

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)

3. Commentary on the Chapter on Pāthika
(3. Pāthikavaggaṭṭhakathā)

4. Commentary on the Discourse on Knowledge of Beginnings
(4. Aggaññasuttavaṇṇanā)

[DN 27, PTS 3.80–3.98]



PaliVerse

1.The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries

3. Commentary on the Chapter on Pāthika

4. Explanation of the Discourse on Knowledge of Beginnings

Commentary on Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja

111. "Thus have I heard" - this is the Discourse on Primordial Origins. Herein, this is the explanation of obscure terms - "In the Eastern Park, in Migāramātā's mansion" - here this is the progressive discourse. In the past, at the summit of a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, a certain female lay follower, having invited the Blessed One Padumuttara, having given a gift to a hundred thousand monks headed by the Buddha, having lain down at the feet of the Blessed One, made the aspiration "May I be the chief female attendant of a Buddha such as you in the future." She, having wandered in the round of rebirths among gods and human beings for a hundred thousand cosmic cycles, in the time of our Blessed One, took conception in the womb of Queen Sumanā in the house of the millionaire Dhanañcaya, the son of the millionaire Meṇḍaka, in the city of Bhaddiya. At the time of her birth they gave her the name Visākhā. When the Blessed One came to the city of Bhaddiya, she, together with five hundred female slaves, having gone out to meet the Blessed One, became a stream-enterer at the very first sight.

Afterwards she went to the house of the prince Puṇṇavaḍḍhana, the son of the millionaire Migāra, in Sāvattihī. There the millionaire Migāra placed her in the position of mother. Therefore she is called Migāramātā. When she was going to her husband's family, her father had an ornament called the Great Creeper Ornament made. In that ornament four measures of diamonds were used, eleven measures of pearls, twenty-two measures of coral, and thirty-three measures of gems. Thus it reached completion with these and other seven kinds of precious things. When fastened on the head, it falls down as far as the top of the feet. Only a woman bearing the strength of five elephants is able to wear it. Afterwards, having become the chief female attendant of the One of Ten Powers, having given up that ornament, while having a monastery built for the Blessed One with nine hundred million, she had a mansion built on a piece of land the size of a kaṛisa. On its upper storey there were five hundred inner rooms, and on the lower storey five hundred - thus it was adorned with a thousand inner rooms. She, thinking "A mere mansion alone does not look splendid," having surrounded it, had five hundred two-storeyed houses, five hundred small mansions, and five hundred long halls built. The monastery festival reached completion in four months.

There is no relinquishment of wealth in the Buddha's Dispensation by any other woman established in the state of womanhood like Visākhā, nor by any other man established in the state of manhood like Anāthapiṇḍika. For he, having given up fifty-four hundred million, had the great monastery called Jetavana built in a place to the south of Sāvattihī, similar to the Mahāvihāra of Anurādhapura. Visākhā had the

Eastern Park built in a place to the east of Sāvattthī, similar to the monastery of Queen Uttarā. The Blessed One, out of compassion for these two families, dwelling in dependence on Sāvattthī, dwelt in a permanent residence in these two monasteries. One rainy season he dwells in Jeta's Grove, one in the Eastern Park. At that time, however, the Blessed One was dwelling in the Eastern Park. Therefore it was said "in the Eastern Park, in Migāramātā's mansion."

"Vāseṭṭhabhāradvāja" means the novice Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja. "Undergoing probation among the monks" means they were undergoing neither the probation for those formerly of other sects, nor the probation for an offence. But because their rains retreat was not yet complete, they were dwelling aspiring to monkhood. Therefore he said "aspiring to monkhood." Both of these were born in wealthy brahmin families of the northern region, each possessing forty hundred million in wealth, who had mastered the three Vedas; having heard the Vāseṭṭha Discourse in the Majjhima Nikāya they went for refuge; having heard the Tevijja Discourse they went forth, and at this time they were undergoing probation aspiring to monkhood. "Walks up and down in the open air" means on the eastern side of the mansion that extended from north to south, in the shade of the mansion, resplendent with the six-coloured Buddha-rays running about in the sky like a golden festooned post a hundred cubits in height being drawn by mechanical ropes, he walks up and down back and forth.

