

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
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5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya -
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07. Commentary on the Book of Stories about Ghosts
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

07. Commentary on the Book of Stories about Ghosts

4. The Great Chapter

1. Commentary on the Mango-Sugar Ghost Story

517-603. "There is a city named Vesālī of the Vajjis": this is the story of the ghost Ambasakkara. What is its origin? While the Blessed One was dwelling at Jeta's Grove, a Licchavi king named Ambasakkara, a holder of wrong views, a proponent of nihilism, exercised kingship in Vesālī. And at that time, in the city of Vesālī, near the shop of a certain merchant, there was mud; there many people, having jumped across while passing by, became wearied, and some were smeared with mire. Having seen that, the merchant, thinking "May these people not tread upon the mire," having had gosīsa sandalwood, free from foul smell, resembling the colour of a conch shell, brought, had it laid down. By nature he was virtuous, without wrath, of smooth speech, and he praised the virtues of others as they really are.

He, on one day, having hidden the lower garment of his own friend who was bathing and not looking due to carelessness, with the intention of play, having caused him distress, gave it back. But his nephew, having brought goods from another's house by theft, deposited them in his very shop. The owners of the goods, investigating, showed his nephew together with the goods, and him too, to the king. The king commanded "Cut off this one's head, but impale his nephew on a stake." The king's men did so. He, having died, arose among the terrestrial gods. Because of having made a bridge with gosīsa sandalwood, he obtained a white, divine, swift-as-thought thoroughbred horse; through speaking praise of the virtuous, a divine fragrance wafted from his body; but because of having hidden the cloth, he was naked. He, surveying the deeds done by himself in the past, following along accordingly, having seen his own nephew impaled on a stake, being urged by compassion, having mounted the swift-as-thought horse, at the time of midnight, having gone to the place where he was impaled on the stake, standing not far away, says day after day "Live, friend, life itself is better."

And at that time, King Ambasakkara, mounted upon the excellent back of an elephant, while circumambulating the city, having seen in a certain house a woman who had opened a window and was watching the royal splendour, with his mind bound in love, having given a signal to a man seated on the rear seat "Look out for this house and this woman," having gradually entered his own royal palace, sent that man - "Go, my good man, find out whether that woman has a husband or is without a husband." He, having gone, having found out that she had a husband, reported to the king. The king, thinking of a means to take possession of that woman, having had her husband summoned, said "Come, my good man, attend upon me." He, although unwilling, out of fear thinking "The king might impose the royal punishment on me who does not heed his word," having accepted the attendance upon the king, goes day after day to attend upon the king. The king too, having had food and wages given

to him, after the passing of a few days, said thus to him who had come right early to the attendance - "Go, my good man, in such and such a place there is a pond; from there bring dawn-coloured clay and red waterlilies; if you do not come back this very day, your life is forfeit." And when he had gone, he said to the gatekeeper - "Today, while the sun has not yet set, all gates are to be closed."

And that pond was at a distance of three yojanas from Vesālī; nevertheless, that man, threatened by the fear of death, with the speed of the wind, reached that pond while it was still the forenoon. Because he had heard beforehand that "That pond is occupied by non-human spirits," out of fear he goes around on all sides thinking "Is there indeed any danger here?" Having seen him, the non-human guardian of the pond, assuming a compassionate appearance, having approached in human form, said "For what purpose, good man, have you come here?" He told him that incident. He, having said "If so, take as much as you like," having shown his own divine form, disappeared.

He, having taken from there dawn-coloured clay and red waterlilies, reached the city gate while the sun had not yet set. Having seen him, the gatekeeper closed the gate while he was still crying out. He, not obtaining entrance when the gate was closed, having seen a man impaled on a stake near the gate, said "These ones closed the gate thus while I had arrived with the sun not yet set, while I was crying out. 'I have come in good time, I have no fault' - let this be known by you too" - and he made him a witness. Having heard that, he said "I am impaled on a stake, condemned, facing death; how can I be your witness? But one ghost of great supernormal power will come near me here; make him your witness." "But how is he to be seen by me?" "You just stand right here; you will see him yourself." He, standing there, having seen that ghost come in the middle watch, made him a witness. And when the night became light, when the king said "My command has been transgressed by you; therefore I shall impose the royal punishment on you," he said "Sire, your command has not been transgressed by me; while the sun had not yet set, I had come here." "Who is your witness there?" He, having pointed out the naked ghost coming to the presence of the man impaled on the stake as "the witness," when the king said "How is this to be believed by us?" said "Tonight, send with me a man who is to be trusted by you." Having heard that, the king himself, having gone there together with him and standing, when the ghost, having come there, said "Live, friend, life itself is better," questioned him in return with five verses beginning with "There is no sleeping place nor sitting for him." Now, from the beginning, the verse "There is a city named Vesālī of the Vajjis" was placed by the compilers of the recitation for the purpose of showing the connection between them -

517. There is a city named Vesālī of the Vajjis, there was a Licchavi named Ambasakkara;
Having seen a ghost outside the city, right there he questioned him, desiring to know the reason.

518. "There is no sleeping place nor sitting for him, there is no going forward nor going back;
The enjoyment of food eaten, drunk, and chewed, and clothing - even the attending to for him there is not.

519. "Those relatives, friends seen and heard of, compassionate ones who were his before;
Even to see him they now do not obtain, for his nature is abandoned by those people.
520. "There are no friends for one whose self has departed, friends abandon him having known him to be defective;
And seeing benefit they surround him, many friends there are for one whose self has risen.
521. "Deprived of all possessions, in distress, smeared with blood, body pierced through;
Clinging like a dewdrop, today or tomorrow comes the cessation of life.
522. "One such as this, having reached the utmost distress,
Impaled on a stake of the margosa tree;
Then by what reason do you say, demon,
'Live, friend, life itself is better'?"

517. Therein, "there" means in that Vesālī. "Outside the city" means existing outside the city, the connection that arose and occurred just outside the city of Vesālī. "Right there" means in the very place where he saw him. "Him" means that ghost. "Desiring to know the reason" means being desirous of the reason for the meaning of what was said as "Live, friend, life itself is better."

518. "There is no sleeping place nor sitting for him" means the sleeping place characterised by stretching out the back, and the sitting characterised by crossing the legs, do not exist for this person impaled on a stake. "There is no going forward nor going back" means even the slightest movement characterised by going forward and so on does not exist for him. "Even the attending to" means that attending to the faculties characterised by the enjoyment of food eaten, drunk, chewed, clothing and so on, even that does not exist for him. "Even the caring for" is an alternative reading; the caring for the faculties by way of enjoyment of food eaten and so on, even that does not exist for him, because life has departed. This is the meaning. Some read "even the attending to."

519. "Friends seen and heard of, compassionate ones who were his before" means those who were seen companions and also unseen companions, whose friends were compassionate ones, who were formerly of this one. "Even to see" means they are not able even to see him, let alone to live together - this is the meaning. "One whose self has departed" means one whose intrinsic nature has been abandoned. "By that people" means by those people beginning with relatives.

520. "There are no friends for one whose self has departed" means for one whose consciousness has departed, who is dead, there are indeed no friends, because the task to be done by friends for him has been surpassed. "Friends abandon him having known him to be defective" means let the dead one stand aside; having known even a living man to be defective in possessions, thinking "nothing obtainable can be taken from him," friends abandon him. "And seeing benefit they surround him" means but having seen his existing benefit, his wealth, having become speakers of pleasant

words and face-gazers, they surround him. "Many friends there are for one whose self has risen" means for one whose intrinsic nature has risen through the achievement of wealth, who is prosperous, there are many, numerous friends - this is the worldly nature, this is the meaning.

521. "Deprived of all possessions" means one whose self has declined from all articles of use and enjoyment. "In distress" means afflicted. "Smeared" means one whose body is smeared with blood. "Body pierced through" means one whose body is split open inside by the stake. "Clinging like a dewdrop" means like a dewdrop clinging to the tip of a blade of grass. "Today or tomorrow" means today or tomorrow there is the obstruction, the cessation of this man's life; beyond that it does not proceed - this is the meaning.

522. "Impaled" means bound upon, mounted upon. "On a stake of the margosa tree" means on a stake made from the wood of the margosa tree. "By what beauty" means by what reason. "Live, friend, life itself is better" means friend, man, live. Why? Because even for you who have been mounted on a stake, life here is better, more beautiful by a hundredfold, by a thousandfold, than the life of one who has passed away from here.

Thus questioned by that king, that ghost, making known his own intention -

523. "He was a blood relation of mine, I remember from a former birth;
And having seen him, compassion arose in me, O king, may this one of bad character not fall into hell.
524. "Passed away from here, this Licchavi man, to hell teeming with beings, of terrible form;
He is reborn, the doer of wrongful deeds, to great torment, painful and frightening.
525. "By many a portion of virtue this stake is better than that hell;
Exclusively painful, bitter, frightening, exclusively sharp is the hell he may fall into.
526. "And if this one, having heard my word, afflicted by suffering, should give up life;
Therefore I do not speak near him, lest the cessation of life be caused by me."

He spoke four verses.

523. Therein, "of the same blood" means of the same blood, connected by the connection of birth, a relative - this is the meaning. "In a former birth" means in a former existence. "May this one of bad character not fall into hell" means may this person of bad character not fall into hell, may he not be reborn in hell - having seen this, compassion arose in me. This is the explanation.

524. "Teeming with beings" means overflowing with beings who are evil-doers; or else, the fivefold binding, the pouring of molten copper into the mouth, the ascending of the mountain of embers, the casting into the iron cauldron, the entering into the forest of sword-leaf trees, the descending into the river Vetaraṇī, and the casting into

the great hell. Overflowing with these seven cruel tortures beginning with the fivefold binding, heaped up one upon another - this is the meaning. "Of great torment" means of great suffering, or of great torment by fire. "Painful" means undesirable. "Frightening" means fear-producing.

525. "By many a portion of virtue" means by many a share of benefit. "This very stake compared to that hell" means this very stake is better than that hell which is the place of his rebirth. For this is an instrumental expression used in the sense of separation. "Exclusively sharp" means exclusively piercing suffering, certain great suffering - this is the meaning.

526. "And having heard my word, this one" means having heard my word spoken beginning with "Passing away from here," this person, afflicted by suffering, having become as if brought to the suffering of hell by my word. "Should give up life" means he might abandon his own life. "Therefore" means for that reason. "Lest by me" means the intention is: "May the cessation of this person's life not be caused by me" - I do not speak this word near him; rather, I speak only this: "Live, friend, life itself is better."

Thus, when the ghost had made known his intention, again the king, making the opportunity to ask about the ghost's story, spoke this verse -

527. "This matter of the man has been understood, but we wish to ask you something else;
If you give us permission, we ask you, and you should not be angry."

528. "Certainly there was an acknowledgment from me then, there is no telling for one who is not devoted;
Having made me one of trustworthy speech unwillingly, ask me as you wish, as I am able to bear."

These are the verses of speech and reply between the king and the ghost.

527. Therein, "understood" means comprehended. "We wish" means we desire. "No" means our. "And should not be angry" means wrath should not be made thinking "These humans ask whatever they please."

528. "Certainly" means definitely. "Acknowledgment from me" means by means of knowledge my acknowledgment "Ask," the meaning is the giving of permission. "Then was" means it was at that time, at the first seeing. "There is no telling for one who is not devoted" means there is no speaking for one who is not devoted. For indeed one who is devoted speaks something to one who is devoted. But you at that time were not devoted towards me, and I towards you; therefore, having acknowledged, he was not desirous of speaking. But now I, for you, one of trustworthy speech unwillingly, one whose word is to be believed unwillingly, thus having made it so, for this reason. "Ask me as you wish, as I am able to bear" means ask me about that matter as you wish. But I, as I am able to bear, as it is possible for me to endure, so I shall speak in accordance with the power of my own knowledge - this is the intention.

When thus permission for questioning was given by the ghost, the king -

529. "Whatever I shall see with my eye,

All that I would believe in;
But if having seen that I should not believe,
You should perform the legal act of guidance on me, demon."

He spoke a verse. Its meaning is - Whatever I shall see with my eye, all that just so I would believe in; but having seen that, if I should not believe that statement. Demon, you should perform the act of guidance, the act of censure, on me. Or alternatively, "whatever I shall see with my eye" means I shall see whatever with my eye, because of not seeing what is not within the range of the eye. "All that I would believe in" means all of yours, whether seen, heard, or otherwise, I would believe in. For such is my confidence in you - this is the intention. But the meaning of the last phrase is as already stated.

Having heard that, the ghost -

530. "May this acknowledgment of yours be true to me, having heard the Teaching, obtain excellent confidence;
Seeking to understand, and not with a corrupted mind, whatever Teaching you have heard and also not heard;
I would tell all, as they understand." He spoke a verse. From here onwards -
531. "With a white horse, adorned, he approached near the one impaled on the stake;
This vehicle is wonderful, beautiful to behold - of what action is this the result?"
532. "In the middle of the city of Vesālī, on a muddy road there was a pit;
One day, with a gladdened mind, having taken yellow sandalwood, I placed it in the pit.
533. "Having placed our feet on this, both we and others crossed over;
This vehicle is wonderful, beautiful to behold - this is the result of that very action."
534. "Your beauty illuminates all directions, and your fragrance pervades all directions;
You have attained the supernormal power of a spirit, of great majesty, yet you are naked - of what is this the result?"
535. "Without wrath, with a mind constantly serene, I approach people with smooth words;
This is the result of that very action - my divine beauty constantly shines.
536. "Having seen the fame and renown of those established in the Teaching, I speak with a gladdened mind;
This is the result of that very action - my divine fragrance constantly pervades.
537. "While friends were bathing at the ford, having taken the cloth to dry land, I hid it;

Seeking amusement, and not with a corrupted mind, by that I am naked and difficult is my livelihood."

