

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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PaliVerse

2. Commentary on the Book of Analysis

10. Analysis of Enlightenment Factors

1. Commentary on the Suttanta Classification

466. Now, in the analysis of the factors of enlightenment that follows next, "seven" is the delimitation by number. "Factors of enlightenment" (*bojjhaṅgā*) means factors (*aṅga*) of enlightenment (*bodhi*) or of the enlightened one (*bodhi*), thus they are factors of enlightenment. This is what is meant - That harmony of dhammas (*dhammasāmaggī*), which, arising at the moment of the supramundane path, being the counterpart of numerous dangers such as the establishing and accumulating of sloth and restlessness, devotion to sensual pleasure and self-mortification, adherence to annihilationism and eternalism, and so forth - since the noble disciple awakens through this harmony of dhammas reckoned as mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, energy, rapture, tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity, it is called "enlightenment" (*bodhi*); he awakens, that is, he rises from the sleep of the continuum of defilements, or he penetrates the four noble truths, or he realises *nibbāna* itself - the factors of that enlightenment reckoned as the harmony of dhammas are also factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅgā*), just like the factors of meditative absorption, the factors of the path, and so forth. But since this noble disciple awakens through this harmony of dhammas of the kind described above, he is called "enlightenment" (*bodhi*); the factors of that enlightened one are also factors of enlightenment (*bojjhaṅgā*), just like the parts of an army, the parts of a chariot, and so forth. Therefore the commentary teachers said: "Or factors of the person who awakens are factors of enlightenment."

Furthermore: "Factors of enlightenment - in what sense are they factors of enlightenment? They lead to enlightenment, thus they are factors of enlightenment; they awaken, thus they are factors of enlightenment; they awaken accordingly, thus they are factors of enlightenment; they awaken to, thus they are factors of enlightenment; they fully awaken, thus they are factors of enlightenment" - by this method of the *Paṭisambhidā* too, the meaning of factor of enlightenment should be understood.

In the terms "the enlightenment factor of mindfulness" and so forth, an excellent and beautiful factor of enlightenment is a *sambojjhaṅga*; mindfulness itself being a *sambojjhaṅga* is the enlightenment factor of mindfulness (*satisambojjhaṅga*). Therein, the enlightenment factor of mindfulness has the characteristic of establishing, the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena has the characteristic of investigation, the enlightenment factor of energy has the characteristic of exertion, the enlightenment factor of rapture has the characteristic of pervading, the enlightenment factor of tranquillity has the characteristic of peace, the enlightenment factor of concentration has the characteristic of non-distraction, the enlightenment factor of equanimity has the characteristic of reflection. Among these, the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is stated first because of its being

helpful to all the factors of enlightenment, as stated: "And mindfulness, monks, I declare to be useful everywhere." After that, by the method beginning with "dwelling thus mindful, he investigates that dhamma with wisdom," the purpose of the setting forth has come in the canonical text in just this sequential order.

But why are exactly seven stated, neither fewer nor more? Because of being the opposites of sluggishness and restlessness, and because of being useful everywhere. For here, three factors of enlightenment are the counterpart of sloth, as it is said - "But at the time, monks, when the mind is sluggish, it is the right time for the development of the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena, it is the right time for the development of the enlightenment factor of energy, it is the right time for the development of the enlightenment factor of rapture." Three are the counterpart of restlessness, as it is said - "But at the time, monks, when the mind is agitated, it is the right time for the development of the enlightenment factor of tranquillity, it is the right time for the development of the enlightenment factor of concentration, it is the right time for the development of the enlightenment factor of equanimity." But one here, like salt-seasoning in all curries, and like a minister for all affairs in all royal duties, is useful everywhere among all the factors of enlightenment because it is desirable in all of them, as it is said - "But mindfulness, monks, I say is useful everywhere." "Sabbatthaka" is also a reading in the text. The meaning of both is that it is desirable everywhere. Thus it should be understood that exactly seven are stated because of being the counterpart of sloth and restlessness, and because of being useful everywhere.

467. Now, in order to show their differentiation by way of their respective functions regarding one and the same object, the passage beginning with "Therein, what is the enlightenment factor of mindfulness?" is commenced. Therein, "here a monk" means a monk in this dispensation. "Is mindful" means just as one is wise through wisdom, famous through fame, wealthy through wealth, so one is mindful through mindfulness; the meaning is "endowed with mindfulness". "Highest" means supreme; for that is called "highest", supreme, excellent, being in conformity with ultimate truth, namely nibbāna and the path. "With mindfulness and discretion" - "discretion" is called wisdom; the meaning is "with mindfulness and with discretion". The meaning is "with mindfulness and with discretion".

