

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya)

14. The Book of Birth Stories-1 (14. Jātakapāḷi-1)

12. The Book of the Twelves (12. Dvādasakanipāto)

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5. The Collection of Minor Texts

14. The Book of Birth Stories-1

12. The Book of the Twelves

464. The Cūḷakuṇḍāla Birth Story (1)

- 1.** Of the greedy, the fickle-minded, the ungrateful, the treacherous;
A man not devoted to the gods does not deserve to trust women.
- 2.** They do not understand what is done nor what is to be done, nor mother,
father, or brother;
Ignoble, having transgressed the Dhamma, they come under the control of
their own mind.
- 3.** Even a husband long dwelt with, dear and agreeable, compassionate, dear as
life itself;
They abandon him in household duties, therefore I do not trust women.
- 4.** For the mind of women is like that of a monkey, from branch to branch like the
shadow of a tree;
Unstable is the heart of women, it turns round like the rim of a wheel.
- 5.** When they, looking carefully, see a man's wealth as acceptable,
They lead him with smooth words, like Kambojans lead a horse with a lotus.
- 6.** When they, looking carefully, do not see a man's wealth as acceptable;
They avoid him from all around, like a raft by one who has crossed to the far
shore of a river.
- 7.** Like a riddle, all-consuming like fire, with sharp deceit, like a river with a swift
current;
They serve both the dear and the unloved, just as a boat goes to the near
shore and the far.
- 8.** They belong not to one nor to two, like a bazaar spread open;
Whoever would think "They are mine," would obstruct the wind with a net.
- 9.** Just as a river and a road, a drinking booth, an assembly hall, and a wayside
water-shed;
So are women of the world indeed, no limit is found for them.
- 10.** These are like fire-eaters, like the heads of black snakes;
Like cattle with grass outside, they fondle downwards the choicest of the
choicest.
- 11.** Fire, an elephant, a black snake, a king anointed on the head, and all women;

These a man should associate with from a distance, their entire nature is indeed hard to know.

- 12.** A woman who is a dancer, not lovely to many, not an offering, should not be associated with;
Nor another's wife, nor for the sake of wealth, these five women should not be associated with.

The Cūḷakuṇḍāla Birth Story is the first.

465. The Bhaddasāla Birth Story (2)

- 13.** Who are you, in pure garments, standing in the sky in mid-air;
By what do your tears flow, from where has this fear come to you?
- 14.** In your very realm, O king, they knew me as Bhaddasāla;
For sixty thousand years, standing here, I have been venerated.
- 15.** While having cities built, and houses, O lord of the land;
And also various mansions, they did not disregard me;
Just as they venerated me, so too you should venerate.
- 16.** I do not see another tree as massive as yours in size;
In height and circumference, you are handsome by birth.
- 17.** I will have a mansion built, with a single pillar, delightful;
There I will bring you, long may your life be, demon.
- 18.** Thus this thought arose: "Separation from the body;
Having cut me up diversely, cut me into pieces."
- 19.** Having cut at the top and in the middle, afterwards cut at the root;
Thus for me being cut, death would not be painful.
- 20.** Just as one might cut off hands and feet, and ears and nose while living;
Then afterwards cut off the head, that death would be painful.
- 21.** Is being cut into pieces pleasant, O lord of the Bhaddasāla forest?
For what reason, clinging to what, do you wish to be cut into pieces?
- 22.** And whatever cause connected with the Teaching, with reference to the cause;
I wish it to be cut into pieces, great king, listen to me.
- 23.** My relatives, nurtured in happiness, born in the shelter on my side;
Even them I would harm, unhappiness gathered for others.
- 24.** You intended what was to be intended, O lord of the Bhaddasāla forest;
You desire the welfare of your relatives, I give you safety, my dear.

The Bhaddasāla Birth Story is the second.

