

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

3. The Collection of the Connected Discourses -
Commentaries (3. Saṃyutta Nikāya - Aṭṭhakathā)

4. Commentary on the Chapter on the Six Sense Bases
(4. Saḷāyatanavagga-aṭṭhakathā)

7. Connected Discourses with Citta (7. Cittasaṃyuttaṃ)



PaliVerse

3. The Collection of the Connected Discourses - Commentaries

4. Commentary on the Chapter on the Six Sense Bases

7. Connected Discourses with Citta

1. Commentary on the Mental Fetter Discourse

343. In the first of the Cittasamyutta, "Macchikāsaṇḍa" means in the jungle thicket so named. "This discussion arose" - the elders of old were averse to pointless talk; having raised a question in every place where they sat, those not knowing would ask, those knowing would answer; therefore this discussion arose among them.

"Migapathaka" means his own revenue village so named. That, it is said, was at the rear of the Ambāṭaka Grove. "He approached" means having thought "I shall answer the elders' question and provide them with comfortable abiding," he approached. "In the deep word of the Buddha" means in the word of the Buddha that is deep in meaning and deep in the Teaching. "The eye of wisdom penetrates" means the eye of knowledge carries on and proceeds.

2. Commentary on the First Isidatta Discourse

344. In the second, "the Venerable Thera" means the most senior great elder among those elder monks. "Remained silent" means even though he knew, due to lack of self-confidence he did not say anything. "May I answer, venerable sir" - having thought "This elder neither answers himself nor invites others to do so, and the lay follower too is vexing the community of monks; I shall answer this and provide comfortable abiding," he rose from his seat, went to the elder's presence, and thus asked for permission. Having been given permission, he sat down on his own seat and answered.

"With own hand" means with his own hand. "Satisfied" means giving as much as desired, he well satiated them. "Served" means he caused them to refuse by both a hand signal and by speech saying "enough, enough." "With hands removed from the bowls" means the bowls having been removed from the hands, having washed them, having put them into the bag, with the bowls hung on the shoulder - this is the meaning.

3. Commentary on the Second Isidatta Discourse

345. In the third, "from Avanti" means in the Avanti country in the southern route. "That is well spoken" means he speaks with the intention that the statement "I will look after with the four requisites" is faultless and blameless, spoken by you, lay follower.

4. Commentary on the Mahaka Wonder Discourse

346. In the fourth, "distribute the remainder" means they, it is said, having polished a bronze plate together with the elders themselves, served the milk-rice and gave it to him. He, having eaten the milk-rice, wishing to go together with the elders themselves, thought "At home the female lay follower manages the remainder, but here these slaves and workers, not told by me, will not manage it, and thus this superior milk-rice will be lost," and allowing them, he spoke thus. "Kuthitan" means sweltering; the meaning is excessively sharp due to the heated sand below and the heat of the sun above. This, however, is an unbroken phrase in the word of the Buddha in the three Canons. "Paveliyamānena" means with a body that was melting away. "It would be good indeed, venerable sir" means having thought "I shall provide comfortable abiding for them," he spoke thus.

"Performed a feat of supernormal power" means he exercised the supernormal power of determination. And here, the diverse preliminary work such as "let a gentle, gentle cool wind blow, having made a canopy of clouds let the rain god sprinkle drop by drop" - with the determination as a single one such as "let the rain god rain with wind" is also possible. "Let the rain god rain with wind" is the single preliminary work, and "let a gentle, gentle cool wind blow, having made a canopy of clouds let the rain god sprinkle drop by drop" - thus is the diverse determination. By the method already stated, diverse preliminary work with diverse determination, and single preliminary work with single determination also exist indeed. But for one doing it in whatever way, having emerged from the basic meditative absorption and having done the preliminary work, immediately after the preliminary work, that succeeds through the exalted consciousness of determination itself. "Scattered" means strewed about.

