

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

02. Commentary on the Teaching in Verses

17. The Chapter on Wrath

1. The Story of Rohinī, the Maiden of the Warrior Caste

221. "One should give up wrath" - the Teacher, while dwelling at the Nigrodha Monastery, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to a maiden of the warrior caste named Rohinī.

At one time, it is said, the Venerable Anuruddha went to Kapilavatthu together with five hundred monks. Then his relatives, having heard "The elder monk has arrived," went to the elder monk's presence, except for the elder monk's sister named Rohinī. The elder monk asked the relatives "Where is Rohinī?" "At home, venerable sir." "Why has she not come here?" "A skin disease has arisen on her body; she has not come out of shame, venerable sir." The elder monk, having had her summoned saying "Summon her," said thus to her when she had come having put on a cloth jacket - "Rohinī, why did you not come?" "A skin disease has arisen on my body, venerable sir; therefore I did not come out of shame." "But is it not fitting for you to do a meritorious deed?" "What shall I do, venerable sir?" "Have a hall with sitting accommodation built." "With what means?" "Do you not have ornamental goods?" "There is, venerable sir." "Of what value?" "It will be of ten thousand in value." "If so, having given that up, have a hall with sitting accommodation built." "Who will build it for me, venerable sir?" The elder monk, having looked at the relatives standing nearby, said "Let it be your burden." "But what will you do, venerable sir?" "I too shall stay right here." "If so, bring building materials for her." They, saying "Good, venerable sir," brought them.

The elder monk, while arranging the hall with sitting accommodation, said to Rohinī - "Having had a two-storeyed hall with sitting accommodation built, from the time of giving the boards above, having constantly swept the lower hall, prepare the seats; constantly set out the drinking water pots." She, saying "Good, venerable sir," having given up the ornamental goods, having had a two-storeyed hall with sitting accommodation built, from the time of giving the boards above, performed the sweeping and so on of the lower hall. Constantly monks sat down. Then, while she was sweeping the hall with sitting accommodation, the skin disease withered away. She, when the hall with sitting accommodation was completed, having invited the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, having filled the hall with sitting accommodation, gave superior solid and soft food to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha who were seated. The Teacher, having finished the meal, asked "Whose is this gift?" "Of my sister Rohinī, venerable sir." "But where is she?" "At home, venerable sir." "Summon her." She did not wish to come. Then the Teacher had her summoned even though she was unwilling. And having come and having paid homage, he said to her who was seated - "Rohinī, why did you not come?" "There is a skin disease on my body, venerable sir; being ashamed on account of that, I did not

come." "But do you know in dependence on what this has arisen for you?" "I do not know, venerable sir." "This has arisen in dependence on your wrath." "But what was done by me, venerable sir?" "If so, listen." Then the Teacher brought up the past for her.

In the past, the queen-consort of the king of Bārāṇasī, having bound resentment towards a certain dancing woman of the king, having thought "I shall produce suffering for her," having had large itch-fruits brought, having had that dancing woman summoned to her own presence, in such a way that she did not know, had itch-powder placed in between her bed and mantles and covers and so on, and as if making sport, scattered it on her body too. At that very moment her body became swollen and covered with boils. She, itching, having gone, lay down on the bed; there too, as she was being bitten by the itch-powder, a sharper pain arose. At that time the queen-consort was Rohinī.

The Teacher, having brought up this past, said "Rohinī, at that time this deed was done by you yourself. For even a trifle of wrath or jealousy is not fit to be done" - and having said this, he spoke this verse -

221. "One should give up wrath, one should abandon conceit,
One should overcome every mental fetter;
Sufferings do not befall one who does not cling
To mentality-materiality, one who owns nothing."

Therein, "wrath" means one should give up wrath of every kind and also the ninefold conceit. "Mental fetter" means one should overcome all tenfold mental fetters beginning with the mental fetter of sensual lust. "Not clinging" means not being attached. For whoever accepts mentality-materiality by the method beginning with "my matter, my feeling," and when that is breaking up, grieves and is vexed - this one is said to cling to mentality-materiality. One who thus does not accept and is not vexed is said not to cling. Sufferings do not befall that person who thus does not cling, who owns nothing through the absence of lust and so on. This is the meaning. At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on. Rohinī too became established in the fruition of stream-entry, and at that very moment her body became golden-coloured.

She, having passed away from there, having been reborn in the Tāvatiṃsa realm in the boundary between four young gods, became pleasing and endowed with the splendour of beauty. The four young gods too, having seen her, with affection arisen, disputing "She has been reborn within my boundary, she has been reborn within my boundary," having gone to the presence of Sakka, the king of gods, said "Sire, a case has arisen on account of her for us; decide it." Sakka too, having merely looked at her, with affection arisen, said thus - "From the time of seeing her, how have your minds arisen?" Then one said - "My arisen mind was unable to settle down, like a battle drum." The second said "My mind just keeps flowing swiftly, like a mountain river." The third said "From the time of seeing her, my eyes protruded like those of a crab." The fourth said "My mind was unable to stand motionless, like a flag hoisted on a shrine." Then Sakka said to them - "Dear sons, your minds are indeed of a forceful nature; but I, if I obtain her, shall live; if I do not obtain her, death will come to me."

