

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)

1. Commentary on the Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality
(1. Sīlakkhandhavaggaṭṭhakathā)

4. Commentary on the Discourse to Soṇadaṇḍa
(4. Soṇadaṇḍasuttavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

1.The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries

1. Commentary on the Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality

4. Explanation of the Discourse to Soṇadaṇḍa

300. Thus have I heard... etc. "Among the Aṅgas" - this is the Discourse to Soṇadaṇḍa. Herein this is the explanation of terms not previously explained. "Among the Aṅgas" - the Aṅgas are princes who are provincial rulers, who obtained this conventional expression due to the pleasingness of their limbs; their abode, though a single province, is called "Aṅgā" by conventional usage; in that Aṅgan province. "On a journey" - here too the unhurried journey and the regular journey are intended. At that time, it is said, as the Blessed One was surveying the ten-thousand-fold world system, the brahmin Soṇadaṇḍa appeared within the net of knowledge. Then the Blessed One thought: "This brahmin appears in my net of knowledge. Does he indeed have a decisive support?" - investigating, he saw. "When I have gone there, his pupils, having spoken the praise of the brahmin in twelve ways, will not allow him to come into my presence. But he, having broken their argument, having spoken my praise in twenty-nine ways, having approached me, will ask a question. He, at the conclusion of the answering of the question, will go for refuge" - having seen this, attended by five hundred monks, he set out for that country. Therefore it was said - "wandering on a journey among the Aṅgas, etc. arrived at Campā."

"On the bank of the Gaggarā pond" - not far from that city of Campā there is a pond which obtained the conventional expression "Gaggarā" because it was excavated by the chief queen named Gaggarā. On its bank, all around, there was a great campaka grove adorned with flowers of five colours beginning with blue. In that campaka grove, fragrant with the scent of flowers, the Blessed One dwelt. With reference to that, "on the bank of the Gaggarā pond" was said. "By Seniya Bimbisāra of Magadha" - here that king is "of Magadha" because of his sovereignty over the Magadhans. He is "Seniya" because of being endowed with a great army. "Bimbī" means gold. Therefore, because of having a complexion similar to the colour of pure gold, he is called "Bimbisāra."

301-302. "Having become many and united" means "groups" (saṅghā). "In each and every direction a community of theirs exists" means "having a following" (saṅghī). "Previously within the city they were without a group, having gone out they attained the state of being a group" means "having become crowds" (gaṇībhūtā). "He addressed the attendant" means: "Attendant" (khattā) is called a chief minister capable of answering questions that are asked; he addressed him. "Let them wait" means let them wait for a moment, let them not go - this is what is meant.

The Discussion of Soṇadaṇḍa's Virtues

303. "From various kingdoms" means born in various kingdoms, in different kingdoms such as Kāśi, Kosala, and so on; or those were their abodes; or they had come from there - thus "from various kingdoms"; of those from various kingdoms.

"On some business" means in that city, it is said, brahmins gather together for two kinds of business - either for the purpose of partaking in a sacrifice or for the purpose of reciting the sacred verses. And at that time there was no sacrifice in that city. But these had gathered together in the presence of Soṇadaṇḍa for the purpose of reciting the sacred verses. With reference to that it was said - "on some business." They, having heard of his going, thought - "This Soṇadaṇḍa is an eminent brahmin, and for the most part the other brahmins have gone for refuge to the ascetic Gotama; he alone has not gone. If he goes there, he will certainly be enticed by the enticing magic of the ascetic Gotama, and will go for refuge to him. Then at this one's house-gate too there will be no gathering of brahmins." Having deliberated "Come, let us create an obstacle to his going," they went there. With reference to that - "Then those brahmins" and so on was said.

Therein, "for this reason" means for this reason too. Having thus stated this reason, again - "There is no being who is not pleased when one's own praise is being spoken. Come, let us prevent his going by speaking his praise" - having thought thus, they stated the reasons beginning with "For the venerable Soṇadaṇḍa is well-born on both sides."

"On both sides" means on two sides. "On his mother's side and on his father's side" means the venerable one's mother is a brahmin woman, the mother's mother is a brahmin woman, her mother too is a brahmin woman; the father is a brahmin, the father's father is a brahmin, his father too is a brahmin - thus the venerable one is well-born on both sides, on his mother's side and on his father's side. "Of pure descent" means his maternal womb is pure - this is the meaning. "Of even-ripening digestion" - here, however, the kamma-born heat element is called "digestion."

