

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

4. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddha Koṇḍañña
(4. Koṇḍaññabuddhavaṃsavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

12. Commentary on the Chronicle of the Buddhas

4. Explanation of the Chronicle of the Buddha Koṇḍañña

It is said that when the Blessed One Dīpaṅkara had attained final Nibbāna, his Dispensation continued for a hundred thousand years. Then, with the disappearance of the disciples who had awakened after those Buddhas, his Dispensation too disappeared. Then afterwards, having passed beyond one incalculable period, in one cosmic cycle a Teacher named Koṇḍañña arose. That Blessed One, having fulfilled the perfections for sixteen incalculable periods and a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, having brought enlightenment-knowledge to maturity, having stood in an individual existence similar to the individual existence as Vessantara, having passed away from there, having been reborn in the Tusita city, having remained there as long as life lasted, having given his acknowledgment to the deities, having passed away from the Tusita city, he took conception in the womb of a queen named Sujātā in the family of a king named Sunanda in the city of Rammavatī. At the moment of his conception too, thirty-two wonders of the kind described in the chronicle of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara arose. He, with the arrangement of protection made by the deities, after the elapse of ten months, having come forth from the mother's womb, supreme among all beings, facing north, having gone with seven strides, and having surveyed all directions, uttered a bold speech - "I am the foremost in the world, I am the eldest in the world, I am the best in the world, this is my last birth, there is now no more rebirth."

Then on the naming day of the prince, those giving him a name named him "Koṇḍañña." For that Blessed One was of the Koṇḍañña clan. He had, it is said, three mansions - Rāma, Surāma, and Subha by name, supremely delightful. In those, three hundred thousand dancing women, skilled in dancing, singing, and music, were present at all times. His chief queen was named Rucidevī. His son was named Vijitasena. He dwelt in the house for ten thousand years.

But having seen the aged, the sick, the dead, and the gone forth, having departed by a thoroughbred chariot, having gone forth, he practised the practice of striving for ten months. But when the prince Koṇḍañña was going forth, ten crores of people went forth following him. He, surrounded by them, having practised the practice of striving for ten months, on the full moon day of Vesākha, in the village of Sunanda, having eaten the supremely sweet milk-rice given by a millionaire's daughter named Yasodharā, who was endowed with dense rain-clouds, having spent the day residence in a sal grove adorned with fruits, young leaves, and sprouts, in the evening time, having abandoned the group, having taken eight handfuls of grass given by a naked ascetic named Sunandaka, having circumambulated the Sālakalyāṇī tree three times, having looked towards the eastern direction, having placed the Bodhi tree behind him, having spread a grass mat fifty-eight cubits wide, having folded his legs

crosswise, having determined the fourfold energy, having scattered the forces of Māra, in the first watch of the night having purified the knowledge of recollecting past lives, in the middle watch having purified the divine eye, in the last watch having contemplated the mode of dependent conditions, having risen from the fourth meditative absorption of breathing, having focused upon the five aggregates, having seen fifty characteristics by way of rise and fall, having developed insight up to change-of-lineage knowledge, having penetrated the four path knowledges, the four fruition knowledges, the four analytical knowledges, the knowledge that distinguishes the four modes of generation, the knowledge that distinguishes the five destinations, the six kinds of knowledge not shared with others, and all the virtues of a Buddha, with fulfilled thought, while still seated at the foot of the Bodhi tree -

Through the round of many births I wandered, not finding;
Seeking the house-builder, painful is birth again and again.

"House-builder, you have been seen, you will not build a house again;
All your ribs are broken, the peak of the house is demolished;
The mind has gone to the unconditioned, it has reached the elimination of
cravings.

"Just as of a blazing fire struck by an iron hammer,
Gradually subsiding, the destination is not known.

"So too for those rightly liberated, who have crossed over the flood of sensual
bondage;
There is no destination to be declared for those who have attained
unshakeable happiness."

Having uttered this inspired utterance thus, having spent seven weeks at the very foot of the Bodhi tree in the happiness of fruition attainment, in the eighth week, dependent on Brahmā's request - while reflecting "To whom indeed should I first expound the Teaching?" he saw ten ten million monks who had gone forth together with him. "But these sons of good family, with accumulated wholesome roots, who went forth following me as I was going forth, having practised striving together with me, attended on me; come, let me expound to them the Teaching at the very first" - having thus reflected - looking to see "But where are they dwelling now?" - having seen "They are dwelling in the Deva grove in the city of Arundhavatī, eighteen yojanas from here" - "I shall go to expound to them the Teaching" - having taken his bowl and robes, just as a strong man might extend his bent arm or bend his extended arm, even so, having vanished from the foot of the Bodhi tree, he appeared in the Deva grove.

