

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya -
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10. Commentary on the Past Life Histories-1 - of the Elder Monks
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PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

10. Commentary on the Past Life Histories-1 - of the Elder Monks

7. The Chapter on Sakacittaniya

1. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Sakacintaniya

Beginning with "Having seen the forest wilds" is the life history of the Venerable Elder Sakacintaniya. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, having been reborn in a certain family home, following the course of growth, having arisen at the end of that Blessed One's life span, not having reached the Blessed One while he was still living, at the time of his final Nibbāna, having gone forth in the going forth of sages, dwelling in the Himalayas, having reached a secluded, delightful forest, right there in a certain grotto, having made a sand shrine, having formed a perception of the Blessed One, and having formed a perception of it as containing relics, having venerated it with forest flowers, paying homage, he tended it. He, by that meritorious action, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, having experienced in both the foremost, the foremost success, and the foremost success of a universal monarch, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, accomplished in wealth, accomplished in faith, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, became a Worthy One, a possessor of the six higher knowledges.

1. He, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Having seen the forest wilds." Therein, "forest wilds" means: by way of manner, a forest that is spread out, extended, become a thicket - thus "forest wilds." "Forest" means a despised face, a bearing, constantly thick with lions, tigers, demons, goblins, wild elephants, horses, supaññas, serpents, flocks of birds, jungle fowl, cuckoos, or their sounds - thus "forest." That forest wilds reckoned as forest, because of being devoid of human sounds, has little sound, is noiseless - this is the meaning. "Undisturbed" means not agitated, free from danger - this is the meaning. "Frequented by sages" means frequented by, resorted to by sages reckoned as Buddhas, Individually Enlightened Ones, Worthy Ones who have eliminated the mental corruptions - this is the meaning. "The receiver of oblations" means "āhuna" is called veneration and honour; the receptacle is like a house - this is the meaning.

2. "Having made a monument of bamboo" means having made a shrine with bamboo strips - this is the meaning. "Sprinkled with various flowers" means I sprinkled with many flowers such as campaka and so on, I venerated - this is the meaning. "As if face to face with the Perfectly Enlightened One" means as if in the presence of the living Enlightened by himself, I with distinction venerated, I paid homage to the created, the produced shrine - this is the meaning. The remainder is easily

understood.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Sakacintaniya is complete.

2. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Avopupphiya

The life history of the Venerable Elder Avopupphiya beginning with "Having gone forth from the dwelling" and so on. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Sikhī, having been reborn in a family home, having attained discretion, accomplished in faith, having heard the Teaching, having attained pleasure, having taken various flowers with both hands, he sprinkled them over the Buddha. He, by that merit, wandering in the round of rebirths among gods and humans, having experienced both heavenly success and the success of a universal monarch, venerated everywhere, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, having come of age, having gained confidence in the Dispensation, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One. "Ākāsa" is so called because it shines and gleams completely from all around; because of scattering flowers in that space, he became well-known as the Elder Avopupphiya.

7. Thus, having attained the state of peace, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, he said beginning with "Having gone forth from the dwelling." Therein, "dwelling" means: with distinction he carries, he brings along, maintains his individual existence without letting it fall in the four postures - herein, thus it is a dwelling; therefore, "from the dwelling" means having especially gone forth, having gone out. "Having risen up on the walking path" means: for the purpose of walking meditation, he especially rose up, ascended onto the walking path of sixty cubits - this is the meaning. "Making known the four truths" means: walking up and down on that walking path, making known the four truths reckoned as the truths of suffering, origin, cessation, and path, making them manifest, teaching the Deathless state, Nibbāna, analysing, making clear, on that walking path - this is the connection.

8. "Having understood the word of Sikhī, the Buddha, the foremost, such a one" means having understood, having known the word, the sound, the utterance of the Buddha Sikhī, the foremost, endowed with such qualities. "Having taken various flowers" means having taken, having brought many flowers such as nāga, punnāga, and so on. "I sprinkled them in the sky" means I scattered upon the head of the Blessed One as he was walking up and down, in space, I venerated him.

