

THE PALIVERSE PROJECT

The Universe of Buddha's Wisdom

The Triple Canon (Tipiṭaka)

The Canon of Discourses (Sutta Piṭaka)

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

1. The Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality
(1. Sīlakkhandhavaggapāḷi)

9. The Discourse to Poṭṭhapāda (9. Poṭṭhapādasuttaṃ)

[DN 9, PTS 1.178–1.203]



PaliVerse

1. The Collection of the Long Discourses

1. The Chapter on the Aggregate of Morality

9. The Discourse to Poṭṭhapāda

The Story of the Wandering Ascetic Poṭṭhapāda

406. Thus have I heard - On one occasion the Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvattṥi in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's park. Now at that time the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda was dwelling at the debating hall in the Tinduka row, the single-halled park of Mallikā, together with a great assembly of wandering ascetics, about three hundred wandering ascetics. Then the Blessed One, having dressed in the earlier period of the day, taking his bowl and robe, entered Sāvattṥi for almsfood.

407. Then this occurred to the Blessed One: "It is still very early to walk for almsfood in Sāvattṥi. What if I were to approach the debating hall in the Tinduka row, the single-halled park of Mallikā, where the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda is?" Then the Blessed One went to the debating hall in the Tinduka row, the single-halled park of Mallikā.

408. Now at that time the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda was seated together with a great assembly of wandering ascetics, noisy, with loud noise and great noise, engaging in various kinds of pointless talk. That is: talk about kings, talk about thieves, talk about ministers, talk about armies, talk about perils, talk about battles, talk about food, talk about drink, talk about clothes, talk about beds, talk about garlands, talk about odours, talk about relatives, talk about vehicles, talk about villages, talk about towns, talk about cities, talk about countries, talk about women, talk about heroes, talk about streets, talk about wells, talk about the dead, talk about diversity, speculations about the world, speculations about the sea, talk about existence and non-existence, and so on.

409. The wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda saw the Blessed One coming from afar; having seen him, he settled his own assembly - "Let the venerable ones be quiet, let the venerable ones not make a sound. This ascetic Gotama is coming. That venerable one desires quietness and speaks in praise of quietness. Perhaps, having noticed that the assembly is quiet, he might think it fit to approach." When this was said, those wandering ascetics became silent.

410. Then the Blessed One approached the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda. Then the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda said this to the Blessed One - "Come, venerable sir, Blessed One. Welcome, venerable sir, to the Blessed One. It has been a long time, venerable sir, since the Blessed One made this occasion, that is to say, for coming here. Let the Blessed One sit down, venerable sir, this seat is laid down."

The Blessed One sat down on the prepared seat. The wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda too, having taken a certain low seat, sat down to one side. To the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda seated to one side, the Blessed One said this - "Poṭṭhapāda, what

discussion were you having as you sat together here? And what was the conversation that was interrupted?"

The Discussion on the Cessation of Higher Perception

411. When this was said, the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda said this to the Blessed One - "Let that discussion stand, venerable sir, the discussion for which we were sitting together just now. That discussion, venerable sir, will not be difficult for the Blessed One to hear later. Some days ago, venerable sir, earlier than that, when ascetics and brahmins of various sects were sitting together assembled in the debating hall, a discussion arose about the cessation of perception - 'How, good sir, does the cessation of perception occur?' Therein some said thus - 'A person's perceptions arise and cease without cause and without condition. At the time when they arise, at that time he is percipient. At the time when they cease, at that time he is non-percipient.' Thus some declare the cessation of perception.

"Another says this to him - 'But, good sir, it will not be so for me. For, good sir, perception is a person's self. And that indeed comes and goes. At the time when it comes, at that time he is percipient. At the time when it goes, at that time he is non-percipient.' Thus some declare the cessation of perception.

"Another says this to him - 'But, good sir, it will not be so for me. For, good sir, there are ascetics and brahmins of great supernormal power and great majesty. They draw in and draw out this person's perception. At the time when they draw it in, at that time he is percipient. At the time when they draw it out, at that time he is non-percipient.' Thus some declare the cessation of perception.