538. "Whoever playing does evil, they have said such is the result of action for him; But whoever does it not playing, what result of that action have they said?
539. "Those human beings with minds of corrupt thought, defiled by body and by speech;
Upon the collapse of the body, in the future life, without doubt they go to hell.
540. "But others, hoping for a fortunate world, delighting in giving, with a nature inclined to kindness;
Upon the collapse of the body, in the future life, without doubt they go to a fortunate world."

These are the verses of speech and reply of those two.

530. Therein, "may this acknowledgment of yours be true to me" means may this acknowledgment of yours, "all that I would believe in," be true for me. "Having heard the Teaching, obtain excellent confidence" means having heard the Teaching being spoken by me, may you obtain excellent confidence. "Desiring to know" means desiring to understand. "As one who understands" means as another too understanding; or "as is known" means as known by me - this is the meaning.

531. "Of what action is this the result" means "of what is this" - of what indeed is this, of what action is this the result. Or "this" is merely a particle; the explanation is: of what action. And some read "of what, for you."

532-533. "On the muddy road" means on the first one having mud. "Pit" means a hole. "One day" means one day, I. "I placed in the pit" means so that the mud would not be trodden upon, thus I placed it in that muddy hole. "Of that" means of that making of a bridge with yellow sandalwood.

536-537. "Of those established in the Teaching" means of those who practise the Teaching, of those who practise righteously. "I speak of" means I say, I praise. "With the intention of play" means with the intention of making laugh. "Not with a corrupted mind" means not with a mind corrupted towards the owner of the cloth, not with the intention of stealing, nor with the intention of destroying - this is the meaning.

538. "Not playing" means without the intention of play, with a mind corrupted by greed and so on. "What result of that action have they said" means how bitter a painful result of that evil action thus done have the wise ones said.

539-540. "With minds of corrupt thought" means thoughts corrupted by way of sensual thought and so on; by this he spoke of mental misconduct. "Defiled by body and by speech" means impure by body and speech by way of killing living beings and so on. "Hoping" means wishing, desiring.

When the ghost had thus shown by classifying the fruits of action only in brief, the king, not believing that -

541. "How could I know that certainly, this is the result of good and evil?

Or what having seen would I believe in, or who would make me believe in that?"

He spoke a verse. Therein, "how could I know that certainly" means that which by you, by way of "those human beings with minds of corrupt thought, defiled by body and by speech" and so on, and by way of "but others, hoping for a fortunate world" and so on, the result of good and evil action has been stated by classifying; "how" means for what reason could I believe certainly, without dependence on another. "Or what having seen would I believe in" means or what kind of evident example having seen would I believe in return. "Or who would make me believe in that" means or what wise man, what learned person, would make me believe in this matter; the meaning is tell that.

Having heard that, the ghost, making known that matter to him by means of reasoning -

542. "Having seen and heard, believe this: this is the result of good and evil;
If both good and evil were non-existing, would beings be fortunate or ill-fated?
543. "If mortals did not perform actions here, good and evil, in the human world;
Beings would not be fortunate or ill-fated, inferior or superior in the human world.
544. "Because mortals perform actions, good and evil, in the human world;
Therefore beings are fortunate or ill-fated, inferior or superior in the human world.
545. "Today they speak of the twofold result of actions, that which is to be
experienced as pleasure and as pain;
Those deities enjoy themselves, while fools who do not see the dyad are
cooked."

He spoke verses.

542. Therein, "having seen" means having seen even directly. "Having heard" means having heard the Teaching and by following that, drawing an inference, reasoning by analogy. "Of good and evil" means believe this: this is the pleasant and this is the painful result of wholesome and unwholesome action. "Both being non-existing" means when the twofold action, good and evil, is not present. "Would beings be fortunate or ill-fated" means "these beings have gone to a fortunate destination or gone to an unfortunate destination, or are wealthy in a fortunate state or poor in an unfortunate state" - this meaning, how could it be, how could it come about? This is the meaning.

543-544. Now he makes clear the aforesaid meaning by the pair of verses "If mortals did not perform actions here" and "Since mortals perform actions," by way of both exclusion and inference. Therein, "inferior and superior" means inferior and lofty in respect of family, appearance, health, retinue, and so on.

545. "Today they speak of the twofold result of actions" means they say, they speak of the twofold, the two kinds, now, at present, the result of actions, of good conduct and misconduct. "What is that?" - he said "that which is to be experienced as pleasure and as pain," meaning suitable for experiencing what is desirable and undesirable. "Those deities enjoy themselves" means those who by way of excellence obtain the result to be experienced as pleasant, they, having become those deities in the heavenly world, endowed with divine happiness, indulge their faculties. "Fools who do not see the dyad are cooked" means those fools who, not seeing, not believing the dyad - namely action and the fruit of action - those, devoted to evil, experiencing the result to be experienced as painful, are cooked by action in hell and so on, they reach suffering.

With reference to the question "But you who believe in the fruit of action, why do you experience such suffering?" -

546. "I have no actions done by myself, and even having given, there is no one who would dedicate to me;
Clothing, sleeping place, food and drink, by that I am naked and difficult is my livelihood."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "I have no actions done by myself" means since meritorious actions done by oneself in the past do not exist for me, are not found, by which I might now obtain clothing and so on. "And even having given, there is no one who would dedicate to me" means whoever, having given a gift to ascetics and brahmins, might dedicate, might assign to me saying "Let this be for such-and-such a ghost," such a person does not exist. "By that I am naked and difficult is my livelihood" means by that twofold reason I am now naked, without cloth, and difficult, painful is my livelihood, my means of living.

Having heard that, the king, wishing for him to obtain clothing and so on -

547. "Could there be any reason, demon, by which you might obtain clothing?
Tell me, if there is a cause, we would hear words with reason that can be believed."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "by which" means by whatever reason you might obtain, might get clothing, could there be, might there be indeed, any such reason. This is the meaning. "If there is" means if there is.

Then the ghost, explaining that reason to him -

548. "There is here a monk named Kappitaka, a meditator, virtuous, a Worthy One, liberated;
With guarded faculties, restrained in the principal monastic code, become cool, attained to the highest view.

549. "Kindly in speech, bountiful, easy to admonish, fair-faced, well-learned, with well-released speech;
A field of merit, dwelling without conflict, worthy of offerings from gods and humans.

550. "Peaceful, smokeless, free from trouble, desireless, released, free from the dart, unselfish, not crooked;
Without clinging, with all obsession eliminated, having attained the three true knowledges, brilliant.
551. "Unknown, even having seen him, he is not easily known, 'A sage' - thus the Vajjians call him;
The demons know him, without longing, of good character, wandering in the world.
552. "If you, having dedicated to me, were to give one pair or two to him;
And if those were to be accepted, you would see me clothed in garments."

He spoke verses.

548. Therein, "named Kappitaka" - he speaks with reference to the preceptor of the Venerable Elder Upāli, who was among the thousand matted-hair ascetics. "Here" means near this Vesālī. "A meditator" means a meditator through the meditative absorption of the highest fruition. "Become cool" means one who has attained the state of coolness through the appeasement of the disturbance and fever of all mental defilements. "One attained to the highest view" means one who has attained the highest fruition, right view.

549. "Kindly" means soft. "Easy to admonish" means compliant. "Well-learned in the collections" means one who has well learnt the collections. "Of well-released speech" means one of well-released speech; the meaning is one who speaks freely. "One who abides without conflict" means one who abides in friendliness.

550. "Peaceful" means one whose mental defilements are calmed. "Smokeless" means one from whom the smoke of wrong applied thought has disappeared. "Free from trouble" means free from suffering. "Desireless" means free from craving. "Released" means liberated from all existences. "Free from the dart" means one from whom the dart of lust and so on has been removed. "Unselfish" means devoid of mine-making. "Not crooked" means devoid of crookedness of body and other crookedness. "Without clinging" means one who has abandoned the clinging of mental defilements, volitional activities, and so on. "With all obsession eliminated" means one whose obsession of craving and so on is exhausted. "Brilliant" means brilliant with the unsurpassed effulgence of knowledge. "Unknown" means not well-known due to supreme fewness of wishes and concealed virtue.

551. "Even having seen him, he is not easily known" means due to his profound nature, even having seen him, he is not easily cognisable as "of such morality, of such qualities, of such wisdom." "The demons know him, without longing" means the demons know him as "a Worthy One," one without longing, free from craving. "Of good character" means possessing beautiful virtues beginning with morality.

552. "Of him" means of that great elder Kappitaka. "One pair" means one pair of garments. "Or two" means or two pairs of garments. "Having dedicated to me" means having dedicated to me. "And if those were to be accepted" means and if those pairs of garments were to be accepted by him. "Clothed in garments" means arrayed in cloth, having obtained garments, clothed in garments worn and draped - this is the

meaning.

Then the king -

553. "In which region, having gone, may we now see the ascetic dwelling,
Who today might dispel uncertainty and doubt, and the wriggings of views?"

He asked about the elder's dwelling place. Therein, "in which region" means in which region. "Yo majja" means "who today"; the syllable "ma" serves as a word-connector.

Thereupon the ghost -

554. "He is seated in the place of the monkeys' dancing, surrounded by many
deities;
He speaks a talk on the Teaching, true in name, diligent in his own hermitage."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "in the place of the monkeys' dancing" means in the place that obtained the conventional expression "Kapinaccanā" from the dancing of monkeys, of apes. "True in name" means one whose name is exact, whose name is not contrary, by virtue-names beginning with "a meditator, virtuous, a Worthy One, liberated" and so on.

When the ghost had thus spoken, the king, wishing to go at that very moment to the elder's presence -

555. "Thus I shall do, having gone now, I shall clothe the ascetic with a pair;
And if those were to be accepted, may we see you clothed in garments."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "kassāmi" means "I shall do."

Then the ghost, showing "The elder is expounding the Teaching to the deities, therefore this is not the time for approaching" -

556. "Do not approach the one gone forth at an inopportune moment, this is good
for you, Licchavi, this is not the principle;
But having approached at the proper time, right there you will see him seated
in a secret place."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "sādhū" is an indeclinable particle of requesting. "For you, Licchavi, this is not the principle" means, Licchavi king, for you kings this is not the principle, namely approaching at an improper time. "Right there" means in that very place.

When thus spoken by the ghost, the king, having accepted saying "Good," having gone to his own dwelling, again at the appropriate time, having had eight pairs of garments taken, having approached the elder, seated to one side, having exchanged friendly welcome, said "These, venerable sir, eight pairs of garments, please accept." Having heard that, the elder, for the purpose of bringing up the discussion, said "Great king, formerly you were one habitually not giving, of the nature of harassing ascetics and brahmins; how have you become one wishing to give superior garments?" Having heard that, the king, telling the reason, having reported to the elder the meeting with the ghost and everything spoken by him and by himself, having given the garments, dedicated them to the ghost. Thereby the ghost, wearing

celestial garments, decorated and prepared, mounted on a horse, appeared before the elder and the king. Having seen that, the king, delighted, greatly pleased, filled with joy and happiness, having said "Indeed the fruit of action has been seen by me directly; henceforth I shall not do evil, I shall do only meritorious deeds," made a witness of that ghost. And that ghost, having said "If you, Licchavi king, from now on, having abandoned what is not the Teaching, practise the Teaching, thus I shall be your witness and I shall come to your presence; and release quickly the man impaled on the stake from the stake; thus he, having obtained life, practising the Teaching, will be freed from suffering; and having approached the elder from time to time, listening to the Teaching, make meritorious deeds," departed.

Then the king, having paid homage to the elder, having entered the city, very quickly having assembled the Licchavi assembly, having obtained their permission, having released that man from the stake, commanded the physicians "Make this one healthy." And having approached the elder, he asked - "Could there be, venerable sir, freedom from hell for one who stands having done action leading to hell?" "There could be, great king, if one performs lofty merit, one is freed," having said thus, the elder established the king in the refuges and in the precepts. He, established therein, standing firm in the elder's exhortation, became a stream-enterer; and the man impaled on the stake, having become healthy, being struck with religious emotion, having gone forth among the monks, before long attained arahantship. Showing that matter, the compilers of the recitation -

557. "Having said 'So be it', he went there, the Licchavi surrounded by a group of slaves;
He, having approached that city, took up residence in his own dwelling.
558. "Then at the proper time, having done household duties,
Having bathed and drunk and having obtained a moment;
Having selected eight pairs of garments from the chest,
The Licchavi had them taken by a group of slaves.
559. "He, having approached that place, saw that ascetic with peaceful mind;
Withdrawn from his alms-round, returned, become cool, seated at the foot of a tree.
560. Having approached, he spoke to him, and asked about his health and comfortable abiding;
"I am a Licchavi in Vesālī, venerable sir, the Licchavis know me as Ambasakkara.
561. "These eight pairs of garments of mine are beautiful, accept them, venerable sir, I give them to you;
For that very purpose I have come here, so that I might be delighted."
562. "From afar ascetics and brahmins avoid your dwelling;
Bowls are broken in your dwelling, and double robes too they tear apart.
563. "And then others with foot-axes, headlong they throw down the ascetics;
Such harming of the gone forth, done by you, the ascetics receive.

