

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya -
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12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas
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11. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Enlightened One Nārada
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas

11. Explanation on the Lineage of the Buddha Nārada

Now, when the Buddha Paduma had attained final Nibbāna and his Dispensation had disappeared, human beings with a lifespan of a hundred thousand years, gradually declining, had a lifespan of ten years. Again, having increased, having become those of incalculable lifespan, declining, they had a lifespan of ninety thousand years. Then a Teacher named Nārada, the bearer of the ten powers, possessor of the threefold true knowledge, confident with the four grounds of self-confidence, confident in liberation, the highest of men and beings, arose in the world. He, having fulfilled the perfections for four incalculable periods and a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, having been reborn in the Tusita realm, having passed away from there, took conception in the womb of a queen named Anomā, who was incomparable, the queen-consort in the family of a king named Sudeva, a Vāsudeva who had conquered by his own energy, in the city named Dhaññavatī. He, after the elapse of ten months, came forth from the mother's womb in the Dhanañjaya Park. On the name-giving day, when the naming was being done, ornaments suitable for the enjoyment of human beings, befitting them, fell from the sky by means of wishing trees and so on over the entire Indian subcontinent. Because he gave ornaments befitting men, they gave him the name "Nārada."

He dwelt in the midst of the house for nine thousand years. Vijita, Vijitāvī, and Vijitābhirāma - there were three mansions suitable for the three seasons. They made for the prince Nārada a maiden of the warrior caste named Vijitasenā, exceedingly fortunate, accomplished in family, morality, conduct, and beauty, agreeable to his mind, as queen-consort. Beginning with her, there were a hundred thousand women exceeding by twenty thousand. When a son named Nanduttara, who brought joy to all the world, was born to Queen Vijitasenā, he, having seen the four signs, surrounded by a great fourfold army, wearing various dispassion-coloured excellent fine garments, with pearl necklaces and jewelled earrings put on, wearing excellent bracelets, a crown, and bangles, adorned with supremely fragrant flowers, went on foot to the park, having taken off all ornaments, having given them into the hands of the storekeeper, by himself, having cut off his hair-crown, supremely beautiful and decorated with precious jewels, with a sword exceedingly sharp, resembling a spotless dark blue water-lily petal, he threw it into the sky. Sakka, the king of gods, having received it with a golden casket, having led it to the realm of the Thirty-three, made a shrine of the seven precious things, three yojanas in height, on the summit of Sineru.

The Great Man, however, having put on the ochre robes given by the gods, went forth right there in the park. And a hundred thousand men went forth following him. He, having practised the practice of striving right there for seven days, on the full moon

day of Vesākha, having eaten the milk-rice given by the queen-consort Vijitasenā, having spent the day residence right there in the park, having taken eight handfuls of grass given by the park-keeper Sudassana, having circumambulated the great Soṇa Bodhi tree, having spread a grass mat fifty-eight cubits wide, having sat down, having scattered the forces of Māra, having produced the three true knowledges in the three watches, having penetrated the knowledge of omniscience - "Through the round of many births, etc. it has reached the elimination of cravings" - having uttered an inspired utterance, having spent seven weeks, being requested by Brahmā, having given his acknowledgment, surrounded by a hundred thousand monks who had gone forth together with him, he set in motion the wheel of the Teaching there in the Dhanañjaya Park. Then there was the full realisation of the teaching for a hundred thousand koṭis. Therefore it was said -

1. After Paduma, the Perfectly Enlightened One, the best of bipeds;
Nārada by name, matchless, without equal.
2. That Buddha, the eldest beloved son of a wheel-turning monarch,
Adorned with garlands and ornaments, approached the pleasure grove.
3. There was a tree of great fame, handsome, lofty, pure;
Having reached it, he sat down close, beneath the great Soṇa tree.
4. There arose the excellent knowledge, infinite, like a diamond;
With that he discriminated the activities, upturning and overturning.
5. There all mental defilements, entirely he swept away;
He attained consummate enlightenment, and the fourteen Buddha-knowledges.
6. Having attained the highest enlightenment, he set in motion the wheel of the Teaching;
There was the first full realisation for a hundred thousand koṭis."

1-6. Therein, "of a wheel-turning monarch" means of a wheel-turning king. "Eldest" means firstborn. "Beloved legitimate son" means a beloved, dear, legitimate son; a son who is beloved, taken to the breast and fondled - he is called "beloved legitimate son." "Adorned with garlands and ornaments" means adorned with strings of pearls, necklaces, armlets, bracelets, crowns, earrings, and garlands. "To the pleasure grove" means he went to a park named Dhanañjaya pleasure grove outside the city.

