

## **Dīgha Nikāya - The Long Discourses**

### **About Payasi (Payasi Sutta)**

#### **Debate with a Sceptic**

[316] 1. THUS HAVE I HEARD. Once the Venerable Kumāra-Kassapa 710 was touring round Kosala with a large company of about five hundred monks, and he came to stay at a town called Setavya. He stayed to the north of Setavya in the Simsapā Forest.<sup>711</sup> And at that time Prince Payasi was living at Setavya, a populous place, full of grass, timber, water and corn, which had been given to him by King Pasenadi of Kosala as a royal gift and with royal powers.<sup>712</sup>

2. And Prince Payasi developed the following evil opinion: ‘There is no other world, there are no spontaneously born beings, there is no fruit or result [317] of good or evil deeds.’ <sup>713</sup> Meanwhile, the Brahmins and householders of Setavya heard the news: ‘The ascetic Kumāra-Kassapa, a disciple of the ascetic Gotama, is touring round Kosala with a large company of about five hundred monks; he has arrived at Setavya and is staying to the north of Setavya in the Simsapā Forest; and concerning the Reverend Kassapa a good report has been spread about: “He is learned, experienced, wise, well-informed, a fine speaker, able to give good replies, venerable, an Arahant.” And it is good to see such Arahants.’ And so the Brahmins and householders of Setavya, leaving Setavya by the north gate in large numbers, made for the Simsapā Forest.

3. And just then, Prince Payasi had gone up to the verandah for his midday rest. Seeing all the Brahmins and householders making for the Simsapa Forest, he asked his steward why. [318] The steward said: ‘Sir, it is the ascetic Kumāra-Kassapa, a disciple of the ascetic Gotama, ... and concerning him a good report has been spread about... That is why they are going to see him.’ ‘Well then, steward, you go to the Brahmins and householders of Setavya and say: “Gentlemen, Prince Payasi says: ‘Please wait, the Prince will come to see the ascetic Kumara-Kassapa.’” Already this ascetic Kumāra-Kassapa has been teaching these foolish and inexperienced Brahmins and householders of Setavya that there is another world, that there are spontaneously born beings, and

that there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds. But no such things exist.’ ‘Very good, sir’, said the steward, and delivered the message.

4. Then Prince Payasi, accompanied by the Brahmins and householders of Setavya, went to the Simsapa Forest where the Venerable Kumāra-Kassapa was. Having exchanged courtesies with the Venerable Kumara Kassapa, [319] he sat down to one side. And some of the Brahmins and householders saluted the Venerable Kumāra-Kassapa and then sat down to one side, while some first exchanged courtesies with him, some saluted him with joined palms, some announced their name and clan, and some silently sat down to one side.

5. Then Price Payasi said to the Venerable Kumāra-Kassapa: ‘Reverend Kassapa, I hold to this tenet and this view: There is no other world, there are no spontaneously born beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil deeds.’ ‘Well, Prince, I have never seen or heard of such a tenet or view as you declare. And so, Prince, I will question you about it, and you shall reply as you think fit. What do you think, Prince? Are the sun and the moon in this world or another, are they gods or humans?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, they are in another world, and they are gods, not humans.’ ‘In the same way, Prince, you should consider: “There is another world, there are spontaneously born beings, there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds.’ ’ ’

6. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, I still think there is no other world...’ ‘Have you any reasons for this assertion, Prince?’ [320] ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘How is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, I have friends, colleagues and blood-relations who take life, take what is not given, commit sexual offences, tell lies, use abusive, harsh and frivolous speech, who are greedy, full of hatred and hold wrong views. Eventually they become ill, suffering, diseased. And when I

am sure they will not recover, I go to them and say: “There are certain ascetics and Brahmins who declare and believe that those who take life, ... hold wrong views will, after death at the breaking-up of the body, be born in a state of woe, an evil place, a place of punishment, in hell. Now you have done these things, and if what these ascetics and Brahmins say is true, that is where you will go. Now if, after death, you go to a state of woe, ... come to me and declare that there is another world, there are spontaneously born beings, there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds. You, gentlemen, are trustworthy and dependable, and what you have seen shall be as if I had seen it myself, so it will be.” But although they agreed, [321] they neither came to tell me, nor did they send a messenger. That, Reverend Kassapa, is my reason for maintaining: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously born beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil deeds.”

