

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries (Sutta
Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)

4. The Collection of the Numerical Discourses -
Commentaries (4. Aṅguttara Nikāya - Aṭṭhakathā)

04. Commentary on the Book of the Fours (04. Catukkanipāta-
aṭṭhakathā)

5. The Fifth Fifty (5. Pañcamapaṇṇāsakaṃ)



PaliVerse

4. The Collection of the Numerical Discourses - Commentaries

04. Commentary on the Book of the Fours

5. The Fifth Fifty

1. The Chapter on the Good Person

1-6. Explanation of the Discourse on Training Rules

201. In the first discourse of the fifth, "bad person" means an inferior person, a hollow person, a confused person, a fool blinded by ignorance. "Worse than a bad person" means a bad person in excess. The other two should be understood as the opposite of what was stated. The remainder here is clear in meaning. And just as here, so in the remaining five beyond this. For among these, the first was taught by way of the five enmities, the second by way of faithless qualities, the third by way of the bodily and verbal doors, the fourth by way of the mind-door, the fifth by way of the eightfold wrong course, the sixth by way of the tenfold wrong course.

7-10. Explanation of the Set of Four Discourses on One of Bad Character

207-210. In the seventh, "evil" means an inferior, defiled person. "Good" means a fortunate, blameless person. The remainder here is clear in meaning. The same method applies to the eighth as well. In the ninth, "of bad character" means of inferior character. "Of good character" means of blameless character. The remainder here is clear in meaning. The same method applies to the tenth as well. In this chapter, in all ten discourses, the practice of the householder is spoken of. Even if they are stream-enterers or once-returners, it is fitting indeed.

The Good Person Chapter is the first.

2. The Chapter on Assemblies

1. Explanation of the Assembly Discourse

211. In the first of the second, "they defile the assembly" - thus "those who defile the assembly." "They adorn the assembly" - thus "those who adorn the assembly."

2. Explanation of the Discourse on Views

212. In the second, although wrong view is included in mental misconduct, it was stated separately because of its great blameworthiness, and right view by way of its opposite.

3. Explanation of the Discourse on Ingratitude

213. In the third, "ingratitude and unthankfulness" means by ingratitude and unthankfulness. Both of these are one in meaning. The same method applies to the bright side as well.

4-7. Commentary on the Discourse on Killing Living Beings, Etc.

214-217. The fourth is stated by way of the four actions and defilements and their opposite, the fifth by way of the first four wrong courses of the bright side, the sixth by way of the remaining four, the seventh by way of ignoble statements and noble statements. Likewise the eighth, ninth, and tenth are stated by way of faithless qualities together with their opposites. But in all discourses, the bright-side qualities are spoken of as a mixture of mundane and supramundane only. Although in the nine discourses "in heaven" is said, yet the three paths and three fruits are indeed obtained.

The Assembly Chapter is the second.

3. Explanation of the Chapter on Misconduct

221-231. In the third, the first and so on are of manifest meaning only. In the tenth, whoever, having thought, composes poetry, this one is called a poet by thought. Whoever, having heard, composes, this one is called a poet by learning. Whoever composes in dependence on one meaning, this one is called a poet by meaning. Whoever composes at that very moment by his own inspiration, like the Elder Vaṅḡisa, this one is called a poet by inspiration.

The Misconduct Chapter is the third.

4. The Chapter on Action

1. Commentary on the Saṃkhitta Discourse

232. In the first discourse of the fourth, "dark" means black, the action of the ten unwholesome courses of action. "With dark result" means with black result, because of rebirth in the realms of misery. "Bright" means white, the action of the wholesome courses of action. "With bright result" means with white result, because of rebirth in heaven. "Dark and bright" means mixed action. "With dark and bright result" means with pleasant and unpleasant result. For having performed mixed action, one reborn through the unwholesome in the animal realm in such positions as that of a state elephant and so on, experiences happiness when the wholesome operates. One reborn even in a royal family through the wholesome experiences suffering when the unwholesome operates. "Neither dark nor bright" means the knowledge of the four paths that brings about the elimination of action is intended. For if that were dark, it would give dark result. If it were bright, it would give bright result. But because of not giving either result, it is neither dark nor bright - this is the meaning here.

