

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses (1. Dīgha Nikāya)

1. The Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality (1. Sīlakkhandhavaggapāḷi)

13. The Discourse on the Threefold Knowledge (13. Tevijjasuttaṃ)

[DN 13, PTS 1.235-1.253]



PaliVerse

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses

1. The Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality

13. The Discourse on the Threefold Knowledge

518. Thus have I heard - On one occasion the Blessed One was wandering on a journey among the Kosalans together with a large Community of monks, about five hundred monks, and arrived at a brahmin village of the Kosalans named Manasākaṭṭa. There the Blessed One stayed at Manasākaṭṭa, to the north of Manasākaṭṭa, on the bank of the river Aciravatī, in a mango grove.

519. Now at that time several well-known wealthy brahmins were dwelling at Manasākaṭṭa, as follows: the brahmin Caṅkī, the brahmin Tārukkha, the brahmin Pokkharasāti, the brahmin Jāṇusoṇi, the brahmin Todeyya, and other well-known wealthy brahmins.

520. Then, as the young men Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were walking up and down and wandering about on a walk, a discussion arose about the path and the non-path. Then the young man Vāseṭṭha said thus: "This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā, which has been declared by the brahmin Pokkharasāti." The young man Bhāradvāja also said thus: "This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā, which has been declared by the brahmin Tārukkha." Indeed the young man Vāseṭṭha was not able to convince the young man Bhāradvāja, nor was the young man Bhāradvāja able to convince the young man Vāseṭṭha.

521. Then the young man Vāseṭṭha addressed the young man Bhāradvāja: "This, Bhāradvāja, the ascetic Gotama, a Sakyan son who has gone forth from the Sakyan clan, is staying at Manasākaṭṭa, to the north of Manasākaṭṭa, on the bank of the river Aciravatī, in a mango grove. And concerning that Master Gotama, such a good reputation has arisen - 'Thus indeed is the Blessed One: the Worthy One, the Perfectly Enlightened One, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, the Fortunate One, knower of the world, unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed, Teacher of gods and humans, the Enlightened One, the Blessed One.' Come, friend Bhāradvāja, let us go to where the ascetic Gotama is; having approached, we will ask the ascetic Gotama about this matter. As the ascetic Gotama answers us, so we will remember it." "Yes, friend," the young man Bhāradvāja assented to the young man Vāseṭṭha.

The Discussion on the Path and the Non-Path

522. Then the young men Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja approached the Blessed One; having approached, they exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One. Having concluded the pleasant and memorable talk, they sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the young man Vāseṭṭha said this to the Blessed One - "Here, Master Gotama, as we were walking up and down and wandering about on a walk, a discussion arose about the path and the non-path. I say thus - 'This alone is the straight path, this is

the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā, which has been declared by the brahmin Pokkharasāti.' The young man Bhāradvāja said thus - 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā, which has been declared by the brahmin Tārakkha.' Here, Master Gotama, there is strife, there is contention, there is difference of views."

523. "Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, you speak thus - "This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā, which has been declared by the brahmin Pokkharasāti." The young man Bhāradvāja said thus - 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā, which has been declared by the brahmin Tārakkha.' Then about what, Vāseṭṭha, is your strife, about what is your contention, about what is your difference of views?"

524. "About the path and the non-path, Master Gotama. Although, Master Gotama, brahmins proclaim various paths - the Addhariya brahmins, the Tittiriya brahmins, the Chandoka brahmins, the Bavhārijjha brahmins - yet all of them are leading to liberation, leading one who practises them to companionship with Brahmā.

Just as, Master Gotama, even if there are many different paths not far from a village or a town, yet all of them come together at the village; even so, Master Gotama, although brahmins proclaim various paths - the Addhariya brahmins, the Tittiriya brahmins, the Chandoka brahmins, the Bavhārijjha brahmins - yet all of them are leading to liberation, leading one who practises them to companionship with Brahmā."

The Questioning of the Young Man Vāseṭṭha

525. "Do you say 'they lead out,' Vāseṭṭha?" "I say 'they lead out,' Master Gotama." "Do you say 'they lead out,' Vāseṭṭha?" "I say 'they lead out,' Master Gotama." "Do you say 'they lead out,' Vāseṭṭha?" "I say 'they lead out,' Master Gotama."

