

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
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09. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns (09. Therīgāthā-
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

09. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns

2. The Book of the Twos

1. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Abhirūpanandā

19-20. In the Book of Twos, the verse beginning with "Afflicted, impure, putrid" is the verse of the female trainee Abhirūpanandā. It is said that she, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been the daughter of a very wealthy householder in the city of Bandhumatī, having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher, having established herself in the refuges and in the precepts, when the Teacher had attained final Nibbāna, having made an offering to the relic shrine with a golden umbrella adorned with jewels, having died, having been reborn in heaven, wandering again and again only in fortunate destinations, in this arising of a Buddha, was reborn in the womb of the queen-consort of the Sakyan Khemaka in the city of Kapilavatthu. Her name was Nandātissā. She, through the attainment of exceedingly great beauty of form in her individual existence, being lovely, beautiful, and pleasing, became known as Abhirūpanandā. When she had come of age, on the very day of the marriage proposal, the Sakyan prince who was to be her husband died. Then her mother and father gave her the going forth against her will.

She, even after going forth, with vanity arisen in dependence on her beauty, thinking "The Teacher dispraises beauty, censures it, shows the danger in beauty in many ways," did not go to attend upon the Buddha. The Blessed One, having known the maturity of her knowledge, commanded Mahāpajāpati: "Let all the nuns come in succession for exhortation." When her own turn arrived, she sent another. The Blessed One said: "When one's turn has arrived, one must come oneself; another should not be sent." She, being unable to transgress the Teacher's command, went to attend upon the Buddha together with the nuns. The Blessed One, having created by supernormal power one lovely woman's form, then having shown it as aged and decrepit, having aroused religious emotion -

19. "Afflicted, impure, putrid, see, Nanda, this body;
Develop the mind towards foulness, fully focused, well concentrated.
20. "And develop the signless, abandon the underlying tendency to conceit;
Then through the full realisation of conceit, you will live at peace."

He spoke these two verses. Their meaning follows the same method as stated above. At the conclusion of the verses, Abhirūpanandā attained arahantship. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"In the city of Bandhumatī, there was a warrior named Bandhumā;
I was the wife of that king, I lived together with him.

"Having gone to a private place and sat down, thus I thought then;

'Indeed there is nothing wholesome done by me to take along when going.

'To great torment, painful, of terrible form, extremely dreadful;
Surely I go to hell, here there is no doubt for me.

"Having thus reflected, having gladdened my mind;
Having approached the king, I spoke these words.

"We are women by nature, O god, always following men;
Give me one ascetic, I will feed him, O warrior.

"The great king gave to me an ascetic with developed faculties;
Having taken his bowl, I filled it with the finest food.

"Having filled it with the finest food, worth a thousand, I
Having covered it with a pair of cloths, gave it with a satisfied mind.

"By that well-done action, and by volition and aspirations;
Having abandoned the human body, I went to Tāvatiṃsa.

"Of a thousand kings of gods, I attained the status of chief queen;
Of a thousand universal monarchs, I attained the status of chief queen.

"Principality over a district, extensive, incalculable by counting;
Various and much merit, as the fruit of that action thence.

"My beauty is like that of a waterlily, lovely, beautiful to see;
A woman endowed with all qualities, well-born, resplendent.

"When the final existence was attained, I was born in a Sakyan family;
Chief among a thousand women, I belonged to the son of Suddhodana.

"Having become disenchanted with the house, I went forth into homelessness;
Having reached the seventh night, I attained the four truths.

"Robes and almsfood, and requisites and lodging;
I am not able to measure it, this is the fruit of almsfood.

"Whatever former action of mine, wholesome, generated, O sage;
For your benefit, O great hero, much was attended to by me.

"Thirty-one cosmic cycles ago from now, the gift that I gave then;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of almsfood.

"I understand two destinations, divinity and also human;
I know no other destination, this is the fruit of almsfood.

"I understand in high families, three wealthy sal-tree families;
I know no other family, this is the fruit of almsfood.

"Having wandered in the round of rebirths from existence to existence, urged

on by wholesome root;
I do not see anything disagreeable, the fruit is made of pleasure.

"And I am a master in supernormal powers, in the divine ear element;
In the knowledge of others' mental states, I am a master, O great sage.

"I know past lives, the divine eye has been purified;
With all mental corruptions eliminated, there is now no more rebirth.