"Up to the seventh generation of ancestors" - here, the father's father is the grandfather; the generation of the grandfather is the generation of ancestors. "Generation" is called the measure of a lifespan. But this is merely a manner of speaking. In meaning, however, the grandfather himself is the generation of ancestors. Beyond that, all the forefathers too are included by the term "grandfather" itself. Thus, up to the seventh person, he is of pure descent. Or else, they show that he is unassailed and irreproachable with respect to birth. "Unassailed" means - not assailed as "Remove this one, what is the use of him?" - thus unassailed, not cast down. "Irreproachable" means not reproached, not having previously received reviling or blame. For what reason? With respect to birth. That is to say - by such a statement as "He is of low birth" - this is the meaning.

"Wealthy" (aḍḍha) means a lord. "Of great riches" (mahaddhana) means endowed with great wealth. They show that in the venerable one's house there is abundant wealth like dust and sand on the earth, but the ascetic Gotama is poor, sustaining himself by filling his belly through almsfood. "Of great possessions" (mahābhoga) means one of great enjoyment by way of the five types of sensual pleasure. Thus, whatever quality they speak of, thinking "We shall show the Blessed One's lack of that very quality by way of its opposite," they speak.

"Handsome" (abhirūpa) means of superior form, of surpassing form compared to other human beings. "Good-looking" (dassanīya) means worthy of being seen, because even for those looking at him for a whole day he does not cause satiety.

"Pleasing" (pāsādika) because by the very seeing of him he generates confidence in the mind. "Pokkharatā" is called the state of beauty; the beauty of complexion is "beauty of complexion" (vaṇṇapokkharatā); the meaning is: endowed with that excellence of complexion. But the ancients said - "By 'pokkhara' they mean the body; 'colour' means colour itself." According to their view, colour and body together are "colour-and-body" (vaṇṇapokkharāṇi). The state of those is "beauty of complexion" (vaṇṇapokkharatā). Thus, "endowed with the highest beauty of complexion" (paramāya vaṇṇapokkharatāya) means the meaning is: with the highest pure complexion and with the excellence of bodily form. "Of Brahmā-like colour" (brahmavaṇṇī) means of the finest colour. The meaning is: endowed with the finest gold colour even among pure colours. "Of Brahmā-like appearance" (brahmavacchasī) means endowed with a body similar to the body of the Great Brahmā. "Of no small stature to behold" (akhuddāvākāso dassanāya) - they explain: "The opportunity for seeing in the venerable one's body is not small but great; all his limbs and minor limbs are indeed fair to behold, and they are indeed large."

"He has morality" (sīlamassa atthi) - thus he is "virtuous" (sīlavā). "His morality is mature, cultivated" (vuddhaṃ vaddhitaṃ sīlamassa) - thus he is "of mature virtue" (vuddhasīlī). "With mature virtue" (vuddhasīlena) means with mature, cultivated morality. "Endowed with" (samannāgata) means possessed of. This is merely a synonym for the term "of mature virtue" (vuddhasīlī). They say all this with reference to merely the five precepts.

In the passage beginning with "of good speech" (kalyāṇavāca) and so on: he whose speech is good, beautiful, with well-rounded words and phrases is "of good speech" (kalyāṇavāco). He whose conversation is good and sweet is "of good conversation" (kalyāṇavākkaraṇo). "Conversation" (vākkaraṇa) means the sound of utterance. "Urbane" (porī) because it exists formerly through the completeness of qualities. Or "urbane" (porī) because of existing formerly. "Urbane" (porī) means similar in delicacy to an urbane city woman; with that urbane speech. "Distinct" (vissatṭhāya) means unhindered, free from faults such as being hurried and slow. "Free from drooling" (anelagalāya) means devoid of drooling. For when anyone is speaking and saliva drools, or spittle flows forth, or drops of phlegm come out, his speech is called "drooling" (elagaḷa); the meaning is: the opposite of that. "Capable of making the meaning clear" (atthassa viññāpaniyā) means capable of conveying the meaning of what is spoken, having made the beginning, middle, and end clear.

