

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya)

21. The Guide Text (21. Peṭakopadesapāḷi)

4. The Fourth Plane Investigation of Discourses
(4. Suttavicayacatutthabhūmi)

[Pe 4, PTS 74-80]



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

21. The Guide Text

4. The Fourth Plane Investigation of Discourses

40. Therein, what is the investigation of discourses?

Therein, with wholesome mental states and unwholesome mental states, one thoroughly examines what precedes and what follows. What indeed did this discourse begin with... etc. Does it connect with those discourses together with those of similar meaning, or does it not connect?

As the Blessed One teaches the mental defilements at the beginning therein. What was taught? It should be examined whether the abandoning of those mental defilements was taught or not. If the abandoning of those mental defilements was not taught by the Blessed One, wholesome mental states should be sought where those unwholesome ones go to abandoning. If one seeking does not find. Therein, unwholesome mental states should be drawn away and investigated, the discourse conducive to defilement, if mental defilements are being drawn away. Or those that do not give, therein the noble path mental states should be examined - do mental defilements go to abandoning on those planes, or do they not go? However many mental defilements were taught. Not that many noble mental states were taught. Where mental defilements go to abandoning, therein whatever mental defilements are not connected with the opposite of noble mental states, those should be drawn away, if when being drawn away it gives connection. Therein it should be investigated thus. Two or three or more mental defilements go to abandoning by one noble path. If when investigating thus it gives connection, therein it should be examined. Either by lineage or by the handing down of the Canon, both the meaning and the non-meaning of the discourse. Or whatever discourse cannot be explained, one should not doubt the discourse. Thus, just as at the beginning there are wholesome mental states. Whatever mental defilements, those should be abandoned. Those should be examined. Either the wholesome first or the teaching first by the opposite, neither less nor more should be learned. Just as the first weeding - for which mental defilements which noble mental states were taught, are these mental defilements abandoned by these noble mental states, or are they not abandoned - this should be investigated. If when being examined they connect, they should be accepted. But if they do not connect, whatever mental defilements are without opposite, those mental defilements should not be examined. And whatever noble mental states are opposites, those noble mental states should be drawn away. For indeed noble mental states do not go to the abandoning of non-returner's mental defilements, nor do noble mental states lead to the abandoning of all mental defilements. Just as wholesome friendliness and unwholesome lust - but not by making wholesome friendliness, it arises for the abandoning of unwholesome lust - anger goes to abandoning by friendliness. Therefore both mental defilements should be examined. And whatever mental state is pointed out, whether wholesome or unwholesome, that

should be drawn away. If they connect, when being drawn away there is nothing to be examined. Either two mental defilements should be abandoned by one noble mental state, or by two noble mental states one mental defilement is abandoned.

Or when being examined thus it is fitting, therein it should be investigated or as it is fitting therein it should be investigated, as surely it is possible to explain the discourse, for indeed there should be no doubt about the discourse. Mental defilement, when noble teachings have been taught, should be examined from both sides. Indeed, whatever mental defilements have been taught and whatever noble teachings have been taught, whether by verse or by explanation, are these mental defilements abandoned by these noble teachings, or are they not abandoned? Or do these noble teachings lead to the abandoning of these mental defilements? Although unwholesome mental states go to abandoning by wholesome mental states. But not all unwholesome mental states go to abandoning by all noble teachings. Just as friendliness is wholesome and lust is unwholesome, but not having made wholesome friendliness and unwholesome lust, lust goes to abandoning by friendliness, anger goes to abandoning by friendliness. Thus having made it a mental defilement, it goes to abandoning by the discourse. Not having made it a discourse and a mental state, does it lead to the abandoning of all mental defilements. But whatever noble teaching of the discourse is the opposite of defilement, that goes to abandoning by that.

41. Therein, when wholesome is taught in a discourse or explanation, defilements are not fitting, or noble teachings; those should be drawn away by the component to be explained in the great references. Therein, when mental defilements are taught and in noble teachings, even if by that noble teaching those mental defilements go to abandoning. Therein too it should be further examined. For what reason are these mental defilements to be abandoned, for what reason are noble teachings taught? Or in whatever manner noble teachings are taught, in that manner this mental defilement is established. For there is one mental defilement, by that or noble teachings are not to be abandoned otherwise and otherwise, just as view, lust, and ignorance are to be abandoned through vision. If thus that ignorance is to be abandoned by meditative development, or the plane or phenomena are to be abandoned by meditative development. That very same higher fetter is abandoned by seeing the unconditioned, by liberation, by the signless concentration of mind, by inattention. Thus it should be examined with meaning and with phrasing. Whatever mental defilements are to be abandoned through vision, the noble teaching is expounded by the manner of vision; to be abandoned by meditative development, the noble teaching is expounded by the manner of meditative development; to be abandoned by using, the noble teaching is expounded by the manner of using; thus to be abandoned by dispelling, up to the seven mental corruptions to be done, up to otherwise. Otherwise this phenomenon is to be abandoned, by another manner the noble teaching is taught; that noble teaching should be sought otherwise. If this phenomenon is sought by one who teaches by whatever manner, that noble teaching should be sought; by that manner the mental defilement is abandoned. That should be examined therein. But if it does not fit, if indeed by that discourse the arranged discourse should be investigated. As it fits, so it should be accepted. As it does not fit, so it should not be accepted; certainly this was not spoken by the Blessed One, or was misapprehended by the venerable one; as it should be explained in the great references, expounded as it really is by the Blessed One; and whatever teaching is

expounded, wholesome and unwholesome, the condition of that teaching should be sought. For indeed a phenomenon without condition does not arise without condition. Therein, what is the manner for the search?