"In meaning, teaching, and language, and likewise in discernment;
Knowledge for me, O great hero, arisen in your presence.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, she herself too by way of an inspired utterance
spoke those very verses; and this itself was her declaration of final liberating
knowledge.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Abhirūpanandā is completed.

2. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Jentā

21-22. The verses of the elder nun Jentā beginning with "These seven factors of enlightenment." Her past and present story is similar to the story of Abhirūpanandā. But this one was reborn in Vesālī in a Licchavi royal family - this alone is the distinction. Having heard the Teaching expounded by the Teacher, at the conclusion of the teaching, having attained arahantship, having reviewed the distinction attained by herself, by means of joy -

21. "These seven factors of enlightenment, the path for the attainment of Nibbāna;
All of them were developed by me, as taught by the Buddha.
22. "For I have seen that Blessed One, this is the final body;
The cycle of birth and wandering is eliminated, there is now no more rebirth."

He spoke these two verses.

Therein, "these seven factors of enlightenment" means these seven mental states termed mindfulness, investigation of phenomena, energy, joy, tranquillity, concentration, and equanimity, which have obtained the name "factors of enlightenment" because they are constituent factors of enlightenment, that is, the aforesaid concord of mental states, or because they are constituent factors of the person who awakens, the individual possessed of that. "The path for the attainment of Nibbāna" means being the means for the achievement of Nibbāna. "All of them were developed by me, as taught by the Buddha" means those thirty-seven qualities conducive to enlightenment, all of them, just as taught by the Buddha, the Blessed One, so they were produced and increased by me.

"For I have seen that Blessed One" - the word "for" has the meaning of cause. Because that Blessed One, the body of the Teaching, the Perfectly Enlightened One, was seen through the vision of the noble Teaching attained by oneself, therefore "this is the final body" - this is the explanation. For by the vision of the noble Teaching, the Buddhas, the Blessed Ones, and other noble ones are truly seen, not by the mere seeing of the material body. As he said - "Whoever, Vakkali, sees the Teaching sees me" and "But, monks, a learned noble disciple, who sees the noble ones" and so on. The remainder is according to the method already stated.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Jentā is completed.

3. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Sumaṅgalamātā

23-24. The verses of the Elder Nun Sumaṅgala's Mother beginning with "Well freed" and so on. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, having accumulated wholesome action in this and that existence, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a poor family in Sāvattthī, having come of age, given to a certain basket-maker, obtained a son who was a being in his last existence in her very first pregnancy. His name was "Sumaṅgala." From that time onwards, she became known as "Sumaṅgala's Mother." But because her name and clan were not well-known, therefore "a certain unknown elder nun, a nun" was stated in the canonical text. Her son too, having reached discretion, having gone forth, having attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges, became well-known as "the Elder Sumaṅgala." His mother, having gone forth among the nuns, doing the work of insight, one day, having reviewed the suffering obtained by herself during her time as a householder, with a sense of urgency arisen, having developed insight, having attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges, uttering an inspired utterance -

23. "Well freed, well freed, I am truly well freed from the pestle;
My shameless husband, and even my sunshade-making, my pot smells like a water-snake."
24. "Both lust and hate I destroy with a 'crackle crackle' sound;
Having approached the root of a tree, 'Oh happiness!' I meditate in happiness."

He spoke these two verses.

Therein, "sumuttikā" means "well released." The syllable "ka" is merely an expletive; the meaning is "well freed indeed." She, having seen the achievement obtained by herself in the Dispensation, said "well freed, well freed" on account of confidence, or having addressed her on account of praise. But showing liberation from that which she particularly loathed during her time as a householder, she said beginning with "I am truly well freed." Therein, "I am truly well freed" means I am indeed properly freed. "Of the pestle" means from the pestle. It is said that this one, due to her poverty, during her time as a householder, herself did the work of the pestle; therefore she said thus. "My shameless husband" means my husband is shameless, without shame; the remainder of the expression is "he does not please me." Being by nature one whose mind was dispassionate towards sensual pleasures, she speaks

loathing the conduct of those inclined to sensual pleasures. "And even my sunshade-making" means even the sunshade-making being done for the sake of livelihood does not please me - this is the meaning. The word "or" has the meaning of an unstated accumulation; by that it includes boxes, caskets, and so on. She speaks loathing the painful livelihood by way of making sunshades and so on day after day, having taken bamboo sticks and so on. Some, having said "a harmful wind blows upon me," say the meaning is: a harmful, ageing-bringing wind blows upon my body during my time as a householder. Others, however, say the meaning is: "a wind more foul-smelling than that of others, harmful, blows from my body." "My pot smells like a water-snake" means my cooking vessel for food, due to its impurity from being used for a long time, emits the smell of a water-snake; from that I am truly well freed - this is the explanation.