The young gods, saying "Great king, there is no need for your death," having given her up to Sakka, departed. She was dear and agreeable to Sakka. When it was said "Let us go to such and such a sport," Sakka was unable to refuse her word.

The story of Rohinī, the maiden of the warrior caste, is the first.

2. The Story of a Certain Monk

222. "Whoever indeed arisen" - the Teacher, while dwelling at the Aggāḷava shrine, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to a certain monk.

For when lodgings had been permitted by the Teacher for the community of monks, while lodgings were being made by the Rājagaha millionaire and others, one monk of Āḷavī, while making his own lodging, having seen a certain agreeable tree, began to cut it. But a certain deity with a young child who had been reborn there, standing with her child taken on her hip, entreated: "Do not cut down my mansion, master; I shall not be able to wander about from non-residence to non-residence taking my child." He, thinking "I shall not obtain such a tree elsewhere," did not heed her words. She, thinking "Having looked at this child at least, he will desist," placed her son on a branch of the tree. That monk too, being unable to hold back the raised hatchet, cut the child's arm. The deity, with powerful wrath arisen, thinking "Having struck him, I shall kill him," having raised both hands, then thought thus - "This monk is virtuous. If I kill him, I shall be one destined for hell. The remaining deities too, having seen monks cutting their own trees, taking me as a measure, thinking 'Such and such a deity killed a monk in such a way,' will kill monks. And this monk has an owner; I shall tell it to his owner himself." Having put down her raised hands, weeping, having gone to the Teacher's presence, having paid homage, she stood to one side. Then the Teacher said to her: "What is it, deity?" She reported the whole incident in detail: "Venerable sir, such and such a thing was done by your disciple to me; I too, having wished to kill him, having thought such and such, without killing him, have come here."

The Teacher, having heard that, having said "Good, good, deity, well done by you in restraining such arisen irritation like a swerving chariot," spoke this verse -

222. "Whoever indeed would restrain arisen wrath, like a swerving chariot;
Him I call a charioteer, the other person is merely a rein-holder."

Therein, "arisen" means that which has arisen. "Like a swerving chariot" means just as a skilled charioteer, having restrained a chariot running with excessive speed, brings it to a stop wherever he wishes, so whatever person is able to restrain, to hold back arisen wrath. "Him I" means him I call a charioteer. "The other person" means the other charioteer-person of kings, viceroys, and so on is called merely a rein-holder, not a supreme charioteer.

At the conclusion of the teaching, the deity became established in the fruition of stream-entry, and the proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial to the assembly that had arrived as well.

But the deity, even though having become a stream-enterer, stood weeping. Then the Teacher, having asked her "What is it, deity?" when it was said "Venerable sir, my mansion is lost; what shall I do now?" having said "Enough, deity, do not worry, I shall

give you a mansion," pointing out a certain tree near the perfumed chamber in Jeta's Grove where the deity had passed away the previous day, said "In such and such a place there is an unoccupied tree; approach that one." She approached that place. Thenceforth, thinking "This one's mansion is given by the Buddha," even influential deities, having come, were not able to dislodge her. The Teacher, having made that the occasion, laid down the training rule concerning growing plants for the monks.

The story of a certain monk is the second.

3. The Story of the Female Lay Follower Uttarā

223. "One should conquer wrath by non-wrath": the Teacher, while dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, having finished his meal at Uttarā's house, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the female lay follower Uttarā.

Therein, this is the progressive discourse - In Rājagaha, it is said, a poor man named Puṇṇa lived by working for wages in dependence on the millionaire Sumana. His wife and a daughter named Uttarā - these two alone were the people of his household. Then one day they made a proclamation in Rājagaha: "A festival is to be celebrated for seven days." Having heard that, the millionaire Sumana, having addressed Puṇṇa who had come right early, said: "Dear son, our attendants wish to celebrate the festival. Will you celebrate the festival, or will you do work for wages?" "Master, a festival is for those who have wealth. But in my house there is not even rice-grain for rice gruel for the morrow. What is the festival to me? If I can obtain oxen, I shall go to plough." "Then take the oxen." He, having taken strong oxen and a plough, having said to his wife: "Dear lady, the townspeople are celebrating the festival. I, due to poverty, shall go to do work for wages. Cook for me today a double portion of fodder and bring the meal" - went to the field.

The Elder Sāriputta too, having been attained to the cessation attainment for seven days, having emerged on that day, looking around thinking "For whom indeed is it fitting for me to show kindness today?" having seen Puṇṇa entered within the net of his knowledge, looking to see "Is this one indeed faithful? Will he be able to show me kindness?" having known his state of faith and his ability to show kindness and the obtaining of great success by him on account of that, having taken his bowl and robes, having gone to his ploughing place, stood looking at a bush on the bank of a pit.

