

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 -
Aṭṭhakathā)

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas
(12. Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā)

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddha Padumuttara
(12. Padumuttarabuddhavaṃsavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas

12. Explanation of the Chronicle of the Buddha Padumuttara

The Dispensation of the Buddha Nārada, having continued for ninety thousand years, disappeared. And that cosmic cycle was destroyed. Thereafter, for an incalculable number of cosmic cycles, Buddhas did not arise in the world. It was devoid of a Buddha, bereft of the light of a Buddha. Then, when an incalculable number of cosmic cycles had passed, at the summit of a hundred thousand cosmic cycles from now, in one cosmic cycle, one Buddha named Padumuttara - conqueror of Māra, one who had laid down the burden, whose core was like Meru, free from the round of rebirths, whose core was beings' welfare, above all the world - arose in the world. He too, having fulfilled the perfections, having been reborn in the Tusita city, having passed away from there, took conception in the womb of Queen Sujātā, born in a distinguished family, the chief queen of a king named Ānanda, who brought joy to all people, in the city of Hamsavatī. She, with protection made by the deities, after the elapse of ten months, gave birth to Prince Padumuttara in the Hamsavatī pleasure grove. At his conception and birth there were wonders of the kind stated below.

At his birth, it is said, a rain of lotuses fell. Therefore, on his name-giving day, the relatives gave him the name "Prince Padumuttara." He dwelt in the house for ten thousand years. And he had three mansions named Naravāhana, Yasavāhana, and Vasavattī, suitable for the three seasons. A hundred and twenty thousand women headed by Queen Vasudattā were in attendance. When a son named Prince Uttara, unsurpassed in all virtues, was born to Queen Vasudattā, having seen the four signs - He thought "I shall go forth in the great renunciation." At the mere thought of his, the mansion named Vasavattī, like a potter's wheel, rose up into the sky, and like a celestial mansion, like a full moon, having gone through the expanse of the sky, centring upon the Bodhi tree, like the mansion that came in the commentary on the chronicle of the Buddha Sobhita, descended to the ground.

The Great Man, it is said, having descended from that mansion, having put on the ochre robes that were the symbol of arahantship, given by the gods, went forth right there. The mansion, however, having come back, stood in its own place. In the assembly that accompanied the Great Being, setting aside the women, all went forth. The Great Man, together with them, having practised the practice of striving for seven days, on the full moon day of Vesākha, in the town of Ujjenī, having eaten the milk-rice given by the daughter of the millionaire Rucānanda, having spent the day residence in a sal grove, in the evening time, having taken eight handfuls of grass given by a naked ascetic named Sumittā, having approached the Salala Bodhi tree, having circumambulated it, having spread a grass mat thirty-eight cubits wide, having folded his legs crosswise, having determined the fourfold energy, having scattered the forces of Māra together with Māra, in the first watch having recollected past lives, in the second watch having purified the divine eye, in the third watch 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, having penetrated all the virtues of a Buddha through the noble path, the habitual practice of all Buddhas, "Through the round of many births, etc. it has reached the elimination of cravings" - he uttered an inspired utterance. At that time, it is said, a rain of lotuses fell, as if adorning the entire interior of the ten-thousand world-circles. Therefore it was said -

1. "After Nārada, the Perfectly Enlightened One, the best of bipeds;
The Conqueror named Padumuttara, imperturbable, like the ocean.
2. That was a maṇḍa cosmic cycle, in which the Buddha was born;
The populace abundant in wholesome merit, was born in that cosmic cycle."

1-2. Therein, "like the ocean" means the state of being profound like the ocean. "That was a maṇḍa cosmic cycle or" - here, in whatever cosmic cycle two Perfectly Enlightened Ones arise, this is called a cream cosmic cycle. For the cosmic cycle is twofold: an empty cosmic cycle and a non-empty cosmic cycle. There, in an empty cosmic cycle, Buddhas, Individually Enlightened Ones, and universal monarchs do not arise. Therefore, because of the emptiness of persons possessing virtues, it is called an "empty cosmic cycle."

