

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries
(1. Dīgha Nikāya - Aṭṭhakathā)

1. Commentary on the Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality
(1. Sīlakkhandhavaggaṭṭhakathā)

8. Commentary on the Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar
(8. Mahāsīhanādasuttavaṇṇanā)



PaliVerse

1.The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries

1. Commentary on the Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality

8. Explanation of the Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar

Explanation of the Story of the Naked Ascetic Kassapa

381. Thus have I heard... etc. "Was dwelling at Uruññā" - this is the Discourse on the Great Lion's Roar. Herein this is the explanation of terms not previously explained. "At Uruññā" - "Uruññā" is the name of both that country and that city; the Blessed One dwells in dependence on the city of Uruññā. "In the deer park at Kaṇṇakatthala" - not far from that city there is a delightful piece of land called Kaṇṇakatthala. Because it was given for the purpose of safety for deer, it is called a "deer park"; in that deer park at Kaṇṇakatthala. "Naked ascetic" means a naked wandering ascetic. "Kassapa" is his name. "Austere ascetic" means one dependent on austere asceticism. "Who leads a miserable life" - one whose livelihood is miserable by way of the practice of being a naked ascetic, urinating freely, and so on, is one who leads a miserable life; that one who leads a miserable life. "Reproaches" means ridicules. "Blames" means scorns and scoffs at. "They explain what is in conformity with the Teaching" means they speak of a subsidiary reason conforming to the reason stated by the Venerable Gotama. "A reasonable counter-argument" means having a reason corresponding to the reason stated by others, does not even the slightest reason blameworthy by the wise come regarding your speech or counter-argument? This is what is meant: "Is there not in any way whatsoever a blameworthy reason in your doctrine?" "Not wishing to misrepresent" means not wishing to speak with what is untrue.

382. In the passage beginning with "a certain austere ascetic who leads a miserable life," here a certain one, being an austere ascetic because of dependence on austere asceticism such as the going forth of naked ascetics and so on, thinking "I shall lead my life miserably," wearies himself in various ways by eating grass, cow-dung and so on, and due to lack of merit does not even obtain a comfortable livelihood; he, having fulfilled the three kinds of misconduct, is reborn in hell.

Another, though similarly dependent on austere asceticism, is possessing merit and obtains material gain and honour. He, having esteemed himself in a high position thinking "There is now no one equal to me," through wrong way of earning, thinking "I shall produce gain even more exceedingly," having fulfilled the three kinds of misconduct, is reborn in hell. With reference to these two, the first method was stated.

Another, dependent on austere asceticism, leading a miserable life, is of little merit and does not obtain a comfortable livelihood. He, thinking "Due to my not having done merit formerly also, a comfortable livelihood does not arise; come now, let me

perform meritorious deeds," having fulfilled the three kinds of good conduct, is reborn in heaven.

Another, leading a miserable life, is possessing merit and obtains a comfortable livelihood. He having thought "Due to my having done merit formerly also, a comfortable livelihood arises," having abandoned wrong way of earning, having fulfilled the three kinds of good conduct, is reborn in heaven. With reference to these two, the second method was stated.

But one austere ascetic is one who dwells without much suffering, a hermit engaged in the conduct of outsiders or a clothed wandering ascetic, and due to lack of merit does not obtain agreeable requisites. He, through wrong way of earning, having fulfilled the three kinds of misconduct, having placed himself in comfort, is reborn in hell.

Another is possessing merit; he - having aroused conceit thinking "There is now no one equal to me," either producing material gain and honour through wrong way of earning, or through the power of wrong view - having thought such things as "Pleasant is the contact with this young, soft, hairy female wandering ascetic" and so on, or committing to gulping down sensual pleasures, having fulfilled the three kinds of misconduct, is reborn in hell. With reference to these two, the third method was stated.

But another, one who dwells without much suffering, is of little merit; he -thinking "Due to my not having done merit formerly also, I do not obtain a comfortable livelihood," having fulfilled the three kinds of good conduct, is reborn in heaven.

Another is possessing merit; he - thinking "Formerly I obtain happiness due to having done merit; now I shall perform meritorious deeds," having fulfilled the three kinds of good conduct, is reborn in heaven. With reference to these two, the fourth method was stated. This has come by way of sectarians, but it is also found in the Dispensation.