"Both lust and hate I destroy with a 'crackle crackle' sound" means I destroy, eliminate, abandon lust and hate, the foremost of mental defilements, together with this sound "crackle crackle" - this is the meaning. It is said that she, loathing her own husband, censuring the sound of the dry bamboo sticks and so on being split by him day after day, equated the abandoning of that with the abandoning of lust and hate, and spoke. "Having approached the root of a tree" means she, I, Sumaṅgala's mother, having approached a secluded tree-root. "I meditate in happiness" means I meditate happily, from time to time entering into attainment, experiencing the happiness of fruition and the happiness of Nibbāna, I meditate with fruition meditative absorption - this is the meaning. "Oh happiness" - this, however, was said by her by way of attention occurring after the attainment; it is also fitting as by way of prior reflective attention.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Sumaṅgalamātā is completed.

4. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Aḍḍhakāsī

25-26. The verses of the elder nun Aḍḍhakāsī beginning with "As far as the Kāsi country." It is said that she, in the time of Kassapa, the Possessor of the Ten Powers, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, having gone to the presence of nuns, having heard the Teaching, having gained faith, having gone forth, having reviled with the accusation of being a courtesan a certain elder nun who had attained the analytical knowledges and who had eliminated the mental corruptions, who was established in the morality of a nun, having passed away from there, having been tormented in hell, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a millionaire's family of eminent wealth in the Kāsi country, having come of age, as an outcome of verbal misconduct done before, she fell from her position and became a courtesan. By name she was called Aḍḍhakāsī. Her going forth and full ordination by a messenger have come just as in the chapter. For this was said:

Now at that time the courtesan Aḍḍhakāsī had gone forth among the nuns. And she wished to go to Sāvathī, thinking "I shall receive full ordination in the presence of the Blessed One." The cheats heard - "It seems the courtesan Aḍḍhakāsī wishes to go to Sāvathī." They lay in wait on the road. The courtesan Aḍḍhakāsī heard "It seems the cheats have laid in wait on the road." She sent a messenger to the presence of the

Blessed One - "I am wishing for full ordination, how should I proceed?" Then the Blessed One, on this occasion, in this connection, having given a talk on the Teaching, addressed the monks - "I allow, monks, to give full ordination even by a messenger."

Having thus obtained full ordination, doing the work of insight, before long she attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"In this fortunate cosmic cycle, a kinsman of Brahma of great fame;
Kassapa by clan, the best of speakers arose.

"Then I, having gone forth, in that Buddha's Dispensation;
Restrained in the principal monastic code, and in the five faculties.

"Knowing moderation in food, and engaged in wakefulness too;
Dwelling engaged in exertion, I am a nun free from mental corruptions.

"I reviled with a malicious mind, I called her 'courtesan' then;
By that evil action, I was cooked in hell.

"By that remainder of action, I was born in a courtesan's family;
Mostly dependent on others, and in the final birth.

"Born in a millionaire's family among the Kāsis, I by the power of the holy life;
Like a nymph among the gods, I was with accomplishment of beauty.

"Having seen me, beautiful to behold, in Giribbaja, the best of cities;
They established me in the profession of a courtesan, by the power of my abuse.

"I, having heard the Good Teaching, taught by the supreme Buddha;
Accomplished in former impressions, I went forth into homelessness.

"For the purpose of that full ordination, going to the presence of the Conqueror;
Having heard that cheats were standing on the road, I obtained ordination by messenger.

"All action is exhausted, merit and evil likewise;
Having crossed over all saṃsāra, and the courtesan's life is spent.

"And I am a master in supernormal powers, in the divine ear element;
In the knowledge of others' mental states, I am a master, O great sage.

"I know past lives, the divine eye has been purified;
With all mental corruptions eliminated, there is now no more rebirth.

"In meaning, teaching, and language, and likewise in discernment;
Knowledge for me, O great hero, arisen in your presence.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has

been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, by way of an inspired utterance -

25. "As far as the Kāsi country, my toll was that much;
Having made that the price, the townspeople set me at half the price.
26. "Then I became wearied of material form, and being wearied I became
dispassionate;
May I not transmigrate again and again through the round of rebirths;
The three true knowledges have been realised, the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled." -

He spoke these verses.

