition, but he will suffer a calamity, just like that foolish man. It will be the same, with no difference!"

Parable 114: An Aged *Bhikṣu* Obtains the Four Fruitions

The Buddha's Doctrine is vast, and it saves [people] without any limit. If one earnestly strives for the path, one is sure to obtain its fruition. Even though one is ridiculed, one's merit is not lost.

For instance, once in the past there was an aged *bhikṣu* whose years had decayed and whose spirit was dull. Seeing the young *bhikṣus* expound the Doctrine in various ways, he heard their exposition of the four fruitions and was full of admiration. He said to the young *bhikṣus*, "You are clever. I wish you would give me the four fruitions." Every young *bhikṣu* mockingly said, "I have the four fruitions. I need delicious food. Only then shall I give them."

494b When the aged *bhikṣu* heard these words, he was happy inside. He took off his *kambala* and bartered it for what they needed. He thereupon served the young *bhikṣus* all kinds of delicacies and asked them for the four fruitions.

When the young *bhikṣus* had eaten the food, they poked each other and said, playing with the aged *bhikṣu*, "Venerable one, sit down in a corner of this house. We shall give you the fruitions." When the aged *bhikṣu* had heard this, he was glad. He sat down as they had told him to. The young *bhikṣus* hit his head with a felt ball and said to him, "This is the fruition of a *srotāpanna*." When the aged *bhikṣu* heard this, his concentrated mindfulness was not disturbed. So he obtained the first fruition.

The young *bhikṣus* further played with him and said, "We have given you the fruition of a *srotāpanna*, so you still have seven births and seven deaths yet. Change to another corner and we shall give you the fruition of a *sakṛdāgāmin*." As he had obtained the first fruition, the aged *bhikṣu*'s thoughts then gradually advanced. So he changed his seat. The young *bhikṣus* again hit his head with a ball and said to him, "We give you the second fruition." The aged *bhikṣu* then increased his concentrated mindfulness and realized the second fruition.

The young *bhikṣus* further played with him and said, "You have obtained the fruition of a *sakṛdāgāmin* now. You still have the adversity of coming and going in birth and death. Change your seat again and we shall give you the fruition of an *anāgāmin*!" The aged *bhikṣu* then changed his seat as they had said. The young *bhikṣus* again hit his head with a ball and said to him, "We now give you the third fruition." When he heard this, the aged *bhikṣu* was glad and doubled his concentration. He immediately realized the fruition of an *anāgāmin*.

The young *bhikṣus* further played with him and said, "You have obtained the fruition of a non-returner now, but you will still experience an impure body in the realms of form and formlessness. Impermanent and deteriorating, it will cause constant suffering. Change your seat again and we shall further give you the fruition of an arhat!" The aged *bhikṣu* then changed his seat as he was told to. The young *bhikṣus* again hit his head with a felt ball and said to him, "We now give you the fourth fruition." The aged *bhikṣu* then reflected in concentration and realized arhatship.

Having obtained the fourth fruition, he was absolutely delighted. Preparing delicacies and all kinds of fragrant flowers, he invited the young *bhikṣus* and showed his gratitude. He discussed with the young *bhikṣus* the pure qualities contributing to awakening. However, the young *bhikṣus* were at a loss for what to say. Only then did the aged *bhikṣu* tell them, "I have realized the fruition of an arhat." When the young *bhikṣus* heard these words, they were all sorry for their previous misdeed, for having ridiculed him. Therefore practitioners should be mindful of what is wholesome. Even

when ridiculed one may still obtain a fruitful recompense. How much more so when in concentration!

Parable 115: A Woman Is Utterly Sincere and Obtains the Fruition of the Path

494c If one strives for the path, one should be zealous and sincere. When one is moved by zeal and sincerity, one can obtain the fruition of the path.

For instance, there once was a woman who was intelligent and wise. She deeply believed in the Triple Jewel. She used to invite a *bhikṣu*, according to the order of the Sangha, to go to her house so that she could worship him. There was an aged *bhikṣu* then, who came to her house when it was his turn. He was old, and his faculties were dull. He was simply ignorant.

Once when he had finished his meal there, that woman asked the aged *bhikṣu*, "Expound the Doctrine to me!" She spread out a seat for herself, closed her eyes, and remained silent. The aged *bhikṣu* then knew that he was ignorant. He did not know how to expound the Doctrine. He watched her closed eyes, left her, and returned to his temple. But this woman realized in her concentration that the formed elements are impermanent, painful, void, unable to be self-existent. In her profound contemplation she obtained the first fruition.

When she had obtained the fruition, she asked for the aged *bhikṣu* and wanted to show her gratitude. This aged *bhikṣu* knew that he was ignorant, that he had left her and fled. He felt twice as ashamed, and he again abandoned her and hid. But when this woman did not stop earnestly looking for him, he showed up. The woman then fully discussed how she had experienced the fruition of the path. Therefore she presented him with an offering to show her immense gratitude. Because he was ashamed, the aged *bhikṣu* deeply blamed himself. In this way he obtained his own fruition. That is why a practitioner should be zealous. If he is zealous, he will certainly obtain what he strives for.

Chapter X

Parable 116: King Udayana

Parable 117: Rāhula

Parable 118: A Old Brahman Is Duped

Parable 119: A Brahman's Wife Wants to Harm Her
Mother-in-Law

Parable 120: The Crows and the Owls Avenge Their
Grievances

Parable 121: A Maidservant Fights with a Goat

Parable 116: King Udayana

495a Formerly King Udayana lived in the city of Roruka. He was intelligent and perspicacious. He had great wisdom. The beauty of his first wife, [who was] called Śyāmāvati, was extraordinary. Her behavior was also virtuous. The king respected her dearly, and she was his absolute favorite.

