

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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02. Commentary on the Teaching in Verses (02. Dhammapada-
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

02. Commentary on the Teaching in Verses

12. The Chapter on the Self

1. The Story of Prince Bodhi

157. "Oneself" - the Teacher, while dwelling in the Bhesakaḷā Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to Prince Bodhi.

It is said that he, having had built a mansion named Kokanuda, incomparable in form to other mansions on the surface of the earth, as if flying up into the sky, asked the carpenter - "Has a mansion of such form been built by you elsewhere before, or is this your first craft?" And when it was said "It is indeed my first craft, Sire," he thought - "If this one will build such a mansion for another too, this mansion will not be marvellous. It is proper for me to kill him, or to cut off his hands and feet, or to pluck out his eyes; thus he will not build a mansion for another." He told that matter to a young man named Sañjīvakaputta, his own dear companion. He thought - "Without doubt this one will destroy the carpenter. He is a priceless craftsman; let him not perish while I am looking on; I shall give him a signal." He, having approached him, having asked "Is your work on the mansion finished, or not?" when it was said "Finished," said "The prince wishes to destroy you; you should protect yourself." The carpenter too, having said "A good thing was done by you, master, in informing me; I shall know what is to be done here," when asked by the prince "What, my dear, is the work on our mansion finished?" said "Not yet finished, Sire; much remains." What work remains? Later, Sire, I shall tell you; for now, have timber brought. What timber? Sapless dry timber, Sire. He had it brought and gave it. Then he said to him - "Sire, from now on you should not come to my presence. Why? For when I am doing fine work, conversing with others causes me disturbance of work; but at mealtime my wife alone will bring me food." The prince too agreed saying "Very well." He too, having sat down in one inner room, having planed those timbers, having made a garuḷa bird suitable for his own children and wife to sit inside, at mealtime said to his wife - "Sell everything that exists in the house and take gold and silver." The prince too, for the purpose of preventing the carpenter from leaving, surrounded the house and set up a guard. The carpenter too, when the bird was finished, having said to his wife "Today you should come bringing all the children too," having eaten his morning meal, having seated his children and wife in the belly of the bird, having departed through the window, fled. He, while they were crying out "Sire, the carpenter is fleeing!" having gone, having descended into the Himalayas, having built a city, became known as the Firewood-cart King.

The prince too, thinking "I shall build the mansion," having invited the Teacher, having decorated the mansion with the four kinds of scent, spread cloth carpeting from the first threshold onwards. It is said that he was childless; therefore, having thought "If I shall obtain a son or a daughter, the Teacher will step upon this," he spread it. He, when the Teacher had arrived, having paid homage to the Teacher with

the fivefold prostration, having taken his bowl, said "Enter, venerable sir." The Teacher did not enter; he requested a second time and a third time too. The Teacher, without entering, looked at the Elder Ānanda. The Elder, by the very sign of being looked at, having known the fact of not stepping upon the cloths, had him gather up the cloths, saying "Let the cloths be gathered up, prince; the Blessed One will not step upon cloth carpeting; the Truth-finder looks after future generations." He, having gathered up the cloths, having led the Teacher inside the dwelling, having honoured him with rice gruel and hard food, seated to one side, having paid homage, said - "Venerable sir, I am your helper, one who has gone for refuge three times; and while in the womb, it seems, I went for refuge once, the second time at the time of being a young boy, the third time at the time of reaching the age of understanding. Why did you not step upon the cloth carpeting for me?" "But what did you think, prince, when you spread the cloths?" "Having thought this - 'If I shall obtain a son or a daughter, the Teacher will step upon my cloth carpeting' - venerable sir." "That is why I did not step upon it." "But shall I, venerable sir, never obtain a son or a daughter?" "Yes, prince." "Why?" "Because of having fallen into negligence together with your wife in a former existence." "At what time, venerable sir?" Then the Teacher, having brought up the past, showed him -

In the past, it is said, many hundreds of people plunged into the ocean by a great boat. The boat broke up in the middle of the ocean. A husband and wife, having taken hold of a plank, entered a small island; all the rest died right there. Now on that small island a great flock of birds dwelt. They, not seeing any other food, being internally hungry, having cooked bird eggs on embers, ate them; when those were not sufficient, having taken bird chicks, they ate them. Thus even in the first stage of life, even in the middle stage of life, and even in the last stage of life, they ate just the same. Not even in a single stage of life did they practise diligence, and not even one of them practised diligence.

