

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

3. The Collection of the Connected Discourses -
Commentaries (3. Saṃyutta Nikāya - Aṭṭhakathā)

5. Commentary on the Great Book (5. Mahāvagga-aṭṭhakathā)

10. Connected Discourses on In-and-Out Breathing
(10. Ānāpānasamīyuttam)



PaliVerse

3. The Collection of the Connected Discourses - Commentaries

5. Commentary on the Great Book

10. Connected Discourses on In-and-Out Breathing

1. The Chapter on One Thing

1. Commentary on the One Thing Discourse

977. In the first discourse of the Ānāpāna Saṃyutta, "one thing" means one phenomenon. The remainder here, whatever should be said, all that has been stated in every way in the Visuddhimagga in the description of the meditation subject of mindfulness of breathing.

6. Commentary on the Ariṭṭha Discourse

982. In the sixth, "bhāvētha no" means "bhāvētha nu" (do you develop). "Sensual desire" means lust for the five strands of sensual pleasure. "Regarding internal-external phenomena" means regarding the twelve sense base phenomena that are internal and external. "Perception of aversion well removed" means perception associated with aversion thoroughly removed; the meaning is eradicated. By this he speaks of his own path of non-returning. Now, showing the insight of the path of arahantship, he said beginning with "Mindful, I shall breathe in."

7. Commentary on the Mahākappina Discourse

983. In the seventh, "movement or trembling" - by both, only movement is spoken of.

8. Commentary on the Lamp Simile Discourse

984. In the eighth, "neither the body becomes weary nor the eyes" - for in other meditation subjects, for one doing the work, the body also becomes weary and the eyes also suffer hardship. For in the element meditation subject, for one doing the work, the body becomes weary; it is as if one has been put into a machine and reached a state of being crushed. In the circular meditation object meditation subject, for one doing the work, the eyes tremble and become weary; they are as if having come out and reached a state of falling. But in this meditation subject, for one doing the work, neither does the body become weary nor do the eyes suffer hardship. Therefore he spoke thus.

Why was "with the complete transcendence of perceptions of material form" and so on said? Is the removal of the circular meditation object obtained in breathing? But the Elder Tipiṭaka Cūḷābhaya said: "Since the sign of breathing appears resembling the form of stars, a string of pearls, and so on, therefore the removal of the circular meditation object is obtained therein." The Elder Tipiṭaka Cūḷanāga said: "It is indeed not obtained." If it is not obtained, why was this classification beginning with noble supernormal power taken up? For the purpose of showing the benefits. For a monk

who aspires to either noble supernormal power, or the four fine-material-sphere meditative absorptions, or the four immaterial attainments, or the attainment of cessation, this concentration of mindfulness of breathing should be well attended to. Just as indeed, when a city is obtained, whatever goods produced in the four directions enter the city itself through the four gates, and the countryside is also obtained. This is indeed the benefit of the city itself. Thus this classification beginning with noble supernormal power is the benefit of the development of the concentration of mindfulness of breathing; when the concentration of mindfulness of breathing is developed in every way, all this is accomplished for the practitioner - thus it was said for the purpose of showing the benefits. In "and happiness" here, why was "he" not said? Because "monk" did not occur in this passage.

9. Commentary on the Vesālī Discourse

985. In the ninth, "at Vesālī" means in the city so named, in which conventional expression operates by virtue of the feminine gender. For that city is called Vesālī because it became extensive through the enlargement of the wall enclosure three times. And this city too should be understood as having reached fullness in every respect only when the Perfectly Enlightened One attained omniscience. Having thus shown the village as food resort, he states the dwelling place: "in the Great Wood in the Pinnacled Hall." Therein, the Great Wood is a naturally grown, unplanted, bounded, great forest. But in the vicinity of Kapilavatthu, the Great Wood, connected as one with the Himalayas, being without boundary, stood reaching the great ocean. This one is not like that; a bounded great forest is the Great Wood. But the Pinnacled Hall should be understood as the Perfumed Chamber of the Buddha, the Blessed One, made in a park built in dependence on the Great Wood, having a pinnacle building within, covered with a swan-and-quail covering, accomplished in every respect.