7. ‘As to that, Prince, I will question you about it, and you shall reply as you think fit. What do you think, Prince? Suppose they were to bring a thief before you caught in the act, and say: “This man, Lord, is a thief caught in the act. Sentence him to any punishment you wish.” And you might say: “Bind this man’s arms tightly behind him with a strong rope, shave his head closely, and lead him to the rough sound of a drum through the streets and squares and out through the southern gate, and there cut off his head.” And they, saying: “Very good” in assent, might... lead him out through the southern gate, and there cut off his head.” Now if that thief were to say to the executioners: “Good executioners, in this town or village I have friends, colleagues and blood-relations, please wait till I have visited them” , would he get his wish? [322] Or would they just cut off that talkative thief’s head?’ ‘ He would not get his wish, Reverend Kassapa. They would just cut off his head.’

‘So, Prince, this thief could not get even his human executioners to wait while he visited his friends and relations. So how can your friends, colleagues and blood-relations who have committed all these misdeeds, having died and gone to a place of woe, prevail upon the warders of hell, saying: “Good warders of hell, please wait while we report to Prince Payasi that there is another world, there are spontaneously born beings, and there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds”? Therefore, Prince, admit that there is another world...’

8. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, I still think there is no other world...’  
Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, I have friends ... who abstain from taking life, from taking what is not given, from committing sexual [323] offences, from telling lies or using abusive, harsh and frivolous speech, who are not greedy or full of hatred and who have right views.<sup>714</sup> Eventually they become ill... and when I am sure they will not recover, I go to them and say: “There are certain ascetics and Brahmins who declare and believe that those who abstain from taking life ... and have right views will, after death at the breaking-up of the body, be born in a happy state, a heavenly world. Now you have refrained from doing these things, and if what these ascetics and Brahmins say is true, that is where you will go. Now if, after death, you go to a happy state, a heavenly world, come to me and declare that there is another world... You, gentlemen, are trustworthy and dependable, and what you have seen shall be as if I had seen it myself, so it will be.” But although they agreed, they neither came to me, nor did they send a messenger. That, Reverend Kassapa, is my reason for maintaining: [324] “There is no other world...”

9. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable, because some wise people understand what is said by means of parables. Suppose a man had fallen head first into a cesspit, and you were to say to your men: “Pull that man out of the cesspit!” and they would say: “Very good”, and do so. Then you would tell them to clean his body thoroughly of the filth with bamboo scrapers, and then to give him a triple shampoo with yellow loam. Then you would tell them to anoint his body with oil and then to clean him three times with fine soap-powder. Then you would tell them to dress his hair and beard, and to adorn him with fine garlands, ointments and clothes. [325] Finally you would tell them to lead him up to your palace and let him indulge in the pleasures of the five senses, and they would do so. What do you think, Prince? Would that man, having been well washed, with his hair and beard dressed, adorned and garlanded, clothed in white, and having been conveyed up to the palace, enjoying and revelling in the pleasures of the five senses, want to be plunged once more into that

cesspit?’ ‘No, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘Why not?’ ‘Because that cesspit is unclean and considered so, evil-smelling, horrible, revolting, and generally considered to be so.’

’ In just the same way, Prince, human beings are unclean, evil-smelling, horrible, revolting and generally considered to be so by the devas. So why should your friends ... who have not committed any of the offences... (as verse 8), and who have after death been born in a happy state, a heavenly world, come back and say: “There is another world,...there is fruit [326] of good and evil deeds”? Therefore, Prince, admit that there is another world...’

10. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, I still think there is no other world...’ ‘Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, I have friends who abstain ... from telling lies, from strong drink and sloth-inducing drugs. Eventually they become ill... “There are certain ascetics and Brahmins who declare and believe that those who abstain from taking life...and sloth-producing drugs will...be born in a happy state, in a heavenly world, as companions of the Thirty-Three Gods...’ ’ [327] But although they agreed, they neither came to tell me, nor did they send a messenger. That, Reverend Kassapa, is my reason for maintaining: ” There is no other world...’ ’ ’

11. ‘As to that, Prince, I will question you about it, and you shall answer as you think fit. That which is for human beings, Prince, a hundred years is for the Thirty-Three Gods one day and night. Thirty of such nights make a month, twelve such months a year, and a thousand such years are the life-span of the Thirty-Three Gods. Now suppose they were to think: “After we have indulged in the pleasures of the five senses for two or three days we will go to Pāyāsi and tell him there is another world, there are spontaneously born beings, there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds”, would they have done so?’ ‘No, Reverend Kassapa, because we should be long-since dead. But, Reverend Kassapa, who has told you that the Thirty-Three Gods exist, and that they are so long-lived? I don’t [328] believe the Thirty-Three Gods exist or are so long-lived.’

