

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
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5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya -
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09. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns (09. Therīgāthā-
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

09. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns

13. The Book of the Twenties

1. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Ambapālī

252-270. In the Twentieth Nipāta, the verses beginning with "Black, like the colour of wasps" and so on are those of the Elder Nun Ambapālī. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, having gone forth in the Dispensation of the Blessed One Sikhī, having become fully ordained, dwelling having undertaken the training rules of a nun, one day, together with many nuns, having paid homage to a shrine and circumambulating it, a lump of spittle suddenly spat out by an elder nun who had eliminated the mental corruptions, who was going ahead, fell on the shrine courtyard; when the elder nun who had eliminated the mental corruptions had gone without seeing it, this one, going behind, having seen that lump of spittle, reviled saying "What courtesan indeed dropped a lump of spittle in this place?" She, during her time as a nun, guarding morality, being disgusted with dwelling in a womb, fixed her mind on a spontaneously born individual existence. Therefore, in her final individual existence, she was spontaneously born at the foot of a mango tree in a royal garden at Vesālī. Having seen her, the park keeper brought her to the city. Because she was born at the foot of a mango tree, she was called "Ambapālī." Then, having seen her lovely, beautiful, pleasing, endowed with distinguished qualities such as charm, loveliness, and so on, many princes, each desirous of making her their own possession, made a dispute with one another. For the purpose of appeasing their dispute, judges instigated by her action established her in the position of a courtesan, saying "Let her belong to all." She, having gained faith in the Teacher, having built a monastery in her own park and having dedicated it to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, afterwards, having heard the Teaching in the presence of her son, the Elder Vimalakoṇḍañña, having gone forth, doing the work of insight, in dependence on the state of being aged and decrepit of her own body, with a sense of urgency arisen, making clear the impermanence of activities -

252. "Black, like the colour of wasps, with curly tips, my hair was;
Now through ageing, like hemp fibres, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
253. "Like a perfumed casket, fragrant, filled with flowers, was my hair on the head;
Now through ageing, it smells like animal hair, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
254. Like a grove, dense and well-planted, adorned with tips arranged by comb and needle;
That, through ageing, sparse here and there, the word of the truth-speaker is

not otherwise.

255. "Adorned with gold upon the dark mass of hair, it shone beautifully, decorated with lovely braids;
That head, through ageing, has been made bald, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
256. "Like lines well drawn by a painter, my eyebrows were beautiful before;
Now through ageing, hanging down with wrinkles, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
257. "Bright and very beautiful like gems, my eyes were deep blue and elongated;
They, struck by ageing, are not beautiful, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
258. "And my nose, smooth and prominent, shone beautifully towards the bloom of youth;
Now through ageing, as if shrivelled, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
259. "Like a bracelet well made, well finished, my earlobes were beautiful before;
Now through ageing, hanging down with wrinkles, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
260. "Like the colour of a plantain bud, my teeth were beautiful before;
Now through ageing, broken and discoloured, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
261. "Wandering in the jungle thicket in the forest, like a cuckoo I warbled sweetly;
That, through ageing, falters here and there, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
262. "Like a smooth conch-shell well polished, my neck was beautiful before;
Now through ageing, broken and bent, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
263. "Both like round cross-bars in comparison, my arms were beautiful before;
Now through ageing, like withered trumpet-flower branches, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
264. "Adorned with smooth signet rings of gold, my hands were beautiful before;
Now through ageing, like roots and tubers, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
265. "Both plump, round, joined together and upraised, my breasts were beautiful before;
Like water-skins they hang down, without water, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
266. "Like a polished golden plank, my body shone beautifully before;

Now it is covered with fine wrinkles, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.

267. "Both like an elephant's trunk in comparison, my thighs were beautiful before; Now through ageing, like bamboo tubes, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
268. "Adorned with smooth golden anklets, my calves were beautiful before; Now through ageing, like sesame stalks, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
269. "Both like cotton-stuffed cushions in comparison, my feet were beautiful before; Now through ageing, cracked and wrinkled, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise.
270. "Such was this body, decrepit, the abode of many sufferings; With its plaster fallen off, a house of ageing, the word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise."

She spoke these verses.

Therein, "black" means of black colour. "Like the colour of wasps" means though being black, of a colour similar to wasps; the meaning is glossy blue. "With curly tips" means with curled tips; the meaning is curled and twisted from the root up to the tips. "Head-born" means hair. "Through ageing" means because of ageing, with beauty destroyed by ageing. "Like hemp fibres" means like hemp and like bark fibres; the meaning is also like hemp fibres and like bow-string hemp fibres. "The word of the truth-speaker is not otherwise" means the utterance of the truth-speaker, the unerring speaker, the Perfectly Enlightened One, beginning with "all matter is impermanent, overcome by ageing," is not otherwise, it is just as it really is; there is no falsehood therein.

"Like a perfumed casket, fragrant" means fragrant like a toiletry box perfumed with flower-scent, perfumed powder and so on, made to take on fragrance. "Filled with flowers, my hair on the head" means formerly my tress of hair, filled with champaka, jasmine, Arabian jasmine and other flowers, was pure - this is the meaning. "That" refers to the hair on the head. Then afterwards, now it has become having the smell of animal hair, just the natural smell of body hair. Or alternatively, "having the smell of animal hair" means having the same odour as ram's wool. They also say "the smell of goat wool."

"Like a grove, dense and well-planted" means like a nearby forest that is well planted, dense, with compact arrangement, rising only upward, with straight long branches. "Adorned with tips arranged by comb and needle" means formerly, having been adorned with tips arranged by disentangling the matted hair with a comb and a golden needle; or having become like a comb in density, adorned by the arrangement of tips with coral-toothed hairpins. "That" refers to the hair on the head. "Sparse here and there" means with hair fallen out, sparse here and there.

"Adorned with gold on the dark mass" means a mass of dark hair decorated with gold,

diamonds and so on. But those who read "saṇhakaṇḍakasuvaṇṇamaṇḍita," for them the meaning is adorned by disentangling the matted hair with smooth golden needles. "Shines adorned with beautiful braids" means having been adorned with braids of hair similar to garlands of royal trees, it shone formerly. "That head through ageing has been made bald" means that head, thus adorned, has now through ageing been made bald, with hair fallen out in patches here and there.

"Like lines well drawn by a painter" means it shines like lines well drawn with blue colour pigment by a painter, a craftsman. "Beautiful eyebrows before were mine" means beautiful eyebrows formerly attained beauty for me. "Hanging down with wrinkles" means standing hanging down with wrinkles arisen at the edge of the forehead.

"Bhassarā" means bright. "Surucirā" means very beautiful. "Yathā maṇī" means like a jewel-ring. "Nettahesuṃ" means they were beautiful eyes. "Abhinīlamāyatā" means having been deeply blue and extended. "Te" means the eyes. "Jarāyabhihatā" means struck by ageing.

"Saṇhatuṅgasadisī ca" means smooth, prominent, and proportionate to the remaining facial features. "Sobhate" means my nose shines like a line of yellow orpiment rounded and placed. "Su abhiyobbanaṃ patī" means in the beautiful time of fresh youth; that nose has now, through ageing, with its beauty obstructed, become as if steamed, and like a leather strap.

"Kaṇkaṇaṃva sukataṃ suniṭṭhitaṃ" means she speaks with reference to the circular shape, like a well-prepared golden bracelet. "Sobhare" means they shine. Or the reading is "sobhante." "Su" is merely a particle. "Kaṇṇapāḷiyo" means the ear-lobes. "Valibhippalambitā" means having become wrinkled by wrinkles arisen here and there, they fall down and hang like bundles of cloth stretched out on a lathe.

"Pattalīmakulavaṇṇasādisā" means having the colour and shape similar to a plantain bud. "Khaṇḍitā" means broken by breaking and falling, having gone to a state of brokenness. "Asitā" means having gone to a state of blackness through change of colour.

"Wandering in the jungle thicket in the forest, like a cuckoo I warbled sweetly" means wandering in the jungle thicket by way of frequenting the feeding ground, like a cuckoo dwelling in the forest singing along, I warbled a sweet utterance. "Taṃ" means the warbled utterance. "Khalitaṃ tahiṃ tahiṃ" means due to the condition of broken teeth and so on, it has become stumbling here and there.

"Saṇhakamburiva suppaṃajjitā" means like a smooth golden conch-shell well polished. "Bhaggā vināmitā" means through the wasting away of flesh, with the network of veins on the head having become visible, it is broken and bent.

"Vaṭṭapalighasadisopamā" means exactly equal to a round cross-bar stick. "Tā" means those two arms. "Yathā pāṭalibbalitā" means resembling the withered branches of a trumpet-flower tree due to the state of decrepitude.

"Saṇhamuddikasuvaṇṇamaṇḍitā" means decorated with signet rings made of gold, polished and bright. "Yathā mūlamūlikā" means resembling radish tubers.