9. "By that action, lord of bipeds" means the lord, the chief among two-footed beings - gods, brahmās, and humans. "Bull among men" means one who has become bull-like among men. "I have attained the unshakeable state" means having gone forth in your presence, I have attained, I am one who has attained the unshakeable state, Nibbāna. "Having abandoned victory and defeat" means having abandoned, having discarded both victory, which is termed divine and human success, and defeat, which is termed the suffering of the four realms of misery, I have attained Nibbāna - this is the meaning. The remainder is easily understood.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Avopupphiya is complete.

3. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Paccāgamaniya

The life history of the Venerable Elder Paccāgamaniya begins with "On the bank of the river Sindhu" and so on. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vipassī, was reborn in the realm of the ruddy goose near the river Sindhu, the Ganges, and because of being endowed with previous accumulated requisites, not eating living beings, feeding only on moss, he wandered about. At that time, the Blessed One Vipassī, showing favour to beings, went there. At that moment, that ruddy goose, having seen the shining Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, having cut a sal flower from a sal tree with his beak, having come, he honoured him. He, by that very confidence of mind, having passed away from there, having been reborn in the heavenly world, having experienced the success of the six sensual-sphere existences again and again, having passed away from there, having been reborn in the human world, having experienced the success of a universal monarch and so on, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, having attained discretion, having gained confidence in the Teacher by the power of former conduct, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One; because of having been a ruddy goose and having seen the Blessed One and having gone somewhere and having brought flowers and having venerated him, by the name of his former merit, he became well-known as the Elder Paccāgamaniya.

13. Having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, he said beginning with "On the bank of the river Sindhu." "Sī" means that which shakes, making a cool sound, trembles - thus "sindhu"; that which goes roaring, making a sound - thus "nadī" (river). "I was a ruddy goose then" means a ruddy goose is one that goes swiftly, like a wheel going swiftly, whether in water or on land or in space - thus "cakkavāka" (ruddy goose). The meaning is: then, at the time of seeing the Blessed One Vipassī, I was a ruddy goose. "Feeding on pure moss" means: because of being unmixed with other food resorts, I dwell eating only pure moss. "And well-restrained in evil deeds" means: by the force of former impressions, well restrained in evil-doing, restrained through the three doors, well-trained.

14. "I saw the stainless Buddha" means because of being devoid of lust, hate, and delusion, I saw, I perceived, the stainless, free from mental defilement Buddha. "Going through the sky-path" means the Buddha going through the sky-path, the path of the sky. "With my beak" means with my beak of the mouth; "having held up a sal flower" means having taken up a sal flower; "I offered it to Vipassī" means I venerated the Blessed One Vipassī - this is the meaning. The remainder is easily understood.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Paccāgamaniya is complete.

4. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Parappasādaka

The life history of the Venerable Elder Parappasādaka beginning with "The bull, the excellent, the hero." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Siddhattha, was reborn in a brahmin family, who had mastered the three Vedas together with their

vocabularies and rituals, phonology and etymology, and the histories as a fifth, learned in verse, a grammarian, fully versed in worldly knowledge and the marks of a great man, well-known by the name of Sela the brahmin, having seen the Blessed One Siddhattha, having seen him shining with the thirty-two characteristics of a great man and the eighty minor features, with a gladdened mind, made known his praise with many reasons and many similes. He, by that meritorious action, having experienced the six sensual-sphere successes beginning with those of Sakka and Māra in the heavenly world, having experienced the success of a universal monarch among human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home accomplished in wealth, having attained discretion, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long having attained the four analytical knowledges and the six higher knowledges, became a great one who had eliminated the mental corruptions, and because of generating confidence of mind in all beings through praise of the Buddha, he became well-known as the Elder Parappasādaka.