113. "They followed him walking up and down" means having raised joined palms, with bodies bent down, conforming to him, they walked up and down. "He addressed Vāseṭṭha" means he was the wiser of the two and knew what should be taken up and what should be answered; therefore he addressed him. "You are indeed" (tumhe khvattha) means "you indeed are" (tumhe kho attha). "Brahmins by birth" (brāhmaṇajaccā) means of brahmin descent. "Of brahmin lineage" (brāhmaṇakulīnā) means of recognised clan among brahmins, accomplished in family. "From a brahmin family" (brāhmaṇakulā) means from a brahmin family; the meaning is having abandoned a brahmin family accomplished in wealth and so on. "Do not revile" means they do not revile with the tenfold basis of reviling. "Do not abuse" means they do not abuse with various kinds of contemptuous talk - this is the meaning. Thus the Blessed One asks while already knowing "The brahmins revile and abuse these novices." Why? "These, not asked by me, will not speak first; when it is not spoken about, the discussion will not arise" - for the purpose of initiating the discussion. "Truly" (taggha) is an indeclinable particle used in a definitive statement; what is meant is "Definitively indeed, venerable sir, the brahmins revile us and abuse us." "Befitting themselves" (attarūpāya) means befitting their own nature. "Complete" (paripuṇṇāya) means filled up by heaping on terms and phrases according to their preference again and again. "Not incomplete" (no aparipuṇṇāya) means not broken off in the middle, proceeding without interruption.

But why do the brahmins revile these novices? Because of being without support. For these novices were sons of the foremost brahmins, who had mastered the three Vedas, well-known and esteemed among the brahmins of Jambudīpa; because of their going forth, other sons of brahmins went forth. Then the brahmins, thinking "We have become without support," because of this lack of support, having seen them at the village gate or inside the village, reviled them by saying such things as "You have

broken the brahmin tradition, you wander about behind the shaveling ascetic, greedy for flavours" and so on that have come in the canonical text, as well as "The brahmin alone is the superior class" and so on. The novices, even when those were reviling them, without generating irritation or resentment, merely when asked by the Blessed One, reported "Truly, venerable sir, the brahmins revile us and abuse us." Then the Blessed One, asking about the manner of reviling, asks "In what way, then, do they revile you?" They, explaining, said beginning with "The brahmins, venerable sir."

Therein, "the superior class" means they show that in the context of declaring birth, clan, and so on, the brahmin alone is superior. "Other classes are inferior" means they say the other three classes are inferior, low. "Fair" (sukko) means white. "Dark" (kaṇho) means black. "Are purified" means they are purified in the context of declaring birth, clan, and so on. "Sons of Brahmā" means sons of the Great Brahmā. "Legitimate sons, born from his mouth" means having dwelt at his breast, they came forth from his mouth; or "legitimate sons" means having been placed at his breast, they were nurtured there. "Born of Brahmā" (brahmajā) means arisen from Brahmā. "Created by Brahmā" (brahmanimmitā) means fashioned by Brahmā. "Heirs of Brahmā" (brahmadāyādā) means heirs of Brahmā. "You have gone over to an inferior class" (hīnamattha vaṇṇaṃ ajjhupagatā) means you have gone over to an inferior class. "Shavelings, petty ascetics" - they say this disparaging and showing disgust, not with reference to merely being shaven-headed and merely being ascetics. "Menials" (ibbhe) means householders. "Dark ones" (kaṇhe) means black ones. "Kinsmen" (bandhu) means those who have become relatives of Māra, partisans of Māra. "Offspring of his feet" (pādāpacce) means those who have become the offspring of the feet of the Great Brahmā; the intention is born from his feet.