466. The Samuddavāṇija Birth Story (3)

- 25.** Those people plough and sow, humans living on the fruit of their actions;
We are not sharers in this small island, from Jambudīpa this alone is better for us.
- 26.** When the moon has reached the fifteenth night, the force of the ocean will be great;
It will flood this lofty island, let it not kill you - go to another shelter.
- 27.** Never will the force of the ocean's waters flood this lofty island;
That has been seen by me through many signs, do not fear, why do you grieve? Rejoice!
- 28.** With abundant food, with plentiful food and drink, you have attained this lofty residence;
I do not see any fear for you, rejoice with your sons and sons' sons.
- 29.** Whatever this god in the southern direction calls out as 'security', that is his truth;
The northern one knew not of fear and fearlessness, do not fear, why do you grieve? Rejoice!
- 30.** Just as these demons disagree, one speaks of danger, one of security;
So come, hear my word, quickly, swiftly, let us not all perish.
- 31.** All having assembled, let us make a boat, a sturdy canoe equipped with all machinery;
If this southern one spoke truth, this northern one protests in vain;

That very thing will be for our benefit in misfortune, and we shall not abandon this island.
- 32.** If this northern one spoke truth, this southern one protests in vain;
Having ascended that very boat, all of us, thus we may safely cross to the beyond.
- 33.** Indeed, one should not easily grasp the foremost by the first, having taken the youngest that has come into range;
Whoever here, having investigated, grasps the truth, he indeed, that man, attains the foremost state.
- 34.** Just as those merchants in the midst of the ocean waters, by their own action, carried themselves safely;
Having penetrated the future benefit, even a little he does not neglect, that one of extensive wisdom.
- 35.** And fools, greedy for flavour through delusion, not having penetrated the future benefit;

They sink when the need arises in the present, like those humans in the middle of the ocean.

- 36.** One should prepare beforehand the future task, "May the task not afflict me at the time of the task";
Such a one who does the task beforehand, that task does not afflict him at the time of the task.

The Samuddavāṇija Birth Story is the third.

467. The Kāma Birth Story (4)

- 37.** For one desiring sensual pleasure, if that succeeds for him;
Surely he is joyful in mind, a mortal having obtained what he wishes.
- 38.** For one desiring sensual pleasure, if that succeeds for him;
From that, he finds yet another craving for sensual pleasures, for mental objects.
- 39.** Just as the horn of a horned ox grows as it grows;
Thus for a foolish man, an ignorant one not understanding;
Craving and thirst increase even more as he grows.
- 40.** Rice and barley fields on earth, cattle and horses, slaves and servants;
Having given, it is not enough for one, knowing this, one should live righteously.
- 41.** A king, having conquered the earth by force, dwelling in greatness up to the ocean's end;
Unsatisfied with this side of the ocean, he would desire even the far side of the ocean.
- 42.** As long as one remembers sensual pleasures, one does not find satisfaction in the mind;
Having turned back from that, having withdrawn, having seen, they indeed are well-satisfied who are satisfied with wisdom.
- 43.** Satisfaction through wisdom is foremost, he is not tormented by sensual pleasures;
The person satisfied through wisdom, craving does not bring under its control.
- 44.** One should diminish sensual pleasures, of few wishes, not covetous;
A person vast as the ocean, he is not tormented by sensual pleasures.
- 45.** Like a chariot-maker cutting leather for sandals;
Whatever sensual pleasures one abandons, that happiness arises;
If one should wish for all happiness, one should abandon all sensual pleasures.
- 46.** Eight verses have been spoken by you, all are worth a thousand;
Accept them, Great Brahmā, your saying is excellent.

- 47.** I have no need for thousands, for hundreds or for myriads;
Speaking the last verse, my mind is not delighted in sensual pleasures.
- 48.** Fortunate indeed is this young man, the sage who knows all worlds;
Who fully understands this craving, the producer of suffering - he is wise.

The Kāma Birth Story is the fourth.