"Old" means old through the decrepitude of ageing. "Aged" means one who has reached the limit of the growth of the major and minor limbs. "Elderly" means endowed with elderliness by birth. It is said to mean one long engaged for a long time. It is said to mean one long engaged for a long time. "One who has traversed the span of life" means one who has gone through a long period of time; the intention is that two or three reigns of kings have passed. "Advanced in years" means one who has reached the final stage of life; the final stage of life is the last third portion of a hundred years.

Furthermore, "old" means ancient; it is said to mean one of a family lineage continuing for a long time. "Aged" means endowed with growth in virtues such as morality and good conduct and so on. "Elderly" means endowed with greatness of wealth. "One who has traversed the span of life" means one who has entered the

path, who is accustomed to conducting himself without transgressing the limits of the brahmins' ascetic practices and observances and so on. "Advanced in years" means one who, even with the status of seniority by birth, has reached the final stage of life.

The Discussion of the Buddha's Virtues

304. "When this was said" means when this was said by those brahmins. Soṇadaṇḍa - "These brahmins speak my praise by means of birth and so on, but it is not proper for me to find pleasure in my own praise. Come, let me break their argument, inform them of the greatness of the ascetic Gotama, and bring about their going there" - having thus reflected, "if so" - he said beginning with "sirs, listen to me too." Therein, those beginning with "well-born on both sides" are virtues similar to his own virtues, they too; thinking "who am I and what are the virtues such as the achievement of birth and so on of the ascetic Gotama" - considering them to be even more superior than his own virtues, but he makes known the others absolutely for the purpose of illustrating the greatness of the Blessed One.

"We ourselves are worthy" - by thus defining, he here explains this - "If one who is great in virtues is indeed to be approached. For just as a mustard seed compared with Sineru, a cow's hoofprint compared with the great ocean, a dew-drop compared with the water in the seven great lakes is small and insignificant. Just so, compared with the virtues such as the achievement of birth and so on of the ascetic Gotama, our virtues are small and insignificant; therefore we ourselves are worthy to approach that Master Gotama for an audience."

"Having left behind a great congregation of relatives" means eighty thousand families on the mother's side, eighty thousand families on the father's side - thus having left behind one hundred and sixty thousand families, he went forth.

"Both stored in the ground and in the sky" - here, in the royal courtyard and in the park, having filled lime-plastered ponds with the seven kinds of precious things, the wealth placed on the ground is called "stored in the ground." That which was placed having filled the pinnacles of mansions and so on is called "stored in the sky." This much came by way of family succession. But on the very day of the Truth-finder's birth, four treasures arose, namely Saṅkha, Ela, Uppala, and Puṇḍarīka. Among them, Saṅkha extended one league, Ela half a yojana, Uppala three leagues, and Puṇḍarīka one yojana. In those too, whatever was taken was replenished; thus it should be understood that the Blessed One went forth having left behind abundant gold and silver.

"While still young" means while still youthful. "With jet-black hair" means with very black hair, or having become one whose hair was similar in colour to collyrium - this is the meaning. "With the blessing" means with the good fortune. "In the first stage of life" means in the first stage of the three stages of life. "Of the unwilling" means of those not wishing. The genitive case is used in the sense of disregard. "Those who have tears on their faces" are "with tearful faces"; of those with tearful faces; the meaning is "of those whose faces were wet with tears." "Of the weeping" means of those who were crying and lamenting. "Of no small stature to behold" - here it should be understood that the Blessed One's stature for beholding was indeed immeasurable.

Herein is this story - At Rājagaha, it is said, a certain brahmin, having heard that one cannot take the measure of the ascetic Gotama, at the time when the Blessed One was entering for almsfood, having taken a bamboo sixty cubits long, having stood outside the city gate, when the Blessed One arrived, having taken the bamboo, he stood nearby. The bamboo reached only up to the Blessed One's knee. On the following day, having joined two bamboos together, he stood nearby. The Blessed One too, appearing only up to the waist above the two bamboos - said "Brahmin, what are you doing?" "I am taking your measure." "Brahmin, even if you were to come having joined together bamboos standing filling the entire interior of the world-sphere, you would never be able to take my measure. For the perfections were not fulfilled by me through four incalculable periods and a hundred thousand cosmic cycles in such a way that another might take my measure. Unequalled, brahmin, the Truth-finder is immeasurable." Having said this, he spoke a verse in the Dhammapada -

"For one who venerates such ones as these, quenched, safe from every quarter;

The merit cannot be reckoned, even this much by anyone."