The Teacher, having shown this as his former deed, said "If indeed you, young man, had at that time practised diligence together with your wife in even a single stage of life, in even a single stage of life a son or a daughter would have arisen. If, however, even one of you had been diligent, dependent on that, a son or a daughter would have arisen. Young man, by one who considers oneself as dear, being diligent in all three stages of life, oneself should be protected; by one unable to do so, oneself should be protected even in a single stage of life" - having said this, he spoke this verse -

157. "If one should know oneself as dear, one should protect it well-protected;
During one of the three watches, the wise person should look after himself."

Therein, "watch" means the Teacher, through his own mastery of the Teaching and through skilfulness in teaching, here taught making one of the three stages of life as "watch"; therefore the meaning here should be understood thus. "If one should know oneself as dear, one should protect it well-protected" means one should protect it in such a way that it is well-protected. Therein, if a layman, thinking "I shall protect myself," having entered a well-secured inner room on the upper storey of a mansion, having become one with complete protection, even while dwelling there; or having become one gone forth, even while dwelling in a well-secured rock cell with doors and

windows shut - one does not protect oneself at all. But a layman, performing meritorious deeds such as giving, morality, and so on, according to one's strength; or one gone forth, becoming zealously engaged in duties, counter-duties, scriptural study, and attention - one is said to protect oneself. Thus, being unable to do so in all three stages of life, a wise person looks after oneself even in one of the stages of life. For if one who has become a householder is unable to do wholesome deeds in the first stage of life due to being absorbed in play, wholesome deeds should be done by being diligent in the middle stage of life. If in the middle stage of life one is unable to do wholesome deeds while nourishing children and wife, they should be done in the last stage of life. Even by one doing thus, oneself is indeed looked after. But for one not doing thus, oneself is not dear; it only makes one heading for the realms of misery. If, however, one gone forth, while rehearsing, retaining, reciting, and performing all kinds of duties in the first stage of life, falls into heedlessness, the ascetic duty should be done by being diligent in the middle stage of life. If, while asking about the commentary, judgment, and reasons and non-reasons regarding the scriptural study learnt in the first stage of life, one falls into heedlessness in the middle stage of life, the ascetic duty should be done by being diligent in the last stage of life. Even by one doing thus, oneself is indeed looked after. But for one not doing thus, oneself is not dear; it only torments one with subsequent remorse.

At the conclusion of the teaching, Prince Bodhi became established in the fruition of stream-entry, and the proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial to the assembly that had arrived as well.

The story of Prince Bodhi is the first.

2. The Story of the Elder Upananda, Son of the Sakyans

158. The Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to Upananda the Sakyan, beginning with "Oneself first."

It is said that elder was skilled at giving a talk on the Teaching. Having heard his talk on the Teaching connected with fewness of wishes and so on, many monks, having venerated him with the three robes, undertook the ascetic practices. The requisites relinquished by them, he himself took. He, when one rainy season was approaching, went to the countryside. Then at one monastery, young novices, out of devotion to the speaker of the Teaching, said "Venerable sir, enter the rains retreat here." Having asked "How much rains-residence gift is obtained here?" when by them it was said "One cloak each," he left his sandals there and went to another monastery. Having gone to a second monastery, having asked "What is obtained here?" when it was said "Two cloaks," he left his walking stick. Having gone to a third monastery, having asked "What is obtained here?" when it was said "Three cloaks," he left his water vessel there. Having gone to a fourth monastery, having asked "What is obtained here?" when it was said "Four cloaks," saying "Good, I shall dwell here," he entered the rains retreat there and gave a talk on the Teaching to both householders and monks. They venerated him with many cloths and robes. He, having finished keeping the rains retreat, having sent a message to the other monasteries too, saying "Because a requisite was left by me, a rains-residence gift should be received; let them send it to me," having had everything brought, having filled a small carriage, he set out.