"Pīnavaṭṭasahituggatā" means plump, round, joined together as if one, and risen upward-facing. "Sobhate su thanakā pure mamā" means my two breasts, having been of the aforesaid form, shone like golden water-pots. For this is a singular used in the sense of a plural, and a present tense expression used in a past sense. "Thevikīva lambanti nodakā" means those two breasts of mine, without water, with their liquid drained, hang like water-bags of ashes placed on a bamboo stick.

"Polished like a golden plank" means it shines like a golden plank that has been smeared with natural vermilion and polished for a long time. "It is covered with fine wrinkles" means that body of mine is now spread here and there with fine wrinkles, having become wrinkled-skinned.

"Like the coil of a noble elephant in simile" means equal to the trunk of a noble elephant. For here the trunk is called "bhoga" because one consumes by means of it - thus it is said. "Te" means the thighs. "Like bamboo tubes" means now they were like bamboo joints.

"Adorned with smooth golden anklets" means decorated with smooth, polished golden anklets. "Jaṅghā" means the bony calves of the legs. "Tā" means those calves. "Like sesame stalks" means because of having little flesh and blood, through emaciation, they were like sesame stalks left over after reaping, dried up. The letter "ra" serves as a word-connector.

"Like filled with cotton in simile" means like sandals wrapped with silk-cotton tree cotton, through being soft and smooth. Those feet of mine are now cracked and split, wrinkled, having become wrinkled.

"Ediso" means of such a form. "Ahu" means it was, of the aforesaid nature. "This body" means this body of mine. "Decrepit" means loosely bound. "The abode of many sufferings" means having become the abode of many sufferings caused by ageing and so on. "Sopalepapatito" means this body has fallen without its coating, fallen through the utter elimination of the coating of volitional activities, facing downfall - this is the meaning. Or the word-analysis is "so pi alepapatito"; the meaning is the same. "A house of ageing" means like a decrepit house. Or it had become a house for ageing. Therefore the word of my Teacher, the Perfectly Enlightened One, the truth-speaker, the unerring speaker, who having known the intrinsic nature of phenomena as they really are, speaks of them properly, is not otherwise.

Thus this elder nun, having reflected upon impermanence in all phenomena of the three planes through the approach of discerning impermanence in her own individual existence, and in accordance with that having applied the characteristic of suffering and the characteristic of non-self therein, striving in insight, attained arahantship by the succession of paths. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"He whose garland was touched by rays, the great sage named Phussa;
I was his sister, I was born in a warrior family.

"Having heard his teaching, with a clear mind;
Having given a great gift, I aspired to accomplishment of beauty.

"Thirty-one cosmic cycles ago from now, Sikhī, the chief leader of the world;

Arose as the light of the world, the refuge of the three worlds, the Conqueror.

"In that charming city of Aruṇa, born of a brahmin family;
Angry, I cursed a nun with a liberated mind.

"Like prostitutes, of misconduct, corrupters of the Conqueror's Dispensation;
Having thus reviled, by that evil action.

"Having gone to the cruel hell, consigned to great suffering;
Passed away from there among human beings, reborn as a female ascetic.

"For ten thousand births, I made myself a courtesan;
From that evil I would not be freed, like one having eaten deadly poison.

"I practised the holy life in the Conqueror's Dispensation under Kassapa;
By the result of that action, I was born in the city of the Thirty-three heaven.

"When the final existence was attained, I was spontaneously born;
Born among the mango branches, therefore I am called Ambapālī.

"Surrounded by tens of millions of living beings, I went forth in the Conqueror's
Dispensation;
I have attained the unshakeable state, a legitimate daughter of the Buddha.

"And I am a master in supernormal powers, in the purification of the ear-
element;
In the knowledge of others' mental states, I am a master, O great sage.

"I know past lives, the divine eye has been purified;
With all mental corruptions eliminated, there is now no more rebirth.

"In meaning, teaching, and language, and likewise in discernment;
My knowledge is spotless, pure, owing to the Buddha, the foremost.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, all existences have been
uprooted;
Like a she-elephant having cut the bond, I dwell without mental corruptions.

"Indeed welcome it was for me, in the presence of the Buddha, the foremost;
The three true knowledges have been attained, the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled.

"The four analytical knowledges, and these eight deliverances;
The six higher knowledges have been realised, the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, having reviewed her own practice, by way of an
inspired utterance she recited those very verses.

The commentary on the verses of the Elder Nun Ambapālī is concluded.

2. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Rohinī

271-291. The verses of the Elder Nun Rohinī beginning with "Ascetics, dear lady, you sleep." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, ninety-one cosmic cycles ago from now, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, one day, having seen the Blessed One walking for almsfood in the city of Bandhumatī, having taken the bowl, having filled it with cake, having given it to the Blessed One, filled with joy and happiness, paid homage with the fivefold prostration. She, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, gradually having accumulated the requisites for deliverance, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in the house of a brahmin of great wealth in Vesālī, having received the name Rohinī, having attained discretion, while the Teacher was dwelling at Vesālī, having gone to the monastery, having heard the Teaching, having become a stream-enterer, having expounded the Teaching to her mother and father, having aroused confidence in the Dispensation, having obtained their permission, having gone forth by herself, doing the work of insight, before long attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. Therefore it was said -

"In the city of Bandhumatī, of Vipassī, the great sage;
Wandering for almsfood, I gave a cake then.

"By that well-done action, and by volition and aspirations;
Having gladdened my mind there, I went to Tāvatiṃsa.

"I attained the status of chief queen of thirty-six kings of gods;
I attained the status of chief queen of fifty universal monarchs.

"Whatever was wished for by mind, all succeeded for me;
Having experienced success, among gods and humans.

"When the final existence was attained, I was born in a brahmin family;
Rohinī by name, held dear by relatives.

"Having gone to the presence of monks, having heard the Teaching according to truth;
Having become one with a stirred mind, I went forth into homelessness.

"Wisely striving, I attained arahantship;
Ninety-one cosmic cycles ago from now, the gift that I gave then;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of the gift of cake.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, having reviewed her own practice, speaking by way of an inspired utterance the verses spoken formerly at the time of being a stream-enterer by way of words and replies between her father and herself -

271. "'Ascetics,' dear lady, you sleep, 'ascetics,' you awake;

You praise only ascetics, surely you will become a female ascetic.

272. "Abundant food and drink you give to the ascetics;
Rohinī, now I ask you, why are the ascetics dear to you?
273. "Unwilling to work, lazy, living on what is given by others;
Hopeful, lovers of sweet things, why are the ascetics dear to you?
274. "At long last indeed, dear father, you inquire of me about the ascetics;
I will explain to you their wisdom, morality and effort.
275. "Loving work, not lazy, doers of the foremost work;
They abandon lust and hate, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
276. "The three roots of evil, those who act purely shake off;
All evil has been abandoned by them, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
277. "Their bodily action is pure, and their verbal action is such;
Their mental action is pure, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
278. "Spotless like a conch shell or pearl, pure within and without;
Full of bright qualities, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
279. "Very learned, bearers of the Teaching, noble ones, living righteously by the
Teaching;
They teach the meaning and the Teaching, therefore the ascetics are dear to
me.
280. "Very learned, bearers of the Teaching, noble ones, living righteously by the
Teaching;
With unified minds, mindful, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
281. "Going afar, mindful, speaking with wisdom, unagitated;
They understand the end of suffering, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
282. From whatever village they depart, they do not look back at anything;
They go without longing, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
283. "They do not store their own in granaries, nor in jars, nor in baskets;
Seeking what is already prepared, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
284. "They do not take unwrought gold, nor gold nor money;
They sustain themselves with the present, therefore the ascetics are dear to
me.
285. "Gone forth from various families, and from various countries;
They cherish one another, therefore the ascetics are dear to me.
286. "Indeed for our benefit, dear lady, you were born in this family, Rohinī;
With faith in the Buddha and the Teaching, and with keen respect for the
Community.

287. "For you understand this, the unsurpassed field of merit;
These ascetics accept offerings from us too.
288. "The sacrifice is established here, it will be fruitful for us;
If you fear suffering, if suffering is unpleasant to you.
289. "Go to the Buddha, the Teaching, and such a Community for refuge;
Take upon yourself the moralities, that will be for your benefit.
290. "I go to the Buddha, the Teaching, and such a Community for refuge;
I take upon myself the moralities, that will be for my benefit."
291. "Formerly I was a kinsman of Brahma, now I am a brahmin;
I am a possessor of the threefold true knowledge, a learned one, one who has
attained the highest knowledge, and I am one who has bathed."

She recited these verses.

Therein, the first three verses were spoken by one not wishing his own daughter's devotion to the monks. Therein, "'Ascetics,' dear lady, you sleep" means dear lady, you, even at the time of sleeping, praising "ascetics, ascetics," speaking only talk connected with ascetics, you sleep. "'Ascetics,' you awake" means even when rising from sleep, having said "ascetics" thus, you awake, you arise from sleep. "You praise only ascetics" means at all times you praise, you extol only ascetics or only the virtues of ascetics. "Surely you will become a female ascetic" means even though standing in the form of a laywoman, in mind you will, methinks, be a female ascetic indeed. Or alternatively, "surely you will become a female ascetic" means even though now standing in the form of a laywoman, before long you will, methinks, become a female ascetic indeed, because of your inclination and tendency towards ascetics alone.