‘Prince, imagine a man who was blind from birth and could not see dark or light objects, or blue, yellow, red or crimson ones, could not see the smooth and the rough, could not see the stars and the moon. He might say: “There are no dark and light objects and nobody who can see them, ... there is no sun or moon, and nobody who can see them. I am not aware of this thing, and therefore it does not exist.” Would he be speaking rightly, Prince?’ ‘No, Reverend Kassapa. There are dark and light objects . . . ,[329] there is a sun and a moon, and anyone who said: “I am not aware of this thing, I cannot see it, and therefore it does not exist” would not be speaking rightly.’

‘Well, Prince, it appears that your reply is like that of the blind man when you ask how I know about the Thirty-Three Gods and their longevity. Prince, the other world cannot be seen the way you think, with the physical eye. Prince, those ascetics and Brahmins who seek in the jungle-thickets and the recesses of the forest for a resting-place that is quiet, with little noise — they stay there unwearied, ardent, restrained, purifying the divine eye,<sup>715</sup> and with that purified divine eye that exceeds the powers of human sight, they see both this world and the next, and spontaneously born beings. That, Prince, is how the other world can be seen, and not the way you think, with the physical eye. Therefore, Prince, admit that there is another world, that there are spontaneously born beings, and that there is fruit and result of good and evil deeds.’

12. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, [330] I still think there is no other world...’ ‘Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Well, Reverend Kassapa, I see here some ascetics and Brahmins who observe morality and are well-conducted, who want to live, do not want to die, who desire comfort and hate suffering. And it seems to me that if these good ascetics and Brahmins who are so moral and well-conducted know that after death they will be better off, then these good people would now take poison, take a knife and kill themselves, hang themselves or jump off a cliff. But though they have such knowledge, they still want to live, do not want to die, they desire comfort and hate suffering. And that, Reverend Kassapa, is my reason for maintaining: “There is no other world. . . .”’

13. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable, because some wise people understand what is said by means of parables. Once upon a time, Prince, a certain Brahmin had two wives. One had a son ten or twelve years old, while the other was pregnant and nearing her time when the Brahmin died. Then this youth said to his mother’s co-wife: “Lady, whatever wealth and possessions, silver or gold, there may be, is all [331] mine. My father made me his heir.” At this the Brahmin lady said to the youth: “Wait, young man, until I give birth. If the child is a boy, one portion will be his, and if it is a girl, she will become your servant.” The youth repeated his words a second time, and received the same reply. When he repeated them a third time, the lady took a knife and, going into an inner room, cut open her belly, thinking: “If only I could find out whether it is a boy or a girl!” And thus she destroyed herself and the living embryo, and the wealth as well, just as fools do who seek their inheritance unwisely, heedless of hidden danger.

‘In the same way you, Prince, will foolishly enter on hidden dangers by unwisely seeking for another [332] world, just as that Brahmin lady did in seeking her inheritance. But, Prince, those ascetics and Brahmins who observe morality and are well-conducted do not seek to hasten the ripening of that which is not yet ripe, but rather they wisely await its ripening. Their life is profitable to those ascetics and Brahmins, for the longer such moral and well-conducted ascetics and Brahmins remain alive, the greater the merit that they create; they practise for the welfare of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the profit and benefit of devas and humans. Therefore, Prince, admit that there is another world...’

14. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, I still think there is no other world...’ ‘Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’  
‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, take the case that they bring a thief before me, caught in the act and say: “Here, Lord, is a thief caught in the act, sentence him to whatever punishment you wish.” And I say: “Take

this man and put him alive in a jar. Seal the mouth and close it with a damp skin, give it a thick covering of damp clay, [333] put it in an oven and light the fire.” And they do so. When we are sure the man is dead, we remove the jar, break the clay, uncover the mouth, and watch carefully: “Maybe we can see his soul<sup>716</sup> escaping.” But we do not see any soul escaping, and that is why, Reverend Kassapa, I believe there is no other world...’