114. "Truly, Vāseṭṭha, the brahmins, not remembering the ancient, said thus" - here "vo" is merely a particle, or it is the genitive case; the meaning is "your brahmins." "The ancient" means the ancient, primordial lineage of conduct relating to the origin of the world. "Not remembering" means not remembering. This is what is meant: certainly, Vāseṭṭha, the brahmins, not recollecting and not knowing the ancient origin of the world, speak thus. "But are seen" and so on was said for the purpose of breaking their view. Therein, "brahmin women" means brahmin women who have been brought into the family by way of marriage from the bride's side and marriage from the groom's side for the purpose of obtaining sons are seen. Those same women at a later time become menstruating; the meaning is that their menses have arisen. "Pregnant" means those in whom an embryo has arisen. "Giving birth" means giving birth to sons and daughters. "Nursing" means women giving mother's milk to children. "Being womb-born" means being born through the vagina of brahmin women. "Said thus" means they speak thus. How? "The brahmin alone is the superior class, etc. heirs of Brahmā." But if that were a truthful statement of theirs, the womb of brahmin women would be the breast of the Great Brahmā, the vagina of brahmin women would be the mouth of the Great Brahmā; but this should not be seen thus. Therefore he said "They misrepresent Brahmā" and so on.

Commentary on the Purification of the Four Castes

By this much, having spoken this silencing argument - "Let them not be able to say 'We dwelt at the breast of the Great Brahmā and came forth from his mouth'" - then, for the purpose of showing that all four classes are purified only by undertaking and

practising wholesome mental states, he said "There are, Vāsetṭha, these four classes" and so on. "Reckoned as unwholesome" means reckoned as "unwholesome," or having become a portion of the unwholesome. This same method applies everywhere. "Not befitting the noble ones" means unable to attain the state of noble ones. "Dark" means naturally black. "Having dark results" means their result too is dark, meaning suffering. "Among the nobles too, those" means among the noble class too, those. "A certain" means in a certain one. This same method applies everywhere.

"Bright" means white by the state of being free from mental defilements. "Having bright results" means their result too is bright, meaning happiness.

116. "Both mixed together occurring" means occurring having become mixed together in both. In which both? In dark and bright phenomena, both blamed by the wise and praised by the wise. "Whatever the brahmins say here thus" means here, even though the brahmins are occurring in these dark and bright phenomena, whatever they thus say "The brahmin alone is the superior class" and so on. "The wise do not allow that of theirs" means those who are wise in the world, they do not give thanks, they do not praise - this is the meaning. What is the reason for this? In the passage beginning with "For, Vāsetṭha, of these," this is the meaning in brief. As to what was said "do not allow," if one asks why? Because whoever among these four classes is a monk, a Worthy One, etc. one completely liberated through final knowledge, he is declared the foremost among them, and they are not of such a kind. Therefore the wise do not allow that of theirs.

And here, in the terms beginning with "Worthy One," he is a Worthy One by reasons such as being far from mental defilements. One who has eliminated the mental corruptions because of the elimination of the mental corruptions. The seven trainees and good worldlings are said to be dwelling the dwelling of the holy life. But this one is one who has completed the dwelling, thus "one who has lived the holy life." One who has done what was to be done means that through the four paths, what was to be done beginning with full understanding in regard to the four truths has been done by him. One who has laid down the burden means that the burden of mental defilements and the burden of aggregates have been laid down by him. "Laid down" means removed. A good welfare, or one's own welfare is one's own welfare; one who has attained his own welfare by this means is "one who has attained his own welfare." The fetter of becoming is called craving; that has been completely destroyed by him, thus "one who has completely destroyed the fetter of becoming." "One completely liberated through final knowledge" means liberated having known rightly, by cause, by reason. "Among people" means among these people; the meaning is in this world. "Both in this present life and in the future life" means in this individual existence and in the next individual existence.

117. "Without interval" means without distinction, the meaning is similar to one's own family. "Vassals" means those wielding power over them. "Humbleness" means the older ones show humbleness. The younger ones perform paying respect and so on. Therein, "doing the proper duties" means befitting action such as performing the respective duties.

118. "Settled" means firmly attached, standing unshakeably. But for whom does such faith exist? For a stream-enterer. For he, being one of settled faith, even when his head is being cut off with a sword, does not say that the Buddha is not the Buddha, or that the Teaching is not the Teaching, or that the Community is not the Community. He is one of established faith, like Sūrambaṭṭha.

