

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)

4. The Collection of the Numerical Discourses -
Commentaries (4. Aṅguttara Nikāya - Aṭṭhakathā)

01. Commentary on the Book of the Ones (01. Ekakanipāta-
aṭṭhakathā)

1. Commentary on the Chapter on Material Form and So Forth
(1. Rūpādivaggavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

4. The Collection of the Numerical Discourses - Commentaries

01. Commentary on the Book of the Ones

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One

In the Collection of the Numerical Discourses

Commentary on the Book of the Ones

Introductory Discussion on the Undertaking of the Work

Whose heart is cooled by compassion, whose darkness of delusion is dispelled
by the lamp of wisdom;
Revered by the world of humans and gods, I pay homage to the Fortunate One,
liberated from all destinations.

Even the Buddha, having both developed and realised the state of
Buddhahood;
That which he attained, whose stains are gone, I pay homage to that
unsurpassed Teaching.

Of the Fortunate One's legitimate sons, who crush the army of Māra;
The assembly of all eight, with bowed head I pay homage to the noble
Community.

Thus, of me whose mind is full of faith, the merit born of homage to the Triple
Gem;
By which, having become one whose obstacles are well removed, through its
power.

Of the excellent Aṅguttara collection, adorned with the Ones, Twos, and so on;
Which generates varied inspiration in the foremost speakers of the Teaching.

For the purpose of elucidating the meaning, the commentary from the
beginning by five hundred masters;
Which was recited, and recited again afterwards too.

But it was brought to the island of Sīhaḷa by the master, the great Mahinda;
And was established in the Sinhalese language for the benefit of the island's
inhabitants.

Having removed from it the Sinhalese language, I, into a delightful language;
Rendering it befitting the method of the canonical texts, free from faults.

Not contradicting the doctrine of the elders, who are lamps of the elder

lineage;
Of subtle judgement, dwelling at the Great Monastery.

Having omitted the meaning that has come again and again, I shall make the meaning clear;
For the satisfaction of good people and for the long endurance of the Teaching.

The description of cities beginning with Sāvatthī was made below;
Of the Dīgha and the Majjhima, which by me while explaining the meaning.

And the stories that were stated there by way of detail;
Of those too I shall not make a detailed commentary here again.

But the meanings of discourses which are not made clear without stories;
For the purpose of elucidating those, I shall show the stories too.

The exposition of morality, the ascetic practices, and all the meditation subjects;
Together with the arrangement of conduct, the detailed account of meditative absorptions and attainments.

All the direct knowledges, and the determination of the collection of wisdom;
Aggregates, elements, sense bases, faculties, and the four noble ones.

Truths, the teaching of the mode of dependent conditions, with a thoroughly pure and subtle method;
Inseparable from the path of the canonical texts, insight and meditative development too.

Since, however, all this was thoroughly and purely stated by me in the Visuddhimagga;
Therefore I shall not discuss that further here.

"In the middle, this Visuddhimagga, standing within all four scriptures;
Will make clear the meaning as spoken therein.

Thus indeed it was made; therefore, taking that too together with this Commentary, understand the meaning based upon the Aṅguttara.

Summary Discussion

1. Explanation of the Chapter on Material Form and So Forth

Therein, the Aṅguttara Scripture by name comprises eleven Books: the Book of Ones, the Book of Twos, the Book of Threes, the Book of Fours, the Book of Fives, the Book of Sixes, the Book of Sevens, the Book of Eights, the Book of Nines, the Book of Tens, and the Book of Elevens. By discourse -

"Nine thousand discourses, and five hundred discourses;

Fifty-seven discourses, there are in the Aṅguttara Scripture.

Of that, among the Books the Book of Ones is the first; among the discourses, the Discourse on the Exhaustion of the Mind. Of that too, the introduction beginning with "Thus have I heard" was spoken by the Venerable Ānanda at the time of the First Great Rehearsal. This First Great Rehearsal, however, was expanded upon at the beginning of the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, the Commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya; therefore it should be understood by the method expanded upon there.

Explanation of the Introduction

1. Now as for this introduction beginning with "Thus have I heard," therein "thus" is an indeclinable particle, "me" and so on are noun terms. In "was dwelling at Sāvathī," here "vi" is a prefix term, "harati" is a verb term - by this method, to begin with, the analysis of terms should be understood.

As regards meaning, however, the word "thus" has various meanings including simile, instruction, gladdening, reproach, acceptance of a statement, manner, illustration, and emphasis, among others. For thus indeed, in "So by a mortal born, much wholesome should be done" and so on, it occurs in simile. In "Thus should you step forward, thus should you step back" and so on, in instruction. In "So it is, Blessed One, so it is, Fortunate One" and so on, in gladdening. In "Just so indeed this outcast woman praises that shaveling, that petty ascetic, here and there" and so on, in reproach. In "Yes, venerable sir, those monks assented to the Blessed One" and so on, in acceptance of a statement. In "Indeed thus, venerable sir, I understand the Teaching taught by the Blessed One" and so on, in manner. "Come, young man, go to where the ascetic Ānanda is; having approached, in my name ask the ascetic Ānanda about his health, whether he is free from illness, free from affliction, light in rising, strong, and dwelling in comfort - 'The young brahmin Subha, son of Todeyya, asks the venerable Ānanda about his health, whether he is free from illness, etc. and dwelling in comfort,' and say thus: 'It would be good if the venerable Ānanda would approach the dwelling of the young man Subha, son of Todeyya, out of compassion'" and so on, in illustration. "What do you think, Kālāmas, are these mental states wholesome or unwholesome?" "Unwholesome, venerable sir." "Blameworthy or blameless?" "Blameworthy, venerable sir." "Censured by the wise or praised by the wise?" "Censured by the wise, venerable sir." "When complete and taken upon oneself, do they lead to harm and suffering or not? How is it for you here?" "When complete, venerable sir, and taken upon oneself, they lead to harm and suffering; thus it is for us here" and so on, in emphasis. Here it should be seen in the senses of manner, illustration, and emphasis.