"But then, Vāseṭṭha, is there any single brahmin among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

"But then, Vāseṭṭha, is there any single teacher among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

"But then, Vāseṭṭha, is there any single teacher's teacher among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

"But then, Vāseṭṭha, is there anyone among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge up to the seventh generation of teachers by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

526. "But then, Vāseṭṭha, did even those who were the ancient sages of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, the makers of the sacred hymns, the transmitters of the sacred hymns, whose ancient hymn passages are now sung, recited, and collected by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge of today, who sing along with them, recite along with them, repeat what

was spoken, recite what was taught, as follows - Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, Bhagu - did even they say - 'We know this, we see this, where Brahmā is or in which direction Brahmā is or in which place Brahmā is'?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

527. "Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, there is not any single brahmin among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face. There is not any single teacher among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face. There is not any single teacher's teacher among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face. There is not anyone among the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge up to the seventh generation of teachers by whom Brahmā has been seen face to face. Even those who were the ancient sages of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, the makers of the sacred hymns, the transmitters of the sacred hymns, whose ancient hymn passages are now sung, recited, and collected by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge of today, who sing along with them, recite along with them, repeat what was spoken, recite what was taught, as follows - Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, Bhagu - even they did not speak thus - 'We know this, we see this, where Brahmā is or in which direction Brahmā is or in which place Brahmā is.' Yet those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge speak thus - 'What we do not know, what we do not see, to companionship with that we teach the path. This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā.'"

528. "What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, this being so, does not the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, Master Gotama, this being so, the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turns out to be worthless."

"Good, Vāseṭṭha, that indeed, Vāseṭṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge will teach the path to companionship with that which they do not know, which they do not see. 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā' - this is impossible.

529. "Just as, Vāseṭṭha, a file of blind men clinging to one another, the first one does not see, the middle one does not see, the last one does not see. Even so, Vāseṭṭha, methinks the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge is like a file of blind men: the first one does not see, the middle one does not see, the last one does not see. This speech of these brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turns out to be ridiculous, turns out to be mere words, turns out to be void, turns out to be hollow.

530. "What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, do the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge see the moon and sun, as do many other people, from where the moon and sun rise and where they set, imploring, praising, with joined palms, paying homage, moving round and round?"

"Yes, Master Gotama, the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge see the moon and sun, as do many other people, from where the moon and sun rise and where they set, imploring, praising, with joined palms, paying homage, moving round and round."

531. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, the moon and sun that the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge see, as do many other people, from where the moon and sun rise and where they set, imploring, praising, with joined palms, paying homage, moving round and round - are the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge able to teach the path to companionship with the moon and sun - 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with the moon and sun'?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

"Thus indeed, Vāsetṭha, the moon and sun that the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge see, as do many other people, from where the moon and sun rise and where they set, imploring, praising, with joined palms, paying homage, moving round and round - even they are not able to teach the path to companionship with the moon and sun - 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with the moon and sun.'

532. "Thus indeed Brahmā has not been seen face to face by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by the teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by the teachers' teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by those up to the seventh generation of teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Even those who were the ancient sages of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, the makers of the sacred hymns, the transmitters of the sacred hymns, whose ancient hymn passages are now sung, recited, and collected by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge of today, who sing along with them, recite along with them, repeat what was spoken, recite what was taught, as follows - Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāsetṭha, Kassapa, Bhagu - even they did not speak thus - 'We know this, we see this, where Brahmā is or in which direction Brahmā is or in which place Brahmā is.' Yet those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge speak thus - 'What we do not know, what we do not see, to companionship with that we teach the path. This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā.'"

533. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, this being so, does not the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, Master Gotama, this being so, the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turns out to be worthless."

"Good, Vāsetṭha, that indeed, Vāsetṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge will teach the path to companionship with that which they do not know, which they do not see - 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā' - this is impossible.