468. The Janasandha Birth Story (5)

- 49.** These ten are indeed the states, which not having done before;
He afterwards feels remorse, thus spoke Janasandha.
- 50.** Not having obtained wealth, he is tormented, what was not accumulated before;
"I did not seek wealth before," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 51.** "Though a craft was possible for me before, I did not learn a craft;
Difficult is the livelihood of one without a craft," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 52.** "I was formerly a fraudulent knower, divisive and a backbiter;
Fierce and also harsh," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 53.** Formerly I was a killer of living beings, cruel and also ignoble;
I did not honour beings, thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 54.** "Though many women were available, unattached to others;
I resorted to another's wife," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 55.** "When there was indeed much, when food and drink was at hand;
I did not give a gift before," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 56.** Mother and father too, an old person past their youth;
"Though being able, I did not support them," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 57.** The teacher, the instructor, the one who brought all the flavours of sensual pleasures;
"I despised my father," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 58.** Towards ascetics and brahmins too, virtuous and very learned;
"I did not attend on them before," thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 59.** Good it is when austere asceticism is practised, and a peaceful one is attended upon;
And when austere asceticism was not practised before, thus he feels remorse afterwards.
- 60.** And whoever wisely proceeds regarding these states;
Doing a man's duties, he afterwards does not feel remorse.

469. The Mahākaṇha Birth Story (6)

- 61.** Black, black and terrible, with white fangs, radiant;
Bound by five ropes, why did your dog bark?
- 62.** This will not be for the benefit of the deer, O Uśīnaka;
Having become a calamity for human beings, then the dark one will be released.
- 63.** With bowls in hand, petty ascetics, shaven-headed, wrapped in the double robe;
They will plough with ploughs, then the dark one will be released.
- 64.** Female ascetics gone forth, shaven-headed, wrapped in the double robe;
When they will go about in the world, then the dark one will be released.
- 65.** With long upper lips, matted-hair ascetics, with stained teeth, with dusty heads;
When they go demanding debts, then the dark one will be released.
- 66.** Having learnt the Vedas and the Sāvittī, and the sacrificial rites, the brahmins;
Will sacrifice for hire, then the dark one will be released.
- 67.** Mother and father too, an old person past their youth;
Though being able, they do not support them, then the dark one will be released.
- 68.** Mother and father too, an old person past their youth;
"You are fools," they will say, then the dark one will be released.
- 69.** The teacher's wife, a friend, the maternal uncle's wife, the father's sister;
When they will go about in the world, then the dark one will be released.
- 70.** Having taken up sword and shield, having raised the sword, brahmins;
Will commit highway robbery, then the dark one will be released.
- 71.** Fair-skinned, hostile to widows, thick-armed, without means;
Will cause the breaking of friendship, then the dark one will be released.
- 72.** Deceitful, fraudulent, with minds of bad persons;
When they will be in the world, then the dark one will be released.

470. The Kosiya Birth Story (7)

- 73.** I neither buy nor sell, nor do I have any accumulation;
This is indeed difficult to obtain and small, a bowl of rice is not enough for us,
hard to obtain.

- 74.** From little one should give a little, from moderate a moderate amount;
From much one should give much, not giving is not fitting.
- 75.** This I say to you, Kosiya, give gifts and enjoy.
Having ascended the noble path, one who eats alone does not obtain happiness.
- 76.** Vain is his oblation, and vain too is his endeavour;
He who, while a guest is seated, eats food alone.
- 77.** This I say to you, Kosiya, give gifts and enjoy;
Having ascended the noble path, one who eats alone does not obtain happiness.
- 78.** True is his oblation, and true too is his endeavour;
He who, while a guest is seated, does not eat food alone.
- 79.** This I say to you, Kosiya, give gifts and enjoy;
Having ascended the noble path, one who eats alone does not obtain happiness.
- 80.** A man makes offerings at the lake, and at Gayā with its many bodies;
At Doṇa, at the Timbaru ford, in the swift-flowing, great torrent.
- 81.** Here is his oblation, here is his endeavour;
He who, while a guest is seated, does not eat food alone.
- 82.** This I say to you, Kosiya, give gifts and enjoy;
Having ascended the noble path, one who eats alone does not obtain happiness.
- 83.** For he swallows the hook, the long thread together with its binding;
He who, while a guest is seated, eats food alone.
- 84.** This I say to you, Kosiya, give gifts and enjoy;
Having ascended the noble path, one who eats alone does not obtain happiness.
- 85.** "These brahmins are indeed of noble beauty, and this dog of yours - for what reason?
It transforms into various colours and appearances; tell us, brahmins, who are you?"
- 86.** Both the moon and the sun have come here, and this is Mātali, the charioteer of the gods;
I am Sakka, the lord of the thirty-three, and this one is called Pañcasikha.
- 87.** Cymbals and small drums, tambourines and large drums;
They awaken him who is asleep, and having awakened, he rejoices.