Puṇṇa, having seen the elder, having set aside his ploughing, having paid homage to the elder with the fivefold prostration, thinking "There will be need for a wooden toothbrush," having made a wooden toothbrush allowable, gave it. Then the elder, having taken out his bowl and water strainer, gave them to him. He, thinking "There will be need for drinking water," having taken them, having filtered drinking water, gave it. The Elder thought - "This one lives at the back of others' house. If I go to his house-gate, his wife will not get to see me. Until she, having taken the meal, sets out on the road, I shall stay right here." He, having waited there a little while, having known that she had set out on the road, set out facing towards the inner city.

She, having seen the elder on the road, thought - "Sometimes when I have a gift, I do not see the noble one; sometimes when I see the noble one, I have no gift. But today the noble one has been seen by me, and this gift is here. Will he indeed show me

kindness?" She, having put down the food vessel, having paid homage to the elder with the fivefold prostration, said: "Venerable sir, without thinking whether this is coarse or superior, show kindness to your servant." The elder, having held out his bowl, while she, holding the vessel with one hand and giving the food from it with the other hand, when half the food had been given, covered the bowl with his hand, saying "Enough." She said: "Venerable sir, there is only one portion; it cannot be made into two. Without making provision for this world for your servant, make provision for the world beyond. I wish to give it without remainder." Having said this, having placed all of it in the elder's bowl, she made the aspiration: "May I be a partaker of what is seen by you in this very life." The elder, having said "May it be so," having given the thanksgiving while standing right there, having sat down in a place convenient for water, took his meal. She too, having turned back, having searched for rice-grain, cooked a meal. Puṇṇa too, having ploughed an area of about half a karīsa, being unable to endure the hunger, having released the oxen, having entered the shade of a single tree, sat down looking at the road.

Then his wife, while going having taken the meal, having seen him, thought: "He is sitting oppressed by hunger, looking at me. If he threatens me saying 'You have delayed too much, woman,' and strikes me with a driver's stick, the deed done by me will become useless. I shall tell him beforehand." Having thought thus, she said - "Husband, for just this one day gladden your mind. Do not make the deed done by me useless. For I, while bringing your meal right early, having seen the General of the Teaching on the road, having given your meal to him, having gone again and having cooked a meal, have come. Gladden your mind, husband." He, having asked "What do you say, dear lady?" having heard that matter again, saying "Dear lady, well done indeed by you in giving my meal to the noble one! By me too, right early today, a wooden toothbrush and water for washing the face were given to him" - with a gladdened mind, having delighted in those words, because of having received the meal late, with body wearied, having placed his head on her lap, he fell into sleep.

Then, right early, his tilled ground, with reference to the dust powder, all stood as red gold, shining like a heap of kaṇikāra flowers. He, having awakened, having looked, said to his wife - "Dear lady, this tilled ground all appears to have become gold for me. Is it that my eyes are spinning because of having received food too late in the day?" "Husband, it appears just so to me too." He, having risen, having gone there, having taken one lump, having struck it on the plough-head, having known its golden nature, thinking "Ah, by the gift given by me to the noble General of the Teaching, this very day the result has been shown. But it is not possible to conceal and enjoy so much wealth," having filled the food bowl brought by his wife with gold, having gone to the royal palace, having entered when given permission by the king, having paid respect to the king, when it was said "What is it, dear?" he said "Sire, today my tilled ground has all become filled with gold and stands thus. It is fitting to have this gold brought." "Who are you?" "I am named Puṇṇa." "But what was done by you today?" "By me, right early, a wooden toothbrush and water for washing the face were given to the General of the Teaching. And by my wife too, the food being brought for me was given to him alone."

Having heard that, the king, having said "This very day, indeed, friend, the result of the gift given to the General of the Teaching has been shown," asked "Dear, what shall I do?" "Having sent many thousands of carts, have the gold brought." The king sent the carts. When the king's men were taking it saying "It belongs to the king," each thing taken became nothing but clay. They, having gone, having reported to the king, said "Having said what did you take it?" When asked, they said "It belongs to you." "It is not mine, dear. Go and take it saying 'It belongs to Puṇṇa.'" They did so; each thing taken was nothing but gold. Having brought all of it, they made a heap in the royal courtyard. The heap was eighty cubits in height. The king, having assembled the citizens, asked "Does anyone in this city have so much gold?" "There is not, Sire." "What then is fitting to give him?" "The umbrella of a millionaire, Sire." The king, saying "Let him be named the Millionaire of Much Wealth," gave him the umbrella of a millionaire together with great wealth. Then he said to him - "We, Sire, have dwelt for so long a time in another's family. Give us a dwelling place." "Then look, this thicket can be seen; having had it removed, build a house" - he pointed out the site for a house of a former millionaire. He, having had a house built in that place in just a few days, performing the house-entering ceremony and the umbrella ceremony together as one, gave a gift to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha for seven days. Then the Teacher, while giving the thanksgiving, gave a progressive discourse. At the conclusion of the talk on the Teaching, the millionaire Puṇṇa and his wife and his daughter Uttarā - these three persons became stream-enterers.