For a certain one leads a miserable life by way of undertaking ascetic practices, or due to lack of merit, even having wandered through the whole village, does not obtain a bellyful. He thinking "I shall produce requisites," either having engaged in wrong way of earning by way of medical treatment and so on, or having claimed arahantship, or having practised the three bases of scheming, is reborn in hell.

And another, just such as that, is possessing merit. He, having generated conceit through that success in merit, wishing to make the arisen material gain lasting, through wrong way of earning, having fulfilled the three kinds of misconduct, arises in hell.

Another, who has undertaken ascetic practices, is just of little merit and does not obtain a comfortable livelihood. He thinking "Formerly I do not obtain anything due to not having done merit; if I now engage in wrong way of earning, in the future too I shall be one for whom happiness is difficult to obtain," having fulfilled the three kinds of good conduct, being unable to attain arahantship, is reborn in heaven.

Another is possessing merit; he - "Formerly I, through having done merit, am now happy; now too I shall do merit" - having abandoned wrong ways of earning, having fulfilled the three kinds of good conduct, being unable to attain arahantship, arises in heaven.

383. "The coming" means - "These have come from such and such a place" - thus the coming. "And the going" means the place where they are now to go. "And the passing away" means the passing away from there. "And the rebirth" means the rebirth again of those who have passed away from there. "Why should I censure all austere asceticism" means - He shows: "For what reason should I censure? For we censure only what is blameworthy, and praise what is praiseworthy. We do not, like a washerman making a bundle, put the washed and the unwashed together." Now, making known that meaning - He said beginning with "There are, Kassapa, some ascetics and brahmins."

384. "What they say is good in some cases" means the fivefold morality; for indeed no one in the world says that is "not good." Again, "what they say is not good in some cases" means the fivefold enmity; no one says that is "good." Again, "what they say is good in some cases" means non-restraint at the five sense doors; it is said that they - "The eye should not be obstructed; agreeable forms should be seen with the eye" - they say; this same method applies to the ear and so on. Again, "what they say is not good in some cases" means restraint at the five sense doors.

Having thus shown the agreement and disagreement of one's own doctrine with the doctrine of others, now showing the agreement and disagreement of the doctrine of others with one's own doctrine, he said beginning with "what we." Therein too the meaning should be understood by way of the five moral precepts and so on.

Explanation of the Discussion of Cross-Questioning

385. "Cross-questioning" means let them cross-question. And here, one asking about a view is called "cross-questioning," one asking about a reason is called "probing," and one asking about both is called "admonishing." "Teacher with teacher" means having compared a teacher together with a teacher - "Does your teacher live having completely abandoned those mental states, or the ascetic Gotama?" In the second term too, the same method applies.

Now, showing by combining that meaning - he said beginning with "Which of these venerable ones'." Therein, "unwholesome and reckoned as unwholesome" means unwholesome and also known as "unwholesome," or the meaning is classified and placed into a portion. This same method applies in all terms. And furthermore, here "blameworthy" means with fault. "Not befitting the noble ones" means not sufficient, unable to become noble ones in the sense of being faultless.

386-392. "The wise, cross-questioning" means because of which the wise, questioning us and others, would speak thus - that possibility exists, there is that reason; this is the meaning. "Or else the other venerable teachers of groups" means but the other venerable teachers of groups live having abandoned whatever this or that trifling amount; this is the meaning. "Would for the most part praise us in this matter" - this the Blessed One said even in the case of cross-questioning a teacher with a teacher - even in the case of cross-questioning a community with a