15. ‘As to that, Prince, I will question you about it, and you shall reply as you think fit. Do you admit that when you have gone for your midday rest you have seen pleasant visions of parks, forests, delightful country and lotus-ponds?’ ‘I do, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘And at that time are you not watched over by hunchbacks, dwarfs, young girls and maidens?’ ‘I am, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘And do they observe your soul entering or leaving your body?’ [334] ‘No, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘So they do not see your soul entering or leaving your body even when you are alive. Therefore how could you see the soul of a dead man entering or leaving his body? Therefore, Prince, admit that there is another world...’

16. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, I still think there is no other world...’ ‘Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, take the case that they bring a thief before me... and I say: “Weigh this man on the scales alive, then strangle him, and weigh him again.” And they do so. As long as he was alive, he was lighter, softer and more flexible, but when he was dead he was heavier, stiffer<sup>717</sup> and more inflexible. And that, Reverend Kassapa, is my reason for maintaining that there is no other world...’

17. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable... [335] Suppose a man weighed an iron ball that had been heated all day, blazing, burning fiercely, glowing. And suppose that after a time, when it had grown cold and gone out, he weighed it again. At which time would it be lighter, softer and more flexible: when it was hot, burning and glowing, or when it was cold and extinguished?’ ‘Reverend Kassapa, when that ball of iron is hot, burning and glowing with the elements of fire and

air, then it is lighter, softer and more flexible. When, without those elements,<sup>718</sup> it has grown cold and gone out, it is heavier, stiffer and more inflexible.’ ‘Well then, Prince, it is just the same with the body. When it has life, heat and consciousness, it is lighter, softer and more flexible. But when it is deprived of life, heat and consciousness, it is heavier, stiffer and more inflexible. In the same way, Prince, you should consider: “There is another world...”’ ‘ ’

18. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, I still think there is no other world...”’ ‘Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’ ‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, take the case of a thief that they bring before me... [336] and I say: “Kill this man without wounding his cuticle, skin, flesh, sinews, bones or marrow”’ ‘ ’<sup>719</sup> and they do so. When he is half-dead, I say: “Now lay this man on his back, and perhaps we shall be able to see his soul emerging.” They do so, but we cannot see his soul emerging. Then I say: “Turn him face downwards,...on his side, . . . on the other side,...stand him up,...stand him on his head,...thump him with your fists,...stone him,...hit him with sticks,... strike him with swords,... shake him this way and that, and perhaps we shall be able to see his soul emerging.” And they do all these things, but although he has eyes he does not perceive objects or their spheres,<sup>720</sup> although he has ears he does not hear sounds..., although he has a nose he does not smell smells..., although he [337] has a tongue he does not taste tastes..., although he has a body he does not feel tangibles or their spheres. And that is why, Reverend Kassapa, I believe there is no other world...”’

19. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable... Once there was a trumpeter who took his trumpet<sup>721</sup> and went into the border country.<sup>722</sup> On coming to a village, he stood in the village centre, blew his trumpet three times and then, putting it down on the ground, sat down to one side. Then, Prince, those border folk thought: “Where does that sound come from that is so delightful, so sweet, so intoxicating, so compelling, so captivating?” They addressed the trumpeter and asked him about this. “Friends, this trumpet is where those delightful sounds come from.” So then they laid the

trumpet on its back, crying: “Speak, mister trumpet, speak!” But the trumpet never uttered a sound. Then they turned it face downwards,...on its side,... on its other side,... stood it up,... stood it on its head, . . . [338] thumped it with their fists,... stoned it,... beat it with sticks,... struck it with swords,... shook it this way and that, crying: “Speak, mister trumpet, speak!” But the trumpet never uttered a sound. The trumpeter thought: “What fools these border folk are! How stupidly they search for the sound of the trumpet!” And as they watched him, he took the trumpet, blew it three times, and went away. And those border folk thought: “It seems that when the trumpet is accompanied by a man, by effort, and by the wind, then it makes a sound. But when it is not accompanied by a man, by effort, and by the wind, then it makes no sound.”

‘In the same way, Prince, when this body has life, heat and consciousness, then it goes and comes back, stands and sits and lies down, sees things with its eyes, hears with its ears, smells with its nose, tastes with its tongue, feels with its body, and knows mental objects with its mind. But when it has no life, heat or consciousness, it does none of these things. In the same way, Prince, you should consider: “There is another world...’ ‘ ‘ ‘

20. ‘Whatever you may say about that, Reverend Kassapa, [339] I still think there is no other world...’ ‘ Have you any reason for this assertion, Prince?’ ‘I have, Reverend Kassapa.’  
‘What is that, Prince?’

