

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)

10. Commentary on the Second Chapter on Heedlessness and So
Forth (10. Dutiyapamāḍādivaggavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

4. The Collection of the Numerical Discourses - Commentaries

01. Commentary on the Book of the Ones

10. Explanation of the Second Chapter on Heedlessness and So Forth

98. In the tenth, "internal" means internal by way of one's own personal self. "Factor" means reason. "Thus having done" means having done in this way. This is what is meant - Monks, taking as a reason that which has arisen internally, individually, in one's own continuity, I do not perceive any other single reason either.

110-114. "External" means existing outside one's own internal continuity. "Of the Good Teaching" means of the good teaching, the meaning is of the Dispensation. "For the decay" means for the destruction. "For the disappearance" means for the purpose of not being known.

115. "For the presence" means for the purpose of long duration. "For non-decay, for non-disappearance" should be understood by the method of the opposite of what has been stated. The remainder here in the fourfold classification is by the same method as already stated.

130. In the remaining ones beyond this, regarding "explain what is not the Teaching as 'the Teaching'" and so on, first according to the method of the discourses, the ten wholesome courses of action are the Teaching, the ten unwholesome courses of action are not the Teaching. Likewise, the four establishments of mindfulness, the four right strivings, the four bases for spiritual power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven factors of enlightenment, and the noble eightfold path - these thirty-seven qualities conducive to enlightenment are called the Teaching. Three establishments of mindfulness, three right strivings, three bases for spiritual power, six faculties, six powers, eight factors of enlightenment, and the ninefold path; and the four kinds of clinging, the five mental hindrances, the seven underlying tendencies, and the eight wrong courses - this is not the Teaching.

Therein, having taken any one portion of what is not the Teaching, saying "We shall make this, which is not the Teaching, the Teaching; thus our teacher's lineage will be leading to liberation, and we shall become well-known in the world," speaking of that which is not the Teaching as "This is the Teaching," they are said to explain what is not the Teaching as the Teaching. In the same way, having taken one among the portions of the Teaching, speaking of it as "This is not the Teaching," they are said to explain the Teaching as not the Teaching. But according to the method of the monastic discipline, an act to be carried out after accusing with a factual case, reminding, and according to acknowledgment is called the Teaching; an act to be carried out with a non-factual case, without accusing, without reminding, and without acknowledgment is called not the Teaching.

According to the method of the discourses, the removal of lust, the removal of hate, the removal of delusion, restraint, abandoning, and reflection - this is called monastic discipline; the non-removal of lust and so on, non-restraint, non-abandoning, and non-reflection - this is called not monastic discipline. According to the method of the monastic discipline, success of the case, success of the motion, success of the proclamation, success of the boundary, and success of the assembly - this is called monastic discipline. Failure of the case, failure of the motion, failure of the proclamation, failure of the boundary, and failure of the assembly - this is called not monastic discipline.

According to the method of the discourses, the four establishments of mindfulness, the four right strivings, etc. the noble eightfold path - this was said, spoken by the Truth-finder. Three establishments of mindfulness, three right strivings, three bases for spiritual power, six faculties, six powers, eight factors of enlightenment, and the ninefold path - this was not said, not spoken by the Truth-finder. According to the method of the monastic discipline, the four offences involving expulsion, the thirteen offences entailing initial and subsequent meetings of the Community, the two undetermined rules, and the thirty rules involving expiation with forfeiture - this was said, spoken by the Truth-finder. Three offences involving expulsion, fourteen offences entailing initial and subsequent meetings of the Community, three undetermined rules, and thirty-one rules involving expiation with forfeiture - this was not said, not spoken by the Truth-finder.

According to the method of the discourses, the daily entering into fruition attainment, the entering into the attainment of great compassion, the surveying of the world with the Buddha-eye, the teaching of discourses by way of the arising of occasions, and the telling of birth stories - this was practised; not the daily entering into fruition attainment, etc. not the telling of birth stories - this was not practised. According to the method of the monastic discipline, for one who has been invited, having spent the rains residence, asking for permission and departing on a journey, having performed the invitation ceremony and departing on a journey, and first extending hospitality together with visiting monks - this was practised; the non-performance of that very practice is called not practised.