And at that time those ten ten million monks were dwelling in the Deva grove in dependence on the city of Arundhavatī. And those monks, having seen the One of Ten Powers coming from afar, with gladdened minds, having gone forward to meet him, having received the Blessed One's bowl and robes, having prepared the Buddha-seat, having shown respect to the Teacher, having paid homage to the Blessed One, having surrounded him, sat down to one side. There Koṇḍañña, the One of Ten Powers, surrounded by a company of sages, seated on the Buddha-seat, shone like

the thousand-eyed one surrounded by a host of deities, like the autumn night-maker that had reached the stainless expanse of the sky, like a full moon surrounded by a host of stars. Then the Teacher, having taught them the unsurpassed Discourse on the Setting in Motion of the Wheel of the Teaching, with three rounds and twelve aspects, pursued by all Buddhas, gave the nectar of the Teaching to drink to a hundred thousand ten million gods and humans headed by ten ten million monks. Therefore it was said -

1. After Dīpaṅkara, the Leader named Koṇḍañña;
Of infinite power, of immeasurable fame, immeasurable, difficult to approach.
2. "Like the earth in patience, like the ocean in morality;
Like Meru in concentration, like the sky in knowledge.
3. "The elucidation of the faculties, powers, factors of enlightenment, path and truths;
The Buddha always made known, for the welfare of all living beings.
4. "When Koṇḍañña, the leader of the world, was setting in motion the wheel of the Teaching;
There was the first full realisation for a hundred thousand koṭis."

1-4. Therein, "after Dīpaṅkara" means afterwards, in the later period of the Teacher Dīpaṅkara - this is the meaning. "Named Koṇḍañña" means the name obtained by virtue of his own clan. "Leader" means great leader. "Of infinite power" means of infinite power through the power of his own morality, virtue, knowledge, and merit. From below Avīci, above the summit of existence, across infinite world systems - in between here there is not even a single person able to stand having looked at his face. Therefore it was said "of infinite power." "Of immeasurable fame" means of infinite renown. For of that Blessed One, for a hundred thousand years up to the time of final Nibbāna, in between here there was no limit to the counting of the assembly of monks. Therefore he is called "of immeasurable fame." One of immeasurable virtue and renown is also called "of immeasurable fame." "Immeasurable" means by way of the measure of the accumulation of virtues he cannot be measured, thus immeasurable. As he said -

"Even a Buddha could speak the praise of a Buddha, even for a cosmic cycle, speaking of nothing else;
The cosmic cycle would be exhausted in the long interval, but the praise of the Truth-finder would not be exhausted."

Therefore, because of the immeasurable accumulation of virtues, he is called "immeasurable." "Difficult to approach" means difficult to approach; because of the impossibility of approaching having insulted and struck against, he is difficult to approach; the meaning is difficult to overcome.

"Like the earth" means equal to the earth. "In patience" means by forbearance; because of the state of not being shaken by gain and loss, the desirable and undesirable, and so on, like the great earth two hundred thousand yojanas thick plus forty thousand, by an ordinary wind, he is called "like the earth." "Like the ocean in

morality" means equal to the ocean by the state of not transgressing the boundary through morality-restraint. For it was said: "The great ocean, monks, stable in nature, does not overflow its boundaries."

"Like Meru in concentration" means equal to Meru, the chief of mountains, because of the absence of trembling generated by phenomena opposed to concentration; the meaning is similar. Or, having a body more firm like Meru, the chief of mountains.

"Like the sky in knowledge" - here, because of the infinite nature of the Blessed One's knowledge, the comparison was made with infinite space. Four infinities were spoken of by the Blessed One. As he said -

"The totality of beings and space, and world-circles are infinite;
The Buddha's knowledge is immeasurable, these cannot be understood."

Therefore the comparison of infinite knowledge was made with infinite space.

"The illumination of faculties, powers, factors of enlightenment, path, and truths" - by the inclusion of these faculties, powers, factors of enlightenment, path, and truths, the establishments of mindfulness, right strivings, and bases for spiritual power are also included. Therefore, by way of the four groups beginning with the faculties, he made known the teaching that illuminates the thirty-seven qualities conducive to enlightenment; he taught - this is the meaning. "For the welfare" means for the purpose of welfare. "Setting in motion the wheel of the Teaching" means when the knowledge of the Teaching was being set in motion.