"There was a tree" means in that pleasure grove there was, it is said, a tree named Rattasoṇa. It is said that it was ninety cubits in height, with an evenly rounded trunk, endowed with various kinds of spreading branches, with dark, thick, and broad foliage, giving dense shade, free from the wandering of various flocks of birds because of being inhabited by a deity, being an ornament on the surface of the earth, as if ruling over the kingdom of trees, supremely delightful to behold, with all its branches fully adorned with red flowers, and being a tonic for the eyes of gods and humans. "Of great fame" means of extensive fame; the meaning is renowned throughout the entire world, well-known everywhere through his own achievement, celebrated. Some read "there was a tree, vast." "Lofty" means great; the meaning is

like the Pāricchattaka tree of the gods. "Having reached it" means having reached, having arrived at, having approached that Soṇa tree - this is the meaning. "Beneath" means beneath that tree.

"The excellent knowledge arose" means the excellent knowledge arose. "Infinite" means immeasurable, limitless. "Like a thunderbolt" means similar to a thunderbolt, sharp; this is a designation for the insight knowledge of the observation of impermanence and so on. "With that he discriminated the activities" means with that insight knowledge he discriminated the activities beginning with materiality.

"Upturning and overturning" means he discriminated the rise and fall of activities - this is the meaning. Therefore, having contemplated the mode of dependent conditions, having risen from the fourth meditative absorption of breathing, having focused upon the five aggregates, having seen fifty characteristics by way of rise and fall, having developed insight up to change-of-lineage knowledge, he obtained all the virtues of a Buddha through the successive noble paths - this is the meaning.

"There" means at the Soṇa tree. "All defilements" means all the mental defilements; it is stated having made a change of gender. Some read "there, by all mental defilements." "Entirely" means without remainder. "Swept away" means he swept away all mental defilements by the flood of the path and the flood of the mental defilements; the meaning is he brought them to destruction. "Enlightenment" means the knowledge of the path of arahantship. "And the fourteen Buddha-knowledges" means the fourteen Buddha-knowledges. Which are those? The eight path and fruition knowledges, and the six kinds of knowledge not shared with others - thus these are the fourteen Buddha-knowledges by name. The word "and" has the purpose of combining; by that, he also attained the other four analytical knowledges, the four grounds of self-confidence knowledges, the four knowledges that distinguish the modes of generation, the five knowledges that distinguish the destinations, the ten power knowledges, and all the virtues of a Buddha - this is the meaning.

Thus, having attained the state of a Buddha, having consented to Brahmā's request, having placed before him a hundred thousand monks who had gone forth together with him in the Dhanañjaya pleasure grove, he set in motion the wheel of the Teaching. Then the first full realisation was of a hundred thousand ten million. At that time, it is said, in the city of Mahādoṇa, a king of serpents named Doṇa dwelt on the bank of the Ganges, of great supernormal power, of great might, honoured, respected, revered, and venerated by a great multitude. In whatever region the people dwelling in the countryside did not make oblations to him, he destroyed their region by drought, or by excessive rain, or by a shower of hail.

Then the Teacher Nārada, the Seer of the Shore, having seen the decisive support for the taming of many living beings through the king of serpents Doṇa, surrounded by a great community of monks, went to the dwelling place of that king of serpents. Thereupon people, having seen him, said thus - "Blessed One, here dwells a king of serpents with terrible poison, of risen radiance, of great supernormal power, of great might; let him not vex you, you should not go." But the Blessed One went as if not hearing their words. And having gone, he sat down there on a flower-covering of supremely fragrant scent made in honour of that king of serpents. The great multitude, it is said, gathered together thinking "We shall see the battle of both the sage-king Nārada and the king of serpents Doṇa."

Then the serpent, having seen the sage-elephant seated thus, not enduring the contempt, having made his body visible, emitted smoke. The One of Ten Powers also emitted smoke. Again the king of serpents blazed up. The king of sages also blazed up. Then that king of serpents, his body exceedingly wearied by the masses of smoke issuing from the body of the One of Ten Powers, not enduring the suffering, released his poison, thinking "I shall kill him by the force of my poison." By the force of the poison, even the entire Indian subcontinent would have perished. But that poison was not able to cause even a single hair on the body of the One of Ten Powers to tremble. Then that king of serpents -looking about thinking "What indeed is the situation of the ascetic?" having seen the Blessed One, full like the sun and like the moon in the autumn season, shining with the six-coloured Buddha-rays, with the beauty of a serene countenance - "Alas! This ascetic is indeed of great supernormal power; but I, not knowing my own strength, have offended" - having thought thus, he sought shelter and went to the Blessed One himself as refuge. Then Nārada, the king of sages, having tamed that king of serpents, performed the Twin Miracle for the purpose of inspiring confidence in the minds of the great multitude that had assembled there. Then ninety thousand crores of living beings became established in arahantship. That was the second full realisation. Therefore it was said -

7. "Training the great Doṇa, the king of serpents, the great sage;
He performed a miracle then, showing to the world with its gods.
8. "Then for gods and humans, at that proclamation of the Dhamma;
Ninety thousand crores crossed beyond all doubt."