‘Reverend Kassapa, take the case of a thief they bring before me...and I say: “Strip away this man’s outer skin, and perhaps we shall be able to see his soul emerging.” Then I tell them to strip away his inner skin, his flesh, sinews, bones, bone-marrow... but still we cannot see any soul emerging. And that is why, Reverend Kassapa, I believe there is no other world...’

21. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable... Once there was a matted-haired fire-worshipper<sup>723</sup> who dwelt in the forest in a leaf-hut. And a certain tribe was on the move, and its leader stayed for one night near the fire-worshipper’s dwelling, and then left. So the fire-worshipper

thought [340] he would go to the site to see if he could find anything he could make use of. He got up early and went to the site, and there he saw a tiny delicate baby boy lying abandoned on his back. At the sight he thought: “It would not be right for me to look on and let a human being die. I had better take this child to my hermitage, take care of him, feed him and bring him up.” So he did so. When the boy was ten or twelve, the hermit had some business to do in the neighbourhood. So he said to the boy: “I want to go to the neighbourhood, my son. You look after the fire and don’ t let it go out. If it should go out, here is an axe, here are some sticks, here are the fire-sticks, so you can relight the fire and look after it.” Having thus instructed the boy, the hermit went into the neighbourhood. But the boy, being absorbed in his games, let the fire go out. Then he thought: “Father said: ‘ ... here is an axe ... so you can relight the fire and look after it.’ Now I’ d better do so!” [341] So he chopped up the fire-sticks with the axe, thinking: “I expect I’ ll get a fire this way.” But he got no fire. He cut the fire-sticks into two, into three, into four, into five, ten, a hundred pieces, he splintered them, he pounded them in a mortar, he winnowed them in a great wind, thinking: “I expect I’ ll get a fire this way.” But he got no fire, and when the hermit came back, having finished his business, he said: “Son, why have you let the fire go out?” and the boy told him what had happened. The hermit thought: “How stupid this boy is, how senseless! What a thoughtless way to try to get a fire!’ ’ So, while the boy looked on, he took the fire-sticks and rekindled the fire, saying : ” Son, that’ s the way [342] to rekindle a fire, not the stupid, senseless, thoughtless way you tried to do it!”

’ In just the same way, Prince, you are looking foolishly, senselessly and unreasonably for another world. Prince, give up this evil viewpoint, give it up! Do not let it cause you misfortune and suffering for a long time!’

22. ‘Even though you say this, Reverend Kassapa, still I cannot bear to give up this evil opinion. King Pasenadi of Kosala knows my opinions, and so do kings abroad. If I give it up, they will say: ‘ What a fool Prince Pāyāsi is, how stupidly he grasps at wrong views!’ I will stick to this view out of anger, contempt and spite!’

23. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable...Once, Prince, a great caravan of a thousand carts was travelling from east to west. And wherever they went, they rapidly consumed all the grass, wood and greenstuff. Now this caravan had two leaders, each [343] in charge of five hundred carts. And they thought: “This is a great caravan of a thousand carts. Wherever we go we use up all the supplies. Perhaps we should divide the caravan into two groups of five hundred carts each”, and they did so. Then one of the leaders collected plenty of grass, wood and water, and set off. After two or three days’ journey he saw a dark red-eyed man coming towards him wearing a quiver and a wreath of white water-lilies, with his clothes and hair all wet, driving a donkey-chariot whose wheels were splashed with mud. On seeing this man, the leader said: “Where do you come from, sir?” “From such-and-such.” “And where are you going?” “To so-and-so.” “Has there been much rainfall in the jungle ahead?” “Oh yes, sir, there has been a great deal of rain in the jungle ahead of you, the roads are well watered and there is plenty of grass, [344] wood and water. Throw away the grass, wood and water you have already got, sir! You will make rapid progress with lightly-laden carts, so do not tire your draught-oxen!” The caravan-leader told the carters what the man had said: “ Throw away the grass, wood and water...” , and they did so. But at the first camping-place they did not find any grass, wood or water, nor at the second, the third, fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh, and thus they all came to ruin and destruction. And whatever there was of them, men and cattle, they were all gobbled up by that yakkha-spirit, 724 and only their bones remained.725