At the conclusion of the verse, eighty-four thousand living beings drank the Deathless.

There is yet another story - Rāhu, the lord of titans, it is said, was four thousand yojanas and eight hundred yojanas tall. The span between his arms was twelve hundred yojanas. In thickness, six hundred yojanas. The breadth of his palms and soles was three hundred yojanas. His finger-joints were fifty yojanas. The space between his eyebrows was fifty yojanas. His mouth was two hundred yojanas, three hundred yojanas deep, and three hundred yojanas in circumference. His neck was three hundred yojanas. His forehead was three hundred yojanas. His head was nine hundred yojanas. Having thought "I am tall; I shall not be able to look at the Teacher by bending down," he did not come. One day, having heard the praise of the Blessed One - he came thinking "Somehow or other I shall look at him."

Then the Blessed One, having known his disposition -having thought "In which of the four postures shall I show myself?" thought "One who is standing, even if short, appears as if tall. I shall show myself to him while lying down." Having said "Ānanda, prepare a small bed in the precincts of the perfumed chamber," he lay down there in the lion's posture. Rāhu, having come, having raised his neck, looked up at the Blessed One lying down as at a full moon in the middle of the sky. And when it was said "What is this, lord of titans?" - "I did not come thinking 'I shall not be able to look at the Blessed One by bending down.'" Not by me, lord of titans, were the perfections fulfilled with face cast down. Giving was given only with face turned upward. On that day Rāhu went for refuge. Thus the Blessed One is of no small stature to behold.

He is virtuous by the morality of fourfold purity, and that morality is noble, highest, and pure. Therefore he said - "Of noble virtue." That same is wholesome in the sense of being blameless. Therefore he said - "Of wholesome virtue." "Endowed with wholesome virtue" is a synonym for that.

"A teacher of teachers of many" means by each single proclamation of the Teaching by the Blessed One, eighty-four thousand living beings and also immeasurable gods and humans drink the deathless of the path and fruition; therefore he is a teacher of many. And he is a teacher's teacher of those disciples who are tractable.

"One who has eliminated sensual lust" - here, certainly all mental defilements of the Blessed One have been eliminated. But the brahmin does not know those. He speaks of the virtue only in the area of his own knowledge. "Free from fickleness" -

"Decorating bowls, decorating robes, decorating lodgings, or of this foul body, etc. embellishing, thoroughly embellishing" - he is devoid of the fickleness thus stated.

"One who puts what is not evil first" means he goes about having put in front the nine supramundane states which are not evil. "For the brahmin people" means for the brahmin people consisting of Sāriputta, Moggallāna, Mahākassapa, and others; and he is the one honoured by this people. For this people goes about having put the ascetic Gotama in front - this is the meaning. Furthermore, "one who puts what is not evil first" means evil is not his putting in front, he does not go about having put evil in front, he does not desire evil - this is the meaning. Of whom? Of the brahmin people. It is said that he is unopposed even to the brahmin people who are opposed to himself, being one who desires only their welfare and happiness.

"From foreign countries" means from other countries. "From foreign regions" means from other regions. "Come to ask questions" means warrior-class wise men and others, as well as gods, brahmās, serpents, gandhabbas, and others - "Having prepared questions, we shall ask" - thus they come. Therein, some, having observed either a fault in the question or their own inability to receive the answer, without asking, sit down in silence. Some ask. For some, the Blessed One, having generated enthusiasm for the question, answers. Thus the doubts of all of them, like waves of the great ocean having reached the shore, having reached the Blessed One, are broken.