2. Commentary on the Vitthāra Discourse

233. In the second, "afflictive" means with hate. "Bodily activity" means volition at the body-door. "Generates" means strives, combines. In the remaining two as well, the same method applies. "An afflictive world" means a world with suffering. "Afflictive contacts" means resultant contacts with suffering. "Feels afflictive feeling" means feels resultant feeling with affliction. "Exclusively painful" means absolutely only suffering, not mixed with happiness. "Just as beings in hell" - here "just as" is an

indeclinable particle in the sense of illustration. By that he shows only beings doomed to hell; but there are no others comparable to them. By this method the meaning should be understood everywhere. In the passage beginning with "just as human beings" and so on, for human beings first, at times pleasant feeling arises, at times unpleasant feeling. "Some gods" - here the sensual-sphere gods should be seen. For when they see deities of greater influence, by way of rising from the seat where they are sitting, lowering the upper robe that has been wrapped around, raising joined palms, and so on, at times suffering arises; for those experiencing divine success, at times happiness. "Some beings in states of misfortune" - here mansion-dwelling ghosts should be seen. They continuously, at one time experience happiness, at one time experience suffering. But serpents, supaññas, elephants, horses, and so on are, like human beings, with mingled pleasure and pain. "Whatever volition there is for the abandoning" - here the path volition leading to the end of the round of rebirths should be understood. For that leads to the elimination of action.

3. Commentary on the Discourse on Soṇakāyana

234. In the third, "Sikhāmogallāna" means a brahmin of the Moggallāna clan endowed with a great top-knot situated on the middle of his head. "Former" means former beginning from the immediately preceding past day; beginning from the second day onwards, they should be understood as "earlier than that." "Soṇakāyana" means his own pupil. "This world, friend, is of the nature of action" means friend, this world has action as its intrinsic nature. "It persists through the undertaking of action" means it persists by the undertaking of action. It explains that one persists only by striving in action; one who does not strive is annihilated. The remainder is the same as the method stated below.

4-9. Commentary on the Discourse on Training Rules, Etc.

235. The fourth and so on are of manifest meaning only. But regarding the path factors, because one establishes with mindfulness and defines with wisdom, therefore both are indeed action. The rest are merely factors, not action - so it was said. The same method applies to the factors of enlightenment too. But in the Abhidhamma, all of this, without distinction, is described as action associated with volition only.

10. Commentary on the Ascetic Discourse

241. In the tenth, "here only" means in this very Dispensation. But this restriction should be understood in the remaining terms as well. For the second and so on ascetics too are only here, not elsewhere. "Empty" means void, hollow. "The other doctrines" means the four doctrines of eternalism, four partial eternalists, four finitists and infinitists, four eel-wrigglers, two fortuitous originationists, sixteen doctrines of perception, eight doctrines of non-perception, eight doctrines of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, seven doctrines of annihilationism, five doctrines of Nibbāna in this present life - all these are the sixty-two views that have come in the Brahmajāla; the doctrines of outsiders other than this are called "the other doctrines." All of those are empty of these four ascetics who have attained the fruitions. For they do not exist therein. And not only are they empty of those alone, but also of the four ascetics who have attained the paths, and also of those who have begun insight for the purpose of the four paths - thus they are empty of all twelve ascetics. With reference to this very meaning, it was said by the Blessed One in the Mahāparinibbāna -

"At twenty-nine years of age, Subhadda,
I went forth, seeking what is wholesome;
More than fifty years have passed,
Since I went forth, Subhadda;
One practising in the domain of the true method of the Teaching,
Outside of this there is not even an ascetic."

"There is no second ascetic, there is no third ascetic, there is no fourth ascetic, the other doctrines are empty of other ascetics." Here, "one practising in the domain" means one who has begun insight is intended. Therefore, combining together the three - one who has begun insight for the path of stream-entry, one standing on the path, and one standing in the fruition - he said "there is not even an ascetic"; combining together the three - one who has begun insight for the path of once-returning, one standing on the path, and one standing in the fruition - he said "there is no second ascetic either." The same method applies in the other two as well. The eleventh is of manifest meaning.