According to the method of the discourses, the four establishments of mindfulness, etc. the eightfold path - this is called laid down. Three establishments of mindfulness, etc. the ninefold path - this is called not laid down. According to the method of the monastic discipline, the four offences involving expulsion, etc. the thirty rules involving expiation with forfeiture - this is called laid down. Three offences involving expulsion, etc. thirty-one rules involving expiation with forfeiture - this is called not laid down.

Now as for what was said at the end of all the discourses, "they cause this Good Teaching to disappear," therein there are five disappearances: the disappearance of achievement, the disappearance of practice, the disappearance of the Scriptures, the disappearance of the outward form, and the disappearance of the relics. Therein, achievement means the four paths, the four fruits, the four analytical knowledges, the three true knowledges, and the six direct knowledges. That, when declining, declines beginning from the analytical knowledges. For only up to a thousand years after the final Nibbāna of the Buddhas are they able to produce the analytical

knowledges; after that, the six direct knowledges; thereafter, being unable to produce even those, they produce the three true knowledges. As time goes on and on, being unable to produce even those, they become dry insight practitioners. By this very means, non-returners, once-returners, and stream-enterers. While those endure, the achievement is not said to have disappeared. But with the ending of the life of the last stream-enterer, the achievement is said to have disappeared. This is called the disappearance of achievement.

The disappearance of practice means that, being unable to produce meditative absorptions, insight, path and fruitions, they guard merely the fourfold purification of morality. As time goes on and on, having reached the conclusion "We keep morality having made it complete, and we engage in striving, yet we are unable to realise either the path or the fruit; there is now no penetration of the noble teaching," being given to idleness, they do not accuse one another, do not remind one another, and become without remorse; from then on they trample upon the lesser and minor rules. As time goes on and on, they commit expiations and grave offences, then heavy offences. Only the expulsion rules remain. Even when hundreds or thousands of monks guarding the four expulsion rules are still living, the practice is not said to have disappeared. But with the breach of morality or the end of life of the last monk, it has disappeared. This is called the disappearance of practice.

"The Scriptures" means the three Canons of the Buddha's teaching, the Pāḷi text together with its commentary. As long as that endures, so long the Scriptures are said to be complete. As time goes on and on, kings and princes become unrighteous; when those are unrighteous, the royal ministers and so on become unrighteous; thereupon the inhabitants of the country and provinces. Because of their unrighteousness, the rain god does not rain properly; thereupon the crops do not succeed. When those do not succeed, the donors of requisites are unable to give requisites to the community of monks; the monks, being wearied by requisites, are unable to support their pupils. As time goes on and on, the Scriptures decline; they are unable to retain them by way of meaning, and retain them only by way of the Pāḷi text. Then, as time goes on and on, they are unable to retain even the Pāḷi text in its entirety; first the Canon of the Higher Teaching declines. As it declines, it declines beginning from the top. For first of all the great treatise of Conditional Relations declines; when that has declined, the Book of Pairs, the Points of Controversy, the Designation of Human Types, the Treatise on Elements, the Analysis, and the Compendium of Mental States.

Thus, when the Canon of the Higher Teaching has declined, beginning from the top, the Canon of Discourses declines. For first the Aṅguttara Nikāya declines; in that too, first the Book of Elevens, then the Book of Tens, etc. then the Book of Ones. Thus, when the Aṅguttara has declined, beginning from the top, the Saṃyutta Nikāya declines. For first the Great Chapter declines, then the Chapter on the Six Sense Bases, the Chapter on the Aggregates, the Chapter on Causality, and the Chapter with Verses. Thus, when the Saṃyutta Nikāya has declined, beginning from the top, the Majjhima Nikāya declines. For first the Later Fifty declines, then the Middle Fifty, then the Root Fifty. Thus, when the Majjhima Nikāya has declined, beginning from the top, the Dīgha Nikāya declines. For first the Pāthika Chapter declines, then the Great Chapter, then the Morality Aggregate Chapter. Thus, when the Dīgha Nikāya has declined, the Canon of Discourses is said to have declined. They retain only the Jātaka

together with the Canon of Monastic Discipline. Only those with a sense of shame retain the Canon of Monastic Discipline, but those desirous of gain, thinking "Even when the discourses are spoken, there are none who observe them," retain only the Jātaka. As time goes on and on, they are unable to retain even the Jātaka. Then, first the Vessantara Jātaka declines for them; then in reverse order the Puṇṇaka Jātaka, the Mahānārada Jātaka; and at the end the Apanṇaka Jātaka declines. Thus, when the Jātaka has declined, they retain only the Canon of Monastic Discipline.

