

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

5. The Collection of Minor Texts (5. Khuddaka Nikāya)

14. The Book of Birth Stories-1 (14. Jātakapāḷi-1)

8. The Book of the Eights (8. Aṭṭhakanipāto)

[Ja 417-426, PTS 3.425-3.481]



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

14. The Book of Birth Stories-1

8. The Book of the Eights

417. The Kaccānī Birth Story (1)

- 1.** Dressed in white, pure, with wet hair, Kaccānī, why having placed a pot in the middle;
Flour, sesame seeds, you wash rice grains, rice with sesame will be - for what reason?
- 2.** "This, brahmin, is not for the purpose of food, the rice with sesame will be well cooked;
The Teaching has died, for that today I will make an offering in the midst of the cemetery."
- 3.** Having investigated, Kaccānī, do your duty, the Teaching has died, who now has told you thus;
The thousand-eyed one of incomparable power, the excellent Teaching never dies.
- 4.** "This is a firm measure for me here, Brahmā, the Teaching is understood, there is no uncertainty for me here;
Those who are now evil, those same ones are now happy."
- 5.** My daughter-in-law indeed was barren, she having killed me gave birth to a son;
She is now the lord of the whole family, but I am cast away, alone.
- 6.** I am alive indeed, I am not dead, I have come here for your very purpose;
She who having killed you gave birth to a son, together with the son I will reduce to ashes.
- 7.** "And if this pleases you, king of gods, you have come here for my very benefit;
I and my son and daughter-in-law and grandson, being joyful, may we dwell at home."
- 8.** "And if this pleases you, Kāṭiyānī, though being struck, you do not give up the teaching;
You and your son and daughter-in-law and grandson, being joyful, may you dwell at home."
- 9.** That Kāṭiyānī together with her daughter-in-law, being joyful, dwelt at home;
Both son and grandson attended on them, supported by the lord of the gods.

The Kaccānī Birth Story is first.

418. The Eight Sounds Birth Story (2)

10. This was formerly called a low-lying place, with many fish and great water;
The residence of the crane king, my paternal dwelling;
Today we sustain ourselves on frogs, we do not abandon our abode.
11. Who will pierce the eye of the immoral Bandhara for the second time;
Who will make my young ones, my nest, and me safe?
12. All the softwood was utterly eliminated, as far as its destination was;
With food exhausted, great king, the woodworm does not delight in the core.
13. Surely I, having gone from here, released from the king's dwelling;
Shall delight myself, dwelling in the branches of trees.
14. Surely I, having gone from here, released from the king's dwelling;
I shall drink the finest waters, going before the herd to the cattle pen.
15. Me, intoxicated by sensual pleasures, lustful, infatuated with sensual
pleasures;
The fierce hunter Bharata brought me, the Bāhika - may there be good fortune
for you.
16. In the darkness and gloom, on the high upper mountain;
She, with smooth and soft words, "May your foot not stumble on the stone."
17. Without doubt, seeing the final elimination of birth, I shall not return to lying in
a womb again;
This is the last, the final lying in a womb, my wandering in the round of
rebirths for rebirth is eliminated.

The Eight Sounds Birth Story is second.

419. The Sulasā Birth Story (3)

18. This golden armlet, many pearls and lapis lazuli;
Take it all, venerable one, and announce me as a slave.
19. "Lay aside, beautiful one, do not lament excessively;
And I do not directly know wealth brought by having killed."
20. "Since I remember myself, since I reached the age of discretion;
And I do not directly know another more dear than you."
21. Come, I will embrace you, and I will circumambulate you;
For now there is no more meeting of me and you.
22. "For not in all situations is a man wise;
A woman too may be wise, discerning here and there.
23. "For not in all situations is a man wise;

A woman too may be wise, quickly discerning what is beneficial.

- 24.** Quickly and indeed swiftly, she perceived nearby;
Just as with a fully drawn bow a deer, Sulasā killed the enemy.
- 25.** Whoever here does not quickly understand the matter that has arisen;
He, of slow wit, is destroyed, like a thief in a mountain cave.
- 26.** Whoever quickly understands the matter that has arisen;
Is freed from the confinement of enemies, just as Sulasā was from the flour-man."

The Sulasā Birth Story is third.

420. The Sumaṅgala Birth Story (4)

- 27.** Having considered "I am exceedingly angry," a lord should not yet decree punishment;
Without reason, unbefitting of oneself, one would arouse great sufferings for another.
- 28.** But when one should know one's own confidence, one should examine the wrong-doing of another for its meaning;
Then having considered by oneself "this is the meaning here," one should impose a fitting punishment upon him.
- 29.** And he does not burn others nor himself, who not infatuated examines what is right and wrong;
Whoever becomes the rod-bearing lord here, he, guarded by praise, does not fall from glory.
- 30.** Those warriors who act without consideration, decree punishment hastily, infatuated;
Connected with blame, they give up life, and even freed from here, they go to an unfortunate realm.
- 31.** And those who delight in the Teaching proclaimed by the Noble One, they are unsurpassed in speech, in mind, and in action;
They, established in peace, meekness, and concentration, such ones go to both worlds.
- 32.** I am a king, lord of men and women, even if I am angry I restrain myself;
Prohibiting the populace of such a kind, I decree punishment with compassion wisely.
- 33.** May glory and prosperity never forsake you, O warrior, O lord of people;
Without wrath, with a mind constantly serene, free from trouble, may you protect for a hundred years.
- 34.** Endowed with these virtues, O warrior, established in noble conduct, easy to admonish, not prone to wrath;

Happy, without oppression, rule the earth, and liberated from here, go to a good destination.