The Action Chapter is the fourth.

5. The Chapter on Perils of Offenses

1. Commentary on the Discourse on the Schismatic

243. In the first discourse of the fifth, "Has that legal case, Ānanda" means a certain legal case among the legal cases arising from contention and so on arose in the Community of monks; the Teacher, asking about its state of being settled, spoke thus. "How could that, venerable sir" - venerable sir, "how" means for what reason will that legal case be settled, he says. "Kevalakappaṃ" means wholly, all around. "Standing for schism in the Community" means standing speaking back against what has been spoken for the purpose of controversy together with the Community. "Therein the Venerable" means when he was thus standing, the Venerable Anuruddha. "Does not think even a single announcement should be spoken" means he does not think even a single statement should be said, such as "Do not, friend, speak thus together with the Community." "Voyuñjati" means engages in, commits to pursuit. "Atthavase" means by reason of cause. "They would remove" means they would drive out, not allowing to approach the Observance and the invitation to admonish ceremonies. The remainder should be understood by the Pāḷi text itself.

2. Explanation of the Discourse on Perils of Offences

244. In the second, "having shaved his head" means having set aside the five tufts, having made him shaven with a razor. "With a harsh sound" means with a rough sound. "With a drum" means with an execution drum. "Of one standing nearby" means of one standing on one side. "Resulting in decapitation" means deserving of the cutting off of the head. "Yatra hi nāma" means "whoever indeed." "So vatassāhaṃ" means "surely I should be such," the meaning is that I should not do such evil. "Will make amends according to the Teaching" means will make amends in conformity with the Teaching; the meaning is he will stand on the plane of a novice. "Having put on a dark cloth" means having dressed in a dark rag. "Deserving the pestle" means deserving of being struck with a pestle. "According to the Teaching"

means here, having emerged from the offence and being established in the pure end, one is indeed said to act according to the Teaching. "A container of ashes" means a bundle of ashes. "Blameworthy, deserving the ashes" means deserving of being struck on the head with a blameworthy container of ashes. "According to the Teaching" means here, by confessing the offence, one is indeed said to make amends according to the Teaching. "Deserving of censure" means deserving of blame. "Regarding rules requiring acknowledgement" means regarding those that should be acknowledged. By this, all the remaining offences too are included. "These, monks, are the four fears of offence" means, monks, these are indeed called the four fears arising in dependence on offences.

3. Explanation of the Discourse on the Benefits of Training

245. In the third, training is the benefit here - thus "with training as its benefit." Wisdom is the higher goal here - thus "with wisdom as its higher goal." Liberation is the core here - thus "with liberation as its core." Mindfulness is the authority here - thus "with mindfulness as its authority." For the purpose of these benefits and so on, reckoned as training and so on, it is lived - thus it has been said. "Fundamentals of conduct" means the highest conduct. This is a designation for morality laid down by way of duties. "In that way he in that training" means in that way that monk who is eager to train in that training rule.

"Fundamental to the holy life" is a designation for the four great moralities which are the beginning of the holy life of the path. "Altogether" means in every way. "Teachings" means the teachings of the four truths. "Are examined with wisdom" means they are well seen by path wisdom together with insight. "Are touched through liberation" means they are touched by the contact of knowledge through the liberation of the fruition of arahantship. "Mindfulness is well established internally" means mindfulness is thoroughly established in one's own internal self. "I shall support with wisdom" means I shall support with insight wisdom. "I shall examine with wisdom" - here too insight wisdom is intended. "I shall support with wisdom here and there the teaching already touched" - but here path wisdom alone is intended.