As time goes on and on, even the Canon of monastic discipline declines beginning from the top. For first the Supplement declines, then the Chapters, the Nuns' Analysis, the Great Analysis - thus in order they retain only the Observance Chapter. Even then the Scriptures have not disappeared. But as long as even a four-line verse continues among human beings, so long the Scriptures have not disappeared. When a faithful and devoted king, having had a bag containing a thousand pieces of gold coins placed in a golden casket on an elephant's back, having had a drum circulated in the city saying "Let whoever knows a four-line verse spoken by the Buddhas take this thousand," not finding anyone to take it, thinking "When it is circulated once, there are indeed those who hear and those who do not hear," having had it circulated up to the third time, not finding anyone to take it, the king's men bring that bag containing a thousand pieces of gold coins back into the royal palace, then the Scriptures are called disappeared. This is the disappearance of the Scriptures.

As time goes on and on, the taking up of the robe, the taking up of the bowl, the bending and stretching, the looking ahead and looking aside are not inspiring. Like Jain ascetics with a gourd bowl, monks, having put the bowl under the upper arm, having taken it, go about; even to this extent the outward sign has not disappeared. But as time goes on and on, having brought it down from the upper arm, having hung it by the hand or by a string, they go about; and not making the robe suitable for dyeing, having made it the colour of camel bone, they go about. As time goes on and on, there is neither dyeing nor cutting of the fringe nor piercing of the waist-band; having done merely the allowable mark, they use it. Again, having pierced the waist-band, they do not make the allowable mark. Then, not doing either, having cut off the fringe, they go about like wandering ascetics. As time goes on and on, thinking "What use is this to us?" they tie a small piece of orange cloth on the hand or on the neck, or they fasten it in the hair, or maintaining a wife, having ploughed and sown, having earned a livelihood, they go about. Then, when giving an offering, they give to them with reference to the Community. With reference to this, it was said by the Blessed One - "In the future period of time, Ānanda, there will be those of mere clan-name, wearing the orange robe around their necks, immoral, of bad character. They will give gifts with reference to the Community among those immoral ones. Even then, Ānanda, I say that an offering given to the Community is incalculable, immeasurable." Then as time goes on, while doing various kinds of work, thinking "This is an obsession, what use is this to us?" having cut off the piece of orange cloth, they throw it in the forest. At this time the outward sign is called disappeared. It is said that from the time of Kassapa, the One of Ten Powers, the practice and custom of the Greeks wearing white cloth arose. This is the disappearance of the outward sign.

But the disappearance of the relics should be understood thus -there are three final extinguishments: the final extinguishment of the mental defilements - the final extinguishment of the aggregates, and the final extinguishment of the relics. Therein, the final extinguishment of the mental defilements took place at the seat of enlightenment, the final extinguishment of the aggregates at Kusinārā, the final extinguishment of the relics will take place in the future. How? Then, not receiving honour and respect here and there, the relics, by the power of the Buddhas' determination, go to a place where honour and respect are received. As time goes on and on, there is no honour and respect in all places. For at the time of the decline of the Dispensation, all the relics in this island of Tambapaṇṇi, having assembled together, will go to the Mahācetiya, from there to the Rājāyatana Shrine on the island of Nāgadīpa, from there to the seat of enlightenment. From the abode of the serpents too, from the world of the gods too, from the Brahma world too, the relics will go to the great seat of enlightenment itself. Not even a relic the size of a mustard seed will perish in the interim. All the relics, having assembled together at the great terrace of enlightenment, having taken the form of the Buddha, display at the terrace of enlightenment the splendour of the Buddha's body seated cross-legged. The thirty-two marks of a great man, the eighty minor features, and the halo of a fathom - all is completely perfect. Then, as on the day of the Twin Miracle, having performed a wonder, they display it. At that time there is no being in human form gone there, but in the ten-thousandfold world-circle, all the deities, having assembled together, lament saying "Today the One of Ten Powers attains final Nibbāna; from now on there will be darkness." Then, the heat element having arisen from the relic body, brings that body to the state of being beyond designation. The flame arisen from the relic body will rise up as far as the Brahma world; even when there remains a relic the size of a mustard seed, it will become one mass of flame. When the relics have reached exhaustion, it will be cut off. Having thus shown such great power, the relics disappear. Then the assembled hosts of gods, as on the day of the Buddhas' final Nibbāna, having made an offering with divine fragrances, garlands, musical instruments and so on, having circumambulated three times, having paid homage, having said "May we be able to see the Buddha arising in the future, Blessed One," they go each to their own places. This is the disappearance of the relics.