Therein, by the word "thus" in the sense of manner, he explains this meaning -The word of that Blessed One, which is subtle in various methods, arising from manifold dispositions, accomplished in meaning and phrasing, of various wonders, profound in the Teaching, meaning, instruction, and penetration, reaching the path of hearing in accordance with each and every being's own language - who is able to comprehend it in every way? But having generated the desire to hear with all one's strength, "thus have I heard" means "by me too it was heard in one manner."

In the sense of illustration, freeing himself thus: "I am not self-originated, this was not realised by me," he illustrates the entire discourse that is now to be spoken as "thus have I heard, by me too it was thus heard."

In the sense of emphasis, showing his own power of retention in accordance with the state of being praised thus by the Blessed One: "This is the foremost, monks, of my disciples who are monks who are very learned, namely Ānanda; of those who are mindful, of those with perfect behaviour, of those who are resolute, of attendants, namely Ānanda," and thus by the General of the Teaching: "The Venerable Ānanda is skilled in meaning, skilled in the Teaching, skilled in phrasing, skilled in language, and skilled in what precedes and what follows," he generates in beings the desire to hear: "Thus have I heard, and that indeed, whether in meaning or in phrasing, is neither deficient nor excessive; it should be seen just so and not otherwise."

The word "me" appears in three meanings. For thus indeed, in "What is gained by chanting verses is not fit to be eaten by me" and so on, the meaning is "by me." In "It would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One would expound to me the Teaching in brief" and so on, the meaning is "to me." In "Dhammadāyādā me, bhikkhave, bhavathā" and so on, the meaning is "my." Here, however, both twofold meanings - "heard by me" and "my hearing" - are fitting.

"Heard" - this word "suta," both with prefix and without prefix, has a variety of many meanings such as going, renowned, soiled, accumulated, pursuit, cognisable by ear, cognised by following the ear-door, and so on. For thus indeed - In "senāya pasuto" and so on, the meaning is "going." In "Sutadhammassa passato" and so on, the meaning is "of one whose teaching is renowned." In "Avassutā avassutassā" and so on, the meaning is "soiled and unsoiled." In "Tumhehi puññaṃ pasutaṃ anappaka" and so on, the meaning is "accumulated." In "Ye jhānappasutā dhīrā" and so on, the meaning is "engaged in meditative absorption." In "Diṭṭhaṃ sutaṃ muta" and so on, the meaning is "cognisable by ear." In "Sutadharo sutasannicayo" and so on, the meaning is "one who retains what is cognised by following the ear-door." Here, however, its meaning is "considered by following the ear-door" or "consideration by following the ear-door." For when the word "me" has the meaning "by me," "thus heard by me - considered by following the ear-door" is fitting. When the meaning is "my," "thus my hearing - consideration by following the ear-door" is fitting.

Thus, among these three terms, "thus" is an indication of the function of consciousness beginning with ear-consciousness. "Me" is an indication of the person endowed with the aforementioned consciousness. "Heard" is an indication of apprehension that is neither deficient, nor excessive, nor distorted, by rejecting the state of not having heard. Likewise, "thus" is the elucidation of the occurrence in various ways with respect to the object of that cognitive process of consciousness proceeding by following the ear-door. "Me" is the elucidation of oneself. "Heard" is the elucidation of the teaching. For here this is the summary - "By the cognitive process of consciousness proceeding in various ways with respect to the object, nothing else was done by me, but this was done - this teaching was heard."

Likewise, "thus" is the elucidation of what is to be expounded. "Me" is the elucidation of the person. "Heard" is the elucidation of the person's function. This is what is meant - "Whatever discourse I shall expound, that was thus heard by me."

Likewise, "thus" is the description of the various modes of that continuity of consciousness whose functioning in various modes involves the grasp of various meanings and phrasings. For "thus" is this concept of mode. "Me" is the description of the agent. "Heard" is the description of the object. By this much, the ascertainment of the agent's grasp of the object through the continuity of consciousness functioning in various modes, possessed of that, has been made.

Or alternatively, "thus" is the description of the person's function. "Heard" is the description of the consciousness's function. "Me" is the description of the person engaged in both functions. Here, however, this is the summary - "Heard by me, a person endowed with consciousness having the function of hearing, through the conventional expression of the function of hearing obtained by means of consciousness."

Therein, "thus" and "me" are concepts of the non-existent in terms of highest truth and ultimate reality. For what is there here in the ultimate sense that could receive the description "thus" or "me"? "Heard" is a concept of the existent. For whatever is here apprehended by the ear, that exists in the ultimate sense. Likewise, "thus" and "me," because they are to be spoken with reference to this and that, are concepts by derivation. "Heard," because it is to be spoken by placing alongside the seen and so on, is a concept by comparison.

And here, by the word "thus" he explains non-confusion. For one who is confused is not capable of penetrating in various ways. By the word "heard" he explains the non-decay of what was heard. For one whose learning has been forgotten does not acknowledge after an interval of time "it was heard by me." Thus, through his non-confusion there is the accomplishment of wisdom, and through non-decay there is the accomplishment of mindfulness. Therein, through mindfulness preceded by wisdom there is the ability to retain the phrasing, and through wisdom preceded by mindfulness there is the ability to penetrate the meaning. Through the application of both those abilities, because of being able to safeguard the treasury of the Teaching endowed with meaning and phrasing, there is the accomplishment of being the treasurer of the Teaching.