community. Why? Because even through praise of the Community, the accomplishment of praise of the Teacher is achieved. For even those who become devoted to the Community through the achievement of the Buddha, and devoted to the Buddha through the achievement of the Community, for thus, having seen the bodily achievement of the Blessed One, or having heard the proclamation of the Teaching, there are those who say - "Fortunate indeed, sirs, are the disciples who are intimate associates of such a Teacher" - thus through the achievement of the Buddha they become devoted to the Community. But having seen the good conduct and resort of the monks, their going forward and going back and so on, there are those who say - "Indeed, sirs, if this quality of peace belongs to the disciples who are intimate associates, how much greater must be the form of the Teacher" - thus through the achievement of the Community they become devoted to the Buddha. Thus whatever is praise of the Teacher, that is praise of the Community. Whatever is praise of the Community, that is praise of the Teacher - because even through praise of the Community the accomplishment of praise of the Teacher is achieved, the Blessed One in both methods - said "would for the most part praise us in this matter." But here in the passages beginning with "The ascetic Gotama lives having completely abandoned these mental states, or else the other venerable teachers of groups," this is the intention - For there are three abstinences by way of natural abstinence, abstinence by undertaking, and abstinence by cutting off. Among those, for others there is merely the abstinence of natural abstinence and abstinence by undertaking, but abstinence by cutting off does not exist at all. But among the five abandonings - abandoning by substitution of opposites, abandoning by suppression, abandoning by eradication, abandoning by tranquillisation, and abandoning by escape - for others there is merely abandoning by substitution of opposites and abandoning by suppression, by means of the eight attainments and by means of mere insight. The other three abandonings do not exist at all. Likewise, restraint by morality, restraint by patience, restraint by knowledge, restraint by mindfulness, and restraint by energy - these are the five restraints. Among those, for others there is merely the five precepts and merely the patience of endurance, and the remainder does not exist at all.

Now there are these five recitations of the Observance; among those, for others there is merely the five precepts. The morality of Pātimokkha restraint does not exist at all. Thus, in the abandoning of the unwholesome and in the undertaking of the wholesome, in the three abstinences, in the five abandonings, in the five restraints, in the five recitations - "I myself and my Community of disciples are recognised in the world; for there is no teacher equal to me, there is no community equal to my Community of disciples" - thus the Blessed One roars the lion's roar.

Explanation of the Noble Eightfold Path

393. Having thus roared the lion's roar, for the purpose of making known the unerring nature of that lion's roar - he said beginning with "There is, Kassapa, a path." Therein, "path" means the supramundane path. "Practice" means the preliminary practice. "One who speaks at the right time" and so on were explained in the Brahmajāla. Now, combining that twofold path and practice together and showing them - he said beginning with "It is just this noble." But having heard this, the naked ascetic thought - "The ascetic Gotama imagines that only for him there is a path and

a practice, and that there is not for others. Well then, let me tell him about our path too." Thereupon he spoke about the practice of the naked ascetics. Therefore he said - "When this was said, the naked ascetic Kassapa said this to the Blessed One, etc. he dwells devoted to the practice of going down into the water."

Explanation of the Discussion of Austere Practices

394. Therein, "austere practices" means undertakings of austerity; the meaning is "ascetic deeds." "Reckoned as asceticism" means reckoned as the work of ascetics. "Reckoned as committed to holy life" means reckoned as the work of brahmins. "A naked ascetic" means clotheless; the meaning is naked. "Of loose habits" means of unrestrained conduct; devoid of the conduct of worldly sons of good family in matters of defecation and so on, he defecates while just standing, urinates while just standing, eats hard food, and eats soft food. "Licking his hands" means when almsfood remains on his hand, he licks his hand with his tongue; or having defecated, perceiving his hand itself as a stick, he scrapes it with his hand. When told "Come, venerable sir, for the purpose of receiving almsfood," he does not come - thus he is "not one who comes when asked 'Come, venerable sir.'" Even when told "Then stop, venerable sir," he does not stop - thus he is "not one who stops when asked 'Stop, venerable sir.'" Both of those, it is said, he -does not do, thinking "this person's word will have been carried out." "Brought to him" means almsfood taken and brought beforehand; "specifically prepared" means almsfood announced thus: "This was prepared dedicated to you." "Not an invitation" means even almsfood to which he has been invited thus: "Please enter such and such a family or street or village" - he does not consent to, he does not accept. "Not from the mouth of a pot" means he does not accept almsfood being given having been taken out from a pot. "Not from the mouth of a bowl" means a "kaḷopī" is a cooking pot or a hand-basket; from that too he does not accept. Why? Because "in dependence on me, the pots and bowls receive a blow from a ladle." "Not across a threshold" means he does not accept what is being given having made a threshold as an intermediary. Why? "This one, in dependence on me, receives the function of being an intermediary." In the case of a stick and a pestle too, the same method applies.