Afterwards, the millionaire of Rājagaha asked for the daughter of the millionaire Puṇṇa in marriage for his own son. He, having said "I shall not give her," when it was said "Do not do thus; having dwelt in dependence on us for so long a time, your success was obtained; give your daughter to my son," said "He is one of wrong view; my daughter cannot carry on without the Three Jewels; I shall indeed not give him my daughter." Then many sons of good family, groups of millionaires and others, requested him "Do not break trust with him; give him your daughter." He, having accepted their word, gave his daughter on the full moon of Āsāḷha. She, from the time of going to her husband's family, was not able to approach a monk or a nun, or to give a gift, or to hear the Teaching. Thus, when two and a half months had passed, she asked the attendant standing nearby - "How much of the rains retreat now remains?" "A fortnight, my lady." She sent a message to her father: "Why did they throw me into such a prison? Better for me to be branded and proclaimed as a slave to others. It is not fitting to give to such a family of wrong view. From the time of coming, I have not been able to do even one meritorious deed such as seeing monks and so on."

Then her father, having declared his displeasure "My daughter is indeed afflicted," sent fifteen thousand coins: "In this city there is a courtesan named Sirimā; she takes a thousand daily. Having brought her with these coins and having made her a wife for her husband, let her herself make merit." She, having had Sirimā summoned, said: "Dear companion, having taken these coins, attend upon your companion for this fortnight." She agreed saying "Very well." She, having taken her, having gone to the presence of her husband, when he, having seen Sirimā, said "What is this?" she said: "Husband, for this fortnight let my companion attend upon you; but I, for this fortnight, wish to give gifts and wish to hear the Teaching." He, having seen that

lovely woman, with affection arisen, received it saying "Good!"

Uttarā too, having invited the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, having obtained the Teacher's promise saying "Venerable sir, for this fortnight, without going elsewhere, almsfood should be accepted right here," with a satisfied mind thinking "From now on, until the great invitation ceremony, I shall obtain the opportunity to attend upon the Teacher and to hear the Teaching," went about arranging all duties in the kitchen, saying "Cook the rice gruel thus, cook the cakes thus." Then her husband, thinking "Tomorrow will be the invitation ceremony," standing at the window facing the kitchen, looking around thinking "What is that blind fool doing going about?" having seen that millionaire's daughter, drenched with sweat, covered with ashes, smeared with charcoal soot, having arranged things thus and going about, having laughed saying "Alas, the blind fool, in such a position does not enjoy this splendid achievement; she goes about with a gladdened mind thinking 'I shall attend upon the shaven-headed ascetics,'" departed.

When he had departed, Sirimā, who had been standing near him, thinking "Having looked at what indeed did he laugh?" looking through that very window, having seen Uttarā, thought: "Having looked at her, he laughed; surely there is intimacy between him and her." It is said that she, although living for a fortnight in that house as an outside woman, while enjoying that success, not knowing her own status as an outside woman, formed the notion "I am the mistress of the house." She, having bound resentment towards Uttarā, thinking "I shall produce suffering for her," having descended from the mansion, having entered the kitchen, having taken boiling ghee with a ladle at the place for cooking cakes, set out towards Uttarā. Uttarā, having seen her coming, thought: "A favour has been done for me by my companion; the world-circle is too confined, the Brahma world is too low; the virtue of my companion alone is great. For in dependence on her I obtained the opportunity to give gifts and to hear the Teaching. If there is irritation in me towards her, let this ghee burn me. If there is not, let it not burn me" - and she pervaded her with friendliness. By that, the boiling ghee poured on her head was like cool water.

Then, thinking "This will be cool," having filled the ladle and having taken it, as she was coming, Uttarā's female slaves, having seen her, threatening her saying "Go away, you badly trained one, you are not fit to pour boiling ghee on our mistress," rising up from here and there, having beaten her with hands and feet, threw her down on the ground. Uttarā, although trying to prevent them, was not able to prevent them. Then, standing over her, having warded off all the female slaves, having admonished Sirimā saying "Why was such a weighty thing done by you?" having bathed her with hot water, she anointed her with oil medicated a hundred times. At that moment she, having known her own status as an outside woman, thought: "A weighty deed was done by me; while I was pouring boiling ghee upon her merely because of the husband's laughing, she did not command the female slaves saying 'Seize her!' Even at the time of harassing me, having warded off all the female slaves, she did what ought to be done for me. If I do not ask forgiveness of her, may my head split into seven pieces" - and having lain down at her feet, said "Lady, forgive me." I am a daughter who has a father; when my father forgives, I shall forgive. So be it, lady, I shall ask forgiveness of your father, the millionaire Puṇṇa. Puṇṇa is my father in the round of rebirths; but when my father who brings about the end of the round of

rebirths forgives, I shall forgive. But who is your father who brings about the end of the round of rebirths? The Perfectly Enlightened One. I have no trust with him. I shall arrange it; tomorrow the Teacher will come here bringing the Community of monks; you, having taken whatever honour you have obtained, having come right here, ask forgiveness of him. She, having risen saying "Very well, lady," having gone to her own house, having commanded five hundred attendant women, having prepared various kinds of solid foods and curries, on the following day, having taken that honour, having come to Uttarā's house, being unable to place it in the bowls of the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, she stood. Having taken all that, Uttarā herself arranged it. Sirimā too, at the conclusion of the meal, together with her retinue, lay down at the feet of the Teacher.