Another method - By the word "thus" he explains wise attention, because for one attending unwisely there is no penetration in various ways. By the word "heard" he explains non-distraction, because for one with a distracted mind there is no hearing. For thus a person with a distracted mind, even when being spoken to with every excellence, says "It was not heard by me, speak again." And here, by wise attention he establishes the right directing of oneself and having made merit in the past, because of the absence of that for one who has not rightly directed himself or who has not made merit in the past. Likewise, by non-distraction he establishes the hearing of the Good Teaching and the decisive support of good persons. For one with a distracted mind is not able to hear, and for one not attending upon good persons there is no hearing.

Another method - Since it was said that "'thus' is the description of the various modes of that continuity of consciousness whose functioning in various modes involves the grasp of various meanings and phrasings." And since such an auspicious mode does not occur for one who has not rightly directed himself or who has not made merit in

the past, therefore by "thus," through this auspicious mode, he explains his own achievement of the latter pair of wheels. By "heard," through the practice of hearing, the achievement of the former pair of wheels. For there is no hearing for one dwelling in an unsuitable place or for one devoid of the decisive support of good persons. Thus, through the accomplishment of the latter pair of wheels, the purity of disposition is accomplished; through the accomplishment of the former pair of wheels, the purity of practice. And through that purity of disposition, the accomplishment of proficiency in realisation; through the purity of practice, the accomplishment of proficiency in scripture. Thus, the word of one whose practice and disposition are pure, who is accomplished in scripture and realisation, like the break of dawn before the rising of the sun, and like wise attention before wholesome action, deserves to be the forerunner of the Blessed One's word - and so, placing the introduction in its proper place, he spoke beginning with "Thus have I heard."

Another method - By the word "thus," which is indicative of penetration in various ways, he makes clear the existence of his own achievement of the analytical knowledge of discernment. By "heard," which is indicative of penetration of the varieties of what is to be heard, the existence of his achievement of the analytical knowledge of language and Teaching. And speaking this word "thus," which is indicative of wise attention, he makes clear: "These teachings have been contemplated by me in mind, thoroughly penetrated by view." Speaking this word "heard" (suta), which is indicative of the practice of hearing, he makes clear: "Many teachings have been heard by me, retained, practised in speech." By both of these, making clear the fulfilment of meaning and phrasing, he generates regard for hearing. For one who does not hear with regard the Teaching that is complete in meaning and phrasing becomes an outsider to great welfare. Therefore, having generated regard, the Teaching should be heard attentively.

But by this complete statement "Thus have I heard," the Venerable Ānanda, not attributing to himself the Teaching proclaimed by the Truth-finder, transcends the plane of the bad person; acknowledging his discipleship, he enters the plane of the good person. Likewise, he turns the mind away from what is not the Good Teaching, and establishes the mind in the Good Teaching. Making clear "This was only heard by me, it is the word of that very Blessed One," he frees himself, cites the Teacher, points to the word of the Conqueror, and establishes the guide of the Teaching.

Furthermore, by saying "Thus have I heard," not acknowledging that it was produced by himself, elucidating the former statement - "This was received by me face to face from that Blessed One, confident with the four grounds of self-confidence, bearer of the ten powers, standing in the position of a bull, roaring the lion's roar, supreme among all beings, lord of the Teaching, king of the Teaching, sovereign of the Teaching, lamp of the Teaching, refuge of the Teaching, noble wheel-turning monarch of the Good Teaching, the Perfectly Enlightened One - his word. Herein no uncertainty or doubt should be entertained regarding the meaning, the Teaching, the terms, or the phrasing" - he destroys faithlessness in this Teaching among all gods and humans, and generates the accomplishment of faith. Therefore this is said -

"He destroys faithlessness, and increases faith in the Dispensation;
Thus saying 'Thus have I heard,' the disciple of Gotama."

"One" (eka) is an indication delimited by number. "Occasion" (samaya) is a delimited indication. "On one occasion" (ekam samayaṃ) is an unspecified illustration. Therein the word "occasion" (samaya) -

"Is seen in the senses of combination, moment, time, multitude, cause, view, Attainment, abandoning, and penetration."

For thus indeed, in such passages as "Perhaps tomorrow we might approach, taking into account the time and occasion," the meaning is combination. In such passages as "There is just one, monks, opportune moment and right time for abiding by the holy life," it means moment. In such passages as "the hot season, the feverish season," it means time. In such passages as "A great assembly in the wilds," it means multitude. In such passages as "And this occasion too was not understood by you, Bhaddāli - 'The Blessed One is dwelling at Sāvattthī, the Blessed One too will know me - the monk named Bhaddāli does not fulfil the training in the Teacher's instruction.' This occasion too was not understood by you, Bhaddāli" and so on, it means cause. In such passages as "Now at that time the wandering ascetic Uggāhamāna, son of Samaṇamuṇḍikā, was dwelling at the debating hall in the Tinduka row, the single-halled park of Mallikā," it means view.

"The good visible in this very life and the good of the future life.

Through the full realisation of benefit, the wise one is called 'a wise person.'"

In such passages and so on, it means attainment. In such passages as "through the complete full realisation of conceit, he made an end of suffering" and so on, it means abandoning. In such passages as "suffering has the meaning of oppression, the meaning of conditioned, the meaning of torment, the meaning of change, the meaning of full realisation" and so on, it means penetration. Here, however, its meaning is time. By that, among the times that constitute varieties of time - year, season, month, fortnight, night, day, forenoon, midday, afternoon, first watch, middle watch, last watch, moment, and so on - it explains "on one occasion."

