

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses (1. Dīgha Nikāya)
2. The Collection of the Middle Length Discourses (2. Majjhima Nikāya)
3. The Chapter on Pāthika (3. Pāthikavaggaṇṇapāṭi)
4. The Discourse on Knowledge of Beginnings (4. Aggaññasuttaṃ)
[DN 27, PTS 3.80–3.98]



PaliVerse

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses

3. The Chapter on Pāthika

4. The Discourse on Primordial Origins

Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja

111. Thus have I heard - On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvattṥi in the Eastern Park, in Migāramāṭā's mansion. Now at that time Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were undergoing probation among the monks, aspiring to monkhood. Then the Blessed One, in the evening, having emerged from seclusion, having descended from the mansion, was walking up and down in the open air in the shade of the mansion.

112. Vāseṭṭha saw the Blessed One, in the evening, having emerged from seclusion, having descended from the mansion, walking up and down in the open air in the shade of the mansion. Having seen him, he addressed Bhāradvāja - "This, friend Bhāradvāja, the Blessed One, in the evening, having emerged from seclusion, having descended from the mansion, is walking up and down in the open air in the shade of the mansion. Come, friend Bhāradvāja, let us go to where the Blessed One is; perhaps we might receive a talk on the Teaching from the Blessed One for hearing." "Yes, friend," Bhāradvāja assented to Vāseṭṭha.

113. Then Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja approached the Blessed One; having approached, having paid respect to the Blessed One, they followed the Blessed One as he walked up and down. Then the Blessed One addressed Vāseṭṭha - "You are, Vāseṭṭha, brahmins by birth, of brahmin lineage, gone forth from a brahmin family from home into homelessness. Do the brahmins, Vāseṭṭha, not revile you, not abuse you?" "Truly, venerable sir, the brahmins revile us, abuse us with abuse befitting themselves, complete, not incomplete." "In what way, then, Vāseṭṭha, do the brahmins revile you, abuse you with abuse befitting themselves, complete, not incomplete?" "The brahmins, venerable sir, speak thus - 'The brahmin alone is the superior class, other classes are inferior. The brahmin alone is the fair class, other classes are dark. Only brahmins are purified, not non-brahmins. Only brahmins are the sons of Brahmā, born of his breast, born from his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā. You have abandoned the superior class and have gone over to an inferior class, that is to say, to these shavelings, these petty ascetics, these menials, these dark ones, these offspring of Brahmā's feet. This is not good, this is not proper, that you have abandoned the superior class and have gone over to an inferior class, that is to say, to these shavelings, these petty ascetics, these menials, these dark ones, these offspring of Brahmā's feet.' Thus indeed, venerable sir, the brahmins revile us, abuse us with abuse befitting themselves, complete, not incomplete."

114. "Truly, Vāseṭṭha, the brahmins, not remembering the ancient, said thus - 'The brahmin alone is the superior class, other classes are inferior; the brahmin alone is the fair class, other classes are dark; only brahmins are purified, not non-brahmins; only brahmins are the sons of Brahmā, legitimate sons, born of his breast, born from his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.' But, Vāseṭṭha, brahmin women of the brahmins are seen menstruating, pregnant, giving birth, and nursing. And those brahmins, being womb-born, said thus - 'The brahmin alone is the superior class, other classes are inferior; the brahmin alone is the fair class, other classes are dark; only brahmins are purified, not non-brahmins; only brahmins are the sons of Brahmā, legitimate sons, born of his breast, born from his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.' They misrepresent Brahmā, and they speak falsely, and they generate much demerit.

