

# THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

*The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom*

## Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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2. The Canon of Discipline - Commentaries (2. Vinaya  
Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)

3. Commentary on the Great Chapter (3. Mahāvagga-  
aṭṭhakathā)

7. The Section on Kathina (7. Kathinakkhandhakaṃ)

[Kd 7, PTS 1.253-1.267]



PaliVerse

### 3. Commentary on the Great Chapter

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#### 7. The Chapter on Kaṭhina

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##### Discussion on the Allowance of Kaṭhina

**306.** In the Kathina Section - "Pāveyyakā" means inhabitants of the Pāveyya country. Pāveyya is a country in the western region of Kosala; it is said that they were dwellers there. This is a designation for the Bhaddavaggiya elders, who were brothers of the same father as the King of Kosala. Among them, the most senior was a non-returner, the most junior was a stream-enterer, and there was not a single one who was either an arahant or an ordinary person. "Forest-dwellers" means forest-dwellers by virtue of having undertaken the ascetic practice; not merely by dwelling in the forest. The same method applies to their being almsfood eaters and so forth. And this is stated by way of the principal practice. But these monks practised having undertaken all thirteen ascetic practices. "When the waters had merged" means gathered together, joined, mixed with water; the meaning is that both high ground and low ground had become one body of water.

"When there was mud from the water" means mud from the water rising up at every place stepped upon and striking up to the buttocks; the meaning is such mud.

"Okapuṇṇehi" means full of water. Their robes, it is said, were thick, and the water that fell on them did not drip off but remained as if bound in a bundle due to their thickness. Therefore it was said - "with robes full of water." "Oghapuṇṇehi" is also a reading.

Regarding "we dwelt without contention for the rains retreat" - here, because of the lack of comfort in lodgings at a place for visitors, and because of their dissatisfaction at not obtaining an audience with the Blessed One, those monks did not dwell comfortably; therefore they did not say "we dwelt without contention comfortably for the rains retreat." "Having given a talk on the Teaching" means the Blessed One gave those monks a talk on the beginningless round of existence. All of them, at the conclusion of the talk, having attained arahantship, rose up into the sky from the very place where they were sitting and departed; with reference to that it is said - "having given a talk on the Teaching." Then the Blessed One, having considered "if the spreading of the kathina had been prescribed, these monks, coming with inner and outer robes having set aside one robe, would not have been so wearied, and the spreading of the kathina has been allowed by all Buddhas," wishing to allow the spreading of the kathina, addressed the monks, and having addressed them, said beginning with "I allow, monks" etc.

Therein, "atthatakathinānaṃ vo" - "vo" is merely a particle, an indeclinable; the meaning is "of those who have allocated the kathina-privileges." For when it is thus, what follows - "so nesaṃ bhavissati" - is fitting. Alternatively, "vo" is indeed a genitive form. Regarding "so nesaṃ" here - the meaning is that whatever robe-cloth arises, it will be for those who have allocated the kathina-privileges.

Therein, "going without taking leave" means that as long as the kathina is not revoked, going without taking leave will be allowable; the meaning is that there will be no offence under the training rule on proper conduct. "Going without taking the complete set of robes" means going without taking up the three robes; the meaning is that separation from robes will be allowable. "A group meal" means a group meal too will be allowable. "As many robes as needed" means as many robes as needed; the meaning is that keeping that much undetermined and unassigned will be allowable. "And whatever robe-cloth arises there" means in the territory where the kathina has been spread, whether it be a robe of a deceased monk, or given dedicated to the Community, or brought by means of communal property arising there, by whatever manner any communal robe-cloth arises, the meaning is that it will be theirs.

"And thus, monks, the kathina should be spread" - here, who obtains the spreading of the kathina, and who does not obtain it? In terms of number, at the minimum limit five persons obtain it, upwards even a hundred thousand, but fewer than five do not obtain it. In terms of having completed the rains residence, those who entered the rains retreat on the earlier date and have performed the invitation ceremony at the first invitation obtain it; those whose rains residence is broken or those who entered on the later date do not obtain it, and even those who have completed the rains residence at another monastery do not obtain it - thus it is stated in the Mahāpaccarī. However, for those who entered on the earlier date, all serve as quorum-fillers; they do not obtain the privileges, the privileges belong only to the others. If those who entered on the earlier date are four, or three, or two, or one, making the others quorum-fillers, the kathina should be spread. Then if four monks have entered, and one novice has completed his years, if he receives full ordination on the later date, he both serves as a quorum-filler and obtains the privileges. Three monks and two novices, two monks and three novices, one monk and four novices - in these cases too the same method applies. If those who entered on the earlier date are not skilled in spreading the kathina, elders who are chapter-reciters skilled in the spreading should be sought and brought. Having recited the formal act, having had the kathina spread, and having partaken of the offering, they will depart. The privileges, however, belong only to the others.