Then at one monastery, two young monks, having received two cloaks and one woollen blanket, being unable to divide them, saying "Let the cloaks be yours, the blanket mine," sat down near the road and disputed. They, having seen that elder coming, said "Venerable sir, divide and give them to us." You yourselves divide them. We are unable, venerable sir; you yourself divide and give them to us. If so, will you stand by my word? Yes, we will stand by it. "If so, very well," having given them the two cloaks, saying "This woollen blanket is worthy of being worn by us who give talks on the Teaching," he took the very costly woollen blanket and departed. The young monks, having become remorseful, having gone to the Teacher's presence, reported that matter. The Teacher, having said "Not only now, monks, does he take what belongs to you and make you remorseful; in the past too he did just so," brought up the past -

In the past, two otters - one who walked along the shore and one who walked in the deep - having obtained a large salmon, having engaged in contention saying "Let the head be mine, the tail yours," being unable to divide it, having seen a certain jackal, said - "Uncle, divide this and give it to us." I have been appointed by the king at the place of judgment; having sat there for a long time, I have come for the purpose of a walk to stretch my legs; now I have no opportunity. Uncle, do not do thus; just divide and give it to us. Will you stand by my word? We will stand by it, uncle. "If so, very well," he, having cut off the head, placed it on one side, the tail on one side. And having done so, "Dear ones, whichever of you walked along the shore, let him take the tail. Whichever walked in the deep, let the head be his. But this middle portion will be for me who am established in the principle of judgment" - thus convincing them -

"The tail for the one who walks along the shore, the head for the one who walks in the deep;

This middle portion will be for the one established in righteousness."

Having spoken this verse, he took the middle portion and departed. They too stood looking at him, remorseful.

The Teacher, having shown this past, having convinced those monks saying "Thus this one made you remorseful in the past too," censuring Upananda, having said "Monks, one who exhorts others should first establish oneself in what is proper," he spoke this verse -

158. "One should first establish oneself in what is proper;

Then one may instruct others - a wise person would not be defiled."

Therein, "should establish in what is proper" means one should establish oneself in suitable virtues. This is what is meant - Whoever wishes to instruct others by means of virtues such as fewness of wishes and so on, or by means of the noble lineage practice and so on, he should first establish himself in those virtues. Having thus established oneself, then one should instruct others with those virtues. For without having established oneself therein, merely instructing only others, having obtained blame from others, one is defiled indeed; having established oneself therein and instructing, one obtains praise from others, therefore one is not defiled indeed. A wise person doing thus would not be defiled.

At the conclusion of the teaching, those monks became established in the fruition of stream-entry. The proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial for the great multitude as well.

The story of the Elder Upananda, son of the Sakyans, is the second.

3. The Story of the Elder Monk Padhānikatissa

159. "Oneself" - the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the Elder Padhānikatissa.

It is said that he, having taken a meditation subject in the presence of the Teacher, having taken five hundred monks, having entered the rains retreat in the forest, having exhorted them "Friends, a meditation subject has been taken by you in the presence of the living Buddha; being diligent, practise the ascetic duty," himself having gone, having lain down, slept. Those monks, having walked up and down in the first watch, entered the dwelling in the middle watch. He, having slept, at the time of awakening, having gone to their presence, having said "What, have you come thinking 'Having lain down, we shall sleep'? Having gone out quickly, practise the ascetic duty," himself having gone, slept in the same way. The others, having walked up and down outside in the middle watch, entered the dwelling in the last watch. He again, having awoken, having gone to their presence, having driven them out of the dwelling, himself having gone again, slept in the same way. When he was constantly doing thus, those monks were unable to attend to recitation or the meditation subject, and their minds underwent alteration. They, thinking "Our teacher is putting forth exceedingly strenuous energy; shall we investigate?" while investigating, having seen his behaviour, said "We are ruined, friends; our teacher crows a hollow crow." As they were exceedingly wearied by sleeplessness, not even one monk was able to produce a distinction. They, having finished keeping the rains retreat, having gone to the Teacher's presence, having been received with friendly welcome by the Teacher, when asked "What, monks, being diligent, did you practise the ascetic duty?" reported that matter. The Teacher, having said "Not only now, monks; in the past too this one made an obstacle for you indeed," being requested by them -

"Not brought up by mother and father, dwelling in a family without a teacher;
This cock does not directly know the proper time or the improper time."

He related this Akālarāvikukkuṭa Jātaka in detail. "For at that time that cock was this Elder Padhānikatissa, these five hundred monks were those young men, the world-famed teacher was myself" - the Teacher, having related this Jātaka in detail, having said "Monks, one who exhorts others should make oneself well tamed. For one exhorting thus, being well tamed, tames indeed," spoke this verse - 159.