It is said that he, having heard the Teacher's proclamation of the Teaching, having become a stream-enterer, went home. Then Māra, having created a form of the Buddha adorned with the thirty-two excellent marks, having stood at his house door, sent a message saying "The Teacher has come." Sūrambaṭṭha thought "I have just now come having heard the Teaching in the presence of the Teacher; what could this be?" Having approached, having paid homage with the perception of the Teacher, he stood there. Māra said - "Ambaṭṭha, what was spoken to you by me - 'matter is impermanent, etc. consciousness is impermanent' - that was badly spoken. For it was said thus by me without consideration. Therefore you should take it that 'matter is permanent, etc. consciousness is permanent.'" He thought - "It is impossible that Buddhas would speak anything without consideration and without having directly known it. Surely this is Māra who has come for the purpose of generating doubt in me." Thereupon he said to him "You are Māra." He was unable to speak a lie. He acknowledges "Yes, I am Māra." "Why have you come?" He said: for the purpose of shaking your faith. "Dark one, Evil One, you just stand alone; even a hundred, even a thousand, even a hundred thousand Māras such as you are unable to shake my faith. Faith that has come through the path is indeed firm, unshakeable like Sineru established upon the rock-earth. What are you doing here?" - he snapped his fingers. He, being unable to stand, disappeared right there. With reference to such faith, this was said "settled."

"Rooted, established" means because the root of the path has arisen, it is established by that root of the path. "Firm" means solid. "Unshakeable" means like a well-planted gate-post, unable to be shaken by anyone. "It is proper for him to say" means it is fitting for that noble disciple to say this. How? "I am the Blessed One's son, legitimate" and so on. For he is the Blessed One's son because, in dependence on the Blessed One, he is born on the noble plane. He is legitimate, born from his mouth, because by the power of the sound of the Teaching that came forth from the mouth after dwelling at the breast, he is established in the paths and fruits. Born of the Teaching, created by the Teaching, because of being born from the noble Teaching and because of being fashioned by the noble Teaching. Heir to the Teaching, because he deserves the inheritance of the nine supramundane teachings. "What is the reason for this" means: having said "I am the Blessed One's son" and then said "born of the Teaching, created by the Teaching" - if one asks why? Now, showing its meaning, he said beginning with "for this, of the Truth-finder" and so on. Therein, "the body of the Teaching, and also" - why is the Truth-finder called "the body of the Teaching"? For the Truth-finder, having reflected in his heart upon the three Canons of the Buddha's teaching, brought them forth by speech. Therefore his body, being made of the Teaching, is the Teaching itself. Thus, the Teaching is his body - hence "the body of the Teaching." Because of being the body of the Teaching, he is also the body of Brahmā. For the Teaching is called "Brahmā" in the sense of being the foremost. "Become the Teaching" means one whose intrinsic nature is the Teaching. Because of being become the Teaching, he is also become Brahmā.

119. Having thus far shown the doctrine that cuts down the claim of superiority, now in order to show the very same doctrine that cuts down the claim of superiority by yet another method, he said beginning with "There comes a time, Vāseṭṭha." Therein, the discussion on the contraction and expansion of the universe has been explained in detail in the Brahmajāla. "Come to this state of being" means they come to this state, to human existence. "Here they dwell, mind-made" means they, even though being reborn here in the human world, having become spontaneously born, are born by mind alone - thus they are mind-made. Just as in the Brahma world, here too rapture itself accomplishes the function of nutriment for them - thus they are feeding on rapture. By this very method, self-luminous and so on should also be understood.

Commentary on the Manifestation of the Essence of the Earth

120. "There was one mass of water" means the entire world-circle had become one mass of water only. "Darkness" means gloom. "Blinding darkness" means a thick darkness that produces blindness by preventing the arising of eye-consciousness. "Spread" means it was established and extended all around. "Of hot milk" means of hot milk. "Endowed with colour" means endowed with colour. For its colour was similar to the kaṇikāra flower. "Endowed with fragrance" means endowed with fragrance; it wafted divine fragrance. "Endowed with flavour" means endowed with flavour; it is as if infused with divine nutritive essence. "Bee's honey" means honey made by small bees. "Pure" means faultless, free from flies and their eggs. "Of greedy nature" means of greedy intrinsic nature. Even in the immediately preceding cosmic cycle he was greedy indeed. "Hey" - he said, having become astonished. "What might this be" means its colour is agreeable and its odour too, but what might its flavour be like - this is the meaning. He in whom greed had arisen there tasted the savoury earth with his finger, having taken it with his finger he placed it on the tip of his tongue.