The Simile of the Country Belle

534. "Just as, Vāsetṭha, a man might speak thus - 'I desire and long for whoever is the most beautiful woman in this country.' They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this most beautiful woman in the country whom you desire and long for, do you know whether that most beautiful woman is a noble woman or a brahmin woman or a merchant woman or a worker woman?' Thus questioned, he would say 'no.'

They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this most beautiful woman in the country whom you desire and long for, do you know whether that most beautiful woman is of such a name and such a clan, or whether she is tall or short or of medium height, or whether she is dark or brown or of golden complexion, or in which village or town or city she lives?' Thus questioned, he would say 'no.' They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, that which you neither know nor see, that you desire and long for?' Thus questioned, he would say 'yes.'

535. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, this being so, does not the speech of that man turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, Master Gotama, this being so, the speech of that man turns out to be worthless."

536. "Even so, Vāsetṭha, indeed Brahmā has not been seen face to face by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by the teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by the teachers' teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by those up to the seventh generation of teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Even those who were the ancient sages of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, the makers of the sacred hymns, the transmitters of the sacred hymns, whose ancient hymn passages are now sung, recited, and collected by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge of today, who sing along with them, recite along with them, repeat what was spoken, recite what was taught, as follows - Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāsetṭha, Kassapa, Bhagu - even they did not speak thus - 'We know this, we see this, where Brahmā is or in which direction Brahmā is or in which place Brahmā is.' Yet those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge speak thus - 'What we do not know, what we do not see, to companionship with that we teach the path. This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā.'"

537. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, this being so, does not the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, Master Gotama, this being so, the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turns out to be worthless."

"Good, Vāsetṭha, that indeed, Vāsetṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge will teach the path to companionship with that which they do not know, which they do not see - 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā' - this is impossible.

The Simile of the Ladder

538. "Just as, Vāsetṭha, a man might make a ladder at a crossroads -for ascending a mansion. They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this mansion for ascending which you are making a ladder, do you know that mansion - whether it is in the eastern direction or the southern direction or the western direction or the northern direction, or whether it is high or low or of medium height?' Thus questioned, he would say 'no.'

They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, that which you neither know nor see, for ascending that mansion you are making a ladder?' Thus questioned, he would say 'yes.'

539. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, this being so, does not the speech of that man turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, Master Gotama, this being so, the speech of that man turns out to be worthless."

540. "Even so, Vāsetṭha, indeed Brahmā has not been seen face to face by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by the teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by the teachers' teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, nor indeed has Brahmā been seen face to face by those up to the seventh generation of teachers of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge. Even those who were the ancient sages of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, the makers of the sacred hymns, the transmitters of the sacred hymns, whose ancient hymn passages are now sung, recited, and collected by the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge of today, who sing along with them, recite along with them, repeat what was spoken, recite what was taught, as follows - Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamataggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāsetṭha, Kassapa, Bhagu - even they did not speak thus - 'We know this, we see this, where Brahmā is or in which direction Brahmā is or in which place Brahmā is.' Yet those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge speak thus - 'What we do not know, what we do not see, to companionship with that we teach the path. This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā.'

541. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, this being so, does not the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, Master Gotama, this being so, the speech of the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge turns out to be worthless."

"Good, Vāsetṭha. That indeed, Vāsetṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge will teach the path to companionship with that which they do not know, which they do not see. 'This alone is the straight path, this is the direct way leading to liberation, leading one who practises it to companionship with Brahmā' - this is impossible.

The Simile of the River Aciravatī

542. "Just as, Vāsetṭha, this river Aciravatī is full of water, level to the brim, so that a crow could drink from it. Then a man might come along, wishing for the far shore, seeking the far shore, going to the far shore, wanting to cross to the far shore. He, standing on the near bank, might call to the far bank - 'Come, far shore, come, far shore.'

543. "What do you think, Vāsetṭha, would the far bank of the river Aciravatī come to the near bank for that man by reason of calling, or by reason of requesting, or by reason of longing, or by reason of rejoicing?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

544. "Even so, Vāsetṭha, the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, by abandoning those qualities that make one a brahmin and living accordingly, having accepted those qualities that make one a non-brahmin and living accordingly, thus said - 'We invoke Indra, we invoke Soma, we invoke Varuṇa, we invoke Īśāna, we invoke Pajāpati, we invoke Brahmā, we invoke Mahiddhi, we invoke Yama.'