The Purity of the Four Castes

115. "There are, Vāseṭṭha, these four classes -nobles, brahmins, merchants, and workers. A noble too, Vāseṭṭha, here is one who kills living beings, takes what is not given, engages in sexual misconduct, speaks falsehood, speaks divisive speech, speaks harsh speech, engages in idle chatter, is covetous, has a mind of ill-will, and holds wrong view. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, these mental states that are unwholesome and reckoned as unwholesome, blameworthy and reckoned as blameworthy, not to be cultivated and reckoned as not to be cultivated, not befitting the noble ones and reckoned as not befitting the noble ones, dark and having dark results, censured by the wise - these are seen in some nobles here. A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha, etc. A worker too, Vāseṭṭha, here is one who kills living beings, takes what is not given, engages in sexual misconduct, speaks falsehood, speaks divisive speech, speaks harsh speech, engages in idle chatter, is covetous, has a mind of ill-will, and holds wrong view. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, these mental states that are unwholesome and reckoned as unwholesome, etc. dark and having dark results, censured by the wise; these are seen in some workers here.

"A noble too, Vāseṭṭha, here is one who abstains from killing living beings, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abstains from lying, abstains from divisive speech, abstains from harsh speech, abstains from idle chatter, is non-covetous, has a mind without ill-will, and holds right view. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, these mental states that are wholesome and reckoned as wholesome, blameless and reckoned as blameless, to be cultivated and reckoned as to be cultivated, befitting the noble ones and reckoned as befitting the noble ones, bright and having bright results, praised by the wise - these are seen in some nobles here. A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha, etc. A worker too, Vāseṭṭha, here is one who abstains from killing living beings, etc. is non-covetous, has a mind without ill-will, and holds right view. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, these mental states that are wholesome and reckoned as wholesome, blameless and reckoned as blameless, to be cultivated and reckoned as to be cultivated, befitting the noble ones and reckoned as befitting the noble ones, bright and having bright results, praised by the wise; these are seen in some workers here.

116. "Now, Vāseṭṭha, when among these four classes there are thus both dark and bright phenomena occurring mixed together, phenomena blamed by the wise and praised by the wise, whatever the brahmins say here thus - 'The brahmin alone is the

superior class, other classes are inferior; the brahmin alone is the fair class, other classes are dark; only brahmins are purified, not non-brahmins; only brahmins are the sons of Brahmā, legitimate sons, born of his breast, born from his mouth, born of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.' The wise do not allow that of theirs. What is the reason for this? For, Vāseṭṭha, whoever among these four classes is a monk, a Worthy One, one who has eliminated the mental corruptions, one who has lived the holy life, one who has done what had to be done, one who has laid down the burden, one who has attained his own welfare, one who has utterly eliminated the fetters of existence, one completely liberated through final knowledge, he is declared the foremost among them by the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

117. "By this method too, Vāseṭṭha, it should be known how the Teaching alone is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

"King Pasenadi of Kosala knows, Vāseṭṭha - 'The ascetic Gotama has gone forth from a Sakyan family without interval.' But, Vāseṭṭha, the Sakyans are vassals of King Pasenadi of Kosala. The Sakyans, Vāseṭṭha, show humbleness, paying respect, rising up in respect, salutation with joined palms, and doing the proper duties to King Pasenadi of Kosala. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, whatever humbleness, paying respect, rising up in respect, salutation with joined palms, and doing the proper duties the Sakyans show to King Pasenadi of Kosala, that King Pasenadi of Kosala shows to the Truth-finder - humbleness, paying respect, rising up in respect, salutation with joined palms, and doing the proper duties - not thinking 'The ascetic Gotama is well-born, I am ill-born. The ascetic Gotama is powerful, I am weak. The ascetic Gotama is pleasing, I am ugly. The ascetic Gotama is influential, I am of little influence.' Rather, honouring the Teaching, respecting the Teaching, revering the Teaching, venerating the Teaching, paying homage to the Teaching, thus King Pasenadi of Kosala shows humbleness to the Truth-finder, paying respect, rising up in respect, salutation with joined palms, and doing the proper duties. By this method too, Vāseṭṭha, it should be known how the Teaching alone is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

118. "You are, Vāseṭṭha, of various births, of various names, of various clans, of various families, gone forth from home into homelessness. 'Who are you?' - when asked, 'We are ascetics, disciples of the Sakyan' - you acknowledge. Now, Vāseṭṭha, for one whose faith in the Truth-finder is settled, rooted, established, firm, unshakeable by any ascetic or brahmin or god or Māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world, it is proper for him to say - 'I am the Blessed One's son, legitimate, born from his mouth, born of the Teaching, created by the Teaching, heir to the Teaching.' What is the reason for this? For this, Vāseṭṭha, is a designation for the Truth-finder: 'the body of the Teaching', and also 'the body of Brahmā', and also 'become the Teaching', and also 'become Brahmā'.