"It pleased him" means as soon as it was placed on the tip of the tongue, having pervaded seven thousand taste conductors, it remains agreeable. "And craving entered into him" means craving arose in him there.

Commentary on the Manifestation of the Moon, Sun, and So On

121. "They began to consume it by breaking it into lumps" means having made morsels, having cut it into lump after lump, they began to consume it. "The moon and sun" means the moon and the sun. "Appeared" means they became manifest.

But which of them appeared first, which dwells where, what is the measure of which, which is above, which goes swiftly, how many are their courses, how do they move, and in how many places do they make light? Both appear together. The sun is perceived first. For when the self-luminosity of those beings had disappeared, there was darkness. They, frightened and trembling, thought "It would indeed be a good thing if light were to appear." Then the orb of the sun arose, generating valour in the public. Therefore its name was "sun." When that had made light during the day and had set, there was darkness again. They thought "It would indeed be a good thing if another light were to arise." Then, as if knowing their desire, the disc of the moon arose. Therefore its name was "moon."

Of those, the moon dwells inside a jewel mansion. That is fenced outside with silver. Both were cool indeed. The sun dwells inside a golden mansion. That exterior is fenced with crystal. Both are hot indeed.

In measure, the moon is straight across forty-nine yojanas. In circumference, one hundred and fifty yojanas less three yojanas. The sun is straight across fifty yojanas, in circumference one hundred and fifty yojanas.

The moon is below, the sun is above, and between them there is one yojana. From the lower edge of the moon to the upper edge of the sun there is a hundred yojanas.

The moon goes slowly in a straight course, and swiftly across. On both sides the constellation-stars go. The moon approaches each constellation like a cow approaching a calf. But the constellations do not abandon their own place. The straight course of the sun is swift, its transverse course is slow. He, from the Observance day of the dark fortnight, on the first day of the lunar fortnight, goes leaving behind the disc of the moon by a hundred thousand yojanas. Then the moon appears like a line. On the second day of the fortnight a hundred thousand - thus up to the Observance day, leaving behind a hundred thousand by a hundred thousand, he goes. Then the moon, having gradually waxed, becomes full on the Observance day. Again on the first day of the lunar fortnight, having run a hundred thousand yojanas, he catches up. On the second day a hundred thousand - thus up to the Observance day, having run a hundred thousand by a hundred thousand, he catches up. Then the moon, having gradually waned, on the Observance day is not seen at all. Having placed the moon below, the sun is above. Like a small vessel by a large dish, the disc of the moon is covered. Like the shadow of a house at midday, the shadow of the moon is not seen. He, when his shadow is not seen, like a lamp during the day for those standing far away, is himself also not seen.

"How many paths do they have?" Here, there are three paths: the goat path, the elephant path, and the cattle path. Therein, water is repulsive to goats, but agreeable to noble elephants. For cattle, it is comfortable due to the evenness of cold and heat. Therefore, at whatever time the moon and sun ascend the goat path, then the rain god does not rain even a single drop. When they ascend the elephant path, then the sky pours forth as if broken open. When they ascend the cattle path, then evenness of season comes about. The moon and sun go out from Sineru for six months, and wander within for six months. For they wander near Sineru in the month of Āsāḷha. Thereupon, having gone out for two months, wandering outside, they go through the middle in the first month of Kattika. Thereupon, having gone towards the world-circle, having wandered near the world-circle for three months, having gone out again, having gone through the middle in the month of Citra, thereupon having advanced towards Sineru for two months, they again wander near Sineru in Āsāḷha.

In how many places do they make light? All at once they make light in three continents. How? For in this continent, the time of sunrise is midday in Pubbavideha, the time of setting in Uttarakuru, and the middle watch of the night in Aparagoyāna. In Pubbavideha, the time of rising is midday in Uttarakuru, the time of setting in Aparagoyāna, and here the middle watch of the night. In Uttarakuru, the time of rising

is midday in Aparagoyāna, here the time of setting, and in Pubbavideha the middle watch of the night. In the continent of Aparagoyāna, the time of rising is midday here, the time of setting in Pubbavideha, and the middle watch of the night in Uttarakuru.