"You give" (paveccchasi) means you gave. "Rohinī, now I ask" means: mother Rohinī, I now ask you - thus the brahmin said, asking his own daughter. "Why are the ascetics dear to you" means: mother Rohinī, whether you are sleeping or waking or at other times too, you praise only the virtues of the ascetics; the meaning is: for what reason indeed have the ascetics become those to be held dear by you?

Now the brahmin, pointing out the fault in the ascetics to his daughter, spoke the verse "unwilling to work." Therein, "unwilling to work" (akammakāmā) means not willing to work, not desirous of doing any work that brings benefit to oneself and others. "Lazy" (alasā) means idle. "Living on what is given by others" (paradattūpajīvino) means habitually subsisting only on what is given by others. "Expectant" (āsaṃsukā) means those who, from that very source, hope for food, clothing, and so on. "Desiring what is sweet" (sādukāmā) means those who desire only sweet, pleasant food. All this the brahmin said as fault imagined by himself alone, not knowing the virtues of the ascetics.

Having heard that, Rohinī, with a satisfied mind thinking "Now I have obtained the opportunity to speak of the virtues of the noble ones," wishing to praise the virtues of the monks, first declaring her pleasure in praising them, spoke the verse "At long last indeed, father." Therein, "at long last indeed" (cirassaṃ vata) means after a long

time, indeed. "Father" (tāta) - she addresses her father. "Ascetics" (samaṇānaṃ) - you inquire about the ascetics, or about why the ascetics should be held dear by me. "Of them" (tesaṃ) means of the ascetics. "Wisdom, morality, and endeavour" (paññāsīlaparakkama) means wisdom and morality and effort.

"I will explain" (kittayissāmi) means I will relate. Having acknowledged, praising them, in order to first unravel the fault stated by him as "unwilling to work, lazy" and to show the virtue that is the opposite of that, she said beginning with "loving work." Therein, "loving work" (kammakāmā) means they desire, they wish for work - the ascetic duty distinguished as duties and counter-duties and so on - by way of fulfilment; thus they are "loving work." Therein, having been properly engaged, by rising up, exerting themselves, and striving, they are not lazy; thus "not lazy" (analaṣā). But they do that work as foremost, highest, conducive only to Nibbāna; thus they are "doers of the foremost work" (kammaseṭṭhassa kārakā). But while doing that, because of the blameless nature of the practice, they abandon lust and hate; in such a way that lust and hate are abandoned, thus the ascetics do their work. "Therefore the ascetics are dear to me" means the meaning is: by that aforesaid right practice, the ascetics are to be held dear by me.

"The three roots of evil" means the three roots of the unwholesome, reckoned as greed, hate, and delusion. "They shake off" (dhunanti) means they destroy; the meaning is they abandon. "Those who act purely" (sucikārino) means those who perform blameless actions. "All evil has been abandoned by them" means by the achievement of the highest path, all evil has been abandoned by them.

Thus, in order to analyse and show the meaning stated in brief as "the ascetics are those who act purely," she spoke the verse "bodily action." That is easily understood.

"Spotless like conch shells and pearls" (vimalā saṅkhamuttāvā) means free from stain like well-washed conch shells and like pearls, devoid of the stains of lust and so on.

"Pure within and without" (suddhā santarabāhirā) means the inner and the outer is within and without. From that, pure within and without; the meaning is pure in disposition and practice. "Full of bright qualities" (puṇṇā sukkāna dhammānaṃ) means completely full of exclusively bright, blameless qualities; the meaning is endowed with the aggregates of morality and so on of one beyond training.

"Much learning beginning with discourses, mixed prose and verse, and so on belongs to them, or they have arisen through learning" thus they are very learned; the meaning is endowed with great learning of the scriptures and great learning of penetration. "They bear that very twofold Teaching" thus they are bearers of the Teaching. "They guide beings by the training rule of good conduct and conduct" thus they are noble. "They live by the Teaching, by the true method" thus they are living righteously. "They teach the meaning and the Teaching" means they speak about and make known both the meaning of what is said and the Teaching of the exposition. Or alternatively, they teach and declare what is not deviating from meaning and not deviating from the Teaching.

"With unified minds" means with concentrated minds. "Mindful" means having established mindfulness.

"Going far" means gone to the forest, having left the precincts of humans, going far away; or by the power of supernormal power, going to a far place according to their liking - thus they are going far. "Mantā" is called wisdom; by the habit of speaking with that, they are speakers of wisdom. "Not agitated" means unagitated, free from restlessness, with quietened minds. "They understand the end of suffering" means they penetrate Nibbāna, which is the limit of the suffering of the round of rebirths.

"They do not look back at anything" means from whatever village they depart, they do not look at any being or activity in that village by way of longing; rather, they go and depart without longing.

"They do not store in granaries" means those ascetics do not store their own property and wealth in granaries, they do not put it away and keep it, because of the absence of such possession. "Kumbhin" means in a jar. "Khaḷopiya" means in a hand-basket. "Seeking what is already prepared" means seeking food that is already prepared for the benefit of others in other families.

"Hirañña" means a coin. "Rūpiya" means silver. "They sustain themselves with the present" means not sorrowing over the past and not longing for the future, they sustain themselves with the present, they maintain their individual existence.

"They cherish one another" means they show friendliness towards one another. "Pihāyanti" is also a reading; the meaning is the same.

Thus that brahmin, having heard the virtues of the monks in the presence of his daughter, with a gladdened mind, praising his daughter, said beginning with "For the benefit indeed" and so on.

"Amhampi" means for us too. "Dakkhiṇa" means a gift.

"Here" means regarding those ascetics. "Yañña" means the practice of giving. "Vipula" means of abundant fruit. The remainder is according to the method already stated.

Thus the brahmin, having established himself in the refuges and in the precepts, at a later time, with religious emotion arisen, having gone forth, having developed insight, having become established in arahantship, having reviewed his own practice, uttering an inspired utterance, spoke the verse "kinsman of Brahma." Its meaning has been stated above.

The commentary on the verses of the Elder Nun Rohinī is concluded.

3. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Cāpā

292-312. The verses of the elder nun Cāpā beginning with "Before he held a staff in hand." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, gradually with accumulated wholesome roots, with the requisites of deliverance stored up, in this arising of a Buddha, was reborn as the daughter of the chief deer-hunter in a certain deer-hunter's village in the Vaṅgahāra country; her name was Cāpātissā. And at that time, Upaka the naked ascetic, having met the Teacher who was going from the seat of enlightenment towards Bārāṇasī to set in

motion the wheel of the Teaching, having asked "Your faculties are indeed very clear, friend, your complexion is pure and bright! With reference to whom have you gone forth, friend, or who is your Teacher, or whose Teaching do you approve of?" -

"I am the all-conquering one, the all-knowing one, untainted by all phenomena; Having abandoned all, liberated through the elimination of craving, having directly known by myself, whom should I point to as teacher?

"I have no teacher, no one equal to me is found;
In the world including the gods, there is no one who is my match.

"For I am a Worthy One in the world, I am the unsurpassed Teacher;
I alone am the Perfectly Enlightened One, become cool, quenched.

"To set in motion the wheel of the Teaching, I am going to the city of Kāsi;
In the world that has become blind, I will beat the drum of the Deathless."

When the Teacher had declared his own state of omniscient Buddhahood and the setting in motion of the wheel of the Teaching, he, with a confident mind, having said "May it be so, friend, you deserve to be the infinite conqueror," having taken a side path, departed and went to the Vaṅgahāra country. There he made his dwelling in dependence on a certain deer-hunter's small village. There the chief deer-hunter attended upon him. He, one day, going far away to hunt, having commanded his own daughter Cāpā "Do not be negligent towards my Worthy One," departed together with his sons and brothers. And that daughter of his was lovely and beautiful to see.

Then Upaka the naked ascetic, having gone to the deer-hunter's house at the time for the alms round, having seen Cāpā who had approached to serve food, overcome by lust, being unable even to eat, having taken the meal in a vessel, having gone to his dwelling place, having put the meal aside, lay down without food, thinking "If I obtain Cāpā, I shall live; if not, I shall die." On the seventh day, the deer-hunter, having come, asked his daughter - "Have you not been negligent towards my Worthy One?" She said: "Having come for just one day, he has not come again." And the deer-hunter, at that very moment having gone to his dwelling place, asked while stroking his feet: "What is it, venerable sir, are you unwell?" Upaka just kept turning over, groaning. He said: "Speak, venerable sir, whatever I am able to do, all that I shall do." Upaka, by one method of exposition, informed him of his own disposition. "But do you know, venerable sir, any craft?" "I do not know." "Venerable sir, it is not possible for one not knowing any craft to dwell in a house." He said - "I do not know any craft, but I shall be a meat-carrier for you, and I shall sell meat." The huntsman, saying "That itself pleases us too," having given him an upper garment, having made him dwell at his own friend's house for a few days, on such a day having brought him to the house, gave him his daughter.

