

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)

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

2. Commentary on the Great Chapter (2. Mahāvaggaṭṭhakathā)

2. Commentary on the Great Discourse on Causation
(2. Mahānidānasuttavaṇṇanā)

[DN 15, PTS 2.55-2.71]



PaliVerse

1.The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries

2. Commentary on the Great Chapter

2. Explanation of the Great Discourse on Causation

Commentary on the Introduction

95. Thus have I heard... etc. "Among the Kurus" - this is the Discourse on the Great Causation. Herein this is the explanation of obscure terms. "Was dwelling among the Kurus" - the Kurus are princes who are provincial rulers; their abode, though a single province, is called "Kurus" by conventional usage. In that Kuru province. The commentary teachers, however, said - In the time of Mandhātu, human beings in the three continents, having heard that "the Indian subcontinent is the birthplace of supreme human beings such as Buddhas, Individually Enlightened Ones, great disciples, and wheel-turning monarchs, the supreme continent, exceedingly delightful," came together with King Mandhātu the wheel-turning monarch as he toured the four continents, having put the wheel treasure in front. Then the king asked the adviser treasure - "Is there a place more delightful than the human world?" Why do you speak thus, Sire? Do you not see the power of the moon and sun? Is not their abode more delightful than here? The king, having put the wheel treasure in front, went there. The four great kings - Having merely heard "The great king Mandhātu has come," thinking "The king is of great supernormal power and great might; he cannot be warded off by battle," they handed over their own kingdom. He, having accepted that, asked again - "Is there a place more delightful than here?"

Then they told him about the realm of the Thirty-three. "The realm of the Thirty-three, Sire, is more delightful than here. There these four great kings stand as attendants of Sakka, the king of gods, on the doorkeeper's ground; Sakka, the king of gods, is of great supernormal power and great might; these are his places of enjoyment - The Vejayanta mansion, a thousand yojanas in height; the Sudhammā divine assembly hall, five hundred yojanas in height; the Vejayanta chariot, one hundred and fifty yojanas in size, and likewise the elephant Erāvaṇa; the Nandana grove adorned with a thousand divine trees; the Cittalatā grove, the Phārusaka grove, the Missaka grove; the Pāricchattaka coral tree, a hundred yojanas in height; beneath it the Paṇḍukambala stone, sixty yojanas in length, fifty yojanas in breadth, fifteen yojanas in height, of the colour of jayakusuma flowers, by whose softness half the body of Sakka sinks in when he sits down."

Having heard that, the king, wishing to go there, sprinkled the wheel treasure. It stood firm in the sky together with the fourfold army. Then, from the midpoint between the two heavenly worlds, the wheel treasure descended and stood firm on the earth together with the fourfold army headed by the adviser treasure. The king went alone to the realm of the Thirty-three. Sakka - Having merely heard "Mandhātu has come," having gone out to meet him - Having said "Welcome to you, great king, it

is your own, great king, instruct us, great king," he divided the kingdom into two parts together with the performers and gave one part. As soon as the king was established in the realm of the Thirty-three, his human nature disappeared and a divine nature became manifest. It is said that when he was seated together with Sakka on the Paṇḍukambala stone, the difference between them was discernible only by the blinking of the eyes. Not noticing that, the gods were confused about the difference between Sakka and him. He, experiencing divine success there, exercised kingship for as long as thirty-six Sakkas arose and passed away, and still unsatisfied with sensual pleasures, having fallen from there, established in his own park, his body struck by wind and heat, he died.

When the wheel treasure had again become established on the earth, the adviser treasure, having caused the inscription of Mandhātu's sandal to be written on a golden slab, instructed the kingdom thus: "This is the kingdom of Mandhātu." Those people too who had come from the three continents, being unable to go back, having approached the adviser treasure - "Sire, we came by the power of the king; now we are unable to go; give us a dwelling place," they requested. He gave them each one country. Therein, the region inhabited by the people who had come from Pubbavideha, by that very former designation - received the name "Videha country"; the region inhabited by the people who had come from Aparagoyāna received the name "Aparanta country"; the region inhabited by the people who had come from Uttarakuru received the name "Kuru country"; but on account of the many villages, market towns, and so on, it is referred to in the plural. Therefore it was said - "He dwells among the Kurus."

"A market town of the Kurus named Kammāsadhamma" - regarding "Kammāsadhamma," here some explain the meaning by replacing the letter "dha" with the letter "da." "Kammāsa was tamed here" - thus "Kammāsadamma." "Kammāsa" means the man-eater Kammāsapāda. It is said that the wound on his foot at the place where it was pierced by a stake, while healing, healed resembling variegated wood. Therefore he became known as "Kammāsapāda" (Speckled-foot). And he was tamed in that place, restrained from his man-eating nature. By what? By the Great Being. In which Jātaka? In the Mahāsutasoma Jātaka, say some. But these elders say it was in the Jayaddisa Jātaka. For at that time Kammāsapāda was tamed by the Great Being. As he said -

"When I was the son of Jayaddisa,
The offspring of the lord of the Pañcāla country,
Having given up my life, I freed my father;
And I also inspired confidence in Kammāsapāda."

Some, however, explain the meaning with the letter "dha" itself. It is said that the inhabitants of the Kuru country had the Kuru observance practice; in that, a blemish arose; therefore that place is called "Kammāsadhamma," meaning "the place where a blemish in the practice arose here." The market town established there also has this very same name. Why was it not stated in the locative case? Because of the dwelling place. It is said that for the Blessed One there was no monastery as a dwelling place in that market town. But having gone away from the market town, in a certain delightful piece of ground well supplied with water, there was a great jungle thicket;

there the Blessed One dwelt, making that market town his village as food resort. Therefore the meaning here should be understood thus - "He dwells among the Kurus; there is a market town of the Kurus named Kammāsadhamma; making that his village as food resort."

"Venerable": this is a term of endearment, a term of respect. "Ānanda" is that elder's name. "To one side" is a description in the abstract neuter - as in such passages as "the moon and sun revolve unevenly." Therefore, the meaning here should be understood thus: just as one who is seated is seated to one side, so he sat down. Or this is an accusative expression used in the locative sense; "sat down" means he took a seat. For the wise, having approached one who holds the place of a teacher, sit down to one side through skilfulness in seating. And this one was one of them; therefore he sat down to one side.

But how is one who is seated, seated to one side? By avoiding the six faults of sitting. That is: too far, too near, upwind, on a raised place, too directly in front, and too far behind. For one seated too far away, if he wishes to speak, he has to speak in a loud voice. One seated too near causes physical contact. One seated upwind afflicts with bodily odour. One seated on a raised place displays disrespect. One seated too directly in front, if he wishes to look, has to look eye to eye. One seated too far behind, if he wishes to look, has to look by turning his neck. Therefore this one too, having circumambulated the Blessed One three times, having paid homage respectfully, having avoided these six faults of sitting, at a place facing the right kneecap, having entered within the six-coloured rays of the Buddha, as if plunging into clear lac dye, as if putting on a golden cloth, as if entering the midst of a canopy of red water-lily garlands, the Venerable Ānanda, the treasurer of the Teaching, sat down. Therefore it was said - "He sat down to one side."

But at what time, and for what reason, did this venerable one approach the Blessed One? In the evening, for the reason of asking a question about the mode of dependent conditions. On that day, it is said, this venerable one, for the purpose of supporting families, as if depositing a bag of a thousand at each house door, having walked for almsfood in the village of Kammāsadhamma, having returned from his alms round, having shown his duty to the Teacher, when the Teacher had entered the perfumed chamber, having paid homage to the Teacher, having gone to his own day-quarters, having shown his duty to his pupils, when they had departed, having swept the day-quarters, having laid out a leather mat, having taken water from a water vessel, having cooled his hands and feet with water, having folded his legs crosswise, seated, he entered the fruition attainment of stream-entry. Then, having risen from the attainment at the determined time, he brought down knowledge into the mode of dependent conditions. He beginning from "with ignorance as condition, activities" to the end, from the end to the beginning, from both ends to the middle, and from the middle reaching both ends, contemplated the twelve-termed mode of dependent conditions three times. As he was thus contemplating, the mode of dependent conditions, having become clear, appeared to him as if utterly manifest.

Then he thought - "This mode of dependent conditions has been spoken of by all the Buddhas as 'both deep and deep in its appearance,' yet for me, a disciple established in limited knowledge, it appears as manifest, clear, and obvious. Does it appear as manifest only to me, or to others as well?" Then this occurred to him - "Come, let me

take this question and ask the Blessed One. Surely the Blessed One, having made this the occasion, as if lifting up Sineru with its surrounding accessories, having spoken one discourse, will show it. For when the Buddhas reach these four grounds - the regulation of the monastic discipline, the intermediate planes, the mode of dependent conditions, and the other doctrines - their thunder is great, knowledge enters in, the greatness of the Buddha's knowledge becomes evident, the teaching is profound, struck by the three characteristics, connected with emptiness."

