

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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12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas
(12. Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā)

15. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddha Piyadassī
(15. Piyadassībuddhavaṃsavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas

15. Explanation of the Chronicle of the Buddha Piyadassī

But in the period after Sujāta, at the summit of one thousand and eight hundred cosmic cycles from now, in one cosmic cycle, three Buddhas arose - Piyadassī, Atthadassī, and Dhammadassī. Therein, the Blessed One named Piyadassī, having fulfilled the perfections, having been reborn in the Tusita city, having passed away from there, having taken conception in the womb of a queen named Candā, whose face was like the moon, the chief queen of a king named Sudatta in the city of Sudhaññavatī, after the elapse of ten months, he came forth from the mother's womb in the Varuṇa Park. On his name-giving day, because of having shown to the world dear and distinctive wonders, they gave him the name "Piyadassī." He dwelt in the house for nine thousand years. He had, it is said, three mansions named Sunimmala, Vimala, and Giribrahma. Thirty-three thousand women headed by Queen Vimalā were in attendance.

He, having seen the four signs, when a son named Kañcanaveḷa was born to Queen Vimalā, having gone forth in the great renunciation by a thoroughbred chariot, went forth. And one ten million men went forth following him. He, the great man, surrounded by them, having practised the practice of striving for six months, on the full moon day of Vesākha, in the brahmin village of Varuṇa, having eaten the milk-rice given by the daughter of the brahmin Vasabha, having spent the day residence in a sal grove, having taken eight handfuls of grass given by a livelihood-seeker named Sujāta, having approached the Kakudha Bodhi tree, having spread a grass mat fifty-three cubits wide, having folded his legs crosswise, having penetrated the knowledge of omniscience, having uttered the inspired utterance "Through many births in the round of rebirths," having spent seven weeks right there, having known the capability for the penetration of the noble Teaching of those who had gone forth together with him, having gone there through the sky, having descended in the Usabhavata park near the city of Usabhavatī, surrounded by a ten million monks, he set in motion the wheel of the Teaching. Then there was the full realisation of the teaching for a hundred thousand koṭis. This was the first full realisation.

Again, not far from the city named Usabhavatī, on the Sudassana mountain, a king of gods named Sudassana dwelt. He was one of wrong view. Moreover, the people in the whole of Jambudīpa annually offered him a tribute worth a hundred thousand. That Sudassana, the king of gods, having sat down on the same seat together with the human king, received the tribute. Then the Blessed One Piyadassī, thinking "I shall dispel that wrong view of that Sudassana, the king of gods," when that king of gods had gone to an assembly of demons, having entered his dwelling, having ascended the royal bed, emitting six-coloured rays, sat down like the sun in the autumn season

on the Yugandhara mountain. His attendant and serving deities, having venerated the One of Ten Powers with garlands, scents, ointments, and so on, having surrounded him, stood there.

Sudassana too, the king of gods, while coming from the assembly of demons, having seen six-coloured rays emanating from his own dwelling, thought - "On other days, such splendour resplendent with a net of many rays has never been seen before in my dwelling. Who indeed has entered here, a god or a human being?" - looking, having seen the Blessed One seated, blazing with a net of six-coloured rays, like the sun at the summit of the eastern mountain peak in the autumn season, he thought - "This shaveling ascetic is seated on the excellent bed, surrounded by my retinue and attendants" - with a mind overcome by wrath - "Come, I shall show him my own power" - having thought thus, he made that entire mountain a single mass of flames. "By this blaze of fire the shaveling ascetic has been reduced to ashes" - looking, having seen the One of Ten Powers blazing, with his excellent body flashing and radiating with a net of many rays, with the beauty of his serene facial complexion, with clear and lustrous skin, he thought - "This ascetic endures the burning of fire; come, I shall submerge this ascetic with a flood of water and kill him" - he set an exceedingly deep flood of water flowing towards the mansion.