It was a rule in that country then that no king could play the lute himself. But his wife then presumed on being the favorite and said to the king, "Please play the lute for me. I shall dance for you, O king." The king could not decline her wish. He took his lute and played. His wife immediately raised her hands and danced. The king had always been versed in physiognomy. Seeing his wife dance, he noticed that she was marked for death. He then put aside his lute and gave a deep sad sigh.

His wife said to the king, "I enjoy your special favor now. I have ventured to ask you, in our inner room, O king, to play the lute; and I have started dancing so that we might enjoy ourselves. Did I do something wrong that you put aside your lute and sighed? O king, please do not conceal anything but tell me!" The king then answered, "My deep sigh was not for you to hear, my wife." His wife said, "As I serve you now, O king, my utter sincerity is unparalleled. If I have done anything wrong you must tell me what it was!" When she did not stop insisting the king told her the truth. "How could I appear to feel different toward you! When you started dancing a while ago, the mark of death was externally visible. When I calculate the remainder of your life, it is not more than seven days. That is why I put aside my lute and sighed."

When his wife heard this, she felt extreme sorrow, and she said to the king, "If it is as you have said, that my life will not be long, I have heard the *bhikṣuṇī* Śailā explain that if one can go forth with devout thoughts for one day, one will certainly obtain rebirth in heaven. For this reason I want to go forth. Please give me your permission, O king, and I can be on my way!" The feelings of the king were very affectionate then, and his love was unremitting. He said to his wife, "When the sixth day is here, I shall allow you to go

forth and enter the path. I shall not decline your wish." So, when the sixth day came, the king said to his wife, "You have wholesome thoughts, wanting to go forth. When you have obtained rebirth in heaven, you must come and see me! Only [if you promise me this] shall I give you my permission and let you go forth." When she promised, she received his permission and could go forth and experience the observance of the eight precepts. That same day she drank too great a quantity of honey syrup and suffered from intestinal convulsions.

On the morning of the seventh day her life ended. Because of her good karmic causality she was reborn in heaven. Then she wondered about three things. The first was about the past: What body had she had? The second was about her previous karmic causality: What merit had she developed? The third was about the present: She decidedly had the body of a goddess. Having come to this conclusion, she knew fully about her previous karmic causality and her vow to the king. Because of the vow she had made, she came to the king. At that moment light filled the king's palace on all sides. The king then asked, "Who is this bright sign for? Please explain it for me." Then the goddess answered, "I am your wife, Lady Śyāmāvati." When the king heard these words, he wanted her to come and sit down, but the goddess replied, "As I am now, I see you as offensive, O king, and unapproachable. I have come to see you because of my previous vow, O king."

When the king had heard this, his mind understood; and he spoke these words: "Now, this goddess formerly was my wife. Because she had wholesome thoughts, wanting to enter the path, she went forth for one day; and subsequently her life ended. Because of this merit she was reborn in heaven. Her spirit is lofty, and she sees me as vile. Why should I not go forth now? I have heard it said that one fingernail of a god has the value of Jambudvīpa. How much less so this [small] country [of mine]! It is nothing to have regrets about!" Having said these words, he installed his son Senarāja to succeed him on the royal throne. He went forth, applied himself to the path, and obtained arhatship.

Then the [new] king, Senarāja, ruled over the land; and he trusted artful talk. He felt nothing for state matters. King Udayana felt pity for his son and for the people of the land. He wanted to come and convert them, urging them to develop goodness. King Senarāja heard that his father was about to arrive, and his joy was immeasurable. He wanted to order everyone to go out to the roadside and welcome him. His deceitful ministers were afraid of being sent away then, so they said to the king, "You wear the celestial crown on your head now, O king, and you sit on the Lion Throne. According to the law, it is impossible for two people to sit on the Lion Throne. If you welcome the king, your father, he will again take up his royal position. He will surely kill you, O king. If you remain king, it is necessary to harm the king, your father."

King Senarāja then felt distressed. His uncertainty grew and grew. When their remonstrating did not stop, an evil idea came to his mind. He summoned a *caṇḍāla* (outcaste) to go and kill his father. When the *caṇḍāla* received the summons, he went to where the [old] king, the father, was. He bowed his head and said to him, "In the past I have received your favors. I really do not have any feelings of betrayal toward you, old king, but I have been sent to kill you now, O old king. If I do not do you harm, I shall certainly be punished with death." The old king replied, "I am coming now to convert your king. How could I be so fond of myself as to let you be put to death!" He stretched his neck so that it was more than a hundred feet long, and he said to the *caṇḍāla*, "Go ahead and chop it off!" The *caṇḍāla* then tried to chop it off with all his strength, but the sword could not wound it. Because the old king felt pity, he lent the *caṇḍāla* his supernatural power and said to him, "Go and tell your king this for me now: 'You have killed your father, and you have furthermore harmed an arhat. You have committed two deadly sins. If you are quite repentant, you may wipe away your
495c sins.'" Then, after the *caṇḍāla* had received this instruction, he raised his sword to cut again. He cut off the old king's head and took it back to his country.

