

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya -
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12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas
(12. Buddhavaṃsa-aṭṭhakathā)

24. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddha Kakusandha
(24. Kakusandhabuddhavaṃsavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas

24. Explanation of the Chronicle of the Buddha Kakusandha

When Vessabhū, the Self-Existent One, had attained final Nibbāna, and when that cosmic cycle had passed, for twenty-nine cosmic cycles the suns among conquerors did not arise. But in this fortunate cosmic cycle, four Buddhas arose. Which four? Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana, Kassapa, and our Buddha. But the Blessed One Metteyya will arise. Thus this cosmic cycle, because it is adorned with five arisings of Buddhas, was praised by the Blessed One as a fortunate cosmic cycle. Therein, the Blessed One named Kakusandha, having fulfilled the perfections, having been reborn in the Tusita city, having passed away from there, took conception in the womb of a brahmin woman named Visākhā, the queen-consort of a chaplain named Aggidatta, of a king named Khemaṅkara, an adviser in the principles of welfare, in the city of Khemavatī. But when warriors honour, respect, revere, and venerate brahmins, then Bodhisattas are born in a brahmin family.

But when brahmins honour, respect, revere, and venerate warriors, then they arise in a family of the warrior caste. At that time, it is said, brahmins were honoured and respected by warriors; therefore the reliable Kakusandha, the Bodhisatta, arose in an unconfused brahmin family with the arising of the splendour of prosperity, resounding throughout and causing the ten-thousandfold world system to tremble. The wonders of the kind stated above arose. Thereupon, after the elapse of ten months, he came forth from the mother's womb in the Khemavatu Park, like a flame of fire from a golden creeper. He dwelt in the house for four thousand years. He had, it is said, three mansions named Kāma, Kāmavaṇṇa, and Kāmasuddhi. Thirty thousand women headed by the brahmin woman Rocinī were in attendance.

He, having seen the four signs, when an unsurpassed son named Uttara was born to the brahmin woman Rocinī, having gone forth in the great renunciation by a harnessed thoroughbred chariot, went forth. Forty thousand went forth following him. He, surrounded by them, having practised the practice of striving for eight months, on the full moon day of Vesākha, having eaten the milk-rice given by the daughter of the brahmin Vajirindha in the town of Sucirindha, having spent the day residence in an acacia grove, in the evening time, having taken eight handfuls of grass brought by a barley-field keeper named Subhadda, having approached the Sirīsa Bodhi tree, a trumpet-flower tree of the stated measure, wafting divine fragrance, having spread a grass mat thirty-four cubits wide, having folded his legs crosswise, having attained the highest enlightenment - "Through the round of many births, etc. it has reached the elimination of cravings" - having uttered an inspired utterance, having spent seven weeks, having seen the capability for the penetration of the truths of the forty thousand monks who had gone forth together with him, in a single day, having entered the deer park named Isipatana arisen near the city of Makila, having reached the middle of them, the Blessed One set in motion the wheel of the Teaching. Then there was the first full realisation of the teaching for forty thousand koṭis.

Again, having performed the Twin Miracle at the gate of the city of Kaṇṇakujja at the foot of a great sal tree, he produced the eye of the Teaching for thirty thousand koṭis; that was the second full realisation. But when, not far from the city of Khemavatī, at a certain shrine of a god, a wished-for king of men, a demon named Naradeva, having assumed a visible human body, standing in the middle of the wilderness near a lake whose water was cool, adorned with lotuses, water-lilies, and blue lotuses, with supremely sweet and cool water, fragrant and delightful to all people, having enticed beings with lotuses, water-lilies, white water-lilies, and so on, devoured humans. When that road was cut off and devoid of the concourse of people, having entered the great forest, he devoured beings who arrived there. That was a great wilderness road renowned in the world. At both entrances to the wilderness, it is said, a great multitude of people having assembled, stood for the purpose of crossing the wilderness. Then the Teacher Kakusandha, free from the bond of existence, one day at the time towards the break of dawn, having emerged from the attainment of great compassion, surveying the world, saw that influential demon Naradeva who had come within the net of knowledge, and that multitude of people. And having seen them, having gone through the expanse of the sky, while that very crowd of people was watching, the Blessed One, performing various kinds of wonders, having descended into the dwelling of that demon Naradeva, sat down on his auspicious divan.