159. Well tamed indeed, one would tame, for the self is truly difficult to tame."
Its meaning is -

Its meaning is - "For the self is truly difficult to tame" - for this self is indeed difficult to tame. Therefore, in whatever way one is well tamed, so should one tame. At the conclusion of the teaching, those five hundred monks too attained arahantship.

At the conclusion of the teaching, those five hundred monks too attained arahantship.

4. The Story of the Mother of Kumārakassapa, the Senior Nun

160. "Indeed, oneself is one's own protector": the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the mother of the Elder Kumārakassapa.

She, it is said, was a millionaire's daughter in the city of Rājagaha who, from the time of reaching discretion, requested the going forth. Then she, even though requesting again and again, not obtaining the going forth from her mother and father, having come of age, having gone to her husband's family, having become a devoted wife, dwelt in the house. Then, before long, an embryo was established in her womb. She, not knowing the established state of the embryo, having pleased her husband, requested the going forth. Then he, with great honour, having led her to the nuns' quarters, not knowing, gave her the going forth in the presence of nuns who were supporters of Devadatta. At a later time, the nuns, having known her state of being pregnant, when asked by them "What is this?" said "I do not know, noble ladies, what this is; my morality is indeed healthy." The nuns, having led her to the presence of Devadatta, asked "This nun has gone forth through faith; we know the established state of the embryo of this one, but we do not know the time; what shall we do now?" Devadatta, having thought only this much - "Let not ill repute arise for the nuns under my exhortation" - said "Turn her out of the Order." Having heard that, the young woman said "Do not destroy me, noble ladies; I have not gone forth with reference to Devadatta. Come, take me to the Teacher's presence at Jeta's Grove." They, having taken her, having gone to Jeta's Grove, reported to the Teacher. The Teacher, even though knowing "The embryo was established during her time as a laywoman," for the purpose of freeing from the criticism of others, having had King Pasenadi of Kosala, Mahā-Anāthapiṇḍika, Cūḷa-Anāthapiṇḍika, the female lay follower Visākhā, and other great families summoned, commanded the Elder Upāli - "Go, purify the case of this young nun in the midst of the fourfold assembly." The Elder, having had Visākhā summoned before the king, entrusted that legal case to her. She, having had a screen wall set up around, inside the screen having examined the ends of her hands, feet, navel, and belly, having calculated the month-days, having known "This one conceived the embryo while in the lay state," reported that matter to the Elder. Then the Elder established her state of purity in the midst of the assembly. She, at a later time, gave birth to a son of great majesty, whose aspiration had been wished for at the feet of the Buddha Padumuttara.

Then one day, the king, while going near the nuns' quarters, having heard the sound of a child, having asked "What is this?" when it was said "Sire, a son has been born to a certain nun; that is the sound," having led that boy to his own house, gave him to the nurses. On the name-giving day, having given him the name Kassapa, because he was raised with the care of a prince, they recognised him as Kumārakassapa. He, having struck some boys at the playground, when it was said "We have been struck by an orphan," having approached the king, having asked "Sire, they call me 'an orphan'; please tell me my mother," when the king showed the nurses and it was said "These are your mothers," he said "I do not have so many mothers; I should have one mother; please tell me about her." The king, having thought "It is not possible to

deceive this one," said "Dear son, your mother is a nun; you were brought by me from the nuns' quarters." He, by just that much having become one in whom a sense of religious urgency had arisen, said "Dear father, give me the going forth." The king, saying "Good, dear son," gave him the going forth with great honour in the presence of the Teacher. He, having obtained full ordination, became known as the Elder Kumārakassapa. He, having taken a meditation subject in the presence of the Teacher, having entered the forest, having striven, being unable to produce a distinction, thinking "I shall take the meditation subject again having distinguished it further," having gone to the Teacher's presence, dwelt in the Blind Men's Grove.