‘And when the leader of the second caravan was sure the first caravan had gone forward far enough, he stocked up with plenty of grass, wood and water. After two or three days’ journey this leader saw a dark red-eyed man coming towards him... [345] who advised him to throw away his stocks of grass, wood and water. Then the leader said to the carters: “This man told us that we should throw away the grass, wood and water we already have. But he is not one of our friends and relatives, so why should we trust him? So do not throw away the grass, wood and water we have; let the caravan continue on its way with the goods we have brought, and do not throw any of them away!” The carters agreed and did as he said. And at the first camping-place they did not find any grass, [346] wood or water, nor at the second, the third, fourth, fifth, sixth or seventh, but there they saw the

other caravan that had come to ruin and destruction, and they saw the bones of those men and cattle that had been gobbled up by the yakkha-spirit. Then the caravan leader said to the carters: “That caravan came to ruin and destruction through the folly of its leader. So now let us leave behind such of our goods as are of little value, and take whatever is of greater value from the other caravan.” And they did so. And with that wise leader they passed safely through the jungle.

‘In the same way you, Prince, will come to ruin and destruction if you foolishly and unwisely seek the other world in the wrong way. Those who think they can trust anything they hear are heading for ruin and destruction just like those carters. Prince, give up this evil viewpoint, give it up! Do not let it cause you misfortune and suffering for a long time!’

24. ‘Even though you say this, Reverend Kassapa, still I cannot bear to give up this evil opinion... [347] If I give it up, they will say: “What a fool Prince Pāyāsi is . . .”’

25. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable... Once there was a swineherd who was going from his own village to another. There he saw a heap of dry dung that had been thrown away, and he thought: “There’s a lot of dry dung somebody’s thrown away, that would be food for my pigs. I ought to carry it away. And he spread out his cloak, gathered up the dung in it, made it into a bundle and put it on his head, and went on. But on his way back there was a heavy shower of unseasonable rain, and he went on his way bespattered with oozing, dripping dung to his finger-tips, and still carrying his load of dung. Those who saw him said: “You must be mad! You must be crazy! Why do you go along carrying that load of dung that’s oozing and dripping all over you down to your finger-tips?” “You’re the ones that are mad! You’re the ones that are crazy! [348] This stuff is food for my pigs.” Prince, you speak just like the dung-carrier in my parable. Prince, give up this evil viewpoint, give it up! Do not let it cause you misfortune and suffering for a long time!’

26. ‘Even though you say this, Reverend Kassapa, still I cannot bear to give up this evil opinion...If I give it up, they will say: “What a fool Prince Payasi is...”’

27. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable...Once there were two gamblers using nuts as dice. One of them, whenever he got the unlucky dice, swallowed it. The other noticed what he was doing, and said: “Well, my friend, you’re the winner all right! Give me the dice and I will make an offering of them.” “All right”, said the first, and gave them to him. Then that one filled the dice with poison and then said: “Come on, let’s have a game!” The other agreed, they played again, and once again the one player, whenever [349] he got the unlucky dice, swallowed it. The second watched him do so, and then uttered this verse:

“The dice is smeared with burning stuff,

Though the swallower doesn’t know.

Swallow, cheat, and swallow well —

Bitter it will be like hell!”

Prince, you speak just like the gambler in my parable. Prince, give up this evil viewpoint, give it up! Do not let it cause you misfortune and suffering for a long time!’

28. ‘Even though you say this, Reverend Kassapa, still I cannot bear to give up this evil opinion... If I give it up, they will say: “What a fool Prince Pāyāsi is . . .”’

29. ‘Well then, Prince, I will give you a parable... Once the inhabitants of a certain neighbourhood migrated. And one man said to his friend: “Come along, let’s go to that neighbourhood, we might find something valuable!” His friend agreed, so they went to that district, and came to a village street. [350] And there they saw a pile of hemp that had been thrown away, and one said: “Here’s some

hemp. You make a bundle, I'll make a bundle, and we'll both carry it off." The other agreed, and they did so. Then, coming to another village street, they found some hemp-thread, and one said: "This pile of hemp-thread is just what we wanted the hemp for. Let's each throw away our bundle of hemp, and we'll go on with a load of hemp-thread each." "I've brought this bundle of hemp a long way and it's well tied up. That will do for me — you do as you like!" So his companion threw away the hemp and took the hemp-thread.