Then, as time passed, from their living together a son was born; they gave him the name Subhadda. Cāpā, at the time of his crying, mocked Upaka with a song for soothing the child, such as "Son of Upaka, son of a naked ascetic, son of a meat-carrier, do not cry, do not cry." He said: "Do not think me destitute, Cāpā; I have a friend named the Infinite Conqueror, I shall go to his presence." Cāpā, having known "Thus this one is troubled," spoke in that same way again and again. One day, having

been thus spoken to by her, having become angry, he began to go. Even though being conciliated by her saying this and that, not coming to acceptance, he departed facing the western direction.

And the Blessed One at that time, while dwelling at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, informed the monks - "Whoever, monks, today comes here and asks 'Where is the Infinite Conqueror?' send him to my presence." And Upaka too, asking here and there "Where does the Infinite Conqueror dwell?" having gradually gone to Sāvattthī, having entered the monastery, having stood in the middle of the monastery, asked "Where is the Infinite Conqueror?" The monks led him to the presence of the Blessed One. He, having seen the Blessed One, said: "Do you know me, Blessed One?" "Yes, I know you. But where have you been living for so long a time?" "In the Vaṅgahāra country, venerable sir." "Upaka, now that you have become old, will you be able to go forth?" "I shall go forth, venerable sir." The Teacher commanded a certain monk - "Come, monk, give the going forth to this one." He gave him the going forth. He, having gone forth, having taken a meditation subject in the presence of the Teacher, devoting himself to meditation, before long, having become established in the fruition of non-returning, having died, was reborn in the Aviha realm; at the very moment of rebirth he attained arahantship. Seven persons, merely upon being reborn in the Aviha realm, attained arahantship; he was one of them. For this was said:

"Seven monks, liberated, have been reborn in Aviha;
With lust and hate eliminated, they have crossed over attachment in the world.

"Upaka and Palagaṇḍa, and Pakkusāti, those three;
Bhaddiya and Khaṇḍadeva, and Bāhuraggi and Siṅgiya;
They, having abandoned the human body, have overcome the divine bond."

But when Upaka had departed, Cāpā, with a disenchanted heart, having handed over the child to his grandfather, going by the path formerly gone by Upaka, having gone to Sāvattthī, having gone forth in the presence of the nuns, doing the work of insight, having become established in arahantship by the succession of paths, having reviewed her own practice, having combined together the verses formerly spoken by Upaka and by herself, by way of an inspired utterance -

292. "Before he held a staff in hand, now he is a deer-hunter;
Through hope he sank into a terrible mire, he was not able to reach the beyond.
293. "Thinking me well-intoxicated, Cāpā also pleased the son;
Having cut the bond to Cāpā, I shall go forth again."
294. "Do not be angry with me, great hero, do not be angry with me, great sage;
For indeed, for one afflicted by wrath, there is no purity, how much less austere asceticism.
295. "I shall depart from Nāḷā, who here will remain in Nāḷā;
Binding ascetics living righteously by the Teaching with her womanly form.

296. "Come, Kāḷa, turn back, enjoy sensual pleasures as before;
Both I and my relatives are brought under your control.
297. "From here, Cāpā, a quarter part, as you speak to me;
For a man attached to you, that would indeed be lofty.
298. "Like a dark-limbed woman, a flowering takkāri tree on a mountain top;
Like a pomegranate sapling in full bloom, like a trumpet-flower tree within an island.
299. "Me, with limbs anointed with yellow sandalwood, wearing the finest Kāsi cloth;
Me, such a beautiful one, having left behind, for whose sake do you go.
300. "Just as a fowler wishes to capture a bird;
With this contrived appearance, you will not ensnare me.
301. "And this fruit of a son, Kāḷa, produced by you for me;
Me, such a one with a son, having left behind, for whose sake do you go.
302. "The wise give up sons, then relatives, then wealth;
Great heroes go forth, like an elephant having cut its bond.
303. "Now this son of yours, with a stick or with a dagger,
Or I will dash him to the ground; you will not go because of sorrow for your son.
304. "If you give the son to jackals and dogs,
You will not make me return for the sake of a child, wretched one.
305. "Well now, venerable one, where will you go, Kāḷa;
To which village and market town, city or royal capital?
306. "We were before leaders of groups, not ascetics though thinking ourselves ascetics;
We wandered from village to village, to cities and royal capitals.
307. "For this Blessed One is the Buddha, towards the river Nerañjarā;
For the abandoning of all suffering, he expounds the Teaching to living beings;
I am going to his presence, he will be my Teacher.
308. "Now you should pay my homage to the unsurpassed lord of the world;
And having circumambulated him, you should dedicate the offering.
309. "This indeed can be obtained by us, as you speak to me;
Now I shall pay homage for you to the unsurpassed lord of the world;
And having circumambulated him, I shall dedicate the offering.
310. "Then Kāḷa departed, towards the river Nerañjarā;
He saw the Enlightened by himself, teaching the Deathless state.
311. Suffering, the origin of suffering, and the overcoming of suffering;

The noble eightfold path, leading to the peace of suffering.

312. "Having paid homage to his feet, and having circumambulated him;
Having dedicated the offering to Cāpā, I went forth into homelessness;
The three true knowledges have been attained, the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled."

He spoke these verses.

Therein, "with a staff in hand" means one with a stick in hand. "Formerly" means formerly, in the time of being a wandering ascetic, he was one who went about having taken a stick in hand for the purpose of warding off fierce bulls, dogs, and so on. "He is now a deer-hunter" means he now, through living and eating together with deer-hunters, became a deer-hunter, a huntsman. "Through hope" means through craving. "Āsayā" is also a reading; the meaning is because of disposition. "Into a mire" means from the mire of sensual pleasure and the mire of wrong view. "Terrible" means terrible because of its severity, since it brings vast harm that is unknown. "He was not able to reach the beyond" means he was not able to come to, to go to Nibbāna, which is the beyond of that very mire; he did not succeed - Upaka speaks with reference to himself alone.

"Thinking me well-intoxicated" means regarding me as well intoxicated in herself, having reached a state of vanity, stuck through the power of attachment to sensual pleasure, or having made me heedless. "Cāpā pleased the son" means Cāpā, the daughter of the deer-hunter, offending me with such words as "son of the naked ascetic" and so on, pleased the son, played with him. Some also read "Thinking me asleep"; the meaning is thinking me to be one who sleeps. "Having cut the bond to Cāpā" means having cut the bondage of mental defilements arisen in you, Cāpā. "I shall go forth again" means again, for a second time too, I shall go forth.

Now he says to her "I have no need of you." Having heard that, Cāpā, asking forgiveness, spoke the verse "Do not be angry with me." Therein, "do not be angry with me" means do not be angry with me merely on account of playing. "O great hero, O great sage" - she addresses Upaka. For she, considering him as one who had gone forth before and as one wishing to go forth now too, and expecting patience, said "O great sage." Therefore he said - "For indeed, for one afflicted by wrath, there is no purity, how much less austere asceticism" - the intention is: you, not being able to endure even this much, how will you tame the mind, or how will you practise austere asceticism?

Then, when told by Cāpā "So you wish to go to Nāḷā and live there?" he said - "I shall depart from Nāḷā, who here will remain in Nāḷā" - who will dwell here in Nāḷā? I shall indeed depart from Nāḷā itself. For that was his birth-village; having departed from there, he went forth. And that is in the region near the seat of enlightenment in the country of Magadha; it was said with reference to that. "Binding ascetics living righteously by her womanly form" means: Cāpā, you, binding with your womanly form and with feminine wiles and deportment those who have gone forth, who are righteous, who live by the Teaching, you stand thus. The intention is: because of which I have now become like this, therefore I abandon you.

When this was said, Cāpā, wishing to make him turn back, spoke the verse "Come, Kāḷa." Its meaning is - Because of your dark complexion, Kāḷa, Upaka, come, turn back, do not depart; enjoy sensual pleasures as before; both I and whatever relatives of mine there are, all of them are brought under your control, wielding power over them, through your not wishing to depart.

Having heard that, Upaka spoke the verse beginning with "From here, Cāpā." Therein, "cāpe" means Cāpā (in the vocative). For because she had a bodily stature similar to a bow (cāpa), she obtained the name "Cāpā"; therefore, she is called "Cāpā." You, Cāpā, as you speak, as you now say, you should make only a quarter part of such affectionate behaviour. For a man attached to you, overpowered by lust, that would indeed be lofty; but I am now dispassionate towards you and towards sensual pleasures; therefore I do not stand by Cāpā's words - this is the intention.