Then, when that mansion was filled with the flood of water, not even a thread's worth of the Blessed One's robe who was seated there, nor even a hair's breadth of his body, was moistened. Then Sudassana, the king of gods - having thought "By this the ascetic will be without hope and dead," having withdrawn the water, looking, having seen the Blessed One seated, surrounded by his own assembly, shining with a spreading net of various rays, like the autumn night-maker that has emerged from an opening in the dark clouds, not enduring his own contempt - "Come, I shall kill him" - with wrath he rained down a shower of nine kinds of weapons. Then, by the power of that Blessed One, all the weapons, having become fragrant flower garlands of various kinds, supremely beautiful to behold, fell at the feet of the One of Ten Powers.

Then, having seen that marvel, Sudassana, the king of gods, with a supremely enraged mind, having seized the Blessed One by the feet with both hands, wishing to remove him from his own dwelling, having lifted him up, having crossed over the great ocean, having gone to the encircling world-mountain - "Does the ascetic live or is he dead?" - looking, having seen him seated on that very same seat - "Oh, this ascetic is of great might! I am not able to drag this ascetic out from here. If indeed anyone knows me, no small disgrace will be mine. As long as no one sees this, so long I shall let him go and depart" - thus he thought.

Then the One of Ten Powers, having known the disposition of his mind, determined thus, so that all gods and humans could see him. And on that day, one hundred kings in the whole of Jambudīpa had gathered together for the very purpose of offering gifts to him. Those human kings, having seen Sudassana, the king of gods, seated holding the Blessed One's feet - "Our king of gods performs the service of attending to the feet of the sage-king, the Teacher Piyadassī; oh, Buddhas are indeed marvellous! Oh, the virtues of the Buddha are distinguished!" - with gladdened minds towards the Blessed One, all paying homage to the Blessed One, having made salutation with joined palms on the head, stood there. There the Blessed One Piyadassī, having made that Sudassana, the king of gods, the chief, expounded the Teaching. Then ninety

thousand koṭis of gods and humans attained arahantship. That was the second full realisation.

Now when in the city of Kumuda, measuring nine yojanas, an elder named Soṇa, an opponent of the Buddha like Devadatta, having consulted with Prince Mahāpaduma, having killed his father, and again having made various kinds of efforts for the murder of the Buddha Piyadassī, yet being unable to kill him, he had the rider of the elephant-king Doṇamukha summoned, and having enticed him, reported that matter to him - "When this ascetic Piyadassī enters this city for almsfood, then having let loose the excellent elephant named Doṇamukha, kill the ascetic Piyadassī."

Then that rider, devoid of examining what is beneficial and what is harmful, a king's favourite - Having thought "This ascetic might dislodge me even from my position," having accepted saying "Very well," on the second day, having observed the time of the One of Ten Powers' entry into the city, having approached that one with a well-formed round head, a pot-like forehead, a trunk-bank long like a bow, very broad soft ears, honey-tawny eyes, a handsome shoulder-seat, rounded compact haunches, closely-set concealed knee-joints, tusks beautiful like a plough-pole, a fine tail, esteemed dark complexion, endowed with all marks, lovely to behold like a black rain-cloud, walking with the graceful gait of a lion's stride, like a moving mountain, with seven points of contact on the ground, in rut in seven ways, oozing from everywhere, like Death embodied - having made him even more intoxicated and heedless with special morsels of food, eye-ointment, incense, unguents and so on, he sent that elephant, a warding off of enemies, like the elephant Erāvaṇa, a warding off of hostile people, for the purpose of killing the elephant among sages. Then that excellent tusker, as soon as it was released, having killed elephants, buffaloes, horses, men and women, its body with tusks and trunk smeared with the blood of the slain, its eyes enveloped in a net of blood, having smashed carts, gate-panels, pinnacled buildings, doors, arched gateways and so on, being followed about by crows, hawks, vultures and so on, having seized the limbs of slain buffaloes, chariots, horses, elephants and so on, devouring them like a demon who feeds on humans, having seen from afar the One of Ten Powers coming surrounded by a company of pupils, with speed like that of the wind or a garuḷa bird, it rushed upon the Blessed One with force.

