

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

- 3. The Canon of Higher Teaching - Commentaries
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PaliVerse

6. Commentary on the Pairs-1

Canon of the Higher Teaching

6. Commentary on the Treatise "The Book of Pairs" (First Part)

In brief only, to the gods, the god of gods in the abode of the gods;
Having taught the Points of Controversy, he who abandons conflict.

Gone beyond the domain of Yama, adorned with various pairs;
The sixth Higher Teaching treatise, the teacher of the sixth.

The Book of Pairs, he whose bodily hair is dark, curling, and stainless;
That which he taught, having attained, the order of its exposition;
Now, because of that, therefore this commentary of it proceeds.

1. Pairs on Roots

Explanation of the Synopsis Section

1. The Mūla-yamaka, the Khandha-yamaka, the Āyatana-yamaka, the Dhātu-yamaka, the Sacca-yamaka, the Saṅkhāra-yamaka, the Anusaya-yamaka, the Citta-yamaka, the Dhamma-yamaka, and the Indriya-yamaka - it has been said that this treatise is divided in ten ways by means of these ten pairs. Therein, the meaning of the name of those ten pairs by means of which this treatise is divided in ten ways, and of this treatise itself, should first be understood thus - In what sense is it "pairs"? In the sense of a couple. For a couple is called a pair -as in such instances as "the Twin Miracle, the twin Sāla trees" and so on. Thus, because it is taught by means of pairs, which are termed couples, each one among these ten is called a pair. But because of the collective nature of these pairs, this entire treatise should be understood as "Pairs."

Therein, because it is taught by making questions and answers by way of roots, the very first of the ten is called the Mūla-yamaka. It has two sections: the synopsis section and the analytic explanation section. Among those, because what has been recited is to be explained in the order of recitation, the synopsis section comes first. Of that, "Whatever mental states are wholesome, are all of them wholesome roots?" "Or else, whatever are wholesome roots, are all those mental states wholesome?" - this pair is the beginning. Its paired nature should be understood in three ways: as a pair of meanings, by way of the two meanings termed wholesome and unwholesome roots; or as a pair of mental states, by way of those same meanings through the textual mental states proceeding in forward and reverse order; or as a pair of questions, by way of questions proceeding in forward and reverse order. The same method applies in the remaining ones too.

Now, in this Mūla-yamaka taught by means of these pairs, the determination of the text of the synopsis section should first be understood thus, by way of the classification into methods, pairs, questions, and meanings - For in dependence on this first term "wholesome mental states" of the matrix of the triad of wholesome, there are these four methods: the root method, the root-root method, the root-ish method, and the root-root-ish method. In each of those methods there are three pairs each: the root pair, the one-root pair, and the mutual-root pair. Thus in the four methods there are twelve pairs; in each pair, by way of forward and reverse order, there are two questions each, making twenty-four questions; in each question, by way of ascertainment and doubt, there are two meanings each, making forty-eight meanings.

Therein, "whatever mental states are wholesome" - because there is no doubt regarding wholesome states as "are they wholesome or are they not wholesome?", in this term the meaning of ascertainment should be understood. "Are all of them wholesome roots?" - because it is asked by way of uncertainty thus "are all those wholesome mental states wholesome roots or not?", in this term the meaning of doubt should be understood. And that is stated for the purpose of illustrating doubt at the point of doubt for those amenable to instruction, but for the Truth-finder there is no such thing as doubt. The same method applies to the subsequent question terms as well.

And just as in dependence on the wholesome term there are these four methods, twelve pairs by way of three pairs each in each method, twenty-four questions by way of two questions each in each pair; Forty-eight meanings by way of two meanings each in each question. In dependence on the unwholesome term likewise. In dependence on the indeterminate term likewise. Having combined all three terms together, in dependence on the designated noun term likewise - thus it should be understood that in the four terms of the matrix of the triad of wholesome, altogether sixteen methods, forty-eight pairs, ninety-six questions, and one hundred and ninety-two meanings are stated by way of the synopsis. By this much, the root section is first recited.

Thereafter, "whatever wholesome mental states there are, all of them are wholesome causes" and so on - nine sections were recited by way of synonyms of that very root section. Thus the root section, the cause section, the source section, the origin section, the production section, the origination section, the nutriment section, the object section, the condition section, and the arising section - all ten sections there are. Therein, by the very delimitation arrived at in the root section, the methods and so on should be understood in the remaining ones too - thus it should be understood that in all ten sections, one hundred and sixty methods, four hundred and eighty pairs, nine hundred and sixty questions, and one thousand nine hundred and twenty meanings have been recited. Thus, for now, in the synopsis section, this should be understood as merely the establishment of the canonical text by way of the classification of methods, pairs, questions, meanings, and sections.

The verse "Root, cause, and source" is called the summary verse of all ten sections. Therein, root and so on are all synonyms for reason only. For a reason is a "root" in the meaning of foundation. It sends forth and proceeds for the purpose of producing its own result - thus it is a "cause" (hetu). As if showing "Come, take it!", it points out

its own result - thus it is a "source" (nidāna). The result comes into being from this - thus it is "origin" (sambhava). It originates - thus it is "production." The result arises here, or by this it arises - thus it is "origination" (samuṭṭhāna). It brings about its own result - thus it is "nutriment" (āhāra). It is held on to by its own result which is not to be rejected - thus it is "object" (ālambaṇa). Dependent on this, without rejecting, the result goes and proceeds - thus it is a "condition" (paccaya). The result arises from this - thus it is "origin" (samudaya). Thus the meaning of the words of these terms should be understood.