'Coming to another village street, they found some hemp-cloth, and one said: "This pile of hemp-cloth is just what we wanted the hemp or hemp-thread for. You throw away your load of hemp and I'll throw away my load of hemp-thread, and we'll go on with a load of hemp-cloth each." But the other replied as before, so the one companion threw away the hemp-thread and took the hemp-cloth. [351] In another village they saw a pile of flax..., in another, linen-thread..., in another, linen-cloth..., in another, cotton..., in another, cotton-thread..., in another, cotton-cloth..., in another, iron..., in another, copper..., in another, tin..., in another, lead..., in another, silver..., in another, gold. Then one said: "This pile of gold is just what we wanted the hemp, hemp-thread, hemp-cloth, flax, linen-thread, linen-cloth, cotton, cotton-thread, cotton-cloth, iron, copper, tin, lead, silver for. You throw away your load of hemp and I'll throw away my load of silver, and we'll both go on with a load of gold each." "I've brought this load of hemp a long way and it's well tied up. That will do for me — you do as you like!" And this companion threw away the load of silver and took the load of gold.

'Then they came back to their own village. And there the one who brought a load of hemp gave no pleasure to his parents, nor to his wife and children, nor to his friends and colleagues, and he did not even get any joy or [352] happiness from it himself. But the one who came back with a load of gold pleased his parents, his wife and children, his friends and colleagues, and he derived joy and happiness from it himself as well.

'Prince, you speak just like the hemp-bearer in my parable. Prince, give up this evil view, give it up! Do not let it cause you misfortune and suffering for a long time!'

30. ‘I was pleased and delighted with the Reverend Kassapa’s first parable, and I wanted to hear his quick-witted replies to questions, because I thought he was a worthy opponent. 726 Excellent, Reverend Kassapa, excellent! It is as if someone were to set up what had been knocked down, or to point out the way to one who had got lost, or to bring an oil-lamp into a dark place, so that those with eyes could see what was there. Just so has the Reverend Kassapa expounded the Dhamma in various ways. And I, Reverend Kassapa, go for refuge to the Blessed Lord, to the Dhamma, and to the Sangha. May the Reverend Kassapa accept me from this day forth as a lay-follower as long as life shall last! And, Reverend Kassapa, I want to make a great sacrifice. Instruct me, Reverend Kassapa, how this may be to my lasting benefit and happiness.’

31. ‘Prince, when a sacrifice is made at which oxen are slain, or goats, fowl or pigs, or various creatures are slaughtered,<sup>727</sup> and the participants [353] have wrong view, wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness and wrong concentration, then that sacrifice is of no great fruit or profit, it is not very brilliant and has no great radiance. Suppose, Prince, a farmer went into the forest with plough and seed, and there, in an untilled place with poor soil from which the stumps had not been uprooted, were to sow seeds that were broken, rotting, ruined by wind and heat, stale, and not properly embedded in the soil, and the rain-god did not send proper showers at the right time — would those seeds germinate, develop and increase, and would the farmer get an abundant crop?’ ‘No, Reverend Kassapa.’

‘Well then, Prince, it is the same with a sacrifice at which oxen are slain,... where the participants have wrong view, ... wrong concentration. But when none of these creatures are put to death, and the participants have right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, then that sacrifice is of great fruit and profit, it is brilliant and of great radiance. Suppose, Prince, a farmer went into the forest with plough and seed, and there, in a well-tilled place with good soil from which the stumps had been uprooted, were to sow seeds [354] that were not broken, rotting, ruined by wind and heat, or stale, and were firmly embedded in the soil, and the rain-god were to send proper showers at the right time – would those seeds germinate,

develop and increase, and would the farmer get an abundant crop?’ ‘ He would, Reverend Kassapa.’

‘In the same way, Prince, at a sacrifice at which no oxen are slain,... where the participants have right view,...right concentration, then that sacrifice is of great fruit and profit, it is brilliant and of great radiance.’

32. Then Prince Pāyāsi established a charity for ascetics and Brahmins, wayfarers, beggars and the needy. And there such food was given out as broken rice with sour gruel, and also rough clothing with ball-fringes.<sup>728</sup> And a young Brahmin called Uttara was put in charge of the distribution.<sup>729</sup> Referring to it, he said: ‘Through this charity I have been associated with Prince Pāyāsi in this world, but not in the next.’

And Prince Pāyāsi heard of his words, [355] so he sent for him and asked him if he had said that. ‘Yes, Lord.’ ‘But why did you say such a thing? Friend Uttara, don’t we who wish to gain merit expect a reward for our charity?’