Again, Cāpā, wishing to arouse attachment towards herself in him, said "kāḷaṅgini." Therein, "kāḷā" is a vocative addressing him. "Aṅgini" means one accomplished in the beauty of limbs. "Iva" is an indeclinable particle used for comparison. "Takkāriṃ pupphitaṃ girimuddhani" means like a pomegranate sapling in full bloom standing on a mountain top. And some read "ukkāgāri"; the meaning is like a sapling of limb-bones. And "on a mountain top" is said for the purpose of showing beauty unspoilt by anything. Some, stating the reading "kāliṅgini," explain the meaning as similar to a pumpkin creeper. "Phullaṃ dālimalaṭṭhiṃva" means like a flowering pomegranate creeper. "Antodīpeva pāṭali" means like a trumpet-flower tree in bloom within an island; and the mention of the island here is solely for the purpose of showing the wonder of its splendour.

"Haricandalittaṅgi" means one whose entire body is anointed with red sandalwood. "Kāsikuttamadhārini" means one who wears the finest Kāsi cloth. "Taṃ maṃ" means such a me. "Rūpavatiṃ santi" means being one accomplished in beauty. "Kassa ohāya gacchasi" means for the sake of what being, or for what reason, for what cause, having left behind, having abandoned, having relinquished, do you go?

From here onwards too, setting aside only the verses of their speech and reply, there are three verses at the conclusion. Therein, "sākuntiko" means like a bird-hunter. "Āharimena rūpena" means by contrived appearance through the adorning of hair and so on, through the tending of the body, and through garments, ornaments, and so on - by artificial form, beauty, artifice, and skill - this is the meaning. "Na maṃ tvam bādhayissasi" means now, as before, you will not be able to ensnare me.

"Puttaphala" means the fruit reckoned as a son, the offspring of a son.

"Sappaññā" means the wise, endowed with wisdom that discerns the danger in the round of rebirths - this is the intention. For they go forth having abandoned a small or a great circle of relatives or a mass of wealth. Therefore he said - "Great heroes go forth, like an elephant having cut its bond" - like a noble elephant cutting its iron bond, having cut the bondage of the household life, they go forth with great energy only, not with inferior energy - this is the meaning.

"Daṇḍena" means with whatever stick. "Churikāya" means with a razor. "Bhūmiyaṃ vā nisumbhissaṃ" means having thrown him to the ground, I shall harm him by beating, piercing, and so on. "Puttasokā na gacchasi" means you will not go on

account of sorrow for your son.

"Will give" means he will give. "On account of the child" means for the reason of the child. "Wretched one" is a vocative addressing her; the meaning is "inferior one."

Now, having consented to his departure, in order to know the place of his going, she spoke the verse "Well then."

The other, showing "Formerly I stood having taken up a Dispensation not leading to liberation, but now wishing to stand in the Dispensation of the Infinite Conqueror which is leading to liberation, therefore I shall go to his presence," said beginning with "We were." Therein, "having a group" means leaders of a group. "Not ascetics" means not those who have calmed evil. "Deeming themselves ascetics" means those having the perception thus: "We have calmed evil." "We wandered" - he speaks having included himself among Pūraṇa and the others.

"Towards the Nerañjarā" means near the river Nerañjarā, on its bank. "The Buddha" means one who has attained the highest enlightenment; he speaks with the intention that the Blessed One, having attained the highest enlightenment, while expounding the Teaching, dwelt right there at all times.

"Now you should pay my homage" means you should convey my homage; the meaning is you should address the unsurpassed lord of the world in my name. "And having circumambulated, you should dedicate the offering" means having circumambulated the Buddha, the Blessed One, three times and having paid homage at four places, then from that merit, giving the transference of merit to me, you should dedicate the circumambulation. She speaks thus because of having previously heard the qualities of the Buddha and because of being accomplished in the supporting conditions.

"This indeed can be obtained by us" means this merit of performing the circumambulation can be given to you by us, but not the turning back, and the enjoyment of sensual pleasures as before is not possible - this is the intention. "I shall pay your respect" means I shall convey your homage.

"He" means Kāḷa; "he saw" means he saw.

Because in the Teacher's teaching the discourse on the truths is predominant, and because of the absence of anything apart from that, "suffering" and so on was said; the remainder is by the same method as already stated.

The commentary on the verses of the Elder Nun Cāpā is concluded.

4. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Sundarī

313-338. The verses beginning with "Your children have died, dear lady" are the verses of the Elder Nun Sundarī. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, thirty-one cosmic cycles ago from now, in the time of the Blessed One Vessabhū, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, one day, having seen the Teacher walking for almsfood, with a gladdened mind, having given almsfood, paid homage with the fivefold prostration. The Teacher, having known her confidence of mind, having given

thanksgiving, departed. She, by that meritorious action, having been reborn among the Tāvatiṃsa gods, having remained there as long as life lasted, having experienced heavenly success, having passed away from there, wandering again and again only in fortunate destinations, with matured knowledge, in this arising of a Buddha, was reborn as the daughter of a brahmin named Sujāta in Bārāṇasī. Because of her beauty, her name was Sundarī. And when she came of age, her younger brother died. Then her father, overpowered by sorrow for his son, going about here and there, having met with the Elder Nun Vāsiṭṭhī, asking her the means of dispelling that sorrow, spoke two verses beginning with "Your children have died, dear lady." The elder nun, having known him to be overcome by sorrow, wishing to dispel his sorrow, having spoken two verses beginning with "Many hundreds of sons," related her own state of being free from sorrow. Having heard that, the brahmin said "How have you, lady, become thus free from sorrow?" The elder nun related to him the virtues of the Triple Gem.

Then the brahmin, having asked "Where is the Teacher?" having heard "He is now dwelling in Mithilā," at that very moment, having harnessed the chariot, having gone by chariot to Mithilā, having approached the Teacher, having paid homage, having exchanged pleasant talk, sat down to one side. The Teacher expounded the Teaching to him. He, having heard the Teaching, having gained faith, having gone forth, having established insight, striving and endeavouring, on the third day attained arahantship. Then the charioteer, having taken the chariot, having gone to Bārāṇasī, reported that news to the brahmin woman. Sundarī, having heard of her own father's state of having gone forth, asked permission of her mother saying "Mother, I too shall go forth." The mother said "Whatever wealth there is in this house, all that is your own property; you are the heiress of this family, proceed accordingly, consume all this wealth, do not go forth." She, having obtained her mother's permission saying "I have no need for wealth, I shall go forth indeed, mother," having thrown away the great success like a lump of spittle, went forth. And having gone forth, while still being a female trainee, having developed insight, striving and endeavouring, because of being accomplished in the supporting conditions, because her knowledge had reached maturity, together with the analytical knowledges, she attained arahantship. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"As Vessabhū, the great sage, was walking for almsfood;
Having taken up a ladle of almsfood, I gave to the foremost Buddha.

"Having accepted, the Perfectly Enlightened One, Vessabhū, the leader of the world;
The Teacher, standing in the street, gave me thanksgiving.

"Having given a ladle of almsfood, you will go to Tāvatiṃsa;
You will become the chief queen of thirty-six divine kings.

"You will become the chief queen of fifty universal monarchs;
All that is wished for by mind, you will obtain always.

"Having experienced success, you will go forth without possessions;

Having fully understood all mental corruptions, you will attain nibbāna, without mental corruptions.'

"Having said this, the Perfectly Enlightened One, Vessabhū, the leader of the world,
The hero rose up into the sky, like a king of swans in the firmament.

"Well given by me was the excellent gift, well sacrificed was the accomplishment of alms-giving;
Having given a ladle of almsfood, I have attained the unshakeable state.

"Thirty-one cosmic cycles ago from now, the gift that I gave then;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of giving almsfood.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, dwelling in the happiness of fruition and the happiness of Nibbāna, afterwards, having asked permission from her preceptor thinking "I will roar a lion's roar before the Teacher," having departed from Bārāṇasī, together with many nuns, having gone gradually to Sāvattthī, having approached the presence of the Teacher, having paid homage to the Teacher, standing to one side, having been received with friendly welcome by the Teacher, she declared the final liberating knowledge by way of making clear her state as the Teacher's own-born daughter and so on. Then, beginning with her mother, the whole group of kinsmen and the retinue went forth. She, afterwards, having reviewed her own practice, beginning with the verse spoken by her father, by way of an inspired utterance -

313. "Your children have died, dear lady, you who formerly devoured them;
You by day and by night, grieve exceedingly.
314. "Today, having consumed all your hundred sons, brahmin woman;
Vāseṭṭhi, by what reason do you not grieve excessively?
315. "Many hundreds of sons, and hundreds of congregations of kinsmen;
Were consumed in the past, both mine and yours, brahmin.
316. "I, having known the escape from birth and from death;
I do not grieve, I do not weep, nor did I worry.
317. "Wonderful indeed, Vāseṭṭhi, you speak such a word;
Whose Teaching have you understood, that you speak such an utterance?
318. "This one, brahmin, is the Perfectly Enlightened One, towards the city of Mithilā;
For the abandoning of all suffering, he expounded the Teaching to living beings.
319. "Having heard the Teaching from that Worthy One, O brahmin, free from clinging;

There having cognised the Good Teaching, I dispelled my sorrow for my son.