Although he, even by nature, would approach the Blessed One a hundred times or a thousand times in a single day, never approaching without cause or reason, on that day, however, having taken up this question - having thought "Having encountered this Buddha-fragrant-elephant, I shall hear the trumpeting of knowledge; having encountered this Buddha-lion, I shall hear the lion's roar of knowledge; having encountered this Buddha-Sindh-horse, I shall see the stride of knowledge," having risen from his daytime resting place, having shaken out and taken up his leather mat, he approached the Blessed One in the evening time. Therefore it was said - "Approaching in the evening time for the reason of asking a question about the mode of dependent conditions."

Regarding "how deep": here the word "how" is used in the sense of exceeding measure; deep beyond measure, the meaning is exceedingly deep. "Deep in appearance" means being deep itself, it appears so, the meaning is it is seen as such. For one thing is shallow yet having the appearance of depth, like stale water of dark colour due to rotten leaves and so on. For that, even though only knee-deep, appears as if the height of a hundred men. One thing is deep yet having the appearance of shallowness, like the clear water of the Maṇi River. For that, even though the height of a hundred men, appears as if only knee-deep. One thing is shallow and having the appearance of shallowness, like water in a jar and so on. One thing is deep and having the appearance of depth, like water in the great ocean at the base of Sineru. Thus water itself obtains four names. But in dependent origination this does not exist. For this obtains only one name, namely "both deep and deep in appearance." "Although being of such a nature, and yet to me it seems as if utterly clear - this is wonderful, Venerable Sir, marvellous, Venerable Sir." Thus, making known his own astonishment, having asked the question, he sat in silence.

The Blessed One, having heard his words - "Ānanda speaks of a question within the domain of a Buddha as being clear to himself, as if stretching out his hand to grasp the highest point of existence, as if striving to split Sineru and extract its pith, as if wishing to cross the great ocean without a boat, as if striving to turn over the earth and take its essence. Come, I shall tell him of its profound nature" - having thought thus, he spoke beginning with "Do not say so."

Therein, regarding "do not say so" (mā heva): the syllable "ha" is merely a particle. The meaning is "do not speak thus." And this statement "do not say so" the Blessed One speaks both when extolling the Venerable Ānanda and when reproving him.

Explanation of Extolling

Therein, when extolling - Ānanda, you are of great wisdom, of clear knowledge; therefore, even though deep, dependent origination appears to you as if clear. But for others it should not be regarded as clear; it is indeed deep and deep in appearance.

Therein, they give four similes. It is said that for a great wrestler who had been nourished with fine food for six months, who had completed his training, at the time of a festive gathering, who had become familiar with the wrestler's stone, while going to the battlefield, they showed him a wrestler's stone along the way. He - said "What is this?" "A wrestler's stone." "Bring it then." When they said "We are unable to lift it," having gone himself and having said "Where is the heavy part of this?" having lifted two stones with both hands and having tossed them like play-balls, he went on. Therein, even though the wrestler's stone is light for the wrestler, it should not be said to be light for others. For just as a wrestler nourished with fine food for six months, so is the Venerable Ānanda endowed with resolution for a hundred thousand cosmic cycles; just as the wrestler's stone is light due to the wrestler's great strength, so is dependent origination clear due to the elder's great wisdom; it should not be said to be clear for others.

And in the great ocean, the fish named timi is two hundred yojanas, the timiṅgala is three hundred yojanas, the timipiṅgala is four hundred yojanas, the timirapiṅgala is five hundred yojanas; the ānanda, the timinanda, the ajjhāroha, and the mahātimi - these four are a thousand yojanas each. Therein, they explain by means of the timirapiṅgala alone. When it moves its right ear, it is said, the water stirs in an area of five hundred yojanas. Likewise the left ear. Likewise the tail, likewise the head. But when it has shaken both ears, struck the water with its tail, tossed its head to and fro, and begun to play, in an area of seven or eight hundred yojanas the water boils as if placed in a vessel and set upon an oven, and in an area of merely three hundred yojanas the water is unable to cover its back. He might speak thus - "They say this great ocean is deep, deep - where is its depth? We do not obtain even enough water to cover our back." Therein, for the timirapiṅgala, endowed with such a body, the great ocean is shallow; but it should not be said that it is shallow for other small fish. Just so, for the Elder, endowed with knowledge, dependent origination is clear; but it should not be said that it is clear for others too.

And the king of supaṇṇas is one hundred and fifty yojanas; his right wing is fifty yojanas, likewise the left wing; the tail-feather cluster is sixty yojanas, the neck is thirty yojanas, the beak is nine yojanas, the feet are twelve yojanas. When he begins to display the supaṇṇa-wind, an area of seven or eight hundred yojanas is not sufficient. He might speak thus - "They say this space is infinite, infinite - where is its infinitude? We do not obtain even space enough to spread the wind of our wings." Therein, for the king of supaṇṇas, endowed with such a body, space is limited; but it should not be said that it is limited for other small birds. Just so, for the Elder, endowed with knowledge, dependent origination is clear; but it should not be said that it is clear for others too.

Now Rāhu, the lord of titans, from the soles of his feet to the tips of his hair, is four thousand eight hundred yojanas. The span between his two arms is twelve hundred yojanas. In thickness, six hundred yojanas. The palms of his hands and soles of his feet are three hundred yojanas each, likewise the mouth. Each finger-joint is fifty yojanas, likewise the space between the eyebrows. The forehead is three hundred yojanas. The head is nine hundred yojanas. When he has descended into the great ocean, the deep water reaches only up to his knees. He might speak thus - "They say this great ocean is deep, deep - where is its depth? We do not obtain even enough

water to cover our knees." Therein, for Rāhu, endowed with such a body, the great ocean is shallow; but it should not be said that it is shallow for others. Just so, for the Elder, endowed with knowledge, dependent origination is clear; but it should not be said that it is clear for others too. With reference to this meaning, the Blessed One - "Do not say so, Ānanda; do not say so, Ānanda" he said.

For the Elder, indeed, through four reasons, even the deep dependent origination appears as clear. With which four? Through the achievement of past decisive support, through dwelling at the ford, through being a stream-enterer, and through being one of great learning.

The Talk on the Achievement of Prior Decisive Support

It is said that a hundred thousand cosmic cycles from now, a Teacher named Padumuttara arose in the world. His city was named Haṃsavatī, his father was a king named Ānanda, his mother was a queen named Sumedhā, and the Bodhisatta was named Prince Uttara. He, on the day of his son's birth, having gone forth in the great renunciation, having gone forth into homelessness, devoting himself to striving, gradually having attained omniscience - having uttered the inspired utterance "Through many births in the round of rebirths," having spent a week on the seat of enlightenment, thinking "I shall place my foot upon the earth," he stretched forth his foot. Then, splitting the earth, a great lotus arose. Its outer petals were ninety cubits, the filaments were thirty cubits, the pericarp was twelve cubits, and the pollen was the measure of nine water-pots.

The Teacher, however, was fifty-eight cubits in height. The span between his two arms was eighteen cubits, his forehead was five cubits, and his hands and feet were eleven cubits. When with his eleven-cubit foot he merely stepped upon the twelve-cubit pericarp, the pollen, the measure of nine water-pots, having risen up and having ascended to a height of fifty-eight cubits, showered down upon him as if strewn with red arsenic powder. From that point on, the Blessed One became known as Padumuttara. His two chief disciples were Devila and Sujāta. Amitā and Asamā were the two chief female disciples. His attendant was named Sumana. The Blessed One Padumuttara, looking after his father, attended by a hundred thousand monks, was dwelling in the royal city of Haṃsavatī.

Now his younger brother was named Prince Sumana. The king gave him a revenue village at a place two thousand yojanas from Haṃsavatī. He would sometimes come and see his father and the Teacher. Then one day the borderland was in revolt. Sumana sent word to the king - "The borderland is in revolt." The king sent back the message: "Why were you placed there by me?" He, having gone out and having quelled the bandits - sent word to the king: "The country is at peace, Sire." The king, pleased - said: "Let my son come quickly." He had about a thousand ministers. He consulted with them on the way - "My father is pleased; if he gives me a boon, what shall I take?" Then some said to him: "Take an elephant, take a horse, take a chariot, take a province, take the seven treasures." Others - "You are sons of the lord of the earth; wealth is not hard for you to obtain; even what is obtained, all that must be left behind when departing; only merit alone is to be taken when departing; therefore, when the king is granting you a boon, take the boon of attending upon the Blessed One Padumuttara for three months." He "You are my good friends; this thought was

not mine, but it was produced by you; thus shall I do," and having gone and having paid homage to his father, and the father too having embraced him and having kissed him on the head - when it was said "I grant you a boon, son," he said: "Very well, great king, I wish, great king, to make my life not barren by attending upon the Blessed One for three months with the four requisites; grant me this very boon." When it was said "That is not possible, dear son; choose another boon," he said: "Sire, for warriors there are not two words; give me this very thing; I have no need of anything else." "Dear son, the mind of Buddhas is difficult to know; if the Blessed One does not wish it, even if given by me, what will come of it?" He "Very well, Sire, I shall ascertain the mind of the Blessed One," and went to the monastery.