The non-empty cosmic cycle is fivefold - a core cosmic cycle, a cream cosmic cycle, an excellent cosmic cycle, a core-cream cosmic cycle, and a fortunate cosmic cycle. There, in a cosmic cycle devoid of the core of virtues, through the manifestation of a single Perfectly Enlightened One who produces the core of virtues, who generates the core of virtues, it is called a "core cosmic cycle." But in whatever cosmic cycle two lords of the world arise, that is called a "cream cosmic cycle." In whatever cosmic cycle three Buddhas arise, among them the first gives a prediction about the second, the second about the third; there, human beings, with delighted hearts, choose by the power of their own wished-for aspirations. Therefore it is called an "excellent cosmic cycle." But in whatever cosmic cycle four Buddhas arise, that, because of being more distinguished and more essential than the former cosmic cycles, is called a "core-cream cosmic cycle." In whatever cosmic cycle five Buddhas arise, that is called a "fortunate cosmic cycle." But that is extremely rare. In that cosmic cycle, beings are for the most part abundant in goodness and happiness. For the most part, those with three roots bring about the destruction of mental defilements, those with two roots are bound for a fortunate destination, and those without roots obtain roots. Therefore that cosmic cycle is called a "fortunate cosmic cycle." Therefore it was said - "The non-empty cosmic cycle is fivefold" and so on. For this was said by the ancients:

"One Buddha in a core cosmic cycle, two Conquerors in a cream cosmic cycle;
Three Buddhas in an excellent cosmic cycle, four Buddhas in a core-cream cosmic cycle;
Five Buddhas in a fortunate cosmic cycle, beyond that there are no more Conquerors."

But in whatever cosmic cycle Padumuttara, the Possessor of the Ten Powers, arose, that, although being a core cosmic cycle, because of the similarity to a cream cosmic cycle through the achievement of virtues, was called a "cream cosmic cycle." The word "or" should be understood in the sense of a simile. "Abundant in wholesome deeds" means those who have accumulated merit. "Populace" means a multitude of people.

Now the Blessed One Padumuttara, supreme among assemblies, having spent a week on the seat of enlightenment - Thinking "I shall place my foot upon the earth," he stretched forth his right foot. Then, splitting the earth, lotuses arose - both land-born and water-born - with spotless, soft filaments and pericarps, with unblemished, intact, and extensive petals. Their outer petals, it is said, were ninety cubits, the filaments were thirty cubits, the pericarps were twelve cubits, and the pollen of each one was the measure of nine water-pots. The Teacher, however, was fifty-eight cubits in height. The span between his two arms was eighteen cubits, his forehead was five cubits, and his hands and feet were eleven cubits. When with his eleven-cubit foot he merely stepped upon the twelve-cubit pericarp, the pollen, the measure of nine water-pots, having risen up and having ascended to the height of fifty-eight cubits to the region of his body, showered down as if making it like crushed red arsenic powder. From that point on, the Teacher became known in the world as Padumuttara - so say the reciters of the Connected Collection.

Then the Blessed One Padumuttara, above all the world, having accepted Brahmā's request, surveying beings who were fit vessels for the proclamation of the Teaching, having seen in the city of Mithilā two princes named Devala and Sujāta accomplished with decisive support, at that very moment having gone through the sky, having descended into the Mithilā Park, had both princes summoned by the park keeper. And they too, "Our paternal aunt's son, Prince Padumuttara, having gone forth, having attained perfect enlightenment, has arrived at our city; come, let us approach him for an audience" - together with their retinues, having approached the Blessed One Padumuttara, having surrounded him, sat down. Then the One of Ten Powers, surrounded by them, shining like a full moon surrounded by a host of stars, set in motion the wheel of the Teaching there; then there was the first full realisation of the teaching for a hundred thousand koṭis. Therefore it was said -

- 3.** "At the first teaching of the Dhamma by the Blessed One Padumuttara;
There was the full realisation of the teaching for a hundred thousand koṭis."

Then at another time, at the gathering of the ascetic Sarada, having tormented the great multitude with the torment of hell, expounding the Teaching, he gave the nectar of the Teaching to drink to beings reckoned as thirty-seven hundred thousand, that was the second full realisation of the teaching. Therefore it was said -

- 4.** "Thereafter also when raining, and satisfying living beings;
For thirty-seven hundred thousand, there was the second full realisation."