- 35.** Thus with good conduct and well-spoken words, by the Teaching, by the true method, skilfully guiding;
He would extinguish the agitated multitude, as a great cloud extinguishes the earth with water.

The Sumaṅgala Birth Story is fourth.

421. The Gaṅgamālā Birth Story (5)

- 36.** The earth had become embers, the ground was covered with hot ashes;
Then you sing your duties, the sunshine does not torment you.
- 37.** The sun shines above, the sand burns below;
Then you sing your duties, the sunshine does not torment you.
- 38.** The sunshine does not torment me, desires torment me;
For purposes are various, O king, they torment, not the sunshine.
- 39.** I saw your root, Sensual Pleasure, from thought, Sensual Pleasure, you are born;
I will not think of you, thus, Sensual Pleasure, you will not exist.
- 40.** Even few sensual pleasures are not enough, with many too one is not satisfied;
Alas, the prattle of fools, one who is watchful should avoid them.
- 41.** "This is the fruit of a small action of mine, Udaya attained greatness;
It is indeed a well-gained gain for the young man, who went forth having abandoned sensual lust."
- 42.** Through austerity they abandon evil deeds, through austerity the state of barber and potter;
Through austerity having overcome, O Gaṅgamālā, you addressed Brahmadatta by name.
- 43.** See for yourself, mother, this is the result of patience and meekness;
He who is honoured by all people, him we pay homage to, together with the king and ministers.
- 44.** Do not say anything to the Ganges garland, one training in the paths of wisdom among sages;
For he has crossed the ocean, having crossed which they live free from sorrow.

The Gaṅgamālā Birth Story is fifth.

422. The Shrine Birth Story (6)

- 45.** The principle destroyed indeed destroys, not destroyed it destroys nothing;

Therefore one should not destroy the principle, lest you, the principle destroyed, be destroyed.

- 46.** From one speaking falsehood, the deities depart;
And his mouth smells foul, and he falls from his own state;
Whoever, knowing, when asked a question, would explain it otherwise.
- 47.** If indeed you speak the truth, be, O king, as before;
If you speak falsely, O king, remain on the ground, O shrine.
- 48.** It rains for him at the wrong time, at the right time it does not rain for him;
Whoever, knowing, when asked a question, would explain it otherwise.
- 49.** If indeed you speak the truth, be, O king, as before;
If you speak falsely, O king, enter the ground, O shrine.
- 50.** His tongue becomes forked, like a snake's, O lord of the land;
Whoever, knowing, when asked a question, would explain it otherwise.
- 51.** If indeed you speak the truth, be, O king, as before;
If you speak falsely, O king, enter further into the shrine.
- 52.** His tongue does not exist, like a fish's, O lord of the land;
Whoever, knowing, when asked a question, would explain it otherwise.
- 53.** If indeed you speak the truth, be, O king, as before;
If you speak falsely, O king, enter further into the shrine.
- 54.** Only daughters are born to him, no sons are born in his family;
Whoever, knowing, when asked a question, would explain it otherwise.
- 55.** If indeed you speak the truth, be, O king, as before;
If you speak falsely, O king, enter further into the shrine.
- 56.** Sons do not exist for him, they depart in every direction;
Whoever, knowing, when asked a question, would explain it otherwise.
- 57.** If indeed you speak the truth, be, O king, as before;
If you speak falsely, O king, enter further into the shrine.
- 58.** That king, cursed by the sage, who formerly moved through the sky;
Entered the earth, having reached his time, with diminished self.
- 59.** Therefore, the wise do not praise going by desire;
One should speak with an uncorrupted mind, a word connected with truth.

The Shrine Birth Story is sixth.

423. The Faculty Birth Story (7)

- 60.** Whoever, Nārada, comes under the control of the faculties through sensuality;

He, having abandoned both worlds, withers away even while living.