Therein, "as far as the Kāsi country, my toll was that much" means the toll existing in the Kāsi countryside is the Kāsi country toll; as far as that was, however much, that much was my toll - it was. But how much was it? About a thousand. In the Kāsi country, it is said, at that time, by way of toll, the income arising for the king in one day was about a thousand; from this one too, the wealth obtained from men's hands in one day was that much. Therefore it was said - "As far as the Kāsi country, my toll was that much." She, however, because of being equal in measure to the Kāsi toll, obtained the designation "Kāsi." Therein, mostly people, being unable to give a thousand, having given half of that, having enjoyed themselves for only part of the day, would go; on account of them, she became known as "Aḍḍhakāsi." Therefore it was said - "Having made that the price, the townspeople set me at half the price." Having made that wealth of about five hundred the price, the townspeople, the people dwelling in the market town, although being priceless by virtue of being a jewel among women, on account of the half-price sign, established me by the designation "Aḍḍhakāsi," thus they called me - this is the meaning.

"Then I became wearied of material form" means having been a harlot, she was thus established. Then afterwards, in dependence on the Dispensation, I became wearied of material form, seeing "Thus too matter is impermanent, thus too this matter is suffering, unattractive" - I became dissatisfied therewith. "And being wearied I became dispassionate" means being wearied, I thereafter attained dispassion. By the use of "being wearied" here, he shows young insight; by the use of "dispassion," powerful insight. For it has been said: "Being disenchanting, one becomes dispassionate; through dispassion, one becomes liberated." "May I not transmigrate again and again through the round of rebirths" - by this he illustrates the manner of becoming wearied and becoming dispassionate. By "the three true knowledges" and so on, the attainment of the summit of those. That is by the same method as already stated.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Aḍḍhakāsi is completed.

5. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Cittā

27-28. The verse beginning with "Although I am thin" and so on is the verse of the elder nun Cittā. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, ninety-four cosmic cycles ago from now, was

reborn in the realm of kinnaras on the bank of the river Candabhāgā. She, one day, having seen a certain Individually Enlightened One seated at the root of a tree, with a gladdened mind, having made an offering with reed flowers, having paid homage, having raised joined palms, having circumambulated him, departed. She, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a very wealthy householder's family in Rājagaha, having attained discretion, having gained faith at the Teacher's entrance to Rājagaha, afterwards having gone forth in the presence of Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, in the time of old age, having ascended Vulture's Peak mountain, practising the ascetic duty, having developed insight, attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"On the bank of the Candabhāgā river, I was a kinnara woman then;
I saw the stainless Buddha, the Self-Become One, the unconquered.

"With a confident mind, glad, filled with joy, with joined palms;
Having taken a reed garland, I venerated the Self-Become One.

"By that well-done action, and by volition and aspirations;
Having abandoned the kinnarī body, I went to the destination among the deities.

"I attained the status of chief queen of thirty-six kings of gods;
I attained the status of chief queen of ten universal monarchs;
Having caused agitation in my mind, I went forth into homelessness.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, all existences have been uprooted;
With all mental corruptions eliminated, there is now no more rebirth.

"Ninety-four cosmic cycles ago from now, the flower that I honoured;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of flower-offering.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

She, however, having attained arahantship, having reviewed her own practice -

27. "Although I am thin, sick and very weak;
Leaning on a staff I go, having ascended the mountain.

28. "Having laid aside the double robe, and having turned over the bowl;
On the rock I steadied myself, having shattered the mass of darkness."

He spoke these two verses.

Therein, "although I am thin" means even though I am worn out by old age, with an emaciated body due to having little flesh and blood. "Sick and very weak" means sick due to a disturbance of the elements and so on, and by that very sickness

exceedingly weak. "Leaning on a staff I go" means wherever I go, I go only by holding on to a walking stick. "Having ascended the mountain" means even being in such a state, through desire for seclusion, having ascended Vulture's Peak mountain.

"Having laid aside the double robe" means having been wearing only the inner and upper robes, having placed the double robe that had been placed on the shoulder as it was folded, within arm's reach. "And having turned over the bowl" means having turned my clay bowl for daily use face downwards and having placed it to one side. "On the rock I steadied myself, having shattered the mass of darkness" means seated on the mountain, having shattered the mass of delusion never before shattered during this long period of time, and by that very shattering of the mass of delusion I steadied myself, my individual existence; the meaning is that I suppressed my continuity by bringing about the state of non-arising in the future.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Cittā is completed.

6. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Mettikā

29-30. The verse beginning with "Although I am afflicted" and so on is the verse of the elder nun Mettikā. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating merit as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Siddhattha, having been reborn in a householder's family, having attained discretion, made an offering at the Teacher's shrine with a girdle adorned with jewels. She, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, was reborn in Rājagaha in a wealthy brahmin family. The remainder is similar to what was said in the preceding. But this one, having ascended the Counterpart Peak, practising the ascetic duty, having developed insight, attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"To the Blessed One Siddhattha, I was a schemer of a stupa;
A girdle was given by me, for the new construction work of the Teacher.

"And when the great stupa was finished, I gave a girdle again;
To the sage, the Protector of the World, devoted, with my own hands.

"Ninety-four cosmic cycles ago from now, the girdle which I gave then;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of making a stupa.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, having reviewed her own practice, by way of an inspired utterance -

29. "Although I am afflicted, weak, with youth gone;
Leaning on a staff I go, having ascended the mountain.

30. "Having laid aside the double robe, and having turned over the bowl;
Seated I was on a rock, thereupon my mind was liberated;

The three true knowledges have been attained, the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

He spoke these two verses.

Therein, "afflicted" means afflicted through being overcome by disease, with suffering arisen, having reached suffering. "Weak" means devoid of power through that very reaching of suffering and through the decrepitude of ageing. Therefore she said "with youth gone," meaning one who has traversed the span of life.

"Thereupon my mind was liberated" means seated I was on a rock, thereupon immediately after that, because of being properly applied through evenness of energy, by the succession of paths, my mind was liberated from all mental corruptions. The remainder is according to the method already stated.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Mettikā is completed.

7. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Mittā

31-32. The verse of another elder nun, Mittā, beginning with "The fourteenth, the fifteenth." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a family of the warrior caste, having attained discretion, having become a lady of the harem of King Bandhumā, having seen one elder nun who had eliminated the mental corruptions, a female disciple of the Blessed One Vipassī, with a gladdened mind, having taken the bowl from her hand, having filled it with superior solid and soft food, gave it together with a very costly suit of clothes. She, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in the Sakyan royal family at Kapilavatthu, having attained discretion, having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher, having gained faith, became a female lay follower. She, at a later time, having gone forth in the presence of Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, having completed the preliminary functions, doing the work of insight, before long attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"In the city of Bandhumatī, there was a warrior named Bandhumā;
I was the wife of that king, I lived together with him.

"Having gone to a private place and sat down, thus I thought then;
'Indeed there is nothing wholesome done by me to take along when going.

'To great torment, painful, of terrible form, extremely dreadful;
Surely I go to hell, here there is no doubt for me.

Having approached the king, I spoke these words;
Give me one ascetic, I will feed him, O warrior.

"The great king gave to me an ascetic with developed faculties;
Having taken his bowl, I filled it with the finest food.

"Having filled it with supreme food, I made an ointment of fragrance;

Having covered it with a net, I concealed it with a pair of cloths.

"This is my object, I remember it for as long as I live;
Having gladdened my mind there, I went to Tāvatiṃsa.

"Of thirty kings of gods, I attained the status of chief queen;
What is wished for by my mind, arises as desired.

I attained the status of chief queen of twenty universal monarchs;
Having become as if gathered, I wander in the round of rebirths from existence to existence.

"I am released from all bondage, my clinging is gone;
With all mental corruptions eliminated, there is now no more rebirth.

"Ninety-one cosmic cycles ago from now, the gift that I gave then;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of almsfood.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, having reviewed her own practice, filled with joy and happiness, by way of an inspired utterance -

31. "The fourteenth, the fifteenth, and the eighth of the fortnight;
And the extra holiday, well endowed with the eight factors.
32. "I undertook the Observance, delighting in the group of gods;
Today, with one meal, shaven-headed, wrapped in the double robe;
I do not aspire to the group of gods, having removed anguish from the heart."
he spoke these two verses.