"Of two" means when two are eating, if one rises and gives, he does not accept. Why? "There is an obstacle to a mouthful for one of them." But in the passages beginning with "not from a pregnant woman," he does not accept, thinking "the child in the womb of a pregnant woman suffers. For a nursing woman, there is an obstacle to milk for the child; for a woman who has gone among men, there is an obstacle to delight." "From where food has been collected" means at meals prepared by collecting; during a time of famine, it is said, disciples of the naked ascetics, for the sake of the naked ascetics, having instigated people here and there to give rice-grain and so on, cook food. A superior naked ascetic does not accept even from that. "Not where a dog" means where a dog - is standing by thinking "I shall obtain almsfood," he does not accept what has been brought without giving to it there. Why? Because there is an obstacle to almsfood for this one. "Swarming" means moving in swarms and swarms; for if, having seen a naked ascetic - people enter the food-house thinking "we shall give almsfood to this one," and as they enter, flies that were hidden in the mouths of

bowls and so on fly up and move about in swarms, he does not accept almsfood brought from there. Why? Because in dependence on me, an obstacle to the feeding ground of the flies has arisen.

"Rice-water" means sour gruel made from the ingredients of all kinds of grain. And here, only the drinking of liquor is blameworthy, but this one perceives all of them as blameworthy. "A one-house man" means one who, having obtained almsfood at just one house, turns back. "A one-morsel man" means one who sustains himself with just one morsel. In the case of "a two-house man" and so on too, the same method applies. "With even one small dish" means with one small dish. A "datti" is a small bowl in which they place the choicest almsfood and keep it. "Once a day" means with an interval of one day. "Once a fortnight" means with an interval of a fortnight. "Eating food in rotation" means eating food by turns; food that comes by turns of days, thus: by a turn of one day, by a turn of two days, by a turn of seven days, by a turn of a fortnight.

395. "One who feeds on vegetables" means one who feeds on fresh vegetables. "One who feeds on millet" means one who feeds on millet grain. Regarding wild rice and so on, "wild rice" is a species of paddy that grows by itself in the forest. "Leather scraps" means the refuse discarded by tanners after scraping leather. "Haṭṭa" is called both moss and aquatic slime. "Bran" means rice bran. "Rice scum" means the burnt cooked rice stuck to the rice pot; one takes it from the very place where it has been discarded and eats it. They also call it "rice gruel." Sesame flour and so on are well-known indeed. "One who feeds on fallen fruits" means one who feeds on fruits that have dropped.

396. "Hempen garments" means cloths made of hempen bark. "Mixed garments" means cloths of mixed material. "Shroud-cloth" means garments discarded from a dead body, or garments made by tying together eraka grass and so on. "Rag-robies" means rags discarded on the ground. "Bark-cloth" means garments made of tree bark. "Cheetah hide" means the skin of a cheetah. "A cloak of cheetah hide" means that same hide split in the middle. "Kusa-grass garment" means a garment made by tying together kusa grass. The same method applies to bark garments and wood-shaving garments as well. "A blanket of human hair" means a blanket made of human hair. With reference to which it was said -

"Just as, monks, whatever woven cloths there are, a hair blanket is declared the worst among them. A hair blanket, monks, is cold in the cold, hot in the heat, of little value, ugly, foul-smelling, and of unpleasant contact."

"A blanket of horse-tail hair" means a blanket made of horse-tail hairs. "Owl-feather garments" means a garment made by tying together owl feathers. "Devoted to the striving of squatting" means engaged in the energy of squatting; even when going, he goes by squatting and hopping up again and again. "One who lies on thorns" means he drives iron thorns or natural thorns into the ground, spreads a hide over them, and performs standing, walking, and so on there. "Sleeping place" means even when lying down, he makes his sleeping place right there. "Sleeping place on a plank" means a sleeping place on a wooden plank. "Sleeping place on bare ground" means a sleeping place on bare ground, on a high place on the earth. "One who lies on one side" means he sleeps on one side only. "A wearer of dust and dirt" means having

smear the body with oil, he stands in a place where dust rises; then dust and dirt clings to his body, and he wears that. "One who uses whatever seat is assigned" means without disturbing the seat obtained, he has the habit of sitting down in whatever he receives, right there. "One who eats filth" means one who has the habit of eating filth. "Filth" is called faeces. "One who abstains from drinking" means one who has rejected the drinking of cool water. "The evening being the third" means three times including the evening. In the morning, at midday, and in the evening - thinking "I shall wash away evil three times a day," he dwells devoted to the practice of going down into the water.