"Another says this to him - 'But, good sir, it will not be so for me. For, good sir, there are deities of great supernormal power and great majesty. They draw in and draw out this person's perception. At the time when they draw it in, at that time he is percipient. At the time when they draw it out, at that time he is non-percipient.' Thus some declare the cessation of perception.

"Then, venerable sir, mindfulness arose in me concerning the Blessed One - 'Ah, surely the Blessed One, ah, surely the Fortunate One, who is well skilled in these things.' The Blessed One, venerable sir, is skilled, the Blessed One knows the nature of the cessation of perception. How, venerable sir, does the cessation of perception occur?"

The Discussion on the Arising and Cessation of Perception with Cause

412. "There, Poṭṭhapāda, those ascetics and brahmins who said - 'A person's perceptions arise and cease without cause and without condition' - they have failed from the very beginning. What is the reason for this? For, Poṭṭhapāda, a person's perceptions arise and cease with cause and with condition. Through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases."

413. "And what is the training?" The Blessed One said: "Here, Poṭṭhapāda, a Truth-finder arises in the world, a Worthy One, a Perfectly Enlightened One... etc. Thus, Poṭṭhapāda, a monk is accomplished in morality... etc. When he regards these five hindrances as abandoned within himself, gladness arises; in one who is gladdened, rapture arises; when the mind is filled with rapture, the body becomes calm; one

whose body is calm feels happiness; the mind of one who is happy becomes concentrated. He, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental states, enters and dwells in the first meditative absorption, which is accompanied by applied thought and sustained thought, with rapture and happiness born of seclusion. His former perception of sensuality ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of rapture and happiness born of seclusion; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of rapture and happiness born of seclusion. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This is the training," said the Blessed One.

"Furthermore, Poṭṭhapāda, with the subsiding of applied and sustained thought, a monk enters and dwells in the second meditative absorption, which has internal confidence and unification of mind, is without applied thought and without sustained thought, with rapture and happiness born of concentration. His former subtle true perception of rapture and happiness born of seclusion ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of rapture and happiness born of concentration; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of rapture and happiness born of concentration. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This too is the training," said the Blessed One.

"Furthermore, Poṭṭhapāda, with the fading away of rapture, a monk dwells in equanimity, mindful and fully aware, and experiences happiness with the body - that which the noble ones declare: 'One who is equanimous and mindful, one who dwells in happiness' - he enters and dwells in the third meditative absorption. His former subtle true perception of rapture and happiness born of concentration ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of equanimity and happiness; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of equanimity and happiness. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This too is the training," said the Blessed One.

"Furthermore, Poṭṭhapāda, with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, and with the previous disappearance of joy and displeasure, a monk enters and dwells in the fourth meditative absorption, which has neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity. His former subtle true perception of equanimity and happiness ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of neither-unpleasant-nor-pleasant. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This too is the training," said the Blessed One.

"Furthermore, Poṭṭhapāda, with the complete transcendence of perceptions of form, with the passing away of perceptions of sensory impingement, with inattention to perceptions of diversity, aware that 'space is infinite,' a monk enters and dwells in the plane of infinite space. His former perception of form ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of the plane of infinite space; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of the plane of infinite space. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This too is the training," said the Blessed One.

"Furthermore, Poṭṭhapāda, with the complete transcendence of the plane of infinite space, aware that 'consciousness is infinite,' a monk enters and dwells in the plane of infinite consciousness. His former subtle true perception of the plane of infinite space ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of the plane of infinite consciousness; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of the plane of infinite consciousness. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This too is the training," said the Blessed One.

"Furthermore, Poṭṭhapāda, with the complete transcendence of the plane of infinite consciousness, aware that 'there is nothing,' a monk enters and dwells in the plane of nothingness. His former subtle true perception of the plane of infinite consciousness ceases. At that time there is the subtle true perception of the plane of nothingness; at that time he is one with the subtle true perception of the plane of nothingness. Thus through training one perception arises, through training one perception ceases. This too is the training," said the Blessed One.