Then a monk who, in the time of the Buddha Kassapa, had practised the ascetic duty together with him, having attained the fruition of non-returning, had been reborn in the Brahma world - having come from the Brahma world, having asked fifteen questions, dismissed him saying "Apart from the Teacher, there is no one able to answer these questions; go, learn the meaning of these in the Teacher's presence." He, having done so, at the conclusion of the answering of the questions, attained arahantship. But from the day of his departure onwards, for twelve years, tears flowed from the eyes of his mother the nun. She, grieved by separation from her son, with a face wet with tears, while walking for almsfood, having seen the Elder in the middle of the street, crying out "Son, son!" running up to seize him, turned over and fell. She, with milk releasing from her breasts, having risen up, with wet robes, having gone, seized the Elder. He thought - "If this one receives sweet words from my presence, she will be ruined. Having been firm, I shall converse with her." Then he said to him - "What are you doing going about? Are you not able to cut even a mere measure of affection?" She, having thought "Oh, how hard is the Elder's talk!" having said "What are you saying, dear son?" when spoken to again by him in the same way, she thought - "I am unable to hold back tears for twelve years on account of this one, yet this one is so hard-hearted; what use is he to me?" - having cut off affection for her son, on that very day she attained arahantship.

At a later time, they raised up a discussion in the Teaching hall - "Friends, Kumārakassapa, who was thus endowed with decisive support, and the elder nun were removed by Devadatta, but the Teacher became their support. Oh, Buddhas are indeed compassionate towards the world!" The Teacher, having come, having asked "What discussion were you having as you sat together here, monks?" when it was said "Such and such," having said "Not only now, monks, have I become a condition and support for them; in the past too I was indeed their support" -

"One should resort to the banyan tree, one should not dwell with a branch;
Death in the banyan tree is better, than life in a branch."

Having told this Nigrodha Jātaka in detail, having connected the Jātaka thus: "At that time the branch-deer was Devadatta, and his assembly was Devadatta's assembly, the doe whose turn had come was the elder nun, the son was Kumārakassapa, and the Nigrodha deer-king who went having given up his life for the pregnant doe was myself" - and making known the state of the elder nun having made herself her own support by cutting off affection for her son, having said "Monks, because by

depending on another it is not possible to become one destined for heaven or one destined for the path, therefore oneself alone is one's own protector - what will another do?" he spoke this verse -

160. "Indeed, oneself is one's own protector, for who else could be a protector? Indeed, with oneself well tamed, one obtains a protector difficult to obtain."

Therein, "protector" means support. This is what is meant - Because by one established in oneself, accomplished in self, having done what is wholesome, it is possible to reach heaven, or to develop the path, or to realise the fruition. Therefore indeed oneself alone is one's own support; who indeed could be a support for whom? Indeed, with oneself well tamed, through complete practice, one obtains the difficult-to-obtain protector reckoned as the fruition of arahantship. For with reference to arahantship, "one obtains a protector difficult to obtain" is stated here.

At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of the mother of Kumārakassapa, the senior nun, is the fourth.

5. The Story of the Lay Follower Mahākāla

161. The Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to a certain stream-enterer lay follower named Mahākāla, beginning with "Indeed, evil done by oneself."

It is said that he, having become an observer of the Observance on eight days of the month, hears the talk on the Teaching the whole night at the monastery. Then at night, thieves, having broken through the wall of a certain house and having taken the goods, being pursued by the owners who were awakened by the sound of metal vessels, having thrown away the seized goods, fled. The owners too pursued them indeed, and they scattered in different directions. But one, having taken the road to the monastery, threw down a bundle in front of Mahākāla, who, having listened to the talk on the Teaching at night, was washing his face at the bank of the pond right early, and fled. The people who had come following the thieves, having seen the bundle, having seized him saying "You, having broken through the wall of our house and having carried off the bundle, go about as if listening to the Teaching," having beaten him, having killed him, having thrown him aside, went away. Then young novices who had gone right early having taken a water pot, having seen him, having said "The lay follower who lay down having heard the talk on the Teaching at the monastery meets an inappropriate death," reported to the Teacher. The Teacher, having said "Yes, monks, in this individual existence an unfitting death has been obtained by him at this time; but for one whose deed was done in the past, what was obtained by him was indeed fitting," being requested by them, related his former deed -