Afterwards, at the great blessing assembly, deities in the ten thousand world-systems, having created subtle individual existences, gathered together in this very world-circle. There, it is said, a certain young god asked the One of Ten Powers, Koṇḍañña, a question about blessings. To him the Blessed One spoke of blessings. There, ninety thousand crores attained arahantship. There was no limit to the counting of stream-enterers and so on. Therefore it was said -

- 5.** "Then also, while he was teaching, at the assembly of humans and deities;
For ninety thousand crores, there was the second full realisation."

Therein, "then also" means at a still later time too. "While teaching" means when the Blessed One was expounding the Teaching. "Of humans and deities" means of humans and of immortals; but when the Blessed One, performing the Twin Miracle that crushes the conceit of the heretical teachers in the sky, expounded the Teaching, then eighty thousand crores attained arahantship. Those established in the three fruitions passed beyond the path of counting. Therefore it was said -

- 6.** "Subduing the sectarians, when he taught the Dhamma;
For eighty thousand crores, there was the third full realisation."

Therein, the meaning should be understood by bringing in the word "then." When the Blessed One expounded the Teaching, then there was the full realisation of the teaching for eighty thousand crores.

It is said that the Teacher Koṇḍañña, having attained the highest enlightenment, spent the first rains retreat in the Canda Park in dependence on the city of Candavatī. There, the young man named Bhadda, the son of a wealthy brahmin named

Sucindhara, and the young man named Subhadda, the son of the brahmin Yasodhara, having heard the proclamation of the Teaching face to face from the Buddha Koṇḍañña, with devoted minds, together with ten thousand young men, having gone forth in his presence, attained arahantship.

Then the Teacher Koṇḍañña, on the full moon day of the month of Jeṭṭha, surrounded by a hundred thousand crores headed by the Elder Subhadda, recited the Pātimokkha. That was the first assembly. Afterwards, when the Teacher Koṇḍañña's son named Vijitasena had attained arahantship, the Blessed One recited the Pātimokkha in the midst of a thousand crores headed by him. That was the second assembly. Then at another time, the One of Ten Powers, while wandering on a journey through the country, gave the going forth to a king named Udena with a retinue of ninety crores of people, together with that assembly. But when he had attained arahantship, the Blessed One, surrounded by ninety crores of Worthy Ones headed by him, recited the Pātimokkha. That was the third assembly. Therefore it was said -

7. "There were three assemblies of the great sage Koṇḍañña;
Of those who had eliminated the mental corruptions, spotless ones, of peaceful minds, such ones.
8. "The first meeting was of a hundred thousand crores;
The second was of a thousand crores, the third of ninety crores."

7-8. At that time, it is said, our Bodhisatta, having become a universal monarch named Vijitāvī, dwelt in the city of Candavatī. It is said that he, surrounded by many excellent men, protected the earth - the abode of the ocean, together with Meru and Yugandhara, of immeasurable wealth - without rod, without sword, by righteousness. Then the Buddha Koṇḍañña too, surrounded by a hundred thousand crores of those who had eliminated the mental corruptions, wandering on a journey through the country, gradually reached the city of Candavatī.

It is said that King Vijitāvī - having heard "The Perfectly Enlightened One, it is said, has arrived at our city," having gone forward to meet him, having arranged a dwelling place for the Blessed One, having invited him for the morrow together with the Community of monks, on the following day, having well prepared the meal arrangements, gave a great gift to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha numbering a hundred thousand crores. The Bodhisatta, having fed the Blessed One, at the end of the thanksgiving - having entreated "Venerable sir, dwell right here for three months, caring for the welfare of the public," for three months continuously gave an incomparable great gift to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha.

Then the Teacher, to the Bodhisatta - having declared "In the future he will become a Buddha named Gotama," expounded the Teaching to him. He, having heard the Teacher's talk on the Teaching, having handed over the kingdom, having gone forth, having learnt the three Canons, having produced the eight attainments and the five direct knowledges, not having fallen away from meditative absorption, was reborn in the Brahma world. Therefore it was said -

9. "I at that time, a warrior named Vijitāvī;
With the ocean as the boundary, I exercised sovereignty.