‘But, Lord, the food you give — broken rice with sour gruel — you would not care to touch it with your foot, much less eat it! And the rough clothes with ball-fringes - you would not care to set foot on them, much less wear them! Lord, you are kind and gentle to us, so how can we reconcile such kindness and gentleness with unkindness and roughness?’ ‘Well then, Uttara, you arrange to supply food as I eat and clothes such as I wear.’ ‘Very good, Lord’, said Uttara, and he did so.<sup>730</sup> [356]

And Prince Pāyāsi, because he had established his charity grudgingly, not with his own hands, and without proper concern, like something casually tossed aside, was reborn after his death, at the breaking-up of the body, in the company of the Four Great Kings, in the empty Serīsaka mansion. But Uttara, who had given the charity ungrudgingly, with his own hands and with proper concern,

not as something tossed aside, was reborn after death, at the breaking-up of the body, in a good place, a heavenly realm, in the company of the Thirty-Three Gods.

33. Now at that time the Venerable Gavampati<sup>731</sup> was accustomed to go to the empty Serisaka mansion for his midday rest. And Pāyāsi of the devas went to the Venerable Gavampati, saluted him, and stood to one side. And the venerable Gavampati said to him, as he stood there: ‘Who are you, friend?’ ‘Lord, I am Prince Pāyāsi.’ ‘Friend, are you not the one who used to say: “There is no other world, there are no spontaneously born beings, there is no fruit or result of good or evil deeds”?’ ‘Yes, Lord, I am the one who used to say that, but I [357] was converted from that evil view by the Noble Kumāra-Kassapa.’ ‘And where has the young Brahmin Uttara, who was in charge of the distribution of your charity, been reborn?’

‘Lord, he who gave the charity ungrudgingly...was reborn in the company of the Thirty-Three Gods, but I, who gave grudgingly,... have been reborn here in the empty Serīsaka mansion. Lord, please, when you return to earth, tell people to give ungrudgingly ... and inform them of the way in which Prince Pāyāsi and the young Brahmin Uttara have been reborn.’

34. And so the Venerable Gavampati, on his return to earth, declared: ‘You should give ungrudgingly, with your own hands, with proper concern, not carelessly. Prince Pāyāsi did not do this, and at death, at the breaking-up of the body, he was reborn in the company of the Four Great Kings in the empty Serīsaka mansion, whereas the administrator of his charity, the young Brahmin Uttara, who gave ungrudgingly, with his own hands, with proper concern and not carelessly, was reborn in the company of the Thirty-Three Gods.’

<sup>710</sup> Known as ‘Young Kassapa’ to distinguish him from other Kassapas, such as Mahā-Kassapa or Kassapa the Great (DN 16.6.19). Described as ‘the best preacher in the Sangha’, he showed his debating skill in this battle of wits with Payasi.

711 Not the same place as the Simsapa Grove where the Buddha gave the famous parable of the simsapā leaves (SN 56.31), which was in Kosambi. Cf. n.388.

712 A stock phrase, cf. n.141.

713 Cf. the views of Ajita Kesakambali (n.111).

714 A purely conventional phrase: one wonders what Pāyāsi's idea of 'right view' was.

715 Cf. nn.133, 140.

716 Jīvaṃ: cf. DN 6 and 7.

717 Patthīnataro: from the same root as thīna-middha 'sloth and torpor', more lit. 'stiffness and sluggishness'.

718 Of course the elements have not completely vanished, as all four elements are always present. But they have ceased to predominate.

719 Corrected after Buddhadatta Thera, from RD's rendering 'stripping off cuticle and skin', which applies to verse 20.

720 Ayatana (n.685). This comes in here rather strangely.

721 Sanka: a conch-shell trumpet or 'chank'.

722 The border-country folk were regarded as stupid.

723 Jaṭila. Soon after his enlightenment, the Buddha had converted the three Kassapa brothers who were fire-worshippers.

724 Here the yakkha is definitely evil, but cf. n-503.

725 The story is also told in Jataka 1, and a related one in Jataka 2 (see I.B. Homer, Ten Jataka Stories, Bangkok 1974).

726 Payasi, like Potthapada (n.218), and many Indians to this day, enjoys a good argument for its own sake.

727 Cf. DN 5.

728 These were to weigh the garment down.

729 RD has blundered here with a mistranslation of vyāvaṭa (see PED).

730 RD thinks he did so at his own expense. We do not know one way or the other about this!

731 One of the Buddha's early converts. He went for his siesta to the lower heavens!