- 88.** Those who are stingy here, miserly, abusive to ascetics and brahmins;
Having laid down the physical body right here, upon the body's collapse, they go to hell.
- 89.** Those who hope for a fortunate destination, established in the Teaching, in self-control and sharing;
Having laid down the physical body right here, upon the body's collapse, they go to a fortunate destination.
- 90.** You were not a relative in previous births, he was stingy, an irritator, of bad character;
We have come here for your very purpose, may this one of bad character not go to hell.
- 91.** Surely indeed you are desiring my welfare, in that you instruct me;
I shall act accordingly, all that is spoken by those who seek my benefit.
- 92.** This very day I shall desist, and I would not do anything evil;
And there is nothing of mine that should not be given, and I do not drink water without having given.
- 93.** And thus as I give at all times, these possessions, O Vāsava, will be exhausted;
Then I shall go forth, Sakka, having abandoned sensual pleasures, each according to its limit.

The Kosiya Birth Story is the seventh.

471. The Meṇḍakapañha Birth Story (8)

- 94.** Those who never once in the past had friendship of even seven steps in this world;
Born as enemies, the two companions, having reconciled, they wander - for what reason?
- 95.** If today at breakfast time, you are not able to answer this question;
I will banish you all from the country, for I have no use for those born of poor wisdom.
- 96.** In the terrible assembly of the great multitude, when the tumultuous gathering of people has arisen;
With distracted minds, with various thoughts, we are not able to answer this question.
- 97.** With fully focused minds, each one, having gone to a secret place, having reflected on the meaning;
Having meditated in solitude, the wise, then they will speak, O lord of men, this matter.
- 98.** For the daughters of the princes of Ugga, the meat of a ram is dear and agreeable;

They do not give meat to the dog, then there would be friendship between the ram and the dog.

- 99.** They flay the hide of a goat, for the sake of the comfort of a horse-back rug;
And they do not spread one for the dog, then there would be friendship
between the ram and the dog.
- 100.** For the ram has curved horns, but the dog has no horns;
One feeds on grass, the other eats meat, then there would be friendship
between the ram and the dog.
- 101.** The ram eats grass and eats foliage, but the dog does not eat grass nor
foliage;
The dog would catch a hare or a cat, then there would be friendship between
the ram and the dog.
- 102.** The eight-and-a-half-footed one of the quadruped, the ram with eight claws,
not being visible;
This one brings the hide for this one, this one brings the meat for that one.
- 103.** The chief of Videha, having gone to the excellent mansion, the exchange of
mutual foods;
The lord of men, it is said, saw with his own eyes this, the full face of one who
wished to eat.
- 104.** It is indeed a great gain for me, that such wise ones are in my family;
The wise penetrate the profound and subtle meaning of the question with well-
spoken words.
- 105.** And a mule-drawn chariot to each one, and a prosperous excellent village to
each one;
I give to all of you wise ones, supremely pleased in mind by the well-spoken
words.

The Meṇḍakapañha Birth Story is the eighth.