Explanation of the Synopsis Section.

Explanation of the Exposition Section

50. Now, the section on the detailed exposition has been commenced by the method beginning with "whatever mental states are wholesome." Therein, "whatever" is an expression meaning without remainder. "Wholesome mental states" means those of the characteristic stated in the word-by-word analysis of the triad of wholesome, unblameable, having pleasant results, of wholesome intrinsic nature. "Are all of them wholesome roots" - it asks: are all of them indeed wholesome roots? "There are only three wholesome roots" means not all of them are wholesome roots, but only three beginning with non-greed are wholesome roots - this is the meaning. "The remaining wholesome mental states are not wholesome roots" means the remaining wholesome mental states beginning with contact are not called wholesome roots. Or alternatively, the meaning is that the remaining ones beginning with contact are called just wholesome mental states indeed, not wholesome roots. "Or else, whatever are wholesome roots" - by the second term of the first question, "wholesome roots," the three beginning with non-greed are taken. "Are all those mental states wholesome" - it asks: are all those three mental states also wholesome? "Yes" - he says this accepting the wholesome nature of all the wholesome roots. This, for now, is the meaning of the root pair in the root method. By this method, the manner of answering in all the questions should be understood. But wherever there is only a distinctive point, that alone we shall explain.

51. In the One-Root Pair, firstly, "all of them are of one root with a wholesome root" should be taken not in the sense of counting as one-rooted, but should be taken in the sense of the same. For the meaning here is this: all of them are of the same root with a wholesome root. Whatever is the root of contact, that itself is the root of feeling and so on. Then, accepting their such condition, he said "Yes." "Wholesome-originated" means wholesome consciousness-originated materiality is shown. "Of one root" means of the same root with the wholesome root beginning with non-greed. For just as non-greed and so on are the root of contact and so on by being the root condition, so too they are for that originated materiality as well, but because of the absence of the wholesome characteristic, that is not wholesome.

52. In the Mutual Pair, without asking "whatever are wholesome," the question was made as "whatever are of one root with a wholesome root." Why? Because that very same meaning is possible even by this phrasing. "Wholesome roots" is a qualification of the former. For it was said "the roots which arise together," but those can be wholesome roots as well as unwholesome and indeterminate roots; here "wholesome roots" was said for the purpose of showing the distinction. "And mutually rooted"

means they are mutually conditions by way of root condition - this is the meaning. In the reverse question of that very same, without saying "are all those mental states of one root with a wholesome root," it was said "are all those mental states wholesome." Why? Because of the absence of a distinction in meaning. For if the question were made as "of one root with a wholesome root," the answer would have to be given in the very same manner as stated below, namely "the roots which arise together," and this being so, there would be no distinction in meaning. Therefore, not having done so, the question was made thus. By this method, the distinction in the questions in the Mutual Root Pair in the root-root method and so on should also be understood.

53-55. In the Root-of-Root Method, "are all of them roots of wholesome roots" asks whether all of them are roots reckoned as wholesome roots. "Of one root-root" means they are of one root-root in the sense of the same, thus "of one root-root." "Mutually rooted in roots" means the root of one another is the mutual root; the mutual root is the root of these in the sense of root condition, thus "mutually rooted in roots."

56. In the Mūlaka method, "rooted in the wholesome" means the wholesome is the root of these in the sense of root condition - thus "rooted in the wholesome."

57-61. In the root-rooted method, "rooted in wholesome roots" means: the root of the wholesome is the wholesome root. The wholesome root is the root of these in the sense of root condition only - thus "rooted in wholesome roots." This, for now, is the specific meaning in the method pair questions in dependence on the wholesome term.

62-73. In the case of the unwholesome term and so on too, the same method applies. But this is the distinction: "rootless unwholesome" is said with reference to delusion associated with sceptical doubt and restlessness.

74-85. "Rootless indeterminate" means the eighteen arisings of consciousness, matter, and Nibbāna. "Not of one root with an indeterminate root" - but here, setting aside matter originated from indeterminate with root, the remainder is obtained. Matter originated from indeterminate with root is of one root with an indeterminate root; having made that negligible, this answer was given by way of what is obtainable together only.

86-97. "Mental states that are mental" means mental states termed as mentality. These, in meaning, are the four immaterial aggregates and Nibbāna. "There are only nine mentality roots" means nine roots by way of wholesome, unwholesome, and indeterminate roots. "Rootless mentality is not of one root with a mentality root" means rootless mentality - that is, all eighteen arisings of consciousness, delusion associated with sceptical doubt and restlessness, and Nibbāna - is not of one root with a mentality root. For it does not arise together with that. In the passage "mentality with root, with a mentality root" too, the meaning is "mentality with root, with a mentality root." The remainder is of manifest meaning everywhere.

Commentary on the Root Section.

98-99. The meaning in the section on root and so forth should also be understood by this same approach. The verse "Root, cause, and source" is stated again by way of the summary for all ten sections as indicated.



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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