119. "There comes a time, Vāseṭṭha, when, after a very long period has passed, this world contracts. When the world is contracting, beings for the most part are reborn in the Ābhassara Brahma world. There they dwell, mind-made, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, moving through the air, remaining in glory, and they continue thus for a very long time.

"There comes a time, Vāseṭṭha, when, after a very long period has passed, this world expands. When the world is expanding, beings for the most part, having passed away from the realm of radiant gods, come to this state of being. Here they dwell, mind-made, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, moving through the air, remaining in glory, and they continue thus for a very long time.

The Manifestation of the Savoury Earth

120. "Now at that time, Vāseṭṭha, there was one mass of water, and there was darkness, blinding darkness. The moon and sun were not discernible, the constellations and stars were not discernible, night and day were not discernible, months and fortnights were not discernible, seasons and years were not discernible, female and male were not discernible; beings were reckoned just as beings. Then, Vāseṭṭha, for those beings, at some time or other, after a very long period had passed, savoury earth spread over the water; just as a skin forms on the surface of hot milk as it cools, just so it appeared. It was endowed with colour, endowed with fragrance, endowed with flavour; just as fine ghee or fine butter, such was its colour. Just as pure bee's honey, such was its sweetness. Then, Vāseṭṭha, a certain being of greedy nature - 'Hey, what might this be?' - tasted the savoury earth with his finger. As he tasted the savoury earth with his finger, it pleased him, and craving entered into him. Other beings too, Vāseṭṭha, following that being's example, tasted the savoury earth with their fingers. As they tasted the savoury earth with their fingers, it pleased them, and craving entered into them.

The Manifestation of the Moon, Sun, and So On

121. "Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings began to consume the savoury earth, breaking it into lumps with their hands. When, Vāseṭṭha, those beings began to consume the savoury earth, breaking it into lumps with their hands. Then the self-luminosity of those beings disappeared. When the self-luminosity had disappeared, the moon and sun appeared. When the moon and sun had appeared, the constellations and stars appeared. When the constellations and stars had appeared, night and day became discernible. When night and day became discernible, months and fortnights became discernible. When months and fortnights became discernible, seasons and years became discernible. To this extent indeed, Vāseṭṭha, this world again expanded.

122. "Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings, consuming the savoury earth, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. In whatever way, Vāseṭṭha, those beings, consuming the savoury earth, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration, in that way roughness entered into the bodies of those beings, and difference in beauty became apparent. Some beings were beautiful, some beings were ugly. There, those beings who were beautiful despised the ugly beings - 'We are more beautiful than these, these are uglier than us.' Due to their arrogance about beauty, for those of the nature of conceit and arrogance, the savoury earth disappeared. When the savoury earth had disappeared, they gathered together. Having gathered together, they lamented - 'Oh the flavour, oh the flavour!' Even now, human beings, having obtained something delicious, say thus - 'Oh the flavour, oh the flavour!' They follow that same ancient primordial expression, but they do not understand its meaning.

The Manifestation of Earth-Mushrooms

123. "Then, Vāseṭṭha, when the savoury earth had disappeared for those beings, a ground-mushroom appeared. Just as a mushroom, just so it appeared. It was endowed with colour, endowed with fragrance, endowed with flavour; just as fine ghee or fine butter, such was its colour. Just as pure bee's honey, such was its sweetness.

"Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings began to consume the ground-mushroom. They, consuming it, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. In whatever way, Vāseṭṭha, those beings, consuming the ground-mushroom, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration, in that way roughness entered exceedingly into the bodies of those beings, and difference in beauty became apparent. Some beings were beautiful, some beings were ugly. There, those beings who were beautiful despised the ugly beings - 'We are more beautiful than these, these are uglier than us.' Due to their arrogance about beauty, for those of the nature of conceit and arrogance, the ground-mushroom disappeared.

The Manifestation of Creepers

124. "When the earth-mushroom had disappeared, a creeper appeared, just as a bamboo shoot, just so it appeared. It was endowed with colour, endowed with fragrance, endowed with flavour; just as fine ghee or fine butter, such was its colour. Just as pure bee's honey, such was its sweetness.

"Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings began to consume the creeper. They, consuming it, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. In whatever way, Vāseṭṭha, those beings, consuming the creeper, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration, in that way roughness entered even more into the bodies of those beings, and difference in beauty became apparent. Some beings were beautiful, some beings were ugly. There, those beings who were beautiful despised the ugly beings - 'We are more beautiful than these, these are uglier than us.' Due to their arrogance about beauty, for those of the nature of conceit and arrogance, the creeper disappeared.

"When the creeper had disappeared, they gathered together. Having gathered together, they lamented - 'Alas, we had it, alas, the creeper has left us!' Even now, human beings, when touched by some painful phenomenon, say thus - 'Alas, we had it, alas, it has left us!' They follow that same ancient primordial expression, but they do not understand its meaning.

The Manifestation of Uncultivated Rice

125. "Then, Vāseṭṭha, when the creeper had disappeared for those beings, rice ripening without cultivation appeared, without husk, without chaff, pure, fragrant, with grain as its fruit. Whatever they brought in the evening for the evening meal, by morning it was ripe and regrown. Whatever they brought in the morning for the morning meal, by evening it was ripe and regrown; no cutting off was apparent. Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings, consuming the rice ripening without cultivation, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration.

The Manifestation of Female and Male Characteristics

126. "In whatever way, Vāsetṭha, those beings, consuming the rice ripening without cultivation, with that as their food, with that as their nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration, in that way roughness entered even more into the bodies of those beings, and difference in beauty became apparent, and in a woman the female organ appeared, and in a man the male organ. And a woman gazed upon a man for a protracted time, and a man upon a woman. As they gazed upon one another for a protracted time, lust arose, and fever entered into their bodies. They, due to that fever, engaged in sexual intercourse.

"Now, Vāsetṭha, those beings at that time who saw others engaging in sexual intercourse, some threw dust, some threw ashes, some threw cow-dung - 'Perish, impure one, perish, impure one!' 'How indeed could a being do such a thing to another being!' Even now, human beings in certain countries, when a bride is being led away, some throw dust, some throw ashes, some throw cow-dung. They follow that same ancient primordial expression, but they do not understand its meaning.

The Practice of Sexual Intercourse

127. "Now, Vāsetṭha, what was not authorized at that time is now authorized. Now, Vāsetṭha, those beings who at that time engaged in sexual intercourse, for a month or even two months they were not allowed to enter a village or a market town. When, Vāsetṭha, those beings committed that misconduct excessively for a protracted time. Then they began to build houses for the purpose of concealing that very misconduct. Then, Vāsetṭha, this occurred to a certain being of lazy nature - 'Hey, why do I trouble myself bringing rice in the evening for the evening meal and in the morning for the morning meal! What if I were to bring rice just once for both the evening and morning meals!'

"Then, Vāsetṭha, that being brought rice just once for both the evening and morning meals. Then, Vāsetṭha, a certain being approached that being; having approached, he said this to that being - 'Come, friend being, let us go to get rice.' 'Enough, friend being, I have brought rice just once for both the evening and morning meals.' Then, Vāsetṭha, that being, following that being's example, brought rice just once for two days. 'Thus too indeed, friend, is good!'

"Then, Vāsetṭha, a certain being approached that being; having approached, he said this to that being - 'Come, friend being, let us go to get rice.' 'Enough, friend being, I have brought rice just once for two days.' Then, Vāsetṭha, that being, following that being's example, brought rice just once for four days, 'Thus too indeed, friend, is good!'