Now at that time, having finished the meal duty, the Blessed One had entered the perfumed chamber. He went to the presence of the monks seated together in the circular pavilion. They said to him - "Prince, why have you come?" To see the Blessed One; show me the Blessed One. We, prince, do not get to see the Teacher at whatever moment we wish. But who, venerable sir, does get to? The Elder Sumana, prince. "Where, venerable sir, is the elder?" Having asked where the elder's sitting place was, having gone and having paid homage - "I wish, venerable sir, to see the Blessed One; show me to him," he said. The elder - "Come, prince," taking him and placing him in the precincts of the perfumed chamber, ascended the perfumed chamber. Then the Blessed One - "Sumana, why have you come?" he said. The prince, venerable sir, has come to see the Blessed One. If so, monk, prepare a seat. The elder prepared a seat; the Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat. The prince, having paid homage to the Blessed One, exchanged friendly greetings. When did you come, prince? Venerable sir, when you had entered the perfumed chamber. But the monks - "We do not get to see the Blessed One at whatever moment we wish," sent me to the elder's presence. But the elder showed me with just a single word. The elder, venerable sir, methinks, is a favourite in your Dispensation. Yes, prince, this monk is a favourite in my Dispensation. Venerable sir, by doing what does one become a favourite in the Buddhas' Dispensation? By giving gifts, by taking upon oneself morality, by performing the Observance practice, prince. Blessed One, I wish to become a favourite in the Buddha's Dispensation like the elder; consent to the rains residence for me for three months. The Blessed One - Having looked to see "Is there indeed a purpose in going there?" and having seen that there is, said "Truth-finders, prince, delight in empty dwellings." The prince, having said "It is understood, Blessed One, it is understood, Fortunate One," said "I, venerable sir, shall go ahead and have a monastery built; when I send word, come together with a hundred thousand monks," and having obtained the promise, having gone to his father's presence, having said "The promise has been given to me, Sire, by the Blessed One; when I send word, send the Blessed One," having paid homage to his father, having departed, having had a monastery built at every yojana along the way, having travelled a distance of two thousand yojanas, searching for a monastery site in his own city, having seen the pleasure grove of a householder named Sobhana, having bought it for a hundred thousand, and having spent a hundred thousand, he had a monastery built. There, having had the perfumed chamber for the Blessed One and huts, caves, and pavilions for the remaining monks for the purpose of night-quarters and day-quarters built, having made an encircling wall, and having completed the gateway, he sent word to his father's presence - "My task is finished; send the Teacher."

The king, having fed the Blessed One - said "Blessed One, Sumana's task is finished; he awaits your coming." The Blessed One, with a retinue of a hundred thousand monks, dwelling in monasteries at every yojana, went forth. The prince, having heard "The Teacher has come," having gone out to meet him for a yojana, venerating him with garlands and so on, having ushered him into the monastery -

"Bought by me for a hundred thousand, built for a hundred thousand;
The pleasure grove named Sobhana, accept it, O Great Sage."

He presented the monastery. He, having given a gift on the day of entering the rains retreat, having summoned his own children and wife and ministers, said - "This Teacher has come to our presence from afar, and Buddhas are those who revere the Teaching, not those who value material gains. Therefore I, having put on two cloths for three months, having taken upon myself the ten precepts, shall dwell right here; you should give gifts for three months to the hundred thousand who have eliminated the mental corruptions in this very manner."

He, dwelling in a place similar to the dwelling place of the Elder Sumana, having seen all the duty that the elder performed for the Blessed One, having thought "In this place this elder is the absolute favourite; it is fitting for me to aspire to a position like his," having entered the village when the invitation ceremony to admonish was approaching, having given a great gift for seven days, on the seventh day having placed the three robes at the feet of the hundred thousand monks, having paid homage to the Blessed One - "Venerable sir, whatever merit has been made by me beginning from having had monasteries built at intervals of a yojana along the road, that was done not aspiring for the success of Sakka, nor for the success of Māra, nor for the success of Brahmā, but aspiring for the state of being an attendant of a Buddha. Therefore may I too, Blessed One, in the future, like the Elder Sumana, be an attendant of a Buddha" - having fallen down with the fivefold prostration, he paid homage.

The Blessed One - looking to see "Great is the aspiration of this son of good family; will it succeed or not?" - having known "In the future, in the hundred thousandth cosmic cycle from now, a Buddha named Gotama will arise; he will be his very attendant" -

"May all that is wished for and desired by you be fulfilled;
May all your thoughts be fulfilled, as the moon on the fifteenth."

He said. The prince, having heard that -thinking "Buddhas are those whose words are without contradiction," from the very second day, having taken that Blessed One's bowl and robes, he was as if following behind him step by step. He, having given gifts for a hundred thousand years during that Buddha's arising, having been reborn in heaven, even in the time of the Buddha Kassapa, having given his upper garment for the purpose of holding the bowl of the elder who was walking for almsfood, he made an offering. Having been reborn again in heaven and having passed away from there, having become the king of Bārāṇasī, having had hermitages built for eight Individually Enlightened Ones, having set up jewel stands, he performed attendance with the four requisites for ten thousand years. These are the well-known instances.

But while giving gifts for a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, having been reborn

together with our Bodhisatta in the Tusita city, having passed away from there, having taken conception in the house of the Sakyan Amitodana, having gradually made the renunciation, having attained perfect enlightenment, having come to Kapilavatthu on his first visit, when the Blessed One was departing from there, when royal princes had gone forth for the purpose of the Blessed One's retinue, having gone forth together with Bhaddiya and others, having gone forth in the presence of the Blessed One, before long, having heard a talk on the Teaching in the presence of the Venerable Puṇṇa Mantāṇiputta, he became established in the fruition of stream-entry. Thus this venerable one was endowed with the accomplishment of prior decisive support; by that very accomplishment of prior decisive support, even the deep dependent origination appeared to him as if manifest.

Explanation of Dwelling at Fords and So On

"Dwelling at the fording place" means learning, hearing, questioning, and retaining again and again in the presence of teachers. That was exceedingly pure for the elder; therefore for him too, even the deep dependent origination appeared as if manifest.

And for stream-enterers, the mode of dependent conditions appears as utterly manifest; and this venerable one was a stream-enterer. And for the very learned, just as a bed and chair in a room of four cubits when a lamp is burning, the definition of mentality-materiality becomes obvious; and this venerable one was the foremost of the very learned; by the power of his great learning too, even the deep mode of dependent conditions appeared to him as if manifest.

The Profundity of Dependent Origination

Therein, dependent origination is called deep in four ways: by depth of meaning, by depth of phenomena, by depth of the Teaching, and by depth of penetration.

Therein, the meaning of ageing and death having arisen and come about with birth as condition is deep, etc. the meaning of activities having arisen and come about with ignorance as condition is deep - this is the depth of meaning.

The meaning of ignorance being the condition for activities is deep, etc. the meaning of birth being the condition for ageing and death is deep - this is the depth of phenomena.

In some discourses dependent origination is taught in forward order, in some in reverse order, in some in both forward and reverse order, in some beginning from the middle in forward order or reverse order or both forward and reverse order, in some with three connections and four summaries, in some with two connections and three summaries, in some with one connection and two summaries - this is the depth of the Teaching.

But for ignorance, the meaning of not knowing, not seeing, and non-penetration of the truths is deep; for activities, the meaning of preparing, accumulating, with lust, and without lust; for consciousness, the meaning of emptiness, non-agency, non-transmigration, conception, and manifestation; for mentality-materiality, the meaning of simultaneous arising, separability, inseparability, bending, and being afflicted; for the six sense bases, the meaning of predominance, world, door, field, and being the domain; for contact, the meaning of touching, striking together, coming together, and

assembling; for feeling, the meaning of experiencing the flavour of the object, happiness, suffering, neutral state, meditation, lifelessness, and what is felt; for craving, the meaning of delighting, clinging, flowing, creeper-like craving, river-like craving, ocean-like craving, and being difficult to fill; for clinging, the meaning of taking up, grasping, adherence, misapprehension, and being difficult to overcome; for becoming, the meaning of accumulating, preparing, and casting into modes of generation, destinations, stations, and abodes; for birth, the meaning of being born, produced, descending, arising, and manifesting; for ageing and death, the meaning of destruction, fall, breaking up, and change is deep. Thus whatever is the intrinsic nature of ignorance and so on, by whatever penetration ignorance and so on are penetrated in terms of their own function and characteristic; that is deep - this should be understood as the depth of penetration. All of that appeared to the Elder as if utterly clear. Therefore the Blessed One, extolling the Venerable Ānanda - said beginning with "Do not say so." And here the intention is this - Ānanda, you are of great wisdom and clear knowledge; therefore even the deep dependent origination appears to you as if utterly clear; hence - "Does it appear utterly clear only to me, or to others as well?" - do not speak thus.

