

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

- 3. The Canon of Higher Teaching - Commentaries
(3. Abhidhamma Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)
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PaliVerse

5. Commentary on the Points of Controversy

17. Seventeenth Chapter

1. Explanation of the Discussion on Whether There Is Accumulation of Merit for a Worthy One

776-779. Now there is the discussion called "there is accumulation of merit for a Worthy One." Therein, for those whose view, having seen actions such as giving, sharing, shrine-worship, and so on of a Worthy One, is "there is accumulation of merit for a Worthy One," just as the Andhakans hold; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him with "a Worthy One is one who has eliminated merit and evil; if he were to do merit, he would also do evil," he said "accumulation of demerit." The other, not seeing the performance of killing living beings and so on, rejects. In the passages beginning with "meritorious volitional activity," he rejects because there is no action leading to existence for a Worthy One. In the passages beginning with "would give a gift," the proponent of one's own doctrine acknowledges because of the actual occurrence of giving and so on by functional consciousness. The other, not heeding the consciousness, establishes his view merely by seeing the occurrence of function alone. But because that was unwisely established, it is as if not established at all.

Commentary on the Discussion of There is Accumulation of Merit for a Worthy One.

2. Commentary on the Discussion of There is No Untimely Death for a Worthy One

780. Now there is the discussion called "there is no untimely death for a Worthy One." Therein, having unwisely taken the meaning of the discourse "I, monks, do not say there is destruction of intentional actions that have been done and accumulated without experiencing their result," for those whose view is "a Worthy One must attain final nibbāna only after having experienced the result of all actions, therefore there is no untimely death for a Worthy One," just as of the Rājagirikās and the Siddhatthikās; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him thus: "if there is no untimely death for him, there should not be a killer of an arahant," he said "there is not a killer of an arahant." The other rejects because of the existence of both heinous action with immediate bad destination and such persons.

781. In the question "would poison not penetrate," he rejects by the view that "as long as the formerly done action does not go to utter elimination, so long it does not penetrate." The remainder here proceeds according to the canonical text itself.

782. This was said with reference to the discourse "I do not, monks" - I do not say there is destruction of intentional actions that have been done - the state of being bounded and delimited of those actions - without experiencing, without undergoing, without going through their result; and that indeed, for those experienced in present

life, in this very life only, not beyond that; for those experienced in next life, only having been reborn in the proximate rebirth, not beyond that; for those whose results are experienced from one life to another, whenever they obtain the opportunity for result, in such successive existences. Thus, in every way, when there is the turning of the round of rebirths, when action has obtained its turn of result, there is no spot on earth where standing one could be freed from evil deeds. This being so, that which by means of the supposition "action that has not yet obtained its turn of result must inevitably be experienced by a Worthy One," the establishment of the view "there is no untimely death for a Worthy One" was made - that is only a wrong-doing.

Commentary on the Discussion of There is No Untimely Death for a Worthy One.

3. Commentary on the Discussion on "All This is from Action Alone"

783. Now this is the discussion on all this being from action. Therein, in dependence on the discourse "By action the world goes on," for those whose view is "all this round of action, defilement, and result is from action alone," just as of the Rājagirikās and the Siddhatthikās; with reference to them, "all this" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him "this being so, action too would follow from action," he said "is action also from action." The other rejects thinking if action too is indeed from action, then that action would be merely result. As for "caused by what was done in the past," he asks in order to accuse "if all this is from action, then it must be caused by what was done in the past." The other rejects out of fear of the doctrine of being caused by what was done in the past.

784. "From the result of action": he asks in order to accuse thus: "if all this is from action, whatever action was the cause of what occurred in a past existence, that too was from action in an even earlier existence, thus the result of action comes about; therefore for you all this follows from the result of action." The other rejects with reference to the arising from action of what occurs in the present, just as a sprout from a seed. When asked the second time, he acknowledges because that action too, like a seed from a previous seed, proceeds from previous action. "Would one kill a living being" and so on is said in order to accuse thus: "if all is from the result of action, one would perform killing living beings and so on by the result of action alone." The other acknowledges according to his view that even the volition of immorality, being produced by previous action, is in one method of exposition indeed a result. Then, in order to accuse him thus: "if for you killing living beings arises from the result of action, then the result too, like killing living beings, would turn out to be fruitful," he said "fruitful." The other, seeing the fruitfulness of killing living beings from its being conducive to hell and so on, acknowledges. But not seeing a place where it is said "this is the fruit of the result of action," he rejects. In the case of taking what is not given and so on too, the same method applies. "The requisite of medicines for the sick is fruitful": he asks about the fruit of giving by way of the gift. The discourse "by action the world goes on," having rejected the doctrine of no-action that holds "there is no action," makes clear the doctrine of action, the ownership of actions, that holds "there is action." Not the arising of everything from action alone, therefore it is not a proof.