414. "When, Poṭṭhapāda, a monk here perceives it as one's own, he from there to such and such a place, from there to such and such a place, gradually experiences the highest perception. When he is established at the highest perception, he has this thought: 'For me intending, it is worse; for me not intending, it is better. If I were to intend and generate volitional activities, these perceptions of mine would cease, and other gross perceptions would arise; what if I were neither to intend nor to generate volitional activities?' He neither intends nor generates volitional activities. For him not intending, not generating volitional activities, those perceptions cease, and other gross perceptions do not arise. He experiences cessation. Thus, Poṭṭhapāda, is the conscious attainment of the progressive cessation of perception.

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, have you ever heard before of such a conscious attainment of the progressive cessation of perception?" "No, Venerable Sir. Thus, Venerable Sir, I understand what the Blessed One has said: 'When, Poṭṭhapāda, a monk here perceives it as one's own, he from there to such and such a place, from there to such and such a place, gradually experiences the highest perception; when he is established at the highest perception, he has this thought: "For me intending, it is worse; for me not intending, it is better. If I were to intend and generate volitional activities, these perceptions of mine would cease, and other gross perceptions would arise; what if I were neither to intend nor to generate volitional activities?" He neither intends nor generates volitional activities; for him not intending, not generating volitional activities, those perceptions cease, and other gross perceptions do not arise. He experiences cessation. Thus, Poṭṭhapāda, is the conscious attainment of the progressive cessation of perception.'" "Yes, Poṭṭhapāda."

415. "Does the Blessed One, venerable sir, declare only one highest perception, or does he also declare many highest perceptions?" "I declare, Poṭṭhapāda, one highest perception, and I also declare many highest perceptions." "But in what way, venerable sir, does the Blessed One declare one highest perception and also many highest perceptions?" "In whatever way, Poṭṭhapāda, one experiences cessation, in that way I declare the highest perception. Thus, Poṭṭhapāda, I declare one highest perception, and I also declare many highest perceptions."

416. "Venerable sir, does perception arise first and knowledge afterwards, or does knowledge arise first and perception afterwards, or do perception and knowledge arise simultaneously?" "Poṭṭhapāda, perception arises first and knowledge afterwards, and from the arising of perception comes the arising of knowledge. He thus understands: 'Truly, my knowledge arose with this as condition.' By this method, Poṭṭhapāda, this should be known - how perception arises first and knowledge afterwards, and from the arising of perception comes the arising of knowledge."

The Discussion on Perception and Self

417. "Venerable sir, is perception a person's self, or is perception one thing and self another?" "But what self do you acknowledge, Poṭṭhapāda?" "Venerable sir, I acknowledge a gross self that is material, made of the four primary elements, feeding on edible food." "If, Poṭṭhapāda, your self were gross, material, made of the four primary elements, feeding on edible food. That being so, Poṭṭhapāda, perception would be one thing and self another. By this method too, Poṭṭhapāda, it should be known how perception would be one thing and self another. Let this gross self remain, Poṭṭhapāda, material, made of the four primary elements, feeding on edible food, then for this person some perceptions arise and some perceptions cease. By this method, Poṭṭhapāda, it should be known how perception would be one thing and self another."

418. "Venerable sir, I acknowledge a mind-made self, with all major and minor parts, with complete faculties." "If, Poṭṭhapāda, your self were mind-made, with all major and minor parts, with complete faculties, even so, Poṭṭhapāda, perception would be one thing and self another. By this method too, Poṭṭhapāda, it should be known how perception would be one thing and self another. Let this mind-made self remain, Poṭṭhapāda, with all major and minor parts, with complete faculties, then for this person some perceptions arise and some perceptions cease. By this method too, Poṭṭhapāda, it should be known how perception would be one thing and self another."

419. "Venerable sir, I acknowledge a formless self made of perception." "If, Poṭṭhapāda, your self were formless, made of perception, even so, Poṭṭhapāda, perception would be one thing and self another. By this method too, Poṭṭhapāda, it should be known how perception would be one thing and self another. Let this formless self made of perception remain, Poṭṭhapāda, then for this person some perceptions arise and some perceptions cease. By this method too, Poṭṭhapāda, it should be known how perception would be one thing and self another."

420. "But is it possible, venerable sir, for me to know - 'perception is a person's self' or 'perception is one thing and self is another'?" "This is difficult to know, Poṭṭhapāda, by you who hold a different view, a different acceptance, a different preference, a different practice, a different teacher's doctrine - 'perception is a person's self' or 'perception is one thing and self is another.'"

