

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)

8. Connected Discourses to Headmen (8. Gāmaṇisaṃyuttaṃ)



PaliVerse

3. The Collection of the Connected Discourses - Commentaries

4. Commentary on the Chapter on the Six Sense Bases

8. Connected Discourses to Headmen

1. Commentary on the Caṇḍa Discourse

353. In the first of the Gāmaṇisaṃyutta, "Caṇḍa the headman" means a certain headman whose name was taken as "Caṇḍa" by the elder monks who compiled the teachings. "Manifests" shows that quarrelling back with one who quarrels, reviling back one who reviles, striking back one who strikes, he makes it obvious. "Does not manifest" shows that even when reviled, even when struck, he does nothing contrary.

2. Commentary on the Tālapuṭa Discourse

354. In the second, "Tālapuṭa" means one of that name. It is said that his complexion was bright like the colour of a palm fruit released from its stalk; on account of that they gave him the name "Tālapuṭa." He was a person in his last existence, endowed with resolution. But since conception is uncertain, like a stick thrown into the sky, therefore he was born in a family of actors. Having come of age, however, he became the foremost in the art of acting and became well-known throughout the whole Indian subcontinent. His retinue consisted of five hundred carts and five hundred women, and since his wife too had just as many, together with a thousand women and a thousand carts, whatever city or market town he entered, there they gave him a hundred thousand even beforehand. But when, having put on his festive gathering costume, he performed together with a thousand women, whatever ornaments such as hand-ornaments and foot-ornaments they threw, there was no end to them. On that day, surrounded by a thousand women, having performed in Rājagaha, because his knowledge was fully matured, together with his retinue he approached the Blessed One.

"With truth and falsehood" means with truth and with falsehood. "Let this be" means let this be. "Arousing lust" means performances that are conditions for lust, such as the display of drawing out five-coloured threads from the mouth, wind and rain, and other dramatic representations showing aspects connected with the gratification of sensual pleasure. "Even more exceedingly" means to an exceeding measure.

"Arousing hate" means displays of the appearance of cutting off hands and feet and so on, which are conditions for hate. "Arousing delusion" means varieties of magical illusion that are conditions for delusion, such as taking water and making it into oil, taking oil and making it into water, and so on.

"A hell called 'Laughter'" means there is no separate hell named "Laughter"; but in one section of Avīci itself, they are cooked while assuming the appearance of actors, as if dancing and as if singing; with reference to that, this was said. "I am not, venerable sir, weeping at this" means "I, venerable sir, am not weeping at this

declaration of the Blessed One" - thus the meaning here should be understood in the transitive sense, not merely by the shedding of tears. And here other conventional expressions such as "they weep for the dead, mother" and so on should also be understood.

3-5. Commentary on the Yodhājīva Discourse and Others

355-357. In the third, "warrior" means one who makes his livelihood by battle; his name was thus taken by the elder monks who compiled the teachings. "Strives and endeavours" means he makes endeavour and effort. "Finish him off" means they cause him to undergo death. "Wrongly done" means badly done. "Wrongly directed" means badly placed. "A hell called 'the defeated'" means this too is not a separate hell; but in one section of Avīci itself, they are cooked as if armed with the five weapons, shields in hand, having mounted elephants, horses, and chariots, fighting in battle; with reference to that, this was said. In the fourth and fifth too, the same method applies.

6. Commentary on the Asibandhakaputta Discourse

358. In the sixth, "of the western lands" (pacchābhūmakā) means dwellers of the western region. "Carrying water-pots" (kāmaṇḍalukā) means those with their own water-pitchers. "Wearing garlands of moss" (sevālamālikā) means those who, right early, having taken moss and blue lotuses and so on from the water, having made a garland for the purpose of knowing their state of purification by water, adorn themselves. "Descending into water" (udakorohakā) means those who descend into water morning and evening. "They raise up" (uyyāpenti) means they convey upwards. "They inform" (saññāpenti) means they rightly make known. "They make them enter heaven" (saggaṃ nāma okkāmenti) means having surrounded and standing there, saying "Go, dear sir, to the Brahma world, go, dear sir, to the Brahma world," they make them enter heaven. "Might circumambulate" (anuparisakkeyya) means might go round about. "Rise up" (ummujja) means emerge, rise up. "Float up to dry land" (thalamuplava) means ascend to dry land. "There whatever there might be" (tatra yāssa) means there whatever there might be. "Gravel or potsherds" (sakkharā vā kaṭṭhalā vā) means gravel and potsherds. "They would go downwards" (sā adhogāmi assa) means they would go down, would go below. "Go down" (adhogaccha) means go below.