"One who says 'Come, welcome'" means among gods, humans, those gone forth, and householders, to each one who has come to his presence - He says thus "Come, welcome" - this is the meaning. "Kindly" - therein, what is softness of speech? He is endowed with the softness of speech stated by the method beginning with "whatever speech is gentle, pleasant to the ear" and so on; the meaning is one of soft words. "Friendly" means skilled in hospitality; to the four assemblies who come again and again - By the method beginning with "Is it bearable for you, monks, is it endurable?" as if appeasing all the weariness of the journey, he is one who first makes pleasant talk - this is the meaning. "Not frowning" means just as some, having reached an assembly, become stiff-faced and contracted-faced, he is not like that; rather, upon seeing the assembly, his face-lotus opens like a lotus at the touch of the rays of the young sun, and becomes resplendent like the full moon. "Open-faced" means just as some, as if with faces turned down, say nothing to the assembly that has arrived, being of exceedingly rare talk, he is not of such a kind. But the ascetic Gotama is one of easy talk. For those who come again and again to his presence -The regret "Why have we come here?" does not arise; but having heard the Teaching, they are only delighted - this he shows. "One who speaks first" means when speaking, he speaks first of all; and that indeed he speaks suited to the time, suited to the measure, based upon meaning only, not pointless talk.

"Not in that village or" means wherever, it is said, the Blessed One dwells, there influential deities take up protection, and in dependence on that, no misfortune befalls human beings; for it is dust-goblins and the like that harass human beings, and they depart far away through the power of those deities. Furthermore, through the power of the Blessed One's friendliness too, non-human spirits do not harass human beings.

Among "has a following" and so on, "has a following" means he has a monastic community that is to be instructed or that was established by himself. "Has a group" means he has such a group. Or this is a synonym for the preceding term itself. "Teacher of a group" means the teacher of the group by way of training them in conduct. "Of the various founders of sects" means of the many founders of sects. "In one way or another" means by this or that reason, even by a mere reason such as being a naked ascetic and so on. "Arises" means approaches from all sides, increases.

"They are our guests" means they are our visitors, newcomers, guests - this is the meaning. "I learn" means I know. "Of immeasurable praise" means of praise that cannot be measured even by an omniscient one of such a kind - he shows "how much more by one such as me." And this too has been 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."

305. But having heard this talk of praise of the Teacher, those brahmins thought - as the brahmin Soṇadaṇḍa speaks in praise of the ascetic Gotama, that Master Gotama is of superior virtues; yet our teacher, while knowing his virtues, has endured for too long; come, let us conform to him - and they conformed. Therefore, when this was said, "those brahmins" and so on was stated. Therein, "it would be fitting" means it would be proper. "Even carrying provisions": puṭosa is called provisions for a journey; the meaning is that it would be proper to approach even having taken those. "Puṭaṃsena" is also a reading; its meaning is: a puṭa on the shoulder is puṭaṃsa; with that puṭaṃsa. For it means "even by one carrying a container of provisions on the shoulder."

Explanation of Soṇadaṇḍa's Reflection

306-308. "Tirovanasaṇḍagatassa" means of one who had gone inside the jungle thicket, the meaning is of one who had entered the interior of the monastery. "Añjaliṃ paṇāmetvā" means these were those siding with both factions; they thought thus - "If those of wrong view accuse us - 'Why did you pay homage to the ascetic Gotama?' To them - 'Does merely making a salutation with joined palms constitute homage?' - thus we shall say. If those of right view accuse us - 'Why did you not pay homage to the Blessed One?' 'Does homage only consist of striking the ground with one's head? Is not the act of salutation with joined palms also homage?' - thus we shall say." "Nāmagotta" means those who, saying "Master Gotama, I am the son of so-and-so, named Datta, named Mitta, I have come here," announce their name. Those who, saying "Master Gotama, I am named Vāseṭṭha, named Kaccāna, I have come here," announce their clan. These, it is said, were poor, aged sons of good

family who acted thus thinking "We shall become well-known in the midst of the assembly by means of our name and clan." But those who sat silent were both deceitful and blindly foolish. Therein, the deceitful ones - "Even one who engages in one or two friendly conversations becomes intimate, and when there is intimacy it is not proper not to give one or two almsfood" - thus freeing themselves from that, they sit in silence. The blindly foolish, through sheer ignorance, like a lump of clay thrown down, sit silent anywhere whatsoever.