Explanation of the Uselessness of Austere Practices

397. Then the Blessed One, showing the uselessness of their austere practices without accomplishment in morality and so on - said beginning with "Even if, Kassapa, one is a naked ascetic." Therein, "ārakā vā" means far indeed. "Averaṃ" means free from hate and enmity. "Abyāpajjaṃ" means free from displeasure and ill-will.

398. "Difficult to do, Master Gotama" - Kassapa said this explaining: "We formerly wandered about considering just this much to be asceticism and being committed to holy life, but you speak of something quite different as asceticism and being committed to holy life." "This is the common saying" means this is ordinary talk. "And if, Kassapa, by this measure" - "Kassapa, if by this measure, by such a small undertaking of practice, asceticism or being committed to holy life were difficult to do, very difficult to do, then it would not be proper to say 'Asceticism is difficult to do'" - this is the meaning here together with the connection of terms. By this method, the connection of terms should be understood everywhere.

399. "Difficult to know" - this too he said with reference to this: "We formerly wandered about considering that by this much one is an ascetic or a brahmin, but you speak otherwise." Then the Blessed One, having rejected that common saying of his, making manifest the state of being difficult to know from the perspective of intrinsic nature itself, again also - said beginning with "This is the common saying indeed." There too, the meaning should be understood by making the connection of terms in the manner already stated.

Explanation of the Accomplishment in Morality, Concentration and Wisdom

400-401. "But what is that, Master Gotama" - why does he ask? It is said that this wise person grasped the talk even as the Blessed One was speaking, then having understood the uselessness of his own practice, the ascetic Gotama - "For him this accomplishment in morality, accomplishment in mind, and accomplishment in wisdom is not developed, not realised, then he is far from asceticism" and so on, he said. "Come now, let me ask him about those accomplishments" - thus he asks for the purpose of understanding the accomplishment in morality and so on. Then the Blessed One, having shown him the arising of a Buddha, speaking the teaching of the thread, in order to show those accomplishments - said beginning with "Here, Kassapa." "And with this accomplishment in morality, Kassapa" - this was said with reference to the fruition of arahantship itself. For the Blessed One's Dispensation has the fruition of arahantship as its final goal. Therefore he said that there is no other accomplishment in morality and so on that is more superior or more sublime than the

accomplishments in morality, mind and wisdom associated with the fruition of arahantship.

Explanation of the Discussion of the Lion's Roar

402. And having said thus, now roaring the unsurpassed great lion's roar -He said beginning with "There are, Kassapa, some ascetics and brahmins." Therein, "noble" means free from impurity, supremely pure. "Supreme" means highest. For, beginning with the five precepts up to the Pātimokkha restraint morality, it is just morality; but that which is associated with the supramundane path and fruition is called supreme morality. "I do not therein" means the meaning is: therein, in both morality and supreme morality, I do not perceive a person equal to myself, equal to me with morality equal to my morality. "I am indeed superior therein" means I am indeed the highest in that morality. In which? "That is to say, in higher morality" means the meaning is: which is this highest morality. Thus he roars this first lion's roar.

"Advocates of austere asceticism and disgust for evil" means those who advocate austere asceticism and disgust for evil. Therein, "it burns" (tapati) is austere asceticism (tapo); this is the name for the energy that burns up mental defilements. "Disgust" (jigucchā) is that which is disgusted at those very mental defilements. "Noble supreme" - here, "noble" because of being faultless. Austere asceticism and disgust for evil reckoned as insight energy arisen even by way of the eight bases of endeavour is just austere asceticism and disgust for evil; that which is associated with path and fruition is called supreme. "Higher disgust for evil" - here, the state of disgust is loathsomeness (jeguccham); the highest loathsomeness is higher disgust for evil (adhijeguccham). Therefore, the meaning here should be understood thus: that is to say, in higher disgust for evil, I am indeed superior therein. In the section on wisdom too, the wisdom of the ownership of actions and insight wisdom are called wisdom; that which is associated with path and fruition is called supreme wisdom. "Higher wisdom" - here, a change of gender should be understood. But the meaning here is - That which is called higher wisdom, I am indeed superior therein. In the section on liberation, liberation by substitution of opposites and liberation by suppression are called liberation; but liberation by eradication, liberation by tranquillisation, and liberation by escape should be understood as supreme liberation. And here too, "that is to say, in higher liberation" means: that which is this higher liberation, I am indeed superior therein - this is the meaning.