Therein, this should be investigated: "This phenomenon is stated as such, with cause, with condition." And that condition is threefold - soft, middling, exceeding. Therein, in a soft condition a soft phenomenon should be accepted; thus when this is so, the condition is twofold: successive condition and contiguity condition. That condition should be sought from soft to exceeding. What is the reason? Even one condition goes to learning or fulfilment by other conditions. Therein, whatever teaching is taught, the cause of that teaching should be sought by this or by reason. As the condition is by cause and by condition, the result of that teaching should be sought. As what is explained seeks striving in the foundation, that condition should be sought. For indeed an exceeding result is not of a soft phenomenon, nor is a soft phenomenon of an exceeding result; but soft fits soft, middling fits middling, exceeding fits exceeding - that should be accepted; but if it does not fit, it should not be accepted. And whatever the Blessed One begins to teach as Teaching, that very Teaching he teaches to the middle and end; as phenomena are explained at the beginning in the foundation of the discourse, that very much is the end of that discourse. For by the power of that teaching, that discourse is a verse or explanation, small or great; but as twofold, fitting or placing and teaching-placing. The form too of the teaching should be sought. And just as restraint of the five faculties was taught by the Blessed One for the purpose of subduing craving, it is just desire. He teaches as in the Cowherd Simile discourse; by other discourses too the Blessed One speaks, it is just desire; in the Majjhima Nikāya, applied thought - this is in conformity with the Blessed One's teaching - thus that teaching should be sought in other explanations too. For indeed it should not be seen in one discourse alone. What is fitting, that should be accepted.

42. Therein, what is permitted? Whatever discourse was not spoken by the Blessed One but is shown in the discourses themselves, thus it should be kept. As "spoken by such and such a one," that discourse should be investigated. Is this discourse permitted and acceptable to the Blessed One, or is it not permitted and acceptable? Is some form of discourse permitted and acceptable to the Blessed One, and is some form not permitted and acceptable? Whatever the One with Ten Powers teaches as his range without completely bringing it down, all that discourse is not permitted and acceptable to the Blessed One. There is also that disciple who knows the range of the One with Ten Powers limitedly or unlimitedly, but he does not know that power altogether, otherwise indeed by hearing; just as by the Venerable Sāriputta by whom the brahmin was exhorted, that venerable one does not have the knowledge of the diversity of faculties and powers; therefore, being concerned with persons and not knowing others and that, when there was something further to be done, he was produced, he was disparaged by the Blessed One. Just as the Venerable Mahākassapa exhorts his nephew, possessed of the immediacy condition, without lighting up his fingers by the miracle of supernormal power, whatever knowledge of all phenomena and undertakings of action according to cause and according to reason as it really is, that is found in that venerable one, by that he exhorts him; that the Blessed One does.

"Even if you were to hold ten lamps, Kassapa;
He will not see forms, for he has no eye."

And yet, just as a messenger instructs beings by the king's word, so one following the rest teaches the utterance of an unrelated person to others. A discourse that is permitted and acceptable should be accepted. What is not permitted and acceptable should not be accepted.

Therein, what is the mixing of discourses? Discourse is fivefold: conducive to defilement, conducive to habituation, conducive to seeing, conducive to development, and pertaining to one beyond training. One would accomplish one thing but teaches another, and explains the meaning of one discourse in another discourse. Or indeed one explains the meaning of a discourse in many ways. One reveals the meaning in the accomplishment of the noble Teaching. One explains the meaning of what is conducive to habituation in those conducive to seeing. One explains the meaning of the lower mental fetters in the higher ones. One explains the soft and middling faculties in discourses on the exceeding. Thus this discourse has confusion; whatever confusion there is by cause and by outcome and by fruit and by explanation and also by softness, middlingness, and exceedingness, and by meaning and by phrasing - this is called the mixing of discourses. Whatever is not confused, this is called the investigation of discourses.

Therein, this is the summary verse

Unbroken for the former ones, the condition of what is as it really is;
The outcome is the faith of habituation, permission is the mixing of discourses.

Of the Elder Mahākaccāyana

The fourth plane named the Investigation of Discourses.



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.

PDF Creation Date: 16 August 2026

HOW TO CITE

PaliVerse (2026). The Triple Canon. The Canon of Discourses. 5. The Collection of Minor Texts. 21. The Guide Text. 4. The Fourth Plane Investigation of Discourses Retrieved from paliverse.org

© 2026 The PaliVerse Project · All Rights Reserved
Centre for Study and Practice of Theravāda Buddhism
Civic Non-Profit Company registered in Greece
This PDF may be freely distributed for study and practice.

PaliVerse.org