Then that man-eating demon, having seen the sage-sun, the sun emitting six-coloured rays, as if surrounded by a rainbow, coming by the path of the wind - "The One of Ten Powers comes here out of compassion for me" - with a gladdened heart, together with his retinue of demons, having gone to the Himalayas abounding with many herds of deer, having gathered flowers of various colours and fragrances, born of water and born of land, supremely delightful, and fragrant scents, having venerated with garlands, scents, ointments, and so on Kakusandha, the leader of the world, free from faults, seated on his own divan, uttering praises and songs, having made salutation with joined palms on his head, paying homage, he stood. Thereupon the humans, having seen that wonder, with gladdened hearts, having assembled together, having surrounded the Blessed One, paying homage, they stood. Then the Blessed One Kakusandha, free from renewed existence, having inspired the demon Naradeva, the demon who had been greatly venerated, by showing the connection between actions and their fruits, having terrified him with a talk on hell, gave a talk on the four truths; then there was the full realisation of the teaching for unlimited beings. This was the third full realisation. Therefore it was said -

1. After Vessabhū, the Perfectly Enlightened One, the best of bipeds;
Kakusandha by name, immeasurable, difficult to approach.
2. "Having abolished all existence, gone to perfection in conduct;
Like a lion having broken through a cage, attained the highest enlightenment.
3. "When Kakusandha, the leader of the world, was setting in motion the wheel
of the Teaching;
There was the full realisation of the teaching for forty thousand koṭis.
4. "In the sky, in the atmosphere, having performed the twin miracle;
He awakened thirty thousand crores of gods and humans.

5. "At the proclamation of the four truths to Naradeva, the demon,
The full realisation of the teaching for him was incalculable by counting."

1-5. Therein, "having abolished" means having uprooted. "All existence" means all ninefold existence; the meaning is action which is the sign for the arising of existence. "Gone to perfection in conduct" means gone to the far shore by way of fulfilling all the perfections. "Like a lion having broken through a cage" means the meaning is like a lion breaking through a cage, the bull among sages destroyed the cage of existence. For Kakusandha, who had destroyed the bonds of existence, there was only one assembly of disciples. In the city of Kaṇṇakujja, at Isipatana in the Deer Park, surrounded by forty thousand Worthy Ones who had gone forth together with him, the Blessed One recited the Pātimokkha on the full moon day of Māgha. Therefore it was said -

6. "Of the Blessed One Kakusandha, there was one meeting;
Of those who had eliminated the mental corruptions, spotless ones, of peaceful minds, such ones.
7. Of forty thousand, then was the meeting;
Of those who had attained the plane of the tamed, through the elimination of the host of enemies, the mental corruptions."

6-7. At that time our Bodhisatta, having been a king named Khema, having given bowl and robes as a great gift to the monastic community headed by the Buddha, gave eye ointment and other medicines and all medicines. And having given other ascetic's requisites, having heard his proclamation of the Teaching, having become one with a gladdened heart, he went forth in the presence of the Blessed One. That Teacher however - declared "In the future, in this very cosmic cycle, he will become a Buddha." Therefore it was said -

8. "I at that time, was a warrior named Khema;
Having given no small gift to the Truth-finder, to the sons of the Conqueror.
9. "Having given a bowl and a robe, eye ointment and liquorice;
All this that is wished for, I prepare, the choicest of the choicest.
10. "That Buddha too declared of me, Kakusandha, the great leader;
In this fortunate cosmic cycle, this one will be a Buddha.
11. "Having gone forth from the delightful city called Kapila, etc. we shall be face to face with him."
13. "The city was named Khemavatī, I was then named Khema;
Seeking omniscience, I went forth in his presence."