403. "In an empty house" means in an empty house; the intention is having sat down alone. "And in assemblies" means in the eight assemblies. And this too was said -

"There are these four grounds of self-confidence of the Truth-finder, Sāriputta. Endowed with which grounds of self-confidence the Truth-finder acknowledges a distinguished position, roars the lion's roar in assemblies" - the discourse should be expanded.

"And they ask him questions" means wise gods and humans, having prepared a question, ask him. "He answers" means he answered at that very moment. "He satisfies their minds" means by answering the question he indeed pleases the minds of the public. "But they do not think it worth listening to" means even having satisfied their minds, others do not think the words of one who speaks are worth listening to - and thus they would say; this is the meaning. "And they think it worth listening to"

means both gods and humans think it worth listening to with great endeavour. "They are pleased" means they become well-devoted, with pliant minds, with tender minds. "They show signs of faith" means they are not merely pleased in a superficial way; giving up superior robes and other requisites and great monasteries such as the Veḷuvana monastery and others, they show signs of faith. "Towards the truth" means for the sake of the truth of whatever Teaching he teaches, for the purpose of fulfilling the practice in conformity with the Teaching; the meaning is that they proceed. "And they proceed towards the truth" means they proceed towards such a state; for having heard the Teaching of that Blessed One, some become established in the refuges, some in the five precepts, and others, having gone forth, become monks. "And those who have proceeded succeed" means those who have proceeded upon that practice are able to fulfil it; indeed they fulfil it in every way; it should be said that by the fulfilment of the practice they please the mind of that Master Gotama.

But standing at this point, the lion's roars should be connected together. "I see a certain austere ascetic reborn in hell" - this indeed is one lion's roar of the Blessed One. "I see another reborn in heaven" - this is one. "In the abandoning of unwholesome mental states, I alone am foremost" - this is one. "In the undertaking of wholesome mental states too, I alone am foremost" - this is one. "In the abandoning of unwholesome mental states, my Community of disciples alone is foremost" - this is one. "In the undertaking of wholesome mental states too, my Community of disciples alone is foremost" - this is one. "In morality there is none equal to me" - this is one. "In energy there is none equal to me" - this is one. In wisdom... etc. In liberation... etc. "Roaring the lion's roar, having sat down in the midst of the assembly, I roar" - this is one. "Having become confident, I roar" - this is one. "They ask me questions" - this is one. "When asked a question, I answer" - this is one. "By my answer I please the mind of another" - this is one. "Having heard, they think it worth listening to" - this is one. "Having heard, they are pleased with me" - this is one. "They show signs of faith" - this is one. "Whatever practice I teach, they proceed towards the truth" - this is one. "And those who have proceeded please me" - this is one. Thus, for each one of the former ten - "And he roars it in assemblies" and so on are ten accessories each. Thus those ten, by way of being accessories of the former ten, make a hundred, and the former ten as well - thus there are one hundred and ten lion's roars. But in any other discourse, so many lion's roars are rare to find; therefore this discourse is called the Great Lion's Roar. Thus the Blessed One, having refuted the successive assertions "The ascetic Gotama roars a lion's roar, but he roars it in an empty house," now showing the lion's roar previously roared in the assembly, said beginning with "On one occasion I."

Explanation of the Discussion of the Probation for Adherents of Other Religions

404. Therein, "there a certain austere ascetic me" means there, while I was dwelling at Rājagaha on the Vulture's Peak mountain, a certain austere ascetic, a wandering ascetic named Nigrodha. "Concerning the practice of loathing evil" means he asked a question on the subject of loathing evil through energy. This refers to when the Blessed One, seated at the great monastery on the Vulture's Peak, having heard with the divine ear element the friendly conversation of the wandering ascetic Nigrodha and the lay follower Sandhāna who were seated in the park of Queen Udumbarikā, having come through the sky and sat down on the prepared seat in their presence,