10. A hundred thousand koṭis of spotless great sages,
Together with the supreme lord of the world, I satisfied with the finest food.
11. That Buddha too declared of me, Koṇḍañña, the leader of the world;
After incalculable cosmic cycles, he will become a Buddha in the world.
12. "Having striven in striving, having performed austerities;
At the root of the holy fig tree, the Perfectly Enlightened One of great fame will
awaken.
13. "His mother who gave him birth will be named Māyā;
His father will be named Suddhodana, this one will be Gotama.
14. "Kolita and Upatissa will be the chief disciples;
Ānanda by name will be the attendant, he will attend upon that Conqueror.
15. "Khemā and Uppalavaṇṇā will be the chief female disciples;
The enlightenment tree of that Blessed One is called the holy fig tree.
16. "Citta and Hatthaka of Āḷavī will be the chief male attendants;
Nanda's mother and Uttarā will be the chief female attendants;
The life span of that famous Gotama will be a hundred years."
17. "Having heard this word of the matchless great sage;
Rejoicing, men and deities said: "This one is indeed a Buddha-seed."
18. Sounds of acclamation occur, they clap their hands and laugh;
With joined palms they pay homage, the ten thousand deities.
19. "If we miss the Dispensation of this Protector of the World,
In the future time, we shall be face to face with him."
20. "Just as people crossing a river, having missed the opposite ford;
Having taken a lower ford, they cross over the great river.
21. "Just so, all of us, if we let go of this Conqueror;
In the future time, we shall be face to face with him."
22. "Having heard his word, I gladdened my mind even more;
Accomplishing that very purpose, I gave the great kingdom to the Conqueror;
Having given the great kingdom, I went forth in his presence.
23. "The discourses and also the monastic discipline, the ninefold Teacher's
instruction;
Having learnt all thoroughly, I made resplendent the Conqueror's Dispensation.
24. "There, dwelling diligent, in sitting, standing, and walking;
Having gone to the perfection of direct knowledge, I went to the Brahma
world."

9-24. Therein, "I at that time" means I at that time. "Named Vijitāvī" means I was a universal monarch bearing such a name. "With the ocean as the boundary" means here, the meaning is: having made the encircling world-mountain the boundary and limit, I exercise sovereignty having made the ocean that stands thus as the boundary. By this much it is not obvious.

It is said that a universal monarch, by the power of the wheel treasure, keeping Sineru on the left side, goes over the upper part of the ocean to Pubbavideha, measuring eight thousand yojanas. There the universal monarch - "Living beings should not be killed, what is not given should not be taken, there should be no wrong conduct in sensual pleasures, falsehood should not be spoken, intoxicants should not be drunk, and eat as you have been accustomed to eat" - gives this exhortation. When the exhortation had thus been given, that wheel treasure, having risen up into the sky, plunges into the eastern ocean. And in whatever way it plunges in, in that way the water of the great ocean, having become contracted in the spread of its waves, sinking down, having sunk down to the extent of a yojana, stands within the ocean on both sides like a wall of lapis lazuli gems, supremely beautiful to behold; having thus gone to the boundary of the eastern ocean, that wheel treasure turns back. And as it turns back, that retinue is at the front, the universal monarch in the middle, and the wheel treasure at the rear. That water too, as if unable to endure separation from the shining one, striking up to the circumference of the rim, continuously approaches the shore.

Thus the wheel-turning monarch, having conquered Pubbavideha bounded by the eastern ocean, wishing to conquer Jambudīpa bounded by the southern ocean, goes facing towards the southern ocean by the path indicated by the wheel treasure. Having conquered that Jambudīpa measuring ten thousand yojanas, having emerged from the southern ocean, having gone in the very manner stated above to conquer Aparagoyāna measuring seven thousand yojanas, having conquered that too up to the ocean boundary, having emerged from the western ocean too, having gone likewise to conquer Uttarakuru measuring eight thousand yojanas, having made that up to the ocean boundary, having likewise conquered it, he emerges from the northern ocean too. By this much, sovereignty over the earth bounded by the ocean has been attained by the universal monarch. Therefore it was said "With the ocean as the boundary, I exercised sovereignty."

"Hundreds of thousands of crores" means hundreds of thousands of crores. Or this itself is the reading. "Spotless ones" means of those who had eliminated the mental corruptions. "Together with the supreme protector of the world" means together with the one of ten powers, hundreds of thousands of crores - this is the meaning. "With the finest food" means with superior food. "I satisfied" means I satisfied.