"If, venerable sir, this is difficult for me to know, holding a different view, a different acceptance, a different preference, a different practice, a different teacher's doctrine - 'perception is a person's self' or 'perception is one thing and self is another'; what then, venerable sir, is the world eternal, only this is the truth, anything else is vain?" This has been left undeclared by me, Poṭṭhapāda - "the world is eternal, only this is the truth, anything else is vain."

"What then, venerable sir, 'the world is non-eternal, only this is the truth, anything else is vain'?" "This too, Poṭṭhapāda, has been left undeclared by me - 'the world is non-eternal, only this is the truth, anything else is vain.'"

"What then, venerable sir, 'the world is finite... etc. 'the world is infinite... 'the soul is the same as the body... 'the soul is one thing and the body is another... 'the Truth-finder exists after death... 'the Truth-finder does not exist after death... 'the Truth-finder both exists and does not exist after death... 'the Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death, only this is the truth, anything else is vain'?" "This too, Poṭṭhapāda, has been left undeclared by me - 'the Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death, only this is the truth, anything else is vain.'"

"But why, venerable sir, has this been left undeclared by the Blessed One?" "Because, Poṭṭhapāda, this is not connected with the goal, not connected with the Teaching, not fundamental to the holy life, it does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna; therefore this has been left undeclared by me."

"What then, venerable sir, has been declared by the Blessed One?" "This is suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, has been declared by me. 'This is the origin of suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, has been declared by me. 'This is the cessation of suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, has been declared by me. 'This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, has been declared by me."

"But why, venerable sir, has this been declared by the Blessed One?" "Because, Poṭṭhapāda, this is connected with the goal, this is connected with the Teaching, this is fundamental to the holy life, this leads to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna; therefore this has been declared by me." "So it is, Blessed One, so it is, Fortunate One. Now let the Blessed One do as he thinks fit, venerable sir." Then the Blessed One rose from his seat and departed.

421. Then those wandering ascetics, not long after the Blessed One had departed, assailed the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda from all sides with verbal goading - "Just so indeed this venerable Poṭṭhapāda, whatever the ascetic Gotama says, he gives thanks for that very thing - 'So it is, Blessed One, so it is, Fortunate One.' But we do not understand any definite teaching expounded by the ascetic Gotama - 'The world is eternal' or 'the world is non-eternal' or 'the world is finite' or 'the world is infinite' or 'the soul is the same as the body' or 'the soul is one thing and the body another' or 'the Truth-finder exists after death' or 'the Truth-finder does not exist after death' or 'the Truth-finder both exists and does not exist after death' or 'the Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death.'"

When this was said, the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda said this to those wandering ascetics - "I too, friends, do not understand any definite teaching expounded by the ascetic Gotama - 'The world is eternal' or 'the world is non-eternal'... etc. 'The Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death'; but the ascetic Gotama declares a practice that is factual, true, real, the principle of the causal relationship of phenomena, the cosmic law of phenomena. And when one declares a practice that is

factual, true, real, the principle of the causal relationship of phenomena, the cosmic law of phenomena, how indeed could an intelligent person like me not give thanks for the well-spoken words of the ascetic Gotama as well-spoken?"