"Then, Vāsetṭha, a certain being approached that being; having approached, he said this to that being - 'Come, friend being, let us go to get rice.' 'Enough, friend being, I have brought rice just once for four days.' Then, Vāsetṭha, that being, following that being's example, brought rice just once for eight days, 'Thus too indeed, friend, is good!'

"When, Vāsetṭha, those beings began to consume stored rice. Then husk enveloped the grain, chaff too enveloped the grain; what was reaped did not regrow, the breaking off became apparent, the rice plants stood in clumps.

The Division of Rice

128. "Then, Vāsetṭha, those beings assembled, and having assembled, they lamented - 'Evil indeed, friend, are the mental states that have appeared among beings. For we were formerly mind-made, feeding on rapture, self-luminous, moving through the air, remaining in glory, and we remained for a long time, for a long duration. For us, at some time or other, after a very long period had passed, savoury earth spread over the water. It was endowed with colour, endowed with fragrance, endowed with flavour. We began to consume the savoury earth, breaking it into lumps with our hands; as we began to consume the savoury earth, breaking it into lumps with our hands, our self-luminosity disappeared. When the self-luminosity had disappeared, the moon and sun appeared; when the moon and sun had appeared, the constellations and stars appeared; when the constellations and stars had appeared, night and day became discernible; when night and day became discernible, months and fortnights became discernible. When months and fortnights became discernible, seasons and years became discernible. We, consuming the savoury earth, with that as our food, with that as our nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. Due to the manifestation of those evil unwholesome mental states of ours, the savoury earth disappeared. When the savoury earth had disappeared, a ground-mushroom appeared. It was endowed with colour, endowed with fragrance, endowed with flavour. We began to consume the ground-mushroom. We, consuming it, with that as our food, with that as our nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. Due to the manifestation of those evil unwholesome mental states of ours, the ground-mushroom disappeared. When the ground-mushroom had disappeared, a creeper appeared. It was endowed with colour, endowed with fragrance, endowed with flavour. We began to consume the creeper. We, consuming it, with that as our food, with that as our nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. Due to the manifestation of those evil unwholesome mental states of ours, the creeper disappeared. When the creeper had disappeared, rice ripening without cultivation appeared, without husk, without chaff, pure, fragrant, with grain as its fruit. Whatever we brought in the evening for the evening meal, by morning it was ripe and regrown. Whatever we brought in the morning for the morning meal, by evening it was ripe and regrown. No breaking off was apparent. We, consuming the rice ripening without cultivation, with that as our food, with that as our nutriment, remained for a long time, for a long duration. Due to the manifestation of those evil unwholesome mental states of ours, husk enveloped the grain, chaff too enveloped the grain, what was reaped did not regrow, the breaking off became apparent, the rice plants stood in clumps. What if we were to divide the rice and establish boundaries!' Then, Vāsetṭha, those beings divided the rice and established boundaries.

129. Then, Vāsetṭha, a certain being of greedy nature, while guarding his own share, having taken what was not given from another's share, consumed it. They seized him, and having seized him, said this - "Evil indeed, friend being, you do, that while guarding your own share, having taken what is not given from another's share, you consume it. Do not, friend being, do such a thing again." "Yes, friend," Vāsetṭha, that

being assented to those beings. For the second time, Vāseṭṭha, that being etc. For the third time, Vāseṭṭha, that being, while guarding his own share, having taken what was not given from another's share, consumed it. They seized him, and having seized him, said this - "Evil indeed, friend being, you do, that while guarding your own share, having taken what is not given from another's share, you consume it. Do not, friend being, do such a thing again." Some struck with the hand, some struck with a clod, some struck with a stick. Henceforth, Vāseṭṭha, taking what is not given became known, reproach became known, lying became known, and taking up the stick became known.