Therein, although among these years and so on, whatever discourse was spoken in whatever year, season, month, fortnight, night-time or daytime, all that was well known and well ascertained by the Elder through wisdom. But since, if it were stated thus: "Thus have I heard in such and such a year, in such and such a season, in such and such a month, in such and such a fortnight, in such and such a night-time or in such and such a daytime," it would not be possible to easily remember, or recite, or cause to be recited, and much would have to be said; therefore, having combined that meaning in just one term, he said "on one occasion."

Or these - the time of conception in the womb, the time of birth, the time of religious urgency, the time of renunciation, the time of performing austerities, the time of victory over Māra, the time of the highest enlightenment, the time of pleasant abiding in the present life, the time of teaching, the time of final Nibbāna - such and so on are the times of the Blessed One, exceedingly well known among gods and humans, being indeed of many varieties of time. Among those times, it explains "on one occasion" as being the one termed the time of teaching. And that which, among the times of the function of knowledge and the function of compassion, is the time of the function of compassion; among the times of the practice for one's own welfare and

the practice for the welfare of others, is the time of the practice for the welfare of others; among the times of the twofold duty for those assembled, is the time of talk on the Teaching; among the times of teaching and practice, is the time of teaching - with reference to a certain one among those times too, he said "on one occasion."

But why here, just as in the Abhidhamma "at the time when sensual-sphere" and in other discourse passages "at the time, monks, when a monk, quite secluded from sensual pleasures" the description was made with the locative case, and in the Vinaya "at that time the Buddha, the Blessed One" the description was made with the instrumental case, why was it not done likewise, but instead the description "on one occasion" was made with the accusative case? Because there in those cases and here the meaning is different. For there in the Abhidhamma and in other discourse passages, the meaning of a basis and the meaning of a characteristic of a state through a state are applicable. For the time having the meaning of a basis and the meaning of a group is the occasion, and through the state of the occasion termed the momentary combination and cause of the phenomena such as contact and so on stated therein, their existence is characterised; therefore, for the purpose of illuminating that meaning, the description with the locative case was made there.

And in the Vinaya, the meaning of cause and the meaning of instrumentality are applicable. For that occasion of the laying down of training rules, which was difficult to comprehend even by Sāriputta and others, by that occasion which was a cause and an instrument, the Blessed One, laying down training rules and having regard for the cause of the laying down of training rules, dwelt here and there. Therefore, for the purpose of illuminating that meaning, the description with the instrumental case was made there.

But here and in other passages of such a kind, the meaning of perpetual connection is applicable. For whatever time the Blessed One taught this or another discourse, he absolutely dwelt during that time in the abiding of compassion. Therefore, for the purpose of illuminating that meaning, the description with the accusative case was made here. Therefore this is said -

"Having considered this and that meaning, with the locative and the instrumental;

Elsewhere 'occasion' was stated, but here with the accusative."

But the ancients explain - Whether "at that time" or "by that occasion" or "on one occasion," this is merely a difference of expression; everywhere the meaning is just the locative. Therefore, even though "on one occasion" is said, the meaning should be understood as "at one time."

"Blessed One" means the venerable one. For in the world they call the venerable one "Blessed One." And this one is the venerable one of all beings by virtue of being distinguished by all qualities; therefore he should be understood as the Blessed One. It has been said by the ancients too -

"'Blessed One' is the foremost word, 'Blessed One' is the highest word;
He is venerable, endowed with respect, therefore he is called 'Blessed One.'"

Furthermore -

"He is fortunate, he has destroyed, he is endowed, he has distributed the portions;
He has been devoted, he has renounced going in existences, therefore he is the Blessed One."

By means of this verse too, the detailed meaning of that term should be understood. And that has been stated in the Visuddhimagga in the description of the recollection of the Buddha.

To this extent, here, by the words "thus have I heard," showing the Teaching as it was heard, he makes manifest the body of the Teaching of the Blessed One. By that, he consoles the people distressed by not seeing the Teacher, saying "This is not a Scripture whose Teacher has passed away; this is your Teacher." By the words "on one occasion the Blessed One," showing the non-existence of the Blessed One at that time, he establishes the final Nibbāna of the material body. By that, he stirs a sense of urgency in people intoxicated with the pride of life, saying "The one who was the teacher of such a noble Teaching, the bearer of the ten powers, whose body was like a diamond mass - even that Blessed One has attained final Nibbāna; in whom else should hope for life be placed?" and he generates enthusiasm in them for the Good Teaching. And by saying "thus," he indicates the achievement of the teaching. "Heard by me" indicates the achievement of the disciple. "On one occasion" indicates the achievement of time. "The Blessed One" indicates the achievement of the teacher.

"At Sāvattthī" means in the city so named. And this is a locative expression used in the sense of proximity. "Dwells" - this is, without distinction, an indication of being endowed with one or another among the posture-abiding, divine abiding, sublime abiding, and noble abiding. But here it is an indication of being engaged in one or another of the postures classified as standing, walking, sitting, and lying down; therefore the Blessed One should be understood as dwelling whether standing, walking, sitting, or lying down. For he cuts off the discomfort of one posture with another posture and carries on, maintains, his individual existence without letting it fall; therefore he is said to "dwell."

"Jeta's Grove" means in the grove of Prince Jeta. For that was planted, nurtured, and maintained by him, and he was its owner; therefore it came to be reckoned as "Jeta's Grove"; in that Jeta's Grove. "Anāthapiṇḍika's park" means in the park that came to be reckoned as "Anāthapiṇḍika's" because it was dedicated to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha through the bestowal of fifty-four crores of gold by the householder Anāthapiṇḍika. This is the summary here; the detail, however, has been stated in the Papañcasūdanī, the commentary on the Majjhima, in the explanation of the Sabbāsava Sutta.