5. Commentary on the First Kāmabhū Discourse

347. In the fifth, "faultless" means without fault. "With white covering" means with white covering. "Free from trouble" means free from suffering. "Having been silent for a moment" means for the purpose of considering its meaning, turning over the three Canons like an earring in the ear, for the purpose of examining "this is the meaning of this, this is the meaning of this," having been silent for a moment. "Of liberation" means of the liberation of the fruition of arahantship. But in explaining this question, the lay follower did a difficult thing. For the Perfectly Enlightened One spoke from what he himself had seen, saying "Do you see, monks, this monk coming, fair-skinned, thin, with a prominent nose?" But this one, by grasping the method, said "this is a designation for the worthy one."

6. Commentary on the Second Kāmabhū Discourse

348. In the sixth, "How many, venerable sir, are the activities?" - this householder, it is said, resorts to cessation; therefore, having thought "I shall ask about the activities that are the basis for cessation," he spoke thus. The Elder too, having known his intention, although there are many activities existing such as meritorious volitional activity and so on, indicating only bodily activity and so on, said beginning with "There are three, householder." Therein, because of being connected to the body, it is prepared and produced by the body - thus it is bodily activity. It prepares and produces by speech - thus it is verbal activity. Because of being connected to consciousness, it is prepared and produced by consciousness - thus it is mental activity.

"But which, venerable sir?" - what is being asked here? "These activities are mutually mixed, confounded, obscure, and difficult to illustrate. For thus, the eight sensual-sphere wholesome volitions and twelve unwholesome volitions that have arisen having brought about taking, grasping, releasing, and stirring at the body door - thus twenty wholesome and unwholesome volitions as well as in-breath and out-breath are called bodily activity only. The twenty volitions of the aforementioned kind that have arisen having brought about the stirring of the jaw and verbal expression at the verbal door, as well as applied and sustained thought, are called verbal activity only. The twenty-nine wholesome and unwholesome volitions that have arisen for one sitting in a secret place and reflecting, without having reached the point of stirring at the body and verbal doors, as well as these two mental states - perception and feeling - are called mental activity only. Thus these activities are mutually mixed, confounded, obscure, and difficult to illustrate; I shall make them obvious and clear and have them explained" - thus he asked.

"But why, venerable sir?" - here he asks the meaning of the terms bodily activity and so on. In the answer to that, "connected to the body" means dependent on the body. When the body exists they exist; when it is absent they do not exist. "Connected to consciousness" means dependent on consciousness. When consciousness exists they exist; when it is absent they do not exist.

Now, asking for the purpose of knowing "Does this one resort to the cessation of perception and feeling or does he not resort to it, or is he a master through practice therein or not a master through practice?" he said "But how, venerable sir, does the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling come about?" In the answer to that, by the pair of terms "I shall attain" or "I am attaining," the time of the attainment of the plane of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is spoken of. By the term "I have attained," the inner cessation is meant. Likewise, by the former two terms the time with consciousness is spoken of; by the latter, the time without consciousness.

"His mind has been previously developed in such a way" means prior to the attainment of cessation, at the very time of determining the duration, the consciousness determining the duration has been developed thus: "I shall be without consciousness for this much time." "That leads him to that state" means whatever consciousness has been thus developed, that leads that person to that state, to the state of being without consciousness. "Verbal activity ceases first" means it ceases first, before the remaining activities, in the second meditative absorption itself. "Then bodily activity" means after that, bodily activity ceases in the fourth meditative absorption. "Then mental activity" means after that, mental activity ceases within the inner cessation. "Vitality" means the material life faculty. "Destroyed" means injured, perished.

Therein, some say "From the statement 'mental activity too has ceased' regarding one attained to cessation, consciousness has not ceased; therefore this attainment is with consciousness." They should be told - From the statement "his verbal activity too has ceased," speech has not ceased; therefore one who has attained cessation should be able to sit while teaching the Dhamma and while doing chanting. From the statement "the mental activity of this one who is dead, deceased, has also ceased," consciousness would not have ceased; therefore by one who cremates the deceased

mother or father or Worthy Ones, a heinous action with immediate bad destination would have been committed. Thus, without adhering to the letter, standing in the method of the teachers, the meaning should be examined. For the meaning is the refuge, not the letter.