"Speaks in many ways about the talk on foulness" means he speaks a talk that produces disenchantment with the body, proceeding by way of showing the aspect of foulness, through many reasons. That is: There are in this body head hairs, body hairs, nails, teeth, etc. urine. What is meant? Monks, even searching in every way in this fathom-long carcass, no one sees any pearl or gem or lapis lazuli or aloe wood or sandalwood or saffron or camphor or perfumed powder and so on, not even the slightest state of purity; rather, one sees only impurity of various kinds such as head hairs and body hairs and so on, supremely foul-smelling, loathsome, ugly in appearance; therefore neither desire nor lust should be entertained here. Even those called head hairs, grown on the head, the highest part, they too are foul, impure, and repulsive. And their state of being foul, impure, and repulsive should be understood by five aspects: by colour, by shape, by odour, by dwelling place, and by location.

"Likewise for body hairs and so on too" - this is the summary here; the detail, however, should be understood in the manner stated in the Visuddhimagga. Thus the Blessed One speaks the talk on foulness in many ways, with a fivefold analysis in each and every portion.

"Praises foulness" means having laid down the matrix of foulness by way of the bloated and so on, analysing and describing it by way of the word-analysis, he praises foulness. "Praises the development of foulness" means that which is the meditation, the growth, the increase of consciousness that proceeds having taken the aspect of foulness in internal and external objects such as head hairs and so on or the bloated

and so on - showing the benefit of that development of foulness, he praises it, he extols its virtue. That is: "A monk devoted to the development of foulness, monks, regarding objects such as head hairs and so on or the bloated and so on, attains the first meditative absorption, which has five factors abandoned, is endowed with five factors, is threefold in goodness, and is accomplished in ten characteristics. He, in dependence on that casket of consciousness called the first meditative absorption, having developed insight, attains the highest good, arahantship."

"I wish, monks, to go into seclusion for a fortnight" means: I wish, monks, to go into seclusion for one fortnight, to hide away, to dwell being alone - this is the meaning. "I should not be approached by anyone except for one bringing almsfood" means whoever, without making contrived speech himself, having taken out almsfood prepared in faithful families for my benefit, offers it to me - setting aside that one monk who is the almsfood-bringer, I should not be approached by anyone else, whether by a monk or by one who leads the household life.

But why did he say thus? In the past, it is said, five hundred deer-hunters, having enclosed the forest with great stick-nets and so on, glad and delighted, all together, having earned their living for as long as life lasted by the action of killing deer and birds, arose in hell. They, having been tormented there, by some wholesome action done before, arose among human beings, and by the power of a good decisive support, all of them obtained the going forth and full ordination in the presence of the Blessed One. For them, from that root unwholesome action, successive volitions with unripened result created the opportunity for the cutting off of life by self-attack and by attack from others within that fortnight. The Blessed One saw that. And the result of action indeed cannot be prevented by anyone. And among those monks there were worldlings as well as stream-enterers, once-returners, non-returners, and ones who had eliminated the mental corruptions. Therein, those who had eliminated the mental corruptions were incapable of reconnection; the other noble disciples were of certain destination, heading for a fortunate world; but the destination of the worldlings was uncertain.

Then the Blessed One thought - "These, frightened by the fear of death through desire and lust for their individual existence, will not be able to purify their destination. Come, let me speak to them the talk on foulness for the abandoning of desire and lust. Having heard that, through the disappearance of desire and lust for their individual existence, having purified their destination, they will take conception in heaven. Thus their going forth in my presence will be fruitful." Thereupon, for their assistance, he spoke the talk on foulness with the meditation subject as the lead, not with the intention of praising and extolling death. And having spoken, this occurred to him - "If during this fortnight the monks see me, they will come and report 'Today one monk has died, today two... etc. today ten.' And this result of action cannot be prevented by me or by anyone else. Even having heard that, what shall I do? What use is it for me to hear of purposeless calamity and disaster? Come, let me go to a state of not seeing the monks." Therefore he spoke thus - "I wish, monks, to go into seclusion for a fortnight. I should not be approached by anyone except for one bringing almsfood."