8-13. Therein, "eye ointment" is obvious. "Madhulaṭṭhikā" means liquorice. "Imeta" means "this" (imaṃ etaṃ). "Patthita" means wished for. "Paṭiyādemī" means I give; the meaning is I gave. "Varaṃ vara" means the foremost of the foremost - this is the meaning. "Yadetam patthita" is also a reading; its meaning is whatever he wishes, all that he gave. This is the more beautiful.

Now that unhesitating Blessed One Kakusandha's city was named Khema. His father was a brahmin named Aggidatta, his mother was a brahmin woman named Visākhā, Vidhura and Sañjīva were the two chief disciples, Buddhija by name was the attendant, Sāmā and Campā were the two chief female disciples, the great sirīsa tree was the enlightenment tree, his body was forty cubits in height, the bodily radiance emanated ten yojanas all around, his life span was forty thousand years, his wife was a brahmin woman named Rocinī, his son was named Uttara, and he departed by a thoroughbred chariot. Therefore it was said -

14. "The brahmin Aggidatta was the father of that Buddha;
Visākhā was the name of the mother, of the Teacher Kakusandha.
15. "There in the secure city dwelt the great family of the Perfectly Enlightened One;
The excellent, the foremost among men, of good birth, of great fame.
20. "Vidhura and Sañjīva were the chief disciples;
Buddhija by name was the attendant of the Teacher Kakusandha.
21. "Sāmā and Campā were the chief female disciples;
The enlightenment tree of that Blessed One is called the Sirīsa tree.
23. "Forty cubits, very high, the great sage;
The colour of gold emanates, ten yojanas all around.
24. "Forty thousand years was the life span of that great sage;
Remaining for that long, he helped many people to cross.
25. Having spread out the bazaar of the Dhamma, for men and women including the gods;
Having roared like a lion's roar, he, together with his disciples, attained final Nibbāna.
26. Accomplished in speech with eight factors, without holes, continuously;
All that has disappeared, are not all activities empty?"

14-26. "There dwelt, there in the secure city" - this verse should be understood as spoken for the purpose of showing the birth-city of Kakusandha. "Great family" means the risen and exalted father's family of the Blessed One. "The excellent, the foremost among men" means the excellent, the foremost among all human beings by reason of birth - this is the meaning. "Of good birth" means possessing noble birth, of the highest noble birth. "Of great fame" means of great renown. What is that great family of the Buddha? Therein, the connection should be seen with the term "the great family dwelt in the secure city."

"Ten yojanas all around" means the meaning is that a gold-coloured radiance, having pervaded ten yojanas all around, constantly emanating from the body, radiates forth. "Bazaar of the Dhamma" means a bazaar reckoned as the Dhamma. "Having spread out" means the meaning is having spread out the bazaar of the Dhamma, like a bazaar prosperous with various goods for the purpose of selling goods. "For men and

women" means for the purpose of the attainment of the distinction of the jewels of meditative absorption, attainment, path and fruition by tractable men and women. "A lion's roar" means like a lion's roar, having roared the roar of fearlessness.

"Accomplished in speech with eight factors" means the Teacher whose voice is endowed with eight factors. "Without holes" means moral practices that are devoid of the state of holes and so on are without holes, unspotted, unblemished. Or else, "without holes" means without gaps - the pairs of disciples and so on. "Continuously" means constantly, at all times. "All that has disappeared" means the Teacher and the pairs of disciples and so on, all that, having entered the state of a sage, has reached the state of disappearance - this is the meaning.

"The Buddha Kakusandha, free from bonds, of unhindered wisdom, gone beyond all faults;
The junction of the three worlds, indeed devoted to truth, in the secure city he arranged his dwelling."

In the remaining verses, everything is obvious everywhere.

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

The twenty-second lineage of the Buddhas is concluded.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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

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