By whom is it proper for the kathina to be given? It is proper when given by anyone, whether a deity or a human being, or by any one of the five co-religionists. There is a duty for the kathina donor; if he, not knowing it, asks - "Venerable sir, how should the kathina be given?" he should be told thus - "It is proper to give cloth sufficient for any one of the three robes at the time of sunrise, saying 'We give kathina-cloth.' For its preparation, so many needles, so much thread, so much dye, and it is proper to give rice-gruel and food to so many monks who are doing the preparation."

The one spreading the kathina too should know the duty of one spreading the kathina that has arisen rightfully and properly. For a cloth smeared with starch just as brought from the weaver's house is not proper, and a soiled cloth too is not proper; therefore, having obtained the cloth for spreading the kathina, having washed it well, having prepared needles and other requisites for robe-making, having sewn it together with many monks on that very day, having dyed the completed needlework, having applied the mark, the kathina should be spread. If before that one is spread, someone

brings another kathina cloth, and gives many other cloths as kathina-privilege items, it should be spread with the cloth belonging to the one who gives the greater privilege. The other should be advised and made to understand in whatever way appropriate.

But by whom should the kathina be spread? By the one to whom the Community gives the kathina-cloth. But to whom should the Community give it? To the one who has worn-out robes. If many have worn-out robes, it should be given to the senior one. Even among the seniors, the one who has a large following and is able to make the robe and spread it on that very day, it should be given to him. If the senior one is not able but a more junior one is able, it should be given to him. Furthermore, it is proper for the Community to show consideration to the great elder; therefore it should be said: "Venerable sir, please accept it; we shall make it and present it." Whichever of the three robes is worn out, it should be given for that purpose. For one who normally has a double-layered robe, it should be given for a double-layered one only. If, however, his single-layered robe is thick and the kathina cloth is thin, for the sake of suitability, enough for a double-layered one should be given; even to one who says "Not obtaining it, I shall wear a single-layered one," it is proper to give a double-layered one. But to one who is naturally greedy, it should not be given. By him too it should not be accepted thinking "Having spread the kathina, I shall afterwards sew and make two robes." But to the one to whom it is given, in order to show the procedure by which it should be given, beginning with "And thus, monks, the kathina should be spread," the formal act of giving beginning with "Let the venerable Community hear me" is first stated.

When the kathina has been thus given, if that kathina cloth already has its preparatory work completed, that is good. If the preparatory work is not completed, no one should refrain from doing it thinking "I am an elder" or "I am learned"; all should assemble together and complete the washing, sewing, and dyeing. For this kathina duty is praised by the Buddha. In the past, the Blessed One Padumuttara also performed the kathina duty. It is said that his chief disciple, the elder named Sujāta, received the kathina, and the Teacher, sitting together with sixty-eight hundred thousand monks, made it.

Having taken the kathina whose making has been completed, the monk who is to spread it, if he wishes to spread the kathina with the outer robe, the old outer robe should be relinquished, the new outer robe should be determined. The kathina should be spread according to the procedure stated in the Parivāra beginning with "The declaration 'I spread the kathina with this outer robe' should be uttered." And having spread it, "that monk who spread the kathina, having approached the Community, having arranged the upper robe over one shoulder, having raised his hands in añjali, should say thus - 'Venerable sirs, the kathina of the Community has been spread, the spreading of the kathina is legitimate, please approve it.' Those approving monks, having arranged the upper robe over one shoulder, having raised their hands in añjali, should say thus - 'Friends, the kathina of the Community has been spread, the spreading of the kathina is legitimate, we approve it.'" It should be approved according to the procedure stated in the Parivāra beginning thus, and the others should approve. Thus the kathina becomes spread for all. For this has been stated in the Parivāra: "The kathina becomes spread for two persons - for the one who spreads

it and for the one who approves it." Furthermore it is said - "The Community does not spread the kathina, a group does not spread the kathina, an individual spreads the kathina; through the approval of the Community, the approval of the group, and the spreading by the individual, the kathina becomes spread for the Community, the kathina becomes spread for the group, the kathina becomes spread for the individual."