The Story of Citta, Hatthisāriputta, and Poṭṭhapāda

422. Then, after two or three days had passed, Citta Hatthisāriputta and the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda approached the Blessed One; having approached, Citta Hatthisāriputta paid respect to the Blessed One and sat down to one side. But the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One. Having concluded the pleasant and memorable talk, he sat down to one side. Seated to one side, the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda said this to the Blessed One - "At that time, venerable sir, not long after the Blessed One had departed, those wandering ascetics assailed me from all sides with verbal goading - 'Just so indeed this venerable Poṭṭhapāda, whatever the ascetic Gotama says, he gives thanks for that very thing - "So it is, Blessed One, so it is, Fortunate One." But we do not understand any definite teaching expounded by the ascetic Gotama - "The world is eternal" or "the world is non-eternal" or "the world is finite" or "the world is infinite" or "the soul is the same as the body" or "the soul is one thing and the body another" or "the Truth-finder exists after death" or "the Truth-finder does not exist after death" or "the Truth-finder both exists and does not exist after death" or "the Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death."' When this was said, venerable sir, I said this to those wandering ascetics - 'I too, friends, do not understand any definite teaching expounded by the ascetic Gotama - "The world is eternal" or "the world is non-eternal"... etc. "The Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death"; but the ascetic Gotama declares a practice that is factual, true, real, the principle of the causal relationship of phenomena, the cosmic law of phenomena. And when one declares a practice that is factual, true, real, the principle of the causal relationship of phenomena, the cosmic law of phenomena, how indeed could an intelligent person like me not give thanks for the well-spoken words of the ascetic Gotama as well-spoken?"

423. "All these wandering ascetics, Poṭṭhapāda, are blind, without eyes; you alone among them have eyes. For indeed, Poṭṭhapāda, there are teachings that have been taught and laid down by me as definite; and indeed, Poṭṭhapāda, there are teachings that have been taught and laid down by me as not definite.

"And what, Poṭṭhapāda, are those teachings that have been taught and laid down by me as not definite? 'The world is eternal' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as not definite; 'The world is non-eternal' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as not definite; 'The world is finite' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... etc. 'The world is infinite' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... 'The soul is the same as the body' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... 'The soul is one thing and the body another' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... 'The Truth-finder exists after death' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... 'The Truth-finder does not exist after death' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... 'The Truth-finder both exists and does not exist after death' - this, Poṭṭhapāda... 'The Truth-finder neither exists nor does not exist after death' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as not definite.

"And why, Poṭṭhapāda, have these teachings been taught and laid down by me as not definite? Because, Poṭṭhapāda, these are not connected with the goal, not connected with the Teaching, not fundamental to the holy life; they do not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. Therefore these have been taught and laid down by me as not definite."

The Definite Teaching

424. "And what, Poṭṭhapāda, are those teachings that have been taught and laid down by me as definite? 'This is suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as definite. 'This is the origin of suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as definite. 'This is the cessation of suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as definite. 'This is the practice leading to the cessation of suffering' - this, Poṭṭhapāda, is a teaching that has been taught and laid down by me as definite.

"And why, Poṭṭhapāda, have these teachings been taught and laid down by me as definite? Because, Poṭṭhapāda, these are connected with the goal, these are connected with the Teaching, these are fundamental to the holy life; these lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. Therefore these have been taught and laid down by me as definite.

425. "Poṭṭhapāda, there are some ascetics and brahmins who hold such views and such opinions - 'The self is exclusively happy and healthy after death.' Having approached them, I speak thus - 'Is it true that you venerable ones hold such views and such opinions - "The self is exclusively happy and healthy after death"?' If when thus questioned by me they acknowledge 'yes.' Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones dwell knowing and seeing an exclusively happy world?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones perceive yourselves as exclusively happy for one night or one day or half a night or half a day?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.' Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones know - "This is the path, this is the practice for the realisation of an exclusively happy world"?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones hear the sound of those deities who have been reborn in an exclusively happy world, when they speak - "You are well practising, sirs, you are rightly practising, sirs, for the realisation of an exclusively happy world; for we too, sirs, having thus practised, have been reborn in an exclusively happy world"?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech of those ascetics and brahmins turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech of those ascetics and brahmins turns out to be worthless."

426. "Just as, Poṭṭhapāda, a man might speak thus - 'I desire and long for whoever is the most beautiful woman in this country.' They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this most beautiful woman in the country whom you desire and long for, do you know whether that most beautiful woman is a noble woman or a brahmin woman or a merchant woman or a worker woman?' Thus questioned, he would say 'no.' They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this most beautiful woman in the country whom you desire and long for, do you know whether that most beautiful woman is of such a name and such a clan, or whether she is tall or short or of medium height, or whether she is dark or brown or of golden complexion, or in which village or town or city she lives?' Thus questioned, he would say 'no.' They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, that which you neither know nor see, that you desire and long for?' Thus questioned, he would say 'yes.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech of that man turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech of that man turns out to be worthless."