Explanation of the Description of a Brahmin

309-310. "Having known with his mind the reflection in the mind" - the Blessed One - reflecting "This brahmin, from the time of his arrival, is seated with face cast down, with body stiffened, thinking of what, what indeed is he thinking?" - knew his mind with his own mind. Therefore it was said - "having known with his mind the reflection in the mind." "Is vexed" means falls into vexation. "Having surveyed the assembly" - by the Blessed One's asking a question concerning his own doctrine, like one who was drowning in water, having been lifted up and placed on dry ground, having become one whose body and mind were fully calmed, for the purpose of winning over the assembly, by the very perception of his view, as if saying "May the venerable sirs bear in mind my words," having surveyed the assembly, he said this to the Blessed One.

311-313. "Among those who hold up the sacrificial ladle" means the first or second among the brahmins who take up the sacrificial ladle for the purpose of performing the sacrifice. The ancients say "among those who receive the great sacrifice being given by means of the sacrificial ladle." Thus the brahmin answered the question properly in accordance with his own doctrine. But the Blessed One, for the purpose of showing the highest brahmin in particular - said beginning with "but of these." "They said this" means if a brahmin accomplished in birth, beauty, and sacred texts is not a brahmin, then who now in the world will be a brahmin? Having thought "This Soṇadaṇḍa removes us; come, let us reject his argument," they said this. "Apavādāti" means rejects. "Anupakkhandati" means enters into. This - "If you, out of confidence, wish to go for refuge to the ascetic Gotama, go; do not break the brahmin's doctrine" - they said with this intention.

314. "He said this" means when these brahmins were thus crying out all at once, having thought "this discussion will not reach its conclusion, well then, having made them silent, let me speak with Soṇadaṇḍa alone" - he said the utterance beginning with "this, if indeed you."

315-316. "With reason" means with cause. "Completely equal" means, setting aside partial equality, equal by the state of equality, equal in every way - this is the meaning. "I know his mother and father" - would he not know the mother and father of his sister's son? He speaks with reference to the illumination of the lineage. "Might even speak falsehood" means he might speak falsehood that destroys welfare. "What will beauty do?" means when there is no inner virtue, what will it do? What will be able to protect his brahmin status? - this is the meaning. And furthermore, there might be - "It accomplishes the brahmin status of one established in natural morality" - even thus, morality alone will accomplish it; for indeed when that is absent, there

was no brahmin status - thus beauty and the rest are mere confusion. But having heard this, those brahmins - "The teacher has spoken the intrinsic nature of things; we grumbled without reason" - became silent.

Explanation of the Discussion of Morality and Wisdom

317. Then the Blessed One thought: "The question has been stated by the brahmin; but will he be able to stand firm here or not?" For the purpose of investigating him - he said beginning with "But of these, brahmin." "Cleansed by morality" means purified by morality. "Where there is morality, there is wisdom" means in whatever person there is morality, there too is wisdom; how can there be wisdom in one who is immoral? Or in one devoid of wisdom, in a fool, in an idiot, how can there be morality? "Morality and wisdom" means morality and wisdom together constitute morality and wisdom. "Wisdom" means wisdom itself. "So it is, brahmin": the Blessed One said this approving the brahmin's words. Therein, "wisdom cleansed by morality" means cleansed by the morality of fourfold purity. But how does one cleanse wisdom by morality? A worldling whose morality has been unbroken for sixty or eighty years, even at the time of death, having destroyed all mental defilements, having cleansed wisdom by morality, attains arahantship. Like the great elder of sixty rains retreats at the Kandarasāla residential cell. It is said that when the elder, having lain down on his deathbed, was groaning due to severe pain, King Tissa the Great, having gone thinking "I shall see the elder," standing at the door of the residential cell, having heard that sound, asked - "Whose sound is this?" It is the sound of the elder's groaning. "In sixty years of going forth, not even the mere discernment of feeling has been accomplished; I shall not now pay homage to him." Having turned back, he went to pay homage to the Great Bodhi Tree. Then the young attendant said to the elder - "Why, venerable sir, do you put us to shame? Even the faithful king, having become remorseful, has gone saying 'I shall not pay homage.'" "Why, friend?" "Having heard the sound of your groaning." Having said "Then give me the opportunity," having suppressed the pain, having attained arahantship, he gave a signal to the young monk - "Go, friend, now have the king pay homage to us." The young monk, having gone - said "Now, it is said, pay homage to the elder." The king, paying homage to the elder by the crocodile prostration - said "I do not pay homage to the master's arahantship, but rather I pay homage only to the morality guarded while standing on the plane of the worldlings." Thus morality cleanses wisdom. But for one who has no restraint by morality within, yet through the capacity of one who understands upon brief indication, at the conclusion of a four-line verse, having cleansed morality by wisdom, attains arahantship together with the analytical knowledges. This is called cleansing morality by wisdom. Just as the minister Santati.