"That indeed, Vāsetṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, by abandoning those qualities that make one a brahmin and living accordingly, having accepted those qualities that make one a non-brahmin and living accordingly, by reason of invoking, or by reason of requesting, or by reason of longing, or by reason of rejoicing, upon the body's collapse at death will attain to companionship with Brahmā - this is impossible.

545. "Just as, Vāsetṭha, this river Aciravatī is full of water, level to the brim, so that a crow could drink from it. Then a man might come along, wishing for the far shore, seeking the far shore, going to the far shore, wanting to cross to the far shore. He, on the near bank, is bound with his hands tied behind his back with a strong chain, tightly bound.

"What do you think, Vāsetṭha, would that man go from the near bank of the river Aciravatī to the far bank?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

546. "Even so, Vāsetṭha, these five types of sensual pleasure are called fetters in the Noble One's discipline, and are also called bondage. Which five? Forms cognisable by eye that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, enticing, connected with sensuality, arousing. Sounds cognisable by ear... etc... odours cognisable by nose... flavours cognisable by tongue... Tangible objects cognisable by body that are desirable, lovely, agreeable, enticing, connected with sensuality, arousing.

"These, Vāsetṭha, are the five types of sensual pleasure that are called fetters in the Noble One's discipline, and are also called bondage. These five types of sensual pleasure, Vāsetṭha, the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge consume while bound by greed, infatuated, immersed, not seeing the danger, without wisdom of escape. That indeed, Vāsetṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, by abandoning those qualities that make one a brahmin and living accordingly, having accepted those qualities that make one a non-brahmin and living accordingly, consuming the five types of sensual pleasure while bound by greed, infatuated, immersed, not seeing the danger, without wisdom of escape, bound by the fetter and bondage of sensuality, upon the body's collapse at death will attain to companionship with Brahmā - this is impossible.

547. "Just as, Vāseṭṭha, this river Aciravatī is full of water, level to the brim, so that a crow could drink from it. Then a man might come along, wishing for the far shore, seeking the far shore, going to the far shore, wanting to cross to the far shore. He, on the near bank, having wrapped himself up to the head, might lie down.

"What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, would that man go from the near bank of the river Aciravatī to the far bank?" "No indeed, Master Gotama."

548. "Even so, Vāseṭṭha, these five mental hindrances are called obstructions in the Noble One's discipline, and are also called hindrances, and are also called coverings, and are also called envelopings. Which five? The mental hindrance of sensual desire, the mental hindrance of anger, the mental hindrance of sloth and torpor, the mental hindrance of restlessness and remorse, the mental hindrance of sceptical doubt. These, Vāseṭṭha, are the five mental hindrances that are called obstructions in the Noble One's discipline, and are also called hindrances, and are also called coverings, and are also called envelopings.

549. "Vāseṭṭha, these brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge are obstructed, hindered, bound, and enveloped by these five mental hindrances. That indeed, Vāseṭṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, by abandoning those qualities that make one a brahmin and living accordingly, having accepted those qualities that make one a non-brahmin and living accordingly, obstructed, hindered, bound, and enveloped by the five mental hindrances, upon the body's collapse at death will attain to companionship with Brahmā" - this is impossible.

The Discussion on Comparison

550. "What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, what have you heard from the brahmins who are senior, elderly, teachers and teachers' teachers, when they speak - is Brahmā with possessions or without possessions?" "Without possessions, Master Gotama." "With a mind of enmity or without a mind of enmity?" "Without a mind of enmity, Master Gotama." "With a mind of ill-will or without a mind of ill-will?" "Without a mind of ill-will, Master Gotama." "With a defiled mind or with an undefiled mind?" "With an undefiled mind, Master Gotama." "Wielding power or not wielding power?" "Wielding power, Master Gotama."

"What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, are the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge with possessions or without possessions?" "With possessions, Master Gotama." "With minds of enmity or without minds of enmity?" "With minds of enmity, Master Gotama." "With minds of ill-will or without minds of ill-will?" "With minds of ill-will, Master Gotama." "With defiled minds or with undefiled minds?" "With defiled minds, Master Gotama." "Wielding power or not wielding power?" "Not wielding power, Master Gotama."