Therein one might ask - If the Blessed One dwells at Sāvattthī, then "in Jeta's Grove" should not be said. But if he dwells there, then "at Sāvattthī" should not be said. For it is not possible to dwell in both places at one time. But this should not be seen thus. Did we not say "this is a locative expression used in the sense of proximity"? Therefore, just as herds of cattle roaming near the Ganges, the Yamunā, and so on are said to be "roaming at the Ganges, roaming at the Yamunā," so too here, that which is Jeta's Grove near Sāvattthī - dwelling there, he is said to be "dwelling at

Sāvatthī in Jeta's Grove." For the mention of Sāvatthī is for the purpose of indicating the village as food resort, and the remaining words are for the purpose of indicating a dwelling place suitable for one gone forth.

Therein, by the mention of Sāvatthī, the Venerable Ānanda shows the Blessed One's assistance to householders; by the mention of Jeta's Grove and so on, his assistance to those gone forth. Likewise, by the former, the avoidance of the pursuit of self-mortification through the acceptance of requisites; by the latter, the showing of the means of avoiding the pursuit of sensual happiness through the abandoning of material sensual pleasures. By the former, devotion to expounding the Teaching; by the latter, inclination towards seclusion. By the former, approaching through compassion; by the latter, withdrawing through wisdom. By the former, the disposition towards accomplishing the welfare and happiness of beings; by the latter, non-attachment in bringing about the welfare and happiness of others. By the former, comfortable abiding on account of not relinquishing righteous happiness; by the latter, on account of the pursuit of super-human achievements. By the former, abundance of benefit to human beings; by the latter, to deities. By the former, the state of having grown up in the world for one born in the world; by the latter, being untainted by the world. By the former, from the statement "One person, monks, arising in the world arises for the welfare of many people, for the happiness of many people, out of compassion for the world, for the good, welfare, and happiness of gods and humans. Which one person? The Truth-finder, the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One" - the accomplishment of the purpose for which the Blessed One arose; by the latter, dwelling in a manner befitting the place where he arose. For the Blessed One arose first in the Lumbinī Grove, and secondly at the seat of enlightenment - thus by both mundane and supramundane arising he arose indeed in a grove. Therefore it shows his dwelling indeed in a grove. By this and such methods the interpretation of meaning here should be understood.

"There" is an elucidation of place and time. For at whatever time he dwells, "there" refers to that time. And in whichever park he dwells, "there" refers to that park - thus it explains. Or it indicates the place and time suitable for speaking. For the Blessed One does not speak the Teaching in an unsuitable place or at an unsuitable time. "It is not the right time yet, Bāhiya" and so on is the proof of this here. "Kho" is an indeclinable particle used merely as an expletive, in emphasis, or in the sense of the beginning of a statement. "The Blessed One" is an elucidation of the one revered by the world. "The monks" is a term for persons suitable for hearing the discourse. But here, the meaning of the word should be understood by the method beginning with "one who begs is a monk, one who has entered upon the practice of going for alms is a monk." "Addressed" means he spoke to, he said, he aroused their attention - this is the meaning here. But elsewhere it also occurs in the sense of informing. As he said - "I announce to you, monks, I make known to you, monks." Also in the sense of summoning. As he said - "Come, monk, in my name address Sāriputta."

"Monks" is an elucidation of the manner of addressing. And that is said because of the accomplishment of the connection with qualities such as the habit of begging and so on. For those skilled in language consider that a monk is one endowed with the quality of the habit of begging, and also one endowed with the quality of the nature of begging, and also one endowed with the quality of having done well in begging. And

by that word, accomplished through the connection with qualities such as the habit of begging and so on, making known a livelihood practised by both low and superior people, he effects the suppression of haughtiness and despondency. By this word "Monks," preceded by a glance of the eyes with a gentle heart pervaded by compassion, he makes them face towards himself. And by that very word which indicates the desire to speak, he generates in them the desire to listen. And by that very word, in the sense of vocative address, he also engages them in thorough hearing and attention. For the success of the Dispensation depends on thorough hearing and attention.

If one asks: when other gods and humans were also present, why did he address only the monks? Because of their being the eldest, the foremost, the nearest, and always present. For the Blessed One's proclamation of the Teaching is common to all assemblies. And monks are the eldest in the assembly because they arose first. They are the foremost because, having taken the homeless life as the starting point, they conform to the Teacher's conduct and are the recipients of the entire Dispensation. They are the nearest, because among those seated there, they are close to the Teacher. They are always present, because they frequent the Teacher's vicinity. Moreover, they are vessels for the proclamation of the Teaching, because of the actual existence of practice in accordance with instruction - thus too he addressed them indeed.

For what purpose did the Blessed One, when expounding the Teaching, first address the monks, rather than simply expounding the Teaching? For the purpose of arousing mindfulness. For monks may be seated thinking of other things, or with distracted minds, or reviewing the Teaching, or attending to their meditation subject; if, without addressing them, the Teaching were being taught, being unable to discern "What is the source of this teaching? What is its condition? On what occasion was it taught?" they might either misapprehend it or might not apprehend it at all. Therefore, for the purpose of arousing their mindfulness, the Blessed One first addresses them and afterwards expounds the Teaching.

"Venerable sir" - this is a word of respect, or the giving of a reply to the Teacher. Moreover, here, saying "Monks," the Blessed One addresses those monks. Saying "Venerable sir," they address the Blessed One in return. Likewise, saying "Monks," the Blessed One speaks at the beginning; saying "Venerable sir," they speak back to him. By saying "Monks," he elicits a reply; by saying "Venerable sir," they give a reply. "Those monks" means those whom the Blessed One addressed. "They assented to the Blessed One" means they assented to the Blessed One's address; the meaning is that, having turned towards him, they listened, accepted, and received it. "The Blessed One said this" means the Blessed One spoke this entire discourse that was now to be spoken. To this extent, that which was spoken by the Venerable Ānanda as the introduction adorned with time, place, preacher, assembly, and occasion, for the easy comprehension of this discourse, the explanation of its meaning is complete.