answered the question asked by Nigrodha concerning the practice of loathing evil; it was said with reference to that. "Beyond measure" means by the highest measure; the meaning is by an exceedingly great extent. "Who indeed, venerable sir" - setting aside a blindly foolish follower of wrong views, any other person of wise nature says "who indeed, having heard the Blessed One's Teaching, would not be delighted?" "May I receive" - this he - "For a long time indeed my self has been wearied by being yoked to the side not leading to liberation; like one rolling about thinking 'I shall bathe on the bank of a dry river,' like one pounding chaff, no purpose whatsoever has been accomplished. Come, let me apply myself to the method" - having thought thus, he said. Then the Blessed One - whoever was formerly of another sect, for whom the probation for adherents of other sects was laid down in this chapter, who, standing on the plane of a novice - undergoes probation having taken it upon himself by the method beginning with "I, venerable sirs, of such and such a name, formerly of another sect, wish for full ordination in this Teaching and discipline; I, venerable sirs, request the Community for probation for four months" - with reference to that - he said beginning with "Whoever, Kassapa, was formerly of another sect."

405. Therein, "going forth" is said merely by way of smoothness of expression, for he obtains the going forth without having undergone probation. However, one who seeks full ordination must undergo probation, fulfilling the eight duties beginning with entering the village at the proper time. "Having won the favour" means with gladdened minds through the fulfilment of the eight duties; this is the meaning here in brief. In detail, however, this probation for adherents of other sects should be understood by the method stated in the explanation of the Chapter on the Going Forth in the Samantapāsādikā, the commentary on the Vinaya. "But here to me" means "but to me here." "The difference among individuals is known" means the diversity of individuals is known. It shows that "this is well known to me: 'This person is worthy of probation, this person is not worthy of probation.'" Then Kassapa thought - "Oh, wonderful is the Buddha's Dispensation, where thus having rubbed and pounded, they accept only what is proper and reject what is improper." Then, with even greater enthusiasm arisen for the going forth - he said beginning with "If, venerable sir."

Then the Blessed One, having known his intense desire -addressed a certain monk, saying "Kassapa does not deserve probation" - "Go, monk, having bathed Kassapa and given him the going forth, bring him here." He, having done so, having given him the going forth, came to the presence of the Blessed One. The Blessed One, having caused him to sit down in the midst of the group, gave him full ordination. Therefore it was said - "The naked ascetic Kassapa received the going forth in the presence of the Blessed One, he received full ordination." "Not long after being fully ordained" means having been fully ordained, not long indeed. "Withdrawn" means withdrawn in body and mind from sensual pleasures as objects and sensual pleasures as defilements. "Diligent" means not abandoning mindfulness in the meditation subject. "Ardent" means ardent with the ardour of energy reckoned as bodily and mental. "Resolute" means one whose mind is directed towards and whose individuality is given over, through disregard for body and life. "For the sake of which" means for the purpose of which. "Sons of good family" means sons of good family endowed with good conduct. "Rightly" means just by reason, just by cause. "That unsurpassed" means that which is unsurpassed. "The final goal of the holy life" means the fruition of

arahantship, which is the final goal of the holy life of the path. For it is for the sake of that that sons of good family go forth. "In this very life" means in this very individual existence. "Having realised by direct knowledge himself" means having made it evident through one's own wisdom; the meaning is having made it not dependent on others. "Having attained, he dwelt" means having reached, having accomplished, he dwelt; and dwelling thus, birth is eliminated, etc. he directly knew.

Having thus shown his plane of reviewing, in order to conclude the teaching with the pinnacle of arahantship, it was said "And the Venerable Kassapa became one of the Worthy Ones." Therein, "a certain one" means one. "Of the Worthy Ones" means of the Worthy Ones; the intention here is that he was among the Worthy Ones who were disciples of the Blessed One. But whatever was not said here and there in between, that is obvious since it has been stated in those respective places.

Thus in the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, the Commentary on the Dīgha Nikāya,

the explanation of the Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar 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.

PDF Creation Date: 14 September 2026

HOW TO CITE

PaliVerse (2026). Commentaries. The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries. 1. The Collection of the Long Discourses - Commentaries. 1. Commentary on the Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality. 8. Commentary on the Great Discourse on the Lion's Roar Retrieved from paliverse.org

© 2026 The PaliVerse Project · All Rights Reserved
Centre for Study and Practice of Theravāda Buddhism
Civic Non-Profit Company registered in Greece
This PDF may be freely distributed for study and practice.

PaliVerse.org