20. One day, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, he said beginning with "The bull, the excellent, the hero." Therein, "bull" (usabha) - vasabha, nisabha, visabha, āsabha - these are four foremost bulls. Therein, the chief of a hundred cattle is a vasabha, the chief of a thousand cattle is a nisabha, the chief of a hundred thousand cattle is a visabha, the chief of ten million hundred thousand cattle is an āsabha - and learned brahmin scholars, when offering praise to anyone whatsoever, offer praise according to their own respective wisdom, but there is not even one who is able to offer praise to the Buddhas in every way. For the Buddha is immeasurable. For this was said:

"Even a Buddha could speak the praise of a Buddha, even for a cosmic cycle, speaking of nothing else;

The cosmic cycle would be exhausted in the long interval, but the praise of the Truth-finder would not be exhausted."

And so on. This brahmin too, by way of what had come to his lips, by way of a single expression of confidence, where "āsabha" should have been said, said beginning with "usabha." "One who should be chosen, who should be desired" is "excellent" (vara). Because of energy exerted over many hundreds of thousands of cosmic cycles, he is a hero. One who seeks, searches for the great aggregate of morality and so on is the great sage (mahesī); that great sage, the Buddha. One who has conquered with distinction the Māras beginning with the mass of mental defilements and Māra is the victorious one (vijitāvī); that victorious Enlightened by himself. The Enlightened by himself whose colour is like the colour of gold, he is golden-coloured; having seen that golden-coloured Enlightened by himself, what being indeed is not pleased?

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Parappasādaka is complete.

5. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Bhisadāyaka

The life history of the Venerable Elder Bhisadāyaka, beginning with "Vessabhū by name." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Vessabhū, was born in the

elephant womb in the Himalayas and dwelt there. At that time, the Blessed One Vessabhū, desiring seclusion, went to the Himalayas. Having seen him, that noble elephant, with a gladdened mind, having taken lotus roots and fibres, fed the Blessed One. He, by that meritorious action, having passed away from the elephant womb, having been reborn in the heavenly world, having experienced there the six sensual-sphere successes, having come to human existence, having experienced the success of a universal monarch and so on among human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family of great wealth, by the power of former impressions, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One; by the name of the wholesome deed formerly done, he became well-known as the Elder Bhisadāyaka.

29. He, having remembered his former deed, showing his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Vessabhū by name." Therein, "Vessabhū" means: he consumes, transcends the merchant class - thus Vessabhū. Or, he consumes, overcomes the merchant class, or the merchant's work, or sensual lust and so on, or wholesome deeds and so on, or objective sensual pleasures and defilement sensual pleasures - thus Vessabhū; he was the Blessed One named Vessabhū by name. "He was the third of the sages" means: one who seeks, searches for wholesome mental states is a sage; because it was said "Vipassī, Sikhī, Vessabhū," the third sage, the third Blessed One; "ahu" means "he was" - this is the meaning. "Having entered the forest grove" means: having plunged into, having entered the forest reckoned as a grove - the meaning is he entered.

30. "Having taken lotus roots and fibres" means: it hurts, injures, and destroys the hunger of two-footed and four-footed creatures, thus it is "bhisa" (lotus root). What is that? A lotus tuber. Lotus roots and fibres are "lotus roots and fibres." Having taken those lotus roots and fibres - this is the meaning.

31. "And touched by the hand" means that gift given by me, by Vessabhū, the one of supreme intelligence, of highest intelligence, was touched, made contact with, by the hand, by the palm of the hand. "I do not know of happiness equal to that, how much less surpassing it" means I do not know of happiness equal to that happiness; from that, beyond, from that, further, from that, exceeding happiness, where? - this is the meaning. The remainder is easily understood in accordance with the method.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Bhisadāyaka is complete.

6. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Sucintita

The life history of the Venerable Elder Sucintita, beginning with "I was a roamer in mountain fastnesses." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Atthadassī, was born in a hunter's family in the Himalayan region, and dwelt killing and eating deer, boars, and so on. At that time, the Lord of the World, dependent on benefiting the world and compassion for beings, went to the Himalayas. At that time, that hunter, having seen the Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, gave the excellent sweet meat that had been brought for his own eating. The Blessed One accepted it out of compassion for him, and having consumed it, having spoken thanksgiving,

departed. He, by that very merit, by that very pleasure, having passed away from there, wandering in the round of rebirths in fortunate worlds, having experienced the six sensual-sphere successes, having experienced the success of a universal monarch and so on among human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a family home, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

36. Having attained the distinctions such as the four analytical knowledges and the five direct knowledges, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, he said beginning with "I was a roamer in mountain fastnesses." "It makes a sound (girati)" thus it is "giri" (mountain). What is that? A mountain made of rock and soil; "dugga" means a place difficult to go, to be traversed with difficulty; a difficult place because of mountains is "giriduggaṃ" (mountain fortress); the meaning is "difficult to go." In that mountain fortress, in the mountain caves, I was a roamer, one accustomed to roaming, I was, I existed. "Well-born like a lion" means born with distinction, arisen, like a lion, like a maned lion, "I roam in the mountain fortress" - this is the meaning.

40. "I entered the mountain fortress" means I at that time, filled with joy and happiness by that gift of meat, entered the mountain interior. The remainder is of manifest meaning only.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Sucintita is complete.

7. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Vatthadāyaka

The life history of the Venerable Elder Vatthadāyaka, beginning with "Born as a bird then I was." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Atthadassī, having been reborn in the realm of supaṇṇas, having seen the Blessed One Atthadassī going to Mount Gandhamādana, with a gladdened mind, having abandoned the appearance of a supaṇṇa, having created the appearance of a young man, having taken a very costly divine garment, he venerated the Blessed One. That Blessed One too, having accepted it, having spoken thanksgiving, departed. He, having spent time by that very pleasure, having remained as long as life lasted, having passed away from there, having been reborn in the heavenly world, wandering there again and again in the round of rebirths, having experienced meritorious deeds, then among human beings, as human success, everywhere very costly cloths and ornaments were obtained; then, in each and every existence that arose, dwelling in each and every place visited under the shade of cloth, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, having attained discretion, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long he became one who had attained the six higher knowledges and eliminated the mental corruptions; he became well-known by the name of one who has performed meritorious deeds as the Elder Vatthadāyaka.

45. He, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Born as a bird then I was." Therein, "born as a bird" means: "a bird springs forward and flies up by means of this" - thus it is a wing; "he has a wing" - thus he is a winged one; the meaning is born, arisen in

the realm of the winged ones. "Supaṇṇa" means one whose feathers, wings, are beautiful - he is a supaṇṇa; the meaning is one of great burden with wings shining with golden colour seized by the wind. "Lord of the garuḷas" means: "they swallow heavy burdens, stones, for the purpose of seizing serpents" - thus they are garuḷas; the lord, the king of the garuḷas is the lord of the garuḷas; the connection is "I saw the stainless Buddha."

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Vatthadāyaka is complete.

8. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Ambadāyaka

Beginning with "The Blessed One Anomadassī" is the life history of the Venerable Elder Ambadāyaka. This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Anomadassī, was reborn in a monkey womb, and having become a monkey king in the Himalayas, was dwelling there. At that time, the Blessed One Anomadassī, out of compassion for him, went to the Himalayas. Then that monkey king, having seen the Blessed One, with a gladdened mind, gave a very sweet mango fruit with bee honey. Then the Blessed One, while he was watching, having consumed all that, having spoken thanksgiving, departed. Then he, with a heart accomplished in pleasure, by that very joy and pleasure, having remained as long as life lasted, having passed away from there, was reborn in the heavenly world, having experienced divine happiness there again and again, and having experienced human success among human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home accomplished in wealth, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long became one who had attained the six higher knowledges. By the name of his former merit, he became well-known as the Elder Ambadāyaka.

53. He afterwards, having seen the wholesome seed made by himself, filled with pleasure, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "The Blessed One Anomadassī." "Pervaded the world with friendliness, the immeasurable, without clinging" means that Blessed One, having made the immeasurable beings in the entire world without clinging, free from clinging, by means beginning with "may they be happy," pervaded, spread, increased with friendliness, with a mind of friendliness - this is the meaning.