"Just so, Poṭṭhapāda, those ascetics and brahmins who hold such views and such opinions - 'The self is exclusively happy and healthy after death.' Having approached them, I speak thus - 'Is it true that you venerable ones hold such views and such opinions - "The self is exclusively happy and healthy after death"?' If when thus questioned by me they acknowledge 'yes.' Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones dwell knowing and seeing an exclusively happy world?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones perceive yourselves as exclusively happy for one night or one day or half a night or half a day?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.' Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones know - "This is the path, this is the practice for the realisation of an exclusively happy world"?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones hear the sound of those deities who have been reborn in an exclusively happy world, when they speak - "You are well practising, sirs, you are rightly practising, sirs, for the realisation of an exclusively happy world; for we too, sirs, having thus practised, have been reborn in an exclusively happy world"?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech of those ascetics and brahmins turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech of those ascetics and brahmins turns out to be worthless."

427. "Just as, Poṭṭhapāda, a man might make a ladder at a crossroads for ascending a mansion. They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this mansion for ascending which you are making a ladder, do you know whether that mansion is in the eastern direction or the southern direction or the western direction or the northern direction, or whether it is high or low or of medium height?' Thus questioned, he would say 'no.' They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, that which you neither know nor see, for ascending that mansion you are making a ladder?' Thus questioned, he would say 'yes.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech of that man turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech of that man turns out to be worthless."

"Just so, Poṭṭhapāda, those ascetics and brahmins who hold such views and such opinions - 'The self is exclusively happy and healthy after death.' Having approached them, I speak thus - 'Is it true that you venerable ones hold such views and such opinions - 'The self is exclusively happy and healthy after death'?' If when thus questioned by me they acknowledge 'yes.' Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones dwell knowing and seeing an exclusively happy world?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones perceive yourselves as exclusively happy for one night or one day or half a night or half a day?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.' Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones know - this is the path, this is the practice for the realisation of an exclusively happy world?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"Then I speak thus - 'But do you venerable ones hear the sound of those deities who have been reborn in an exclusively happy world, when they speak - 'You are well practising, sirs, you are rightly practising, sirs, for the realisation of an exclusively happy world; for we too, sirs, having thus practised, have been reborn in an exclusively happy world'?' Thus questioned, they say 'no.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech of those ascetics and brahmins turn out to be worthless?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech of those ascetics and brahmins turns out to be worthless."

The Three Acquisitions of a Personality

428. "There are, Poṭṭhapāda, three acquisitions of a personality - the gross acquisition of a personality, the mind-made acquisition of a personality, the immaterial acquisition of a personality. And which, Poṭṭhapāda, is the gross acquisition of a personality? Material, made of the four primary elements, feeding on edible food - this is the gross acquisition of a personality. Which is the mind-made acquisition of a personality? Material, mind-made, with all major and minor parts, with complete faculties - this is the mind-made acquisition of a personality. Which is the immaterial acquisition of a personality? Formless, made of perception - this is the immaterial acquisition of a personality.

429. "I expound the Teaching, Poṭṭhapāda, for the abandoning of even the gross acquisition of a personality - for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein. Now, Poṭṭhapāda, you might think thus - 'Defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and one will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge oneself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein, but it is a painful dwelling.' But this, Poṭṭhapāda, should not be seen thus. Defiling mental states will indeed be abandoned, and purifying mental states will increase, and one will, in this

very life, having realised by direct knowledge oneself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein, and there will be gladness and joy and tranquillity and mindfulness and full awareness and a happy dwelling.

430. "I expound the Teaching, Poṭṭhapāda, for the abandoning of even the mind-made acquisition of a personality - for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein. Now, Poṭṭhapāda, you might think thus - 'Defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and one will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge oneself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein, but it is a painful dwelling.' But this, Poṭṭhapāda, should not be seen thus. Defiling mental states will indeed be abandoned, and purifying mental states will increase, and one will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge oneself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein, and there will be gladness and joy and tranquillity and mindfulness and full awareness and a happy dwelling.