King Senarāja saw his father's head, the color of which had not changed, and he knew that his father had obtained the path. He

did not want the position of king. After his remorse had arisen, he felt regretful. He cried and fainted. After quite some time he regained consciousness and asked the *caṇḍāla* what the king, his father, had said. The *caṇḍāla* then told the king what the old king had told him to. "Since you have killed your father, and you have furthermore harmed an arhat, you have committed two deadly sins. You will have to be quite repentant." When he had heard these words, [Senarāja] was twice as torn, and he said, "The king, my father, had obtained arhatship. What desire would he have for a country? But they made me kill my father."

The deceitful ministers were afraid then that the king would harm them, and they said to the king, "How can there be arhats in the world? O king, you believe in hollow words, and you torment yourself with them." The king then replied, "My father's head has been dead for many days now, but its color has not changed. If he had not obtained the path, how could this have come about? Furthermore, in the time of my father, the great ministers Tīṣya and Upatīṣya both went forth and obtained arhatship. We have seen their various miracles. Upon their nirvana people collected their bones and erected pagodas that are in existence now. How could you say that [arhats] do not exist!" The deceitful ministers answered, "Magic in the world, and incantations, and also the power of medicinal herbs can do miracles, too. Those two ministers were no arhats. After a few days we shall show you proof."

Having said these words they made two holes by the pagodas and placed a cat in each of them. They fed them at the pagodas. When they called, "Tīṣya, come!", a cat came out to eat the meat. When they told it to go back, it went back into the hole. When they had instructed them in that way, the cats were trained. So [the ministers] said to the king, "Do you want to see Tīṣya and the other now, O king? Please, let us go and have a look together." The king ordered his carriage and went to the pagodas. Those deceitful ministers then called, "Tīṣya, come out!" A cat came out of a hole. When they told it to go back, the cat went back into the hole. When the king saw this, his confusion was complete. He confidently made up his mind and did not believe in punishment or merit.

The king then went out with his army on an excursion. When he returned he saw the Venerable Kātyāyana on his way; he was sitting in meditation and had entered concentration. Then the king saw him and had an evil thought. He took some earth in his hand and covered the venerable one with it. He said to those around him, "Each of you, cover Kātyāyana with earth for me!" Thereupon the reverend was buried under a heap of earth.

496a There was an important minister who had faith in the Triple Jewel. He arrived later and when he heard about this matter, he was extremely distressed. So he removed the earth from the reverend and said to everyone, "If anyone cares for me, remove this earth!" The reverend was sitting in a jeweled cavity of lapis lazuli. His divine bearing looked fresh, and he did not look dirtied. The important minister was glad and bowed at his feet. He said to the reverend, "The king is unprincipled now, committing this evil misdeed. Good and evil will surely be repaid. How can he be free from calamity?" The reverend answered, "After seven days it will rain earth. It will fill this city and pile up into a mountain of earth. The king and the people will all be covered and perish." When the great minister heard this he felt sad; and he told the king about it. He also devised a plan to make a tunnel that ended outside the city.

When the seven days were over, it rained fragrant flowers, precious jewels, and clothes. In the city there was none who was not glad. The deceitful ministers said to the king, "These lucky signs now all come because of your virtue. However, an ignorant person has slandered you, saying that it would rain earth. Instead we get precious jewels. The circumstances do not agree with such deception."

When the people with unwholesome karmic causality heard that there was a lucky sign, they all gathered together like clouds. Then at the four gates of the city the iron barriers were all lowered by some obscure power. There was nowhere to escape or hide. It then rained earth, filling the city and piling up like a mountain. But the great minister left through the tunnel, together with those he cared for. He went to the reverend and said to him, "I am moved when I think that this city is covered up in one day. The earth that

has rained has become a mountain. The lord and his people have lost their lives. What karmic causality did they have before that they suffer this destruction together?"

The reverend then said to the great minister, "Listen carefully! Listen carefully! I shall tell you! In the past, many kalpas ago, there was the daughter of an elder in that country. She lived on an upper storey. While she was cleaning at the break of day, she was getting rid of the filth she was sweeping, and it fell on the head of a *bhikṣu*. She did not feel any remorse. She happened to obtain a fine husband. All the women then asked her, 'How have you obtained this fine husband?' The daughter then answered, 'I have done nothing but to sweep the upper storey, letting the dust fall on a *bhikṣu*'s head. For that reason I happen to have met my fine husband.' When the women heard this, they thought it was as she had said; and they competed in making piles of dust to throw on *bhikṣus*. For this karmic reason they all received this retribution."

Having said these words he went to the city of Pāṭaliputra together with Puṇyatārā. Ever since antiquity the city of Roruka and that city have alternately prospered and decayed. When one city was ruined, the other city prospered. Therefore the reverend and the others went to Pāṭaliputra. The elder Ghoṣila worshipped the reverend at the border. The elder had always been wealthy, but when the reverend reached his house, his riches became more abundant than before. After he had reached the city, the Reverend Kātyāyana said to the Buddha, "For what reason does the Reverend Ghoṣila have his nice voice? His enormous wealth is immeasurable, and his riches still increase."

496b

The Buddha said, "Once, a long time ago, there was an elder who every day sent someone to ask five hundred *pratyekabuddhas* to come to his house and to prepare a meal. That messenger usually went with his dog. As he happened to have some business or other, he could not go to invite them. The dog went alone to the monastery at the usual time and he barked at the Sangha. The *pratyekabuddhas* then said, 'Laymen have many things to do. They tend to forget when it is too difficult for them, but the dog just came barking to call us.' So they all went to the elder's house.