7. Commentary on the Khettūpama Discourse

359. In the seventh, "rough" means hard, not soft. "Saline" means where salt has arisen. "Bad ground" means an inferior piece of land. Among "me as their island" and so on, "I am the island, the support for them" thus "me as their island." "I am the shelter, the place of clinging for them" thus "me as their shelter." "I am the protection, the safety for them" thus "me as their protection." "I am the refuge, the removal of fear for them" thus "me as their refuge." "Dwell" means they dwell having made me thus.

"As fodder for cattle" means due to the absence of harvest, having reaped and tied into bundle after bundle and placed, in the hot season it will be food even for cattle - this is the meaning. "Water jar" means a special kind of vessel so named because of a jewelled girdle around its belly. "Not leaking, not seeping" means it does not carry

away the water, does not let it seep around, does not exhaust it - this is the meaning. Thus in this discourse, only the proclamation of the Teaching thoroughly has been spoken of. For the Buddhas, there is no such thing as expounding the Teaching inattentively. For the Buddhas are of conduct similar to a lion; just as a lion exerts exactly the same force for seizing a noble elephant in rut as for seizing a hare, a cat, and so on, so too the Buddhas, whether teaching one, or two, or many, or the assembly of monks, or the assembly of nuns, male lay followers, and female lay followers, or even teaching sectarians, teach only thoroughly. But because the four assemblies listen having believed and being convinced, their teaching became called a thorough teaching.

8. Commentary on the Saṅkhadhama Discourse

360. In the eighth, by this statement "whatever one frequently dwells in, whatever one frequently dwells in," the Jain by himself breaks his own doctrine. Therefore the Blessed One said beginning with "this being so, no one would be bound for the realm of misery." But the former four terms become conditions for wrong view. Therefore, showing the danger in those too, he said beginning with "here, headman, a certain teacher holds such a doctrine." Therein, "ahampamhī" means "I too am."

Regarding what should be said concerning "accompanied by friendliness" and so on, all that, together with the method of meditation, has been stated in the Visuddhimagga itself. But "just as, headman, a powerful conch-blower" and so on is here unprecedented. Therein, "powerful" means endowed with strength. "Conch-blower" means one who blows a conch shell. "With little difficulty" means without trouble, without pain. For a weak conch-blower, even while blowing the conch, is not able to make himself heard in the four directions with his voice; the sound of his conch does not pervade in every direction. But for a powerful one it is spreading out; therefore he said "powerful."

Regarding "by the liberation of mind through friendliness": here, when "friendliness" is said, both access and absorption are applicable; but when "liberation of mind" is said, only absorption is applicable. "Whatever action done within limits": action done within limits is called that belonging to the sensual sphere of existence; action done without limits is that belonging to the fine-material-sphere of existence. For that, having surpassed the measure, having increased by way of specific, non-specific, and directional pervading, because of having been so done, is called "done without limits."

"It does not remain there, it does not persist there" means that sensual-sphere action does not stay behind in that fine-material-sphere and immaterial-sphere action, does not stand. What is meant? That sensual-sphere action is not able to stick in between or to stand in that fine-material-sphere and immaterial-sphere action, or to pervade, consume, take its own place in, and become established in the fine-material-sphere and immaterial-sphere action. Rather, the fine-material-sphere and immaterial-sphere action itself, like a great flood overwhelming a small body of water, having pervaded the sensual-sphere action, having consumed it, having made its own place, remains. Having warded off its result, it itself leads to companionship with Brahmā. Thus this

discourse, having arisen at the beginning by way of mental defilements and having been taken up at the end by way of the divine abidings, has proceeded according to the very same connection.