318. Why did he say "But what is that, brahmin?" The Blessed One, it is said, thought - "Brahmins in the brahmin tradition declare the five precepts as 'morality,' and the wisdom of learning the three Vedas as 'wisdom.' They do not know any higher distinction. What if I were to show the brahmin path morality, fruition morality, path wisdom, and fruition wisdom, which constitute a higher distinction, and conclude the teaching with the pinnacle of arahantship." Then, asking him from the wish to speak - he said "But what, brahmin, is that morality? What is that wisdom?" Then the brahmin - "The question was answered by me in accordance with my own doctrine. But the ascetic Gotama, having turned back, asks me again; would I now be able to satisfy his

mind and answer, or not? If I were unable, even the esteem that had first arisen for me would be destroyed. But for one who is unable, there is no fault in the statement 'I am not able.'" Thus, having turned back and placing the burden upon the Blessed One himself, he said beginning with "This much is the limit for us." Therein, "this much is the limit" means this much, namely the statement about morality and wisdom, is the highest for us; we are ones for whom this much is the limit; beyond this we do not know the meaning of this statement - this is the meaning.

Then the Blessed One, in order to show him morality and wisdom beginning from the arising of the Truth-finder who is the root of morality and wisdom - said beginning with "Here, brahmin, a Truth-finder." Its meaning should be understood in the manner stated in the Sāmaññaphala. But this is the distinction: here the threefold morality - was assigned simply as morality thus "this too is his morality"; the four meditative absorptions beginning with the first meditative absorption are in meaning accomplishment in wisdom. But without assigning them under the heading of wisdom, having shown them merely as the proximate cause of insight wisdom, wisdom was assigned beginning from insight wisdom.

The Discussion of Soṇadaṇḍa's Declaration of Lay Followership

319-322. The meaning of the term "for the morrow" (svātanāya) should be understood in the manner stated under "for today" (ajjatanāya). "On account of that this assembly would despise me" means on account of that, because of having risen from the seat upon seeing you from afar, that assembly would despise me - "This Soṇadaṇḍa, standing in the last stage of life, is old, while Gotama is young, a youth; he is not even equal to his grandson, yet he rises from his seat for one who has not even attained the status of his grandson" - thus they would despise him. "May Master Gotama accept that as my rising from my seat" means there is no such thing as my not rising out of disrespect, but I will not rise out of fear of the destruction of my wealth; that is proper for both you and me to know. Therefore "may Master Gotama accept this as my rising from my seat" - it is said that a cheat equal to this one is rare to find; but there is no such thing as disrespect towards the Blessed One on his part; therefore, out of fear of the destruction of his wealth, he speaks thus by means of scheming. The same method applies to the other terms as well. In "with a talk on the Teaching" and so on: by a talk on the Teaching suitable to that moment, having pointed out the benefit pertaining to the present life and the future life, having instigated them to take up wholesome mental states, having caused them to grasp them. Therein, having inspired him, having made him enthusiastic, and having gladdened him by that enthusiasm and by other virtues existing in him, having rained a shower of the jewel of the Teaching, he rose from his seat and departed. But the brahmin, due to his own deceitfulness, even when the Blessed One had rained such a shower of the Teaching, was unable to produce a distinction. Only all the earlier and later discourse served for his attainment of Nibbāna in the future and was conducive to forming impressions.

Thus in the Sumaṅgalavilāsini, the Commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya,

the explanation of the Discourse to Soṇadaṇḍa is completed.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

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PDF Creation Date: 16 August 2026

HOW TO CITE

PaliVerse (2026). Commentaries. The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries. 1. The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries. 1. Commentary on the Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality. 4. Commentary on the Discourse to Soṇadaṇḍa Retrieved from paliverse.org

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