Explanation of Disparagement

But as for what was said - "reproving" - therein the intention is this - Ānanda, do not speak thus: "and yet to me it seems as if utterly clear." For if it seems to you as if utterly clear, why did you not become a stream-enterer by your own natural capacity, but standing upon the method given by me, you penetrated the path of stream-entry? Ānanda, it is Nibbāna itself that is deep; but if the mode of dependent conditions has become clear to you, then why do you not, having uprooted these four mental defilements - the gross mental fetter of sensual lust, the mental fetter of aversion, the gross underlying tendency to sensual lust, and the underlying tendency to aversion - realise the fruition of once-returning? Why do you not, having uprooted those same four mental defilements having a residuum, realise the fruition of non-returning? Why do you not, having uprooted these eight mental defilements - the five mental fetters beginning with lust for material form, the underlying tendency to lust for existence, the underlying tendency to conceit, and the underlying tendency to ignorance - realise arahantship?

And why do you not penetrate the knowledge of the perfections of a disciple like Sāriputta and Moggallāna, who fulfilled their perfections over one incalculable period exceeding a hundred thousand cosmic cycles? And why do you not penetrate the knowledge of individual enlightenment like the Individually Enlightened Ones, who fulfilled their perfections over two incalculable periods exceeding a hundred thousand cosmic cycles? Or if it appears to you as utterly clear in every way, then why do you not realise the knowledge of omniscience like the Buddhas, who fulfilled their perfections over four, eight, or sixteen incalculable periods exceeding a hundred thousand cosmic cycles? Are you without desire for these specific attainments? See how far you have failed! You, a disciple established in limited knowledge, regarding the exceedingly deep mode of dependent conditions - you say "it appears clear to me" - this statement of yours is contrary to the declaration of the Buddhas; it is fitting that such a monk should not speak contrary to the declaration of the Buddhas.

Is it not the case, Ānanda, that for me, even while striving to penetrate this mode of

dependent conditions, four incalculable periods exceeding a hundred thousand cosmic cycles have passed? And moreover, for the purpose of penetrating the mode of dependent conditions, there is no gift that was not given by me, there is no perfection that was not fulfilled. And while scattering the forces of Māra as if effortlessly, thinking "I shall penetrate the mode of dependent conditions," this great earth did not tremble even by two finger-breadths; likewise while attaining the recollection of past lives in the first watch, and while accomplishing the divine eye in the middle watch. But in the last watch, at the time approaching the break of dawn - at the very moment of seeing "Ignorance is a condition for activities in nine ways," the ten-thousandfold world system, releasing hundreds and thousands of resounding cries like a bronze cymbal struck with an iron rod, trembled like a drop of water on a lotus leaf blown by the wind. Thus deep is this dependent origination, Ānanda, and deep in its appearance. Through not understanding this teaching, Ānanda, etc. does not pass beyond.

"Of this teaching" means of this teaching of conditions. "Through not understanding" means not awakening to by way of full understanding through known comprehension. "Through not penetrating" means not penetrating by way of full understanding through scrutiny and abandoning. "Become like a tangled ball of thread" means become entangled like thread. Just as thread of weavers that has been badly placed and gnawed by mice becomes entangled here and there, and it is difficult to bring together end with end or beginning with beginning, thinking "this is the end, this is the beginning"; just so beings, having stumbled in this mode of dependent conditions, become entangled and confused, and are unable to straighten out that mode of dependent conditions. Therein, the thread, by standing in the position of individual effort, might be possible to straighten out; but except for the two Bodhisattas, there are no other beings able to straighten out the mode of dependent conditions by their own nature. But just as tangled thread, when given rice-gruel and beaten with a comb, becomes knotted here and there, forming into balls and bound with knots, just so these beings, having stumbled among the conditions, being unable to straighten out the conditions, become entangled and bound with knots by way of the sixty-two wrong views. For whoever are dependent upon wrong views, all are simply unable to straighten out the mode of dependent conditions.

"Like a matted ball of string" - a kulāgaṇṭhika is called the gruel-thread of a weaver. Kulā is a name for a bird; some say it is also called kulāvaka. For just as both of those are entangled and it is difficult to bring together end with end or beginning with beginning - this should be construed by the former method itself.

"Like muñja grass and pabbaja reeds" means become like muñja grass and like pabbaja grass. Just as those grasses, having been pounded and made into rope, when in a worn-out state, having taken it up wherever it has fallen, it is difficult to bring together end with end or beginning with beginning of those grasses, thinking "this is the end, this is the beginning." That too, by standing in the position of individual effort, might be possible to straighten out; but except for the two Bodhisattas, there are no other beings able to straighten out the mode of dependent conditions by their own nature. Thus this generation, being unable to straighten out the mode of

dependent conditions, having become knotted by way of wrong views, does not pass beyond the realm of misery, the unfortunate realm, the nether world, the round of rebirths.

Therein, "realm of misery" means hell, the animal realm, the sphere of ghosts, and the host of titans. For all of those, because of the absence of income reckoned as growth - they are called "realm of misery." Likewise, "unfortunate realm" because of being the destination of suffering. "Nether world" because of having fallen from the accumulation of happiness. The other, however -

"The succession of aggregates, and of elements and sense bases;
Continuing uninterrupted, is called the round of rebirths."

It does not pass beyond all of that, does not go beyond it. Then, from death to conception, from conception to death - thus, again and again taking up death and conception, in the three existences, in the four modes of generation, in the five destinations, in the seven stations of consciousness, in the nine abodes of beings, like a boat tossed by the wind in the great ocean, and like an ox yoked to a machine, it simply wanders about. Thus it should be understood that the Blessed One said all of this while reproving the Venerable Ānanda.

Explanation of Dependent Origination

96. Now, because this discourse - is bound by just two terms, namely "This dependent origination is deep, Ānanda" and "become like a tangled ball of string," therefore - beginning the teaching for the purpose of showing the profound nature of the mode of dependent conditions, by the connection "This dependent origination is deep, Ānanda," he said beginning with "There is ageing and death with this as condition." Herein this is the meaning - The condition for this ageing and death is this condition; therefore, with this as condition there is ageing and death. "Is there indeed a condition for ageing and death, from which condition ageing and death would come to be?" - when thus asked, by a mindful, Ānanda, wise person, just as - when it is said "The soul is the same as the body," because the question is to be set aside, one should remain silent, or it should be said "This has been left undeclared by the Truth-finder" - without proceeding in that way, just as - when it is said "Is the eye eternal or non-eternal?" it should be said definitively "non-eternal," so too definitively "there is" should be said to this. Again, when it is said "What is the condition for ageing and death? What indeed is that condition from which ageing and death comes to be?" - "Birth is the condition for ageing and death" should be said to this; thus it should be said - this is the meaning. This same method applies in all terms.

"With mentality-materiality as condition, contact" - but this, because when "with the six sense bases as condition" is said, there is only the grasping of the six resultant contacts such as eye-contact and so on, and here, wishing to show both the distinction of the conditionally arisen that is grasped and not grasped by this term "with the six sense bases as condition," and also another distinctive condition for contact beyond the six sense bases, therefore it was said - this should be understood. But what was spoken by the Blessed One in this turn of phrase? The source of the conditions was spoken of. For this discourse is called the Great Source because it was spoken having made the conditions disentangled and cleared of thickets.

98. Now, in order to show the true, unerring, not otherwise conditionality of those various conditions, he said beginning with "'Birth is the condition for ageing and death' - thus indeed this was said." Therein, "by this method" means by this reason. "In every way, in all respects" - this is a pair of indeclinable particles. Its meaning is - "If birth of every kind, in every way, of every intrinsic nature, were not to exist at all." In the case of becoming and so on too, the meaning should be understood by this very method. "For anyone" - this is an indeterminate expression, meaning for whichever one among gods and so on. "Anywhere" - this too is merely an indeterminate expression, meaning in whichever of the nine existences beginning with sensual existence. "As follows" is an indeclinable particle used in the sense of classifying the meaning that has been set down in an indeterminate manner; its meaning is - "That which was said 'for anyone anywhere,' I shall classify that meaning for you." Then, classifying it - He said beginning with "of gods for the state of being a god." Therein, "of gods for the state of being a god" means that which is this birth of aggregates for gods for the state of being a god, by which birth of aggregates gods are called "gods." "If birth were not to exist at all" - by this method the meaning should be understood in all terms. And here, "gods" means gods by rebirth. "Gandhabbas" means just the deities inhabiting tree trunks and so on. "Demons" means non-human spirits. "Beings" means whatever beings have come into existence. "Birds" means whatever have bone-wings or skin-wings or feather-wings. "Reptiles" means whatever move along creeping on the ground. "Of those various" means of those various gods, gandhabbas, and so on. "For that particular state" means for the state of being a god, gandhabba, and so on. "From the cessation of birth" means from the disappearance of birth; the meaning is from the absence of birth.

"Cause" and so on are all merely synonyms for reason. For since a reason sends forth and proceeds for the purpose of producing its own result, therefore it is called "cause" (hetu). Since it delivers that result - As if dispatching it saying "Come, take it!" - therefore it is a source (nidāna). Since the result arises from it, springs up, and dependent on it, comes and proceeds, therefore it is called "origin" (samudaya) and "condition" (paccaya). This same method applies everywhere. Furthermore, in "namely birth," "namely" (yadidaṃ) is an indeclinable particle. Its meaning should be understood in all terms according to the appropriate gender. But here - "Which is this birth" - this is its meaning. For birth is a condition for ageing and death by way of decisive support.