- 61.** After happiness comes suffering, after suffering comes happiness;
You, having dried up happiness, have attained suffering, expect the excellent happiness.
- 62.** In times of difficulty, enduring difficulty, whoever does not go beyond the difficulty;
He, the wise one, attains the happiness at the end of difficulty, the exertion.
- 63.** Not indeed for desire of sensual pleasures, not for different purposes, not for a cause of benefit;
And not having disregarded what has been done, you deserve to fall away from the teaching.
- 64.** Skill is good for a householder, and sharing food;
Not laughing at gains, untroubled at loss of welfare.
- 65.** "This much is wisdom," even so Davila spoke;
There is nothing worse than this, whoever comes under the control of the faculties.
- 66.** Like one falling into the hands of enemies, O Sivi, one like me attains;
Work and true knowledge, skill, marriage, morality and gentleness;
And having abandoned these in glory, I was reborn through my own actions.
- 67.** I am like one conquered by a thousand, without kin, without refuge;
Departed from the noble teaching, just as a ghost, so am I.
- 68.** Having caused suffering to those desiring happiness, I have fallen into this state;
Thus I do not attain happiness, like one standing amidst flames.

The Faculty Birth Story is seventh.

424. The Blazing Birth Story (8)

- 69.** "When a house is burning, whatever vessel one takes out;
That is for one's benefit, not what is burnt there.
- 70.** Thus the world is ablaze with ageing and death;
One should take out by giving, what is given is well removed.
- 71.** Whoever gives a gift to one who has righteously acquired, attained through industriousness and energy;
Having passed beyond Yama's Vetaraṇī river, that mortal attains divine states.
- 72.** "Giving and battle, they say, are the same; even few, being good, conquer many;
If one with faith gives even a little, by that very deed he becomes happy in the hereafter.

- 73.** Giving with discrimination is praised by the Fortunate One, those who are worthy of offerings here in the world of the living;
Gifts given to them are of great fruit, like seeds sown in a good field.
- 74.** One who lives without harming living beings, does not do evil through fear of others' censure;
They praise the timid, not the hero there, for the peaceful do not do evil out of fear.
- 75.** By the inferior holy life, one is reborn in a warrior family;
By the middling, to divinity, and by the highest, one becomes pure.
- 76.** Certainly giving is praised in many ways, but the state of the Teaching is better than giving;
For in the past, and even earlier, the good, those with wisdom, attained Nibbāna itself.

The Blazing Birth Story is eighth.

425. The Impossibility Birth Story (9)

- 77.** If the Ganges were a lotus pond, peaceful, and cuckoos were conch-coloured;
If the rose-apple tree were to give palmyra fruit, then surely it might be so.
- 78.** When there might be a threefold mantle of tortoise hair,
A winter covering, then surely it might be so.
- 79.** When a watchtower might be well made from mosquito legs;
Firm and unshakeable, then surely it might be so.
- 80.** When a ladder were well-made from hares' horns,
For the purpose of ascending to heaven, then surely it might be so.
- 81.** When mice, having climbed a ladder, would eat the moon;
And would bring down Rāhu, then surely it might be so.
- 82.** When flies, moving in swarms, having drunk from a pitcher of liquor,
Would make their dwelling on embers, then surely it might be so.
- 83.** When a donkey would be endowed with bimba-fruit lips, fair-faced;
Skilled in dancing and singing, then surely it might be so.
- 84.** When crows and owls, having gone to a private place, would consult;
Would desire each other's fortune, then surely it might be so.
- 85.** When an umbrella of lotus root leaves would be more firm,
For warding off the rain, then surely it might be so.
- 86.** When a kulaka bird, Mount Gandhamādana,
Were to take in its beak and go, then surely it might be so.

- 87.** When an ocean-going ship, with machinery and enclosure;
A boy could take and carry away, then surely it might be so.

The Impossibility Birth Story is ninth.

426. The Panther Birth Story (10)

- 88.** Is it bearable, is it endurable, is there happiness for you, maternal uncle?
Your mother spoke of your happiness, we indeed desire your happiness.
- 89.** Having trodden upon my tail, having harassed me, you goat;
Today, by your uncle's word, do you think you should be released?
- 90.** You are seated facing east, I have come before your face;
Your tail is behind you, how then could I have trodden upon it?
- 91.** As far as the four islands, with their oceans and mountains;
So far extends my tail, how then could you have avoided it?
- 92.** Previously my mother, father and brothers told me this;
Of the long tail of the wicked one, I have come through the sky.
- 93.** And having seen her coming, you goat, in the sky;
The herd of deer fled, my prey was destroyed by you.
- 94.** Thus as she wailed, the blood-drinker, the she-goat;
Crushed her throat, there is no well-spoken word for the wicked.
- 95.** Indeed not in the wicked is there method, nor nature, nor well-spoken word;
One should apply effort towards the wicked, and he does not delight in the virtuous.

The Panther Birth Story is tenth.

The Book of Eights is concluded.

Its summary:

Pure, Untroubled Mind, Cloth-Bearer, Crane King's Bracelet, Excellent Stick;
Then Charcoal, Shrine, Devila, then Blazing, Ganges, Ten Goats.



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). The Triple Canon. The Canon of Discourses. 5. The Collection of Minor Texts. 14. The Book of Birth Stories-1. 8. The Book of the Eights Retrieved from paliverse.org

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