320. "So I too shall go, towards the city of Mithilā;
Perhaps that Blessed One may release me from all suffering."
321. The brahmin saw the Buddha, free, without clinging;
He expounded the Teaching to him, the sage who has gone beyond suffering.
322. Suffering, the origin of suffering, and the overcoming of suffering;
The noble eightfold path, leading to the peace of suffering.
323. There, having cognised the Good Teaching, he delighted in the going forth;
Sujāta, within three nights, touched the three true knowledges.
324. "Come, charioteer, go, hand over this chariot for me;
Tell the brahmin woman of good health, 'The brahmin has now gone forth;
Sujāta, within three nights, touched the three true knowledges.
325. Then the charioteer, having taken the chariot and also the thousand,
Told the brahmin woman of good health, 'The brahmin has now gone forth;
Sujāta, within three nights, touched the three true knowledges.
326. "This horse-carriage and also the thousand, charioteer;
Having heard of the brahmin with the threefold true knowledge, I give you a
gift."
327. "Let the horse-carriage be yours alone, and also the thousand, brahmin
woman;
I too shall go forth, in the presence of the one of excellent wisdom."
328. "Elephants, cattle and horses, jewelled earrings, and this prosperous
household wealth having abandoned;
Your father has gone forth, enjoy the possessions, Sundarī;
You are the heiress in the family.
329. "Elephants, cattle and horses, jewelled earrings, and this charming household
wealth having abandoned;
My father has gone forth, distressed by sorrow for his son;
I too shall go forth, distressed by sorrow for my brother.
330. "May that thought of yours succeed, whatever you desire, Sundarī;
Almsfood obtained by standing up and gleaning, and a rag robe;
Accomplishing these, in the world beyond, without mental corruptions.
331. "For me as a female trainee, lady, the divine eye has been purified;
I know past lives, where I dwelt before.
332. "In dependence on you, beautiful one, elder nun, ornament of the Community;
The three true knowledges have been attained, the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled.

333. "Permit me, lady, I wish to go to Sāvattthī;
I shall roar the lion's roar in the presence of the Buddha, the foremost.
334. "See, Sundarī, the Teacher, golden-coloured, with golden skin;
The tamer of the untamed, the Perfectly Enlightened One, safe from every
quarter.
335. "See Sundarī coming, free, without clinging;
Without lust, unbound, having performed one's obligations, without mental
corruptions.
336. "Having departed from Benares, I have come into your presence;
Your female disciple, O Great Hero, Sundarī pays homage at your feet.
337. "You are the Buddha, you are the Teacher, I am your daughter, brahmin;
A legitimate one, born from your mouth, who has done what had to be done,
without mental corruptions.
338. "Welcome to you, Bhadda, and your coming is not unwelcome;
For thus indeed the tamed ones come, to pay homage at the Teacher's feet;
Without lust, unbound, who have done what had to be done, without mental
corruptions."

She recited these verses.

Therein, "petāni" means dead. "Bhoti" - he addresses her thus. "Puttāni" is said with a change of gender; the meaning is "pete putte" (dead sons). Only one son of hers had died, but the brahmin, having become one with the perception "This one has been afflicted by sorrow and wandered about for a long time; many sons of hers must have died, I think," spoke with the plural. And likewise "today, having consumed all your hundred sons." "Khādamānā" - this is a term of jeering by way of popular expression. For in the world, when a woman's sons die as soon as they are born, censuring her, they say "child-devourer" and so on. "Atīvā" means very much, exceedingly. "Paritappasi" means grieves; "pure" is the explanation. Here this is the meaning in brief - Dear lady Vāseṭṭhi, formerly you, having become one whose sons had died, grieving and lamenting, exceedingly given over to sorrow, wandered about villages, market towns, and royal cities.

"Sājjā" means she today, meaning she, you, at present. Or the reading is "sajjā." "By what beauty" means by what reason.

"Khāditāni" - the elder nun too speaks in the same manner of expression as spoken by the brahmin. Or "khāditāni" was said with reference to births as tigresses, leopardesses, cats, and so on. "Atītaṃse" means in the past portion, the meaning is in past existences. "Mama tuyhañca" means by me and by you.

"Having known the escape from birth and from death" means having penetrated with path knowledge Nibbāna, which is the escape from birth, ageing, and death. "Na cāpi paritappayin" means nor was I in anguish; the meaning is I did not fall into anguish.

"Abbhutaṃ vata" means wonderful indeed. For that which is marvellous, what was previously not become, is called "abbhuta." "Edisi" means of such kind - a speech illuminating the absence of grieving and so on, thus: "I do not grieve, I do not weep, nor did I worry." "Whose Teaching have you understood" - since such a Teaching simply cannot be obtained, therefore "whose Teacher's Teaching have you understood that you speak such an utterance" - he asks about the Teacher and the Dispensation.

"Without clinging" means free from suffering. "Having understood the Good Teaching" means having penetrated the Teaching of the noble truths. "Dispelled" means I removed, I abandoned.

"Free" means liberated in every respect, unbound from all mental defilements and all existences. "For him" means that Perfectly Enlightened One, for this brahmin.

"There" means in that proclamation of the Teaching of the four truths.

"Hand over the chariot to me" means hand over this chariot to the brahmin woman.

"And a thousand too" means the explanation is: having taken also the thousand coins brought for the purpose of travel expenses, hand them over.

"Horse-chariot" means a chariot yoked with horses. "A gift" means a gift of gratitude.

Thus, when the gift of gratitude was being given by the brahmin woman, the charioteer, not accepting it, having spoken the verse "Let it be yours alone," having gone to the very presence of the Teacher, went forth. But when the charioteer had gone forth, the brahmin woman, having addressed her own daughter Sundarī, urging her to the household life, spoke the verse "Elephants, cattle and horses." Therein, "elephants" means elephants. "Cattle and horses" means cattle and horses. "Jewelled earrings" means gems and earrings. "Having abandoned this prosperous household wealth" means having abandoned all of this - the variety beginning with elephants as stated, and also the unstated variety of fields, sites, unwrought gold, gold, and so on, the prosperous and abundant household wealth, the household equipment, and also other things such as female and male slaves and so on - your father went forth. "Enjoy the possessions, Sundarī" means Sundarī, you should enjoy these possessions. "You are the heiress in the family" means for you are indeed worthy of the inheritance in this family.

Having heard that, Sundarī, making known her own disposition towards renunciation, said beginning with "Elephants, cattle and horses."

Then her mother, urging her towards renunciation itself, spoke one and a half verses beginning with "May that succeed for you." Therein, "whatever you desire, Sundarī" means Sundarī, whatever you now desire, wish for. May that thought of yours for the going forth, that desire for the going forth, succeed, may it be accomplished without obstacle. "Almsfood obtained by standing up" means almsfood to be obtained by standing at house after house. "Gleaning" means wandering from house to house in succession for that purpose, and standing for that purpose. "These" means almsfood obtained by standing up and so on. "Enduring" means overcoming without weariness in dependence on the strength of one's legs; the meaning is accomplishing.

Then Sundarī, having promised her mother saying "Very well, mother," having gone out, having gone to the nuns' quarters, while being just a female trainee, having realised the three true knowledges, having informed her preceptor saying "I shall go to the Teacher's presence," went to Sāvattthī together with the nuns. Therefore it was said "For me as a female trainee, lady" and so on. Therein, "for me as a female trainee" means by me while being a female trainee. "Lady" - she addresses her own preceptor.

"In dependence on you, beautiful one, elder nun, ornament of the Community" means the explanation is: lady, in dependence on you, a good friend, beautiful one - beautiful through being endowed with beautiful qualities such as morality and so on, the senior nun of the Community by being more senior in the community of nuns and through the connection with the quality of firmness - the three true knowledges have been attained by me, the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled.

"Icche" means I wish. "Sāvattthi gantave" means to go to Sāvattthī. "I will roar the lion's roar" is said with reference to the declaration of the final liberating knowledge itself.

Then Sundarī, having gone gradually to Sāvattthī, having entered the monastery, having seen the Teacher seated on the pulpit, experiencing lofty joy and pleasure, addressing herself, said "See, Sundarī." "Golden-coloured" means of gold colour. "Gold-skinned" means having skin resembling gold. And here, the Blessed One is called "gold-coloured" because of his yellow colour. Then, in order to show that he resembles a well-polished golden mirror that has been properly rubbed and anointed with natural vermillion, having said "golden-coloured," "gold-skinned" was said.

"See Sundarī coming" means see me, the one named Sundarī, coming to the Blessed One. By the phrase beginning with "free," she declares the final liberating knowledge, speaking through the diffusion of joy.

In order to dispel the doubt of those who might wonder "From where has she come, where has she come to, and what kind of person is this Sundarī?" having spoken the verse "from Bārāṇasī," in order to make the meaning stated therein as "a female disciple" more obvious, she spoke the verse "You are the Buddha." Its meaning is - In this world including its gods, you alone are the Omniscient Buddha; because of instructing as is fitting through benefits pertaining to the present life, the future life, and the highest good, you are my Teacher; and I, a brahmin woman who has eliminated the mental corruptions, am legitimate through the noble birth generated by effort on the Blessed One's breast; born from the mouth because of being born through the noble path, which is the foremost of the Dispensation, by the proclamation of the Teaching proceeding from the mouth; having done what had to be done because of the completion of what had to be done beginning with full understanding; without mental corruptions because of the exhaustion of mental corruptions in every respect.