“The elder was absolutely delighted at that moment, and he worshipped according to the rules. The elder at that time was myself. The messenger at that time was Aniruddha. The dog at that time was the elder Ghoṣila. That is why in every existence he has a fine voice and plenty of riches. Therefore, a wise one must diligently worship the fields of merit.”

Parable 117: Rāhula

Thus have I heard. Just on the night when the Buddha went forth, Rāhula, the Buddha’s son, first entered the womb. The bodhisattva Siddhārtha practiced austerities for six years. Underneath the bodhi tree he subdued the four Māras, removed the hindrances, and suddenly had great insight, realizing the unsurpassed path. He was endowed with the ten powers and the four fearlessnesses; he accomplished the eighteen special qualities and was endowed with the four analytical knowledges. By way of all the perfections, he had reached the other shore. Understanding all the qualities of the Buddhas, he surpassed the *śrāvakas* and the *pratyekabuddhas*. Rāhula was born just on the night when Śākyamuni realized the path.

All the ladies in the whole palace were ashamed. They were very distressed and said, “Uncanny indeed is this great evil! Yaśodharā did not mind whether it was right or wrong. She has acted recklessly. In her carelessness she has stained all of us in the whole palace. The bodhisattva Siddhārtha has long ago gone forth, but all of a sudden she now gives birth to this son. It is very shameful!”

There was a Śākya woman called Vidyut, the daughter of Yaśodharā’s mother’s sister. Beating her breast and slapping her thighs, she angrily scolded her. “Yaśodharā, you are loved by the reverend one. Why did you commit this outrage? It is already six years since the crown prince Siddhārtha has gone forth to apply himself to the path, but you give birth to this little son. It is very untimely. Who did you obtain him from? You are shameless,

bringing disgrace to our family. You are not to be counted amongst our family, since you do not protect us from a bad name. The bodhisattva Siddhārtha has great excellence. His fame is known far and wide. Why is it that you do not preserve it now, but actually bring it to disgrace?"

496c

At that very moment King Śuddhodana was in his lofty mansion. He saw that the great earth was shaking in six directions, and he saw unusual manifestations. When King Śuddhodana had seen these signs he thought that the bodhisattva had died; and an arrow of sorrow hit his heart.

He became very distressed and he said:

The fragrance of my son's morality fills the four distances. He is adorned with the primary and the secondary marks, like a garland of lotus flowers. They are withered now by his dying day. [He showed] the profound and firm roots of his morality, the branches and leaves of his moral dread and shame, the fragrance of his reputation, and the generous shade of his great compassion! My son is like a tree, trodden down by the elephant of death. He is as big as the golden mountains, adorned with a multitude of valuables. My son is the king of the golden mountains. His person, adorned with the primary and secondary marks, is destroyed by the thunderbolt of impermanence. He is like the great ocean, filled with a multitude of treasures. Like the waters of the ocean disturbed by a *makara* fish, so it is with the ocean of my son, disturbed by the *makara* fish of death. He looks like the full moon surrounded by the stars. So it is with my son surrounded by immeasurable qualities and adorned with the primary and secondary marks. Now he is swallowed by Rāhu, who means impermanence. My lineage has continued until now from such kings as Ta-chang-fu, Lu-yueh, and Chen-ching. The present day must not interrupt my lineage! I had hoped indeed that my son might be a noble Wheel-turning King, or that he might complete a Buddha's path. I would rather die now! If I lose my son, my life, wracked

with grief and distress, will certainly not be preserved. I had hoped that he would go forth and attain immortality, donning the robe of the Law and holding the alms bowl. I most certainly shall not see such things.

Because he thought of his son, he experienced all kinds of anxious thoughts and considered things to be as he imagined.

Then he heard people raise their voices, crying loudly in the palace. The king was twice as startled, thinking that the crown prince had died. He asked a maidservant who was passing by, "What is this crying? My son is not dead, is he?" The maid said to the king, "The crown prince is not dead. Yaśodharā has just given birth to a son. The whole palace is ashamed. That is why they are crying!" When the king heard these words, his anger grew and grew. He raised his voice and wept bitterly, crying out loudly in a high voice. He called out, "Strange! It is deeply disgraceful. Six years have passed since my son left home. How can she now give birth to a son!"

It was a rule in the land that when one beat the drum once, all armies would assemble. When the ninety-nine thousand Śākya were all gathered, he called Yaśodharā. Yaśodharā then donned a white garment and clasped her son to her bosom. She was not in the least afraid. She had some stain on her face; and she stood there among her own people, holding her son in her arms. Then, a Śākya holding the staff changed color with anger and scolded Yaśodharā. "You are despicable, I say, an absolute disgrace! You have brought shame on our clan. How do you have the face to stand here before us?"

There was a Śākya called Viṣṇudeva. He was Yaśodharā's maternal uncle. He said to Yaśodharā, "Among the vile and foolish, no one can surpass you. I should speak the truth for the clan. After all, where did you get this son?" Yaśodharā felt no shame at all. She straightforwardly said, "From the Śākya by the name of Siddhārtha who has gone forth. From him did I obtain this son."

When King Śuddhodana heard these words, he was angry and he said, "Do not protect the one you have borne! You conveniently

tell a lie. Whether it is true or false is known to all Śākya. Even though my son, Siddhārtha, had heard about the five objects of desire when he was in our family, he still did not lend his ear to them. Much less would he have lust and sire a son. Such words are utterly indecent. From whom did you obtain your son, bringing us disgrace? This is truly perverted and not the correct way. When formerly my son Siddhārtha was in his family, he was not at all attached to any valuables or delicacies whatsoever. How much less so now that he practices asceticism, daily eating rice gruel!" With this denunciation King Śuddhodana gave vent to his deep anger. He asked the Śākya, "How should she now suffer and be killed?"