564. "You did not give even oil with grass, you did not point out the path to one who was lost;
You yourself took the stick from the blind, such a miser, unrestrained are you;
Then by what reason, having seen what, do you share with us?"
565. "I acknowledge, venerable sir, what you say, I harassed ascetics and brahmins;
Seeking amusement, and not with a corrupted mind, yet this too was a wrong-doing of mine, venerable sir.
566. Having produced evil through play, the demon experiences suffering, one of incomplete enjoyment;
A young youth, a partaker of nakedness, what indeed could be more painful than that?
567. "Having seen that, I obtained religious emotion, venerable sir, and because of that I give this gift;
Accept, venerable sir, eight pairs of garments, may these offerings go to the spirit."
568. "Certainly giving is praised in many ways, and may the state of non-decay be yours as you give;
I accept your eight pairs of garments, may these offerings go to the spirit."
569. Then the Licchavi, having rinsed his mouth, having given eight pairs of garments to the elder;
And if those were to be accepted, you would see the demon clothed in garments.
570. He saw him anointed with the essence of sandalwood, mounted on a thoroughbred of excellent beauty;
Adorned, well-dressed in cloth, surrounded - the demon who had attained great supernormal power.
571. He, having seen that, delighted and elated, with joyful mind and of beautiful appearance;
And having seen the great result of action, visible here and now, having realised it with his own eye.
572. Having approached, he spoke to him: "I will give a gift to ascetics and brahmins;
And there is nothing of mine that should not be given, and you, demon, are very helpful to me."
573. "And you, Licchavi, gave me a portion, gifts that are not futile;
So I will make friendship with you, a non-human with a human."
574. "You are my destination and kinsman and ultimate goal, you are my friend and also my deity;
I request you, having become one with joined palms, I wish to see you again, O demon."

575. "If you will be faithless, miserly in nature, with a wrongly directed mind;
You will indeed not obtain me for seeing, and having seen you I will not even
converse with you.
576. "But if you will be one who respects the Teaching, delighting in giving, one
whose individuality is well-collected;
A well-spring for ascetics and brahmins, thus you will obtain me for seeing.
577. "And having seen you I will converse with you, venerable sir, and release this
one quickly from the stake;
From which source we made friendship, I imagine for the sake of the one
impaled on the stake.
578. "We made friendship with each other, and this one was quickly released from
the stake;
Attentively practising the teachings, he would be freed from that hell;
The action would be to be experienced elsewhere.
579. "And having approached Kappitaka, having shared with him at the proper
time;
Sit down yourself face to face and ask, he will declare this matter to you.
580. "Having approached that very monk, ask him, seeking to understand and not
with a corrupted mind;
Whatever Teaching you have heard and also not heard, all that he will declare,
as he understands."
581. Having conversed there in secret, having made a witness with the non-human;
He departed to the presence of the Licchavis, then he spoke to the assembly
seated together.
582. "Let the venerable sirs hear my one word, wishing for a boon, I shall obtain my
purpose;
A man impaled on a stake, of cruel deeds, with punishment imposed, of an
attached nature.
583. "For so long, about twenty nights, since he was impaled, he neither lives nor is
dead;
I will release him now, let the Community allow as it sees fit."
584. "Release this one and others quickly, who would speak against one acting
thus;
As you understand, so do, the Community allows as it sees fit."
585. He, having approached that place, released the one impaled on the stake very
quickly;
"Do not fear, my dear" - and he said this to him, and he provided physicians.
586. "And having approached Kappitaka, having shared with him at the proper
time;

The Licchavi, sitting down himself face to face, questioned him in the same way, desiring to know the reason.

587. "A man impaled on a stake, of cruel deeds, with punishment imposed, of an attached nature;
For so long, about twenty nights, since he was impaled, he neither lives nor is dead.
588. "He has been released, having gone, by me now, because of this demon's word, venerable sir;
Could there be any reason whatsoever, by which he might not go to hell?
589. "Tell me, venerable sir, if there is a cause, we would hear trustworthy words with reason;
There is no destruction of those actions, without experiencing them here there is no end."
590. "If he were to practise the teachings, attentively, day and night, heedful;
He would be freed from that hell, the action would be to be experienced elsewhere."
591. "This matter of the man has been understood, now have compassion on me too, venerable sir;
Instruct me, exhort me, O one of extensive wisdom, so that I might not go to hell."
592. "Go for refuge to the Buddha this very day, and to the Teaching and the Community, with a gladdened mind;
Likewise undertake the five training rules, unbroken and complete.
593. "Quickly abstain from killing living beings, avoid what is not given in the world;
Abstain from intoxicants and do not speak falsehood, and be satisfied with your own wife;
And take upon yourself this noble, wholesome, yielding happiness, endowed with the eight excellent factors.
594. "Robes and almsfood, requisites and lodgings;
Food, drink, solid food, cloth and lodgings;
Give to the upright, with a clear mind.
595. "But monks accomplished in morality, without lust, very learned;
Satisfy them with food and drink, merit always increases.
596. "And thus practising the teachings, attentively, day and night, heedful;
You would be freed from that hell, the action would be to be experienced elsewhere."
597. "This very day I go for refuge to the Buddha, and to the Teaching and the Community, with a gladdened mind;
Likewise I undertake the five training rules, unbroken and complete.

598. "I quickly abstain from killing living beings, I avoid what is not given in the world;
I abstain from intoxicants and do not speak falsehood, and I am satisfied with my own wife;
And I undertake this noble, wholesome, yielding happiness, endowed with the eight excellent factors.
599. "Robes and almsfood, requisites and lodgings;
Food, drink, solid food, cloth and lodgings.
600. "But monks accomplished in morality, without lust, very learned;
I give, I do not waver, delighted in the Buddhas' Dispensation."
601. "Such was the Licchavi Ambasakkara, a certain lay follower in Vesālī;
Faithful, gentle, and a doer of service to monks, he then attentively attended upon the Community.
602. "And the one impaled on the stake, having become healthy, independent and happy, approached the going forth;
And having come to the monk Kappitaka, the excellent one, both attained the fruits of asceticism.
603. "Such is the association with good persons, of great fruit for the wise who understand;
The one impaled on a stake touched the highest fruit, but Ambasakkara the lesser fruit."

They spoke the verses.

557-560. Therein, "took up residence" means he took abode. "Household duties" means the family duties to be done by one dwelling in a house. "Having selected" means having searched for the purpose of obtaining fine cloths. "Withdrawn" means withdrawn from the almsfood. Therefore he said "returned from his alms-round." "He said" means he said the passage beginning with "I am a Licchavi in Vesālī, venerable sir" and so on.

562-563. "They tear apart" means they destroy. "With foot-axes" means with axes reckoned as feet. "They fell" means they bring to ruin.

564. "With grass" means even with the tip of a blade of grass. "You did not point out the path to one who was lost" means you do not tell the path even to one who has lost the way, thinking "let this man wander about here and there." For this king was of a playful disposition. "You yourself take" means having snatched the stick from the hand of a blind person by force, you yourself take it. "You share" means having given some from the things to be enjoyed by yourself, you share.

565. "I acknowledge, venerable sir, what you say" shows that what you say by means of "venerable sir, your bowls are broken" and so on, that I acknowledge; all this indeed was done by me and caused to be done. "This too" means even this done with the intention of play.

566-567. "By play" means through play. "Having produced" means having accumulated. "Experiences" means undergoes. "One with incomplete enjoyments" means one whose enjoyments are not complete. To show that very incompleteness of enjoyments, "a young youth" and so on was stated. "Of nakedness" means of the state of being naked. "What indeed could be more painful than that" means what indeed by name could be more painful than that state of nakedness for that ghost. "May these go as offerings to the spirit" means may these cloth-offerings being given by me be of benefit to the ghost.

568-572. "Praised in many ways" means praised in many ways by the Buddha and others. "May it be of imperishable nature" means may it be of a nature not subject to utter elimination. "Having rinsed" means having washed the face preceded by the washing of hands and feet. "Anointed with essence of sandalwood" means anointed with sandalwood of the finest quality. "Of noble appearance" means of excellent form. "Surrounded" means surrounded by attendants of agreeable conduct. "Having attained great spirit-power" means having attained great spirit-power, divine power, and standing thus. "He said to him" means he said to him.

573. "Gave a portion" - he speaks with reference to the gift of cloth, which constitutes a portion of the four requisites. "As witness" means the state of being a witness.

574. "Was mine" means was to me. "My deity" means the explanation is: was my deity.

575-577. "Of wrongly disposed mind" means of a mind that has adopted wrong view, having abandoned the righteous practice and having adopted the unrighteous practice - this is the meaning. "From which source" means for what reason, the cause of coming to whose presence.

579. "Having shared" means having made a sharing of gifts. "Sit down yourself face to face and ask" means having sent away other men, having sat down close, ask face to face itself.

581-583. "Seated together" means seated by way of having assembled. "I shall obtain the purpose" means I shall obtain even the purpose desired by me. "With punishment imposed" means with the bodily punishment fixed. "Of an attached nature" means of a nature attached to the king. "About twenty nights" means about twenty nights have passed - this is the meaning. "That I" means that, I. "According to my wish" means according to my preference.

584. "This one and another" means this man impaled on the stake, and another upon whom the king's command has been imposed, and him too. "Release quickly" means set free swiftly. "Who would speak against one acting thus" means who indeed in this Vajji country would say "do not release" one who is performing such a righteous act; no one at all is able to say thus - this is the meaning.

585. "And the physicians" means and the physicians.

588. "The word of the spirit" means the word of the ghost; it shows that "venerable sir, by the word of that ghost I acted thus."

590. "Righteous qualities" means meritorious qualities capable of overcoming the evil action done before. "The action would be to be experienced elsewhere" means whatever in that evil action is to be experienced upon rebirth, that is called defunct kamma. But whatever is to be experienced from one life to another, that has its fruit to be experienced elsewhere in another subsequent existence, when there is continuation of the round of rebirths - this is the meaning.

593. "And this" is said by taking what is being spoken by oneself as near to that, or as evident. "Noble, endowed with the excellent eight factors" means noble in the sense of pure, the highest Observance morality endowed with, furnished with, the eight factors beginning with abstention from killing living beings. "Wholesome" means blameless. "Yielding happiness" means resulting in happiness.

595. "Merit always increases" means having done merit just once, not being satisfied thinking "this much is enough," for one who fulfils good conduct again and again, merit increases at all times; or for one who fulfils good conduct again and again, the fruit of merit reckoned as merit grows and is fulfilled ever higher and higher - this is the meaning.

597. When the Elder had spoken thus, the king, with a mind terrified by the suffering of the realms of misery, with confidence growing in the Triple Gem and in meritorious qualities, from that time onwards undertaking the refuges and the precepts, said beginning with "This very day I go for refuge to the Buddha."

601. Therein, "such" means of such a kind, of the nature as described above. "A certain lay follower in Vesālī" means having become a certain lay follower among many thousands of lay followers in Vesālī. "Faithful" and so on was said to show his different state from his former condition through dependence on a good friend. For formerly he was faithless, hard, one who reviled monks, and one who did not attend upon the Community. But now, having become faithful and gentle, he attentively attended upon the community of monks at that time. Therein, "a doer of service" means one who performs helpful deeds.

602. "Both" means the two - the one impaled on a stake and the king. "Attained the fruits of asceticism" means they attained the fruits of asceticism as is fitting. This was said to show this as is fitting: "The one impaled on a stake touched the highest fruit, but Ambasakkara the lesser fruit." Therein, "the lesser fruit" is said with reference to the fruition of stream-entry. But whatever here has not been analysed as to meaning, that is easily understood indeed.

Thus the Venerable Kappitaka, having gone to Sāvattthī to pay homage to the Teacher, reported to the Blessed One the matter spoken by the king, by the ghost, and by himself. The Teacher, making that the occasion, expounded the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived. That teaching was beneficial to the great multitude.

The commentary on the Mango-Sugar Ghost Story is concluded.

2. Commentary on the Serīsaka Ghost Story

604-657. "Listen to the demon and the merchants" - this is the Serīsaka ghost story. Since that is similar to the Serīsaka mansion story, therefore whatever should be said therein regarding the arising of the occasion and the verses, that has already been

stated in the Paramatthadīpanī, in the commentary on the Vimānavatthu; therefore it should be understood by the method stated there.

The commentary on the Serīsaka Ghost Story is concluded.

3. Commentary on the Nandaka Ghost Story

658-713. "A king named Piṅgalaka" - this is the story of the ghost Nandaka. What is its origin? After the elapse of two hundred years from the Teacher's final Nibbāna, in the Surattṭha domain there was a king named Piṅgala. His general, named Nandaka, having wrong views, with perverted vision, went about having taken up a wrong grasp by the method beginning with "there is not what is given." His daughter, a female lay follower named Uttarā, had been given in marriage to a suitable family. But Nandaka, having died, was reborn as a mansion ghost in a great banyan tree in the Vindhya forest. When he had died, Uttarā, having given to a certain elder who had eliminated the mental corruptions a water-pot filled with pure, cool, scented water, and a saucer full of cakes prepared with flour, endowed with beauty, fragrance, and flavour, dedicated it saying "May this offering be of benefit to my father." By that gift, divine drinking water and unlimited cakes appeared for him. Having seen that, he thought thus - "An evil deed indeed was done by me, in that the public was made to grasp a wrong grasp by the method beginning with 'there is not what is given.' But now King Piṅgala has gone to give exhortation to King Dhammāsoka; he, having given that to him, will come back. Come, let me dispel the view of nihilism." And before long, King Piṅgala, having given exhortation to King Dhammāsoka, while turning back, proceeded along the road.