When the kathina has been thus spread, if the donors give the benefit brought together with the kathina cloth saying "We give it to the very one by whom our kathina was received," the Community of monks has no authority. But if they give without specifying and depart, the Community of monks has authority. Therefore, if the remaining robes of the one who spread the kathina are also weak, having consulted the Community, cloths should be given for their sake as well. But only one formal act of announcement is sufficient. The remaining kathina benefits, the strong cloths, should be given according to the seniority of those who resided for the rains; in the absence of seniority of residence, they should be given starting from the elder's seat; heavy goods should not be divided. If, however, there are many monasteries within one boundary, all monks should be assembled and the kathina should be spread in one place; it is not allowable to spread it separately.

**308.** Now, in order to show in detail the procedure as to how the kathina-privilege is spread and how it is not spread, having said "Thus, monks, the kathina-privilege is spread, thus it is not spread," showing first the characteristic of non-spreading which is both what should not be done and of great scope, he showed twenty-four aspects beginning with "not by merely marking out." Then after that, showing the characteristic of spreading, he showed seventeen aspects beginning with "spread with new cloth." For in the Parivāra too, this very same characteristic is stated: "The kathina-privilege is not spread by twenty-four aspects; the kathina-privilege is spread by seventeen aspects."

Therein, "by merely marking out" means by merely taking the measurement in length and breadth. For when taking the measurement, in order to identify each section, one marks out by showing the demarcation with fingernails and so forth, or rubs on the forehead and so forth; therefore that taking of measurement is called "merely marking out." "By merely washing" means by merely washing the kathina cloth. "By merely examining the robe" means by merely deliberating thus: "Let it be of five pieces, or seven pieces, or nine pieces, or eleven pieces." "By merely cutting" means by merely cutting the cloth as deliberated. "By merely binding" means by merely applying the preliminary thread. "By merely making the long stitching" means by merely making the long stitch following the preliminary thread. "By merely making the head-piece" means by merely binding the head-piece to the top. "By merely making the strengthening" means by merely stitching two layers together as one. Or alternatively, the meaning is: the first layer having been fitted and placed, by merely making the kathina cloth into an inner layer and stitching it. In the Mahāpaccariya it is stated: "by giving support to the ordinary robe." But in the Kurundī it is stated: "by merely attaching an inner layer in order to make the ordinary robe with bound pieces into a double layer." "By merely making the border" means by merely applying the back border lengthwise. "By merely making the front border" means by merely

applying the front border widthwise. "By merely making the additional piece" means by merely applying an additional piece. Or by merely taking a piece from the kathina robe and applying it to another non-kathina robe.

"By merely pressing with a blanket" means with cloth that has been put into the dye only once, being ivory-coloured or pale-leaf-coloured. But if it is dyed once or twice and is suitable, it is allowable. "With cloth obtained by hinting" means with cloth obtained by hinting thus: "I shall spread the kathina-privilege with this cloth." For just this much is stated in the Parivāra. But in the commentaries it is stated: "with cloth obtained by making a hint thus: 'This cloth is beautiful; it is possible to spread the kathina-privilege with this.'" "With cloth obtained by indirect talk" means with cloth produced by indirect talk thus: "It is proper to give kathina cloth; one who gives kathina cloth generates much merit." The kathina-privilege is of the highest standard; it is not proper to make a request even to one's mother; only what is as if descended from the sky is proper. "With cloth obtained temporarily" means with cloth that is temporary. "With cloth that has been stored" means here there are two kinds of storing: storing by making and storing by accumulation. Therein, not making it on that very day but setting it aside for making is storing by making. The Community receives the kathina cloth today and gives it on the following day - this is storing by accumulation.

"Forfeitable" means forfeitable due to the passage of a night. In the Parivāra too it is stated - "Forfeitable means that dawn rises while it is being made." "Not properly marked" means without having applied the proper mark-spot. Regarding "except with a double robe" and so forth: apart from the double robe, the upper robe, and the inner robe, if spread with another cloth such as a bed-covering, it is not spread. "Except with cloth of five or more than five pieces" means it is permissible only when made by cutting into five or more pieces and showing the large circles and half-circles. For thus it is made circular; apart from that, with uncut cloth or with two or three or four pieces, it is not permissible. "Except by an individual's allocation" means apart from an individual's allocation, it is not spread by another allocation, whether of the Community or of a group. "One standing outside the boundary gives thanks" means one standing outside the vicinity-boundary gives thanks.