472. The Mahāpaduma Birth Story (9)

- 106.** Not having seen another's fault, subtle and gross, in every respect;
A lord should decree punishment, without examining for himself.
- 107.** And whoever, a warrior, without examining, inflicts punishment;
He swallows what is thorny, like one blind from birth swallows what has flies.
- 108.** He punishes the unpunishable, and the punishable he leaves unpunished;
Like a blind man on an uneven path, he does not know the righteous from the
unrighteous.
- 109.** And whoever, having well seen these states, subtle and gross, in every
respect;
Should instruct, he indeed deserves to administer.

- 110.** It is not possible by one who is entirely soft, or by one who is entirely harsh;
To establish oneself in greatness, therefore one should practise both.
- 111.** The soft one is despised, and the overly harsh one has enemies;
Having known both of these, one should practise the middle way.
- 112.** Even one infatuated might speak much, and one corrupted speaks much;
Not for the sake of a woman, O king, do you deserve to have your son slain.
- 113.** The whole world is on one side, and this woman is alone;
Therefore I shall proceed accordingly, go and throw her in.
- 114.** Into a purgatory of many levels, deep and very difficult to escape from;
Thrown into a mountain fortress, by what did you not die there?
- 115.** A serpent with raised hood was there, powerful, born on the mountain slope;
He received me with his coils, therefore I did not die there.
- 116.** Come, I will lead you back, prince, to your own house;
Exercise kingship, venerable sir, what will you do in the forest?
- 117.** Just as one who, having swallowed a hook, might pull it out with blood;
Having pulled it out, he would be happy - thus I see myself.
- 118.** What do you call the hook, what do you call the blood relation;
What do you call pulled out? Tell me this when asked.
- 119.** Sensual pleasures I call a hook, elephants and horses blood-relations;
What is given up I call pulled out, know this thus, O warrior.
- 120.** Ciñcāmāṇavikā was my mother, and Devadatta was my father;
Ānanda was the wise elephant, and Sāriputta was the deity;
I was the prince, thus remember the Jātaka.

The Mahāpaduma Birth Story is the ninth.

473. The Mittāmitta Birth Story (10)

- 121.** Doing what actions, how should the wise one exert;
The intelligent one would know an enemy, having seen and having heard, the
wise person.
- 122.** Having seen him, he does not smile at him, nor does he gladly accept him;
And he does not give him his eyes, and he acts in opposition.
- 123.** He associates with his enemies, he does not keep company with his friends;
He prevents those wishing to praise, he praises those who revile.
- 124.** He does not tell him his secrets, he does not conceal his secrets;
He does not praise his work, he does not commend his wisdom.

- 125.** He rejoices in his non-becoming, he does not rejoice in his becoming;
Having obtained marvellous food, mindfulness does not arise for him;
Therefore he does not have compassion for him, "Oh, may he too obtain from here."
- 126.** These sixteen signs are established in an enemy;
By which a wise person would know an enemy, having seen and having heard.
- 127.** Doing what actions, how should the wise one exert;
The intelligent one would know a friend, having seen and having heard, the wise person.
- 128.** He remembers one who has dwelt abroad, he delights in one who has come;
Thereupon he is affectionate, he gladly accepts with speech.
- 129.** He associates with his friends, he does not keep company with his enemies;
He prevents those who revile, he praises those wishing to praise.
- 130.** He tells him his secrets, and he conceals his secrets;
He praises his work, and he commends his wisdom.
- 131.** He rejoices in his becoming, he does not rejoice in his non-becoming;
Having obtained marvellous food, mindfulness arises for him;
Therefore he has compassion for him, "Oh, may he too obtain from here."
- 132.** These sixteen signs are firmly established in a friend;
By which a wise person would know a friend, having seen and having heard.

The Mittāmitta Birth Story is the tenth.

The Book of Twelves is concluded.

Its summary:

Light-minded, With Sal Tree, Ploughing, Again, then Sensual Pleasure, Ten,
Indeed Rising, Excellent;
Then Kaṇha, Sukosiya, Excellent Ram, Lotus, Again, with Excellent Friend - ten.



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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