

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

- 3. The Canon of Higher Teaching - Commentaries
(3. Abhidhamma Piṭaka - Aṭṭhakathā)
- 5. Commentary on the Points of Controversy
(5. Kathāvatthu-aṭṭhakathā)
- 8. Eighth Chapter (8. Aṭṭhamavaggo)



PaliVerse

5. Commentary on the Points of Controversy

8. The Eighth Chapter

1. Commentary on the Discussion of the Six Destinations

503-504. Now there is the discussion called the six destinations. Therein, for those whose view is that there are six destinations together with the class of titans, just as the Andhakas and the Uttarāpathakas; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then the proponent of one's own doctrine, in order to accuse him by virtue of the destinations delimited in the Discourse on Hair-raising as "There are, Sāriputta, these five destinations," said beginning with "is it not that there are five destinations." The other acknowledges through fear of contradiction with the discourses. But why does the proponent of one's own doctrine not accept six destinations? Is it not that in "and free from the four realms of misery," the class of titans is also included? True, it is included, but this is not a destination. Why? Because of the absence of a separate one. For in the class of titans, the Kālakañcikā titans are included in the ghost destination, the assembly of Vepacitti in the god destination; there is no single destination called "the class of titans" separately.

Now, in order to show this very meaning, the section beginning with "is it not that the Kālakañcikā" has been commenced. Therein, "of the same colour" means of similar form and shape - hideous, ugly, unsightly. "Of the same enjoyments" means of similar sexual conduct. "Of the same food" means of similar food consisting of spittle, nasal mucus, pus, blood, and so on. "Of the same lifespan" means of similar limit of lifespan. "Marriage arrangements" means both the taking of maidens and the giving of maidens. On the bright side, "of the same colour" means of similar form and shape - lovely, pleasing, beautiful to behold, endowed with radiance. "Of the same enjoyments" means of similar enjoyment of the five types of sensual pleasure. "Of the same food" means of similar food consisting of ambrosia and so on. The remainder is according to the method already stated. "Is there not the class of titans" - this is a proof only of the class of titans. But because of the absence of a separate delimitation of destination for it, it is not a proof of a destination.

Commentary on the Discussion of the Six Destinations.

2. Commentary on the Discussion of Intermediate Existence

505. Now comes the discussion called the intermediate existence discussion. Therein, for those whose view, having unwisely taken the discourse passage "attainer of final nibbāna in the interval," is "there is indeed an intermediate existence, where a being, without the divine eye as if possessing the divine eye, without supernormal power as if possessing supernormal power, looking at the union of mother and father and the right season, remains for a week or more than a week," just as the Pubbaseliyas and the Sammitīyas; with reference to them, "there is" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, and standing on the view, the acknowledgment is of the other.

Then, to accuse him by virtue of the three existences stated by the Blessed One, he said beginning with "sensual existence." Therein this is the intention - if there is for you some existence called intermediate existence, then it must be one of the sensual existences and so on, just as the five-constituent existence and so on; therefore I ask you - "Is this so-called intermediate existence of yours sensual existence, or fine-material existence or immaterial existence?" The other, not wishing for that, rejects all. "Of sensual existence" and so on was begun to accuse thus: if there is indeed an intermediate existence, it should be in between these existences like a boundary gap between two boundaries. But the opponent, not wishing for that, rejects all the questions only by his view, not with reason. For that very reason the proponent of one's own doctrine prohibits him with "then indeed sir."

506. "Is that the fifth mode of generation" and so on were stated to accuse that it does not go into combination with the modes of generation and so on as defined, and therefore there must be something in excess of each of those. "Is there action leading to intermediate existence?" - if that too is one existence, just as actions leading to sensual existence and so on were shown by the Teacher having classified them as existing, so too there must be action leading to that - this was stated for the purpose of challenging. But because in the other school there is no separate action called "leading to intermediate existence," and their view is that whatever existence one will be reborn in, one arises in intermediate existence by the very action leading to that, therefore "indeed not" was rejected. Even when asked "Are there beings going to intermediate existence?" he rejects by the view that they are called merely those going to sensual existence. Even when asked beginning with "do they arise," being unwilling for birth, ageing and death there, and also for the succession of passing away and conception, he rejects. Even when asked by way of materiality and so on, because his view is that the materiality of a being in intermediate existence is non-manifest, and feeling and so on too are not gross like those of others, therefore he rejects. By this very reason, the rejecting of the state of being five-aggregate constituent existence should also be understood.