9. Commentary on the Family Sutta

361. In the ninth, "famine" means almsfood is difficult to obtain. "With difficult livelihood" means with striving proceeding thus: "Shall we live or shall we not?" "Duhitikā" is also a reading. The meaning is the same. "Difficult is the striving" - here no undertaking whatsoever can be done with ease - thus "duhitikā." "With white bones scattered about" means here and there the white bones of dead people are scattered about - thus "setaṭṭhikā." "Subsisting by means of food tickets" means subsisting by the measure of a ticket; whatever was sown and planted there, that was only the measure of a ticket, it does not produce fruit - this is the meaning.

"To spit it out" means being unable to release the two horns and speak, he will not be able to spit it out, to bring it outside. "To swallow it down" means being unable to see the fault in the question and dispose of it, he will not be able to swallow it down, to take it inside.

"For ninety-one cosmic cycles from now, headman" - the Blessed One, while still speaking, in the time it takes for the breath that has gone out from the nose not to enter again, in that much time recollected ninety-one cosmic cycles for the purpose of fully knowing whether any family had ever been destroyed by the giving of cooked almsfood. Then, not seeing even one, he said beginning with "From now, headman." Now, speaking of the benefits of giving and so on, he began the proclamation of the Teaching with "But whatever families are wealthy." Therein, "arisen through giving" means arisen, produced through giving. The same method applies to the remaining two terms as well. Here, however, "truthfulness" means the practice of speaking truth. "Self-restraint" means the remaining morality. "Scatters" means spending without proper application, he disperses. "Disperses" means destroys as if blowing away. "Destroys" means removes. "Impermanence" means non-existence after having been; the disappearance in a mere moment of things accumulated even over a long time.

10. Commentary on the Mañicūḷaka Discourse

362. In the tenth, "he said this to that assembly" means it is said that this thought occurred to him: "Sons of good family, when going forth, go forth having abandoned both children and wife as well as gold and silver, and it is not possible for those who have gone forth having abandoned something to accept that" - and standing on the grasping of the method, he spoke the statement beginning with "Do not, sirs." "Definitely" means you should definitely remember this indulgence in the five types of sensual pleasure as not the practice of an ascetic, not the practice of a disciple of the Sakyan.

"Grass" means grass for roofing lodgings. "Should be sought" means when a dwelling with a grass roof or a brick roof is falling into decay, one should go to the presence of those by whom it was caused to be built and inform them: "The lodging caused to be built by you is leaking; it is not possible to dwell there." People, if able, will do it; if unable, they will say: "You, having taken a carpenter, have it done; we will convince

them." When this is said, having had it done, they should be informed. The people will give what is to be given to the carpenters. If there are no owners of the residence, it is proper to inform others too by way of the duty of going for alms and have it done. With reference to this, "should be sought" was said.

"Wood" means wood for that purpose when the rafters and so on in the lodging are falling into decay. "A cart" means a temporary cart, having treated it as made for laymen. And not only a cart alone, but it is also proper to seek in this way other equipment such as adzes, hatchets, and spades. "A man" means a man should be sought by way of manual labour. For having said to any man "Will you give manual labour, friend?" and when he says "I will, venerable sir," it is proper to have him do whatever one wishes, saying "Do this and that." "But I do not, headman, by any method" means but I do not say that gold and silver should be sought by any reason whatsoever.

11. Commentary on the Bhadraka Discourse

363. In the eleventh, "among the Mallas" means in the province so named. "By murder" means by killing. "By loss" means by loss of wealth. "Immediate, attained" means not attained after an interval of time; the meaning is attained without exceeding the proper time. "A boy named Ciravāsī" means a son of his so named. "Lives outside in a public rest-house" means he lives outside the city learning some craft or other. In this discourse, the suffering of the round of rebirths is spoken of.

