

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

10. Commentary on the Past Life Histories-1 - of the Elder Monks

13. The Chapter on Sereyya

1. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Sereyyaka

"A reciter, a bearer of sacred charms" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Sereyyaka. This one too, having formed aspirations under former supreme conquerors, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in the subsequent thousands of individual existences, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a brahmin family, having attained discretion, having gone to the far shore of the three Vedas, having reached the summit in the entire brahmin teachings beginning with history, one day, standing in the open air with his retinue, having seen the Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, having taken sereyyaka flowers, throwing them into space, he venerated him. Those flowers, having become a canopy in space, remained for a week and afterwards disappeared. He, having seen that marvel, with an exceedingly gladdened mind, having died with that very joy and pleasure, having been reborn in Tusita and other heavens, having experienced divine happiness there, then having experienced human happiness, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, having attained discretion, by the power of former impressions, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

1. He afterwards, having remembered his formerly performed wholesome deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "A reciter, a bearer of sacred charms." That is just the meaning already stated below.

3. "Having taken a sereyyaka flower" (sereyyakaṃ gahetvānā) means a sereyyaka is a jasmine flower growing on the sirīsa tree; sereyyaka is just sereyyaka; "having taken that sereyyaka flower" - this is the connection. The meaning is that, being devoted to the Blessed One, there being no time to venerate by setting up jasmine, jasmine buds, campaka and other flowers, having taken that sereyyaka flower which had arrived there, he venerated. The remainder is clear everywhere.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Sereyyaka is complete.

2. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Pupphathūpiya

"Not far from the Himalayas" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Pupphathūpiya. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a brahmin family, having attained discretion, having reached accomplishment in his own craft, not seeing any substance therein, having abandoned the home, having entered the Himalayas, together with five thousand

pupils who accompanied him, having produced the five direct knowledges and the eight meditative attainments, having had a hermitage built near a mountain named Kukkura, he dwelt. Then, having heard of the arising of a Buddha, wishing to go to the presence of the Buddha together with his pupils, being oppressed by some illness, having entered the hermitage, having heard from his pupils of the Buddha's majestic power and characteristics, with a gladdened mind, having had many flowers - campaka, asoka, tilaka, ketaka and others - brought from the Himalayas, having made a monument, having venerated as if it were the Buddha, having died, he was reborn in the Brahma world. Then those pupils, having performed his cremation, having gone to the presence of the Buddha, reported that news. Then the Blessed One, having surveyed with the Buddha-eye, made a declaration by means of knowledge of future events. He afterwards, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home in Sāvatthī, having attained discretion, by the power of former impressions, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

10. Then he, having remembered his own former wholesome deeds, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Not far from the Himalayas." That is just the meaning already stated below. "A mountain named Kukkura" means because the peak of the mountain was established in the shape of a dog, in the form of a dog, it came to be reckoned as "Kukkura Mountain." The meaning is: having made a hermitage near it, dwelling together with five thousand ascetics. The remainder is all of manifest meaning only, in accordance with the method.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Pupphathūpiya is complete.

3. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Pāyasadāyaka

Beginning with "Golden-coloured, the Enlightened by himself" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Pāyasadāyaka. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a certain family home accomplished in wealth, having attained discretion, living the household life, accomplished in wealth of elephants, horses, riches, grain, the seven treasures and so on, accomplished in faith, having believed in the fruit of action, having had about a thousand golden bowls made, having filled them with a thousand portions of milk-rice, having had all of them taken, he went to the Simbali grove. At that time, the Blessed One Vipassī, having emitted the six-coloured rays, having created a walking path in space, walks up and down. That millionaire, however, having seen that marvel, exceedingly pleased, having set down the bowls, having paid homage, announced for acceptance. Then the Blessed One, out of compassion, accepted, and having accepted, for the purpose of arousing his pleasure, consumed together with about a thousand communities of monks; the remainder many thousands of monks consumed. He, by that merit, wandering only in fortunate destinations, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, with faith arisen, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

26. He afterwards, reviewing his own wholesome deed, having remembered that, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Golden-coloured, the Perfectly Enlightened One." That has been stated below already.