Explanation of Matter and So On

Now the occasion has arrived for the explanation of the discourse laid down by the Blessed One by the method beginning with "I do not, monks, perceive any other single form"; but since this explanation of the discourse becomes clear when

explained after having examined the laying down of the discourse, therefore the examination of the laying down of the discourse should first be understood. For there are four layings down of discourses - one's own disposition, another's disposition, dependent on a question, and arising from an occasion. Therein, whatever discourses the Blessed One spoke uninvited by others, solely through his own disposition, as follows - The Ākaṅkheyya Sutta, the Vattha Sutta, and so on; for those, the laying down is one's own disposition. But those which, thinking "Indeed, the mental states that ripen liberation have matured in Rāhula; what if I were to train Rāhula further in the elimination of mental corruptions"; thus, having observed the disposition, patience, mind, resolution, and capacity for awakening of others, were spoken by way of another's disposition, as follows - the Rāhulovāda Sutta, the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of the Teaching, and so on; for those, the laying down is another's disposition. But having approached the Blessed One, those various gods and humans ask questions in this and that way. Whatever was spoken by the Blessed One when thus asked - the Devatā Saṃyutta, the Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta, and so on - for those, the laying down is dependent on a question. But those which were spoken dependent on an arisen occasion - the Dhammadāyāda Sutta, the Simile of the Son's Flesh, and so on - for those, the laying down is arising from an occasion. Thus, among these four layings down, the laying down of this discourse is another's disposition. For this was laid down by way of another's disposition. By whose disposition? Of men who give weight to form.

Therein, in "I do not, monks" and so on, the syllable "na" has the meaning of negation. "I" points out oneself. "Monks" - he addresses the monks. "Another" means other than a woman's form that is now to be spoken of. "Even a single form" means even one form. "I perceive" - there are two ways of regarding - the regarding by knowledge and the regarding by wrong view. Therein, "regards as impermanent, not as permanent" - this is called the regarding by knowledge. But that beginning with "regards matter as self" is called the regarding by wrong view. Of those, here the regarding by knowledge is intended. But the connection of this term with the negative particle should be understood. For this is what is said: "I, monks, even while surveying with omniscient knowledge, do not perceive any other single form." "That so obsesses a man's mind" means whatever form, having obsessed, seized, and exhausted the wholesome consciousness of the four planes of a man who gives weight to form, remains. For in such passages as "having confiscated the entire elephant corps," seizing is called obsessing. In such passages as "The perception of impermanence, monks, when developed and cultivated, consumes all sensual lust," it is exhausting. Here both are applicable. Therein, this form, in seizing the wholesome consciousness of the four planes, does not seize it as a man seizes a bunch of blue water-lilies with his hand; nor, in exhausting it, does it exhaust it as fire heats and evaporates water in an oven. It should be understood that, merely by preventing its arising, it both seizes and exhausts even the wholesome consciousness of the four planes. Therefore it was said - "remains obsessing a man's mind."

"Yathayidan" means "just as this." "Itthirūpan" means "a woman's form." Therein, "And why, monks, do you say 'matter'? Because it is transformed, monks, therefore it is called 'matter.' By what is it transformed? It is transformed by cold, it is transformed by heat" - according to the discourse, the meaning of the word and the common characteristic of matter should be understood. But this word "matter" is

used in many meanings such as aggregate, existence, sign, condition, body, colour, shape, and so on. For this is used in the sense of the aggregate of matter in "whatever materiality, past, future, or present." "One develops the path for rebirth in the fine-material realm" - here in the sense of fine-material existence. "Not perceiving material forms internally, one sees forms externally" - here in the sense of the kasiṇa sign. "With a form, monks, evil unwholesome mental states arise, not without a form" - here in the sense of condition. In "space being enclosed, it goes by the term 'materiality'" - here in the sense of body. "Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises" - here in the sense of colour. "One who measures by appearance, one who is pleased by appearance" - here in the sense of shape. By the word "and so on," "enticing form, pleasant form, tasteless form" and so on should also be included. But here this is used in the sense of colour, reckoned as the visible form sense base, of a woman with four originations. Furthermore, whatever colour connected to the body - whether of a woman's worn garment or inner robe, or of ornaments, or of dyes and cosmetics and so on, or of worn garlands and so on - that, having become an object for a man's eye-consciousness, serves its purpose, all this should be understood as a woman's form indeed. "A woman's form, monks, remains obsessing a man's mind" - this was stated for the purpose of strengthening the former statement itself. Or the former was stated by way of simile as "just as this, monks, a woman's form," while this was stated by way of showing the power of obsession.

Here is the story regarding the power of obsession of a woman's form - King Mahādāṭhika Nāga, it is said, having had the great stūpa built on the mango terrace at Cetiyaḡiri, and having made what is called the mountain-goods offering, from time to time, surrounded by his harem retinue, went to Cetiyaḡiri and gave a great gift to the community of monks. At a place where many are assembled, indeed, not everyone's mindfulness is well established; and the king's chief queen named Damiḡadevī, standing in the first stage of life, was beautiful and pleasing. Then a certain elder monk named Citta, one gone forth in old age, looking with the manner of non-restraint, having grasped the sign in the visual object of her form, as if having reached madness, went about in places where he stood and sat, saying "Come, Damiḡadevī! Come, Damiḡadevī!" Thenceforth the young novices, having given him the name "the mad Elder Citta," called him thus. Then that queen died before long. When young novices from the community of monks had gone to view the charnel ground and returned, they went to his presence and said thus - "Venerable Elder Citta, she for whose sake you lament - we have gone to view the charnel ground of that queen and have returned." Even when thus told, not believing, he said "Whatever woman or that woman you went to the charnel ground for, your faces are smoke-coloured." He spoke only the words of a madman. Thus this woman's form remained obsessing the mind of the mad Elder Citta.