Then the Teacher, delighting in her coming, spoke the verse "Welcome to you." Its meaning is - You who attained as it really is the Teaching attained by me. For you, dear lady Sundarī, the coming here to my presence is welcome. Therefore that is not unwelcome, it is not an ill coming. Why? Because "for thus indeed the tamed ones come" - just as you, Sundarī, thus indeed those tamed by the highest taming of the noble path, thereby everywhere without lust, unbound because of the complete

eradication of all mental fetters, having done what had to be done, without mental corruptions, come to pay homage at the Teacher's feet; therefore welcome to you, not unwelcome - this is the explanation.

The commentary on the verses of the Elder Nun Sundarī is concluded.

5. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Subhā the Smith's Daughter

339-367. The verses of the elder nun Subhā, the goldsmith's daughter, beginning with "When I was young." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, gradually with developed wholesome roots, with accumulated requisites of deliverance, wandering only in fortunate destinations, with matured knowledge, in this arising of a Buddha, was reborn as the daughter of a certain goldsmith in Rājagaha; because of the splendour of her beauty, her name was Subhā. She, gradually having attained discretion, with confidence arisen in the Teacher at the Teacher's entrance to Rājagaha, one day, having approached the Blessed One, having paid homage, sat down to one side. The Teacher, having seen the maturity of her faculties, expounded the Teaching containing the four truths in accordance with her disposition. She, at that very moment, became established in the fruition of stream-entry adorned with a thousand methods. She, at a later time, having seen a fault in the household life, having gone forth in the presence of Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, established in the morality of a nun, devoted herself to meditation for the purpose of the higher path. Her relatives, approaching her from time to time, inviting her with sensual pleasures, having shown abundant wealth and various kinds of prosperity, enticed her. She, one day, making known the danger in the household life and in sensual pleasures to those who had come to her presence, having expounded the Teaching with twenty-four verses beginning with "When I was young," having made them desireless, having dismissed them, doing the work of insight, purifying the faculties, having aroused zeal in meditation, before long attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. But having attained arahantship -

- 339. "When I was young, dressed in pure garments, I heard the teaching before;
For me, being heedful, there was full realisation of the truths.
- 340. "Then I, in all sensual pleasures, found intense discontent;
Having seen fear in identity, I longed only for renunciation.
- 341. "Having left behind my group of relatives, and slaves and workers;
Prosperous villages and fields, delightful and joyful.
- 342. "Having abandoned no small wealth, I went forth;
Thus having left through faith, when the Good Teaching is well proclaimed.
- 343. "This would not be proper for one who aspires to nothingness;
Who, having abandoned gold and silver, would come back again.
- 344. "Silver or gold is not for enlightenment, not for peace;
This is not lawful for an ascetic, this is not noble wealth.

345. "This is productive of greed and intoxication, deluding, increasing defilement;
Dangerous, full of trouble, and here there is no stable duration.
346. "Here, men who are lustful and heedless, with defiled minds;
Mutually opposed, they make quarrels far and wide.
347. "Murder and imprisonment and affliction, loss and sorrow and lamentation;
For those afflicted by sensual pleasures, much disaster is seen.
348. "Me, such a one, relatives like enemies, why do you engage me in sensual
pleasures?
Know me as one gone forth, seeing danger in sensual pleasures.
349. "Not by gold and money are mental corruptions eliminated;
Sensual pleasures are enemies, murderers, foes, binding darts.
350. "Me, such a one, relatives like enemies, why do you engage me in sensual
pleasures?
Know me as one gone forth, shaven-headed, wrapped in the double robe.
351. "Almsfood obtained by standing up and gleaning, and a rag robe;
This indeed is suitable for me, a resource for the homeless one.
352. "Sensual pleasures have been vomited out by the great sages, those that are
divine and those that are human;
Liberated in the secure place, they have attained unshakeable happiness.
353. "May I never meet with sensual pleasures, in which no shelter is found;
Sensual pleasures are enemies, murderers, like a mass of fire, painful.
354. "This is an obstacle, a danger, bringing vexation, thorny;
Greed, very uneven, and this is great, with delusion as its entrance.
355. "A danger of dreadful form, sensual pleasures are like a snake's head;
Those fools who delight in them, worldlings who have become blind.
356. "For beings stuck in the mire of sensual pleasure, many in the world are fools;
They do not know the limit of birth and of death.
357. "The path leading to an unfortunate destination, human beings, because of
sensual pleasures;
Many indeed proceed along it, bringing disease upon themselves.
358. "Thus generating enemies, tormenting, subject to defilement;
Worldly gains are binding, sensual pleasures are bonds to death.
359. "Maddening, enticing, sensual pleasures crush the mind;
For the defilement of beings, quickly laid as a snare by Māra.
360. "Sensual pleasures have endless dangers, much suffering, great poison;
Of little enjoyment, conflict-causing, drying up the bright side.

361. "I, having seen such disaster, caused by sensual pleasures;
I will not return to that, always delighting in Nibbāna.
362. "Having crossed over the conflict of sensual pleasures, longing for coolness;
Diligent I shall dwell, at the destruction of all fetters.
363. "Sorrowless, stainless, secure, the Noble Eightfold, straight;
That path I follow, by which the great sages have crossed over.
364. "See this righteous one, Subhā, the smith's daughter;
Having attained that without longing, she meditates at the root of a tree.
365. "Today is the eighth day since going forth, endowed with faith, beautiful
through the Good Teaching;
Trained by Uppalavaṇṇā, possessing the threefold true knowledge, victorious
over death.
366. "She is a freewoman, free of debt, a nun with developed faculties;
Unbound from all mental bonds, who has done what had to be done, without
mental corruptions.
367. "Sakka, with the host of gods, having approached by supernormal power,
The lord of beings pays homage to Subhā, the smith's daughter." He spoke
these verses.

Therein, "when I was young, dressed in pure garments, I heard the teaching before" means because formerly, when I was young, a maiden, dressed in pure garments, clothed in clean garments, adorned and prepared, I heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher. "For me, being heedful, there was full realisation of the truths" means because for me, for myself, having reviewed the Teaching as it was heard, being heedful, having established mindfulness, having determined upon morality, while engaging in meditation, there was the full realisation of the four noble truths, the penetration by way of "this is suffering" and so on.

"Then I, in all sensual pleasures, found intense discontent" means then, for that reason, because of having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher and because of having fully realised the truths, in all sensual pleasures, both human and divine, I found exceedingly intense discontent and dissatisfaction. "In identity" means in the fivefold aggregates of clinging; "fear" means the state of being fearful; having seen with the eye of knowledge; "renunciation" means the going forth, Nibbāna itself; "I longed" means I long for, I aspire to.

"And slaves and workers" means slaves and labourers; for this is said by way of change of gender. "Villages and fields" means villages and fields where early crops and late crops grow, or fields included within villages. "Prosperous" means successful. "Delightful" means pleasant. "Rejoicing" means greatly delighted; the connection is "having abandoned the mass of wealth." "Property" means one's own wealth, the object of possession consisting of gems, gold, silver, and so on. "Not a little" means great; the explanation is "having abandoned." "Thus having left through faith" means in the manner stated beginning with "having left behind my group of relatives,"

having abandoned the great circle of relatives and the great mass of wealth, having believed through faith in the trustworthy object, namely action and the fruit of action and the Triple Gem, having gone out from the house, in the Good Teaching well proclaimed, in the Noble One's discipline well proclaimed by the Perfectly Enlightened One, I went forth.

But for one who has thus gone forth, this would not be proper, that is to say, the return to sensual pleasures that have been abandoned. "For I aspire to nothingness" means I aspire to the state of owning nothing, to the state of non-possession itself. "Who, having abandoned gold and silver, would come back again" means whatever person, having abandoned gold, silver, or any other kind of wealth, were to take it up again, how could he raise his head among the wise?

Because silver or gold is not for enlightenment, not for peace - the meaning is not for path-knowledge, not for Nibbāna. "This is not suitable for ascetics" means this object of possession consisting of gold, silver, and so on, or the acquiring of it, is not suitable for ascetics. For thus it was said: "It is not allowable for the ascetics, disciples of the Sakyan, to accept gold and silver" and so on. "This is not noble wealth" means this aforesaid object of possession is not wealth made of noble qualities like the wealth of faith and so on; it is not because it does not bring about the noble state. Therefore she said "producing greed" and so on.

Therein, "producing greed" means the arousing of greed. "Intoxicating" means bringing intoxication. "Deluding" means the generating of confusion. "Increasing defilement" means the increasing of the defilement of lust and so on. "By whomever it is possessed, because of bringing suspicion to that one, it operates together with suspicion" - thus "dangerous"; by whomever it is possessed, the meaning is that it brings suspicion to that one from here and there. "Full of trouble" means much toil by way of acquiring, guarding, and so on. "And here there is no stable duration" means in this wealth there is neither a state of permanence nor a state of duration; the meaning is that it is merely unstable and unsettled.