There was another Śākya who said, "I think we should make a fiery pit and throw them into the fire, so that absolutely nothing is left of mother and child." They all said that this was best. So they dug a pit for a fire and piled up *khadira* wood in the pit and set fire to it.

They led Yaśodharā to the brink of the fiery pit. Only then did she become afraid, having seen the fiery pit. She was like a wild deer all alone in the park. Looking in the four directions, she saw no one to depend on. Yaśodharā then called out because she experienced this calamity without any wrongdoing on her part. She looked around at the Śākya but there was no one who would rescue her. Hugging her child she gave a deep sigh. Remembering the bodhisattva, she said, "You have compassion, commiserating with all. Gods, dragons, and spirits all respect you. We, mother and child, want for your protection. We experience suffering having done no wrong. Why, O bodhisattva, are we not given any attention? Why do you not rescue us, mother and child? In our present peril there is neither god nor benevolent spirit who cherishes us. O bodhisattva, when you were among the Śākya in the past, you were like the full moon among the stars, but now one cannot even catch one glimpse of you." She immediately turned in the Buddha's direction and wholeheartedly paid her respects. She further saluted the Śākya, joined her palms, and turned toward the fire, speaking the true words, "As for my son here, I really do not have this child from anyone else. If it is true and not false that

497b he has stayed in my womb for six years, the fire will be extinguished and never burn us, mother and son.”

Having said these words she went into the fire, and the fiery pit changed into a pond. She saw that she was placed on a lotus. She was completely without fear, and her complexion was peaceful. Joining her hands she said to the Śākya, “If I had lied, I would have been burnt to death. Because of my true words that this son here is really the bodhisattva’s child, I have escaped the calamity of fire.” There was then a Śākya who said, “When I look at her appearance, she is neither startled nor afraid. Deducing from this, one must know that it is true.” There was another Śākya who said, “This fiery pit has changed to a clear pond. This is proof enough to know that she is free from wrongdoing.” The Śākya then led Yaśodharā back to the palace, and they were twice as respectful and full of praise. They got a wet nurse for her to take care of her son, just as with any other delivery.

The grandfather King Śuddhodana’s love was profound. If he did not see Rāhula, he lost all appetite. When he thought of the bodhisattva, he took Rāhula into his arms and dispersed his gloomy thoughts with him.

In short, after six years, King Śuddhodana longed for the Buddha and sent a messenger to invite him. Out of compassion the Buddha returned to his former country. He came to the Śākya palace. The Buddha changed into one thousand two hundred fifty *bhikṣus* who all looked like the Buddha, having the same luster. Yaśodharā said to Rāhula, “Who is your father? Go to him!” After Rāhula had bowed to the Buddha, he stood at the Tathāgata’s right side. The Tathāgata stroked Rāhula’s head with his hand, which showed a wheel from the merits he had developed in countless kalpas. The Śākya then all thought, “The Buddha still has personal affection now.” The Buddha knew what the Śākya were thinking, and he spoke the stanzas:

1. I do not have any undue partiality toward either my royal relatives or the son who was born. I just stroked his head with my hand. I have ended all fetters. My love or hatred is forever done away with.

2. Do not have any doubt or uncertainty about my son! He will go forth too, again being my son in the Doctrine.
3. I shall briefly mention his qualities: He will go forth and apply himself to the true path. He will accomplish the fruition of arhatship.

Parable 118: An Old Brahman Is Duped

497c All frauds, deceivers, and cheats outwardly look ordinary, but inwardly they are villainous. That is why a wise one must ascertain other people's rectitude.

For example, long ago in the past there was a Brahman whose age was already advanced but who married a young wife. The wife did not like it that her husband was aged. Her licentiousness was unending. When her desire had become manifest, she urged her husband to organize a gathering, inviting young Brahmans. The husband suspected deceit and did not want to invite them in. The young woman then devised all sorts of schemes to delude her husband. When the son of the old Brahman's former wife fell into a fire, the young woman saw it with her own eyes. She let him fall and did not hold him back. The Brahman said, "Why did you not seize my son when he fell into the fire just now?" His wife replied, "Since my youth, I have only approached my own husband. I have never held another man. Why do you all of a sudden want me to lay my hands on this male child?"

When the old Brahman heard these words, he thought it was as she had said. Because he trusted his wife, he organized a great gathering in his house and assembled the Brahmans. The young woman then had intercourse with them. When the old Brahman heard about this, he felt bitter. So he took his valuables, wrapped them in his clothes, and left his wife.

When he was far away from home he saw a Brahman on his way, and they became companions. That evening they stayed together in one place. At the break of day they went on together. When they had left the house of their host and were leaving it

behind, the other Brahman said to the old one, "There is a leaf that got stuck to my clothes at the place where we spent the night yesterday. Since I was a child I have not appropriated any worldly object. I consider a leaf sticking to me to be an absolute disgrace. I would like to go back to that host and return the leaf. You stay here and wait for me to go there and back." When the old Brahman heard these words, he sincerely believed them; and he became twice as reverential. He promised he would stay and wait. The other Brahman pretended that he wanted to take the leaf back to their host, but he entered a ditch in the vicinity and lay down on his stomach. After quite some time he went back and said that he had returned the leaf to the host. The old Brahman trustingly thought it was true and his affection doubled.