But why is wisdom included in this analysis of mindfulness? For the purpose of illustrating the powerful nature of mindfulness. For mindfulness arises both together with wisdom and without it; when arising together with wisdom it is strong, when arising without it, it is weak. Therefore, wisdom is included for the purpose of showing its strength. Just as two royal ministers might be stationed in two regions; among them, one might stand having taken charge of a prince, and one might stand alone by his own authority; among those, the one standing having taken charge of a prince is powerful both by his own authority and by the authority of the prince; the one standing by his own authority alone is not equal in power to him; just so, mindfulness arisen together with wisdom is like the minister standing having taken charge of a prince, and mindfulness arisen without wisdom is like the one standing by his own authority alone. Therein, just as the one standing having taken charge of a prince is powerful both by his own authority and by the authority of the prince, so mindfulness

arisen together with wisdom is strong; just as the one standing by his own authority alone is not equal in power to him, so mindfulness arisen without wisdom is weak - thus wisdom is included for the purpose of showing its strength.

"What was done long ago" means a duty, or a kasiṇa disc, or a kasiṇa preliminary practice done long ago by oneself or by another through bodily action. "What was said long ago" means even much that was spoken long ago by oneself or by another through speech - either a talk on the Teaching or a determination of a meditation subject, standing at the head of duty, or standing at the head of the basis for liberation, a talk on the Teaching itself. "Remembering" means having given rise to that bodily intimation and verbal intimation, one remembers the mental-phenomena portion that occurred thus: "Having arisen thus, it ceased thus." "Recollecting" means remembering again and again. "This is called the enlightenment factor of mindfulness" means this mindfulness thus arisen, which gives rise to the remaining enlightenment factors and is associated with insight, is spoken of as the enlightenment factor of mindfulness.

"He, dwelling thus mindful" means that monk, having become mindful through mindfulness arisen in that manner, dwelling thus. "That phenomenon" means that phenomenon of the kind stated above, done long ago and said long ago. "Investigates with wisdom" means investigates with wisdom as "impermanent, suffering, not-self". "Examines" means examines by directing wisdom therein as "impermanent, suffering, not-self". "Commits to thorough inquiry" means engages in scrutiny and searching. "This is called" means this insight knowledge of the kind stated, which gives rise to the enlightenment factors, is called the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena.

"For him, that phenomenon" means for that monk, that phenomenon of the kind stated above. "Is aroused" means is fulfilled, is exerted. "Unsluggish" means unsluggish precisely because of being aroused. "This is called" means this energy associated with insight, which gives rise to the enlightenment factors, is called the enlightenment factor of energy.

"Spiritual" means spiritual and pure due to the absence of the bait of sensual pleasure, the bait of worldly gain, and the bait of the round of existence. "This is called" means this rapture, which gives rise to the enlightenment factors and is associated with insight, is called the enlightenment factor of rapture.

"For one whose mind is filled with rapture" means for one whose mind is associated with rapture. "The body becomes calm" means the mental body, reckoned as the three aggregates, becomes calm through the subsiding of the distress of defilements. "The mind also" means the aggregate of consciousness also becomes calm in the same way. "This is called" means this tranquillity, which gives rise to the enlightenment factors and is associated with insight, is called the enlightenment factor of tranquillity.

"For one whose body is calm, who is happy" means for one who is happy with the happiness arisen through the calmness of the body. "Becomes concentrated" means it is properly settled; having become still, it is established upon the object, as if it has attained absorption. "This is called" means this one-pointedness of mind, which gives rise to the enlightenment factors and is associated with insight, is called the

enlightenment factor of concentration.

"Thus concentrated" means concentrated by that concentration which is as if it has attained absorption. "Becomes one who thoroughly looks on with equanimity" means one thoroughly looks on with equanimity; becoming uninvolved in the abandoning and development of those phenomena, one looks on with equanimity. "This is called" means this state of neutrality, which ensures that the six enlightenment factors neither fall back nor overshoot, is called the enlightenment factor of equanimity.

What has been stated by this much? The enlightenment factors of preliminary insight, having different flavours and characteristics, neither preceding nor following but in a single mind-moment, have been stated.

The first method.

468-469. Now, showing the second method for the purpose of making clear the manner in which the seven factors of enlightenment become fourteen, he said "Again, seven factors of enlightenment" and so forth. Herein this is the progressive explanation of terms - "Mindfulness regarding internal phenomena" means mindfulness that has arisen in one who is discerning internal activities. "Mindfulness regarding external phenomena" means mindfulness that has arisen in one who is discerning external activities. "Whatever" means whichever. "That too" means that also. "For direct knowledge" means for the purpose of directly knowing the phenomena to be directly known. "For enlightenment" means enlightenment is called the path; the meaning is for the purpose of the path. "For nibbāna" means craving is called vāna; since that is absent therein, it is nibbāna; for that purpose, the meaning is that it leads to the realisation of the unconditioned, deathless element. In the case of the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena too, the same method applies.