99. Regarding the term "existence" - By this word "anywhere," a discernment of location is made. Therein, making Avīci as the limit below and including the gods who control what is created by others above, sensual existence should be known. This method applies to becoming of rebirth. But here it fits with kammic becoming. For that is a condition for birth only by way of decisive support. Regarding the term "clinging" and so on too - By this word "anywhere," it should be known that only a discernment of location is made.

100. "With clinging as condition, existence" - here, clinging to sensual pleasures is a condition for the three kammic becomings and for the three becomings of rebirth, likewise the remaining ones too - thus, with clinging as condition, twenty-four

becomings should be known. In the direct sense, here twelve kammic becomings are obtained. For those, the clings are conditions both by way of conascence and by way of decisive support.

101. "Craving for visible form" means craving by way of object of visible form. This same method applies to craving for sound and so on. Moreover, that craving is a condition for clinging both by way of conascence and by way of decisive support.

102. "This is the condition for craving, namely feeling" - here, resultant feeling is a condition for craving by way of decisive support, while other feeling is also in other ways.

103. Now, to this extent the Blessed One, having shown the former craving that is the root of the round of rebirths, now showing the teaching - like one departing from the path, having struck on the back or having seized by the hair, crying out and crying out - showing the craving of habitual conduct by means of nine terms - he said beginning with "Thus indeed, Ānanda, dependent on feeling there is craving." Therein, "craving" means there are two cravings: craving as search and craving for what is searched. The craving by which, having entered upon goat-tracks, stake-paths, and so on, one seeks and searches for wealth - this is called craving as search. Whatever craving arises regarding those things that have been sought, searched for, and obtained - this is called craving for what is searched. Both of these are merely a designation for craving of habitual conduct. Therefore, this twofold craving dependent on feeling is called craving. Quest means the quest for objects beginning with matter; for that exists when craving exists. "Material gain" means the obtaining of objects beginning with matter; for that exists when quest exists. Judgment, however, is fourfold by way of knowledge, craving, wrong view, and applied thought. Therein - "One should know the judgment of happiness; having known the judgment of happiness, one should pursue internal happiness" - this is the judgment of knowledge. "Judgment" means there are two judgments - judgment of craving and judgment of wrong view. The one hundred and eight thoughts of craving that have come down thus are the judgment of craving. The sixty-two wrong views are the judgment of wrong view. "Desire, lord of the gods, has applied thought as its source" - but in this discourse, what is stated here as "judgment" has come as applied thought itself. For having obtained material gain, one judges the desirable and undesirable, the beautiful and unbeautiful, by applied thought alone - "This much will be for the purpose of visual objects, this much for the purpose of objects beginning with sound, this much will be for me, this much for another, this much I shall consume, this much I shall store away." Therefore it was said - "Dependent on material gain there is judgment."

"Desire and lust" means thus, regarding the matter thought about with unwholesome applied thought, both weak lust and powerful lust arise; for this is here craving. "Desire" is a designation for weak lust. "Holding" means the powerful conviction "I" and "mine." "Possession" means the act of possessing by way of craving and wrong view. "Stinginess" means the inability to endure the state of sharing in common with others. Therefore the ancients explain the meaning of the word thus - "Because it occurs as 'Let this wonderful thing be for me alone, let it not be a wonderful thing for others,' it is called stinginess." "Safeguarding" means thorough protection by way of closing doors, guarding in caskets, and so on. "It does exceedingly" (adhikaroti)

means a legal case (adhikaraṇa); this is a name for a cause. "On account of safeguarding" (ārakkhādhikaraṇa) is an abstract neuter compound; the meaning is "having safeguarding as the cause." Among "taking up of sticks" and so on, the taking up of a stick for the purpose of restraining others is "taking up of sticks." The taking up of a knife with a single edge and so on is "taking up of knives." "Dispute" means both bodily dispute and verbal dispute. The former of the former is opposition, which is strife. The latter of the latter is contention. "You, you" talk is disrespectful speech, "you, you."

112. Now, in order to show that same occurrence-craving by the reverse method too, again - beginning with "on account of safeguarding," he turned back the teaching. Therein, "sensual craving" means craving for form and so on, arisen by the influence of lust for the five strands of sensual pleasure. "Craving for existence" means lust accompanied by the eternalist view. "Craving for non-existence" means lust accompanied by the annihilationist view. "These two phenomena" means these two phenomena: craving as the root of the round of rebirths and occurrence-craving. "Being twofold" means although they have gone to a state of oneness by way of the characteristic of craving, by way of being the root of the round of rebirths and occurrence, in two portions they have one meeting point in feeling; the meaning is they have one condition through feeling as condition. For the meeting point is threefold: meeting point by entry, meeting point by conascence, and meeting point by condition. Therein - "Then all those have sensual pleasure as their meeting point" - this is called meeting point by entry. "Desire is the root of these phenomena, friend; contact is their origin; feeling is their meeting point" - this is called meeting point by conascence. "Being twofold, they have one meeting point in feeling" - but this should be understood as meeting point by condition.

113. "Eye-contact" and so on are all resultant contacts only. Among these, setting aside the four supramundane resultant contacts, the remaining contacts are thirty-two. "Namely contact" - but here, contact is a condition for feeling in many ways.

114. In "Ānanda, by whatever characteristics" and so on, "characteristics" are called the mutually incomparable intrinsic natures of feeling and so on. Those very same, when thoroughly shown, convey each respective hidden meaning - thus they are "signs." Because of being the cause of perceiving each respective thing, they are "marks." Because of being describable in such and such a way, they are "descriptions." Therefore the meaning here is - "Ānanda, by whatever characteristics, etc. by whatever descriptions there is a concept of the mental body, of the mental collection, which is this: when there is the description 'feeling' with regard to feeling's characteristic of experiencing, sign of experiencing, and mark of experiencing; when there is the description 'perception' with regard to perception's characteristic of perceiving, sign of perceiving, and mark of perceiving; when there is the description 'volition' with regard to the activities' characteristic of intending, sign of intending, and mark of intending; when there is the description 'consciousness' with regard to consciousness's characteristic of cognising, sign of cognising, and mark of cognising - 'This is the mental body' - there is a concept of the mental body. In the absence of those characteristics and so on of feeling and so on, which are the causes for the concept of the mental body, would designation-contact be discerned in the material body? That mind-contact which is a synonym for designation-contact, which arises at

the mind-door having made the four aggregates as its basis - would it be discerned in the material body, would it arise having made the five sensitive matters as its basis?" Then the Venerable Ānanda, not accepting the arising of that from the material body, just as the arising of a mango fruit from a rose-apple tree when there is no mango tree, said "No indeed, Venerable Sir."

In the second question, the meaning of the characteristics and so on should be understood by way of the characteristic of being deformed, the sign of being deformed, and the mark of being deformed as "matter," and by way of the description. "Impingement-contact" means the contact that arises having made the impinging aggregate of matter as its basis. Here too the Elder, not accepting the arising of that from the mental body, just as the arising of a rose-apple fruit from a mango tree when there is no rose-apple tree, said "No indeed, Venerable Sir."

The third question was stated by way of both. Therein the Elder, not accepting the arising of both contacts in the absence of mentality-materiality, just as the arising of mango and rose-apple fruits in space, said "No indeed, Venerable Sir."

Having thus shown the condition for the two contacts separately, now in order to show the conditionality by mentality-materiality of both of them without distinction - he began the fourth question with "Ānanda, by whatever characteristics." "Namely mentality-materiality" means which is this mentality-materiality, which is this mentality-materiality in all six doors - this alone is the cause, this alone is the condition. This is the meaning. For in the eye-door and so on, the eye and so on together with the visual object and so on are materiality, and the associated aggregates are mentality - thus even the fivefold contact is contact with mentality-materiality alone as condition. In the mind-door too, the heart-organ and whatever materiality is the object - this is materiality. The associated mental states and whatever immaterial thing is the object - this is called mentality. Thus mind-contact too should be understood as contact with mentality-materiality as condition. But mentality-materiality is a condition for it in many ways.

115. "Were not to descend" means would not go on as if having entered and proceeding, by way of conception. "Would be accumulated" means in the absence of conception consciousness, would the remaining pure mentality-materiality, having become accumulated in the form of an embryo and so on within the mother's womb, having become a mixed entity, go on? "Having descended, were to depart" means having descended by way of conception, would depart by way of death; the meaning is would cease. But that cessation of it does not occur by the cessation of that very consciousness, nor by the cessation of the second and third from that. For together with the consciousness of conception, over thirty kamma-born material phenomena arise. But while those are still standing, sixteen life-continuum consciousnesses arise and cease. During this interval there is no obstacle for the child who has taken conception or for the mother. For this is called having no opportunity. But if the material phenomena arisen together with the consciousness of conception are able to give a condition for the seventeenth life-continuum, occurrence proceeds, the succession is connected. But if they are unable, occurrence does not proceed, the succession is not connected, and it is called departing. With reference to that, "having descended, were to depart" was said.