551. "Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge are with possessions, while Brahmā is without possessions. Now, does it fit, does it agree, that those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge who are with possessions should be together with Brahmā who is without possessions?" "No indeed, Master Gotama." "Good, Vāseṭṭha, that indeed, Vāseṭṭha, those brahmins

who possess the threefold true knowledge who are with possessions, upon the body's collapse at death, will attain to companionship with Brahmā who is without possessions - this is impossible.

"Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge are with minds of enmity, while Brahmā is without a mind of enmity... etc... the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge are with minds of ill-will, while Brahmā is without a mind of ill-will... the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge are with defiled minds, while Brahmā is with an undefiled mind... the brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge are not wielding power, while Brahmā is wielding power. Now, does it fit, does it agree, that those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge who are not wielding power should be together with Brahmā who is wielding power?" "No indeed, Master Gotama." "Good, Vāseṭṭha, that indeed, Vāseṭṭha, those brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge who are not wielding power, upon the body's collapse at death, will attain to companionship with Brahmā who is wielding power - this is impossible.

552. "But here, Vāseṭṭha, these brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, having sunk down, sink further; having sunk further, they reach distress; they cross over, methinks, on dry ground. Therefore this is called the desert of the threefold true knowledge for brahmins who possess the threefold true knowledge, it is also called the wilderness of the threefold true knowledge, it is also called the disaster of the threefold true knowledge."

553. When this was said, the young man Vāseṭṭha said this to the Blessed One - "I have heard this, Master Gotama, the ascetic Gotama knows the path to companionship with Brahmā." "What do you think, Vāseṭṭha? Is Manasākaṭa near from here, is Manasākaṭa not far from here?" "Yes, Master Gotama, Manasākaṭa is near from here, Manasākaṭa is not far from here."

554. "What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, suppose there were a man born and brought up in Manasākaṭa. If they were to ask him, just after he had left Manasākaṭa, about the path to Manasākaṭa. Would there be, Vāseṭṭha, for that man born and brought up in Manasākaṭa, when asked about the path to Manasākaṭa, any hesitation or confusion?" "No indeed, Master Gotama." "What is the reason for this?" "Because, Master Gotama, that man was born and brought up in Manasākaṭa, and all the paths to Manasākaṭa are well known to him."

"There might be, Vāseṭṭha, for that man born and brought up in Manasākaṭa, when asked about the path to Manasākaṭa, some hesitation or confusion, but there would never be for the Truth-finder, when asked about the Brahma world or the practice leading to the Brahma world, any hesitation or confusion. I understand Brahmā, Vāseṭṭha, and the Brahma world, and the practice leading to the Brahma world, and how one who has practised thus has been reborn in the Brahma world - that too I understand."

555. When this was said, the young man Vāseṭṭha said this to the Blessed One - "I have heard this, Master Gotama, the ascetic Gotama teaches the path to companionship with Brahmā." "Good! May Master Gotama teach us the path to companionship with Brahmā. May Master Gotama raise up the brahmin generation." "Well then, Vāseṭṭha, listen; pay close attention; I will speak." "Yes, sir," the young

man Vāseṭṭha assented to the Blessed One.

The Teaching on the Path to the Brahma World

556. The Blessed One said this - "Here, Vāseṭṭha, a Truth-finder arises in the world, a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One... etc. Thus, Vāseṭṭha, a monk is accomplished in morality... etc. When he regards these five hindrances as abandoned within himself, gladness arises; in one who is gladdened, rapture arises; when the mind is filled with rapture, the body becomes calm; one whose body is calm feels happiness; the mind of one who is happy becomes concentrated.

"He dwells having pervaded one direction with a mind accompanied by friendliness. Likewise the second. Likewise the third. Likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere, and in every respect, he dwells having pervaded the entire world with a mind accompanied by friendliness, extensive, exalted, limitless, without enmity, without ill-will.