431. "I expound the Teaching, Poṭṭhapāda, for the abandoning of even the immaterial acquisition of a personality - for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein. Now, Poṭṭhapāda, you might think thus - 'Defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and one will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge oneself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein, but it is a painful dwelling.' But this, Poṭṭhapāda, should not be seen thus. Defiling mental states will indeed be abandoned, and purifying mental states will increase, and one will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge oneself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein, and there will be gladness and joy and tranquillity and mindfulness and full awareness and a happy dwelling.

432. "If others, Poṭṭhapāda, were to ask us thus - 'But which, friends, is that gross acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which you expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein?' - being thus asked, we would answer them thus - 'This, friends, is that gross acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which we expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein.'

433. "If others, Poṭṭhapāda, were to ask us thus - 'But which, friends, is that mind-made acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which you expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein?' Being thus asked, we would answer them thus -

'This, friends, is that mind-made acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which we expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein.'

434. "If others, Poṭṭhapāda, were to ask us thus - 'But which, friends, is that immaterial acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which you expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein?' - being thus asked, we would answer them thus - 'This, friends, is that immaterial acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which we expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech turn out to be well-founded?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech turns out to be well-founded."

435. "Just as, Poṭṭhapāda, a man might make a ladder for ascending a mansion at the foot of that very mansion. They might say to him thus - 'Hey man, this mansion for ascending which you are making a ladder, do you know whether that mansion is in the eastern direction or the southern direction or the western direction or the northern direction, or whether it is high or low or of medium height?' He might speak thus - 'This, friend, is that mansion for ascending which I am making a ladder, at the foot of that very mansion.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech of that man turn out to be well-founded?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech of that man turns out to be well-founded."

436. "Just so, Poṭṭhapāda, if others were to ask us thus - 'But which, friends, is that gross acquisition of a personality... etc... But which, friends, is that mind-made acquisition of a personality... etc... But which, friends, is that immaterial acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which you expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein?' - being thus asked, we would answer them thus - 'This, friends, is that immaterial acquisition of a personality for the abandoning of which we expound the Teaching, so that for those of you who practise accordingly, defiling mental states will be abandoned, purifying mental states will increase, and you will, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge yourself, having attained the fulfilment and expansion of wisdom, dwell therein.'

"What do you think, Poṭṭhapāda, this being so, does not the speech turn out to be well-founded?" "Certainly, venerable sir, this being so, the speech turns out to be well-founded."

437. When this was said, Citta Hatthisāriputta said this to the Blessed One:

"Venerable sir, at the time when there is the gross acquisition of a personality, at that time the mind-made acquisition of a personality is empty, the immaterial acquisition of a personality is empty; or his gross acquisition of a personality at that time is true. Venerable sir, at the time when there is the mind-made acquisition of a personality, at that time the gross acquisition of a personality is empty, the immaterial acquisition of a personality is empty; or his mind-made acquisition of a personality at that time is true. Venerable sir, at the time when there is the immaterial acquisition of a personality, at that time the gross acquisition of a personality is empty, the mind-made acquisition of a personality is empty; or his immaterial acquisition of a personality at that time is true."

"Citta, at the time when there is the gross acquisition of a personality, at that time it does not go by the term 'mind-made acquisition of a personality', nor does it go by the term 'immaterial acquisition of a personality'; at that time it goes only by the term 'gross acquisition of a personality'. Citta, at the time when there is the mind-made acquisition of a personality, at that time it does not go by the term 'gross acquisition of a personality', nor does it go by the term 'immaterial acquisition of a personality'; at that time it goes only by the term 'mind-made acquisition of a personality'. Citta, at the time when there is the immaterial acquisition of a personality, at that time it does not go by the term 'gross acquisition of a personality', nor does it go by the term 'mind-made acquisition of a personality'; at that time it goes only by the term 'immaterial acquisition of a personality'.

438. "If, Citta, they were to ask you thus - 'Did you exist in the past, it is not that you did not exist; will you exist in the future, it is not that you will not exist; do you exist now, it is not that you do not exist' - thus asked, Citta, how would you answer?"