"His faculties are very clear" means: for when the occurrence consisting of functional activity is taking place, as the sensitive matters are struck by external objects, the faculties become wearied, they become as if injured and smeared - like a mirror placed at a crossroads covered by dust raised by wind and so on. But just as a mirror, having been put into a bag and placed in a casket and so on, shines within itself, so for a monk who has attained cessation, the five sensitive matters shine exceedingly within the cessation. Therefore it was said "his faculties are very clear."

By the pair of terms "I shall emerge" or "I am emerging," the time within the cessation is spoken of; by the term "I have emerged," the time of fruition attainment. Likewise, by the former two terms the time without consciousness is spoken of; by the latter, the time with consciousness. "His mind has been previously developed in such a way" means prior to the attainment of cessation, at the very time of determining the duration, the consciousness determining the duration has been developed thus: "Having been without consciousness for this much time, after that I shall become one with consciousness." "That leads him to that state" means whatever consciousness has been thus developed, that leads that person to that state, to the state of having consciousness. Thus below the time of entering the attainment of cessation was taken up; here the time of emergence from cessation.

Now it is the time to speak the talk on cessation - the talk on cessation should be spoken. But that, having set down the matrix "Through being endowed with two powers and through the tranquillity of the three activities, through sixteen courses of knowledge, through nine courses of concentration, mastery-wisdom: knowledge of the attainment of cessation," has been spoken in every way in the Visuddhimagga; therefore it should be taken according to the method spoken there. But what is this called cessation? The non-continuance of the four aggregates through reflection. Then, for what purpose do they attain this? Being dissatisfied with the occurrence of activities, thinking "Having been without consciousness for seven days, we shall dwell happily; this is Nibbāna in the present life, that is to say, cessation" - for that purpose they attain it.

"Mental activity arises first" means for one emerging from cessation, the fruition attainment consciousness arises first. With reference to the perception and feeling associated with that, he said "mental activity arises first." "Then bodily activity" means after that, at the time of the life-continuum, bodily activity arises.

But does fruition attainment not produce in-breath and out-breath? It does produce them. But for this one, the fruition attainment is of the fourth meditative absorption; that does not produce them. Or what need is there of this? Whether the fruition attainment be of the first meditative absorption, or of the second, third, or fourth meditative absorption, for a monk who has emerged from the peaceful attainment, the in-breaths and out-breaths are negligible. Their negligible state should be known by the story of the Elder Sañjīva. For when the Elder Sañjīva, having emerged from the attainment, was walking along treading upon embers without flames resembling

kimsuka flowers, not even a thread's worth of his robe burned, nor was there even the slightest appearance of heat. They say "This is indeed the power of the attainment." Just so, for a monk who has emerged from a peaceful fruition attainment, the in-breaths and out-breaths are negligible. It should be understood that this was spoken with reference to the time of the life-continuum only.

"Then verbal activity" means beyond that, verbal activity arises at the time of exercising the functional occurrence. Does the life-continuum not produce applied and sustained thought? It does produce them. But the applied and sustained thought produced by that are unable to generate speech - thus this was spoken with reference to the time of exercising the functional occurrence itself.

"Empty contact" and so on should be explained both by way of its own qualities and by way of object. By way of its own qualities, first, the fruition attainment is called emptiness; with reference to the contact co-arisen with it, "empty contact" was said. In the signless and desireless too, the same method applies. By way of object, however, Nibbāna is called emptiness because of being void of lust and so on, signless because of the absence of the sign of lust and so on, and desireless because of the absence of the aspirations of lust, hate, and delusion. The contact in the fruition attainment arisen having taken Nibbāna, which is emptiness, as object, is called empty. In the signless and desireless too, the same method applies.

