

# THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

*The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom*

## The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

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The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

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

3. The Chapter on Pāthika (3. Pāthikavaggapāḷi)

8. The Discourse to Siṅgāla (8. Siṅgālasuttaṃ)

[DN 31, PTS 3.180–3.193]



PaliVerse

# 1. The Collection of the Long Discourses

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## 3. The Chapter on Pāthika

## 8. The Discourse to Siṅgāla

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**242.** Thus have I heard - On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Ground. Now at that time Siṅgālaka, a householder's son, having risen early in the morning, having gone out from Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, with joined palms, was paying homage to the various directions - the eastern direction, the southern direction, the western direction, the northern direction, the lower direction, the upper direction.

**243.** Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, entered Rājagaha for almsfood. The Blessed One saw Siṅgālaka, a householder's son, having risen early in the morning, having gone out from Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, with joined palms, paying homage to the various directions - the eastern direction, the southern direction, the western direction, the northern direction, the lower direction, the upper direction. Having seen Siṅgālaka, the householder's son, he said this - "Why do you, householder's son, having risen early in the morning, having gone out from Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, with joined palms, pay homage to the various directions - the eastern direction, the southern direction, the western direction, the northern direction, the lower direction, the upper direction?" "My father, venerable sir, when dying, spoke thus - 'You should pay homage to the directions, dear son.' So I, venerable sir, honouring, respecting, revering, and venerating my father's word, having risen early in the morning, having gone out from Rājagaha, with wet clothes and wet hair, with joined palms, pay homage to the various directions - the eastern direction, the southern direction, the western direction, the northern direction, the lower direction, the upper direction."

### The Six Directions

**244.** "Householder's son, in the Noble One's discipline the six directions are not to be paid homage to in this way." "But in what way, venerable sir, are the six directions to be paid homage to in the Noble One's discipline? It would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One would expound to me the Teaching in such a way that the six directions are to be paid homage to in the Noble One's discipline."

"Well then, householder's son, listen and pay close attention, I will speak." "Yes, venerable sir," Siṅgālaka, the householder's son, assented to the Blessed One. The Blessed One said this -

"When, householder's son, a noble disciple has abandoned the four defilements of action, does not commit evil deeds on four grounds, and does not pursue the six causes of ruin for wealth, he, thus gone beyond the fourteen evils, covering the six directions, is practising for victory in both worlds. For him both this world is won and the next world. Upon the body's collapse at death, he is reborn in a fortunate realm, in a heavenly world.

## The Four Defilements of Action

**245.** "What are the four defilements of action that have been abandoned for him? Killing living beings, householder's son, is a defilement of action; taking what is not given is a defilement of action; sexual misconduct is a defilement of action; lying is a defilement of action. These are the four defilements of action that have been abandoned for him." This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"Killing living beings, taking what is not given, and lying, it is said;  
And going to another's wife - the wise do not praise these."

## The Four States

**246.** "On which four grounds does one not commit evil deeds? Going to bias through desire, one commits evil deeds; going to bias through hatred, one commits evil deeds; going to bias through delusion, one commits evil deeds; going to bias through fear, one commits evil deeds. Since, householder's son, a noble disciple does not go to bias through desire, does not go to bias through hatred, does not go to bias through delusion, does not go to bias through fear; on these four grounds he does not commit evil deeds." This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"Through desire, hatred, fear, and delusion, whoever transgresses the teaching;  
His fame diminishes, like the moon in the dark fortnight.

"Through desire, hatred, fear, and delusion, whoever does not transgress the teaching;  
His fame increases, like the moon in the bright fortnight."

## Six causes of ruin

**247.** "What are the six causes of ruin for wealth that he does not pursue? The pursuit of spirits, liquor and intoxicants that cause negligence, householder's son, is a cause of ruin for wealth; the pursuit of wandering the streets at improper times is a cause of ruin for wealth; visiting fairs is a cause of ruin for wealth; the pursuit of gambling that causes negligence is a cause of ruin for wealth; the pursuit of evil friends is a cause of ruin for wealth; the pursuit of laziness is a cause of ruin for wealth.

## Six dangers of spirits and liquor

**248.** "Householder's son, there are these six dangers in the pursuit of spirits, liquor and intoxicants that cause negligence. Loss of wealth visible here and now, increase of disputes, a basis for diseases, generating ill repute, exposure of private parts, and weakening of wisdom - this is the sixth factor. These, householder's son, are the six dangers in the pursuit of spirits, liquor and intoxicants that cause negligence.