507. Now, beginning with "sensual existence, existence, destination," this is called the comparison with existence. Therein this is the intention - if there were for you some existence called intermediate existence, just as the classification into existence, destination, and so on is obtained in sensual existence and so on, so too it would be obtained therein. Or just as it is not obtained there, so too it would not be obtained in these. For when the nature of existence is the same, this classification exists only in these and not in the other - what is the distinguishing reason here? The other, however, by the influence of mere view alone, both acknowledges and rejects this and that.

508. When asked "Is there intermediate existence for all beings?" since he does not wish for intermediate existence for those going to hell, those going to the realm of non-percipient beings, and those going to the immaterial realm, therefore he rejects. For that very reason, he acknowledges in the reverse order. "For a person who has committed an immediacy offence" and so on was said in order to classify and show those for whom he does not wish for intermediate existence. All that should be understood by following the canonical text itself, together with the discourse proofs.

510. Now there is the discussion called the types of sensual pleasure. Therein, first in one's own school, "sensual element" refers to objective sensual pleasures, defilement sensual pleasures, and also sensual existence. For among these, objective sensual pleasures are sensual pleasures in the sense of being desirable, and element in the sense of being empty of intrinsic nature and a being - thus "sensual element." Defilement sensual pleasures are sensual pleasures in the sense of being desirable and in the sense of desiring, and element by the aforesaid meaning - thus "sensual element." Sensual existence is sensuality for three reasons: in the sense of being desirable, in the sense of desiring, and in the sense of being the region where objective sensual pleasures occur; and element by the aforesaid meaning - thus "sensual element." But in the other school - relying on merely the expression "There are, monks, these five types of sensual pleasure," it was taken that only the five types of sensual pleasure are the sensual element. Therefore, for those whose view this is, just as the Pubbaseliyas hold at present; with reference to them, to make known the diversity of the sensual element, "only five" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, and the acknowledgment of the other is by the influence of his view. "Is there not" and so on was said for the purpose of showing defilement sensual pleasures. Therein, "connected with that" means connected with the types of sensual pleasure, the meaning is having the types of sensual pleasure as object. "Then indeed sir, it should not be said only five" means when these - desire and so on connected with that - exist, it should not be said that only the five types of sensual pleasure are the sensual element. For these too, desire and so on, are sensual pleasures in the sense of being desirable, and also element - thus sensual element. Also the element reckoned as sensuality in the sense of desiring - thus sensual element. This is the meaning.

"The eye of human beings" and so on was said for the purpose of showing objective sensual pleasures. Therein, the opponent, having rejected the non-sensual-element status of even the six sense bases by their being objective sensual pleasures, when asked again about mind, acknowledges the non-sensual-element status with reference to the exalted and supramundane. But because all three-plane mind is indeed the sensual element, therefore the proponent of one's own doctrine restrains him by means of a discourse.

511. "Are the types of sensual pleasure existence?" and so on was said for the purpose of showing that existence is the sensual element. But because there is no conventional expression "existence" with regard to the types of sensual pleasure merely, therefore the opponent rejects saying "That should not be said." "Is there action leading to the types of sensual pleasure?" and so on - all was said for the purpose of showing that the types of sensual pleasure merely are not the sensual element. For there is only action leading to sensual existence reckoned as the sensual element, and beings are only those going to sensual existence. There they are born, decay, die, pass away, and are reborn - not in the types of sensual pleasure. By this method the meaning should be understood everywhere.

Commentary on the Discussion of Types of Sensual Pleasure.

513-514. Now there is the talk called sensual pleasure. Therein, for those whose view is "the five sense bases only are sensual pleasures," in dependence on merely the expression "There are, monks, these five types of sensual pleasure," that is, the five sense bases beginning with the visible form sense base are sensual pleasures, just as the Pubbaseliyas hold; to show that defilement-sensuality alone is without qualification the state of sensual pleasure, "only five" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. The remainder here is clear in meaning.

Commentary on the Discussion of Sensual Pleasure.