Then the Teacher asked her - "What is your offence?" Venerable sir, yesterday such and such a thing was done by me, and then my companion, having prevented the maidservants who were vexing me, rendered me a favour indeed. I, having known the virtue of this one, asked her forgiveness, and then she said to me "When you forgive, I shall forgive." "Is it really so, Uttarā?" "Yes, venerable sir, boiling ghee was poured on my head by my companion." Then "What was thought by you?" "The world-circle is too confined, the Brahma world is too low, the virtue of my companion alone is great. For I, in dependence on her, obtained the opportunity to give gifts and to hear the Teaching. If there is irritation in me towards her, let this burn me. If not, let it not burn me" - having thought thus, I pervaded her with friendliness, venerable sir. The Teacher said "Good, good, Uttarā, thus it is proper to conquer wrath. For wrath should be conquered by non-wrath, one who reviles and abuses by one who does not revile and does not abuse, a great miser by giving of one's own property, a liar by truthful speech" - and having said this, he spoke this verse -

223. "One should conquer wrath by non-wrath, one should conquer the bad by good;
One should conquer the miser by giving, the speaker of falsehood by truth."

Therein, "by non-wrath" means a person prone to wrath should be conquered by being non-wrathful. "The bad" means the wicked one should be conquered by being good. "The miser" means a great miser should be conquered by a mind of generosity towards one's own property. A speaker of falsehood should be conquered by truthful speech. Therefore he spoke thus - "One should conquer wrath by non-wrath, etc. the speaker of falsehood by truth."

At the conclusion of the teaching, Sirimā together with five hundred women became established in the fruition of stream-entry.

The story of the female lay follower Uttarā is the third.

4. The Story of the Question of the Elder Monk Mahāmoggallāna

224. "One should speak truth": the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the question of the Elder Mahāmoggallāna.

For on one occasion the elder, having gone on a journey in heaven, standing at the door of the mansion of an influential deity, said thus to her who had come to his presence, paid homage, and stood - "Deity, great is your success; what action did you

do to obtain this?" "Do not ask me, venerable sir." It is said that the deity, being ashamed of her insignificant action, speaks thus. But she, being told by the elder "Do tell," said - "Venerable sir, by me neither was a gift given, nor veneration made, nor the Teaching heard; only truth alone was guarded." The elder, having gone to other mansion doors, coming one after another, asked other celestial maidens as well. Among those too, having likewise concealed and being unable to prevent the elder, one for the time being said - "Venerable sir, by me nothing was done among giving and so on. But I was a slave of another in the time of the Buddha Kassapa. My master was exceedingly fierce and harsh; with whatever was grabbed - whether a stick or a log - he would break my head. When irritation arose, I rebuked myself thus: 'This master of yours is lord to brand you or to cut off your nose and so on; do not be angry' - and I did not generate any irritation whatsoever. By that, this success was obtained by me." Another said - "I, venerable sir, while guarding a sugar-cane field, gave a stick of sugar-cane to a certain monk." Another gave one timbaru fruit. Another gave one cucumber. Another gave one sweet lovi-lovi. Another one handful of roots. Others, by the method beginning with "a handful of neem," having reported the small gift done by each one, said "By this and this reason, this success was obtained by us."

The elder, having heard the deed done by them, having approached the Teacher, asked - "Is it possible, venerable sir, by the mere speaking of truth, by the mere quenching of irritation, by the exceedingly small mere giving of timbaru fruits and so on, to obtain divine success?" "Why do you ask me, Moggallāna? Was not this meaning told to you by the deities?" "Yes, venerable sir, it is obtained, methinks, by this much, divine success." Then the Teacher, having said to him "Moggallāna, even by merely speaking truth, even by merely abandoning irritation, even by giving a small gift, one goes indeed to the heavenly world," spoke this verse -

224. "One should speak truth, one should not be angry, one should give even a little when asked;
By these three grounds, one may go to the presence of the gods."

Therein, "one should speak truth" means one should explain, express truth, one should become established in truth - this is the meaning. "One should not be angry" means one should not be angry towards another. "When asked" means those called beggars are virtuous ones gone forth. For they, although without requesting "Give," stand at the house door, but in meaning they are indeed requesting. Thus, when asked by virtuous ones, when there is little gift-worthy property, one should give even a trifle. "By these three" means by even one among these three reasons, one may go to the heavenly world - this is the meaning.

At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of the question of the Elder Monk Mahāmoggallāna is the fourth.

5. The Story of the Brahmin, the Buddha's Father

225. The Teacher, while dwelling at Sāketa in the Añjana Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to a question raised by the monks, beginning with "Those who are non-violent."