Then the people dwelling in the city, with minds filled with fear and anguish, having climbed upon mansions, ramparts, walls and trees, having seen it charging towards the Truth-finder, raised a cry of alarm. Some lay followers, however, began to try to restrain it by various methods. Then that Buddha-elephant, having looked at the approaching elephant, with a heart cooled by the diffusion of compassion, pervaded it with friendliness. Thereupon that noble elephant, its mental continuum made soft by the suffusion of friendliness, having known its own offence of hate, being unable through shame to stand before the Blessed One, as if sinking into the earth, fell with its head at the Blessed One's feet. Thus lying down, that one whose body was like a mass of darkness shone like a multitude of black rain-clouds that had approached the vicinity of an excellent golden mountain peak coloured by the radiance of the sun breaking through.

Then, having seen the king of elephants thus falling with its head at the feet of the king of sages, the city people, with hearts filled with supreme joy, raised a lion's roar

of applause, a shout of acclamation. They venerated it in manifold ways with fragrant flower-garlands, sandalwood, scented bath powder, ornaments and so on. All around, wavings of garments took place. In the sky, the celestial drums resounded. Then the Blessed One, having looked at the excellent tusker lying at his feet like a black mountain peak, having touched the head of the excellent elephant with his palm adorned with the marks of a goad, banner, net, conch and wheel, instructed it with a proclamation of the Teaching suited to its mental disposition -

"O excellent elephant, hear the word of one who speaks, and practise that which is joined with welfare and benefit for me;
Remove the corrupt state delighting in murder, approach the peaceful, O one of beautiful tusks.

"Whoever through greed, hate, or delusion, hurts living beings, O lord of elephants;
He, a destroyer of life, for a very long time, experiences terrible suffering in hell.

"Do not do again such an action, O elephant, through negligence or through vanity;
One who destroys life attains unbearable suffering in Avīci for a cosmic cycle.

"Having experienced terrible suffering in hell, if one goes again to the human world;
One is short-lived, of deformed appearance, a harmer, a partaker of special suffering.

"Just as lives are supremely dear to you, O elephant, O slow elephant, among the great multitude;
Having known that they are dear to others too, killing of living beings should be avoided.

"Having understood the fault in hate and delight in harming, and the virtue in abstaining from killing living beings;
Avoid the killing of living beings, if you wish for happiness in heaven hereafter.

"One abstaining from killing living beings, well tamed, becomes dear and agreeable here in the world;
Upon the collapse of the body, and for that one hereafter, the Buddhas declare a dwelling in heaven.

"No one in the world wishes for the coming of suffering, every being born seeks only happiness;
Therefore, great elephant, having abandoned harm, develop friendliness and compassion at the proper time."

Then, being thus instructed by the one of ten powers, the noble elephant, having regained perception, became like a supremely disciplined pupil accomplished in the conduct of monastic discipline. Thus the Blessed One Piyadassī, just as our Teacher, having tamed the noble elephant Doṇamukha called Dhanapāla, expounded the

Teaching there at the assembly of the public. Then there was the full realisation of the teaching for eighty thousand crores. This was the third full realisation. Therefore it was said -

1. "After Sujāta, the self-become one, the leader of the world;
Difficult to approach, equal to the matchless, Piyadassī of great fame.
2. That Buddha too, of immeasurable fame, shines like the sun;
Having destroyed all darkness, he set in motion the wheel of the Teaching.
3. For him too, of incomparable power, there were three full realisations;
There was the first full realisation for a hundred thousand koṭis.
4. Sudassana, the king of gods, delighted in wrong view;
Dispelling his view, the Teacher taught the Dhamma.
5. The gathering of people was unequalled, a great assembly then;
For ninety thousand crores, there was the second full realisation.
6. When the trainer of men trained the elephant Doṇamukha;
For eighty thousand crores, there was the third full realisation."