"For this state of being" means for such a state, for the state of complete five aggregates - this is the meaning. "While still young" means while still tender and immature. "Were to be cut off" means would be interrupted. "Growth, increase, and expansion" - if consciousness were cut off, would the mere pure mentality-materiality, having arisen, attain growth by way of the first stage of life, increase by way of the middle stage of life, and expansion by way of the last stage of life? Or would it attain growth, increase, and expansion by reaching ten years, twenty years, a hundred years, or a thousand years? This is the meaning.

"Therefore, Ānanda" means because whether in the taking of conception in the mother's womb, or in the dwelling in the womb, or in the emerging from the womb, or in the occurrence at the time of ten years and so on, consciousness alone is its condition; therefore this alone is the cause, this is the condition for mentality-materiality, namely consciousness. Just as a king, rebuking his own assembly, might speak thus - "You are the viceroy, you are the general - by whom were you made? Was it not by me? For if, with me not acting, you would become a viceroy or a general by your own natural capacity, we would know your power." Just so, consciousness is the condition for mentality-materiality. In meaning, it is as if consciousness speaks thus to mentality-materiality: "You are mentality, you are materiality, you are called mentality-materiality - by whom were you made? Was it not by me? For if, with me not going before as a forerunner and not taking conception in the mother's womb, you would become mentality or materiality or mentality-materiality, we would know your power." But this consciousness is a condition for mentality-materiality in many ways.

116. "The origin of the mass of suffering" means the origination of the mass of suffering. "Namely mentality-materiality" means which is this mentality-materiality - this alone is the cause, this is the condition. Just as indeed the king's men, rebuking the king, might speak thus - "You are the king - by whom were you made? Was it not by us? For if, with us not standing in the position of viceroy, with us not standing in the position of general, you alone would be king, we would see your kingship." Just so, mentality-materiality too, in meaning, speaks thus to consciousness as it were: "You are the rebirth-linking consciousness - by whom were you made? Was it not by us? For if you, not depending on the three aggregates and the heart-organ, would be called rebirth-linking consciousness, we would see your state of being rebirth-linking consciousness." And moreover, this mentality-materiality is a condition for consciousness in many ways.

"To this extent indeed" means when consciousness is the condition for mentality-materiality, and when mentality-materiality is the condition for consciousness, when both proceed by way of mutuality condition, by this much one may be born, etc. or be reborn; birth and so on would be discerned, or successive death and rebirth-linking.

"The range of designation" means the path of conventional expression that proceeds with reference to mere words only, without seeing the meaning, of such terms as "Sirivaḍḍhaka" and "Dhanavaḍḍhaka" and so on. "The range of language" means the path of conventional expression that proceeds by way of indicating a reason, of such terms as "he remembers, thus he is mindful," "he fully comprehends, thus he is fully aware," and so on. "The range of concepts" - the path of conventional expression that proceeds by way of making known in various ways, of such terms as "wise,

experienced, intelligent, subtle, one who has made counter-arguments," and so on. Thus, by three terms, the aggregates themselves, which are the basis of designation and so on, have been spoken of. "The sphere of wisdom" means what should be traversed by wisdom, what should be known. "The round of rebirths turns" means the round of rebirths in saṃsāra turns. "This state of being" means the state of being thus; this is a name for the five aggregates. "For the manifestation" means for the purpose of making known by name. By "feeling, perception" and so on, for the purpose of making known by name; the meaning is that the five aggregates too are discerned to this extent. "Namely mentality-materiality together with consciousness" means which is this mentality-materiality that proceeds together with consciousness through mutual conditionality - "to this extent" is what has been said. This here is the concluding statement.

Explanation of the Description of Self

117. Thus the Blessed One - having shown the connection of the term "This dependent origination is deep, Ānanda, and deep in its appearance," now showing the connection of the term "become like a tangled ball of string," began the teaching beginning with "And in what respect." Therein, in the passage beginning with "For indeed, Ānanda, one declaring a material, limited self," whoever takes an unextended kasiṇa sign as self, he declares a material, limited self. But whoever is an obtainer of various kasiṇas, he declares that as sometimes blue, sometimes yellow. Whoever takes an extended kasiṇa sign as self, he declares a material, infinite self. Or else whoever, having removed an unextended kasiṇa sign, takes the space touched by the sign, or the four aggregates occurring there, or among those merely consciousness alone, as self, he declares an immaterial, limited self. Whoever, having removed an extended sign, takes the space touched by the sign, or the four aggregates occurring there, or among those merely consciousness alone, as self, he declares an immaterial, infinite self.

118. "Therein, Ānanda": here "therein" means among those four holders of wrong views. "At present or" means just now only, not beyond this. This is said by way of annihilation. "Or one who will be there" means or one who will be there in the world beyond. This is said by way of eternalism. "Though it is not so, being" means being of a nature that is not so. "To such a state" means to such a condition. "I shall bring it" means I shall accomplish it. By this he shows contention. For the annihilationist thinks: "I shall bring the self of the eternalist, which is not so, even though being of a non-annihilation nature, to that purpose, to the nature of annihilation; and having made known the doctrine of eternalism, I shall make him grasp the doctrine of annihilationism only." The eternalist too thinks: "I shall bring the self of the annihilationist, which is not so, even though being of a non-eternal nature, to that purpose, to the state of eternalism; and having made known the doctrine of annihilationism, I shall make him grasp the doctrine of eternalism only."

"That being so" means the meaning is: being thus, declaring a material, limited self. "Material" means one who has attained a material kasiṇa. "The view of a limited self underlies" means this view "the self is limited" underlies; but it does not underlie like a vine or like a creeper. It should be understood that it underlies in the sense of not being abandoned. "It is proper to say" means it is proper to say that such a view underlies that person. This same method applies everywhere.

Regarding "immaterial," here however the meaning should be understood as one who has attained an immaterial kasiṇa, or one whose object is the immaterial aggregates. To this extent, four are the attainers, four are their pupils, four are the rationalists, and four are their pupils - thus from the standpoint of self, sixteen holders of wrong views have been shown.

Explanation of the Non-Description of Self

119. Having thus shown those who declare a self, now in order to show those who do not declare it - he said beginning with "And in what respect, Ānanda." But who do not declare? To begin with, all noble persons do not declare. And those who are very learned, bearers of the Triple Canon, bearers of two Canons, bearers of one Canon, and even a person who is a speaker of the Teaching who has learned by having thoroughly investigated even a single collection, or one who has begun insight practice - they indeed do not declare. For these, regarding the counterpart sign of a kasiṇa, their knowledge is just that it is a counterpart sign of a kasiṇa. And regarding the immaterial aggregates, it is just that they are immaterial aggregates.

Explanation of the Way of Regarding Self

121. Having thus shown those who do not declare, now those who do declare - since they declare having regarded through the influence of views, and their way of regarding is due to the non-abandonment of identity view with twenty bases - therefore, in order to show that identity view with twenty bases, he said again beginning with "And in what respect, Ānanda."

Therein, by "feeling indeed" the identity view founded on the aggregate of feeling is spoken of. By "my self is without experience" the identity view founded on the aggregate of matter is spoken of. By "my self experiences, for my self is subject to feeling" the identity view founded on the aggregates of perception, activities and consciousness is spoken of. For this triad of aggregates experiences because of being associated with feeling. And the nature of being subject to feeling of this is the intrinsic nature of being not dissociated from it.

122. Now, showing the fault therein - he said beginning with "Therein, Ānanda." Therein, "therein" means among those three holders of wrong views. Beginning with "At the time, Ānanda" was said for the purpose of showing the fault thus: whoever regards whatever feeling as self, that self of his sometimes exists, sometimes does not exist.

123. Among "impermanent" and so on, they are impermanent because of non-existence after having been. "Conditioned" means made by coming together and assembling through those various causes. "Dependently arisen" means arisen dependent on this or that condition, rightly by cause alone. "Destruction" and so on - all are synonyms for dissolution. For whatever is broken, that is also destroyed, also falls away, also fades away, also ceases; therefore "subject to destruction" and so on was said.

"My self has departed" - "byagā" means "departed"; the meaning is "my self has departed, has ceased." But how is it that for one and the same person in all three times - there is the thought "this is my self" - how then will it not be so? For a holder

of views has no stability whatsoever, like a stump placed in a heap of chaff; like a forest monkey, he grasps one thing and releases another. "Mixed with impermanence, pleasure, and pain" means: one who regards each particular feeling as self, with distinction, regards an impermanent self that is pleasant and painful; one who regards feeling as self without distinction regards a self that is mixed, having the nature of arising and falling. For feeling is threefold and has the nature of arising and falling, and he regards that as self. Thus for him there results an impermanent self, and the arising of many feelings at a single moment. But he allows an impermanent self; there is no arising of many feelings at a single moment. With reference to this meaning - "Therefore, Ānanda, by this it is not fitting to regard 'feeling is my self'" - thus it was said.