There is yet another story - King Saddhātissa, it is said, one day came to the monastery surrounded by his harem retinue. One young monk, standing at the gateway porch of the Lohapāsāda, being in a state of non-restraint, looked at a certain woman. She too, having cut short her going, looked at him. Both, being burnt by the fire of lust arisen within, died. Thus a woman's form remains obsessing a young man's mind.

There is yet another story - A certain young monk, it is said, from the great monastery of Kalyāṇī, having gone to the monastery at the entrance of the village of Kāḷadīghavāpi for the purpose of recitation, having completed his recitation task, not carrying out the word of those who wished his welfare, thinking "When asked by young novices at the place where I have gone, the settled appearance of the village will have to be described," while walking for almsfood in the village, having grasped the sign in a dissimilar object, having gone to his own dwelling place, having recognised the cloth she had been wearing, while asking "Where, venerable sir, was this obtained?" having known the state of her death, thinking "A woman of such a form has died on account of me," being burnt by the fire of lust arisen within, he met with the destruction of life. Thus too this woman's form should be understood as remaining obsessing a man's mind.

2. The second and so on are stated according to the disposition of those who give weight to sound and so on. Among those, "a woman's sound" means the consciousness-originated sound of speaking, singing, and music of a woman. Furthermore, even the sound of a lute, conch, small drum, and so on produced through a woman's effort, whether of her worn inner robe or of her adorned ornaments, should be understood as a woman's sound indeed. For all of this remains obsessing a man's mind.

Therein, the stories of the golden crab, the golden peacock, the young monk, and so on should be understood. It is said that in dependence on a mountain interior, a great herd of large bull elephants dwelt. And at a place not far from it there was a great lake for their use; in that lake there was a golden crab endowed with a mighty body. He, seizing with his claws like pincers the feet of each and every one who descended into that lake, bringing them under his control, killed them. Those large bull elephants, watching for a chance to descend, went about having made one great elephant their chief. He one day seized that noble elephant. The noble elephant, endowed with strength and mindfulness, thought - "If I cry a frightened cry, all will flee without sporting according to their pleasure" - and he stood quite motionless. Then, having known the state of all having crossed over, having cried aloud to make known to his wife the fact of being seized by it, he spoke thus -

"The golden deer with long eyes,
With skin and bone, dwelling in water, hairless;
Overpowered by it, I cry miserably,
May she not abandon me who am dear as life."

She, having heard that, having known the fact of her husband being seized, in order to release him from that danger, conversing with both the elephant and the crab, spoke thus -

"Noble one, I will not abandon you, an elephant sixty years old;
On the earth bounded by four quarters, you have been dear to me.

"Whatever crabs are in the ocean, in the Ganges and the Yamunā;
Of them you are the foremost water-born, release the husband of her who is crying."

The crab, together with the hearing of the woman's sound, made his grip loose. Then the noble elephant, thinking "This is indeed the opportunity for this," keeping one foot as if still held, having raised the second, having trampled on its back-shell, having crushed it to powder, having dragged it a little, threw it on the shore. Then all the elephants, having assembled together, crushed it saying "This is our enemy." Thus, for now, a woman's sound remains having obsessed the mind of the golden crab.

The golden peacock too, having entered into the Himalayas, dwelling in dependence on a great mountain thicket, constantly at the time of the sun's rising, having looked up at the orb of the sun, making his own protection, speaks thus -

"This one with vision rises, the sole king,
Golden-hued, the illuminator of the earth;
Him, him I pay homage to, the golden-hued, the illuminator of the earth,
Protected by you today may we dwell through the day.

"Those brahmins who have attained the highest knowledge in all phenomena,
To them my homage, and may they protect me;
Homage to the Buddhas, homage to enlightenment,
Homage to the liberated ones, homage to liberation;
Having made this protection,
The peacock walks about in search."

He, having taken his food during the day, in the evening time, entering his dwelling place, having looked at the setting orb of the sun, recites this verse -

"This one with vision departs, the sole king,
Golden-hued, the illuminator of the earth;
Him, him I pay homage to, the golden-hued, the illuminator of the earth,
Protected by you today may we dwell through the night.

"Those brahmins who have attained the highest knowledge in all phenomena,
To them my homage, and may they protect me;
Homage to the Buddhas, homage to enlightenment,
Homage to the liberated ones, homage to liberation;
Having made this protection,
The peacock settled in his dwelling."

Having spent seven hundred years in this manner, one day, even before the act of protection, having heard the sound of a peahen, without remembering the act of protection, he came under the control of a hunter sent by the king. Thus a woman's sound remains obsessing the mind of the golden peacock. But the young monk dwelling at Chātapabbata and the young monk dwelling at Sudhāmuṇḍaka, having heard a woman's sound, came to calamity and disaster.