Therein, "the fourteenth, the fifteenth" - the fourteenth is that which completes fourteen, the fifteenth is that which completes fifteen; that fourteenth and fifteenth - the connection is "of the fortnight." And this is an accusative expression used in the sense of absolute connection. "And the eighth of the fortnight, and that" - this is the explanation. "And the extra holiday" means and the supplementary fortnight; and the fortnight on which the Observance morality should be maintained by way of entering and departing, in order from the beginning and from the end respectively of the fourteenth, fifteenth, and eighth; the meaning is: and on the thirteenth, the first day of the fortnight, the seventh, and the ninth. "Well endowed with the eight factors" means well endowed with the eight factors beginning with abstention from killing living beings. "I undertook the Observance" means I undertook the fasting; I observed - this is the meaning. With reference to which it was said -

"One should not kill a living being, nor take what is not given, one should not speak falsehood, nor should one be a drinker of intoxicants;
One should abstain from not practising the holy life, from sexual intercourse, one should not eat at night, eating at the improper time.

"One should not wear garlands, nor should one use perfumes, one should

sleep on a bed or on the ground on a rug;
This they call the eightfold Observance, made known by the Buddha, who has
reached the end of suffering."

"Delighting in the group of gods" means the explanation is: aspiring to the group of gods beginning with the Cātumahārājika gods by way of wishing for rebirth there, she undertook the Observance. "Today, with one meal" means she, I, today, on this very day, with one occasion of eating a meal. "Shaven-headed, wrapped in the double robe" means having become one with shaven hair and with body wrapped in the double robe, one who has gone forth - this is the meaning. "I do not aspire to the group of gods" means because of having attained the highest path, I do not desire any order of gods. Therefore he said - "Having removed anguish from the heart" means having removed by way of eradication the disturbance of mental defilements gone to the mind - this is the meaning. This itself was her declaration of final liberating knowledge.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Mittā is completed.

8. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Abhayamātā

33-34. The verse beginning with "Upwards from the soles of the feet" and so on is the verse of the elder nun, the mother of Abhaya. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Tissa, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, one day, having seen the Teacher walking for almsfood, with a gladdened mind, having taken the bowl, gave a ladleful of almsfood. She, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, by such an outcome of action, was a city courtesan named Padumavatī in Ujjenī. King Bimbisāra, having heard of her virtues such as beauty and so on, informed the chaplain - "In Ujjenī, it seems, there is a courtesan named Padumavatī; I wish to see her." The chaplain, saying "Very well, Sire," by the power of spells, having summoned a demon named Kumbhīra, by the demon's power, led the king instantly to the city of Ujjenī. The king lived together with her for one night. She conceived an embryo by him. And she informed the king - "An embryo has been established in my womb." Having heard that, the king, having said to her "If it should be a son, having raised him, show him to me," having given a signet ring, departed. She, after the elapse of ten months, having given birth to a son, on the name-giving day, gave him the name Abhaya. And when the son was seven years old, she sent him to the presence of the king, saying "Your father is the great king Bimbisāra." The king, having seen that son, having obtained affection for a son, reared him with the care befitting a prince. His acquisition of faith, going forth, and specific attainment have come above. His mother, at a later time, having heard the Teaching in the presence of her son, the Elder Abhaya, having gained faith, having gone forth among the nuns, doing the work of insight, before long attained arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"As he was walking for almsfood, the Teacher named Tissa;
Having held up a ladle of almsfood, I gave to the foremost Buddha.

"Having accepted, the Perfectly Enlightened One, Tissa, the chief leader of the

world,
The Teacher, standing in the street, gave me thanksgiving.

"Having given a ladle of almsfood, you will go to Tāvatiṃsa;
You will become the chief queen of thirty-six divine kings.

"You will become the chief queen of fifty universal monarchs;
All that is wished for by mind, you will obtain always.

"Having experienced success, you will go forth without possessions;
Having fully understood all mental corruptions, you will attain nibbāna, without
mental corruptions.'

"Having said this, the Perfectly Enlightened One, Tissa, the chief leader of the
world,
The hero rose up into the sky, like a king of swans in the firmament.

"Well given by me was the excellent gift, well sacrificed was the
accomplishment of alms-giving;
Having given a ladle of almsfood, I have attained the unshakeable state.