Commentary on the Discussion on "All This is from Action Alone."

786-787. Now there is the discussion called "bound by the senses." Therein, suffering is twofold - bound by the senses and not bound by the senses. That which is bound by the senses is suffering because of being the basis of suffering; that which is not bound by the senses is suffering because of being included by the statement "what is impermanent, that is suffering" in the sense of oppression by rise and fall. Not grasping this distinction, the view of those who hold that "that for the full understanding of which the holy life is lived under the Blessed One is only suffering bound by the senses, not the other," just as the Hetuvādins hold - in order to show the state of suffering of the other as well, the question "only that which is bound by the senses" is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him thus: "since it was said by the Blessed One 'what is impermanent, that is suffering,' therefore that impermanent thing must be only that which is bound by the senses," he said beginning with "only that which is bound by the senses is impermanent." "Is not that which is not bound by the senses impermanent?" - the meaning is: is not that which is not bound by the senses, such as earth, mountains, rocks and so on, also impermanent?

788. In the question "Should it not be said that only that which is bound by the senses is suffering?" "Yes" is the acknowledgment of the proponent of one's own doctrine. For that which is not bound by the senses is an object of pain and displeasure. For in the hot season fire and in the cold season wind are objects of pain, and always the destruction of wealth and so on are objects of displeasure. Therefore even without the meaning of impermanence, that which is not bound by the senses should be said to be suffering. But because of not being produced by action and mental defilements, it should not be said to be suffering as a noble truth; likewise because of not being fully understood by the path. But since the cessation of grass, wood and so on, or the cessation of seasons, seeds and so on, is not called the noble truth of the cessation of suffering, therefore he acknowledges in order to show this diversity: that which is bound by the senses is both suffering and a noble truth, but the other is merely suffering. The statement beginning with "just as of that which is bound by the senses" makes clear the abiding by the holy life for the full understanding of that which is bound by the senses, and the non-arising again of what has been fully understood. For that very reason here the rejecting was made by the proponent of one's own doctrine. But the state of suffering of that which is not bound by the senses, which is included by the statement "what is impermanent, that is suffering," cannot be denied; therefore it is not a proof.

Commentary on the Discussion on Bound by the Senses.

5. Commentary on the Discussion on Setting Aside the Noble Path

789-790. Now the discussion called "setting aside the noble path" follows. Therein, "because the noble path is called 'the practice leading to the cessation of suffering,' therefore setting aside the noble path, the remaining activities are suffering" is the view of those, just as the Hetuvādins hold; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him thus: "if so, the state of suffering would also follow for the origin,"

he said "is the origin of suffering also suffering?" The other rejects with reference to the characteristic of cause. Being asked again, he acknowledges with reference to the state of being included in the round of existence. Regarding "only three," in the questions he rejects through fear of contradiction with the discourses, and acknowledges by the influence of his view. The remainder here is clear in meaning.

Commentary on the Discussion on Setting Aside the Noble Path.

6. Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that the Community Receives Offerings"

791-792. Now the discussion called "it should not be said that the Community receives offerings" follows. Therein, "in the ultimate sense the Community is just the paths and fruitions, apart from the paths and fruitions there is no such thing as a Community, and the paths and fruitions do not accept anything, therefore it should not be said that the Community receives offerings" - this is the view of those, just as the Vetullakas known at present as the advocates of great merit; With reference to them, "it should not be said" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him thus: "if the Community did not receive, the Teacher would not have praised it with 'worthy of offerings' and so on," he said beginning with "Is not the Community worthy of offerings." "They give gifts to the Community" is said for the purpose of challenging: "those who give to the Community, in the absence of recipients, to whom would they give?" The discourse "Like fire accepts an oblation" has come from the other school's doctrine. Therein, "a great rain cloud" is said with reference to rain from clouds. For the earth accepts the rain, not the cloud itself. "The path accepts" - he speaks by the view that "the paths and fruitions are the Community," but the Community is not just the paths and fruitions. However, the Community is the eight persons designated with reference to the aggregates purified by the manifestation of the paths and fruitions; therefore this is not effective in establishing that.

Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that the Community Receives Offerings."

7. Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that the Community Purifies Offerings"

793-794. Now the discussion called "it should not be said that the Community purifies offerings" follows. Therein, "the Community is just the paths and fruitions, and they are unable to purify offerings, therefore it should not be said that the Community purifies offerings" - this is the view of those, just as of those very same ones; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. "Worthy of offerings" and so on was said for the purpose of showing "if the Community were unable to purify offerings, the Teacher would not have praised it thus." "Purifies" means makes it of great fruit. For what is given to the Community, a little given becomes much, and much given becomes more. "Worthy of offerings" means worthy of a dedicatory gift, befitting the offering, able to purify offerings - this is the meaning. "Succeed in their offering" means they accomplish it; even with a small offering they attain great fruit - this is the meaning. The remainder is by the same method as stated below.

Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that the Community Purifies Offerings."

8. Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that the Community Consumes"

795-796. Now the discussion called "it should not be said that the Community eats" follows. Therein too, "the Community is just the paths and fruitions, and they do not eat anything, therefore it should not be said that the Community eats, drinks, chews, and tastes" - this is the view of those, just as of those very same ones; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, in order to accuse him thus: "if the Community did not eat, the preparation of meals for the Community and so on would be useless," he said beginning with "Is it not that there are some who prepare meals for the Community." "Group meal" and so on was said for the purpose of accusation: "if the Community did not eat, for whom would group meals and so on exist?" "Eight beverages" - this too was said for the purpose of accusation: "if the Community did not drink, for whom would the Teacher have allowed these beverages?" The remainder here also should be understood in the same manner as stated above.

Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that the Community Consumes."

9. *Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that What is Given to the Community is of Great Fruit"*

797-798. Now the discussion called "it should not be said that what is given to the Community is of great fruit" follows. Therein too, "the Community is just the paths and fruitions, and it is not possible to give them anything, nor to receive from them, nor does any benefit succeed by giving to them, therefore it should not be said that what is given to the Community is of great fruit" - this is the view of those, just as of those very same ones; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. "Worthy of offerings" and so on was said for the purpose of showing "if what is given to the Community were not of great fruit, the Teacher would not have praised it thus." The remainder proceeds according to the canonical text itself.

Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that What is Given to the Community is of Great Fruit."

10. *Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that What is Given to the Buddha is of Great Fruit"*

799. Now the discussion called "it should not be said that what is given to the Buddha is of great fruit" follows. Therein, "the Buddha, the Blessed One, does not consume anything, but for the purpose of conforming to the world he displays himself as if consuming, therefore due to the absence of benefit it should not be said that what is given to him is of great fruit" - this is the view of those, just as of those very same ones; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. "The foremost of two-footed beings" and so on was said for the purpose of showing "even a gift to an immoral human being is of a thousandfold merit, how much more so to such a foremost person." The remainder here proceeds according to the canonical text itself.

Commentary on the Discussion on "It Should Not Be Said that What is Given to the Buddha is of Great Fruit."

11. *Commentary on the Discussion on Purification of Offerings*

800-801. Now there is the treatise called the purification of offerings. Therein, "if the offering were to become pure on account of the recipient, it would be of great fruit. The gift was given by the donor, the result was produced by the recipient - thus one would be the doer for another, one would commit pleasure and pain made by another, one would do and another would experience. Therefore giving becomes pure only on account of the donor, not on account of the recipient, only the purity of mind of the donor is the giver of result" - this is the view of those, just as of the Uttarāpathakas; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. "Worthy of offerings" and so on was said for the purpose of showing "if giving were not to become pure on account of the recipient, what would his state of being worthy of offerings and so on do?" "One is the doer for another" - if the volition of giving of the donor were made by the recipient, it would be fitting. But his volition of giving, being pure, becomes pure in the sense of great result dependent on the subject matter reckoned as the recipient; therefore this is not an accusation that "giving becomes pure on account of the recipient."

Commentary on the Discussion on Purification of Offerings.

The seventeenth chapter.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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

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