The disappearance of the Scriptures is indeed the root of this fivefold disappearance. For when the Scriptures have disappeared, practice disappears; when the Scriptures stand, practice is established. For that very reason, on this island, during the great fear of Caṇḍāla Tissa, Sakka, the king of gods, having constructed a great raft, had the monks informed: "There will be great danger, the rain god will not rain properly, the monks, becoming wearied by requisites, will not be able to maintain the Scriptures. It is fitting to go to the far shore and protect your lives with the venerable ones. Board this great raft and go, venerable sirs. For those for whom there is no place to sit here, let them place their chests upon even a piece of wood and go; there will be no danger for any of them." Then, having reached the seashore, sixty monks, having made an agreement - "There is no business of going here for us; remaining right here, we shall protect the three Canons" - having turned back from there, having gone to the southern Malaya country, they dwelt earning their livelihood by tubers, roots, and leaves. When the body was able to bear it, having sat down, they recited; when it was unable, having pushed aside sand and surrounded themselves,

having placed their heads in one place, they contemplated the Scriptures. In this manner, for twelve years, having made the three Canons together with the commentary complete, they maintained them.

When the fear had subsided, seven hundred monks, without destroying even a single syllable or a single phrase of the three Canons together with the commentary at the place where they had gone, having come to this very island, entered the Maṇḍalārāma monastery in the Kallagāma country. Having heard the news of the elders' arrival, the sixty monks who had remained behind on this island, having gone thinking "We shall see the elders," while checking the three Canons together with the elders, did not find even a single syllable or a single phrase that did not agree. At that place, this discussion arose among the elders: "Is the Scriptures indeed the root of the Dispensation, or is it practice?" The rag-robe-wearing elders said "Practice is the root," the speakers of the Teaching said "The Scriptures." Then the elders said to them: "We do not act on the mere word of either of you two groups of people; bring a discourse spoken by the Conqueror." It was not difficult to bring a discourse: "And if, Subhadda, these monks were to dwell rightly, the world would not be empty of Worthy Ones. The Teacher's instruction, great king, is rooted in practice, has practice as its essence. It stands when practice endures" - they brought this discourse. Having heard this discourse, the speakers of the Teaching brought this discourse for the purpose of establishing their own position:

"As long as the discourses stand, as long as the monastic discipline shines forth;

So long they will see the light, just as when the sun has risen.

"When the discourses are absent, and the monastic discipline is forgotten;
There will be darkness in the world, just as when the sun has set.

"When the discourses are guarded and existing, practice is guarded;
The wise one established in practice does not fall from freedom from bondage."

When this discourse was brought, the rag-robe-wearing elders were silent; only the word of the elders who were speakers of the Teaching prevailed. Just as among a hundred cows or a thousand cows, when there is no cow that maintains the lineage succession, that line, that succession is not continued, just so, even when a hundred or a thousand monks who have begun insight practice exist, when the Scriptures are absent, there is no such thing as penetration of the noble path. And just as when letters are placed on the surface of a rock for the purpose of knowing a treasure-pot, as long as the letters endure, so long the treasure-pot is not called lost. Just so, when the Scriptures endure, the Dispensation is not called disappeared.

Explanation of the Second Chapter on Heedlessness 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.

PDF Creation Date: 14 September 2026

HOW TO CITE

PaliVerse (2026). Commentaries. The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries. 4. The Collection of the Numerical Discourses - Commentaries. 01. Commentary on the Book of the Ones. 10. Commentary on the Second Chapter on Heedlessness and So Forth Retrieved from paliverse.org

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