5. Commentary on the Discussion of the Material Element

515-516. Now there is the discussion on the material element. Therein, "material states are called the material element" is the view of those, just as of the Andhakans; with reference to them, "material" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. Then the proponent of one's own doctrine, since the material element means fine-material existence, not merely matter alone, therefore in order to accuse by that meaning, said beginning with "the material element." All that should be understood by the very method stated in the discussion on the types of sensual pleasure. When asked "Is that itself the sensual element?" seeing the contradiction by the delimitation of planes, he rejects. When asked again firmly, he acknowledges by the influence of his own view. But this being so, the state of being possessed of two existences would follow; therefore the proponent of one's own doctrine said beginning with "and with sensual existence." The other rejects because of the impossibility of one being possessed of two.

Commentary on the Discussion of the Material Element.

6. Commentary on the Discussion of the Immaterial Sphere Element

517-518. The meaning in the discussion on the immaterial sphere element too should be understood by this same approach. But in immaterial phenomena, having taken only the aggregate of feeling, the teaching here was given by the method beginning with "feeling is existence." Therein, the meaning should be understood thus: what are those that have come to the term "immaterial states" - is it one among feeling and so on? The remainder should be understood in the same manner as stated above.

Commentary on the Discussion of the Immaterial Sphere Element.

7. Commentary on the Discussion of Sense Bases in the Material Element

519. Now there is the discussion on sense bases in the fine-material element. Therein, for those whose view is that, in dependence on the discourse "material, mind-made, with all major and minor parts, with complete faculties," having determined that even the signs of nose and so on of the Brahmā-company gods are sense bases, their individual existence has six sense bases, just as the Andhakas and the Sammitīyas hold; with reference to them, "having six sense bases" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, and the acknowledgment of the other is by the influence of his view. Then, in order to accuse him by virtue of whichever sense

base does not exist there, beginning with "is there the nose sense base there?" was begun. Thereupon, the opponent acknowledges according to his view that whatever sign of shape of nose and so on of the three internal sense bases exists there, that itself is a sense base. When asked by virtue of the external odour sense base and so on, he does not wish for nose-sensitivity and so on there; therefore, denying their sensory field, he rejects. In the reverse-order questions and the correlation questions too, the meaning should be understood by this same approach.

521. "Is there the nose sense base there, is there the odour sense base, does one smell that odour with that nose?" - this was said with reference to certain teachers in that very other school. They, it seems, wish that the six internal sense bases there are complete, and that a sense base must have its own function, and they also wish that with those noses and so on they smell, taste, and touch those odours and so on. With reference to that view, the other-side advocate acknowledges "Yes."

522. But when asked beginning with "Is there the odour of roots there?" being unable to establish the existence, he rejects. Is it not that beginning with "Is there not there the sign of nose?" is a proof of merely the configuration, not of the sense base; therefore even what is cited is just like what is not cited.

Commentary on the Discussion of Sense Bases in the Material Element.

8. Commentary on the Discussion of Matter in the Immaterial-Sphere of Existence

524-526. Now there is the discussion called "matter in the immaterial-sphere of existence." Therein, for those whose view is that from the statement "consciousness is the condition for mentality-materiality," even in immaterial existence there is subtle matter escaped from gross materiality, just as the Andhakans hold; with reference to them, "there is materiality" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. The remainder here is clear in meaning.

Commentary on the Discussion of Matter in the Immaterial-Sphere of Existence.

9. Commentary on the Discussion of Matter Being Action-Based

527-537. Now comes the discussion called matter being action. Therein, for those whose view is that matter reckoned as bodily and verbal intimation is itself what is called bodily action and verbal action, and that which is wholesome (mind)-originated is wholesome, and that which is unwholesome (mind)-originated is unwholesome, just as the Mahiṃsāsakas and the Sammitīyas hold; with reference to them, "arisen from wholesome consciousness" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, and the acknowledgment is of the other. Then, to accuse him thus: "If that is wholesome, whatever classification beginning with 'with sense-object' is obtained for the wholesome, is that present for it?" - beginning with "with sense-object" and so on was begun. Therein, "longing" and "aspiration" are synonyms for volition itself. For wholesome intention itself, when planning, is called longing. And because of being established by way of planning, it is called aspiration. But further on, in the passage "feeling arisen from wholesome consciousness, perception, volition, faith" and so on, here "longing" and "aspiration" are obtained only for feeling and the others, not for volition. Why? Because of the absence of two volitions together; but it should be understood that because of the certainty of the event, it has gone thus. "Visible form

sense base" and so on is stated for the purpose of showing the distinction of what was stated in brief as "all that is wholesome" in the former section. The remainder by the method of comparison, the discussion on verbal action, and the arrangement beginning with "arisen from unwholesome consciousness" - all should be understood following the canonical text itself. "Impure" here means semen is intended. The discourse proof is clear in meaning.