124. "But, friend, where" means where in the pure aggregate of matter there is altogether no feeling. "Would there be there" means would there be in that fan or window devoid of feeling, I-making arising thus "I am" - this is the meaning. "Therefore, Ānanda" means because the pure aggregate of matter does not rise up and say "I am," therefore by this too it is not fitting - this is the meaning. "Would there be 'I am this' there" means would even a single phenomenon among those three aggregates that have the nature of feeling be such that it could be said "this is 'I am'"? Or alternatively, from the cessation of feeling, when those three aggregates have ceased together with feeling itself, would "I am this" or "I am" arise? - this is the meaning. Then the Venerable Ānanda, not accepting that, like the sharpness of a hare's horn, said "No indeed, Venerable Sir."

By this much, what has been spoken of? The talk on the round of rebirths has been spoken of. For the Blessed One, when speaking about the round of rebirths, spoke somewhere under the heading of ignorance, somewhere under the heading of craving, somewhere under the heading of wrong view. Therein, "A first point, monks, is not discerned of ignorance: 'Before this, ignorance did not exist, then afterwards it came into being.' Even though this is said, monks, and yet it is discerned: 'Ignorance has this as its condition'" - thus it was spoken under the heading of ignorance. "A first point, monks, is not discerned of craving for existence: 'Before this, craving for existence did not exist, then afterwards it came into being.' Even though this is said, monks, and yet it is discerned: 'Craving for existence has this as its condition'" - thus it was spoken under the heading of craving. "A first point, monks, is not discerned of the view of existence: 'Before this, the view of existence did not exist, then afterwards it came into being.' Even though this is said, monks. And yet it is discerned: 'The view of existence has this as its condition'" - thus it was spoken under the heading of wrong view. Here too it was spoken under the heading of wrong view only.

For one gone to wrong views, having grasped feeling beginning with pleasure as self, by the power of the adherence to I-making and mine-making, in all existences, modes of generation, destinations - stations of consciousness and abodes of beings, having fallen away from here and there, being reborn here and there, like a boat tossed by the wind in the great ocean, he wanders about constantly and continuously, and is simply unable to raise his head from the round of rebirths.

126. Thus the Blessed One, having spoken of the round of rebirths by this much of a narrative to the holder of views who was confused about the mode of dependent

conditions, now speaking of the end of the round of rebirths, said beginning with "Since, Ānanda, a monk."

And that discourse on the end of the round of rebirths, the Blessed One, through skilfulness in teachings, without touching upon a person distracted by new construction work and so on, whose meditation subject had been abandoned, beginning by way of a person who is a doer, a dweller in the establishment of mindfulness, said beginning with "neither regards feeling as self." For such a monk - "Whatever materiality, past, future, or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, whether far or near, he defines all materiality as impermanent - one exploration. He defines as suffering - one exploration. He defines as non-self - one exploration" - by the method stated thus, because of proceeding in all phenomena by means of the knowledge of exploration, he neither regards feeling as self, nor anything else. He, thus not regarding, "does not cling to anything in the world" means in the world classified as the world of aggregates and so on, among phenomena such as materiality and so on, he does not cling to any single phenomenon whatsoever as self or as belonging to a self.

"Not clinging, he is not agitated" means not clinging, he is not agitated even by the agitation of craving, wrong view, and conceit. "Not being agitated" means one who is not being agitated. "He personally attains final nibbāna" means by himself he attains final nibbāna through the final extinguishment of the mental defilements. "Birth is eliminated" and so on was said for the purpose of showing the occurrence of reviewing for one who has thus attained final nibbāna.

"This is his view" means whatever is the view of a Worthy One thus liberated, that is such a view. "Itissa diṭṭhī" is also a reading. The meaning is: whoever is a Worthy One thus liberated, such is his view. "That is not proper" means that is not fitting. Why? For if that were so - It would amount to saying "the Worthy One does not know anything"; and it is not fitting to say of a Worthy One who has thus known and is liberated that "he does not know anything." For that very reason, at the conclusion of all four methods - He said beginning with "What is the reason for this?"

Therein, "as far as, Ānanda, designation" means whatever conventional expression reckoned as designation there is. "As far as the range of designation" means whatever is the path of designation - whether aggregates, sense bases, or elements - there is. This same method applies everywhere. "The sphere of wisdom" means the five aggregates that should be traversed by wisdom. "Through direct knowledge of that" means having directly known that. What was shown by the Blessed One by this much? The connection of the passage on the tangled skein itself was shown.

Explanation of the Seven Stations of Consciousness

127. Now, he who - is said to "does not declare," because as he goes on progressing, he becomes one named liberated in both ways. And he who - is said to "does not regard," because as he goes on progressing, he becomes one named liberated by wisdom. Therefore, in order to show the conclusion and the name of those two monks spoken of above, he said beginning with "There are, Ānanda, seven stations of consciousness."

Therein, "seven" is stated by way of conception; four stated by way of object in the Saṅgīti Sutta will come. "Consciousness remains here" is a station of consciousness; this is a designation for the support of consciousness. "And two planes" means two dwelling places. For "dwelling place" is what is intended here by "plane." For that very reason he will say - "The plane of non-percipient beings and the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception are the second." But why was all this taken up? For the purpose of exhausting the round of rebirths. For the round of rebirths does not go to exhaustion by way of stations of consciousness alone or by way of planes alone, but it goes by way of existence, mode of generation, destination, and abode of beings; therefore all this was taken up.

Now, analysing that meaning in due order, he said beginning with "Which are the seven?" Therein, "just as" (seyyathāpi) is an indeclinable particle in the sense of illustration; the meaning is "as for instance human beings." For in immeasurable world-systems, not even two among immeasurable human beings are alike by way of colour, shape, and so on. For even those who somewhere are twin brothers alike in colour or in shape, even for them there is indeed a distinction by way of looking, glancing, speaking, laughing, walking, standing, and so on. Therefore they are said to be "different in body." But their reconnection perceptions are with three roots, with two roots, or without roots; therefore they are said to be "different in perception." "Some gods" means the six sensual-sphere gods. For among them, the body of some is blue, and of some is of yellow and other colours. But their perceptions are with two roots or with three roots; there are none without roots. "Some beings in states of misfortune" means those freed from the four realms of misery, such as the demoness Uttaramātā, Piyaṅkaramātā, Phussamittā, Dhammaguttā, and other mansion-dwelling ghosts. For their bodies are diverse by way of yellow, white, black, dark yellow, clear-skinned, dark-complexioned colour and so on, and by way of thin, fat, short, and tall; and their perception too, like that of human beings, by way of with two roots, with three roots, and without roots. But they are not influential like gods; they are of little influence like destitute human beings, with food and clothing hard to obtain, dwelling oppressed by suffering. Some are afflicted during the dark fortnight and happy during the bright fortnight; therefore, because of having fallen from the accumulation of happiness, they are said to be "beings in states of misfortune." But those among them who are with three roots, for them there is even full realisation of the Teaching. For the demoness Piyaṅkaramātā, having heard towards the break of dawn the Elder Anuruddha reciting the Teaching -

"Do not make a sound, Piyaṅkara, the monk is reciting passages of the Teaching;

Having understood a passage of the Teaching, we might proceed for our welfare;

And we would exercise self-control towards living beings, we would not speak a conscious lie;

We would train in our own good virtue, perhaps we might be released from the realm of goblins."

Having thus convinced her little son, on that day she attained the fruition of stream-entry. But Uttaramātā, having merely heard the Teaching of the Blessed One, became a stream-enterer.

"Of Brahmā's retinue" means the Brahmā's ministers, Brahmā's chaplains, and the Great Brahmās. "First reborn" means all of them are reborn by means of the first meditative absorption. Among them, the Brahmā's ministers are reborn by means of the limited, and their life-span is a third part of a cosmic cycle. The Brahmā's chaplains by means of the middling, and their life-span is half a cosmic cycle, and their body is more extensive. The Great Brahmās by means of the superior, and their life-span is a cosmic cycle, and their body is exceedingly extensive. Thus, because of the diversity of their body and the unity of their perception by means of the first meditative absorption, they should be understood as different in body and identical in perception.

And just as those, so too are beings in the four realms of misery. For in the hells, the individual existence of some is a league, of some half a yojana, of some a yojana, but Devadatta's was born a hundred yojanas in size. Among animals too, some are small, some are great. In the sphere of ghosts too, some are sixty cubits, some seventy cubits, some eighty cubits; some are beautiful, some are ugly. Likewise the Kālakañjika titans. And furthermore, here there are ghosts called "long-backed" who are even sixty yojanas in size. But the perception of all of them is only unwholesome-resultant and rootless. Thus even beings in the realms of misery are reckoned as different in body and identical in perception.