28. "Well ascended upon a walking path" means: one who is walking, making the stepping of feet, goes, proceeds - thus "walking path" (caṅkamaṃ); the ground area that serves as the support for the stepping of feet of the walking path is called "walking path" - this is the meaning; the connection is: upon this walking path he has with distinction ascended. "In the sky, in the wind's domain" means: that by which one is covered, concealed - thus "vara"; that which does not bear - thus "ambara"; the meaning is: space similar to a white cloth. "There is no hiding, no concealment here" - thus "wind" (anila); "by which those possessing supernormal power go, proceed from all around" - thus "path" (āyana); "wind and that path" - thus "wind's domain" (anilāyana); the meaning is: in that sky, in the wind's domain, they created a walking path. The remainder is clear everywhere.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Pāyasadāyaka is complete.

4. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Gandhodakiya

"Having sat down in the excellent mansion" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Gandhodakiya. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for Nibbāna in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a millionaire's family, having attained discretion, of great riches, of great possessions, experiencing human happiness as if experiencing divine happiness, on one day was seated in an excellent mansion. At that time the Blessed One was going about along the road like a golden Mount Meru; having seen that Blessed One going about, with a gladdened mind, having gone, having paid homage, pouring fragrant water over the Blessed One, he honoured him. He, by that merit, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, having attained discretion, not clinging to the household life, having gone forth in the Teacher's presence, having taken a meditation subject, having developed insight, before long became a Worthy One.

35. He afterwards, having remembered his own former wholesome deeds, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Having sat down in the excellent mansion." Therein, "mansion" (pāsāda) means that which generates, produces confidence and pleasure, thus it is a mansion; having seen the variously decorated garland work, painting, gold work and so on, it generates confidence in the people who have entered there - this is the meaning. It is a mansion and it is excellent in the meaning of being desirable, thus it is an excellent mansion; the connection is: having sat down, having been seated in that excellent mansion, he saw Vipassī, the supreme conqueror. The remainder is clear everywhere.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Gandhodakiya is complete.

5. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Sammukhāthavika

"When Vipassī was being born" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Sammukhāthavika. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a brahmin family, at the very time of being seven years old, having reached accomplishment in his own craft, having established the household life, while dwelling, when the Bodhisatta Vipassī had arisen, the characteristics of all Buddhas being seen in the triad of the Vedas, having declared those characteristics and the Buddhahood of the Bodhisatta Vipassī to the crowd of people headed by the king, he appeased the minds of the people, and announced many words of praise. He, by that wholesome action, having experienced the six sensual-sphere successes, and having experienced wheel-turning monarch successes among human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, with faith arisen, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One. By a name corresponding to the wholesome deed done, he became well-known as the Elder Sammukhāthavika.

41. He, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "When Vipassī was being born." When the Perfectly Enlightened One Vipassī was being born, arising, coming forth from his mother's womb, I interpreted, spoke of the sign that had become manifest, the cause, the reason for Buddhahood - he made many marvels obvious - this is the meaning. The remainder is easily understood in accordance with the method already stated.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Sammukhāthavika is complete.

6. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Kusumāsaniya

"In the city of Dhaññavatī" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Kusumāsaniya. This one too, having formed aspirations under former supreme conquerors, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a brahmin family, having attained discretion, of great riches, of great possessions, having gone to the far shore of the three Vedas, having reached the summit in the brahminical arts, skilled in his own and others' doctrines, wishing to venerate his mother and father, having placed five bunches of water-lilies near himself, while seated, having seen the Blessed One Vipassī coming surrounded by the community of monks, and having seen the dense blue, yellow, and other Buddha-rays, with a gladdened mind, having prepared a seat, having spread those flowers there, having caused the Blessed One to sit down there, having taken all the solid and soft food prepared in his own house for his mother's sake, satisfying the Blessed One together with his retinue with his own hand, he fed him. At the conclusion of the meal, he gave one bundle of water-lilies. Filled with joy on account of that, he made an aspiration. The Blessed One too, having given thanksgiving, departed. He, by that merit, having experienced the two successes among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family accomplished in wealth in Sāvattihī, having attained discretion, having grown in possessions and fame, having seen the danger in sensual pleasures, having abandoned the household life, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