It is said that at the time when the Blessed One, surrounded by the Community of monks, was entering Sāketa for almsfood, one elderly brahmin residing in Sāketa, coming out from the city, having seen the One of Ten Powers at the doorway in the inhabited area, having fallen at his feet, having firmly grasped his ankles, said "Dear son, surely parents should be looked after by their sons in old age; why for so long a time have you not shown yourself to us? I at least have seen you; come to see your mother too" - having taken the Teacher, he went to his own house. The Teacher, having gone there, sat down on the prepared seat together with the Community of monks. The brahmin woman too, having come, having fallen at the Teacher's feet, having said "Dear son, for so long a time where have you gone? Surely parents should be attended upon in old age," had her sons and daughters pay homage, saying "Come, pay homage to your brother." Both of them, with satisfied minds, having served the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, having said "Venerable sir, please accept regular almsfood right here," when it was said "Buddhas do not accept regular almsfood in one place only," they said "If so, venerable sir, those who come to invite you, please send them to our presence." The Teacher, from then on, sent those who came to invite him, saying "Having gone, inform the brahmin." They, having gone, say to the brahmin "We invite the Teacher for the morrow." The brahmin, on the following day, having taken vessels of food and vessels of curry from his own house, goes to the Teacher's sitting place. But when there was no other invitation, the Teacher performed the meal duty at the brahmin's house itself. Both of them, constantly giving their own gift to the Truth-finder and listening to the talk on the Teaching, attained the fruition of non-returning.

The monks raised up a discussion in the Teaching hall: "Friends, the brahmin knows that the Truth-finder's father is Suddhodana and his mother is Mahāmāyā; yet knowing this, together with the brahmin woman he calls the Truth-finder 'our son,' and the Teacher too consents to it likewise. What indeed is the reason?" The Teacher, having heard their discussion, having said "Monks, both of them are calling their own son indeed as son," brought up the past.

In the past, monks, this brahmin was continuously for five hundred births my father, for five hundred births my uncle, and for five hundred births my grandfather. That brahmin woman too was continuously for five hundred births my mother, for five hundred births my aunt, and for five hundred births my grandmother. Thus, having shown that for one and a half thousand births I was raised in the brahmin's hands, and for one and a half thousand births in the brahmin woman's hands - three thousand births of being their son - he spoke these verses:

"In whom the mind settles, and the consciousness becomes clear;
Even in a person never seen before, one surely trusts in him.

"By former living together, or by present welfare;
Thus that love arises, like a waterlily in water."

The Teacher dwelt for three months in dependence on that very family. Both of them, having realised arahantship, attained final nibbāna. Then, having made great honour to them, having placed both on a single catafalque, they carried them out. The Teacher too, attended by five hundred monks, went to the cremation ground together

with them. The great multitude came out, saying "The parents of the Buddha, it is said." The Teacher too, having entered a hall near the cremation ground, stood there. The people, having paid homage to the Teacher, having stood to one side, exchange friendly welcome with the Teacher, saying "Venerable sir, do not think 'Your parents have died.'" The Teacher, without rejecting them by saying "Do not speak thus," having surveyed the disposition of the assembly, expounding the Teaching suitable to that moment -

"Little indeed is this life,
One dies within a hundred years;
Even if one lives beyond that,
Then one dies of old age."

He spoke this Discourse on Ageing. At the conclusion of the teaching, there was the full realisation of the teaching by eighty-four thousand living beings. The monks, not knowing the state of having attained final Nibbāna of the brahmin and the brahmin woman, asked: "Venerable sir, what is their future life?" The Teacher said: "Monks, for such sages beyond training, there is no such thing as a future life. For such ones attain only the imperishable, Deathless, great Nibbāna" - and having said this, he spoke this verse -

225. "Those sages who are non-violent, always restrained in body;
They go to the imperishable state, where having gone they do not grieve."

Therein, "sages" means sages beyond training who have attained the path and fruition through the practice of moral perfection. "In body" - this is merely a manner of teaching; the meaning is well-restrained by all three doors. "Imperishable" means eternal. "State" means an unshakable state, a stable state. "Where" means having gone to that Nibbāna where they do not grieve, do not sorrow, are not vexed - they go to that state - this is the meaning.

At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of the brahmin, the Buddha's father, is the fifth.

6. The Story of Puṇṇa the Slave Woman

226. "For those always wakeful" - the Teacher, while dwelling at the Vulture's Peak, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to a female slave named Puṇṇā belonging to the Rājagaha millionaire.

It is said that one day they gave her much paddy for the purpose of pounding. She, having lit a lamp even at night, while pounding the paddy, for the purpose of resting, stood outside in the wind with her body drenched in sweat. At that time Dabba the Mallian was the appointer of lodgings for the monks. He, having heard the hearing of the Teaching, having kindled his finger for the monks who were going each to their own lodging, going ahead for the purpose of showing the way, created light for the monks. Puṇṇā, having seen by that light the monks wandering on the mountain, having thought "I, being troubled by my own suffering, do not go to sleep even at this time; why do the venerable ones not sleep?" having formed the perception "Surely

there will be illness for some monk, or there will be danger from a being of the snake kind," right early, having taken rice-powder, having moistened it with water, having made a cake on the palm of her hand, having cooked it on embers, having placed it on her hip, thinking "I shall eat it on the path to the bathing ford," having taken a pot, she set out towards the bathing ford. The Teacher too proceeded along that very road to enter the village for almsfood.