In the past, it is said, at the outskirts of the forest of a certain borderland village in the realm of the king of Bārāṇasī, thieves used to strike. The king placed a royal soldier at the outskirts of the forest; he, having taken a fee, leads people from this side to the far side, and brings them from the far side to this side. Then a certain man, having placed his beautiful wife upon a small carriage, went to that place. The

royal soldier, having seen that woman, with affection arisen, even when told by him "Take us across the forest, master," said "Now it is the improper time; I shall take you across right early." "It is the proper time, master; take us across right now." "Turn back, friend; in our very house there will be food and lodging." He did not at all wish to turn back. The other, having given a signal to his men, having turned back the small carriage, having given lodging at the gateway to the unwilling one, had food prepared. Now in his house there was a jewel gem. He, having had it placed inside that one's small carriage, towards the break of dawn made the sound of thieves having entered. Then his men reported "The jewel gem, master, has been taken by thieves." He, having placed guards at the village gates, said "Search those leaving from inside the village." The other too, right early, having harnessed the small carriage, set out. Then those cleaning his small carriage, having seen the jewel gem placed by himself, having threatened him, having beaten him saying "You are fleeing having taken the gem," showed him to the village headman saying "The thief has been caught by us, master." He, having had him beaten and having had him killed, had him thrown away, saying "Indeed, having given lodging in my house to a hired servant, food was given; having taken the gem, he went. Seize him, evil man." This was his former deed. He, having passed away from there, having been reborn in Avīci, having been tormented there for a long time, by the remainder of the result, in a hundred individual existences, being beaten in the same way, met death.

Thus the Teacher, having shown the former deed of Mahākāla, having said "Monks, thus the evil deed done by oneself crushes these beings in the four realms of misery," spoke this verse -

161. "Indeed, evil done by oneself, self-born, arising from oneself;
Crushes the imprudent, as a diamond does a stone-made gem."

Therein, "a diamond a stone-made gem" means a diamond indeed a stone-made gem. This is what is meant - just as a diamond, made of stone, originating from stone, having gnawed that very stone-made gem, the stone gem reckoned as its own place of arising, making it full of holes and piece by piece, renders it unfit for use, just so evil done by oneself, born in oneself, arising from oneself, crushes, cuts, and destroys the imprudent, wisdomless person in the four realms of misery.

At the conclusion of the teaching, the monks who had arrived attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of the lay follower Mahākāla is the fifth.

6. The Story of Devadatta

162. "Whose perpetual immorality": the Teacher, while dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to Devadatta.

For on one day, monks raised up a discussion in the Teaching hall - "Friends, Devadatta is immoral, of bad character; through the cause of immorality, with craving that has grown, having won over Ajātasattu, having produced great material gain and honour, having instigated Ajātasattu to the murder of his father, having joined together with him, he endeavours in various ways for the murder of the Truth-finder." The Teacher, having come, having asked "What discussion were you having as you

sat together here, monks?" when it was said "Such and such," having said "Not only now, monks; in the past too Devadatta endeavoured in various ways for my murder," having related the Kuruṅgamiga Jātaka and others, having said "Monks, for a perpetually immoral person, craving arisen through the cause of immorality, having enveloped like a parasitic creeper a sal tree, breaking it, throws him into hell and so on," he spoke this verse -

162. "Whose perpetual immorality, like a creeper spread over a sal tree;
He makes himself thus, as an enemy wishes for him."

Therein, "perpetual immorality" means the state of being absolutely immoral. A layman performing the ten unwholesome courses of action from birth onwards, or one gone forth committing a heavy offence from the day of full ordination onwards, is called perpetually immoral. But here, whoever is immoral in two or three individual existences, this was said with reference to the state of being immoral that has come by way of his destination. "The state of being immoral": and here, craving arisen in dependence on the six doors of one who is immoral should be understood. "Like a creeper spread over a sal tree" means: for whatever person that immorality reckoned as craving, just as a parasitic creeper, spreading over a sal tree, when the sky is raining, having received water with its leaves, by the force of breaking, envelopes it everywhere completely, so it has spread over and stood enveloping the individual existence. He, like a tree being broken by the parasitic creeper and being felled to the ground, being broken by that craving reckoned as immorality and being felled into the realms of misery, makes himself thus as an enemy wishing for his harm wishes for him - this is the meaning.

At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of Devadatta is the sixth.

7. The Story of the Endeavouring to Create a Schism in the Community

163. "Easy to do": the Teacher, while dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the endeavouring for schism in the Community.