But when the great king Ānanda, together with twenty thousand men and twenty ministers, appeared in the presence of the Perfectly Enlightened One Padumuttara in the city of Mithilā. And the Blessed One Padumuttara, having given the going forth to all of them by the "Come, monk" ordination, surrounded by them, having gone,

looking after his father, was dwelling in the royal city of Hamsavatī. There, just as our Blessed One in the city of Kapila, walking up and down on the jewel walking path in the sky, he spoke the Buddha lineage; then there was the third full realisation of the teaching for fifty hundred thousand. Therefore it was said -

5. "At which time the great hero approached Ānanda;
Having gone to his father's presence, he beat the drum of the Deathless.
6. "When the drum of the Deathless was struck, when the rain of the Teaching was raining;
For fifty hundred thousand, there was the third full realisation."

5-6. Therein, "approached Ānanda" is said with reference to his father, King Ānanda. "Struck" means he struck. "Āhate" means "āhatāya" (by the struck one). "Amatabherimhī" means "amatabheriyā" (of the drum of the Deathless); a change of gender should be understood. "Āsevite" is also a reading; its meaning is "āsevitāya" (by the one practised). "Vassante dhammavutthiyā" means "raining the rain of the Teaching." This is the meaning. Now, showing the means for bringing about the full realisation -

- 7.** "An exhorter, an instructor, a saviour of all living beings;
The Buddha, skilled in teaching, helped many people to cross" -He said;

Therein, "an exhorter" means he exhorts by describing the benefits and virtues of undertaking the refuges, morality, and ascetic practices, thus he is an exhorter. "An instructor" means he causes to understand the four truths, thus he is an instructor, an awakener. "A saviour" means one who helps to cross the four floods.

But when the Teacher, in the city of Mithilā, in the Mithilā Park, in the midst of a company of a hundred thousand koṭis of monks, on the full moon day of Māgha, with a face resembling the full moon, recited the Pātimokkha, that was the first assembly. Therefore it was said -

- 8.** "There were three assemblies of the Teacher Padumuttara;
The first meeting was of a hundred thousand koṭis."

But when the Blessed One, having spent the rains residence at the peak of Mount Vebhāra, having expounded the Teaching to the great multitude who had come for the purpose of seeing the mountain, having given the going forth to ninety thousand crores by the "Come, monk" form, surrounded by them, recited the Pātimokkha, that was the second assembly. Therefore it was said -

- 9.** "When the Buddha, equal to the matchless, dwelt on Vebhāra mountain;
The second meeting was of ninety thousand koṭis."

Again, when the Blessed One, the virtuous one, the protector of the three worlds, was bringing about the release from bondage of the great multitude, wandering on a journey through the country, there was an assemblage of eighty thousand koṭis of monks. Therefore it was said -

- 10.** "Again when he had set out on a journey, from villages, towns and countries;
The third meeting was of eighty thousand koṭis."

Therein, "from villages, towns and countries" means from villages, towns and countries. Or this itself is the reading; the meaning is of those who, having gone forth from his villages, towns and countries, had gone forth.

At that time our Bodhisatta, having been a great official named Jaṭṭila possessing many tens of millions in wealth, gave an excellent gift together with robes to the Community headed by the Buddha. He too, at the conclusion of the thanksgiving for the meal, declared "In the future, at the summit of a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, a Buddha named Gotama will arise." Therefore it was said -

11. "I at that time, an official named Jaṭṭila;
I gave cloth with food to the Community headed by the Enlightened by himself.
12. "That Buddha too declared of me, having sat down in the midst of the
Community;
A hundred thousand cosmic cycles from now, this one will be a Buddha.
13. "Having striven in striving, etc. we shall be face to face with him."
14. "Having heard his word too, I determined upon further ascetic practice;
I made exceedingly firm energy, for the fulfilment of the ten perfections."

11-14. Therein, "the Community headed by the Enlightened by himself" is the accusative case used in the sense of the genitive, meaning of the Community headed by the Buddha. "I gave cloth with food" means the meaning is "I gave food together with robes, I." "Uggadaḷahaṃ" means exceedingly firm. "Dhiti" means the meaning is "made energy."

But in the time of the Blessed One Padumuttara there were no sectarians at all. All gods and humans went for refuge to the Buddha himself. Therefore it was said -

15. "All the sectarians were defeated, displeased and unhappy then;
None attended upon them, they were expelled from the country.
16. "All having come together there, approached near the Buddha;
You are the protector, O great hero, be a refuge, O One with Vision.
17. "Compassionate and merciful, seeking the welfare of all living beings;
He established all the sectarians who had arrived in the five precepts.
18. "Thus it was undisturbed, void of sectarians;
Decorated with Worthy Ones, by those who had become masters, by such
ones."