"Bodily energy" means energy that has arisen in one who is undertaking walking meditation. "Mental energy" means energy that has arisen without bodily exertion, thus: "I shall not break this cross-legged posture until my mind is liberated from the taints through non-clinging." "Tranquillity of body" means the tranquillity of disturbance of the three aggregates. "Tranquillity of consciousness" means the tranquillity of disturbance of the aggregate of consciousness. Regarding the enlightenment factor of equanimity, the judgment is similar to that of the enlightenment factor of mindfulness. In this method, the seven factors of enlightenment are spoken of as a mixture of mundane and supramundane.

However, the elder teachers of old, saying "This much does not make it clear," analysed and showed it further. For among these, mindfulness, investigation, and equanimity regarding internal phenomena - these three are solely mundane because they have one's own aggregates as their object. Likewise, bodily energy that has not reached the path. But rapture and concentration that are without initial application and sustained application are supramundane. The rest are a mixture of mundane and supramundane.

Therein, firstly, mindfulness, investigation, and equanimity regarding internal phenomena have an internal object, whereas the supramundane has an external object - let not their supramundane nature be established thus. One who says that

energy produced through the practice of walking meditation is also mundane encounters no difficulty. But when are rapture and concentration without initial application and sustained application supramundane? In the sense-sphere, the enlightenment factor of rapture is obtained, but rapture without initial application and sustained application is not obtained. In the fine-material sphere, rapture without initial application and sustained application is obtained, but the enlightenment factor of rapture is not obtained. In the immaterial sphere, neither is obtained at all. Here, however, by taking what is not obtained, even what is obtained is rejected. Thus this enlightenment factor of rapture without initial application and sustained application, having gone beyond the sense-sphere, the fine-material sphere, and the immaterial sphere, is spoken of as being exclusively produced as supramundane.

Likewise, in the sense-sphere, the enlightenment factor of concentration is obtained, but concentration without initial application and sustained application is not obtained. In the fine-material sphere and the immaterial sphere, concentration without initial application and sustained application is obtained, but the enlightenment factor of concentration is not obtained. Here, however, on account of what is not obtainable, even what is obtainable is rejected. Thus this concentration without initial application and sustained application, having gone beyond the sense-sphere, the fine-material sphere, and the immaterial sphere, is spoken of as being exclusively supramundane in nature.

Furthermore, having taken the mundane, it should be made supramundane; having taken the supramundane, it should be made mundane. For there is also a time of supramundane development for mindfulness, investigation, and equanimity regarding internal phenomena. Herein this is the text: "I declare, friends, that internal liberation is the destruction of all clinging; thus these taints do not underlie me." By this sutta they become supramundane. But when, while bodily energy produced through the practice of walking meditation has not yet subsided, insight is conjoined with the path, then that becomes supramundane. But those elders who say "one extracting an enlightenment factor in kasiṇa meditative absorption, ānāpāna meditative absorption, and brahmavihāra meditative absorption should not be prevented" - according to their view, the enlightenment factors of rapture and concentration without initial application and sustained application are mundane.

The second method.

470-471. Now, showing the third method that proceeds by way of the development of the factors of enlightenment, he said "Seven factors of enlightenment" and so forth again. Herein too, this is the sequential word commentary - "Develops" means increases; generates and produces again and again in one's own continuum. "Based upon seclusion" means dependent on seclusion. "Seclusion" means the state of being secluded. And this is fivefold: seclusion by substitution of opposites, seclusion by suppression, seclusion by cutting off, seclusion by tranquillisation, and seclusion by escape. Therein, seclusion by substitution of opposites is insight. Seclusion by suppression is the eight attainments. Seclusion by cutting off is the path. Seclusion by tranquillisation is fruition. Seclusion by escape is Nibbāna, which is free from all signs. Thus, "based upon seclusion" means dependent upon this fivefold seclusion, and the

meaning to be understood is that one develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness based upon seclusion by substitution of opposites, based upon seclusion by cutting off, and based upon seclusion by escape.