"Just as, Vāseṭṭha, a powerful conch-blower would with little difficulty make himself heard in the four directions; even so, Vāseṭṭha, when the liberation of mind through friendliness is thus developed, whatever action done within limits does not remain there, does not persist there. This too, Vāseṭṭha, is a path to companionship with Brahmā.

"Furthermore, Vāseṭṭha, a monk with a mind accompanied by compassion... etc. with a mind accompanied by altruistic joy... etc. he dwells having pervaded one direction with a mind accompanied by equanimity. Likewise the second. Likewise the third. Likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, across, everywhere, and in every respect, he dwells having pervaded the entire world with a mind accompanied by equanimity, extensive, exalted, limitless, without enmity, without ill-will.

"Just as, Vāseṭṭha, a powerful conch-blower would with little difficulty make himself heard in the four directions. Even so, Vāseṭṭha, when the liberation of mind through equanimity is thus developed, whatever action done within limits does not remain there, does not persist there. This, Vāseṭṭha, is a path to companionship with Brahmā.

557. "What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, is a monk who dwells thus with possessions or without possessions?" "Without possessions, Master Gotama." "With a mind of enmity or without a mind of enmity?" "Without a mind of enmity, Master Gotama." "With a mind of ill-will or without a mind of ill-will?" "Without a mind of ill-will, Master Gotama." "With a defiled mind or with an undefiled mind?" "With an undefiled mind, Master Gotama." "Wielding power or not wielding power?" "Wielding power, Master Gotama."

"Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, the monk is without possessions, Brahmā is without possessions. Now, does it fit, does it agree, that a monk who is without possessions should be together with Brahmā who is without possessions?" "Yes, Master Gotama." "Good, Vāseṭṭha, that indeed, Vāseṭṭha, a monk who is without possessions, upon the body's collapse at death, will attain to companionship with Brahmā who is without possessions - this is possible.

558. "Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, a monk is without a mind of enmity, Brahmā is without a mind of enmity... etc... a monk is without a mind of ill-will, Brahmā is without a mind of ill-will... a monk is with an undefiled mind, Brahmā is with an undefiled mind...a monk is wielding power, Brahmā is wielding power. Now, does it fit, does it agree, that a monk who is wielding power should be together with Brahmā who is wielding power?" "Yes, Master Gotama." "Good, Vāseṭṭha, that indeed, Vāseṭṭha, a monk who is wielding power, upon the body's collapse at death, will attain to companionship with Brahmā who is wielding power - this is possible."

559. When this was said, the young men Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja said to the Blessed One: "Excellent, Master Gotama, excellent, Master Gotama! Just as, Master Gotama, one might set upright what had been overturned, or reveal what had been concealed, or point out the path to one who was lost, or hold up an oil lamp in the darkness so that those with eyes might see forms; just so, the Teaching has been made clear by Master Gotama in many ways. We go for refuge to Master Gotama, to the Teaching, and to the Community of monks. May Master Gotama remember us as lay followers who have gone for refuge from this day forth for life."

The Discourse on the Threefold Knowledge is concluded as thirteenth.

The Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality is concluded.

Its summary:

Brahmā, Asceticism, Ambaṭṭha,
Soṇa, Kūṭa, Mahāli, Jālīnī;
Sīha, Poṭṭhapāda, Subha, Kevaṭṭa,
Lohicca, Tevijjā - thirteen.

The Pāḍi of the Chapter on the Aggregate of Virtue is concluded.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

This translation is part of the PaliVerse Project - the first complete, unified English translation of the Pāli Canon together with its Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā) and Subcommentaries (Tīkā), accompanied by interactive study tools. PaliVerse is an ongoing project. The AI translations are continuously improved through experts' revisions and feedback. This text is the latest translation as of the date of download.

PDF Creation Date: 14 September 2026

HOW TO CITE

PaliVerse (2026). The Triple Canon. The Canon of Discourses. 1. The Collection of the Long Discourses. 1. The Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality. 13. The Discourse on the Threefold Knowledge Retrieved from paliverse.org

© 2026 The PaliVerse Project · All Rights Reserved
Centre for Study and Practice of Theravāda Buddhism
Civic Non-Profit Company registered in Greece
This PDF may be freely distributed for study and practice.

PaliVerse.org