15-18. Therein, "defeated" means those whose conceit and arrogance were destroyed. "Sectarians" - here the belief should be understood, the founder of a sect should be understood, the sectarians should be understood. Therein, "they cross here by means of views such as eternalism and so on" - thus it is a belief, a view. The originator of that view is the founder of a sect; those who exist in the sect are sectarians. In the time of the Blessed One Padumuttara, it is said, there were no sectarians. But whatever there are, they too were such - it should be understood that

"all the sectarians were defeated" and so on was stated for the purpose of showing this. "Displeased" means those whose minds were disturbed. "Unhappy" is a synonym for that very thing. "None attended upon them" means no people whatsoever perform services for those heterodox ones, they do not give almsfood, they do not honour them, they do not respect them, they do not revere them, they do not venerate them, they do not rise from their seats, they do not make salutation with joined palms - this is the meaning. "From the country" means even from the entire country. "They were expelled" means they drive out, they banish, they do not give them a dwelling place - this is the meaning. "They" means the sectarians.

"They approached near the Buddha" means thus being banished by those people dwelling in the country, all the heterodox ones too, having come together, went for refuge to the Possessor of the Ten Powers Padumuttara himself. "You are our Teacher, protector, destination, ultimate goal, refuge" - having said thus, they went for refuge - this is the meaning. "Has compassion" means one who is compassionate. "Acts with compassion" means one who is compassionate. "When they had arrived" means the sectarians who had come and gone for refuge. "He established in the five precepts" means he caused them to be established in the five precepts - this is the meaning. "Undisturbed" means unconfused, not mixed with those of other views - this is the meaning. "Void" means empty, devoid of those sectarians. "That" - the remainder of the expression should be seen as "that Dispensation of the Blessed One." "Variegated" means variegated in diverse ways. "By those who had become masters" means by those who had attained mastery.

Now, that Blessed One Padumuttara's city was named Haṃsavatī. His father was a warrior named Ānanda, his mother was a queen named Sujātā, Devala and Sujāta were the two chief disciples, his attendant was named Sumana, Amitā and Asamā were the two chief female disciples, a salala tree was the Bodhi tree, his body was fifty-eight cubits in height, the radiance of his body extended twelve yojanas all around, his life span was a hundred thousand years, his chief queen was named Vasudattā, and his son was named Uttara. Now the Blessed One Padumuttara, it is said, attained final Nibbāna in the supremely delightful Nanda's park. But his relics did not scatter. The human beings dwelling in the whole Indian subcontinent, having come together, built a shrine twelve yojanas in height, made of the seven precious things. Therefore it was said -

19. "The city was named Haṃsavatī, the warrior was named Ānanda;
The mother was named Sujātā, of the Teacher Padumuttara.
24. "Devala and Sujāta were the chief disciples;
Sumana by name was the attendant of the great sage Padumuttara.
25. "Amitā and Asamā were the chief female disciples;
The enlightenment tree of that Blessed One is called the sal tree.
27. "Fifty-eight cubits, very high, the great sage;
Resembling the radiance of gold, bearing the thirty-two excellent characteristics.
28. "Walls, door panels, and walls, trees, and heaps of mountain rocks;

There is no obstruction for him, all around for twelve yojanas.

29. "For a hundred thousand years, life span exists for that long;
Remaining for that long, he helped many people to cross.
30. "Having helped many people cross over, having cut through all doubt;
Having blazed like a great mass of fire, he, together with his disciples, attained
final Nibbāna."

19-30. Therein, "mountain rocks" (nagasiluccayā) means rocks termed mountains. "Obstruction" (āvāraṇa) means concealment, making invisible. "For twelve yojanas" means the Blessed One's bodily radiance, having pervaded a place of twelve yojanas all around, stands night and day - this is the meaning. In the remaining verses, everything is obvious everywhere.

Henceforth, having abridged the meaning that has come again and again, such as the fulfilment of the perfections and so on, we shall proceed stating only the distinctive meaning. If, however, we were to say again and again what has already been said, when would this exposition come to an end?

The explanation of the Chronicle of the Buddha Padumuttara is completed.

The tenth 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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