As the moment was right for the old Brahman to wash and relieve himself, he entrusted his valuables to his companion. This person then took the valuables and ran off. When the old Brahman saw that he had been robbed of his belongings, he was saddened by that man and felt hurt. Full of sorrow and distress, he disappointedly continued on his way.

498a After walking for a while, he rested underneath a tree and saw a stork. It held a straw in its beak and said to the birds, "We should sympathize with each other, come together in one place, and stay there together!" At that time the birds all believed its words and gathered together. Then, after the stork had urged all the other birds to be on their way, it went to their nests, pecked their eggs, and drank the liquid. It killed their offspring and ate them. When the birds were about to arrive, [the stork] again took up a straw in its beak. After the birds had returned, they saw what had happened; and they all angrily railed at the stork, but it retorted, "I had nothing to do with it!" The birds knew then that it was full of deceit and they all left.

After [the Brahman] had passed some more time under the tree, he saw a heretic who had gone forth. He was wearing a patched robe and walked quietly, taking slow paces, [and calling out,] "Out of my way, you creatures!" The old Brahman asked him, "Why do you call out, 'Out of my way!' as you walk along?" The

heretic answered, "I have gone forth. I have compassion for all, and I fear that I might hurt an insect or an ant. That is why I call out." When the Brahman saw the one who had gone forth speaking these words openly, he had profound and genuine faith in him. So he immediately followed him and went to his house. Spending the night there, [the heretic] said to the Brahman, "I need a solitary place in order to develop my thoughts. Stay in another room and sleep there." The Brahman was happy to hear that he would practice the path then, and he felt joy.

Late after midnight he heard the sounds of music, of singing and dancing. So he went to have a look and he saw that in the room where the heretic who had gone forth was staying, there was a pit in the floor. A woman had come out of it to associate with him. When the woman was dancing, the heretic played the harp. When the heretic was dancing, the woman played the harp. When he had seen this, [the Brahman] said to himself, "Among all beings in the world, no matter whether they are men or animals, there is not one you can trust." He spoke the stanza:

She did not touch another man;
 And he returned the leaf to his host.
 The crane deceptively held a straw in its beak,
 And the heretic was afraid to hurt an insect.
 The words of none of these cheats
 Can be trusted at all.

At that time there was an elder in the land who had great wealth in his home. He had a large number of precious objects. One night he lost a great deal of riches. When the king heard this, he asked the elder about his acquaintances in order to ascertain who might have caused the loss. The elder informed the king, "I have never had anything to do with scoundrels. There is only one Brahman who has long been coming and going. He purifies his person and cleanses himself. He would not offend against anyone's possessions. When a leaf stuck to his clothes he returned it to its owner. There has not been anyone else except him." When the king had heard this, he took hold of the Brahman and

498b interrogated him. The elder then went to inform the king, "That man's pure conduct is unequalled in the world. How can he suddenly be arrested! I would rather lose my riches! Please, O king, set him free!"

The king then answered, "In the past I have heard that there are such cases: Outwardly they feign purity, but inwardly they harbor wickedness. Do not fret! Let me investigate the truth!" After he had said these words, he immediately started his investigation. Being at a loss for what to say and his arguments being clumsy, [the Brahman] confessed to the truth.

And so, when a wise one dwells in the world, he is like a mirror. He is good at distinguishing true from false. He is a guide in the world.

**Parable 119: A Brahman's Wife Wants to Harm Her
Mother-in-Law**

Once there was a Brahman whose wife was young. Her beauty was dazzling and her lust was prodigious. She would have liked to indulge in profligacy; but because her mother-in-law was there, she could not do as she wanted. She secretly conceived a treacherous plot to harm her mother-in-law. She piously pretended to take care of her in order to mislead her husband's mind. From morning till dark she was very respectful, providing for her so that she lacked nothing. Her husband was glad, and he said to his wife, "You take care of her now, so you are a pious wife. If my mother has reached old age it is because of your efforts." The wife answered her husband, "I bring her worldly contributions now. She does not gain much! If she obtained the offerings of a goddess, then my wishes would be fulfilled. Is there a good way for her to somehow be reborn as a goddess?" The husband replied to his wife, "According to the rules of the Brahmins, one may jump into an abyss of fire and be burnt by the five fires. If one acts in this way, one obtains rebirth in heaven." The wife replied to her husband, "If my mother-in-law may be reborn in heaven this way and receive spontaneous

offerings, why do we have to be so diligent in assuring that she receive our worldly offerings?"

Upon her saying these words, the husband believed them. So he made a large pit of fire in the open country, piled up plenty of firewood, and made a big blaze. At the pit he then arranged for a large gathering. They supported his aged mother on her way there and convened all their relatives. The whole crowd of Brahmans went to the gathering place. They beat drums, made music, and sang. They were all happy the whole day long. When the guests had gone away, husband and wife stayed alone with his mother. They led her to the fiery pit and pushed her into it. They went away without looking back.

In the fiery pit there was a ledge. The mother fell on the ledge; she did not fall into the fire after all. The mother then came out of the pit. As the day would soon come to an end, she wanted to return home following the path she had come. On her way she passed through a dense forest. It was dark where she was; and she was afraid of tigers and wolves, *rākṣasas* and demons. She climbed up a low tree in order to escape what she feared. By chance a band of robbers who had stolen a great deal of riches gathered one after the other, and rested underneath the tree. The aged mother was afraid, so afraid that she did not dare to move; but she could not hold back and coughed. When the robbers heard the sound of coughing, they thought it was an evil demon, left their riches behind, and all ran off.