Then that ghost created that road facing towards his own dwelling place. The king travels along that road when the midday stands still. As he goes, the road is seen in front of him, but behind him it disappears. The man going at the very rear, having seen the road disappeared, frightened, crying out with a cry of distress, having run, informed the king. Having heard that, the king, frightened, with an agitated mind, standing on the elephant's back, looking around at the four directions, having seen the banyan tree where the ghost dwelt, went towards it together with his fourfold army. Then, when the king had gradually reached that place, the ghost, adorned with all ornaments, having approached the king, having exchanged friendly welcome, had cakes and drinking water given. The king, together with his retinue, having bathed, having eaten the cakes, having drunk the drinking water, with the fatigue of the journey allayed, asked the ghost by the method beginning with "Are you a deity or a gandhabba?" The ghost, having told his own story from the beginning, having freed the king from wrong vision, established him in the refuges and in the precepts. To show that meaning, the compilers of the recitation -

658. "A king named Piṅgalaka was the lord of the Surattṭha people;
Having gone to attend upon the Moriyas, he returned again to Surattṭha.

659. "In the hot midday time, the king approached the mire;
He saw a delightful path, that sandy waste of the ghosts.

660. The king addressed the charioteer -

"This path is delightful, secure, safe, and sheltering;

By this path, charioteer, let us go, near to the Suratt̥tha people from here.'

661. By that the Soratt̥tha king set out, with his fourfold army;
A frightened man said this to the Soratt̥tha king.
662. "We have entered upon a wrong path, terrifying, hair-raising;
The path is seen in front, but behind it is not seen.
663. "We have entered upon a wrong path, near the men of Yama;
A non-human odour blows, a severe sound is heard."
664. Agitated, the Soratt̥tha king said this to the charioteer:
"We have entered upon a wrong path, terrifying, hair-raising;
The path is seen in front, but behind it is not seen.
665. "We have entered upon a wrong path, near the men of Yama;
A non-human odour blows, a severe sound is heard."
666. Having climbed up onto the elephant's back, looking around at the four
directions;
He saw a delightful banyan tree, a tree endowed with shade;
Similar in colour to a blue cloud, resembling the splendour of a cloud's hue.
667. The king addressed the charioteer, "What is this that appears so lofty;
Resembling the colour of a dark cloud, shining with the splendour of a cloud's
hue?"
668. "That, great king, is a banyan tree, a tree accomplished in shade;
Resembling the colour of a dark cloud, shining with the splendour of a cloud's
hue.
669. By that the Soratt̥tha king set out, towards where that lofty one appears;
Resembling the colour of a dark cloud, shining with the splendour of a cloud's
hue.
670. Having descended from the elephant's back, the king approached the tree;
He sat down at the root of the tree, together with his ministers and retinue;
He saw a drinking vessel full of water, and delightful cakes.
671. And a man with a divine appearance, adorned with all ornaments;
Having approached the king, said this to the Soratt̥tha king.
672. "Welcome to you, great king, and also your coming is not unwelcome;
Let your majesty drink the drinking water, eat the cakes, O tamer of enemies."
673. Having drunk the water, the king, together with his ministers and retinue;
Having eaten the cakes and drunk, the Soratt̥tha king said this.
674. "Are you a deity, a gandhabba, or Sakka, the first of givers?
Not knowing you, we ask, how may we know you?"

675. "I am not a god nor a gandhabba, nor Sakka, the first of givers;
I am a ghost, great king, come here from Suratt̥ha."
676. "Of what morality, of what conduct, were you before in Suratt̥ha;
By what holy life of yours, is this power yours?"
677. "Listen to that, great king, tamer of enemies, increaser of the realm;
The ministers and councillors, and the brahmin chaplain.
678. "In Suratt̥ha I, Sire, was a person evil-minded;
Having wrong view and immoral, miserly, abusive.
679. "I hindered many people who were giving and doing meritorious deeds;
I was one who created obstacles for others who were giving.
680. "There is no result of giving, how can there be fruit of self-control?
There is no such thing as a teacher, who will tame the untamed?
681. "Beings are all equal, whence is respect for elders?
There is no power or energy, whence is industrious effort?
682. "There is no such thing as the fruit of giving, it does not purify one who is
hostile;
What is to be obtained a mortal obtains, born of fate and transformation.
683. "There is no mother, father, brother, there is no world beyond this;
There is not what is given, there is not what is offered, what is well-deposited
is not found.
684. "Even one who would kill a person, who cuts off another's head;
No one kills anyone, among the openings between the seven.
685. "For the soul is unbreakable and indivisible, octagonal and spherical all round;
Five hundred yojanas, who is worthy to cut the soul?
686. "Just as when a ball of string is thrown, it runs along unwinding;
Just so that soul runs along unwinding.
687. "Just as having left from a village, one enters another village;
Just so that soul enters another body.
688. "Just as having left from a house, one enters another house;
Just so that soul enters another body.
689. "Eighty-four hundred thousand great cosmic cycles indeed;
Those who are foolish and those who are wise, having spent the round of
rebirths;
Will make an end of suffering.
690. "Happiness and suffering are measured, by bushels and baskets;
The Conqueror understands all, the other generation is deluded.

691. "I was formerly of such a view, deluded, covered by delusion;
Having wrong view and immoral, miserly, abusive.
692. "Within six months, death will occur for me;
I will fall into hell, extremely painful and terrible.
693. "Rectangular, with four doors, divided into sections, measured;
Surrounded by an iron wall, covered over with iron.
694. "Its floor is made of iron, blazing, endowed with heat;
Having pervaded a hundred yojanas all around, it stands always.
695. "For a hundred thousand years, a sound is heard at that moment;
This is the measure, great king, a hundred portions of ten million years.
696. "Hundreds of thousands of crores of people are tormented in hell;
Those having wrong views and the immoral, and those who revile noble ones.
697. "There I shall experience painful feeling for a long duration;
The fruit of evil action, therefore I grieve exceedingly."
698. "Listen to that, great king, tamer of enemies, increaser of the realm;
My daughter, great king, Uttarā - may there be good fortune for you.
699. "She does good action, delighting in morality and Observance;
Restrained and generous, bountiful, free from avarice.
700. "One who does not break the training, a daughter-in-law among other families;
A female lay follower of the Sage of the Sakyans, the glorious Perfectly
Enlightened One.
701. "A monk accomplished in morality, entered the village for almsfood;
With eyes downcast, mindful, with guarded doors, well-restrained.
702. Walking successively, he went to that dwelling;
Uttarā saw him, great king - may there be good fortune for you.
703. "She gave a drinking vessel full of water, and delightful cakes;
'My father is deceased, venerable sir, may this be beneficial to him.'
704. Immediately after the offering was dedicated, the result arose;
I enjoy sensual pleasures as I desire, like King Vessavaṇa.
705. "Listen to that, great king, tamer of enemies, increaser of the realm;
Of the world with its gods, the Buddha is called the foremost;
Go for refuge to that Buddha, together with your sons and wife, O tamer of
enemies.
706. "By the eightfold path, they reach the Deathless state;
Go for refuge to that Teaching, together with your sons and wife, O tamer of
enemies.

707. "Four practising and four established in the fruit;
This is the Community, upright, concentrated in wisdom and morality;
Go for refuge to that Community, together with your sons and wife, O tamer of
enemies.
708. "Quickly abstain from killing living beings, avoid what is not given in the world;
Abstain from intoxicants and do not speak falsehood, and be satisfied with
your own wife."
709. "You are a well-wisher to me, demon, you desire my welfare, O deity;
I will do your word, you are my teacher."
710. "I go to the Buddha for refuge, and also to the unsurpassed Teaching;
And to the Community of the king of men, I go for refuge.
711. "I quickly abstain from killing living beings, I avoid what is not given in the
world;
I abstain from intoxicants and do not speak falsehood, and I am satisfied with
my own wife.
712. "I winnow in a strong wind, in a swift-flowing river;
I vomit out the evil view, delighted in the Buddhas' Dispensation.
713. "Having said this, the Soraṭṭha king, having refrained from evil views;
Having paid homage to the Blessed One, the chief one mounted his chariot."
They spoke the verses.

658-659. Therein, "a king named Piṅgalaka was the lord of the Suraṭṭha people" means that the king well-known by the name "Piṅgala" on account of having tawny eyes was the sovereign king of the Suraṭṭha country. "Of the Moriyas" means of the Moriya kings; he speaks with reference to Dhammāsoka. "He returned again to Suraṭṭha" means he came back along the road leading to Suraṭṭha, heading for the domain of Suraṭṭha. "Mud" means soft ground. "Sandy waste" means a desert road created by the ghost.

660. "Secure" means free from fear. "Auspicious" means bringing about a state of safety. "Sheltering" means free from danger. "Near to the Suraṭṭha people from here" means going by this road we are very near to the domain of Suraṭṭha.

661-662. "Soraṭṭha" means the lord of Suraṭṭha. "Of frightened appearance" means one whose nature is terrified. "Fearsome" means causing fear. "Hair-raising" means the making of the body hair stand on end through the state of being frightening.

663. "Near the men of Yama" means we are in the vicinity of ghosts. "A non-human odour blows" means the bodily odour of ghosts blows. "A severe sound is heard" means the most terrible sound of beings being subjected to torture in the individual hells is heard.

666. "Tree" means a tree which has obtained the name "pādapa" because it drinks water through root-parts similar to feet. "Accomplished in shade" means having accomplished shade. "Similar to a blue cloud in colour" means similar to a blue cloud

in colour. "Resembling the splendour of a cloud in colour" means having the form of a cloud in colour and appearing thus.

670. "A full drinking vessel" means a drinking vessel filled with drinking water.

"Cakes" means sweet-meats. "Delightful" means he saw cakes that were joy-producing, sweet, and pleasant, having filled dishes here and there and placed them.

672. "And also your coming is not unwelcome" - here "atho" is merely an indeclinable particle, or in the sense of emphasis; great king, your coming is not unwelcome, but rather it is indeed welcome - we receive you. This is the meaning. "Tamer of enemies" means one whose nature is to tame enemies.

677. "Ministers and councillors" - the explanation is: let the ministers and councillors hear the word, and let the brahmin, your chaplain, hear it too.

678. "In Suratt̥ha I" means I in the Suratt̥ha country. "Sire" means he addresses the king. "Of wrong view" means one of perverted vision through the view of nihilism. "Immoral" means devoid of morality. "Miserly" means a great miser. "Abusive" means one who reviles ascetics and brahmins.

679. "I hindered" means I prevented. "I was one who created obstacles" - the explanation is: having been one who created obstacles for those who were giving gifts and doing meritorious deeds, I hindered many people from the merit consisting of giving, for others too who were giving gifts.

680. "There is no result of giving" and so on is the showing of the manner in which he prevented. Therein, "there is no result of giving" means he obstructs the result, saying that for one who gives a gift, there is no result of that, no fruit to be attained in the future. "How can there be fruit of self-control" - but how indeed can there be fruit of morality; the intention is that it does not exist at all in any way whatsoever. "There is no such thing as a teacher" means there is no one at all who is a teacher who trains in conduct and good conduct. The intention is that beings are tamed or untamed by their very intrinsic nature. Therefore he said "who will tame the untamed?"

681. "Beings are all equal" means these beings are all mutually equal to one another; therefore there is no elder at all, whence is respect for elders? The meaning is that there is no such thing as merit from respecting elders. "There is no power" means that power, established in which beings, having exerted energy, beginning with the state of human good fortune up to arahantship, attain successes - that power of energy he rejects. "Or there is no energy, whence industriousness of man" - this is said by way of rejecting the doctrine of efficacy, thus: "These things do not proceed by human energy and human effort."

682. "There is no such thing as the fruit of giving" means there is no fruit whatsoever of giving; the relinquishment of a gift is fruitless indeed, like something deposited in ashes. This is the meaning. "It does not purify one who is hostile" - here "one who is hostile" means a person who is full of enmity, who has done evil by way of enmities, by way of killing living beings and so on - it does not purify him through the practice of giving, morality, and so on; it never makes him pure. The earlier passage "there is no result of giving" and so on should be understood as showing the manner in which he prevented himself and others from giving and so on, while "there is no such thing

as the fruit of giving" and so on shows his own wrong adherence. "Laddheyyam" means what should be obtained. But how is it to be obtained? He said "born of the transformation of destiny." This being, whether obtaining happiness or suffering, obtains it solely by way of the transformation of destiny, not because of action having been done, nor by a creator and so on. This is the intention.

683. "There is not mother, father, brother" - he speaks with reference to the absence of fruit of right practice and wrong practice towards mother and so on. "There is not a world beyond this" - from this, from this world, there is no such thing as another world; beings are annihilated right there in each place. This is the intention. "What is given" means a great gift. "What is offered" means a present of honour; he rejects both of those with reference to the absence of fruit, saying "there is not." "Well deposited" means well placed. "Is not found" means that which ascetics and brahmins call giving "a treasure that follows one" - that is not found. The intention is that for them that is merely a matter of words alone.

684. "No one kills anyone" means whatever man might kill another man, might cut off another man's head, therein in the ultimate sense no one kills anyone; because of the perforated nature of the seven classes, one merely appears to be killing. How does the blow of a knife occur? He said "among the openings between the seven." The knife passes into the gap, the opening that exists between the seven classes beginning with earth; thereby beings appear as if struck by swords and so on; but the soul, like the remaining classes too, because of its permanent intrinsic nature, is not cut. This is the intention.