7-8. Therein, "he performed a miracle then" means he performed the Twin Miracle. This is the meaning. Or this itself is the reading. "Tadā devamanussā vā" is also a reading. Therein, "of gods and humans" is the nominative case used in the sense of the genitive. Therefore the meaning is "ninety thousand koṭis of gods and humans." "They crossed over" means they surpassed.

But when he exhorted his own son, Prince Nanduttara, then there was the third full realisation of eighty thousand koṭis. Therefore it was said -

- 9.** "At which time the great hero exhorted his own son;
For eighty thousand crores, there was the third full realisation."

But when in the city of Thullakoṭṭhita, Bhaddasāla and Vijitamitta, two brahmin companions, seeking the lake of the Deathless, saw the Perfectly Enlightened One Nārada, exceedingly self-possessed, seated in the assembly. They, having seen the thirty-two characteristics of a great man on the Blessed One's body - Having come to the conclusion "This one is the remover of the veil in the world, the Perfectly Enlightened One," with faith arisen in the Blessed One, together with their retinues, went forth in the presence of the Blessed One. When those, having gone forth, had attained arahantship, the Blessed One recited the Pātimokkha in the midst of a hundred thousand crores of monks. That was the first assembly. Therefore it was said -

- 10.** "There were three assemblies of the great sage Nārada;
The first meeting was of a hundred thousand koṭis."

At the time when Nārada, the Perfectly Enlightened One, at the gathering of relatives, beginning from his own aspiration, spoke the Buddha lineage, then there was the second assembly of ninety thousand koṭis of monks. Therefore it was said -

- 11.** "When the Buddha made known the Buddha's virtues, with their source;
Ninety thousand crores, spotless ones, met together then."

Therein, "spotless" (vimalā) means those whose stains have disappeared, meaning those who have eliminated the mental corruptions.

When, however, a king of serpents named Verocana, pleased at the taming of the great serpent king Doṇa, having created on the river Ganges a pavilion made of the seven precious things measuring three leagues, having caused the Blessed One together with his retinue to sit down there, together with his retinue, having invited the people of his own country for the purpose of seeing his place of giving, and having assembled serpent dancers and cymbal players wearing various costumes and ornaments, with great honour gave a great gift to the Blessed One together with his retinue. At the conclusion of the meal, the Blessed One gave the thanksgiving as if bringing down the great Ganges. Then, in the midst of eighty hundred thousand monks who, having heard the Teaching at the thanksgiving after the meal, having gained confidence, had gone forth by the "Come, monk" ordination, he recited the Pātimokkha. That was the third assembly. Therefore it was said -

- 12.** "When the noble Verocana gave a gift to the Teacher;
Then the sons of the Conqueror met together, eighty hundred thousand."

Therein, "eighty hundred thousand" means eighty of hundred thousands.

At that time our Bodhisatta, having gone forth in the going forth of sages, having built a hermitage on the slopes of the Himalayas, having become a master through practice in the five direct knowledges and the eight attainments, was dwelling there. Then, out of compassion for him, the Blessed One Nārada, surrounded by eighty koṭis of Worthy Ones and ten thousand lay followers established in the fruition of non-returning, went to that hermitage. The hermit, having seen the Blessed One, with a delighted heart, having built a hermitage for the purpose of dwelling for the Blessed One together with his retinue, having praised the Teacher's virtues for the entire night, having heard the Blessed One's talk on the Teaching, on the following day, having gone to Uttarakuru, having brought food from there, gave a great gift to the Buddha together with his retinue. Thus, having given a great gift for seven days, having brought priceless red sandalwood from the Himalayas, he venerated the Blessed One with that red sandalwood. Then the Possessor of the Ten Powers, surrounded by immortals and humans, having spoken a talk on the Teaching - "In the future he will become a Buddha named Gotama" - thus he declared. Therefore it was said -

- 13.** "I at that time, a matted-hair ascetic of fierce austerity;
One who moves through the sky I was, one who has gone beyond in the five direct knowledges.
- 14.** "Then I, the one equal to the matchless, together with the Community and attendants;

Having satisfied with food and drink, I honoured with sandalwood.