The Great Elected King

130. "Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings assembled, and having assembled, they lamented - 'Evil indeed, friend, are the mental states that have appeared among beings, for taking what is not given will become known, reproach will become known, lying will become known, taking up the stick will become known. What if we were to select one being who would rightly criticise what should be criticised, rightly reproach what should be reproached, rightly banish what should be banished. And we shall give him a share of the rice.'

"Then, Vāseṭṭha, those beings approached the being among them who was more handsome, more fair to behold, more pleasing, and more influential, and said this to him - 'Come, friend being, rightly criticise what should be criticised, rightly reproach what should be reproached, rightly banish what should be banished. And we shall give you a share of the rice.' 'Yes, friend,' Vāseṭṭha, that being, having promised those beings, rightly criticised what should be criticised, rightly reproached what should be reproached, rightly banished what should be banished. And they gave him a share of the rice.

131. "'Approved by the great multitude', Vāseṭṭha, thus the first expression 'Mahāsammatā, Mahāsammatā' arose. 'Lord of the fields', Vāseṭṭha, thus the second expression 'khattiya, khattiya' arose. 'He delights others by the Teaching', Vāseṭṭha, thus the third expression 'rājā, rājā' arose. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, in this way the production of this circle of nobles came about through the ancient primordial expression, from those very beings, not from others. From those who were similar only, not from those who were dissimilar. By the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

The Circle of Brahmins

132. "Then, Vāseṭṭha, this occurred to some of those very beings: 'Evil indeed, friend, are the mental states that have appeared among beings, for taking what is not given will become known, reproach will become known, lying will become known, taking up the stick will become known, banishment will become known. What if we were to remove the evil unwholesome mental states.' They removed the evil unwholesome mental states. 'They remove the evil unwholesome mental states', Vāseṭṭha, thus the first expression 'brāhmaṇā, brāhmaṇā' arose. They, having built leaf huts in a forest haunt, meditate in the leaf huts, without embers, without smoke, with pestles laid aside, in the evening for the evening meal, in the morning for the morning meal, they enter villages, market towns, and royal cities seeking food. They,

having obtained food, meditate again in the leaf huts in the forest haunt. People, having seen him, said thus: 'These beings indeed, friend, having built leaf huts in a forest haunt, meditate in the leaf huts, without embers, without smoke, with pestles laid aside, in the evening for the evening meal, in the morning for the morning meal, they enter villages, market towns, and royal cities seeking food. They, having obtained food, meditate again in the leaf huts in the forest haunt.' 'They meditate', Vāseṭṭha, thus the second expression 'jhāyakā, jhāyakā' arose. Now, Vāseṭṭha, some of those very beings, not attaining that meditative absorption in the leaf huts in the forest haunt, having gone to the vicinity of villages and the vicinity of market towns, dwell composing texts. People, having seen him, said thus: 'These beings indeed, friend, not attaining that meditative absorption in the leaf huts in the forest haunt, having gone to the vicinity of villages and the vicinity of market towns, dwell composing texts; now they do not meditate.' 'Now they do not meditate', Vāseṭṭha, thus the third expression 'ajjhāyakā, ajjhāyakā' arose. Now, Vāseṭṭha, at that time it was considered inferior, but now it is considered foremost. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, in this way the production of this circle of brahmins came about through the ancient primordial expression, from those very beings, not from others, from those who were similar only, not from those who were dissimilar, by the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

The Circle of Merchants

133. "Now, Vāseṭṭha, some of those very beings, having accepted sexual intercourse, engaged in various activities. 'Having accepted sexual intercourse, engaging in various activities', Vāseṭṭha, thus the expression 'merchant, merchant' arose. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, in this way the production of this circle of merchants came about through the ancient primordial expression, from those very beings, not from others, from those who were similar only, not from those who were dissimilar, by the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

The Circle of Workers

134. "Now, Vāseṭṭha, of those very beings, those beings who remained were of fierce conduct and of inferior conduct. 'Of fierce conduct, of inferior conduct', Vāseṭṭha, thus the expression 'worker, worker' arose. Thus indeed, Vāseṭṭha, in this way the production of this circle of workers came about through the ancient primordial expression, from those very beings, not from others, from those who were similar only, not from those who were dissimilar, by the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