685. "For the soul is unbreakable and indivisible" means this soul of beings is not to be cut and not to be broken by knives and so on, because of its permanent intrinsic nature. "Octagonal and spherical all round" means that soul is sometimes octagonal and sometimes spherical all round. "Five hundred yojanas" means having attained the state of complete isolation, it is five hundred yojanas in height. "Who is worthy to cut the soul" - he says that who indeed is worthy to cut with knives and so on the soul that is permanent and unchanging? It cannot be disturbed by anyone.

686. "A ball of string" means a ball of string made by winding. "Thrown" means thrown by way of unwinding. "It runs along unwinding" means when thrown while standing on a mountain or on the top of a tree, the thrown ball of string goes along just unwinding; when the string is exhausted, it does not go further. "Just so" means just as that ball of string goes along being unwound, and when the string is exhausted does not go further, just so that soul, unwinding the ball of individual existence for only the period stated as "eighty-four hundred thousand great cosmic cycles," runs along and proceeds; beyond that it does not proceed.

687. "Just so that soul" means just as some person, having gone out from his own dwelling village, enters another village on some business, just so that soul, having gone out from this body, enters another, a different body by the force of destiny - this is the intention. "Bondi" means body.

689. "Cullāsīti" means eighty-four. "Mahākappino" means of great cosmic cycles. Therein, having said "from one great lake, beginning with Anotatta, every hundred years removing one drop of water with the tip of a blade of kusa grass, by this

method, when that lake has been made waterless seven times, that is called one great cosmic cycle," they say "eighty-four hundred thousand such great cosmic cycles is the extent of the round of rebirths." "Those who are foolish and those who are wise" means those who are blindly foolish and those who are endowed with wisdom, all of them. "Having spent the round of rebirths" means having spent the round of rebirths, delimited by the aforesaid period of time, by way of successive rebirths. "Will make an end of suffering" means they will make the limit, the final goal of the suffering of the round of rebirths. Even the wise are not able to become pure in between, and even the foolish do not proceed beyond that - this is his view.

690. "Happiness and suffering are measured, by bushels and baskets" means the happiness and suffering of beings are, as it were, measured by bushels, baskets, and measuring vessels; because of being limited by the aforesaid delimitation of time alone, and individually for each of those various beings, those are limited, born of the transformation of destiny. "This the Conqueror understands all" means one standing on the plane of the Conqueror understands entirely, because of having transcended the round of rebirths. But this other generation, deluded, wanders about in the round of rebirths.

691. "Of such view I was before" means I was formerly one holding the aforesaid view of nihilism. "Deluded, wrapped in delusion" means deluded by the confusion that was the cause of the aforesaid view, and wrapped by the delusion conascent with it; the intention is that the seed of the wholesome was concealed.

692. Having thus shown the evil action done under the influence of the evil view that had arisen in oneself before, now showing the fruit of that which is to be experienced by oneself in the future, he said beginning with "Within six months for me."

695-697. Therein, "a hundred thousand years" means a hundred thousand of years; "having passed" is the remainder of the expression. Or this is a nominative case used in the locative sense; the meaning is "when a hundred thousand years have passed." "A sound is heard then" means when so much time has passed, at that very time, a sound is heard in that hell thus: "Here, sirs, for you who are being tormented, a period of time measuring a hundred thousand years has passed." "This is the measure, great king, a hundred portions of ten million years" means a hundred portions, a hundred shares of ten million years, great king - this is the measure, this is the delimitation of the life span of beings being tormented in hell. This is the meaning. This is what is meant - Ten tens is called a hundred, ten hundreds is called a thousand, ten ten-thousands is called a hundred thousand, a hundred hundred-thousands is called a ten million; by way of those ten millions, a hundred thousand ten-million-year periods are a hundred portions of ten-million-year periods. And that indeed should be understood by way of the year-reckoning of hell beings only, not of humans or gods. Such many hundreds of thousands of ten-million-year periods is the life span of hell beings. Therefore he said "Hundreds of thousands of crores of people are tormented in hell." But to show by way of conclusion what kind of evil causes beings to be thus tormented in the hells, it was said "Those having wrong views and the immoral, and those who revile noble ones." "Shall experience" means I shall undergo.

698-706. Having thus shown the evil fruit to be experienced by oneself in the future, now having explained the meaning asked by the king with "By what holy life of yours is this power yours?" wishing to establish him in the refuges and in the precepts, he said beginning with "Listen to that, great king." Therein, "delighting in morality and Observance" means delighting in the permanent precepts and in the Observance precepts. "Gave" means she gave. "That Teaching" means that eightfold path and the deathless state.

709-712. Thus encouraged by the ghost in the refuges and in the precepts, the king, with a gladdened mind, first praising the help done for him by that one, becoming established in the refuges and so on, having spoken three verses beginning with "well-wishing," making known the state of having relinquished the evil view formerly held by himself, spoke the verse "I scatter."

Therein, "I scatter in the great wind" means just as when a great wind is blowing, chaff, so too that evil view, demon, I scatter, I shake off in the wind of your proclamation of the Teaching. "Or in a swift-flowing river" means the intention is: or I wash away the evil view like grass, sticks, leaves, and refuse in a great river with a swift current. "I vomit out the evil view" means I cast away the evil view that has come to the forefront of my mind. Therein, he states the reason by the phrase "delighted in the Buddhas' Dispensation." Because one is certainly delighted and devoted to the Dispensation of the Buddhas, the Blessed Ones, which conveys the Deathless, therefore I vomit out that poison reckoned as wrong view - this is the explanation.

713. The concluding verse was placed by the compilers of the recitation. Therein, "the chief one" means having faced the eastern direction. "Mounted the chariot" means the king ascended his own royal chariot prepared for travel, and having ascended, by the power of the demon, on that very day having reached his own city, he entered the royal palace. He at a later time reported this incident to the monks; the monks reported it to the elders; the elders included it in the collection at the Third Council.

The commentary on the Nandaka Ghost Story is concluded.

4. Commentary on the Revatī Ghost Story

714-736. "Rise up, Revatā, of very evil character" - this is the Revatī Ghost Story. Since that is similar to the Revatī Mansion story, therefore whatever should be said therein regarding the arising of the occasion and the verses, that should be understood in the Paramatthadīpanī by the very method stated in the commentary on the Vimānavatthu. For it should be seen that although this was included in the classification of the Vimānavatthu canonical text by virtue of the young god Nandiya, it was also included in the classification of the Petavatthu canonical text as "Revatī Ghost Story" by virtue of the verse connected with Revatī.

The commentary on the Revatī Ghost Story is concluded.

5. Commentary on the Sugar-Cane Ghost Story

737-745. "This great sugar-cane grove of mine": this is the sugar-cane ghost story. What is its origin? While the Blessed One was dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, a certain man, having placed a bundle of sugar-cane on his shoulder, goes along eating

one sugar-cane. Then a certain lay follower, moral, of good character, goes closely behind him together with a young child. The child, having seen the sugar-cane, cries out "Give me!" The lay follower, having seen the child crying out, treating that man kindly, entered into conversation with him. But that man said nothing to him, and did not give even a piece of sugar-cane to the child. The lay follower, having pointed out that child, said "This child is crying very much, give him one piece of sugar-cane." Having heard that, that man, unable to bear it, having set up a hostile mind, out of disrespect threw one sugar-cane stalk behind him.

He, at a later time, having died, by the power of greed long cultivated, was reborn among the ghosts; since the fruit is similar to one's own action, a great sugar-cane grove arose, covering a place measuring eight karīsas, densely covered with sugar-canes the size of pestle-handles, of the colour of collyrium. When, out of desire to eat, as soon as he approached thinking "I shall take a sugar-cane," those sugar-canes strike him, and he, struck by them, falls down.

Then one day the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, going to Rājagaha for almsfood, on the road saw that ghost. He, having seen the elder, asked about the deed done by himself -

737. "This great sugar-cane grove of mine, arises as the fruit of merit, not trifling;
That now does not come to my enjoyment, tell me, venerable sir, of what is this the result?
738. "I am struck, I am consumed, and I strive, I endeavour to consume something;
Thus I, with strength cut off, a miserable wretch, lament - of what action is this the result?
739. "And I, vexed, fall down on the ground,
I roll about like a water creature in the heat;
And as I weep, tears flow from me,
Tell me, venerable sir, of what is this the result?
740. "Hungry, weary and thirsty, extremely parched, I find no pleasant happiness;
I ask you about this matter, venerable sir, how might I obtain the enjoyment of sugar-cane?"
741. "Before you did an action by yourself, when you were a human being in a former birth;
And I tell you this matter, having heard, understand this matter.
742. "You set out eating sugar-cane, and a man followed behind you;
And he, hoping for something from you, spoke, but you said nothing to him.
743. "And he requested from you who were not speaking, 'Please give sugar-cane' -
and he said this to you;
To him you gave sugar-cane from behind, this is the result of that action.
744. "Come now, having gone, you should take from behind, having taken, eat that as much as you like;

By that very thing you will be delighted, joyful and elated and glad."

745. "Having gone, he took from behind, having taken, he ate that as much as he liked;

By that very thing he was delighted, joyful and elated and glad."

The verses of speech and reply were spoken by the ghost and the elder.

737-738. Therein, "of what" means of what kind; the intention is "of what action." "I am afflicted" means I am vexed, I fall into vexation. Or "I am vexed" means I am obstructed, the meaning is I am especially oppressed. "I am consumed" means I am devoured; the meaning is I am cut by sugar-cane leaves as if by sharp blades similar to sword-leaves. "I strive" means I make effort to eat sugar-cane. "I endeavour" means I make an endeavour. "To enjoy" means to enjoy the sugar-cane juice, the meaning is to eat sugar-cane. "With strength cut off" means with endurance cut off, with vigour destroyed; the meaning is with power exhausted. "Destitute" means miserable. "I lament" means distressed by suffering, I wail exceedingly.

739. "Vexed" means one who is vexed, or one whose strength is destroyed. "I fall down on the ground" means being unable to stand, I fall down on the earth. "I roll about" means I revolve around. "Like a water creature" means like a fish. "In the heat" means on dry ground scorched by the heat.

740-744. "Santassito" means thoroughly trembling due to the attainment of dryness of the lips, throat, and palate. "Sātasukha" means happiness that is pleasant. "Na vinde" means I do not obtain. "Taṃ" means you. "Vijānā" means understand. "Payāto" means one who has begun to go. "Anvagacchī" means he followed. "Paccāsanto" means expecting. "Tassetam kammassā" - herein, "etaṃ" is merely a particle; the meaning is "of that action." "Piṭṭhito gaṇheyyāsi" means you should take the sugar-cane from behind oneself. "Pamodito" means greatly delighted.

745. "Having taken, he ate that as much as he liked" means by the procedure of the elder's command, having taken the sugar-cane, having eaten as he pleased, having taken a great bundle of sugar-cane, he presented it to the elder. The elder, helping him, having had him take that very bundle of sugar-cane, having gone to the Bamboo Grove, gave it to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, together with the Community of monks, having consumed it, gave thanksgiving. The ghost, with a confident mind, having paid homage, departed. Thenceforth he consumed sugar-cane comfortably.

He, at a later time, having died, arose among the Tāvātimsa gods. Now this incident of the ghost became well known in the human world. Then people, having approached the Teacher, asked about that incident. The Teacher, having spoken to them about that matter in detail, expounded the Teaching. Having heard that, the people abstained from the stain of stinginess.

The commentary on the Sugar-Cane Ghost Story is concluded.

6. Commentary on the Boy Ghost Story

746-752. "Sāvattthī is the name of the city": the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this referring to two ghosts. It is said that in Sāvattthī, two sons of the king of Kosala, pleasing, in the first stage of life, intoxicated by the vanity of youth,

having committed adultery, having died, were reborn as ghosts on the back of the moat. They lamented at night with a frightful sound. The people, having heard that, frightened and trembling, thinking "When this is done, this ill omen will be appeased," having given a great gift to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, having said "Lay followers, by the hearing of that sound there is no obstacle whatsoever for you," having explained the reason for that, in order to expound to them the Teaching -

- 746. "Sāvatthī is the name of the city, in sight of the Himalayas;
There were two princes there, sons of the king, so I have heard.
- 747. "Intoxicated by enticing things, delighting in the gratification of sensual pleasures;
Greedy for present happiness, they did not see the future.
- 748. "They, having passed away from human existence, have gone from here to the world beyond;
They here cry out unseen, for their own wrong-doing before.
- 749. "Though many worthy recipients were present, though gifts were at hand;
We were not able to make ourselves even a small protection that brings happiness.
- 750. "What could be more evil than this, that we, having passed away from the royal family,
Reborn in the sphere of ghosts, afflicted by hunger and thirst.
- 751. "Having been masters here, they become non-masters there;
They wander about from hunger and thirst, human beings raised up and brought low.
- 752. "Having known this danger, originating from the intoxication of lordship;
Having abandoned the intoxication of lordship, a man would be gone to heaven;
Upon the collapse of the body, the wise one is reborn in heaven." He spoke these verses.

746. Therein, "so I have heard" means not only what was seen by his own knowledge alone, but rather the meaning is "thus it was heard by me" by way of its being well-known in the world.

747. "Delighting in the gratification of sensual pleasures" means having the habit of rejoicing by way of gratification in the types of sensual pleasure. "Greedy for present happiness" means having become greedy and bound to the mere happiness of the present. "They did not see the future" means having abandoned misconduct and having practised good conduct, they did not think of the happiness obtainable in the future among gods and humans.

748. "They here cry out unseen" means those who were formerly princes, now ghosts, here near Sāvatthī, cry out and wail in invisible form. "What are they crying about?" - he said "their own wrong-doing before."