## Six dangers of roaming at improper times

**249.** "Householder's son, there are these six dangers in the pursuit of wandering the streets at improper times. He himself is unguarded and unprotected, his children and wife are unguarded and unprotected, his property is unguarded and unprotected, he

becomes suspected in evil matters, untrue speech takes root regarding him, and he is beset by many painful states. These, householder's son, are the six dangers in the pursuit of wandering the streets at improper times.

#### Six dangers of visiting fairs

**250.** "Householder's son, there are these six dangers in visiting fairs or festivals. Where is there dancing, where is there singing, where is there music, where is there story-telling, where is there hand-clapping, where is there drumming? These, householder's son, are the six dangers in visiting fairs or festivals.

#### Six dangers of heedlessness in gambling

**251.** "Householder's son, there are these six dangers in the pursuit of gambling that causes negligence. Winning, one begets enmity; the loser bewails his wealth; there is loss of wealth visible here and now; the word of one who frequents assemblies is not heeded; he is despised by friends and colleagues; he is not desired by those arranging marriages - 'This person is a gambler, not capable of maintaining a wife.' These, householder's son, are the six dangers in the pursuit of gambling that causes negligence.

#### Six dangers of evil friendship

**252.** "Householder's son, there are these six dangers in the pursuit of evil friends. Those who are gamblers, those who are drunkards, those who are thirsty ones, those who are cheats, those who are deceivers, those who are violent ones. They become his friends, they become his companions. These, householder's son, are the six dangers in the pursuit of evil friends.

#### Six dangers of laziness

**253.** "Householder's son, there are these six dangers in the pursuit of laziness. 'It is too cold,' and he does not work; 'it is too hot,' and he does not work; 'it is too late in the evening,' and he does not work; 'it is too early,' and he does not work; 'I am too hungry,' and he does not work; 'I am too full,' and he does not work. For one dwelling thus with many excuses for duties, wealth that has not arisen does not arise, and wealth that has arisen goes to utter elimination. These, householder's son, are the six dangers in the pursuit of laziness." This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"There is one called a drinking companion,  
There is one who is a friend only face to face;  
But whoever when needs arise,  
Is a helper, he is a true friend.

"Sleeping after sunrise, adultery,  
Abundance of enmity, and harmfulness;  
Evil friends, and extreme miserliness,  
These six states bring a man to ruin.

"One with evil friends, with evil companions,  
With evil conduct and resorts;

From this world and from the next,  
From both a man falls to ruin.

"Dice, women, liquor, dancing and song,  
Sleeping by day, wandering about at improper times;  
Evil friends, and extreme miserliness,  
These six states bring a man to ruin.

"They play with dice, they drink liquor,  
They go to women who are dear as life to others;  
Associating with the inferior, not with the senior,  
He diminishes like the moon in the dark fortnight.

"Whoever is addicted to liquor, without wealth, owning nothing,  
Thirsty, drinking, gone to the tavern;  
He plunges into debt like into water,  
He will quickly bring his family to ruin.

"By one who habitually sleeps by day, by one who dislikes rising at night;  
By one who is always intoxicated, a drunkard, it is not possible to maintain a household.

"'It is too cold, it is too hot, it is too late in the evening,' thus it was;  
Thus for those who abandon their work, benefits pass by the young man.

"But whoever here regards cold and heat as no more than grass;  
Doing a man's duties, he does not abandon happiness."

### False friends

**254.** "These four, householder's son, are enemies disguised as friends that should be known. The taker of what is other should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend, one who excels in words should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend, the speaker of what is not pleasant should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend, the spendthrift companion should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.

**255.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the taker of what is other should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.

"He is a taker of what is other, with little he desires much;  
He does a task out of fear, he associates for the sake of benefit.

"By these four grounds, householder's son, the taker of what is other should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.

**256.** "Householder's son, by four grounds one who excels in words should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He offers hospitality with the past, he offers hospitality with the future, he treats kindly with what is useless, he shows disaster in present duties. By these four grounds, householder's son, one who excels in words should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.

**257.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the speaker of what is not pleasant should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He allows what is evil, he allows what is good, he praises in one's presence, he dispraises in one's absence. By these four grounds, householder's son, the speaker of what is not pleasant should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend.