"The constellations and stars" means the constellations beginning with Kattikā and also the remaining star forms appeared together with the moon and sun. "Night and day" means thereupon, from the setting of the sun until the break of dawn is night, from the break of dawn until the setting of the sun is day - thus night and day became discernible. Then fifteen nights make a fortnight, two fortnights make a month - thus months and fortnights became discernible. Then four months make a season, three seasons make a year - thus seasons and years became discernible.

122. "And difference in beauty" means the state of fading of beauty. "Due to their arrogance about beauty" means due to arrogance that had arisen referring to their beauty. "For those of the nature of conceit and arrogance" means for those whose intrinsic nature of arrogance was arising again and again. "Of the savoury earth" means of the earth that had obtained the name "savoury" due to being accomplished in flavour. "They lamented" means they spoke out in sympathy. "Oh the flavour" means alas, our sweet flavour has disappeared. "The primordial expression" means the talk of the lineage of the origin of the world. "They follow" means they go after.

Commentary on the Manifestation of Ground Mushrooms and So On

123. "Just so it appeared" means having become such, it arose, and it arose like a layer of dry mud inside a reservoir when the water has been cut off.

124. "Creeper" means a certain sweet-flavoured auspicious creeper. "Bamboo shoot" means a tube-like plant. "Alas, we had it" means the sweet-flavoured creeper was indeed ours. "Alas, it has left us" means that has now disappeared from us.

125. "Ripening without cultivation" means arisen on a piece of ground without any cultivation. "Without husk" means free from the powder of the inner rind. "Without chaff" means free from chaff. "Fragrant" means it wafted divine fragrance. "With grain as its fruit" means it bore only very pure, white rice-grain as its fruit. "Ripe and regrown" means the place from which it was taken in the evening was ripe by morning, having grown again; the place from which it was taken, being just as it was in its natural ripened state, was not apparent. "No cutting off was apparent" means having been unharvested, it appeared completely undiminished.

Commentary on the Manifestation of Female and Male Characteristics and So On

126. "And in a woman" means she who was formerly a woman in the time of being human, the female organ appeared in her; formerly in a man, the male organ. For a woman obtaining the state of masculinity obtains it by gradually fulfilling the conditions for masculinity. A man obtaining the state of femininity obtains it in dependence on sexual misconduct. At that time, however, by nature the female organ appeared in a woman, and the male organ in a man. "As they gazed upon" means of those gazing upon, of those looking at. "Fever" means the fever of lust. "Ashes" means ashes. "Being led away" means being conducted away.

127. "Not authorized" means that throwing dust and so on was authorized as "not according to the Teaching." "That is now authorized" means that is now authorized as "according to the Teaching"; they go about taking it as "according to the Teaching." For thus in certain provinces, women making a dispute say "Why do you speak? You who did not even obtain so much as a lump of cow-dung." "Gulping down" means the state of being indulged in. "Stored" means having made into storage. "The breaking off became apparent" means the cut place, having become deficient, became apparent. "In clumps" means at each place, like sheaves bound together, having become bush upon bush.

128. "Establish boundaries" means we should establish a boundary. "Yatra hi nāma" means "whoever indeed." "They struck with the hand" means they struck with the hand one who did not accept the word after three times. "Henceforth" means having made that the starting point.

Commentary on King Mahāsammata

130. "Would criticise what should be criticised" means would make known what should be made known, would cast out what should be cast out, would remove what should be removed - this is what is said. "Who among them was a being" means who of them was a being. But who was he? Our Bodhisatta. "We shall give a share of the rice" means we, having brought a handful from each one's field, shall give you a share of rice; no work is to be done by you; you stand in the position of our chief.

131. "The expression arose" means a term, a designation, a description, a conventional expression arose. "'Khattiya, khattiya' thus the second expression" means not merely the expression alone; but they, being lords of the fields, also performed his consecration with three terms. "Delights" means makes happy, gladdens. "By the primordial" means by what is known as the highest, or by what is known as foremost - the production came about through what arose at the time of the origin of the world.

