

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā)

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

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

09. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns (09. Therīgāthā-
aṭṭhakathā)

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



PaliVerse

5. The Collection of Minor Texts

09. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nuns

8. The Book of the Eights

1. Commentary on the Verses of the Elder Nun Sīsūpacālā

196-203. In the Book of Eights, the verses beginning with "A nun accomplished in morality" are of the elder nun Sīsūpacālā. The story of this one too is by the same method as stated in the story of the elder nun Cālā. For this one too, having heard of the state of having gone forth of the Venerable General of the Teaching, herself too with enthusiasm arisen, having gone forth, having completed the preliminary functions, having established insight, striving and endeavouring, before long attained arahantship. Having attained arahantship, dwelling with the happiness of fruition attainment, one day, having reviewed her own practice, being joyful thinking "One whose obligations have been performed," by way of an inspired utterance -

196. "A nun accomplished in morality, well-restrained in the faculties;
Would attain the peaceful state, full and delicious in itself, nourishing." He spoke a verse.

Therein, "accomplished in morality" means endowed with pure morality of a nun, complete. "Well-restrained in the faculties" means well restrained in the faculties with mind as the sixth, having abandoned lust towards a desirable object such as visible form and so on, hate towards an undesirable one, and delusion towards one regarded with indifference, with faculties well closed. "Full and delicious in itself, nourishing" means the noble path which is not requiring anything added by anyone, nourishing, sweet by its own intrinsic nature, which has become the medicine for the appeasement of the entire disease of mental defilements; or Nibbāna itself. For even the noble path, because it should be practised by those who desire Nibbāna, and because of the absence of the fever of mental defilements, it is proper to call it "the peaceful state."

197. "The Thirty-three and the Yāma, and the Tusita deities too;
The gods who delight in creation, those gods who wield power;
Direct your mind there, where you dwelt before."

This verse was spoken by Māra, who wished to make the elder nun fall from her attainment, by way of urging her there, meaning "produce attachment to the sensual heavens."

Therein, the place where thirty-three persons who performed merit together were reborn, that place is "Tāvatiṃsa." All the young gods reborn there are "Tāvatiṃsa." Some, however, say: "Tāvatiṃsa is simply the name of those gods." "Yāma" means those who have gone to, approached, and attained divine happiness distinguished from the two heavenly worlds. "Tusita" means those who are satisfied and delighted with divine success. "Those who delight in creation" means those who, beyond the

objects ordinarily prepared, at the time when they desire to enjoy in excess, having created enjoyments according to their preference, delight. "Those who wield power" means those who, having known the preference of the mind, exercise mastery over enjoyments created by others. "Direct your mind there" means place your mind in that order of gods beginning with the Tāvatiṃsa, produce attachment for the purpose of being reborn there. Only the Tāvatiṃsa and so on were mentioned with the intention that the enjoyments of the Cātumahārājika gods are inferior to the others. "Where you dwelt before" means in whichever orders of gods you formerly dwelt. It is said that this one, formerly being reborn among the gods, having gone through the five sensual heavens beginning from the Tāvatiṃsa, then descending again from below, having remained among the Tusita gods, having passed away from there, was now reborn among human beings.

Having heard that, the elder nun - "Let be, Māra, the sensual world spoken of by you. The entire other world too is ablaze, in flames with the fire of lust and so on. The mind of the wise does not delight therein" - having shown her own state of mind turned away from sensual pleasures and from the world, threatening Māra -

198. "The Thirty-three and the Yāma, and the Tusita deities too;
The gods who delight in creation, those gods who wield power.
199. "From time to time, existence after existence, established in identity;
Not having transcended identity, they run on through birth and death.
200. "The whole world is ablaze, the whole world is burning;
The whole world is blazing, the whole world is trembling.
201. "Immovable, incomparable, not frequented by worldlings;
The Buddha expounded the Teaching, there my mind delights.
202. "Having heard his word, I dwelt delighted in the Dispensation;
The three true knowledges have been attained, the Buddha's teaching has been fulfilled.
203. "Delight has been destroyed everywhere, the mass of darkness has been split open;
Know thus, Evil One, you are defeated, O Death."

He spoke these verses.

Therein, "from time to time" means that particular time. "Existence after existence" means from existence to existence. "In identity" means in the fivefold group of aggregates. "Established in" means those who put in front. This is what is meant - Māra, the gods of the Thirty-three and so on spoken of by you, going from existence to existence, are established in identity which is beset with many dangers such as impermanence and so on; therefore, at the time of arising in that existence, at the middle time, and at the time of conclusion - at each and every time they stand having put identity itself in front. For that very reason, not having transcended identity, not

being directed towards escape, running along the very shore of identity, they run on through birth and death; because of being followed by lust and so on, they remember again and again only birth and death, and are not liberated from that.

"The whole world is ablaze" means, Māra, not only the sensual world spoken of by you, designated as the triad of elements, but the entire world is burning with the eleven fires beginning with the fire of lust and so on. It is burning because of being set ablaze again and again by those very things. It is blazing because of having become one continuous mass of flames without interruption. It is trembling because of being shaken and agitated here and there by craving and all mental defilements.

Thus in a world that is burning, blazing, and trembling, it is immovable because it is impossible for anyone to cause it to tremble or to shake it, and it is incomparable because it is impossible to weigh it by virtue as "this much" and because of the absence of anything equal to itself. It is not frequented by worldlings because of being practised only by noble ones such as the Buddha and others through the approach of resort and meditative development. The Buddha, the Blessed One, with a mind urged by great compassion, expounded the ninefold supramundane teaching classified as path, fruition, and Nibbāna; he spoke it and declared it to the world with its gods. Therein, "my mind delights and rejoices in that noble teaching, and does not turn away from it" - this is the meaning. The remainder is the same as the method stated below.

The commentary on the verses of the Elder Nun Sīsūpacālā is concluded.

The commentary on the Book of Eights is concluded.



ABOUT THIS TRANSLATION

This translation is part of the PaliVerse Project - the first complete, unified English translation of the Pāli Canon together with its Commentaries (Aṭṭhakathā) and Subcommentaries (Tīkā), accompanied by interactive study tools. PaliVerse is an ongoing project. The AI translations are continuously improved through experts' revisions and feedback. This text is the latest translation as of the date of download.

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