She, having seen the Teacher, thought - "On other days, even when the Teacher has been seen, I have no gift; when there is a gift, I do not see the Teacher. Now I have a gift, and the Teacher has come face to face. If he would accept without thinking whether it is coarse or superior, I would give this cake." Having put the pot aside, having paid homage to the Teacher, she said "Venerable sir, by accepting this coarse gift, show kindness to me." The Teacher, having looked at the Elder Ānanda, having had him take out and offer the bowl given by the great king, accepted the cake. Puṇṇā too, having placed it right in the Teacher's bowl, having paid homage with the fivefold prostration, said "Venerable sir, may success come to me in this very life through you." The Teacher, while standing right there, gave the thanksgiving, saying "May it be so."

Puṇṇā too thought - "Although the Teacher, showing kindness to me, accepted the cake, he will not eat this. Surely, having given it in front to a crow or a dog, or having gone to the house of a king or a prince, he will eat sumptuous food." The Teacher too, having known the disposition of her mind, thinking "What indeed is she thinking?" having looked at the Elder Ānanda, showed the appearance of wishing to sit down. The elder, having prepared a robe, gave it. The Teacher, having sat down just outside the city, took his meal. Deities, having squeezed out like a honeycomb the nutritive essence suitable for gods and humans in the entire interior of the world-circle, infused it therein. And Puṇṇā stood looking on. At the conclusion of the meal, the elder gave water. The Teacher, having finished the meal, having addressed Puṇṇā, said "Why do you, Puṇṇā, despise my disciples?" "I do not despise them, venerable sir." Then what was said by you having looked at my disciples? "I, being troubled by this suffering and misfortune, do not go to sleep; for what purpose do the venerable ones not go to sleep? Surely there will be illness for someone, or there will be danger from a being of the snake kind - this much was thought by me, venerable sir." The Teacher, having heard her words, having said "Puṇṇā, you do not sleep because of the affliction of suffering; my disciples do not sleep because of being devoted to constant wakefulness," spoke this verse -

226. "For those always wakeful, training day and night;
Inclined to Nibbāna, mental corruptions come to an end."

Therein, "training day and night" means of those training in the three trainings by day and by night. "Inclined to Nibbāna" means of those whose disposition is towards Nibbāna. "Come to an end" means all the mental corruptions of such persons go to an end, to destruction, to absence - this is the meaning.

At the conclusion of the teaching, Puṇṇā, just as she stood, became established in the fruition of stream-entry, and the proclamation of the Teaching was beneficial to the assembly that had arrived as well.

The Teacher, having done the meal duty with the cake of rice bran baked on embers, went to the monastery. The monks raised up a discussion in the Teaching hall: "A difficult thing, friends, was done by the Perfectly Enlightened One, taking the meal with the cake of rice bran baked on embers given by Puṇṇā." The Teacher, having come, having asked "What discussion were you having as you sat together here, monks?" when it was said "Such and such," having said "Not only now, monks; in the past too the rice bran given by her was consumed by me," brought up the past -

"Having eaten grass-scrap, having eaten rice-scum and bran;
This was your food, why do you not eat it now?

"Where they do not know a man, by birth or by discipline;
Much there, O great Brahmā, even rice-scum and bran.

"And you indeed understand me, what kind of excellent horse this is;
Knowing, having come to know, I do not eat your rice bran."

He related this Kuṇḍaka-Sindhava-Potaka Jātaka in detail.

The story of Puṇṇā the slave woman is the sixth.

7. The Story of the Lay Follower Atula

227-230. "This is ancient" - the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to a lay follower named Atula.

For he was a lay follower dwelling in Sāvattihī, with a retinue of five hundred lay followers. One day, having taken those lay followers, having gone to the monastery for the purpose of hearing the Teaching, wishing to hear the Teaching in the presence of the Elder Revata, having paid homage to the Elder Revata, he sat down. But that venerable one delighted in seclusion, a solitary wandering ascetic like a lion; therefore he said nothing to him. He, angry thinking "This elder said nothing," having risen, having gone to the presence of the Elder Sāriputta, standing to one side, when the elder said "For what purpose have you come?" said "I, venerable sir, having taken these lay followers, approached the Elder Revata for the purpose of hearing the Teaching; the elder said nothing to me. I, having become angry with him, have come here. Please expound to me the Teaching." Then the elder, having said "If so, lay followers, sit down," spoke at length a talk on the higher teaching. The lay follower too, having become angry thinking "A talk on the higher teaching is exceedingly subtle; the elder spoke much on the higher teaching only; what use is this to us?" having taken his following, went to the presence of the Elder Ānanda.

When the elder too said "What is it, lay followers?" they said "Venerable sir, we approached the Elder Revata for the purpose of hearing the Teaching; not having obtained even so much as a conversation and friendly talk in his presence, angry, we went to the presence of the Elder Sāriputta. He too spoke to us much on the higher teaching only, exceedingly subtle. Having become angry with him too, thinking 'What use is this to us?' we have come here. Tell us, venerable sir, a talk on the Teaching." "If so, having sat down, listen" - the elder, having made it easy to understand for them, spoke only a little Teaching. They, having become angry with the elder too, having gone to the Teacher's presence, having paid homage, sat down to one side.