For one day Devadatta, endeavouring for schism in the Community, having seen the Venerable Ānanda walking for almsfood, informed him of his own intention. Having heard that, the elder, having gone to the Teacher's presence, said this to the Blessed One - "Here I, venerable sir, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking my bowl and robe, entered Rājagaha for almsfood. Devadatta, venerable sir, saw me walking for almsfood in Rājagaha. Having seen me, he approached me; having approached, he said this to me - 'From this day forth, friend Ānanda, I will perform the Observance and legal acts of the Community apart from the Blessed One, apart from the Community of monks.' Today, Blessed One, Devadatta will break the Community, and he will perform the Observance and legal acts of the Community." When this was said, the Teacher -

"Good is easy for the good, good is difficult for the evil;
Evil is easy for the evil, evil is difficult for the noble ones."

Having uttered this inspired utterance, having said "Ānanda, action harmful to oneself is easy, only beneficial action is difficult to do," he spoke this verse -

163. "Easy to do are unwholesome things, and harmful to oneself;
But what is indeed beneficial and good, that indeed is supremely difficult to do."

Its meaning is - Whatever actions are unwholesome, blameworthy, and harmful to oneself precisely because of being conducive to the realms of misery, those are easy to do. But whatever action is beneficial to oneself because of being conducive to a fortunate world, and good in the sense of being blameless, and conducive to a fortunate world as well as conducive to Nibbāna, that is extremely difficult to do, like turning the Ganges, which slopes towards the east, and making it face westward.

At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of the endeavouring to create a schism in the Community is the seventh.

8. The Story of the Elder Monk Kāla

164. "Whoever protests against the teaching" - the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the Elder Kāla.

It is said that in Sāvattthī a certain woman, standing in the position of mother, attended upon that elder monk. People in her neighbour's house, having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher and having come back, praised thus: "Oh, Buddhas are indeed marvellous! Oh, the proclamation of the Teaching is sweet!" That woman, having heard their talk, informed him: "Venerable sir, I too wish to hear the Teacher's proclamation of the Teaching." He prevented her, saying "Do not go there." She, on the following day and the following day too - up to the third time, even though being prevented by him, remained willing to hear. But why did he prevent her? For thus it occurred to him - "Having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher, she will break away from me." She, one day, right early, having eaten the morning meal, having taken upon herself the Observance, having commanded her daughter "Dear girl, serve the noble one well," went to the monastery. Her daughter too, having served that monk when he came at the proper time, when asked "Where is the great female lay follower?" said "She has gone to the monastery for hearing the Teaching." He, having merely heard that, being tormented by a burning arisen in his belly, thinking "Now she has broken away from me," having gone quickly, having seen her listening to the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher, said to the Teacher: "Venerable sir, this woman is slow-witted and does not understand a subtle talk on the Teaching. It is proper, without speaking to her a subtle talk on the Teaching connected with the aggregates and so on, to speak a talk on giving or a talk on morality." The Teacher, having known his disposition, said: "You, lacking wisdom, in dependence on an evil view, protest against the teaching of the Buddhas. You strive only for your own destruction" - and having said this, he spoke this verse -

164. "Whoever protests against the teaching of the Worthy Ones, the noble ones living righteously;
The imprudent one, relying on an evil view;

Like the fruits of the bamboo tree, he bears fruit for his own destruction."

Its meaning is - Whatever imprudent person, out of fear of loss of honour to himself, in dependence on an evil view, protesting when they say "We shall hear the Teaching" or "We shall give gifts," protests against the teaching of the Worthy Ones, the noble ones living righteously, the Buddhas - that protest of his and that evil view are like the fruits of the bamboo tree, which is called a reed. Therefore, just as the bamboo tree, bearing fruits, splits open for its own destruction, bears fruit only for the purpose of its own destruction, so too he bears fruit for his own destruction. And this too was said -

"Fruit indeed kills the plantain, fruit the bamboo, fruit the reed;
Honour kills a contemptible person, as the embryo kills the mule."

At the conclusion of the teaching, the female lay follower became established in the fruition of stream-entry, and the proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial to the assembly that had arrived as well.

The story of the Elder Monk Kāla is the eighth.

9. The Story of the Lay Follower Cūḷakāla

165. "Indeed, done by oneself" - the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the lay follower Cūḷakāla.