749. Now, in order to show the reason for their crying, having divided it by cause and by fruit, "though many were present" and so on was stated.

Therein, "though many were present" means when many worthy of offerings were existing. "When gifts were at hand" means even when gifts fit to be given belonging to oneself were standing near, were available - this is the meaning. "A small amount bringing happiness" - the explanation is: alas, we were not able to make ourselves safe and free from danger by doing even a small amount of merit bringing happiness in the future.

750. "What could be more evil than this" means what other evil, inferior thing could there be than this. "That we, having passed away from the royal family" means by which evil deed we, having passed away from the royal family, have arisen here in the sphere of ghosts, have been reborn among ghosts, and wander about afflicted by hunger and thirst - this is the meaning.

751. "Having been masters here" means here in this world, in the very place where formerly they went about as masters, there in that very place they become non-masters. "Human beings raised up and brought low" means having been masters in the time of being human, having died, brought low by the power of action, they wander about from hunger and thirst; it shows: behold the nature of the round of rebirths.

752. "Having known this danger, arising from the intoxication of lordship" means having known this danger, the fault, reckoned as rebirth in realms of misery, arisen through the power of the intoxication of supremacy, and having abandoned the intoxication of supremacy, having become devoted to merit. "A man would be gone to heaven" means he would indeed be one gone to heaven, the world of the gods.

Thus the Teacher, having related the story of those ghosts, having had the gift made by those people dedicated to those ghosts, expounded the Teaching suited to the disposition of the assembly that had arrived. That teaching was beneficial to the great multitude.

The commentary on the Boy Ghost Story is concluded.

7. Commentary on the Prince Ghost Story

753-765. "Of actions done before" - the Teacher, while dwelling at Jeta's Grove, spoke this referring to the prince-ghost. There, he who in the past was the son of a king named Kitava, having offended against an Individually Enlightened One in the past, having been tormented in hell for many thousands of years, by the remainder of the result of that very action, was born among the ghosts. He is here intended as "the prince-ghost." His story has come in detail below in the Sāṇavāsi Ghost Story; therefore it should be understood by the very method stated there. For the Teacher at that time, when the elder had spoken about the occurrence of his own departed relatives, having said "Not only your relatives, but you too, having become a ghost in the immediately preceding past individual existence from here, experienced great suffering," being requested by him -

753. "The result of actions done before may disturb the mind;

In forms, sounds, flavours, odours, and delightful tangible objects.

754. "Having experienced not a little dancing, singing, delight and play;
Having enjoyed in the park, entering Giribbaja.
755. "He saw the sage Sunetta, self-tamed, concentrated;
Of few wishes, accomplished in shame, delighting in what had come into his
bowl through gleaning.
756. "Having descended from the elephant's back, he said, 'Have you obtained
alms, venerable sir?'
Having taken his bowl, having raised it high, the warrior.
757. "Having broken the bowl on the hard ground, laughing he departed;
I am the son of King Kitava, what will you do to me, monk?
758. "Of that harsh action, the result was painful;
Which the prince experienced, consigned to hell.
759. "Only six times eighty-four thousand years, and myriads too;
He underwent exceedingly suffering, in hell, having done wrong.
760. "Lying on his back he was tormented, face down, on left and right;
Standing with feet upward too, for a long time the fool was tormented.
761. For many thousands of years, heaps and myriads;
He underwent exceedingly suffering, in hell, having done wrong.
762. Such indeed is the bitter suffering, for those who offend against the
unoffending;
Evil doers are cooked, having insulted a sage of good conduct.
763. There for many years, having experienced much suffering;
Destroyed by hunger and thirst, he was a ghost, having passed away from
there.
764. "Having known this danger, originating from the intoxication of lordship;
Having abandoned the intoxication of lordship, one should conform to
humility.
765. Praiseworthy in this very life is he who is respectful towards the Buddhas;
Upon the collapse of the body, the wise one is reborn in heaven."

He spoke this ghost story.

753. Therein, "the result of actions done before may disturb the mind" means the fruit of unwholesome actions done in former births, being lofty and arising, may disturb and overcome the minds of the blindly foolish; the intention is that they would produce their own benefit by means of causing harm to others.

Now, to show that disturbance of the mind together with its domain, "in forms, sounds" and so on was stated. Therein, "in forms" means because of forms, on account of the obtaining of a desired and agreeable visual object. This is the meaning. In "in sounds" and so on too, the same method applies.

754. Thus, specifying and showing from the uncommon standpoint the meaning stated from the common standpoint, he said beginning with "dancing, singing" and so on. Therein, "delight" means amorous enjoyment. "Play" means sport with companions and so on. "Giribbaja" means Rājagaha.

755. "Sage" means a sage in the meaning of search for the aggregates of morality and so on of one beyond training. "Sunetta" means an Individually Enlightened One so named. "Self-restrained" means one whose mind is tamed by the highest mastery. "Concentrated" means concentrated through the concentration of the fruition of arahantship. "Delighting in what had come into his bowl through gleaning" means delighted and content with food obtained through gleaning, that is, the practice of going for alms, which had come into the bowl, that is, included in the bowl.

756. "Have you obtained alms, venerable sir?" and said means he spoke "Have you, venerable sir, obtained almsfood?" for the purpose of generating trust. "Having raised high" means having made it higher and having lifted up the bowl.

757. "Having broken the bowl on the hard ground" means throwing and breaking the bowl on a rough, hard piece of ground. "He departed" means he moved aside a little. And as he was moving aside, the prince said to the Individually Enlightened One who was looking at him with compassion, thinking "Without any reason this blind fool has done great harm to himself" - "I am the son of King Kitava, what will you do to me, monk?"

758. "Harsh" means cruel. "Bitter" means undesirable. "Which" means which result. "Consigned" means clinging.

759. "Only six times eighty-four thousand years and myriads too" means lying on his back for eighty-four thousand years, face down, on the left side, on the right side, with feet upward, hanging, and as he stood - thus there are six times eighty-four thousand years. Therefore he said -

760. "Lying on his back he was tormented, face down, on left and right;
Standing with feet upward too, for a long time the fool was tormented."

But since those years amount to many myriads, therefore "myriads" was said. "He underwent exceedingly suffering" means he reached exceedingly great suffering.

761. "Multitudes" means groups of years; here and in the previous verse, the accusative case should be understood in the sense of absolute connection.

762. "Such" means of such a form. "Bitter" means exceedingly painful; this is a description with a gender-variant particle, as in "he sat down to one side" and so on. The explanation is: having attacked and assailed a sage of good conduct who was unoffending, evil doers suffer such exceedingly bitter pain.

763. "He" means that prince-ghost. "There" means in hell. "Having experienced" means having undergone. "Named" means by way of being clearly manifest. "Passed

away from there" means passed away from hell. The remainder is according to the method already stated.

Thus the Blessed One, having stirred the great multitude assembled there through the account of the prince ghost, made known the truths thereafter. At the conclusion of the truths, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

The commentary on the Prince Ghost Story is concluded.

8. Commentary on the Dung-Eater Ghost Story

766-773. "Having risen up from the cesspit": this was spoken while the Teacher was dwelling at Jeta's Grove, referring to a certain excrement-eating ghost. It is said that in a certain small village not far from Sāvattthī, a householder had a monastery built for his own monk who was dependent on families. There monks from various provinces, having come, took up residence. Having seen them, the people, with confident minds, attended upon them with superior requisites. The monk dependent on families, not enduring that, having become jealous, speaking of the faults of those monks, made the householder look down upon them. The householder, treating those monks and the one dependent on families with contempt, abused them. Then the one dependent on families, having died, was reborn as a ghost in the toilet of that very monastery, whilst the householder, having died, was reborn as a ghost on top of him. Then the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, having seen him, asking -

766. "Having risen up from the cesspit, who indeed are you, wretched one, standing there?

Without doubt an evil-doer, what indeed do you believe?"

He spoke a verse. Having heard that, the ghost -

767. "I, venerable sir, am a ghost, ill-fated, belonging to Yama's world;
Having done evil deeds, I have gone from here to the realm of ghosts."

He made himself known by a verse. Then the elder -

768. "What wrong-doing was done by body, by speech, by mind?
By the result of what action do you undergo this suffering?"

He asked about the deed done by him in a verse. That ghost -

769. "There was a resident monk of mine, envious, stingy with families;
Attached to my house, miserly, abusive.

770. "Having heard his word, I abused the monks;
By the result of that action, I have gone from here to the realm of ghosts."

He spoke of the deed done by himself with two verses.

769. Therein, "there was a resident monk of mine" means in my residence, in the monastery made by me, one monk was a resident, a constant dweller. "Settled in my house" means attached to my home through the state of being dependent on families, clinging through the adherence of craving.

770. "Of that" means of that monk dependent on families. "Monks" means the monks. "I abused" means I reviled. "Gone from here to the realm of ghosts" means in this manner he went to the ghost realm, having become a ghost.

Having heard that, the elder, asking about the destination of the other -

771. "The enemy in the guise of a friend, who was your family attendant;
Upon the collapse of the body, the unwise one, what destination has he gone
to after death?"

He spoke a verse. Therein, "in the guise of a friend" means in the semblance of a friend, through the likeness of a friend.

Again, the ghost, telling the elder about that matter -

772. "I stand on the head, on the top of that very evil-doer;
And he, having reached another realm, is my very attendant.

773. "Whatever others defecate, venerable sir, that becomes food for me;
And whatever I defecate, on that he lives." Spoke a pair of verses.

772. Therein, "of that very one" means of that very ghost who was formerly my monk dependent on families. "Of the evil-doer" means of one of evil conduct. "I stand on the head, on the top" means I stand on the head, and standing, I stand on the very top, not in the space the size of the head - this is the meaning. "Having reached another realm" means having reached the sphere of ghosts, which is another realm with reference to the human world. "My very" - the remainder of the expression is: he became my very attendant.

773. "Whatever others defecate, venerable sir" means venerable sir, noble Mahāmogallāna, in that toilet whatever others defecate, discharge as excrement. "That becomes food for me" means that excrement becomes my food day after day. "Whatever I defecate" means but having eaten that excrement, whatever excrement I produce. "On that he lives" means that ghost dependent on families lives on that excrement of mine day after day by way of eating it; he sustains his individual existence - this is the meaning.

Among them, the householder reviled the well-behaved monks thus: "Better for you is the eating of excrement than such enjoyment of food." The family-dependent monk, however, having instigated the householder too to such speech, himself likewise reviled them; therefore his livelihood was even more blameworthy than that. The Venerable Mahāmogallāna reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, making that the occasion, having shown the danger in blaming, expounded the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived. That teaching was beneficial to the great multitude.

The commentary on the Dung-Eater Ghost Story is concluded.

9. Commentary on the Dung-Eater Female Ghost Story

774-781. "Having risen up from the cesspit": this was spoken while the Teacher was dwelling at Jeta's Grove, referring to a certain excrement-eating female ghost. Her story is similar to the immediately preceding story. Therein, "a monastery was built by a lay follower" has come by way of a male lay follower, but here "by a female lay follower" - this alone is the distinction. The remainder in the story and in the verses has nothing not already explained.

The commentary on the Dung-Eater Female Ghost Story is concluded.

10. Commentary on the Group Ghost Story

782-792. "You are naked, of ugly appearance": this was spoken while the Teacher was dwelling at Jeta's Grove, referring to many ghosts. It is said that in Sāvattthī, many people, forming a group, faithless, without confidence, with minds obsessed by the stain of stinginess, turning away from good conduct such as giving, having lived for a long time, upon the collapse of the body, were reborn in the realm of ghosts near the city. Then one day the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, going to Sāvattthī for almsfood, having seen the ghosts on the road -

782. "You are naked, of ugly appearance, emaciated, with veins showing all over your body;
With ribs protruding, so thin, who are you here, sirs?"

Asked in verse. Therein, "of ugly appearance" (dubbaṇṇarūpātthā) means you are of ugly body. "Who are you here" (ke nu tumhettha) means who indeed are you?"Sirs" (mārisā) - he addresses them in a manner appropriate to himself.

Having heard that, the ghosts -

783. "We, venerable sir, are ghosts, ill-fated, belonging to Yama's world;
Having done evil deeds, I have gone from here to the realm of ghosts."

Having made known their state as ghosts in verse, again by the elder -

784. "What wrong-doing was done by body, by speech, by mind?
By the result of what action have you gone from here to the realm of ghosts?"

Asked in verse about the deed done -

785. "At the open fords, I searched for half a māsa;
Though there were gifts to be given, we made no refuge for ourselves.

786. "We approach the river thirsty, it turns void;
We approach the shade in the heat, it turns to sunshine.

787. "And a wind of fire-colour blows towards us, burning;
This, venerable sir, we deserve, and other evil beyond that.

788. "Even for yojanas we go, hungry, greedy for food;
Without obtaining anything we return, alas, our lack of merit.

789. "Hungry, fainted, wandering, they fell to the ground;
Lying on our backs we turn over, face downward we fall.

790. "And they, having fallen right there, fell to the ground;
We strike our chests and heads, alas, our lack of merit.
791. "This, venerable sir, we deserve, and other evil beyond that;
Though there were gifts to be given, we made no refuge for ourselves.
792. "Surely we, having gone from here, having obtained a human womb;
Bountiful, accomplished in morality, we will do much wholesome."

They spoke of the deeds done by themselves.