Commentary on the Discussion of Matter Being Action-Based.

10. Commentary on the Discussion of the Life Faculty

540. Now there is the discussion called the life faculty. Therein, for those whose view is that the life faculty is an immaterial phenomenon dissociated from consciousness, therefore there is no material life faculty, just as the Pubbaseliyas and the Sammitīyas; with reference to them, the question is of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. In the question "there is no life span of material states," he wishes that life span, duration, sustenance, nourishment, movement, conduct, protection is merely the occurrence by way of continuity of both clung-to matter and grass, wood, and so on, therefore he rejects. In the question "there is" too, he acknowledges for this very reason. In the question "there is immaterial life faculty," he wishes that there is indeed a continuity of life faculty dissociated from consciousness of immaterial phenomena, therefore he acknowledges.

541. In the question "the life span of material states is the immaterial life faculty," whether in the continuity of beings they be material or immaterial, he wishes that for all it is only the immaterial life faculty dissociated from consciousness, therefore he acknowledges.

542. In the questions concerning one attained to cessation also, he both rejects and acknowledges with reference to immaterial life only, which is dissociated from consciousness. But the proponent of one's own doctrine, not accepting that, said beginning with "If" in order to accuse that when the immaterial occurrence is absent, what exists must be material. In the question on the aggregate of mental activities, he rejects with reference to the aggregate of mental activities beginning with contact, and acknowledges with reference to the aggregate of mental activities beginning with bodily action. His view is that phenomena such as bodily intimation, verbal intimation, right speech, right action, and life faculty, and so on, are also included in the aggregate of mental activities. But the proponent of one's own doctrine, not accepting that, said beginning with "there is the aggregate of feeling" in order to accuse that if even when the immaterial occurrence has ceased there is the aggregate of mental activities, let there be the existence of all four aggregates. The other rejects with reference to within the attainment, and acknowledges with reference to the preceding and succeeding portions of one entering into and one emerging from it.

543. In the section on non-percipient beings too, the same method applies. For according to his view, for non-percipient beings, at the time of rebirth-linking, consciousness having arisen ceases, and together with it the immaterial life faculty dissociated from consciousness, having arisen, proceeds as long as life lasts.

Therefore, when asked "there is no life faculty for them," he rejects, and when asked "there is," he acknowledges. The aggregate of feeling and so on too, he rejects for them by way of occurrence, and acknowledges by way of death and rebirth-linking. But the proponent of one's own doctrine, not wishing for that, said "five-aggregate constituent existence" in order to accuse thus: "If there, even at a single moment, feeling and so on exist, it would reach the state of five-aggregate constituent existence." The other rejects out of fear of contradicting the discourses.

544-545. Regarding the question "gets destroyed in part," his view is that what is associated is destroyed, while what is dissociated remains; therefore he acknowledges. "Two life faculties" is the question of the opponent, and the acknowledgment is of the proponent of one's own doctrine. For there are two life faculties by way of material and immaterial; by these very ones a being lives, and by their dissolution one is said to die. For at the moment of passing away, both lives are destroyed together.

Commentary on the Discussion of the Life Faculty.

11. Commentary on the Discussion of Action as Cause

546. Now there is the discussion called "because of action." Therein, the view of those who hold that a Worthy One who in a former existence had slandered a Worthy One falls away from arahantship because of that action, just as the Pubbaseliyas and the Sammitīyas; with reference to them, "because of action" is the question of the proponent of one's own doctrine, the acknowledgment is of the other. The remainder is exactly the same as the method stated in the discussion on decline.

"Well then, because one slanders the Worthy Ones" - this he says in order to make him accept that because of which action one falls away. Then the proponent of one's own doctrine, having made him acknowledge that position, in order to accuse "if so, all those by whom Worthy Ones have not been previously slandered would attain arahantship," said beginning with "whatever." The other, not seeing a fixed course for that action to lead to the attaining of arahantship, rejects.

Commentary on the Discussion of Action as Cause.

The eighth chapter.



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 (Ṭīkā), 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. 3. The Canon of Higher Teaching - Commentaries. 5. Commentary on the Points of Controversy. 8. Eighth Chapter 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