There is another discussion called "by way of approach." For emptiness, signless, and desireless are also terms for insight. Therein, whatever monk, having comprehended activities as impermanent, having seen as impermanent, emerges from impermanence, his insight leading to emergence is called signless. Whoever, having comprehended as suffering, having seen as suffering, emerges from suffering, his is called desireless. Whoever, having comprehended as non-self, having seen as non-self, emerges from non-self, his is called emptiness. Therein, the path of signless insight is called signless, the fruition of the signless path is called signless, when the contact co-arisen with the signless fruition attainment touches, it is said "signless contact touches." The same method applies to the desireless and emptiness as well. But when explained by way of approach, the alternative would arise whether it is empty contact or signless contact or desireless contact; therefore it should be explained both by way of its own qualities and by way of object. For thus it accords that "three contacts touch."

In "slanting towards seclusion" and so on, Nibbāna is called seclusion. Slanting towards that seclusion means bending down - thus "slanting towards seclusion." "Sloping towards seclusion" means having not gone elsewhere, standing as if bent towards where seclusion is - thus "sloping towards seclusion." Standing as if falling towards where seclusion is - thus "inclining towards seclusion."

7. Commentary on the Godatta Discourse

349. In the seventh, "different in meaning and different in phrasing" - their phrasing too is different, and their meaning too. Therein, the difference in phrasing is obvious. But as for the meaning, the limitless liberation of mind, by way of plane, is exalted, belonging to the fine-material-sphere; by way of object, it has beings-concept as object. The liberation of mind through nothingness, by way of plane, is exalted, belonging to the immaterial-sphere; by way of object, it has an inexpressible object.

Emptiness, by way of plane, belongs to the sensual-sphere; by way of object, it has activities as object. For here insight is what is intended as emptiness. The signless, by way of plane, is supramundane; by way of object, it has Nibbāna as object.

In the passage "Lust, venerable sir, is a maker of measure" and so on, just as at the foot of a mountain there is water with rotten leaves and dregs, which is dark in colour; to those looking at it, it appears as if a hundred fathoms deep; but for one who, having taken a stick or a rope, measures it, it is not even enough to cover the back of the foot; just so, as long as lust and so on do not arise, it is not possible to recognise the person; he appears like a stream-enterer, like a once-returner, and like a non-returner. But when lust and so on arise in him, then he is discerned as lustful, corrupt, or deluded. Thus these are called makers of measure because they arise as if showing the measure of a person, saying "this one is of such extent."

"As far as, venerable sir, there are limitless liberations of mind" means however many limitless liberations of mind there are. But how many are they? The four divine abidings, the four paths, and the four fruits - twelve. Therein, the divine abidings are limitless because of the limitlessness of pervading; the remaining ones are limitless because of the absence of mental defilements that are makers of measure. Nibbāna too is indeed limitless, but it is not a liberation of mind; therefore it was not included. "Unshakeable" means the liberation of mind of the fruition of arahantship. For that is the most senior of them all; therefore it is said to be declared the foremost. "Lust, venerable sir, is a possession" - lust, having arisen, crushes, tramples, and obstructs a person; therefore it is said to be a possession. People, it is said, when having oxen trample a threshing floor, say "trample with the tawny ones, trample with the black ones." Thus the meaning of crushing should be understood as the meaning of possession. The same method applies to hate and delusion as well.

The liberations of mind through nothingness are nine phenomena: the plane of nothingness and the paths and fruits. Therein, the plane of nothingness is nothingness because there is no possession as object for it. The paths and fruits are nothingness because of the non-existence of the mental defilements that are possessions, that crush, that obstruct. Nibbāna too is nothingness, but it is not a liberation of mind; therefore it was not included.

In the passage "Lust, venerable sir, is a maker of signs" and so on, just as two similar calves belong to two families. As long as a characteristic has not been made on them, so long it is not possible to know "this is the calf of such and such a family, this is of such and such a family." But when a certain characteristic from among tridents and so on has been made on them, then it is possible to know. Just so, as long as lust does not arise in a person, so long it is not possible to know "whether he is a noble one or a worldlyling." But when lust arises in him, it arises as if making a sign for recognising "this person is one with lust"; therefore it is said "a maker of signs." The same method applies to hate and delusion as well.