For one day, in the same manner as stated in the story of Mahākāla, tunnel-thieves, being pursued by the owners, having thrown down a bundle in front of that lay follower who, having heard the talk on the Teaching at the monastery at night, had departed from the monastery right early and was coming to Sāvattthī, fled. People, having seen him, beat him saying "This one, having done the work of thieves at night, goes about as if listening to the Teaching; seize him!" Water-carrying slave women, going to the water landing place, having seen him, released him saying "Go away, sirs, this one does not do such a thing." He, having gone to the monastery, reported to the monks: "Venerable sir, I was attacked by people; in dependence on the water-carrying slave women, my life was obtained." The monks reported that matter to the Truth-finder. The Teacher, having heard their talk, said: "Monks, the lay follower Cūḷakāla obtained his life in dependence on the water-carrying slave women and by the fact of his own non-performance. For indeed these beings, having done evil action by themselves, become defiled by themselves in hell and so on, but having done wholesome deeds, going to a fortunate world and to Nibbāna, they become pure by themselves" - and having said this, he spoke this verse -

165. "Indeed, evil done by oneself, by oneself one becomes defiled;
Evil not done by oneself, by oneself one becomes pure;
Purity and impurity are individual, no one can purify another."

Its meaning is - By whichever self unwholesome action has been done, he, experiencing suffering in the four realms of misery, becomes defiled by himself. But by whichever self evil has not been done, he, going to a fortunate world and to Nibbāna, becomes pure by himself. Purity reckoned as wholesome action and

impurity reckoned as unwholesome action individually ripen for the doer beings by themselves alone. One person cannot purify another person - he neither purifies nor defiles - this is what is said.

At the conclusion of the teaching, Cūḷakāla became established in the fruition of stream-entry, and the proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial to the assembly that had arrived as well.

The story of the lay follower Cūḷakāla is the ninth.

10. The Story of the Elder Monk Attadattha

166. The Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the Elder Attadattha, beginning with "One's own welfare."

For when the Teacher, at the time of final Nibbāna, said "Monks, I shall attain final Nibbāna after the elapse of four months from now," seven hundred worldling monks, in whom religious urgency had arisen, not leaving the Teacher's presence, went about consulting together "What indeed shall we do, friend?" But the Elder Attadattha thought - "The Teacher, it is said, will attain final Nibbāna after the elapse of four months; and I am not free from lust; while the Teacher is still living, I shall strive for the sake of arahantship." He does not go to the presence of the monks. Then the monks, having said to him "Why, friend, do you neither come to our presence nor discuss anything?" led him to the Teacher's presence and reported "This one, venerable sir, acts in such and such a way." When the Teacher too said "Why do you act thus?" he replied "You, venerable sir, it is said, will attain final Nibbāna after the elapse of four months; I shall strive for the attainment of arahantship while you are still living." The Teacher, having given him applause, said "Monks, whoever has affection for me, by him it is proper to be like Attadattha. For those who venerate me with scents and so on do not venerate me; but those who venerate me by practice in accordance with the Teaching venerate me. Therefore by others too one should be just like Attadattha" - having said this, he spoke this verse -

166. "One should not neglect one's own welfare for another's welfare, even for much;
Having understood one's own welfare, one should be devoted to one's own good."

Its meaning is - First, as householders, one should not neglect one's own welfare even to the extent of a farthing for another's welfare even to the extent of a thousand. For even to the extent of a farthing, it is one's own welfare alone that would produce solid food or soft food, not another's welfare. But this was not spoken thus; it was spoken with the meditation subject as the lead. Therefore, saying "I am not neglecting my own welfare," a monk should not neglect a duty that has arisen for the Community such as the restoration of a shrine and so on, or the duty to the preceptor and so on. For it is precisely while fulfilling the duty of the fundamentals of conduct that one realises the noble fruitions and so on; therefore this too is one's own welfare itself. But whoever, with exceedingly strenuous insight, goes about aspiring for penetration thinking "today or tomorrow," by him, having even set aside the duties to the preceptor and so on, only his own task should be done. For having understood such one's own welfare, having considered "This is my own welfare," "one should be

devoted to one's own good" means one should be energetically engaged and applied in that welfare of one's own.

At the conclusion of the teaching, that elder became established in arahantship, and the proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial to the monks who had arrived as well.

The story of the Elder Monk Attadattha is the tenth.

The commentary on the Self Chapter is concluded.

The twelfth chapter.



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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