"Radiant" means that, like the flame of a torch, the radiance from their bodies, breaking off again and again, as if falling, flows and spreads forth - thus they are "radiant." Among them, according to the fivefold method, those who have developed the pair of the second and third meditative absorptions as limited and are reborn are called "of limited radiance," and their life-span is two cosmic cycles. Those who have developed the middling and are reborn are called "of immeasurable radiance," and their life-span is four cosmic cycles. Those who have developed the superior and are reborn are called "radiant," and their life-span is eight cosmic cycles. But here, by way of the superior delimitation, all of them are included. For the body of all of them is of one single extent, but their perception is diverse, being either without applied but sustained thought only, or without applied and sustained thought.

"Of streaming radiance" means strewn over and scattered with beauty; the meaning is compact with the beautiful radiance and colour of the body. For their radiance does not go breaking off again and again, as with the Radiant gods. But according to the fivefold method, by means of the limited, middling, and superior fourth meditative absorption, they arise having become those called "of limited glory," "of immeasurable glory," and "of streaming radiance," with life-spans of sixteen, thirty-two, and sixty-four cosmic cycles respectively. Thus all of them should be understood as identical in body and also identical in perception by means of the perception of the fourth meditative absorption. The gods of great fruit also belong to the fourth station of consciousness. The non-percipient beings, because of the absence of consciousness, do not come under the classification here, but they come under the abodes of beings.

The Pure Abode beings, established on the side of the end of the round of rebirths, are not perpetual; even for a hundred thousand cosmic cycles or even for an incalculable period, in a world devoid of a Buddha, they do not arise. They arise only when Buddhas have arisen within sixteen thousand cosmic cycles; they are similar to the staging posts of the Blessed One who set in motion the wheel of the Teaching. Therefore they belong to neither a station of consciousness nor an abode of beings. But the Elder Mahāsīva - By this discourse, "But, Sāriputta, there is no abode of beings easy to obtain that has not been previously dwelt in by me during this long period of time, except for the gods of the Pure Abodes," he says that the Pure Abodes too belong to the fourth station of consciousness and the fourth abode of beings; because it cannot be refuted, it is permitted by the discourse.

The meaning of "with the complete transcendence of perceptions of form" and so on has been stated in the Visuddhimagga. But the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, just as with perception, so too because of the subtlety of consciousness, it is neither consciousness nor non-consciousness. Therefore, without stating it among the stations of consciousness, it was stated among the planes.

128. "Therein" means in those stations of consciousness. "And understands that" means and understands that station of consciousness. "And its origin" means he understands its origin by the method beginning with "from the origin of ignorance is the origin of matter." "And its passing away" - he understands its passing away by the method beginning with "from the cessation of ignorance is the cessation of matter." "Gratification" means whatever matter dependent on, etc. whatever happiness and pleasure arises dependent on consciousness, this is the gratification in consciousness - thus he understands its gratification. "Danger" means whatever matter, etc. whatever consciousness is impermanent, suffering, subject to change, this is the danger in consciousness - thus he understands its danger. "Escape" means whatever in matter, etc. whatever is the removal of desire and lust regarding consciousness, the abandoning of desire and lust, this is the escape from consciousness - thus he understands its escape. "Is it proper for him" means is it proper for that monk to delight in that station of consciousness by way of craving, conceit, and wrong view as "I" or as "mine." By this method it should be understood everywhere. But where there is no matter, the origin should be construed by way of the four aggregates; where there is no consciousness, by way of one aggregate. "From the origin of nutriment, from the cessation of nutriment" - this term too should be construed here.

"Since, Ānanda, a monk" means when, Ānanda, a monk. "Liberated by non-clinging" means liberated without grasping the four kinds of clinging. "Liberated by wisdom" means liberated through wisdom. The meaning is liberated by having brought about the non-continuance of the mental body and the material body through the power of wisdom alone, without having realised the eight deliverances. He is fivefold: a dry insight practitioner and one who has attained arahantship having stood in any one of the first meditative absorption and so on. And this too was said - "And which person is liberated by wisdom? Here a certain person does not indeed touch with the body and dwell in the eight deliverances, yet having seen with wisdom, his mental corruptions are utterly eliminated; this is called a person liberated by wisdom."

Explanation of the Eight Deliverances

129. Having thus shown the conclusion and the name of one monk, in order to show the other, he said beginning with "There are these eight." Therein, "deliverance" - in what meaning is it deliverance? In the meaning of being intent upon. But what is this meaning of being intent upon? The meaning of being well released from opposing states, and the meaning of being well released by way of delight in the object - like the lying down of a child with relaxed major and minor limbs on the father's lap, it is occurrence in the object through the state of being unrestrained and without apprehension - thus it has been said. But this meaning is not present in the last deliverance; it is present in all the former ones.

"One who is material sees forms" - here, the fine-material meditative absorption produced internally by way of the blue kasiṇa and so on among the blue kasiṇa and so on based on head-hair and so on is materiality; one who has that is "material." "Sees forms externally" means one sees externally too the forms such as the blue kasiṇa and so on with the eye of meditative absorption. By this, the four fine-material-sphere meditative absorptions of a person who has produced meditative absorption based on kasiṇas that are both internal and external are shown. "Not perceiving material forms internally" means internally not a percipient of material forms; the meaning is one who has not produced fine-material-sphere meditative absorption based on one's own head-hair and so on. By this, the fine-material-sphere meditative absorptions of a person who, having done the preliminary work externally, has produced meditative absorption only externally, are shown.

"One is intent only upon the beautiful" - by this, meditative absorptions based on well-purified colour kasiṇas such as blue and so on are shown. Therein, although within absorption there is no reflective attention as "beautiful," yet whoever dwells having made a pure, beautiful kasiṇa as the object, since he comes to the point where it should be said "he is intent upon the beautiful," therefore the teaching was given thus. But in the Paṭisambhidāmagga - "How is 'one is intent only upon the beautiful' a deliverance? Here a monk dwells having pervaded one direction with a mind accompanied by friendliness, etc. Because of having developed friendliness, beings are not disagreeable. With compassion, altruistic joy, one dwells having pervaded one direction with a mind accompanied by equanimity, etc. Because of having developed equanimity, beings are not disagreeable. Thus 'one is intent only upon the beautiful' is a deliverance" - thus it was said.

Regarding what should be said concerning "with the complete transcendence of perceptions of form" and so on, all that has been stated in the Visuddhimagga itself. "This is the eighth deliverance" - this, because of the complete purification and liberation of the four aggregates in every respect, is called the eighth, the highest deliverance.

130. "In conformity" means from the beginning up to the end. "In reverse order" means from the end up to the beginning. "In both conformity and reverse order" - this is said by way of wandering here and there, remaining fixed in the attainments themselves, without interruption, due to being exceedingly well-practised. "Wherever he wishes" is an illustration of the place - in whatever place he wishes. "Whichever he wishes" is an illustration of the attainment - whichever attainment he wishes. "For as long as he wishes" is an illustration of the delimitation of duration - for whatever duration he wishes. "He attains" means he enters into that particular attainment. "He

emerges" means having risen from that, he remains.

"Liberated in both ways" means liberated in two ways: liberated from the material body by the immaterial attainment, and liberated from the mental body by the path. And this too was said -

"Just as a flame thrown by the force of the wind,
"Goes to its end and does not come to any term;
Thus the sage liberated from the mental body,
Goes to his end and does not come to any reckoning."

And this one liberated in both ways is fivefold: one who has attained arahantship having emerged from any one of the plane of infinite space and so on, and one who, having become a non-returner, has attained arahantship having emerged from cessation. Some, however - "Since the fourth meditative absorption of the fine-material-sphere too is twofold, accompanied by equanimity, and the meditative absorption of the immaterial-sphere is just the same, therefore one who has attained arahantship having emerged from the fourth meditative absorption of the fine-material-sphere is also liberated in both ways."

But this question concerning liberation in both ways, having arisen at the Lower Brazen Palace, reached its judgment after a long time in dependence on the explanation of the Elder Tipiṭaka Cūḷasumana. It is said that at the Giri Monastery, a pupil of the Elder, having heard that question from the mouth of a certain almsfood eater, said - "Friend, at the Lower Brazen Palace, while our teacher was expounding the Teaching, this has not been heard before by anyone." But what, venerable sir, did the Elder say? The fourth meditative absorption of the fine-material-sphere, although twofold and accompanied by equanimity, suppresses the mental defilements, but it occurs in a place where the mental defilements grow on the near side. For these mental defilements occur in dependence on one or another object among blue and so on in five-aggregate constituent existence, and the meditative absorption of the fine-material-sphere does not transcend that object. Therefore, only one who has completely turned away from materiality in every respect, having suppressed the mental defilements by means of immaterial meditative absorption, and having attained arahantship, is liberated in both ways - this, friend, is what the Elder said. And having said this, he brought forth this discourse - "And which person is liberated in both ways? Here a certain person touches with the body and dwells in the eight deliverances, and having seen with wisdom, his mental corruptions are utterly eliminated; this is called a person liberated in both ways."

"And of this, Ānanda, liberation in both ways" means: Ānanda, from this liberation in both ways. The remainder is clear everywhere.

*Thus in the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, the Commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya,
the explanation of the Great Discourse on Causation is completed.*



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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