65. He afterwards, having remembered the wholesome deeds done in the past through the knowledge of past lives, having attained pleasure, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "In the city of Dhaññavatī." Because it is a mine of many fortunate, meritorious families of warriors, brahmins, householders, and wealthy persons, it is Dhaññavatī; or because it is a mine of the seven treasures beginning with pearls and gems, of the seven kinds of grain, and of things for use and consumption, it is Dhaññavatī; or because it is a mine of dwelling places, parks, monasteries and so on for the fortunate ones - Buddhas, Individually Enlightened Ones, and those who have eliminated the mental corruptions - it is Dhaññavatī; of that Dhaññavatī. "City" means: people desiring things for use and consumption aspire here, thus it is a city; or it does not go, thus it is a mountain, a dwelling place for kings, viceroys, prime ministers and so on. It takes the mountain, thus it takes, thus it grasps, thus it is a city; the meaning is: a city is a place that has become a collection of dwelling places for kings and so on, fenced by walls, moats and so on, a demarcated place. The connection is: "In the city" - when I received a declaration in the presence of the Blessed One Vipassī, then in that city of Dhaññavatī I was a brahmin. The remainder is clear everywhere.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Kusumāsaniya is complete.

7. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Phaladāyaka

"A reciter, a bearer of sacred charms" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Phaladāyaka. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in many existences, in the time of the Blessed One Padumuttara, was reborn in a brahmin family, having attained discretion, having gone beyond in the triad of the Vedas and other arts of his own, the chief teacher of many thousands of brahmins, not seeing the end of his own arts and not seeing any substance therein, having abandoned the household life, having gone forth in the going forth of sages, having had a hermitage built not far from the Himalayas, made his dwelling together with his pupils; at that time, the Blessed One Padumuttara, walking for alms, out of compassion for him, reached that place. The hermit, having seen the Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, having put aside what was for his own use into a basket, gave sweet lotus fruits that were hanging on the tree-tops together with honey. The Blessed One, for the purpose of arousing pleasure in him, having consumed them while he was watching, standing in the sky, having spoken of the benefit of giving fruit, departed.

75. He, by that merit, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, having experienced both kinds of success, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home accomplished in wealth, while only seven years old, having attained arahantship, having remembered the wholesome action done in the past, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "A reciter, a bearer of sacred texts." Therein, "ajjheta" means "thinks" thus "ajjhāyi"; "ajjhāyi" itself is "ajjhāyaka." Here indeed the prefix "a" in "negation, augment, that state, etc. the prefix 'a' in absence and smallness" - thus among the ten meanings stated, it is used in the sense of that state. One who studies, thinks, and rehearses for the welfare of pupils by way of hearing, retaining, and so on is an

"ajjhāyaka"; the meaning is a thinker. One who bears in mind and sets going all the sacred texts learnt in the presence of the teacher is a "bearer of sacred texts." "One who has gone beyond the three Vedas" - "veda" is called knowledge; "vedas" are that which should be known, should be understood through knowledge - the three scriptures termed the Iru Veda, the Yaju Veda, and the Sāma Veda; "one who has gone beyond" means one who has gone to, reached the far shore, the end, the summit of those Vedas. The remainder is obvious.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Phaladāyaka is complete.

8. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Ñāṇasañña

The life history of the Venerable Elder Ñāṇasañña beginning with "On the Himalayan mountain." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in each and every existence that arose, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a family home, having come of age, having abandoned the household life, having gone forth into the going forth as a hermit, having had a hermitage built in the mountain caves not far from the Himalayas, having produced the five direct knowledges and the eight meditative attainments, dwelling there, one day, having seen a pure white sandy ground, "Such are the pure Buddhas, just so pure is the knowledge of the Buddha" - he recollected the Buddha and his knowledge and praised them.

84. He, by that merit, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, having experienced both kinds of success, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, having gone forth in the Dispensation, before long having attained arahantship, having recollected the merit done formerly, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "On the Himalayan mountain." "Having seen the beautiful sand" means sand that stood occurring as if fully made, in the manner of chaff, in the manner of being purified - having seen beautiful sand, he recollected the foremost Buddha. This is the meaning. The remainder is easily understood.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Ñāṇasañña is complete.

9. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Gaṇṭhipupphiya

Beginning with "Golden-coloured, the Enlightened by himself" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Gaṇṭhipupphiya. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, with an accumulation of merit made in many births, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a family home, not lacking in articles of use and enjoyment, one day, having seen the Blessed One Vipassī together with his company, with a gladdened mind, made an offering with flowers, with parched corn as the fifth. He, by that very confidence of mind, having remained as long as life lasted, thereupon having been reborn in the heavenly world, having experienced divine success, afterwards having experienced human success among human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home, with faith arisen, having gone forth, before long attained arahantship.

91. He, one day, having remembered the merit done formerly, filled with joy, "By this wholesome deed I have attained Nibbāna," making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Golden-coloured, the Perfectly Enlightened One." All that is of manifest meaning since the method has been stated below.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Gaṇṭhipupphiya is complete.

10. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Padumapūjaka

"Not far from the Himalayas" and so on is the life history of the Venerable Elder Padumapūjaka. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Padumuttara, was reborn in a brahmin family, having attained discretion, having reached accomplishment in his own craft, not seeing any substance therein, because of having been born before the arising of a Buddha, not having obtained exhortation and instruction, having abandoned the household life, having gone forth in the going forth of sages, in dependence on a mountain named Gotamaka not far from the Himalayas, having had a hermitage built, having produced the five direct knowledges and the eight meditative attainments, he dwelt in the happiness of meditative absorption alone. At that time the Blessed One Padumuttara, having become a Buddha, lifting up beings from the round of rebirths, out of compassion for him, went to the Himalayas. The hermit, having seen the Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, having brought together his own pupils, having had them bring lotus flowers, venerated him. He, by that merit, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, having experienced both kinds of success, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home in Sāvattthī, faithful and devoted, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

97. He, having remembered his meritorious action, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Not far from the Himalayas." "A mountain named Gotama" means it became well-known as "Gotama" because it was the dwelling place of Gotama, by the power of determination, through being the residence of numerous yakkha deities. "Pavattati" means stands; thus "pabbata" (mountain). "Covered with iron-wood trees" means "rukkha" (tree) is that which grows and stands. Or, "rukkha" (tree) is that which grows upwards while digging the earth; "nānārukkhā" (various trees) means various, manifold trees such as campaka, camphor, iron-wood, aloe-wood, sandalwood and so on; covered with, surrounded by those various trees is the mountain Gotama - this is the connection.

"Mahābhūtagaṇālaya" means "bhūtā" (beings) are those that exist, are born, arise, and grow; "mahābhūtā" (great beings) are those that are great and are beings; "mahābhūtagaṇa" (host of great beings) is the group, the multitude of great beings; "mahābhūtagaṇālaya" (dwelling place for hosts of great beings) is the dwelling, the support of the host of great beings.

98. "And in the middle of that there was" means in the middle, in the interior of that Gotama mountain, a hermitage was created, produced, made. This is the meaning. The remainder is clear in itself.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Padumapūjaka is complete.

The commentary on the thirteenth chapter is complete.



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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