Others, however, say - "He spoke thus and went into seclusion for the purpose of avoiding censure by others." Others, it is said, would blame the Blessed One - "This

one, claiming 'I am omniscient, the supreme wheel-turning monarch of the Good Teaching,' is not able to prevent even his own disciples from killing one another; what else will he be able to do?" Therein the wise would say - "The Blessed One, being engaged in seclusion, does not know of this incident; there is no one to report it to him either. If he knew, he would surely prevent it." But this is merely a wish; the first is indeed the reason here. "Nāssudhā": here "assudhā" is an indeclinable particle used merely as an expletive or in the sense of emphasis. The meaning is: no one at all approached the Blessed One.

"Anekākāravokāro" means that there is a constituent of being by many reasons such as colour, shape, and so on. "Anekākāravokiṇṇo" means it is said to be mixed in various ways. What is that? The pursuit of the development of foulness - that is the various constituent of being. "Dwelling engaged in the pursuit of the development of foulness" means they dwell properly engaged. "Being troubled" means they are afflicted and distressed by that body. "Being ashamed" means being embarrassed. "Being disgusted" means producing disgust. "Seek one who would take their life with a knife" means they seek a knife that takes away life. And not only did they, having sought a knife, deprive themselves of life by themselves, but they also approached Migalaṇḍika the fake ascetic and said: "It would be good, friend, if you would deprive us of life." And herein, the noble ones neither committed the killing of living beings, nor instigated it, nor approved of it. But the worldlings did all of it.

"Having emerged from seclusion" means having known that those five hundred monks had reached the destruction of life, he emerged from that solitude. Though knowing, as if not knowing, he addressed the Venerable Ānanda for the purpose of bringing up the discussion. "Why indeed, Ānanda, does the Community of monks seem to have become diminished?" means: Ānanda, formerly many monks used to come together for attendance, take up the recitation and interrogation, rehearse, and the monastery appeared as if a single blaze. But now, by the elapse of about a fortnight, the Community of monks seems to have become diminished - thin, feeble, few, sparse. What indeed is the reason? Have the monks departed to the various directions?

Then the Venerable Ānanda, not considering their reaching the dissolution of life through the result of action, but considering it as a condition of the pursuit of the foulness meditation subject, having said beginning with "Because indeed, venerable sir, the Blessed One," and requesting another meditation subject for the monks' attainment of arahantship, said beginning with "It would be good, venerable sir, the Blessed One." Its meaning is - It would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One would explain another reason by which the community of monks might become established in arahantship. Just as there are landing places for descending into the great ocean, so too there are many other meditation subjects for descending into Nibbāna - varieties of the ten recollections, ten circular meditation objects, defining of the four elements, divine abidings, and mindfulness of breathing; among those, let the Blessed One, having consoled the monks, explain a certain meditation subject - this is the intention.

Then the Blessed One, wishing to do so, dismissing the elder monk, said beginning with "Then, Ānanda." Therein, "dwelling in dependence on Vesālī" means in dependence on Vesālī, as many as dwell all around, even within a league or half a

yojana - assemble all of them. This is the meaning. "Having assembled all in the assembly hall" means having gone himself to the places appropriate for him to go, having sent young monks elsewhere, in just a moment, having gathered without remainder all the monks in the assembly hall. "Now let the Blessed One do as he thinks fit, venerable sir" - here this is the intention: The Blessed One, the community of monks has assembled; this is the time to give a talk on the Teaching to the monks, to give instruction; now whatever you know to be the time for, that should be done.