**258.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the spendthrift companion should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend. He is a companion in the pursuit of spirits, liquor and intoxicants that cause negligence, he is a companion in the pursuit of roaming the streets at improper times, he is a companion in visiting fairs or festivals, he is a companion in the pursuit of gambling that causes negligence. By these four grounds, householder's son, the spendthrift companion should be known as an enemy disguised as a friend."

**259.** This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"The friend who is a taker of what is other, and the friend who excels in words;  
And whoever speaks what is not pleasant, and whoever is a companion in loss.

These four as enemies, thus having known, the wise one;  
Should avoid from afar, as a path of danger."

### The true-hearted friend

**260.** "These four, householder's son, are friends who are good-hearted that should be known. The helpful friend should be known as good-hearted, the friend who shares happiness and suffering should be known as good-hearted, the friend who shows what is beneficial should be known as good-hearted, the compassionate friend should be known as good-hearted.

**261.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the helpful friend should be known as good-hearted. He protects the heedless one, he protects the property of the heedless one, he becomes a refuge for the frightened one, when duties to be done have arisen he gives double the wealth. By these four grounds, householder's son, the helpful friend should be known as good-hearted.

**262.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the friend who shares happiness and suffering should be known as good-hearted. He tells him his secrets, he conceals his secrets, he does not abandon him in misfortunes, even his life is given up for his benefit. By these four grounds, householder's son, the friend who shares happiness and suffering should be known as good-hearted.

**263.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the friend who shows what is beneficial should be known as good-hearted. He prevents from evil, he establishes in good, he makes known what has not been heard, he points out the path to heaven. By these four grounds, householder's son, the friend who shows what is beneficial should be known as good-hearted.

**264.** "Householder's son, by four grounds the compassionate friend should be known as good-hearted. He does not rejoice in one's misfortune, he rejoices in one's fortune, he prevents one speaking dispraise, he praises one speaking praise. By these four

grounds, householder's son, the compassionate friend should be known as good-hearted."

**265.** This the Blessed One said, and having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this:

"The friend who is helpful, and whoever is a companion in happiness and suffering;  
The friend who shows what is beneficial, and whoever is compassionate towards friends.

"These four as friends, thus having known, the wise one;  
Should attend on them attentively, as a mother her own son;  
The wise one accomplished in morality shines like a blazing fire.

"For one who gathers wealth, moving like a bee;  
Wealth goes to accumulation, like an ant-hill being built up.

"Having thus gathered wealth, a householder capable in the family;  
Should divide wealth in four ways, he indeed binds friends.

"With one part he should enjoy wealth, with two he should engage in work;  
And the fourth he should store away, it will be there in times of misfortune."

#### The section on covering the six directions

**266.** "And how, householder's son, is a noble disciple one who covers the six directions? These six directions, householder's son, should be known. The eastern direction should be known as mother and father, the southern direction should be known as teachers, the western direction should be known as children and wife, the northern direction should be known as friends and colleagues, the lower direction should be known as slaves and workers, the upper direction should be known as ascetics and brahmins.

**267.** "Householder's son, by five grounds a son should attend upon mother and father as the eastern direction - 'Having been supported by them, I will support them, I will do their duties for them, I will maintain the family lineage, I will proceed as an heir, or else I will give offerings for the departed who have passed away.' By these five grounds, householder's son, when mother and father as the eastern direction have been attended upon by a son, they have compassion for the son by five grounds. They prevent from evil, they establish in good, they have him trained in a craft, they unite him with a suitable wife, at the proper time they hand over the inheritance. By these five grounds, householder's son, when mother and father as the eastern direction have been attended upon by a son, by these five grounds they have compassion for the son. Thus for him this eastern direction is covered, secure, without fear.

**268.** "Householder's son, by five grounds a pupil should attend upon teachers as the southern direction - by rising, by attendance, by obedience, by service, by attentively receiving the craft. By these five grounds, householder's son, when teachers as the southern direction have been attended upon by a pupil, they have compassion for the

pupil by five grounds - they train him to be well-trained, they make him grasp what is rightly grasped, they become declarers of all that has been heard of the craft, they establish him among friends and colleagues, they provide protection in the directions. By these five grounds, householder's son, when teachers as the southern direction have been attended upon by a pupil, by these five grounds they have compassion for the pupil. Thus for him this southern direction is covered, secure, without fear.