788. Therein, "even for yojanas we go" means we go even for many yojanas. How? "Hungry, greedy for food" means having been hungry through starvation for a long time, greedy and craving for food, even having gone thus, without obtaining any food at all, we return. "Lack of merit" means demerit, the state of not having done good.

789. "Lying on our backs we turn over" means sometimes, having been lying on our backs, we go about as if with limbs and minor limbs scattering. "Face downward we fall" means sometimes, having been face downward, we fall.

790. "And they" means they, that is, we. "We strike our chests and heads" means having been face downward and having fallen, being unable to get up, trembling, overcome by pain, we scrape our own respective chests and heads. The remainder is the same as the method stated below.

The Elder reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, making that the occasion, expounded the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived. Having heard that, the great multitude of people, having abandoned the stain of stinginess, became devoted to good conduct beginning with giving.

The commentary on the Group Ghost Story is concluded.

11. Commentary on the Pāṭaliputta Ghost Story

793-795. "Seen by you are the hells, the animal realm": this was spoken while the Teacher was dwelling at Jeta's Grove, referring to a certain mansion ghost. It is said that many merchants dwelling in Sāvattthī and dwelling in Pāṭaliputta went by boat to Suvaṇṇabhūmi. Therein one lay follower, being sick, with mind bound in love for a woman, died. He, although he had done wholesome deeds, without being reborn in the heavenly world, because of the state of having a mind bound to the woman, was reborn as a mansion ghost in the middle of the ocean. Now the woman to whom he was enamoured, having ascended a boat bound for Suvaṇṇabhūmi, was going. Then that ghost, wishing to seize that woman, stopped the passage of the boat. Then the merchants, investigating "For what reason indeed does this boat not go?" administered the ill-luck voting tickets. By the power of the non-human spirit, up to the third time it fell upon that very woman to whom he was enamoured. Having seen that, the merchants, having lowered a bamboo raft into the ocean, lowered that woman on top of it. As soon as the woman was lowered, the boat swiftly set out facing towards Suvaṇṇabhūmi. The non-human spirit, having taken that woman up to his own mansion, delighted together with her.

She, having passed one year, being wearied, requesting that ghost, said -"I, dwelling here, am unable to do what is for my future welfare. Please, sir, take me to Pāṭaliputta itself." He, being requested by her -

793. "Seen by you are the hells, the animal realm, ghosts, titans, or else humans and gods;
You yourself have seen the result of your own actions, I will lead you to Pāṭaliputta unharmed;
Having gone there, do wholesome action."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "seen by you are the hells" means certain individual hells too were seen by you. "The animal realm" means animals of great power such as serpents, supañṇas, and so on were also seen by you - this is the explanation. "Ghosts" means ghosts of various kinds such as hunger and thirst and so on. "Titans" means titans of various kinds such as Kālakañcikas and so on. "Gods" means certain gods (ruled by) the four great kings. It is said that he, by his own power, from time to time, having taken her, went about showing her the individual hells and so on; therefore he spoke thus. "You yourself have seen the result of your own actions" means having gone specifically to the hells and so on, and seeing, she herself directly saw, perceived the result of actions done by oneself. "I will lead you to Pāṭaliputta unharmed" means now I will lead you, unharmed, uninjured by anyone, in human form itself, to Pāṭaliputta. But you, having gone there, do wholesome action; the meaning is: because the result of action has been seen directly, be engaged and employed, devoted to merit.

Then that woman, having heard his word, delighted -

794. "You are a well-wisher to me, demon, you desire my welfare, O deity;
I will do your word, you are my teacher."
795. "Seen by me are the hells, the animal realm, ghosts, titans, or else humans and gods;
I myself have seen the result of my own actions, I will make merit, not trifling."

He spoke a verse.

Then that ghost, having taken that woman, having gone through the sky, having placed her in the middle of the city of Pāṭaliputta, departed. Then her relatives, friends, and others, having seen her, said "We heard that she had been thrown into the ocean and had died. This very one has been seen, indeed, friend, she has come safely," and delighting, having assembled together, they asked her about the incident. She told them everything seen and experienced by herself from the beginning. And those merchants who were residents of Sāvatthī, having gradually reached Sāvatthī in due course, having approached the Teacher's presence, having paid homage, seated to one side, reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, making that the occasion, expounded the Teaching to the four assemblies. Having heard that, the great multitude was struck with religious emotion and became devoted to wholesome qualities such as giving and so on.

The commentary on the Pāṭaliputta Ghost Story is concluded.

12. Commentary on the Mango Grove Ghost Story

796-799. "And this pond of yours is delightful": this was spoken while the Teacher was dwelling at Sāvattthī, referring to the mango-ghost. In Sāvattthī, it is said, a certain householder was one whose wealth was exhausted. His wife died, and he had only one daughter. He, having placed her in the house of his own friend, having taken goods with a hundred coins obtained by way of debt, went on trade together with a caravan, and before long, having obtained five hundred coins that had become profit together with the capital, returned together with the caravan. On the road, thieves, having surrounded them, fell upon the caravan, and the caravan members fled here and there. But that householder, having deposited the coins in a certain shrub, hid nearby. The thieves, having seized him, deprived him of life. He, through greed for wealth, having become a ghost, was reborn right there.

The merchants, having gone to Sāvattthī, reported that news to his daughter. She, with displeasure exceedingly arisen on account of her father's death and fear for her livelihood, lamented grievously. Then her father's friend, a householder, consoled her, saying "Just as all potter's vessels have breaking as their end, even so the life of beings has breaking as its end. Death is common to all and without remedy; therefore do not grieve too much over your father, do not lament. I am your father, you are my daughter, I shall perform your father's duty; you should dwell happily in this house as in your father's house, without displeasure." She, with sorrow allayed by his words, with respect and esteem arisen towards him as towards her father, due to her own destitute condition, having become one who performed service for him and was living thus, wishing to perform the rites for the dead dedicated to her father, having cooked rice gruel, having placed mango fruits of the colour of red arsenic, well-ripened and sweet, on a bronze dish, having had a female slave carry the rice gruel and mango fruits, having gone to the monastery, having paid homage to the Teacher, said thus - "May the Blessed One show favour to me by accepting my offering." The Teacher, with a mind urged by great compassion, fulfilling her wish, showed the indication of sitting down. She, full of mirth, having spread a thoroughly pure cloth brought by herself on the excellent Buddha-seat that had been prepared, gave it. The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat.

Then she offered rice gruel to the Blessed One; the Blessed One accepted the rice gruel. Then, having given rice gruel to the monks too dedicated to the Community, again with washed hands she offered mango fruits to the Blessed One; the Blessed One consumed them. She, having paid homage to the Blessed One, said thus - "Whatever offering of mine, venerable sir, has been produced by way of giving a bed-sheet, rice gruel, and mango fruits, may that reach my father." The Blessed One, having said "May it be so," gave thanksgiving. She, having paid homage to the Blessed One, having circumambulated him, departed. By that offering, merely as soon as it was dedicated, that ghost obtained a mango grove, a pleasure garden, a mansion, wish-fulfilling trees, ponds, and great divine success.

Then those merchants, at a later time, going on trade, having proceeded along that very road, made their dwelling for one night at the place where they had previously stayed. Having seen them, that mansion-ghost, together with the pleasure garden, mansion, and so on, showed himself to them. Those merchants, having seen him, asking about the success obtained by him -

796. "And this pond of yours is delightful, level, with good landing places, and with abundant water;

Covered with flowers, strewn with swarms of bees, how was this delightful thing obtained by you?

797. "And this mango grove of yours is delightful, bearing fruits in all seasons;

Fully in bloom, strewn with swarms of bees, how was this mansion obtained by you?"

They spoke these two verses.

796. Therein, "delightful" means exceedingly charming. "Level" means even-surfaced. "With good landing places" means with beautiful landing places by means of stairways made of jewels. "With abundant water" means with much water.

797. "Flowering in all seasons" means bringing happiness in all seasons by means of trees and so on that produce flowers and produce fruits. Therefore he said "bearing fruits." "Fully in bloom" means always fully in bloom.

Having heard that, the ghost, telling the cause of obtaining the pond and so on -

798. "Ripe mangoes, water, rice gruel, cool shade, delightful;

By the gift given by my daughter, by that it is obtained for me here."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "by that it is obtained for me here" means that gift which was given by my daughter who was giving ripe mangoes, water, and rice gruel to the Blessed One and the monks, dedicating it to me - by that gift given by my daughter, here in this divine mango grove ripe mangoes of all seasons, in this divine delightful pond divine water, and by the giving of rice gruel and the covering, delightful cool shade in the park, mansion, wish-fulfilling trees and so on is obtained here, is accomplished. This is the meaning.

And having said thus, that ghost, having led those merchants and having shown them those five hundred coins, said: "Take half of this; give the other half to my daughter, having cleared the debt taken by me, so that she may live happily." The merchants, gradually having reached Sāvattthī, having told his daughter, gave even the share given by him to her alone. She, having given a hundred coins to the creditors, having given the remainder to that householder who was her own father's friend, herself performing service, dwells. He, having given back to her alone, saying "Let all this be yours alone," made her the mistress of the house of his own eldest son.

She, as time went on, having obtained one son, fondling him -

799. "See thus the action visible here and now, the result of giving, of self-control, of restraint;

Having been a female slave in noble families, I am a daughter-in-law, lord of the house."

She recites this verse.

Then one day the Teacher, having observed the maturity of her knowledge, having pervaded with light, having shown himself as if standing before her -

"The unpleasant in the guise of the pleasant, the disagreeable in the guise of the dear;
Suffering in the guise of happiness, overcomes the heedless one."

He spoke this verse. She, at the conclusion of the verse, became established in the fruition of stream-entry. She, on the second day, having given a gift to the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, making that the occasion, expounded the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived. That teaching was beneficial to the great multitude.

The commentary on the Mango Grove Ghost Story is concluded.

13. Commentary on the Akkharukkha Ghost Story

800. "What one gives, that does not remain the same": this is the story of the ghost of the axle-giver. What is its origin? While the Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvattthī, a certain lay follower dwelling in Sāvattthī, having filled carts with goods, having gone to a foreign country for trade, having sold his own goods there, having loaded the exchange goods onto the carts, proceeded along the road heading for Sāvattthī. As he was going along the road, in the forest the axle of one cart broke. Then a certain man, having had an axe and hatchet taken up for the purpose of obtaining timber, having departed from his own village, wandering in the forest, having reached that place, having seen that lay follower overcome with displeasure due to the breaking of the axle, out of compassion, thinking "This merchant is suffering in the forest due to the breaking of the axle," having cut a piece of timber, having made a strong axle, having fitted it to the cart, gave it.

He, at a later time, having died, was reborn as a terrestrial deity in that very forest region. Having reviewed his own action, at night, having gone to the house of that lay follower, having stood at the house door -

800. "What one gives, that does not remain the same, give indeed a gift, having given one crosses over both;
Both one attains by that giving, be wakeful, do not be negligent."

He spoke a verse. Therein, "what one gives, that does not remain the same" means whatever gift a donor gives, that very thing does not exist in the world beyond as the fruit of that giving; but rather another, abundant, desirable, pleasant fruit indeed exists. Therefore, "give indeed a gift" means give a gift in whatever way. Therein, he states the reason by the phrase "having given, one crosses over both": having given a gift, one overcomes both suffering and harm pertaining to the present life and pertaining to the future life. "Both one attains by that giving" means one approaches, one reaches both happiness pertaining to the present life and pertaining to the future life by that giving; this meaning should also be connected by way of the welfare and happiness of oneself and others. "Be wakeful, do not be negligent" means be wakeful to accomplish giving which prevents harm in both and which achieves welfare in both; having prepared the requisites for giving, and be heedful therein. This is the meaning. And here it was said by way of repetition for the purpose of showing earnestness.

The merchant, having finished his own business, having turned back, gradually having reached Sāvattṭhī, on the second day, having approached the Teacher, having paid homage, seated to one side, reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Teacher, making that the occasion, expounded the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived. That teaching was beneficial to the great multitude.

The commentary on the Akkharukkha Ghost Story is concluded.

14. Commentary on the Wealth-Gathering Female Ghost Story

801. "We collected wealth" - this is the story of the wealth-collecting female ghosts. What is its origin? While the Blessed One was dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, at Rājagaha, it is said, four women, by means of false measures and so on, having conducted trade in ghee, honey, oil, grain and so on, having collected wealth unwisely, lived. They, upon the body's collapse at death, were reborn as female ghosts on the back of the moat outside the city. They, at night, overpowered by suffering -

801. "We collected wealth, by righteous and unrighteous means;
Others consume it, we are sharers in suffering."

Wailing, they cried out with a frightful loud sound. The people, having heard that, frightened and trembling, when the night became light, having prepared a great gift for the Community of monks headed by the Buddha, having invited the Teacher and the Community of monks, having served them with superior solid and soft food, having sat close to the Blessed One who had finished eating and had removed his hand from the bowl, they reported that incident. The Blessed One said "Lay followers, by that sound there is no obstacle whatsoever for you; but four female ghosts, overpowered by suffering, having told of the wrong-doing done by themselves, crying out with a cry of distress by way of lamentation -

"We collected wealth, by righteous and unrighteous means;
Others consume it, we are sharers in suffering."

They spoke this verse."

Therein, "wealth" means special kinds of property and requisites such as garments, ornaments and so on, which have obtained the name "wealth" in the sense of what is to be enjoyed. "We collected" means with minds consumed by the stain of stinginess, without giving anything to anyone, we accumulated. "By righteous and unrighteous means" means by the true method and by the wrong method, or by what resembles the true method but is actually wrong - those riches having been collected by us, others now consume them. "We are sharers in suffering" means but we, because of not having done any good conduct whatsoever and because of having done misconduct, are now sharers in the great suffering included in the realm of ghosts; the meaning is we experience great suffering.