12. Commentary on the Rāsiya Discourse

364. In the twelfth, "Rāsiya" - because the question was asked by making a heap, the name "Rāsiya" was thus taken by the elder monks who compiled the teachings. "Austere ascetic" means one dependent on austere asceticism. "Who leads a miserable life" means one of miserable livelihood. "Extremes" means portions. "Gāma" means vulgar. "Gamma" is also a reading; the meaning is the practice of those who dwell in villages. "The pursuit of self-mortification" means the pursuit of mortification of oneself; the meaning is the making of bodily suffering.

But why here was the pursuit of sensual happiness taken up, why the pursuit of self-mortification, why the middle practice? The pursuit of sensual happiness was taken up for the purpose of showing the enjoyers of sensual pleasures; the pursuit of self-mortification for those dependent on austere asceticism; the middle practice was taken up for the purpose of showing the three bases of wearing away. What is the purpose of showing these? Having abandoned these two extremes, the Truth-finder attained perfect self-enlightenment by the middle practice. He does not censure all enjoyers of sensual pleasures nor praise them, he does not censure all those dependent on austere asceticism nor praise them, he censures only those who are fit to be censured, he praises those who are fit to be praised - it should be understood that the making known of this meaning is the purpose of showing these.

Now, making known that meaning, he said beginning with "There are, headman, three kinds of enjoyers of sensual pleasures." Therein, "with violence" means by violent action. "Does not share" means he does not make a sharing with friends, companions, acquaintances, and intimates. "Does not make merit" means he does not make merit that is a condition for future existence. "By rule and not by rule"

means by what is righteous and by what is unrighteous. "On grounds" means for reasons. "realises" - how does one realise by scorching and tormenting oneself? By way of the fourfold energy and by way of the ascetic practices. "Three wearings away visible here and now" - here, even a single path, because of the wearing away of the three mental defilements, is called "three wearings away."

13. Commentary on the Pāṭaliya Discourse

365. In the thirteenth, "messenger duties" means messenger work, both written messages and oral instructions. "And I understand killing living beings" - why was this begun? "Not only do I know deceit, but I also know this and that besides" - it was begun for the purpose of showing his omniscience. "There are indeed, headman, some ascetics and brahmins" - this was begun for the purpose of showing the view of the remaining ascetics and brahmins and causing its abandonment.

"Wearing garlands and earrings" means one wearing garlands by means of garlands, one wearing earrings by means of earrings. "With sensual pleasures with women" means sensual pleasures together with women are sensual pleasures with women; with those sensual pleasures with women. "Rest-house" means a dwelling house made in one place of the family house for the comfortable residence of each individual person. "I share with him according to my ability, according to my strength" means I make a sharing of that in accordance with my own ability and in accordance with my own strength. "Alaṃ" means proper. "In a matter that should be doubted" means in a reason that should be doubted. "Concentration of mind" shows that you, established in that concentration based on the Teaching, if you were to attain concentration of mind by means of the four paths together with insight. "It is unmistakable for me" - the meaning is that this practice leads for me only to what is unmistakable, to what is without fault. "A winning throw" means a victorious throw.

"This, headman, is concentration based on the Teaching; if therein you were to attain concentration of mind" - here "concentration based on the Teaching" means the phenomena of the ten wholesome courses of action; "concentration of mind" means the four paths together with insight. Or alternatively, the five phenomena stated thus - "gladness arises; in one who is gladdened, rapture arises" - reckoned as gladness, rapture, tranquillity, happiness, and concentration, are called concentration based on the Teaching; but concentration of mind is just the four paths together with insight. Or alternatively, the ten wholesome courses of action and the four divine abidings - this is called concentration based on the Teaching; the unified focus of mind that arises for one fulfilling that concentration based on the Teaching is called concentration of mind. "Thus you would abandon this matter of uncertainty" - the meaning is that if you, thus established in the concentration based on the Teaching of the aforementioned variety, were to thus attain concentration of mind, you would definitely abandon that uncertainty. The remainder is the same as the method stated everywhere.

The Commentary on the Gāmaṇī 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.

PDF Creation Date: 14 September 2026

HOW TO CITE

PaliVerse (2026). Commentaries. The Canon of Discourses - Commentaries. 3. The Collection of the Connected Discourses - Commentaries. 4. Commentary on the Chapter on the Six Sense Bases. 8. Connected Discourses to Headmen 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