Then the Blessed One addressed the monks: "This too, monks." And having addressed them, explaining another method different from the foulness meditation subject previously explained for the monks' attainment of arahantship, he said beginning with "the concentration of mindfulness of breathing." Therein, "the concentration of mindfulness of breathing" means concentration associated with mindfulness that comprehends the in-breathing and out-breathing, or concentration in mindfulness of breathing - the concentration of mindfulness of breathing. "Developed" means produced or cultivated. "Cultivated" means done again and again. "Peaceful and sublime" means peaceful and indeed sublime. In both places, the restriction by the word "indeed" should be understood. What is meant? For this, unlike the foulness meditation subject which is peaceful and sublime only by way of penetration, but because of having a gross object and because of having a repulsive object is neither peaceful nor sublime by way of object - it is not thus by any method unpeaceful or not sublime; rather, it is peaceful, appeased, and quenched by the peacefulness of the object too, and also by the peacefulness of the factors reckoned as penetration; it is sublime and never causing satiety by the sublimity of the object, and also by the sublimity of the factors. Therefore it was said "peaceful and sublime."

As for "an unadulterated pleasant dwelling" - here, "there is no sprinkling for it" means unadulterated, unsprinkled, uninterrupted, separate, exceptional; there is no peacefulness here through preliminary work or through access; from the initial attentiveness onwards, by its very own intrinsic nature it is peaceful and sublime - this is the meaning. Some say "unadulterated" means unsprinkled, nourishing, sweet by its very own intrinsic nature. Thus this should be understood as unadulterated and as a pleasant dwelling because at each and every moment of attainment it leads to the acquisition of bodily and mental happiness.

"Whatever have arisen" means those not yet suppressed. "Evil" means inferior. "Unwholesome mental states" means mental states arisen from lack of skilfulness. "Causes to disappear with reason and cause" means causes to disappear in a moment, suppresses. "Appeases" means thoroughly calms; because of being conducive to penetration, having gradually reached the growth of the noble path, it completely eradicates; what is meant is "tranquillises." "In the last month of summer" means in the month of Āsāḷha. "The dust and dirt that has been raised up" means the dust and grit that, from the earth dried by wind and sun for eight months and broken up by the striking of feet of cows, buffaloes, and so on, has been struck upward, raised up, and arisen into the sky. "A great untimely rain cloud" means a rain cloud that, having covered the entire sky, has arisen in the bright fortnight of Āsāḷha, raining for the whole fortnight. For because it has arisen when the rainy season has not yet arrived, it is called an "untimely rain cloud" - this is what is intended here.

"Causes to disappear with reason and cause, appeases" means in a moment leads to disappearance, causes to settle down on the earth. "Just so" - this is the illustration by simile. What follows is just the method already stated.

10. Commentary on the Kimila Discourse

986. In the tenth, "at Kimilā" means in the city so named. "He said this" means the Elder, it is said, thought - "This teaching has not been given according to the sequence of connection; I will bring it to its proper sequence of connection" - connecting the sequence of the teaching, he said this. "A certain body" means among the bodies beginning with earth, I say a certain one, I say the air body - this is the meaning. Or else, the eye sense base, etc. edible food - the twenty-five material portions are called the material body. Among these, since breathing is included in the touch sense base, it is a certain body; for this reason too he said thus. "Therefore" means since one observes the air body, a certain one among the four bodies, or breathing, a certain one among the twenty-five portions in the material body, therefore "observing the body in the body" - this is the meaning. Thus the meaning should be understood everywhere. "A certain feeling" means a certain one among the three feelings; this was said with reference to pleasant feeling.

"Thorough attention" means the good attention arisen by way of experiencing joy and so on. But is attention pleasant feeling? It is not; but this is a heading of the Teaching. For just as in "devoted to the pursuit of developing the perception of impermanence," here wisdom is spoken of by the name of perception, so too here it should be understood that the feeling of meditative absorption is spoken of by the name of attention. For in this set of four, in the first term feeling is spoken of under the heading of joy; in the second term "happiness" is spoken of in its own form. In the pair of terms on mental activity, from the statement "perception and feeling are mental, these mental states are connected to consciousness; they are mental activities," and from the statement "except for applied and sustained thought, all mental states associated with consciousness are included in mental activity," feeling is spoken of by the name of mental activity. Having collected all that under the name of attention, here he said "thorough attention."