54. "I was a monkey then" means at that time, at the time of his coming, he was a monkey king - this is the meaning.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Ambadāyaka is complete.

9. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Sumana

The life history of the Venerable Elder Sumana, beginning with "Sumana by name." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Sikhī, having been reborn in the family home of a garland-maker, following the course of growth, in whom faith had arisen, with a gladdened mind towards the Blessed One, having taken handfuls of jasmine garlands, he honoured him with both hands. He, by that merit, having

experienced the two successes among gods and human beings, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home, following the course of growth, having grown with children and wife, well-known by the name Sumana, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, before long became a Worthy One.

62. He, having become a Worthy One, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Sumana by name." One whose mind, consciousness, is beautiful, he is Sumana (the glad one). Endowed with faith, confidence and veneration, by name Sumana, a garland-maker, then I was.

63. "Of Sikhi, the kinsman of the world": the crest, the head, shines - thus "Sikhi." Or, in associated association, he eats, destroys - thus "Sikhi." What is that? A flame of fire; because of shining with a flame like a flame of fire, he is "Sikhi." Just as a flame of fire shines and is well-known, fire burns leaves, grass, wood, foliage and so on, so too this Blessed One shines with blue, yellow and other rays and is well-known in the dwelling place of the entire world. He dries up, destroys, and burns up all the mental defilements present in his own continuity - thus is the conventional expression, the name, the naming, the appellation, of that Sikhi. The kinsman and relative of the entire world - thus "kinsman of the world." I placed upon, I venerated with jasmine flowers that Sikhi, the kinsman of the world, the Blessed One - this is the meaning.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Sumana is complete.

10. Commentary on the Life History of the Elder Pupphacaṅkoṭiya

The life history of the Venerable Elder Pupphacaṅkoṭiya, beginning with "Like a fearless lion." This one too, having formed aspirations under former Buddhas, accumulating meritorious deeds as a decisive support for the end of the round of rebirths in this and that existence, in the time of the Blessed One Sikhi, having been reborn in a certain family home, having attained discretion, accomplished in great wealth, having gained confidence in the Teacher, showing signs of faith, having picked golden-coloured anoja flowers, having filled a basket, having venerated the Blessed One, he made the aspiration: "Blessed One, as an outcome of this, in whatever place I am reborn, may I become golden-coloured, worthy of veneration, and attain Nibbāna." He, by that meritorious action, reborn among gods and humans, venerated everywhere, was golden-coloured and handsome. He afterwards, in this arising of a Buddha, having been reborn in a certain family home accomplished in wealth, having come of age, having gained confidence in the Teacher, having gone forth, having developed insight, before long became a Worthy One.

68-69. He, having attained the fruition of arahantship, having remembered his former deed, filled with joy, making known his former conduct, his life history, said beginning with "Like a fearless lion." Therein, "lion" means: one who overcomes and overpowers beings such as two-footed and four-footed creatures is a lion; "of fearless nature" means of fearless intrinsic nature; the connection is: they venerated Sikhī who was seated like that fearless lion. Like the king of Garuḷas, the chief of birds; like the excellent, the highest, the king of tigers; like a maned lion, born with distinction, the distinction among all lions; the refuge of the three worlds, the Perfectly Enlightened One Sikhī. What had it come to be? Without longing, free from mental

defilement, unconquered by the aggregate-Māra and so on, seated - Sikhī - this is the connection. "Foremost in destroying" means the highest, the foremost in destroying, drying up, and demolishing all mental defilements; the meaning is: the foremost among those who destroy the mental defilements - even though Individually Enlightened Ones and disciples of the Buddha exist, the foremost among them. Honoured by the community of monks, surrounded, having surrounded him, seated - Sikhī - this is the connection.

70. "Having placed in a basket" means having filled a casket with the highest anoja flower, I sprinkled the foremost Enlightened by himself Sikhī, I venerated - this is the meaning.

The commentary on the life history of the Elder Pupphacaṅkoṭiya is complete.

The commentary on the seventh chapter is complete.



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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