3. In the third, "a woman's odour" means the odour sense base of a woman originating from four sources. Now, a woman's bodily odour is a foul smell, but what is intended here is the adventitious odour of ointment and so on that has mounted on the body. For some women smell like horses, some smell like rams, some smell of sweat, some smell of blood. A certain blindly foolish one finds pleasure even in a

woman of such a kind. But from the body of a universal monarch's woman treasure the fragrance of sandalwood wafts, and from her mouth the fragrance of waterlilies. This does not belong to all women; only the adventitious odour of ointment and so on is what is intended here. But animals such as elephants, horses, and oxen go even one yojana, two yojanas, three yojanas, or four yojanas following the seasonal odour of females of their own kind among animals. Whether it be the odour on a woman's body or the odour of a woman's outer garments, inner robes, anointed ointments, worn garlands, and so on, all should be understood as a woman's odour indeed.

4. In the fourth, "a woman's flavour" means the flavour sense base of a woman originating from four sources. But the Elders Tipiṭaka Cūḷanāga and Cūḷābhaya say: "This is the flavour of hearing and the flavour of enjoyment by way of a woman's obedient service and so on; this is a woman's flavour." What is the use of that? But whatever flavour of a woman's lips, flesh, saliva smeared with spittle and so on, and whatever flavour of rice gruel, food and so on given to her husband - all that should be understood as "a woman's flavour" indeed. For many beings, having taken whatever given with her own hand by their woman as sweet, came to calamity and disaster.

5. In the fifth, "a woman's tangible object" means bodily contact with a woman; the contact of garments, ornaments, garlands and so on mounted on a woman's body should also be understood as "a woman's tangible object" indeed. All of this obsesses a man's mind, like the contact of a dissimilar object for a young monk taking up group recitation at the great shrine courtyard.

Thus the Teacher, by way of the inclinations and underlying tendencies of beings, having taken each one among forms and so on, said "I do not perceive another such." For just as a woman's form leads astray the arising of consciousness of a man who gives weight to form, obstructs it, causes it to be bound, causes it to be captive, deludes it, and utterly confuses it, the remaining sounds and so on do not do so in the same way. And just as for those who give weight to sounds and so on, sounds and so on do, objects such as forms and so on do not do so in the same way. And for some, among forms and so on, only one object obsesses the mind; for some, even two, even three, even four, even five. Thus these five discourses were spoken by way of the five weightings, not by way of the Five Weightings Jātaka. However, the Five Weightings Jātaka should be brought in and told for the purpose of bearing witness. For therein, through the examining of shops and so on created by spirits in the middle of the wilderness, among the five companions of the great man, the one who gave weight to form, having been trapped by way of the visual object, came to calamity and disaster; those who gave weight to sounds and so on, by way of the sound object and so on. Thus that should be brought in and told for the purpose of bearing witness. But these five discourses were spoken by way of the five weightings only.

6. And since not only men have the five weightings, but women too have them indeed, therefore by way of them too he spoke five discourses again. Their meaning too should be understood in the manner already stated. Among the stories too, in the first discourse, the story should be understood as that of the deceased royal concubine, having seen a young man standing at the gate of the Lohapāsāda. That has been explained in detail below already.

7. In the second discourse, the story of a woman living by her beauty in Bārāṇasī should be known. Guttila the lute player, it is said, sent a thousand to a certain woman; she, having mocked him, did not wish to accept it. He, thinking "I shall do what is to be done here," immediately after the evening time, decorated and prepared, seated at the doorway of another house at a place facing her house, having established the strings of the lute at an even pitch, without the singing voice surpassing the sound of the lute, sang. That woman, having heard the sound of his singing, perceiving it as a door, thinking "I shall go to his presence through the open window," reached the destruction of life just in the air.

8. In the third discourse, this should be brought in: "From the body of a universal monarch the fragrance of sandalwood wafts, and from his mouth the fragrance of waterlilies." And here this story should be known. It is said that in Sāvattthī, the husband of a certain householder's daughter, having heard the Teacher's proclamation of the Teaching, thinking "It is not possible for me to fulfil this Teaching while being a householder," went forth in the presence of a certain elder who was an almsfood eater. Then King Pasenadi of Kosala, having known "This one has no husband," having had his wife brought to the inner palace, one day, having taken a bunch of blue waterlilies, having entered the inner palace, had one blue waterlily given to each woman. While the flowers were being distributed, two came into the hand of that woman. She, having displayed a delighted appearance, having sniffed them, wailed. The king, having seen her twofold manner, having had her summoned, questioned her. She told the reason for her delight and the reason for her weeping. Even though she told it up to the third time, the king, not believing, on the following day, having had all the fragrance of garlands, ointments, and other pleasant odours removed from the entire king's abode, having had seats prepared for the community of monks headed by the Buddha, having given a great gift to the community of monks headed by the Buddha, at the conclusion of the meal, having asked that woman "Which is your elder?" having known when she said "This one," having paid homage to the Teacher, said "Venerable sir, let the community of monks go together with you; our such-and-such elder will give the thanksgiving." The Teacher, having left that monk behind, went to the monastery. As soon as the elder had begun to speak the thanksgiving, the entire king's abode became as if filled with fragrance. The king, having gained confidence thinking "She indeed spoke the truth," on the following day asked the Teacher about that reason. The Teacher explained: "This one, in the past, while listening to a talk on the Teaching, giving applause saying 'Good! Good!' listened attentively; rooted in that, great king, this benefit was obtained by him."

"At the time of the teaching of the Good Teaching, for one who says 'Good! Good!'

From his mouth an odour arises, like a waterlily in water."

The remainder is clear everywhere. In this chapter only the round of rebirths has been spoken of.

Explanation of the Chapter on Material Form and So Forth.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

This translation is part of the PaliVerse Project - the first complete, unified English translation of the Pāli Canon together with its Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā) and Subcommentaries (Tīkā), accompanied by interactive study tools. PaliVerse is an ongoing project. The AI translations are continuously improved through experts' revisions and feedback. This text is the latest translation as of the date of download.

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