135. "There was indeed, Vāseṭṭha, a time when a noble too, censuring his own rule, goes forth from home into homelessness - 'I shall be an ascetic.' A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha, etc. A worker too, Vāseṭṭha, censuring his own rule, goes forth from home into homelessness - 'I shall be an ascetic.' From these four circles, Vāseṭṭha, the production of the circle of ascetics came about, from those very beings, not from others, from those who were similar only, not from those who

were dissimilar, by the Teaching alone, not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

The Discussion on Misconduct and So On

136. "A noble too, Vāseṭṭha, having practised misconduct by body, having practised misconduct by speech, having practised misconduct by mind, holding wrong view, undertaking action based on wrong view, because of undertaking action based on wrong view, upon the body's collapse at death, is reborn in a realm of misery, an unfortunate realm, a nether world, in hell. A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha, A worker too, Vāseṭṭha, An ascetic too, Vāseṭṭha, having practised misconduct by body, having practised misconduct by speech, having practised misconduct by mind, holding wrong view, undertaking action based on wrong view, because of undertaking action based on wrong view, upon the body's collapse at death, is reborn in a realm of misery, an unfortunate realm, a nether world, in hell.

"A noble too, Vāseṭṭha, having practised good conduct by body, having practised good conduct by speech, having practised good conduct by mind, having right view, undertaking action based on right view, because of undertaking action based on right view, upon the body's collapse at death, is reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world. A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha, A worker too, Vāseṭṭha, An ascetic too, Vāseṭṭha, having practised good conduct by body, having practised good conduct by speech, having practised good conduct by mind, having right view, undertaking action based on right view, because of undertaking action based on right view, upon the body's collapse at death, is reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world.

137. "A noble too, Vāseṭṭha, acting in two ways by body, acting in two ways by speech, acting in two ways by mind, holding mixed view, undertaking action based on mixed view, because of undertaking action based on mixed view, upon the body's collapse at death, is one who experiences happiness and suffering. A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha, A worker too, Vāseṭṭha, An ascetic too, Vāseṭṭha, acting in two ways by body, acting in two ways by speech, acting in two ways by mind, holding mixed view, undertaking action based on mixed view, because of undertaking action based on mixed view, upon the body's collapse at death, is one who experiences happiness and suffering.

The Development of the Factors of Enlightenment

138. "A noble too, Vāseṭṭha, restrained in body, restrained in speech, restrained in mind, through pursuing the development of the seven qualities conducive to enlightenment, attains final nibbāna in this very life. A brahmin too, Vāseṭṭha... etc. A merchant too, Vāseṭṭha... A worker too, Vāseṭṭha... An ascetic too, Vāseṭṭha, restrained in body, restrained in speech, restrained in mind, through pursuing the development of the seven qualities conducive to enlightenment, attains final nibbāna in this very life.

139. For, Vāseṭṭha, whoever among these four classes is a monk, a Worthy One, one who has eliminated the mental corruptions, one who has lived the holy life, one who has done what had to be done, one who has laid down the burden, one who has

attained his own welfare, one who has utterly eliminated the fetters of existence, one completely liberated through final knowledge, he is declared the foremost among them by the Teaching alone. Not by what is not the Teaching. For the Teaching, Vāseṭṭha, is foremost among people, both in this present life and in the future life.

140. "This verse too, Vāseṭṭha, was spoken by Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra -

'The noble is foremost among people, for those who rely on clan;
One accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, he is foremost among gods
and humans.'

"Now this verse, Vāseṭṭha, was well sung by Brahmā Sanaṅkumāra, not badly sung. Well spoken, not badly spoken. Connected with benefit, not connected with harm. It is approved by me. I too, Vāseṭṭha, speak thus -

'The noble is foremost among people, for those who rely on clan;
One accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, he is foremost among gods
and humans.'

This is what the Blessed One said. Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, delighted, rejoiced in what the Blessed One had said.

The Discourse on Primordial Origins is concluded as fourth.



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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