4. Explanation of the Discourse on Sleeping Places

246. In the fourth, "ghosts" means the deceased. "Sleep lying on their backs" means they for the most part sleep only on their backs. Or else, those reborn in the sphere of ghosts are called ghosts; because of having little flesh and blood, they, entangled with a mass of bones, are unable to sleep on one side; they sleep only on their backs. "Is displeased" - because of the abundance of energy, the lion, the king of beasts, having placed the two front paws in one place and the hind paws in one place, having inserted the tail between the thighs, having observed the position of the front paws, hind paws, and tail, having placed the head on top of the two front paws, sleeps. Even having slept during the day, when awakening he awakens without being startled, but having raised his head, having observed the position of the front paws and so on, if anything has shifted from its position, "This is not suitable for your birth, nor suitable for your valour," becoming displeased, he sleeps right there and does not depart for his food resort. With reference to this it was said - "Is displeased." But when they have remained without shifting, "This is suitable for your birth and valour," full of mirth,

having risen, having stretched with a lion's stretch, having shaken off the mass of his mane, having roared the lion's roar three times, he departs for his food resort. Therefore it was said - "Is pleased."

5. Explanation of the Discourse on Those Worthy of a Pagoda

247. In the fifth, "a wheel-turning monarch" - here, why does the Blessed One allow the making of a monument for a king who has died having lived in the midst of a household, but not for a moral worldling monk? Because it would not have been marvellous. For if monuments for worldling monks were allowed, in the island of Tambapaṇṇi alone there would be no room for monuments, and likewise in other places. Therefore, thinking "they would not be marvellous," he does not allow it. A wheel-turning monarch arises only once; therefore a monument for him is marvellous. However, for a moral worldling, just as for a monk who has attained final Nibbāna, it is proper indeed to make even a great honour. The sixth and seventh are of manifest meaning only.

8. Explanation of the First Discourse on Conventional Expression

250. In the eighth, "ignoble statements" means the talk of ignoble persons. The same method applies in the remaining ones too.

The Fear of Offences Chapter is the fifth.

The Fifth Fifty is finished.

6. The Chapter on Direct Knowledge

1-3. Explanation of the Discourse on Direct Knowledge and Others

254-256. In the first of the sixth, "through direct knowledge" means having known. "Serenity and insight" means unified focus of mind and insight knowledge of discernment of activities. "True knowledge and liberation" means true knowledge of path knowledge and the remaining associated mental states. In the second, "ignoble quest" means the search, the seeking of ignoble persons. "Subject to ageing" means having the intrinsic nature of ageing. The same method applies in the remaining ones too. The third is clear in itself.

4. Commentary on the Mālukiyaputta Discourse

257. In the fourth, "Mālukiyaputta" means the son of the brahmin woman Mālukiya. "Here" means in this request of yours for exhortation. By this he both disparages and exalts the elder. How? It is said that this one, having been attached to requisites in his youth, afterwards in old age, aspiring for forest dwelling, requests a meditation subject. Then the Blessed One, saying "What shall we say here to the young monks? Just as Mālukiyaputta, you too, having been attached to requisites in your youth, would enter the forest in old age and practise the duties of a monk" - speaking with this intention, he disparages the elder. But since the elder, even in old age, having entered the forest, was desirous of practising the duties of a monk, therefore the Blessed One said: "What shall we say here to the young monks? This Mālukiyaputta of

ours, even in old age, having entered the forest, desirous of practising the duties of a monk, requests a meditation subject. Yet you do not even make energy in your youth" - speaking with this intention, he exalts the elder - this is the explanation.

5-10. Explanation of the Discourse on Families and Others

258-263. In the fifth, "place in authority" means they place in the position of storekeeper. In the sixth, "endowed with beauty" means endowed with bodily complexion. "Endowed with power" means endowed with bodily strength. In the section on monks, "endowed with beauty" means endowed with the beauty of virtuous qualities. "Endowed with power" means endowed with the power of energy. "Endowed with speed" means endowed with the speed of knowledge. In the seventh too, the same method applies. The remainder here is clear in itself.

The Sixth is the Chapter on Direct Knowledge.

7. Explanation of the Chapter on Courses of Action

264-273. In the Chapter on Courses of Action too, the ten courses of action are spoken of as a mixture of mundane and supramundane only.

8. Explanation of Consecutive Repetitions on Lust

274-783. The Repetition Series on Lust has been spoken of having brought to arahantship. The remainder is of manifest meaning everywhere.

In the Manorathapūraṇī, the commentary on the Aṅguttara Nikāya,

the exposition of the Book of Fours 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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