15. "He too, Nārada, the leader of the world, declared of me then;
After incalculable cosmic cycles, he will become a Buddha in the world.
16. "Having striven in striving, etc. we shall be face to face with him."
17. "Having heard his word too, having gladdened my mind even more;
I determined upon a fierce ascetic practice, for the fulfilment of the ten
perfections."

13-17. Therein, "then I" means "then too I." "Equal to the matchless" means the matchless are the past Buddhas; equal to, the same as, those matchless ones is "equal to the matchless." Or else, "asamā" means unrighteous, "samā" means not unrighteous, good persons; among those who are equal to the matchless and unrighteous, one who is equal - where "asamasamasamo" should be said, it should be understood that it is said having made an elision of one word "sama"; the meaning is "equal to the matchless, the unrighteous, and the righteous." "Together with attendants" means together with lay followers. "He too then, in the midst of humans and deities, declared of me, the One with Vision" is also a reading; its meaning is manifest. "Having gladdened the mind even more" means having further gladdened and pleased the heart. "I determined upon a fierce ascetic practice" means I determined upon a fierce ascetic practice. "I determined upon further ascetic practice, for the fulfilment of the ten perfections" is also a reading.

Now that Blessed One Nārada's city was named Dhaññavatī, his father was a warrior named Sudeva, his mother was named Anomā, Bhaddasāla and Jitamitta were the two chief disciples, his attendant was named Vāseṭṭha, Uttarā and Phaggunī were the two chief female disciples, the great soṇa tree was the Bodhi tree, and his body was eighty-eight cubits in height. His bodily radiance constantly pervades a yojana, the life span was ninety thousand years, his chief queen was named Vijitasenā, his son was named Prince Nanduttara, and Vijita, Vijitāvī, and Vijitābhirāma were the three mansions. He dwelt in the house for nine thousand years. He went forth in the Great Renunciation on foot only. Therefore it was said -

18. "The city was named Dhaññavatī, the warrior was named Sudeva;
The mother was named Anomā, of the great sage Nārada.
23. "Bhaddasāla and Jitamitta were the chief disciples;
Vāseṭṭha by name was the attendant of the great sage Nārada.
24. "Uttarā and Phaggunī were the chief female disciples;
The enlightenment tree of that Blessed One is called the Great Soṇa.
26. "Eighty-eight ratanas, very high, the great sage;
Resembling the radiance of gold, the ten-thousand world-system shines
brightly.
27. "The halo from his body radiates in every direction;
Continuously, by day and night, it pervades a yojana always.

28. "No people at that time, within a yojana all around;
Light torches or lamps, covered by the Buddha's rays.
29. "For ninety thousand years, life span exists for that long;
Remaining for that long, he helped many people to cross.
30. "Just as the sky appears beautiful, variegated with stars;
So too his Dispensation shines with Worthy Ones.
31. "For the crossing over of the stream of wandering in the round of rebirths, for
the remaining practitioners;
Having made firm the bridge of the Dhamma, he, the lord of men, attained
final Nibbāna.
32. "That Buddha too, equal to the matchless, those too who had eliminated the
mental corruptions, of incomparable radiance;
All that has disappeared, are not all activities empty?"

18-32. Therein, "resembling a golden festoon" means having the splendour of form similar to a festoon made of gold decorated with various jewels. "The ten-thousand world-system shines brightly" means by his radiance even the ten-thousand world-system shines brightly, is resplendent - this is the meaning. Making known that very meaning, the Blessed One said "The halo from his body radiates in every direction." Therein, "the halo from the body" means like a fathom-radiance, thus a fathom-radiance; the meaning is like the fathom-radiance of our Blessed One.

In "none whatsoever," the syllable "na" has the meaning of negation; its connection with the word "ujjāḷenti" should be seen. "Ukkā" means a torch on a stick. No people whatsoever light torches or lamps. If one asks why? Because of being illuminated by the radiance of the Buddha's body. "Buddharaṃsīhi" means by the Buddha's rays. "Otthaṭṭhā" means covered.

"Uḷūhi" means by stars; just as the expanse of the sky appears beautiful, variegated with stars, so too his Dispensation appears beautiful, variegated with Worthy Ones - this is the meaning. "For the crossing over of the stream of the round of rebirths" means for the purpose of crossing over the ocean of the round of rebirths. "The remaining practitioners" means, setting aside the Worthy Ones, the remaining persons in training together with virtuous worldlings - this is the meaning. "The bridge of the Dhamma" means the bridge of the path; having established the bridge of the Dhamma to help the remaining persons cross over from the round of rebirths, having accomplished all tasks, he attained final Nibbāna - this is the meaning. The remainder, since it has been stated below, is clear everywhere.

The explanation on the Lineage of the Buddha Nārada is completed.

The ninth lineage of the Buddha is concluded.



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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