The signless liberations of mind comprise thirteen phenomena - insight, the four immaterial states, the four paths, and the four fruitions. Therein, insight is called signless because it removes the sign of permanence, the sign of happiness, and the sign of self. The four immaterial states are called signless due to the absence of the sign of materiality. The paths and fruitions are signless due to the absence of the

mental defilements that are makers of signs. Nibbāna too is indeed signless, but it is not a liberation of mind; therefore it was not included. Then why was the liberation of mind through emptiness not included? That, because of the statement "empty of lust" and so on, has entered into all of them; therefore it was not included separately.

"One in meaning" means one in meaning by way of object. For limitless, nothingness, emptiness, and signless - all these are names of Nibbāna itself. Thus, by this method, they are one in meaning. But in one instance it is limitless, in another nothingness, in another emptiness, in another signless - by this method they are different in phrasing.

8. Commentary on the Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta Discourse

350. In the eighth, "approached" - being one who has learnt the collections, who has understood the teaching, a non-returner, a noble disciple, why did he approach the naked, crooked, miserable Jain? For the purpose of freeing from blame and for the purpose of imposing a debate. The Jains, it seems, blamed thus: "The disciples of the ascetic Gotama are like rigid acacia stumps; they do not even show hospitality to anyone." For the purpose of freeing from that blame, and thinking "I shall impose a debate upon him," he approached. "I do not go by faith in the Blessed One in this matter, venerable sir" - for one by whose knowledge it has not been realised. He might go by faith in another, thinking "So it seems." But by me this has been realised through knowledge; therefore I do not go by faith in the Blessed One in this matter - explaining thus, he spoke thus.

"Having looked up" means having raised up the body, having thrust out the belly, having stretched forth the neck, looking in every direction, having looked up. "Might think to obstruct" means might think to ward off, so that having pierced through it does not come out, or might think to bind it. "Reasonable" means with reason. "Then you may refute me together with the assembly of Jains" - when the meaning of these is known, then you should come to me together with the assembly of Jains; the meaning is, having come to my presence for the refutation, you should make known your having come. "One question" means one path of questioning, one search for a question - this is the meaning. "One synopsis" means what is called one, what is it? This is the one synopsis. "One explanation" - "all beings are sustained by nutriment" - this is the one explanation. Thus the meaning should be understood everywhere.

9. Commentary on the Acelakassapa Sutta

351. In the ninth, "how long have you been gone forth" means "how long a time have you been gone forth" - this is the meaning. "Super-human achievement" means human achievement is the ten wholesome courses of action; beyond that human achievement. "A distinction of knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones" means a distinction of knowledge and vision reckoned as "worthy of the noble ones" by virtue of its ability to produce the noble state. "Nakedness" means from the state of being naked. "Shaving the head" means from the state of being shaven. "Brushing off dust" means from brushing off the buttocks; the meaning is merely a peacock-tail fan taken for the purpose of brushing off the dust, dirt and sand stuck to the buttock area of one sitting on the ground.

10. Commentary on the Visiting the Sick Discourse

352. In the tenth, "park deities" means deities dwelling in flower parks and fruit parks. "Forest deities" means deities dwelling in jungle thickets. "Tree deities" means deities dwelling in those various trees, such as Vessavaṇa and deities in the time of Mattarāja. "In medicinal plants, grasses, and forest trees" means deities dwelling in yellow myrobalan, emblic myrobalan, and so on; in muṇja grass, pabbaja grass, and so on; and in the foremost trees of the forest. "Having come together" means having assembled. "Having assembled" means having come together from here and there. "Make an aspiration" means establish by way of aspiration. "The mental aspiration of one who is moral will succeed" means the mental aspiration of one who is virtuous will succeed. "Righteous" means endowed with the ten wholesome qualities and free from going by bias. "King of righteousness" is a synonym for that very thing; or, a king of righteousness because of having obtained the kingdom by righteousness. "Therefore" means because you say "If so, master's son, exhort us too," therefore. "Undivided" means not divided thus: "We will give this to the monks, we will consume this ourselves" - it will be common, shared with the monks.

The Commentary on the Citta Connected Discourses is concluded.



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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