**309.** "With new cloth" means with cloth that has not been used. "With cloth resembling new" means with cloth similar to new, washed once or twice. "With a rag" means with a worn cloth garment. "With a rag robe" means with a rag robe arisen in the twenty-three sources. It is also stated in the Kurundi and Mahāpaccarī that it means a robe made from pieces of cloth obtained by a rag-robe monk wandering about collecting cloth scraps. "With cloth from a shopkeeper" means one takes a rag fallen at a shop entrance and gives it for the purpose of spreading the kathina-privilege; the meaning is that it is also suitable with that. The remainder should be understood by the reverse of what has been stated. However, at this point, what is stated in many commentaries beginning with "how many conditions arise together with the spreading of the kathina-privilege" - all of that has been incorporated into the canonical text in the Parivāra, therefore it should be understood according to the method given there. For nothing is lost to the one spreading the kathina-privilege by its not being stated here.

**310.** Having thus shown the spreading of the kathina, now in order to show the

withdrawal, he said beginning with "And how, monks, is the kathina-privilege withdrawn?" Therein, "grounds" means mothers; the meaning is "generators." For these eight are the generators of the withdrawal of the kathina-privilege. Among those, "ending by departure" means that departure is at the end of it. The rest should be understood in the same way.

### Discussion on the Group of Seven on Taking Up

**311.** "I shall not return" means "I shall not come back again." In this removal of kathina-privileges by departing, however, the robe-obligation is cut first, and the residence-obligation afterwards. For one departing thus, the robe-obligation is cut while still within the boundary, and the residence-obligation upon crossing the boundary. And this has been stated in the Parivāra:

"The removal of kathina-privileges by departing was stated by the Kinsman of the Sun;  
And this I shall answer, the robes-impediment is severed first;  
Afterwards the residence-obligation is cut."

"Having taken a robe" means having taken an unmade robe. "When he has gone outside the boundary" means when he has gone to another neighbouring monastery. "It occurs to him thus" means having seen comfortable lodgings or the company of good companions in that monastery, it occurs to him thus. In this removal of kathina-privileges by completion, however, the residence-obligation is cut first, for it is cut at the mere arising in the mind of "I shall not return." And this too was said -

"The removal of kathina-privileges by completion was stated by the Kinsman of the Sun;  
And this I shall answer, the residence-impediment is severed first;  
When the robe is completed, the robe-obligation is cut."

By this method, the meaning should be understood in the analysis of the remaining categories as well. But this is the distinction - "In the case of removal by decision, both obligations are cut simultaneously at the mere arising in the mind of 'I shall indeed not have this robe made, I shall not return.' For this was said:

"The removal of kathina-privileges by decision was stated by the Kinsman of the Sun;  
And this I shall explain: the two obligations are cut neither before nor after each other."

Thus the cutting of obligations should be understood in all removals of kathina-privileges. But since this can be known both by the method stated here and by what has come in the Parivāra, therefore it has not been stated in detail. Here, however, this is the summary - In the case of removal by loss, the residence-obligation is cut first; when the robe is lost, the robe-obligation is cut. Since the robe-obligation is cut when the robe is lost, therefore it is called "by loss."

In the case of removal by hearing, the robe-obligation is cut first; therefore, for him, the residence-obligation is cut together with the hearing.

In the case of removal by cutting off of expectation, the residence-obligation is cut

first. When the expectation of a robe is cut off, the robes-impediment is severed. But since this, by the method beginning with "without expectation, he obtains; with expectation, he does not obtain; it occurs to him thus: 'I shall have this robe made right here, I shall not return'" - is a mixed exposition together with the other removals and has many divisions, therefore it has been stated separately in detail later, and not stated here. Here, however, the removal by crossing the boundary has been stated immediately after the removal by hearing. Therein, the robe-obligation is cut first; for him, the residence-obligation is cut outside the boundary. In the case of removal together with the monks, the two obligations are cut neither before nor after each other.

**316-325.** Having thus shown the seven removals of kathina-privileges in the "having taken" section, the same were shown again in the "having accepted" section, and also in the "having taken" and "having accepted" sections for unfinished robes, as applicable. Thereafter, within the boundary, without touching the rule "I shall return, I shall not return," but touching only "I shall not return," and by the method beginning with "with undetermined" etc., whichever ones are applicable, those were shown. Thereafter, by the method beginning with "departs with the expectation of a robe," having shown the cutting off of expectation repeatedly in a mixed method together with the others, removals of kathina-privileges applicable to those ending with completion were further shown by way of going to another region and by way of comfortable dwelling. Having thus shown the removal of kathina-privileges in detail, now, in order to show the opposites of those obstructions which were said to be cut off by each respective removal of kathina-privileges, he stated beginning with "Monks, there are these two obstructions of the kathina" etc. Therein, "by relinquishing" means: the mental act by which that dwelling is relinquished, that is called "relinquished"; by that relinquishing. The same method applies to "discarded" and "released" as well. The remainder is clear everywhere.

*The commentary on the Kaṭhina Chapter 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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