Commentary on the Brahmin Circle and So On

132. "Without embers, without smoke" means with smoke and embers gone due to the absence of anything to be eaten after cooking. "With pestles laid aside" means with pestles fallen down due to the absence of anything to be cooked after pounding. "Seeking food" means seeking rice gruel and meal by way of going for alms. "People, having seen him" means those people, having seen. "Not attaining" means not enduring, being unable. "Composing texts" means both constructing and reciting the three Vedas. "Acchanti" means they dwell; "acchenti" is also a reading. The meaning is the same. "Considered inferior" means "they hold charms, they recite charms" - this, Vāseṭṭha, was at that time considered inferior. "That is now considered foremost" means that has now become considered foremost as "they hold so many charms, they recite so many charms." "Of the circle of brahmins" means of the group of brahmins.

133. "Having accepted sexual intercourse" means having taken upon oneself sexual intercourse. "Engaged in various activities" means they engaged in well-known, risen activities such as cow-keeping, trading, and so on.

134. "Worker, worker" means by that action of fierce conduct and action of inferior conduct, they go quickly, quickly, to what is contemptible; the meaning is they perish. "Ahu kho" means "hoti kho" (there comes indeed).

135. "Censuring his own rule" means censuring his own warrior rule thus: "It is not possible to become pure merely by raising a white parasol." This same method applies everywhere. By this statement "From these four circles, Vāseṭṭha," he shows this: "There is no separate circle of ascetics as such; but because it is not possible to become pure by birth, purification comes about through one's own right practice. Therefore, from these four circles the production of the circle of ascetics comes about. These circles conform to the circle of ascetics, and in conforming they conform by the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For having come to the circle of ascetics and having fulfilled right practice, they attain purity."

Commentary on the Discussion of Misconduct and So On

136. Now, making clear the meaning that one cannot be purified merely by birth, but they are purified only through right practice, he began the teaching "A noble too, Vāseṭṭha." Therein, "because of undertaking action based on wrong view" means because of action undertaken through the power of wrong view, or because of undertaking the action of wrong view.

137. "Acting in two ways" means at one time he does wholesome, at another time unwholesome - thus one who acts in both ways. "Is one who experiences happiness and suffering" means there is no possibility of giving the result of both at one moment. But for one by whom much unwholesome has been done, and wholesome only little, he, in dependence on that wholesome, is reborn in a family of the warrior caste or in a brahmin family. Then the unwholesome action makes him blind in one eye, or humpbacked, or a cripple. He is either unworthy of the kingdom, or being thus at the time of consecration, he is unable to enjoy his wealth. Furthermore, at the time of death, like two powerful wrestlers, those two - the wholesome and unwholesome actions - are present. Among those, the unwholesome is more powerful; having warding off the wholesome, it causes rebirth in the animal realm. The wholesome action also becomes one to be experienced during the course of existence. They make him a state elephant, or a state horse, or a state bull. He experiences success. With reference to this, it was said "is one who experiences happiness and suffering."

Commentary on the Development of the Factors of Enlightenment

138. "Of the seven qualities conducive to enlightenment" means seven by way of portions beginning with "the four establishments of mindfulness," but in succession, of the thirty-seven qualities conducive to enlightenment. "Through pursuing the development" means having followed the development, having proceeded - this is the meaning. "Attains final nibbāna" means attains final nibbāna through the final extinguishment of the mental defilements. Thus the Blessed One, having presented the four castes and having set them aside, showed that only one who has eliminated the mental corruptions, who has penetrated the four truths, is the foremost among gods and humans.

140. Now, making that very meaning firm by following the utterance and vision of Brahmā who is accepted by the world, and showing it, he said beginning with "For, Vāsetṭha, of these four classes." "By Brahmā too this" and so on has been expanded in the Ambaṭṭha Sutta. Thus the Blessed One, having shown by this much of a narrative the very doctrine that cuts down the claim of superiority, having set aside the discourse, concluded the teaching with the pinnacle of arahantship. "Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja were delighted" means the novices Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja too, indeed, being joyful, being satisfied in mind, rejoiced in what the Blessed One had said, saying "Good! Good!" Attending to and reviewing this very discourse, together with the analytical knowledges they attained arahantship.

In the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, the Commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya,

the explanation of the Discourse on Knowledge of Beginnings is finished.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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