"Ninety-two cosmic cycles ago from now, the gift that I gave then;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of giving almsfood.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, the verse which was spoken by way of exhortation
by her own son, the Elder Abhaya, while expounding the Teaching, reciting those very
same verses herself too by way of an inspired utterance -

33. "Upwards from the soles of the feet, mother, downwards indeed from the top
of the hair;
Review this body of mine, impure, foul-smelling.
34. "Dwelling thus, all lust has been uprooted;
The fever has been cut off, I have become cool, quenched." He said;

Therein, in the first verse to begin with, this is the meaning in brief -Mother
Padumavatī, upwards from the soles of the feet, downwards from the top of the hair,
filled with various kinds of impurity, impure, foul-smelling because of the blowing of a
putrid odour at all times, review this body, this physical form, which is the origin of
contemptible things, with the eye of knowledge. For this is the verse spoken by her
son by way of giving exhortation.

She, having heard that, having attained arahantship, uttering an inspired utterance,
by way of honouring the teacher, having first spoken that very same verse, relating
her own practice, spoke the second verse "Dwelling thus."

Therein, "dwelling thus" means thus, having stood firm in the exhortation given by my son, the Elder Abhaya, beginning with "upwards from the soles of the feet," having seen the whole body as foulness, with a fully focused mind, having comprehended therein the material phenomena distinguished as primary elements and derived matter, and the immaterial phenomena beginning with feeling that are bound to them, having applied the three characteristics therein, dwelling by way of the observation of impermanence and so on. "All lust has been uprooted" means when insight leading to emergence was joined with the path, by the highest path in the succession of paths, all lust has been uprooted by me, eradicated. "The fever has been cut off" means from that very fact all the fever of mental defilements has been properly destroyed, and because of its being cut off, I have become cool, quenched through the Nibbāna element with residue of clinging.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Abhayamātā is completed.

9. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Abhayā

35-36. The verses of the elder nun Abhayā beginning with "Abhayā, the body is fragile." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating merit as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Sikhī, having been reborn in a wealthy warrior family, having attained discretion, was the chief queen of King Aruṇa. The king one day gave her seven waterlilies accomplished in fragrance. She, having taken those, "What use are these adornments to me? What if I were to venerate the Blessed One with these?" having thought thus, she sat down. And the Blessed One at the time for the alms round entered the king's dwelling. She, having seen the Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, having gone forward to meet him, having venerated him with those flowers, paid homage with the fivefold prostration. She, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home in Ujjenī, having attained discretion, having become a companion of Abhayā's mother, when she had gone forth, out of affection for her, having herself too gone forth, while dwelling together with her in Rājagaha, one day went to the Cool Grove for the purpose of seeing the foul. The Teacher, while just seated in the perfumed chamber, having placed before her an object previously experienced by her, made known to her the state of bloatedness and so on. Having seen that, she stood with a mind stirred with a sense of urgency. The Teacher, having pervaded with light, having shown himself as if seated before her -

35. "Abhayā, the body is fragile, where worldlings are attached;
I shall lay down this body, fully aware and mindful.
36. "By many painful states, for me who delights in heedfulness;
The elimination of craving has been attained, the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

He spoke these verses. She, at the conclusion of the verse, attained arahantship. Therefore it was said in the Apadāna -

"In the city of Aruṇavatī, there was a warrior named Aruṇa;

I was the wife of that king, I prevented what was to be prevented.

"Having taken a garland of seven strands, Uppalā, fragrant as a goddess;
Having sat down in the excellent mansion, thus she thought at that very moment.

"What use are these garlands to me, placed upon my head;
Better for me is what is planted in the knowledge of the Buddha, the foremost.

"Waiting for the Enlightened by himself, I sat down near the door;
When the Enlightened by himself comes, I will honour the great sage.

"With a hump, as if sporting, like a lion, the king of beasts;
Together with the Community of monks, the Conqueror came along the street.

"Having seen the Buddha's radiance, joyful, with a stirred mind;
Having opened the door, I honoured the foremost Buddha.

"Seven waterlily flowers, scattered about in the sky;
Making a canopy, they bear them upon the Buddha's head.

"With elated mind, glad, filled with joy, with joined palms;
Having gladdened my mind there, I went to Tāvātimsa.

"A covering of the great blue lotus, they hold upon my head;
I waft divine fragrance, this is the fruit of seven water lilies.

"Sometimes when I was being led, by my congregation of kinsmen then;
As far as my assembly extended, a great canopy was held.

"Of seventy kings of gods, I attained the status of chief queen;
Having been lord everywhere, I wander in the round of rebirths from existence to existence.

I attained the status of chief queen of sixty-three universal monarchs;
All conformed to me, my words were acceptable.