Even this being so, since this feeling does not become the object, therefore the observation of feeling is not fitting. No, it is not unfitting, for in the Great Establishment of Mindfulness and so on too, having made this or that basis of pleasure and so on the object, feeling feels; but with reference to the occurrence of feeling, "I feel" is merely a conventional expression; with reference to that, "feeling a pleasant feeling, 'I feel a pleasant feeling'" and so on was said. Furthermore, the resolution of this has been stated in the explanation of the meaning of "experiencing joy" and so on. For this has been said in the Visuddhimagga -

"In two ways joy is experienced - by way of object and by way of non-delusion. How is joy experienced by way of object? One attains the two meditative absorptions with rapture; at the moment of that attainment, through the attainment of meditative absorption, joy is experienced by way of object, because the object is experienced. How is joy experienced by way of non-delusion? Having attained the two meditative absorptions with rapture and having emerged, one meditates on the joy associated with meditative absorption in terms of elimination and passing away; at the moment

of insight for that one, through the penetration of characteristics, joy is experienced by way of non-delusion. For this has been said in the Paṭisambhidā: 'For one who understands unified focus of mind and non-distraction by means of long in-breath, mindfulness is established; by that mindfulness, by that knowledge, that joy is experienced.' By this very method, the remaining terms too should be understood in meaning."

Thus, just as joy, happiness, and mental activities are experienced by way of object through the attainment of meditative absorption, so too by this attainment of attention reckoned as feeling associated with meditative absorption, feeling is experienced by way of object. Therefore this is well said: "At that time a monk dwells observing feelings in feelings."

"I do not, Ānanda, for one who is unmindful and not fully aware" - here this is the intention: Since a monk proceeding by the method of "experiencing the mind, I shall breathe in" and so on, although he makes the sign of the in-breath and out-breath the object, yet because that consciousness proceeds having established mindfulness and full awareness upon the object, he is indeed called one observing mind in mind. For there is no development of concentration through mindfulness of breathing for one who is unmindful and not fully aware; therefore, by way of the object, by means of the mind being experienced, "at that time a monk dwells observing mind in mind."

"He, that abandoning of covetousness and displeasure, having seen that with wisdom, becomes one who thoroughly looks on with equanimity" - here by covetousness the mental hindrance of sensual desire itself is shown, and by way of displeasure the mental hindrance of anger is shown. For this set of four is spoken of by means of insight alone, and the observation of mental phenomena is fivefold by way of the section on mental hindrances and so on; the section on mental hindrances is the beginning of that, and of that too this pair of mental hindrances is the beginning. Thus, to show the beginning of the observation of mental phenomena, he said "covetousness and displeasure." "Abandoning" means the knowledge that effects abandoning is intended, thus: through the observation of impermanence one abandons the perception of permanence. "Having seen that with wisdom" means that knowledge of abandoning reckoned as the knowledge of impermanence, dispassion, cessation, and relinquishment, by a subsequent insight wisdom, and that too by a subsequent one - thus it shows the succession of insight. "Becomes one who looks on with equanimity" means one looks on with equanimity at what has entered the path, and one looks on with equanimity at the establishing of oneness - thus one looks on with equanimity in two ways. Therein, there is looking on with equanimity at co-arisen states and also looking on with equanimity at the object. Here, looking on with equanimity at the object is intended. "Therefore, Ānanda" means since one proceeding by the method of "observing impermanence, I shall breathe in" and so on, not only the mental phenomena beginning with mental hindrances, but having seen with wisdom even the knowledge of abandoning of the mental phenomena spoken of under the heading of covetousness and displeasure, becomes one who looks on with equanimity; therefore it should be understood that "at that time a monk dwells observing mental phenomena in mental phenomena."