1-6. In the city of Sumaṅgala, there were two companions, namely the prince named Pālita and the son of the royal chaplain, the young man Sabbadassī. They, having heard that the Perfectly Enlightened One Piyadassī, while wandering on a journey, "has arrived at their own city," with a retinue of a hundred thousand koṭis, having gone out to meet him, having heard his Teaching, having given a great gift for seven days, on the seventh day at the conclusion of the Blessed One's thanksgiving for the meal, together with a hundred thousand koṭis, having gone forth, attained arahantship. In their midst, however, the Blessed One recited the Pātimokkha. That was the first assembly. Then at another time, at the assembly of the divine king Sudassana, ninety crores attained arahantship. Surrounded by them, the Teacher recited the Pātimokkha. This was the second assembly. Again, at the taming of Doṇamukha, eighty crores, having gone forth, attained arahantship. In their midst, the Blessed One recited the Pātimokkha. This was the third assembly. Therefore it was said -

7. "There were three assemblies of that Piyadassī too;
The first meeting was of a hundred thousand koṭis.
8. Thereafter ninety crores of sages met together as one;
At the third assembly, there were eighty crores."

7-8. At that time our Bodhisatta, a young brahmin named Kassapa, having gone beyond the three Vedas together with the histories as a fifth, having heard the Teacher's proclamation of the Teaching, having had a supreme park, a monastery for the Community, built by the relinquishment of a hundred thousand koṭis, became established in the refuges and in the five precepts. Then the Teacher said to him - "After the passing of eighteen hundred cosmic cycles, a Buddha named Gotama will arise in the world" - thus he declared. Therefore it was said -

9. "I at that time, a brahmin named Kassapa;
A reciter, a bearer of sacred texts, one who has gone beyond the three Vedas.
10. Having heard his Teaching, I generated confidence;
With a hundred thousand koṭis, I had a monastery built for the Community.
11. Having given him a park, joyful, with an agitated mind;
I firmly undertook the refuges and the five precepts.
12. "That Buddha too declared of me, having sat down in the midst of the
Community;
In eighteen hundred cosmic cycles, this one will be a Buddha.
13. "Having striven in striving, etc. we shall be face to face with him."
14. "Having heard his word too, I gladdened my mind even more;
I determined upon further ascetic practice, for the fulfilment of the ten
perfections."

9-14. Therein, "the refuges and the five precepts" means the three refuges and the five moral precepts - this is the meaning. "In eighteen hundred cosmic cycles" means after the passing of a thousand cosmic cycles exceeding by eight hundred from now - this is the meaning.

Now that Blessed One's city was named Sudhaññā. His father was a king named Sudatta, his mother was a queen named Sucandā, Pālita and Sabbadassī were the two chief disciples, his attendant was named Sobhita, Sujātā and Dhammadinnā were the two chief female disciples, a kakudha tree was the Bodhi tree, his body was eighty cubits in height, the life span was ninety thousand years, his chief queen was named Vimalā, his son was named Kañcanāveḷa, and he departed by a thoroughbred chariot. Therefore it was said -

15. "The city was named Sudhaññā, the warrior was named Sudatta;
Candā was the name of the mother, of the Teacher Piyadassī.
20. "Pālita and Sabbadassī were the chief disciples;
Sobhita by name was the attendant of the Teacher Piyadassī.
21. "Sujātā and Dhammadinnā were the chief female disciples;
The enlightenment tree of that Blessed One is called the kakudha tree.
23. "That Buddha too, of immeasurable fame, bearing the thirty-two excellent
characteristics;
Eighty cubits in height, he appears like a king of sal trees.
24. "Of fire, moon and sun, there is no such radiance;
As was the radiance of that matchless great sage.
25. "The life span of that god of gods was just so much;
For ninety thousand years, the one with vision stood in the world.

26. "That Buddha too, equal to the matchless, those pairs too incomparable;
All that has disappeared, are not all activities empty?"

15-26. Therein, "or a king of sal trees" means it appears like a king of sal trees, in full bloom on every branch, supremely delightful to behold, with an evenly rounded trunk. "Those pairs too" means the pairs such as the pair of chief disciples and so on. In the remaining verses, the meaning is manifest everywhere.

The explanation of the Chronicle of the Buddha Piyadassī is completed.

The thirteenth lineage of the Buddhas 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.

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