Then the Teacher said to them - "Why have you come, lay followers?" "For hearing the Teaching, venerable sir." "But has the Teaching been heard by you?" "Venerable sir, we first approached the Elder Revata; he said nothing to us. Having become angry with him, we approached the Elder Sāriputta; by him much higher teaching was spoken to us. Not being able to perceive that, having become angry, we approached the Elder Ānanda; by him only a little Teaching was spoken to us. Having become angry with him too, we have come here."

The Teacher, having heard his talk, said "Atula, from ancient times this has been the habitual practice; they censure even one who is silent, even one who speaks much, even one who speaks little. There is indeed no one who is exclusively to be censured or exclusively to be praised. Even kings some blame, some praise. Even the great earth, even the moon and sun, even space and so on, even the Perfectly Enlightened One sitting in the midst of the fourfold assembly expounding the Teaching - some censure, some praise. For the blame or praise of the blindly foolish is immeasurable; but one blamed by a wise and intelligent person is truly blamed, and one praised is truly praised." Having said this, he spoke these verses -

227. "This is ancient, Atula, this is not of today;
They blame one who sits silent, they blame one who speaks much;
They blame even one who speaks moderately, there is no one in the world
who is not blamed.
228. "There has not been, nor will there be, nor is there at present found;
A man completely blamed, or completely praised.
229. "Whom the wise praise, having investigated day after day;
One of flawless conduct, intelligent, endowed with wisdom and morality.
230. "Like a gold coin of Jambu river gold, who is worthy to blame him;
Even the gods praise him, he is praised even by Brahmā."

Therein, "ancient this" means this is old. "Atula" - he addresses that lay follower by name. "This is not of today" means this blaming or praising is not as if of today, recently arisen. "One who sits silent" - "What is this one, like a mute, like a deaf person, like one not knowing anything, having become silent, sitting?" - thus they blame. "One who speaks much" - "What is this one, rattling like a palm-leaf struck by the wind; there is simply no end to his talk" - thus they blame. "Even one who speaks moderately" - "What is this one, regarding his own words as if they were gold and silver, having said one or two things, became silent" - thus they blame. Thus in every way in this world there is no one who is not blamed. This is the meaning. "Nor has there been" means there was not in the past either, nor will there be in the future.

"If the wise" means the blame or praise of the foolish is immeasurable; but when the wise, day after day, having investigated and having known the reason for blame or the reason for praise, praise one of flawless conduct because of being endowed with flawless training or flawless livelihood, praise one who is intelligent because of being endowed with wisdom nourished by the Teaching, praise one endowed with wisdom and morality because of being endowed with both mundane and supramundane wisdom and the morality of fourfold purity - who is worthy to blame him, like a gold

coin of Jambu river gold, free from defects of gold, able to withstand striking and polishing? This is the meaning. "Even the gods" means deities and also wise humans, having attended upon that monk, extol and praise him. "Even by Brahmā" means not only by gods and humans, but he is praised even by the Great Brahmā in the ten-thousand world-systems. This is the meaning.

At the conclusion of the teaching, all five hundred lay followers became established in the fruition of stream-entry.

The story of the lay follower Atula is the seventh.

8. The Story of the Group of Six

231-234. "Bodily misbehaviour": the Teacher, while dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, spoke this proclamation of the Teaching referring to the group of six monks.

For one day the Teacher, while dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, having heard the clattering sound of those group of six monks walking up and down on a flat rock, having taken sticks with both hands and having mounted wooden shoes, having asked "Ānanda, what is this sound?" having heard "It is the clattering sound of the group of six monks walking up and down having mounted shoes," having laid down a training rule, having said "It is fitting for a monk to guard the body and so on," expounding the Teaching, he spoke these verses -

231. "One should guard against bodily misbehaviour, one should be restrained in body;
Having abandoned bodily misconduct, one should practise good conduct by body.
232. "One should guard against verbal misbehaviour, one should be restrained in speech;
Having abandoned verbal misconduct, one should practise good conduct by speech.
233. "One should guard against mental misbehaviour, one should be restrained in mind;
Having abandoned mental misconduct, one should practise good conduct by mind.
234. "The wise restrained in body, and also restrained in speech;
The wise restrained in mind, they indeed are well-restrained."

Therein, "bodily misbehaviour" means one should guard against the threefold bodily misconduct. "Restrained in body" means having prevented the entry of misconduct through the body-door, one should be restrained, with the door shut. But because one who, having abandoned bodily misconduct, practises bodily good conduct, accomplishes both of these, therefore it is said "having abandoned bodily misconduct, one should practise good conduct by body." In the immediately following verses too, the same method applies. "The wise restrained in body" means those wise persons who, not committing killing of living beings and so on, are restrained in body;

not committing lying and so on, are restrained in speech; not arousing covetousness and so on, are restrained in mind - they in this world are well-restrained, well-protected, well-guarded, with doors well-shut - this is the meaning.

At the conclusion of the teaching, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The story of the group of six is the eighth.

The commentary on the Chapter on Anger is concluded.

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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