**269.** "Householder's son, by five grounds a husband should attend upon his wife as the western direction - by honouring her, by not disrespecting her, by not committing adultery, by relinquishing authority to her, by providing her with ornaments. By these five grounds, householder's son, when a wife as the western direction has been attended upon by a husband, she has compassion for her husband by five grounds - she has her work well-arranged, she has the household attendants well-organised, she is not adulterous, she guards what has been brought, and she is skilful and not lazy in all duties. By these five grounds, householder's son, when a wife as the western direction has been attended upon by a husband, by these five grounds she has compassion for her husband. Thus for him this western direction is covered, secure, without fear.

**270.** "Householder's son, by five grounds a son of good family should attend upon friends and colleagues as the northern direction - by giving, by endearing speech, by beneficent conduct, by impartiality, and by not deceiving. By these five grounds, householder's son, when friends and colleagues as the northern direction have been attended upon by a son of good family, they have compassion for the son of good family by five grounds - they protect the heedless one, they protect the property of the heedless one, they become a refuge for the frightened one, they do not abandon him in misfortunes, and they honour his descendants. By these five grounds, householder's son, when friends and colleagues as the northern direction have been attended upon by a son of good family, by these five grounds they have compassion for the son of good family. Thus for him this northern direction is covered, secure, without fear.

**271.** "Householder's son, by five grounds a master should attend upon slaves and workers as the lower direction - by assigning work according to their strength, by providing food and wages, by looking after them when sick, by sharing wonderful delicacies, by release at the right time. By these five grounds, householder's son, when slaves and workers as the lower direction have been attended upon by a master, they have compassion for the master by five grounds - they rise before him, they retire after him, they take only what is given, they do their work well, and they spread his fame and praise. By these five grounds, householder's son, when slaves and workers as the lower direction have been attended upon by a master, by these five grounds they have compassion for the master. Thus for him this lower direction is covered, secure, without fear.

**272.** "Householder's son, by five grounds a son of good family should attend upon ascetics and brahmins as the upper direction - with bodily action through friendliness, with verbal action through friendliness, with mental action through friendliness, by keeping the door open, by providing material gifts. By these five grounds, householder's son, when ascetics and brahmins as the upper direction have been attended upon by a son of good family, they have compassion for the son of good

family by six grounds - they prevent from evil, they establish in good, they have compassion with a good mind, they make known what has not been heard, they purify what has been heard, they point out the path to heaven. By these five grounds, householder's son, when ascetics and brahmins as the upper direction have been attended upon by a son of good family, by these six grounds they have compassion for the son of good family. Thus for him this upper direction is covered, secure, without fear."

**273.** This is what the Blessed One said. Having said this, the Fortunate One, the Teacher, further said this -

"Mother and father are the eastern direction, teachers are the southern direction;  
Children and wife are the western direction, friends and colleagues are the northern direction.

"Slaves and workers are below, ascetics and brahmins are above;  
These directions should a householder capable in the family venerate.

"The wise one accomplished in morality, smooth and discerning;  
Humble in conduct, not obstinate, such a one obtains fame.

"Industrious, not lazy, he does not tremble in misfortunes;  
Of unbroken conduct, intelligent, such a one obtains fame.

"One who supports others, one who makes friends, bountiful, free from avarice;  
A leader, a trainer, a conciliator, such a one obtains fame.

"Giving and endearing speech, and beneficent conduct here;  
And impartiality in all things, in each case as is fitting;  
These ways of supporting others in the world are like the linchpin of a moving chariot.

"And if these ways of supporting others did not exist, a mother on account of her child  
Would not obtain respect or veneration, nor a father on account of his child.

"Since the wise rightly regard these ways of supporting others,  
Therefore they attain greatness, and they become praiseworthy."

**274.** When this was said, Siṅgālaka, the householder's son, said this to the Blessed One - "Excellent, venerable sir! Excellent, venerable sir! Just as, venerable sir, one might set upright what had been overturned, or reveal what had been concealed, or point out the path to one who was lost, or hold up an oil lamp in the darkness so that those with eyes might see forms; Just so, the Teaching has been made clear by the Blessed One in many ways. I, venerable sir, go for refuge to the Blessed One, to the Teaching, and to the Community of monks. May the Blessed One remember me as a lay follower who has gone for refuge from this day forth for life."

*The Discourse on Siṅgāla is concluded as eighth.*



## 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

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## HOW TO CITE

*PaliVerse (2026). The Triple Canon. The Canon of Discourses. 1. The Collection of the Long Discourses. 3. The Chapter on Pāthika. 8. The Discourse to Siṅgāla Retrieved from [paliverse.org](https://paliverse.org)*

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