When daylight came, the aged mother was calm and composed. Without any fear she immediately came down from the tree. She picked out some valuables: fragrant necklaces, pearls, golden bracelets, pearly pendants, all kinds of genuine and wonderful objects, and she went home carrying a full load. When the husband and his wife saw the mother, they were startled and terrified. They thought she was a *vetāla* demon. As they did not venture to come closer, the mother said, "After my death I was reborn in heaven and obtained a great deal of riches." She said to the wife, "The fragrant necklaces, pearls, golden bracelets, and pearly pendants are gifts to you from your parents, aunts, and sisters. Because of my old age

and weakness, I could not carry more. I tell you so that you may come; they will be given according to your wishes.”

When the wife heard her mother-in-law's words, she was happy and delighted. She wanted to jump into a fiery pit, just as had her mother-in-law; and she said to her husband, “Because my aged mother-in-law has jumped into a fiery pit now, she has obtained these riches. Because her strength is weak, she could not carry more. If I go, I shall certainly obtain more.” The husband made a fiery pit for her, just as she had said. She jumped in and was consumed. She immediately vanished forever. The gods then spoke the stanza:

A man, towards honored ones,
Must have no evil thoughts
Just as a wife, wanting to harm her mother-in-law,
Was burned and destroyed herself instead.

Parable 120: The Crows and the Owls Avenge Their Grievances

Once the crows and the owls were each other's enemies. The crows waited for daytime and, knowing that the owls could not see, trampled the owls to death and devoured their flesh. The owls knew that at night the crows' eyes were in darkness; and they pecked at the crows, pierced their bellies open, and ate them. The fears of the day and the fears of the night never ended.

There was a clever crow then among the other crows, who said to the crows, “We are enemies, and if we do not seek a solution we shall finally massacre one another. It is impossible for both of us to be saved. We should find a means to exterminate the owls. Only then can we be happy. If this does not happen, we shall finally be defeated.” The crows replied, “It is as you say. What means should we devise to obtain the destruction of our enemies?” The clever crow answered, “You, crows, just peck at me and pull out my

feathers! Peck up my head! I shall devise a plan to exterminate them." So they did as he said.

His appearance haggard from anxiety, he lamented outside the nesting place of the owls. One owl heard his voice and came out and asked, "Why do you now come to us, your head mauled and your feathers ruined, suffering bitterly and uttering lamentations? What do you want to tell us?" The crow said to the owl, "The crows hate me, and I cannot stay alive. That is why I have come to give myself up to you, so that I may escape their enmity." The owl felt compassion then and wanted to keep and feed him, but the other owls all said, "This is our enemy. We must not attend to him. Why would you feed him to prolong his enmity?" The owl then replied, "Because he is in great distress; he has come here to call on us. All by himself and alone, what harm could he possibly do?" Consequently he fed him and regularly gave him remnants of meat.

As days and months gradually passed, the crow's feathers gradually grew back and he pretended to be happy; but he secretly devised a plan.

He carried dry branches, grasses, and wood and placed them in the owl's nest, as if to show his gratitude. The owl said to the crow, "Why do you do this?" The crow replied, "There are nothing but cold stones in your nest. I use these grasses and wood in order to keep out the wind and cold." The owl thought that that was right. He kept his silence and did not reply. Thereupon the crow asked to take care of the nest. In his deceit he was given the task, so that he might show his gratitude for the support given to him. Then there happened to be a severe snowstorm and the cold was bitter. The owls came together in the nest in a flurry. The crow saw his chance and rejoiced. He brought a herdsman's fire and set fire to the owl's nest with it. The owls were at once burnt in the den. The gods then spoke the stanza:

Wherever there is an old grudge
 One should not have confidence.
 The crow, for instance, pretended to do good,
 But he burned the owls to death.

Parable 121: A Maidservant Fights with a Goat

There once was a maidservant whose disposition was honest. She used to be in charge of her master's barley and beans. In her master's home there was a goat that, looking for a way out, ate the barley. As the number of pecks [of grain] was diminished, the maid faced her master's anger. She said, "Truly I did not take it! It was all eaten by the goat!" For this reason the maid had a constant dislike of the goat. Every time she was beaten with the rod, she then beat the goat with it. The goat cherished anger, too, and it came to butt the maid. Thus they offended each other many times.

One day the maid was empty-handed when lighting the fire. The goat saw that she did not have a rod, and it came straight at the maid to butt her. Because the maid was in difficulty, she put the fire she had lighted on the goat's back. As the goat was burned by the fire, it rushed against everything and set fire to the villagers, all the way up to the mountain wilds. At that moment there were five hundred monkeys in the mountains. When the fire came, it was a big blaze and they could not escape. So they were all immediately burnt to death by the fire. When the gods saw this, they spoke the stanza:

Amidst anger and strife
One must not stay!
When the goat and the maid quarrelled,
The villagers and the monkeys died.

Glossary

ācārya: teacher.

ākimcanyāyatana: the stage of *samādhi* (q.v.) in which nothing exists; the third stage of the four stages of the formless world.

āgama: early Buddhist texts, most of which are extant only in Chinese translation; they correspond to the Pali *nikāyas*.

anāgāmin: non-returner; one who need not be reborn on this earth; one who is in the third of the four stages of development.

āraṇyaka: pertaining to the forest; a forest-dweller; a forested place.