Thus the Blessed One, having spoken the verse spoken by those female ghosts, having related their story, making that the occasion, having expounded the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived, made known the truths thereafter; at the conclusion of the truths, many attained the fruition of stream-entry and so on.

15. Commentary on the Merchant's Son Ghost Story

802-805. "Sixty thousand years" - this is the story of the merchant's son who became a ghost. What is its origin? The Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove. Now at that time King Pasenadi of Kosala, decorated and prepared, mounted upon the excellent back of an elephant, with great royal power and great royal majesty, going about the city, having seen in a certain house on the upper storey of a mansion a woman who had opened a window and was looking at that royal splendour, comparable to a celestial nymph in the perfection of beauty, with his mind obsessed by the surge of mental defilements suddenly arisen towards an object not seen before, even though there were women of the inner palace accomplished in the special qualities of family, beauty, good conduct, and so on, but by the power of the mind which is by nature fickle and difficult to tame, having become with his mind bound to that woman, having given a signal to a man seated on the rear seat "Look out for this mansion and this woman," he entered the royal palace. Everything else should be understood according to the method that has come in the Ambasakkara ghost story.

But this is the distinction - Here the man, having come while the sun had not yet set, when the city gate was closed, having hung the dawn-coloured clay brought by himself and waterlilies on the door panel of the city gate, went to Jeta's Grove to lie down. But the king, having taken up residence on the royal couch, in the middle watch heard by way of a cry of distress what seemed like four syllables - "sa," "na," "du," and "so" - uttered with a loud voice. Those, it is said, were the initial syllables of those verses which, in the past time, four merchants' sons dwelling in Sāvattthī, intoxicated with the vanity of wealth, having generated much demerit in the time of their youth through the action of adultery, afterwards having died, having been reborn in a copper cauldron near that very city, while being tormented, having reached the rim of the copper cauldron, wishing to utter one verse each, had been uttered by them; they, having said only the first syllable, having been overcome by pain, sank back into the copper cauldron.

But the king, having heard that sound, frightened, trembling, agitated, with hair standing on end, having spent the remainder of the night with difficulty, when the night became light, having had the chaplain summoned, told him that incident. The chaplain, knowing the king was frightened and trembling, greedy for material gain, having thought "This means of producing gain for me and for the brahmins has arisen," said "Great king, a great misfortune indeed has arisen; perform the sacrifice of the complete fourfold." The king, having heard his word, commanded the ministers "Prepare the requisites for the sacrifice of the complete fourfold." Having heard that, Queen Mallikā said thus to the king - "Why, great king, having heard the word of the brahmin, do you wish to perform an act involving the killing and harming of many living beings? Should not the Blessed One, whose knowledge moves unobstructed everywhere, be asked? And as the Blessed One will answer you, so should you proceed." The king, having heard her word, having gone to the Teacher's presence, reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, having said "No, great

king, on that account there is no obstacle whatsoever for you," having related from the beginning the story of those beings reborn in the copper cauldron hell, the verses which they had each begun to utter -

802. "Sixty thousand years, complete in every respect;
For those being tormented in hell, when will there be an end?
803. "There is no end, whence an end? No end is seen;
For such evil was done, by you and by me, sir.
804. "We lived a wrong life, we who did not give while there were virtuous ones;
Though there were gifts to be given, we made no refuge for ourselves.
805. "Surely I, having gone from here, having obtained a human womb;
Bountiful, accomplished in morality, I will do much wholesome."

He related it having made it complete.

802. Therein, "sixty thousand years" means sixty thousand of years. It is said that a being reborn in that copper-cauldron hell, going down, reaches the lower surface in thirty thousand years, and rising up from there too, reaches the area of the rim in just thirty thousand years; with that perception, he, wishing to say the verse "Sixty thousand years, complete in every respect," having said "sa," having been overcome by excessive feeling, fell face downwards. But the Blessed One related it to the king having made it complete. This same method applies in the remaining verses too. Therein, "when will there be an end" means when indeed will there be an end, a final goal, of this suffering for us being tormented in the copper-cauldron hell.

803. "For so" means just as there is no end of this suffering for you and for me, no end is seen, so in that manner evil action was done by you and by me - this should be stated by changing the grammatical case.

804. "Wrong livelihood" means a life blameworthy by the wise. "Who, existing" means we who had existing, available gifts to give. "We did not give" means we did not give. To make the very meaning stated more obvious, it was said "Though there were gifts to be given, we made no refuge for ourselves."

805. "Sohaṃ" means that I. "Nūna" is an indeclinable particle in the sense of reflection. "From here" means from this copper-cauldron hell. "Having gone" means having departed. "Having obtained a human womb" means having obtained the human realm, human existence. "Bountiful" means one of generous disposition, or one who understands the words of beggars. "Accomplished in morality" means accomplished in morality and good conduct. "I will do much wholesome" means without falling into heedlessness as before, I will do, I will accumulate much, abundant wholesome meritorious action - this is the meaning.

The Teacher, having spoken these verses, expounded the Teaching in detail. At the conclusion of the teaching, the man who brought red clay and water lilies became established in the fruition of stream-entry. The king, with a sense of urgency arisen, having abandoned covetousness towards another's possession, was content with his own wife.

16. Commentary on the Saṭṭhikūṭa Ghost Story

806-814. "Why, as if mad": this was spoken while the Teacher was dwelling at the Bamboo Grove, referring to a certain ghost. In the past, it is said, in the city of Bārāṇasī, a certain cripple, skilled in the practice of sling-shooting, having reached accomplishment in the craft of throwing pebbles, there, having sat down at the city gate at the foot of a banyan tree, by means of pebble strikes, displayed on banyan leaves the forms of elephants, horses, humans, chariots, pinnacle buildings, flags, full pitchers, and so on. The city boys, giving counterfeit half-pennies and so on for the purpose of their own amusement, had those crafts performed according to their liking.

Then one day the king of Bārāṇasī, having departed from the city, having approached that banyan tree root, having seen the various kinds of form-designs applied on the banyan leaves by way of elephant forms and so on, asked the people - "By whom indeed were these various kinds of form-designs made on these banyan leaves in this way?" The people showed him that cripple: "Sire, they were made by this one." The king, having had him summoned, said thus - "Is it possible, my good man, to fill the belly of a single man shown by me with goats' dung while he is speaking, without his even knowing?" "It is possible, Sire." The king, having led him to his own royal palace, being one who was disgusted with the talkative chaplain, having had the chaplain summoned, having sat down with him in a secluded place enclosed by a screen wall, while consulting, had the cripple summoned. The cripple, having taken goats' dung pellets about a measure and having come, having known the king's indication, seated facing the chaplain, when his mouth was opened, through an opening in the screen wall, lodged each goats' dung pellet at the base of his throat. He, being unable to spit them out due to shame, swallowed them all. Then the king dismissed him with his belly filled with goats' dung pellets - "Go, brahmin, you have obtained the fruit of much speaking. Having drunk a beverage prepared with maddana fruits, piyaṅgu bark, and so on, vomit it up; thus there will be well-being for you." And to that cripple, being delighted by that deed, he gave fourteen villages. He, having obtained the villages, making himself happy and pleased, making his retinue also happy and pleased, giving something as is fitting to ascetics, brahmins, and others, not neglecting the benefit pertaining to the present life and pertaining to the future life, lives happily indeed, and gives food and wages to those who have come to his presence and are learning the craft.

Then a certain man, having approached his presence, said thus - "Good, teacher, teach me too this craft; but I have no need for food and wages." He taught that man that craft. He, having learnt the craft, wishing to test the craft, having gone, split the head of an Individually Enlightened One named Sunetta who was seated on the bank of the Ganges, by a pebble strike. The Individually Enlightened One attained final Nibbāna right there on the bank of the Ganges. The people, having heard that news, having struck that man right there with clods of earth, sticks, and so on, deprived him of life. He, having died, having been reborn in the great hell of Avīci, having been tormented in hell for many thousands of years, by the remainder of the result of that very action, in this arising of a Buddha, was reborn as a ghost not far from the city of

Rājagaha. Since there had to be a result resembling that action, sixty thousand iron hammers, hurled by the force of action, fall upon his head in the earlier period of the day, in the noon period of the day, and in the afternoon period of the day. He, with his head cut and split, having reached excessive feeling, falls to the ground; but as soon as the iron hammers have departed, he stands with his head restored to its natural state.

Then one day the Venerable Mahāmoggallāna, descending from the Vulture's Peak mountain, having seen him -

806. "Why, as if mad, do you run about like a frightened deer;
Without doubt an evil-doer, why indeed do you make such noise?"

With this verse he asked in return. Therein, "as if mad" means as if having the nature of a madman, as if having reached madness. "You run about like a frightened deer" means like a frightened deer, you run here and there. For indeed, when those iron hammers were falling, seeing no protection, thinking "may there not be such a blow," he flees here and there. But those, hurled by the impetus of kamma, fall upon the very head of one standing wherever anywhere. "Why indeed do you make such noise" means why indeed do you make a sound, you go about making an exceedingly loud cry of distress.

Having heard that, the ghost -

807. "I, venerable sir, am a ghost, ill-fated, belonging to Yama's world;
Having done evil deeds, I have gone from here to the realm of ghosts.

808. "Sixty thousand hammers, complete in every respect;
Fall upon my head, and they break my skull."

He gave a reply with two verses. Therein, "sixty thousand hammers" means sixty thousand iron hammers in number. "Complete" means not lacking. "In every respect" means from every part. It is said that for him there arose a head, great, the size of a mountain peak, sufficient for the falling of sixty thousand iron hammers. Without leaving even a spot the size of a hair-tip's pricking on that head of his, those hammers falling break the skull, and on account of that he makes a cry of distress. Therefore it was said "in every respect they fall upon my head, and they break my skull."

Then the elder, asking him about the deed done -

809. "What wrong-doing was done by body, by speech, by mind?
By the result of what action do you undergo this suffering?

810. "Sixty thousand hammers, complete in every respect;
Fall upon your head, and they break your skull."

He spoke two verses.

The ghost, telling him of the deed done by himself -

811. "Then I saw the Enlightened by himself, Sunetta, with developed faculties;
Seated at the root of a tree, meditating, fearless from any quarter.

812. "With a stone-throwing blow, I broke his head;
By the result of that action, I underwent this suffering.

813. "Sixty thousand hammers, complete in every respect;
Fall upon my head, and they break my skull."

He spoke three verses.

811. Therein, "the Perfectly Enlightened One" means an Individually Enlightened One. "Sunetta" means one so named. "With developed faculties" means one whose faculties of faith and so on were developed through the development of the noble path.

812-813. "With a stone-throwing blow" means stone-throwing is called the practice of hurling stones with a bow or with the fingers alone. For thus "with a blow of a stone" is also a reading. "Bhindissam" means I broke.

Having heard that, the elder, showing that "He now receives this fruit of old action in accordance with the deed done by himself" -

814. "Rightly for you, wretch;
Sixty thousand hammers, complete in every respect;
Fall upon your head, and they break your skull."

She spoke the concluding verse. Therein, "righteously" means by a suitable reason. "Te" means your; this befitting fruit of the evil action done by you who offended against that Individually Enlightened One has been brought upon you. Therefore he shows that this cannot be warded off by any god or Māra or Brahmā or even by a Perfectly Enlightened One.

And having said thus, having then walked for almsfood in the city, having completed his meal duty, in the evening period, having approached the Teacher, he reported that incident to the Blessed One. The Blessed One, making that the occasion, expounding the Teaching to the assembly that had arrived, made known the power of the virtues of the Individually Enlightened Ones and the non-barrenness of actions. The great multitude, being struck with religious emotion, having abandoned evil, became devoted to meritorious deeds such as giving and so on.

The commentary on the Saṅghikūṭa Ghost Story is concluded.

Thus in the Khuddaka Commentary, in the Petavatthu,

Of the one adorned with sixteen stories

The exposition of the meaning of the fourth Great Chapter is concluded.

Concluding Discussion

And to this extent -

Those beings who have been reborn among ghosts, doers of wrong-doing;
By which actions that evil, bitter-fruited result is theirs.

Making clear directly and by questions and answers;
Which, by the procedure of the Teaching, increases the religious emotion of
the good.

Which the great sages, skilled in the subject of discussion, with well-
comprehended subject matter,
Recited together under the name of Petavatthu.

In order to make known its meaning, in dependence on the method of the
ancient commentary;
The exposition of the meaning that was undertaken by me.

That which therein is the elucidation of ultimate realities, in each case as is
fitting,
The elucidation, by name called the Paramattha-dīpanī,

It has reached accomplishment, with unconfused judgment;
Of the Pāḷi measuring fifteen recitation sections.

Thus, by one who has composed that, whatever merit has been attained by
me;
By the power of that, may the Dispensation of the Protector of the World,

Having been plunged into through the purified practice beginning with
morality;
May all embodied beings become partakers of the flavour of liberation.

May the Dispensation of the Perfectly Enlightened One long endure in the
world;
May all living beings always be respectful towards it.

May the god who is lord of the earth rain properly in due season;
Delighting in the Good Teaching, may he govern the world by the Teaching
alone.

Thus by the excellent sage, resident of the Badaratittha Monastery,

The exposition of the meaning of the Petavatthu composed by the venerable teacher
Dhammapāla is concluded.

the Commentary on the Petavatthu is completed.



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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