For thus, this practitioner devoted to the practice of developing the enlightenment factor of mindfulness develops the enlightenment factor of mindfulness at the moment of insight as based upon seclusion by substitution of opposites by way of function, and based upon seclusion by escape by way of disposition; but at the time of the path, as based upon seclusion by cutting off by way of function, and based upon seclusion by escape by way of object. Some say "based upon all five kinds of seclusion." For they extract the factors of enlightenment not only at the moments of strong insight, path, and fruition, but also in the kasiṇa meditative absorptions, mindfulness-of-breathing meditative absorptions, foulness meditative absorptions, and divine-abiding meditative absorptions that serve as the basis for insight, and they were not rejected by the commentarial teachers. Therefore, according to their view, at the moment of occurrence of those meditative absorptions, it is based upon seclusion by suppression by function alone. And just as at the moment of insight it was said "based upon seclusion by escape by way of disposition," so too it is fitting to say "one also develops it as based upon seclusion by tranquillisation." This same method applies to "based upon dispassion" and so on. For dispassion and so on are indeed of the same meaning as seclusion.

And here, relinquishment is solely of two kinds -relinquishment as giving up and relinquishment as leaping forward. Therein, "relinquishment as giving up" is the abandoning of defilements at the moment of insight by way of substitution of opposites and at the moment of the path by way of cutting off. "Relinquishment as leaping forward" is the leaping forward into Nibbāna at the moment of insight by way of inclining towards it, and at the moment of the path by way of making it the object. Both of those are applicable in this method of explanation of meaning that is a mixture of mundane and supramundane. For thus this enlightenment factor of mindfulness relinquishes defilements and leaps forward into Nibbāna in the manner stated.

"Maturing in release" - but by this complete expression, it means: maturing towards the purpose of release, and matured; ripening, and fully ripened. For this monk devoted to the development of the factors of enlightenment develops it in such a way that the enlightenment factor of mindfulness ripens towards the purpose of relinquishment as giving up of defilements and towards the purpose of relinquishment as leaping forward into Nibbāna, and in such a way that it becomes fully ripened. This same method applies to the remaining factors of enlightenment as well. In this method too, the factors of enlightenment are spoken of as a mixture of the mundane and the supramundane.

Commentary on the Suttanta Classification.

2. Commentary on the Abhidhamma Classification

472. In the Abhidhamma Classification, there are two methods: by way of asking about all seven factors of enlightenment together and answering, and by way of asking about each individually and answering. The explanation of their meaning

should be understood in the manner stated above.

In the description of the enlightenment factor of equanimity, however, equanimity is by way of looking on. The mode of looking on is looking on. It is called equanimity because it looks at phenomena that are fit to be looked upon with equanimity when they are proceeding properly, and does not prompt them. It is called looking on because it causes a person to look on with equanimity. Looking on that surpasses mundane looking on through the attainment of the state of a factor of enlightenment is close looking on. The state of neutrality through not engaging in activity is neutrality. In order to indicate that this is of the mind, not of a being, it is said "neutrality of mind." This is the sequential word-by-word explanation herein.

The methods herein should be counted -for in the answer after asking about all seven factors of enlightenment together, one thousand methods for each path, one thousand methods - thus four thousand methods are analysed. In the answer after asking individually, four for each factor of enlightenment - thus seven groups of four make twenty-eight. Those together with the former four make thirty-two - thus in the Abhidhamma Classification altogether thirty-two thousand methods are analysed, all pertaining to the wholesome only. Since, however, factors of enlightenment are also obtained at the moment of fruition, and the fruits of recluseship have wholesome causes, therefore, for the purpose of showing the factors of enlightenment in those as well, the resultant method is commenced by the same systematic exposition preceded by the description of the wholesome. That too is twofold: by way of asking together and answering, and by way of asking individually and answering. The remainder here should be understood by the method already stated above. In the resultant, however, the methods should be made threefold compared to the wholesome.

Commentary on the Abhidhamma Classification.

3. Commentary on the Questions Section

482. In the section of questioning, the wholesome and other nature of the factors of enlightenment should be understood according to the sequence of the canonical text. However, in the object triads, all these, having occurred with reference to the immeasurable nibbāna, are only of immeasurable object, not of path-object. But here, by way of co-nascent condition, the wholesome ones have path as root-cause; making either energy or investigation predominant, at the time of path-development they have path as predominance; but when path-development has desire or consciousness as predominant, they should not be called having path as predominance; and at the time of fruition too, they should not be so called.

In the past and so forth, they should not be called even as having a single object; but since nibbāna is an external state, they are called having an external object. Thus in this section of questioning too, the factors of enlightenment are spoken of as exclusively arisen supramundane. For by the Perfectly Enlightened One, in the first method of the Suttanta analysis alone, mundane factors of enlightenment were spoken of; in the second and third, mixed mundane and supramundane factors of enlightenment were spoken of. But in all four methods of the Abhidhamma analysis

and in this section of questioning, they are exclusively supramundane - thus this analysis of the factors of enlightenment too has been shown having been analysed by extracting from the three rounds.

In the Sammohavinodanī, the Commentary on the Vibhaṅga,

the Exposition of the Analysis of the Factors of Enlightenment is completed.



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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