āraṇyaka bhikṣu: a forest-dwelling monk.

āraṇyaka conduct: dwelling in the forest.

arhat: one who is in the last of the four stages of development.

asaṃkhyeya kalpa: an aeon of a certain duration. (See *Abh. K.* III).

aśoka: a kind of flower.

asura: titan; quarrelsome rival of the gods (*devas*).

avadāna: story, parable; one of the twelve types of scriptures.

bhadrakalpa: the Good Kalpa, in which a thousand Buddhas will appear.

Bhagavān: the Buddha; the Lord.

bhāvanāmārga: path of development, cultivation, or meditation.

bhikṣu: a Buddhist monk.

bhikṣuṇī: a Buddhist nun.

birth and death: samsara; the round of rebirth.

bodhi: awakening; enlightenment.

bodhisattva: a being on the way to awakening.

bodhi tree: the tree under which the Buddha attained awakening in meditation.

Brahmā: first of the gods of the Brahma class.

Brahma gods: supreme class of gods.

Brahma Heaven: the heaven in which the Brahma gods live.

brahmacarya: Brahma conduct; the religious life; celibacy.

Cakravartin: the Wheel-turning King; universal monarch.

caṇḍāla: an outcaste; a violent person, a butcher.

candra: moon, splendor.

dānapati: patron, almsgiver, donor.

Dharma: the Buddhist doctrine.

Glossary

dharma: an individually existing thing.

Dharmaguptaka: a certain school of Buddhism.

Dharmapada: a work corresponding to the Pali *Dhammapada*.

dhūtaguṇa: an ascetic practice, such as dwelling in the forest.

eight difficult conditions: eight conditions under which it is difficult to encounter a Buddha: (1) in the hells, (2) as hungry ghosts, (3) as animals, (4) in Uttarakuru (the northern continent where all is pleasant), (5) in the long-life heavens (where life is long and easy), (6) as deaf, blind, and dumb, (7) as a worldly philosopher, (8) in the intermediate period between a Buddha and his successor.

four stages of development: *srotāpanna* (q.v.), *sakṛdāgāmin* (q.v.), *anāgāmin* (q.v.), arhat (q.v.).

gandharva: a celestial musician.

garuḍa: king of birds.

gāthā: a scriptural stanza.

jambu: a type of tree; its fruit; a rose apple.

Jambudvīpa: a mythological continent south of Mount Sumeru, q.v.

jātaka: a story of a previous life of the Buddha.

kalala: an embryo in a certain stage of development.

kalpa: an aeon.

kambala: a wool garment.

karma: action that results in recompense or retribution; willed action; moral action.

karmadāna: giver of work, i.e., assigner of duties (in a monastery).

kaṣāya: a red or yellow monk's robe.

khadira: a kind of acacia tree; its wood.

kṛkara: a kind of partridge.

krośa: a distance; earshot.

kumuda: a kind of water lily.

li: a distance; somewhat more than one-third of a mile.

Mahācīna: Great China; China.

mahallaka: an aged monk.

Maheśvara: a certain god; often Śiva.

mahoraga: a class of demons shaped like boas.

Mahotpala Hell: Great Lotus Hell.

malla: an athlete.

Māra: the Evil One; the Devil.

nāga: serpent deity, dragon.

Namo: homage (to).

Nārāyana: Viṣṇu.

Nirgrantha: a Jain.

nyagrodha: a type of Indian fig tree.

padma: a red lotus.

pañcavārṣika: great quinquennial assembly.

Pāpiyān: Wicked (epithet of Māra).

piśāca: a kind of demon.

pratyekabuddha: a solitary Buddha; one who neither teaches nor is taught.

puṇḍarika: a white lotus.

Rāhu: the demon that causes eclipses.

rākṣasa: a kind of demon.

Śakra: Indra; the lord of the gods (so-called, but below Brahmā).

Śakra devānām indra: Śakra, the lord of the gods (of a certain level).

sakṛdāgāmin: one who will be born only once more; one who is in the second of the four stages of development.

samādhi: meditation, concentration, (mental) one-pointedness.

saṃbodhi: complete awakening.

Samṃbuddha: one who is completely awake; a Buddha.

Samyaksamṃbuddha: one who is truly and completely awakened; a Buddha.

Saṅgha: the Buddhist order, the monastic community.

Sarvāstivāda: a certain school of Buddhism.

śramaṇa: an ascetic.

śrāmaṇera: a Buddhist novice monk.

śrāmaṇyaphala: fruition of a *śramaṇa*.

srotāpanna: stream enterer; one who is in the first of the four stages of development.

srotāpatti: the state of a stream enterer.

sudhā: nectar, the beverage of the gods.

Sumeru: a mythological mountain, the axis of the world.

tāla: a type of palm tree.

Three Treasures: the Buddha, the Dharma (Doctrine), and the Saṅgha (Order).

three unwholesome destinations: the hells, hungry ghosts, animals.

Trāyastriṃśa Heaven: heaven of Śakra.

Tripiṭaka: Three Baskets, an early collection of Buddhist texts.

upādhyāya: a teacher of rules.

Glossary

upāsaka: a Buddhist layman.

upāsikā: a Buddhist laywoman.

utpala: a blue lotus.

vaiḍūrya: lapis lazuli.

vetāla: a reanimated corpse-demon.

vinaya: a body of monastic rules.

yakṣa: a type of demon.

yojana: a league; a unit of distance.

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Skt.: Sanskrit
Jp.: Japanese
T.: Taishō Tripiṭaka

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