"If, venerable sir, they were to ask me thus - 'Did you exist in the past, it is not that you did not exist; will you exist in the future, it is not that you will not exist; do you exist now, it is not that you do not exist.' Thus asked, venerable sir, I would answer thus - 'I existed in the past, it is not that I did not exist; I will exist in the future, it is not that I will not exist; I exist now, it is not that I do not exist.' Thus asked, venerable sir, I would answer thus."

"But if, Citta, they were to ask you thus - 'That past acquisition of a personality which you had, is that alone your true acquisition of a personality, the future empty, the present empty? That future acquisition of a personality which you will have, is that alone your true acquisition of a personality, the past empty, the present empty? That present acquisition of a personality which you now have, is that alone your true acquisition of a personality, the past empty, the future empty?' Thus asked, Citta, how would you answer?"

"But if, venerable sir, they were to ask me thus - 'That past acquisition of a personality which you had, is that alone your true acquisition of a personality, the future empty, the present empty. That future acquisition of a personality which you will have, is that alone your true acquisition of a personality, the past empty, the present empty. That present acquisition of a personality which you now have, is that alone your true acquisition of a personality, the past empty, the future empty?' Thus

asked, venerable sir, I would answer thus - 'That past acquisition of a personality which I had, that alone was my true acquisition of a personality at that time, the future empty, the present empty. That future acquisition of a personality which I will have, that alone will be my true acquisition of a personality at that time, the past empty, the present empty. That present acquisition of a personality which I now have, that alone is my true acquisition of a personality, the past empty, the future empty.' Thus asked, venerable sir, I would answer thus."

439. "Just so, Citta, at the time when there is the gross acquisition of a personality, at that time it does not go by the term 'mind-made acquisition of a personality', nor does it go by the term 'immaterial acquisition of a personality'. At that time it goes only by the term 'gross acquisition of a personality'. Citta, at the time when there is the mind-made acquisition of a personality... etc. Citta, at the time when there is the immaterial acquisition of a personality, at that time it does not go by the term 'gross acquisition of a personality', nor does it go by the term 'mind-made acquisition of a personality'; at that time it goes only by the term 'immaterial acquisition of a personality'.

440. "Just as, Citta, from a cow comes milk, from milk comes curds, from curds comes butter, from butter comes ghee, from ghee comes the cream of ghee. At the time when there is milk, at that time it does not go by the term 'curds', nor does it go by the term 'butter', nor does it go by the term 'ghee', nor does it go by the term 'cream of ghee'; at that time it goes only by the term 'milk'. At the time when there are curds... etc. there is butter... there is ghee... there is the cream of ghee, at that time it does not go by the term 'milk', nor does it go by the term 'curds', nor does it go by the term 'butter', nor does it go by the term 'ghee'; at that time it goes only by the term 'cream of ghee'. Just so, Citta, at the time when there is the gross acquisition of a personality... etc. Citta, at the time when there is the mind-made acquisition of a personality... etc. Citta, at the time when there is the immaterial acquisition of a personality, at that time it does not go by the term 'gross acquisition of a personality', nor does it go by the term 'mind-made acquisition of a personality'; at that time it goes only by the term 'immaterial acquisition of a personality'. These, Citta, are popular names, popular language, popular expressions, popular designations, which the Truth-finder uses without adhering to them."

441. When this was said, the wandering ascetic Poṭṭhapāda 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 Full Ordination of Citta and Hatthisāriputta

442. Then Citta Hatthisāriputta 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 I, venerable sir, receive the going forth in the presence of the Blessed One, may I receive the full ordination."

443. Citta Hatthisāriputta received the going forth in the presence of the Blessed One, he received full ordination. Not long after being fully ordained, the Venerable Citta Hatthisāriputta, dwelling alone, withdrawn, diligent, ardent, and resolute, before long - that unsurpassed goal for the sake of which sons of good family rightly go forth from home into homelessness - the final goal of the holy life, in this very life, having realised by direct knowledge himself, having attained, he dwelt. 'Birth is eliminated, the holy life has been lived, what was to be done has been done, there is no more of this state of being' - he directly knew. And the Venerable Citta Hatthisāriputta became one of the Worthy Ones.

The Discourse on Poṭṭhapāda is concluded as ninth.



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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