"Just so" - here the six sense bases should be seen as like the crossroads. The mental defilements in the six sense bases are like the heap of dust therein. The four

establishments of mindfulness occurring in the four objects are like the carts and chariots coming from the four directions. The destruction of evil unwholesome mental states by the observation of the body and so on should be understood as like the crushing of the heap of dust by a single cart or chariot.

The Chapter on One Thing is the first.

2. The Second Chapter

1-2. Commentary on the Icchānaṅgala Discourse and Others

987-988. In the first discourse of the Second Chapter, regarding "you should answer thus" - why does he tell of his own abiding attainment? For the purpose of freeing from censure. For if they were to say "we do not know," then the sectarians would impute censure upon them, saying "You do not even know 'Our Teacher dwelt for three months in such and such an attainment'; then why do you dwell attending upon him?" - for the purpose of freeing them from that, he said thus.

Then why was the particle "eva-vā" stated as elsewhere "mindful he breathes in, or breathing in long" - but not stated thus here? Because of being exclusively peaceful. For in others, either the in-breath is obvious or the out-breath, but for the Blessed One both of these are obvious indeed, due to the establishment of mindfulness being constantly present - because of being exclusively peaceful, it was not stated. Then, without saying "I train," why was only this much said, "I breathe in"? Because of the absence of anything to be trained in. For the seven trainees are called trainees because of the existence of what is to be trained in; those who have eliminated the mental corruptions are called ones beyond training because of the absence of what is to be trained in; the Truth-finders are ones for whom there is nothing to be trained in, ones beyond training - there is no function of training for them - thus because of the absence of what is to be trained in, it was not stated. The second is clear in itself.

3-10. Commentary on the First Ānanda Discourse and Others

989-996. In the third, "investigates" means investigates by way of impermanence and so on. The other pair of terms is a synonym for this very same thing. "Spiritual" means free from mental defilements. Through the cessation of bodily and mental disturbance, both the body and the mind become calm. "Becomes concentrated" means is rightly established; it becomes as if absorption consciousness. "Becomes one who looks on with equanimity" means becomes one who looks on with equanimity through conascent equanimity.

Thus, for a monk who discerns the body in fourteen ways, mindfulness regarding that body is the enlightenment factor of mindfulness; the knowledge associated with that mindfulness is the enlightenment factor of investigation of phenomena; the bodily and mental energy associated with that itself is the enlightenment factor of energy; rapture, tranquillity, and unified focus of mind are the enlightenment factors of rapture, tranquillity, and concentration; the neutral mode termed as neither falling back nor overstepping these six factors of enlightenment is the enlightenment factor of equanimity. For just as when horses are proceeding evenly, there is no pricking by the charioteer thinking "this one is lagging behind," or pulling back thinking "this one is running ahead," but there is only the mode of stability for one thus observing; just

so, the neutral mode termed as neither falling back nor overstepping these six factors of enlightenment is called the enlightenment factor of equanimity. By this much, what has been spoken of? What have been spoken of are the insight factors of enlightenment, lasting one mind-moment, with different functions and characteristics.

"Based upon seclusion" and so on are of already stated meaning. Here, however, the sixteen-fold mindfulness of breathing has been spoken of as combined; the establishments of mindfulness rooted in breathing are preliminary; the mindfulness of breathing that is their root is preliminary. The establishments of mindfulness rooted in the factors of enlightenment are preliminary; those factors of enlightenment too are only preliminary. But the factors of enlightenment that fulfil true knowledge and liberation are produced as supramundane; true knowledge and liberation are associated with noble fruition. Or true knowledge is associated with the fourth path, and liberation is associated with fruition. The fourth, fifth, and sixth are also of the same division as this. The remainder is clear everywhere.

The commentary on the Ānāpāna Saṃyutta is finished.



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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