"Immeasurable cosmic cycles from now" means the meaning is: from now, having passed beyond three incalculable periods exceeding a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, in one fortunate cosmic cycle.

"Striving" means energy. "Accomplishing that very purpose" means the meaning is: fulfilling, accomplishing, bringing to completion the perfection of giving, that very purpose of becoming a Buddha. "The great kingdom" means the wheel-turning sovereignty. "To the Conqueror" means to the Blessed One; or the locative should be understood in the dative sense. "I gave" means I gave. "Accomplishing that purpose" -

the connection should be seen with this. Some read "I gave the great kingdom to the Conqueror." "Having given" means having relinquished. "Discourses" means the Canon of discourses. "Monastic discipline" means the Canon of monastic discipline. "Ninefold" means the ninefold division consisting of discourses, mixed prose and verse, and so on. "I made resplendent the Conqueror's Dispensation" means I adorned it with mundane scriptural learning and achievement. "There" means in that Blessed One's Dispensation. "Diligent" means accomplished in mindfulness. "I went to the Brahma world" means I went to the Brahma world.

Now, this Buddha Koṇḍañña's city was named Rammavatī, the king named Sunanda was his father, the queen named Sujātā was his mother, Bhadda and Subhadda were the two chief disciples, Anuruddha by name was the attendant, Tissā and Upatissā were the two chief female disciples, the Sālakalyāṇī tree was the enlightenment tree, his body was eighty-eight cubits in height, his life-span was a hundred thousand years, his chief queen was named Rucidevī, his son was named Vijitasena, the king named Canda was the attendant. It is said he dwelt in the Canda Park. Therefore it was said -

25. "The city was named Rammavatī, the warrior was named Sunanda;
The mother was named Sujātā, of the great sage Koṇḍañña.
30. "Bhadda and Subhadda were the chief disciples;
Anuruddha by name was the attendant of the great sage Koṇḍañña.
31. "Tissā and Upatissā were the chief female disciples;
The Sāla-kalyāṇī tree was the enlightenment tree of the great sage Koṇḍañña.
33. "He, eighty-eight cubits, very high, the great sage;
He shines like the king of stars, as the sun at midday.
34. "For a hundred thousand years, life span exists for that long;
Remaining for that long, he helped many people to cross.
35. "With those who have eliminated the mental corruptions, with the unstained,
the ground was decorated;
Just as indeed the sky with stars, thus he appeared beautiful.
36. "Those serpents too were immeasurable, unshakeable, difficult to approach;
Having displayed like a flash of lightning, those of great fame were quenched.
37. "And that incomparable supernormal power of the Conqueror, and the
concentration developed by knowledge;
All that has disappeared, are not all activities empty?"

25-37. Therein, "sālakalyāṇikā" means the Sālakalyāṇī tree; it arises during the time of a Buddha and during the time of a universal monarch, and not at any other time. It springs up in a single day, it is said. "With those who have eliminated the mental corruptions, with the unstained, the ground was decorated" means this ground, radiant with the single lustre of the orange robes of those who have eliminated the mental corruptions, was decorated, supremely beautiful to behold. "Yathā hi" is an

indeclinable particle in the sense of a simile. "With stars" means with constellations, with hosts of stars; the meaning is that just as the expanse of the sky with stars, so this ground, decorated with those who have eliminated the mental corruptions, was resplendent.

"Unshakeable" means imperturbable, unalterable by the eight worldly adversities. "Having displayed like a flash of lightning" means having shown like a flash of lightning. "Vijjuppātaṃvā" is also a reading. It is said that in the time of the Buddha Koṇḍañña, the monks who were attaining final nibbāna, having risen up into the sky to the height of seven palm trees, shining all around like lightning creepers gone through an opening in dark rain clouds, having attained the heat element, attained final nibbāna like fires without fuel. Therefore it was said "having displayed like a flash of lightning." "Incomparable" means unequalled, matchless. "Developed by knowledge" means cultivated by knowledge. The remaining verses are clear, since the method has been stated above.

"The Enlightened by himself named Koṇḍañña, at the delightful Canda Park;
Attained Nibbāna; his shrine was made seven yojanas in extent.

"The relics of that Teacher did not scatter;
They remained as one solid mass, like a golden image."

The human beings dwelling in the whole Indian subcontinent, having come together, using yellow orpiment and red arsenic to serve the function of clay, and oil and ghee to serve the function of water, completed a shrine seven yojanas in extent, made of the seven precious things.

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

The second lineage of the Buddha 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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