"Here, lustful and heedless" means lustful in this wealth, with lust arisen, heedless through separation from mindfulness regarding the ten wholesome mental states. "With defiled minds" means they are indeed those with consciousness defiled by the defilement of greed and so on. And because of that, "mutually opposed, they make quarrels far and wide, even a mother with her son, and a son with his mother" means thus, having become mutually opposed to one another, many beings make quarrels and disputes. Therefore the Blessed One said - "Furthermore, monks, because of sensual pleasures, with sensual pleasures as the source, with sensual pleasures as the reason, etc. a mother quarrels with her son, a son quarrels with his mother" and so on.

"Killing" means death. "Imprisoning" means binding with fetters and so on. "Hardship" means the affliction of cutting off hands and so on. "Loss" means loss of wealth and loss of retinue. "Sorrow and lamentation" means sorrow and lamentation. "Of those afflicted" means of those who are attached. "Much disaster is seen" means in sensual pleasures there is indeed seen much, manifold disaster and harm, of the kind of killing, imprisoning and so on as stated, and also the unstated displeasure, anguish and so on, pertaining to the present life and pertaining to the future life.

"Me, such a one, relatives like enemies, why do you engage me in sensual pleasures" means such a me, one who is dispassionate towards sensual pleasures, you relatives, being kinsmen, like enemies wishing harm, why, for what reason, do you engage and urge me in sensual pleasures. "Know me as one gone forth, seeing danger in sensual pleasures" means understand me as one gone forth, one who sees sensual pleasures as peril; the intention is: is this much not known by you?

"Not by gold and money are mental corruptions eliminated" means the mental corruption of sensuality and so on never go to utter elimination by gold and money; rather, by those very things they only increase. Therefore he said - "Sensual pleasures are enemies, murderers, foes, binding darts." For sensual pleasures are enemies because of bringing what is harmful, through the absence of friendliness; murderers because of being a cause of death, being similar to a murderer with raised sword; foes because of bringing harm even while pursuing, being similar to a foe who pursues with enmity; binding darts because of binding with the darts of lust and so on.

"Shaven-headed" means one with shaven hair. Having collected rags here and there, wrapped in the double robe by the wrapping of the double-robe garment.

"Almsfood obtained by standing up" means almsfood obtained by standing at house after house with open doors. "Gleaning" means the practice of gleaning for that purpose. "The resource of the homeless" means the requisite of life that has become a decisive support, because it is to be depended upon by having approached the homeless ones who have gone forth. For in dependence on that, those gone forth live.

"Vomited" means discarded. "By the great sages" means by the great sages such as the Buddhas and others. "In the secure place" means in Nibbāna, which has become a place free from danger from the bond of sensuality and so on. "They" means the great sages. "Unshakeable happiness" means they have attained the happiness of Nibbāna. Therefore the intention is that sensual pleasures should be relinquished by one who aspires to that.

"May I not meet with sensual pleasures" means may I never come together with sensual pleasures. If one asks why, she said - "In which no shelter is found" and so on means in which sensual pleasures, when being examined, there is not even in a single one what is called protection from harm. "Like a mass of fire" is in the sense of great scorching. "Painful" is in the sense of suffering.

"This is an obstacle, a danger" means that which is called sensual pleasures, because of bringing vast harm that is unknown. "Bringing vexation" is because of causing vexation to the mind. "Thorny" is because of piercing through. "Greed, very uneven, and this" means greed because of being a cause for attachment. It is very uneven, a great impediment. "Great" is in the sense of being difficult to pass over. "With delusion as its entrance" is because of being a cause for attaining infatuation.

"A danger of dreadful form" means of an extremely terrifying intrinsic nature, because of bringing suffering such as harm and so on, like a great danger from deities. "Sensual pleasures are like a snake's head" is in the sense of being fearful.

"Stuck in the mire of sensual pleasure" means stuck, fastened in the mire reckoned as sensual pleasure.

"The path leading to an unfortunate destination" means the path leading to realms of misery beginning with hell. "Because of sensual pleasures" means because of the enjoyment of sensual pleasures. "Much" means manifold by way of the distinction of killing living beings and so on. "Bringing disease" means conveying suffering of the distinction of pertaining to the present life and so on, reckoned as disease in the sense of afflicting.

"Thus" means in the manner stated beginning with "enemies, murderers."

"Generating enmity" means producing the state of enmity. "Tormenting" means causing torment; the meaning is causing remorse. "Subject to defilement" means bringing defilement. "Worldly bait" means being bait in the world. "Fit to be bound" means to be increased by mental fetters which are bonds; the meaning is subject to mental fetters. "Bonds of death" means fetters of death, because of being the sign for arising in existences and so on, and because of being the cause for occurrence.

"Maddening" means causing grief and madness by way of separation from things subject to change, or bringing ever greater intoxication through increase. "Enticing" means causing one to exclaim higher and higher "Oh, what happiness! Oh, what happiness!" "Ullolanā" is also a reading; like a dog wagging its tail on account of a morsel of food, it is the repeated cajoling of beings because of material gains, causing them to reach ruin and contempt - this is the meaning. "Crushing the mind" means having the habit of crushing the mind both now and in the future by producing fever of passion and so on. "Cittappamaddino" is also a reading; the meaning is the same. But those who say "cittappamādinno," for them the meaning is bringing negligence to the mind. "For defilement" means for obstruction or for vexation. "Quickly laid as a snare by Māra" means these sensual pleasures should be seen as a fish-trap laid by Māra, because of bringing harm to beings.

"Of endless danger" means of limitless danger, of many faults, by the method stated in the Dukkhaḥkhandha Sutta and so on, beginning with "This is productive of greed and intoxication" and beginning with "Here facing cold, facing heat." "Of much suffering" means accompanied by manifold suffering beginning with that bound for the realm of misery. "Of great poison" means similar to great poisons such as *halāhala*, because of their sharp and unbearable results. "Of little enjoyment" means of slight gratification, like a drop of honey on a knife's edge. "Producing conflict" means increasing lust and so on. "Drying up the bright side" means destroying the blameless portion of beings.

"Sāhaṃ" means she, I; the meaning is: in the very manner stated above, having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher, having gained faith, having abandoned sensual pleasures, having gone forth, I stand established. "Such" means of such form, of the aforesaid manner. "Having made" means thus having made; the meaning is: for the aforesaid reason. "I shall not return to that" means I shall not again consume those sensual pleasures formerly vomited up by me. "Always delighting in Nibbāna" - the explanation is: because from the time of going forth onwards, at all times delighting in Nibbāna, therefore I shall not return to that.

"Having crossed over the conflict of sensual pleasures" means having crossed over

the conflict of sensual pleasures, and that which was to be done by me, having made the strike of the noble path. "Aspiring to the state of coolness" means aspiring to arahantship, which is termed the state of coolness through the appeasement of the disturbance and fever of all mental defilements. "In the elimination of all mental fetters" means delighting in Nibbāna, which is the elimination of all mental fetters.

"By which the great sages have crossed over" means by which noble path the great sages such as the Buddha and so on have crossed over the great flood of the round of rebirths, I too follow the path traversed by them; the meaning is: I reach it through the practice beginning with morality.

"Righteous" means established in the noble fruition states. "Without longing" means the highest fruition which has obtained the name "without longing" because of the calming of longing. "Having attained" means having accomplished, having achieved through the achievement of the highest path. "Meditates" means she reflects upon that very fruition meditative absorption.

"Today is the eighth day since going forth" means having gone forth, from the time of going forth today is the eighth day; the meaning is: she went forth on the eighth day in the past from now. "With faith" means accomplished in faith. "Beautiful through the Good Teaching" means beautiful through the achievement of the Good Teaching.

"A freewoman" means a freewoman through the abandoning of mental defilements which are similar to the state of slavery. Free of debt through the departure of debts beginning with sensual desire.

It is said that these three verses were spoken by the Blessed One who, having shown to the monks the elder nun who, having gone forth, on the eighth day, having attained arahantship, having entered the fruition attainment at the root of a certain tree, was seated, and praising her.

Then Sakka, the lord of the gods, having seen that event with the divine eye, thinking "Since this elder nun is being praised thus by the Teacher, she should be attended upon by the gods too," at that very moment, having approached together with the gods of the Tāvātimsa heaven, having paid respect, stood with raised joined palms. With reference to that, it was said by the compilers of the recitation -

"Sakka, with the host of gods, having approached by supernormal power,
The lord of beings pays homage to Subhā, the smith's daughter."

Therein, Sakka, the king of gods, who obtained the name "Lord of Beings" by being made the lord, the ruler of beings, of creatures in the three sensual existences, together with the host of gods, having approached that Subhā, the smith's daughter, by his own divine power, pays homage; the meaning is: he salutes with the fivefold prostration.

The commentary on the verses of the Elder Nun Subhā the Smith's Daughter is concluded.

The commentary on the Chapter of Twenties is concluded.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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