"My beauty is like that of a waterlily, and my odour diffuses;
I do not know ugliness, this is the fruit of honouring the Buddha.

"Skilled in the bases for spiritual power, delighting in the development of enlightenment factors;
Having attained the perfection of direct knowledge, this is the fruit of honouring the Buddha.

Skilled in the establishments of mindfulness, with concentration and meditative absorption as their resort;
Engaged in right striving, this is the fruit of honouring the Buddha.

"Energy is my beast of burden, carrying me to freedom from bondage;
With all mental corruptions eliminated, there is now no more rebirth.

"Thirty-one cosmic cycles ago from now, the flower that I honoured;
I do not know of an unfortunate realm, this is the fruit of honouring the
Buddha.

"Mental defilements have been burnt by me, etc. the Buddha's teaching has
been fulfilled."

But having attained arahantship, uttering an inspired utterance, having changed
those very verses, she spoke them.

Therein, "Abhayā" - she addresses herself. "Fragile" means of a nature that breaks;
the meaning is impermanent. "Where worldlings are attached" means in this body,
which is of a nature that breaks in a moment, which is of the intrinsic nature of
impurity, foul odour, loathsomeness, and repulsiveness, these blind worldlings,
beings, are stuck, attached. "I shall lay down this body" means but I, indifferent,
without taking up again, shall cast off, shall discard this body, this putrid body.
Therein, she states the reason by "fully aware and mindful."

"By many painful states" means the intention is: for one touched by many painful
states such as birth, ageing, and so on. "For one who delights in heedfulness" means
for one who delights in heedfulness - termed as the continuous presence of
mindfulness - because of having attained a sense of urgency through that very state
of being fallen into suffering. The remainder is according to the method already
stated. And here, according to the procedure taught by the Teacher -

"Lay down this body, for you who delight in heedfulness;
Attain the elimination of craving, fulfil the Buddha's teaching."

This is the reading, but because it was placed into the recitation according to the
procedure as spoken by the elder nun. "For you who delight in heedfulness"
(appamādaratāya te) means: you should be one who delights in heedfulness - this is
the meaning.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Abhayā is completed.

10. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Sāmā

37-38. The verse beginning with "Four times, five times" is the verse of the elder nun
Sāmā. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, having
accumulated wholesome action as a decisive support for the end of the round of
rebirths in this and that existence, wandering only in fortunate destinations, in this
arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a very wealthy householder's family in
Kosambī, her name was Sāmātissā. She, having attained discretion, having become a
dear companion of the female lay follower Sāmāvatī, when she had died, with
religious emotion arisen, went forth. And having gone forth, being unable to dispel
the sorrow that had arisen referring to Sāmāvatī, she was not able to take the noble
path. At a later time, having heard the exhortation of the Elder Ānanda who was
seated in the sitting hall, having established insight, on the seventh day from that,
together with the analytical knowledges, she attained arahantship.

But having attained arahantship, having reviewed her own practice, making it known

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37. "Four times, five times, I went out from the dwelling;
Not having gained peace of mind, not having control over my mind;
For me that was the eighth night, since when craving was uprooted.
38. "By many painful states, for me who delights in heedfulness;
The elimination of craving has been attained, the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled."

She spoke these two verses by way of an inspired utterance.

Therein, "four times, five times, I went out from the dwelling" means having thought "Seated in my dwelling-place with attention to insight, being unable to bring the ascetic duty to its culmination, due to the absence of a suitable climate, is not my insight indeed obstructed by the path?" I went out from the dwelling, from the lodging, nine times - four and five - outside. Therefore she said "not having gained peace of mind, not having control over my mind." Therein, "peace of mind" is said with reference to the concentration of the noble path. "Not having control over my mind" means not wielding power over my meditation mind due to the absence of moderation of energy. It is said that she had excessively exerted energy. "For me that was the eighth night" means from the time I received the exhortation in the presence of the Elder Ānanda, from that time onwards, unwearied night and day, doing the work of insight, at night having gone out from the dwelling four times and five times, applying attention, not having attained distinction, on the eighth night, having obtained moderation of energy, she exhausted the mental defilements by the succession of paths - this is the meaning. Therefore it was said - "For me that was the eighth night, since when craving was uprooted." The remainder is according to the method already stated.

The commentary on the verses of the elder nun Sāmā is completed.

The commentary on the Book of Twos is completed.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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