

Sāriputta Sutta 2

The Discourse with Sāriputta 2

[Definitions of stream-winning]
(Sāmyutta Nikāya 55.5/5:347 f)
Translated by Piya Tan ©2006

Introduction

The Sāriputta Sutta 2 (S 55.5) is found in the Sotāpatti Sāmyutta, where the limbs for stream-winning (*sotāpatti-y-aṅga*), the stream (*sota*) and the stream-winner (*sotāpanna*) are defined by Sāriputta, in reply to questions asked by the Buddha himself. **The Udāna Commentary** defines a stream-winner as “one, having entered, having attained to the stream that is the path, remains in the fruit of stream-winning.”¹ The same Commentary also says that the stream-winner is called **aṭṭhamaka** (id), usually translated as “the eighth,” that is, the eighth of the noble individuals.²

The Sāriputta Sutta 2 defines the **the limbs for stream-winning** (*sotāpatti-y-aṅga*) as being fourfold, thus”

- (1) associating with the true persons (*sappurisa, samseva*),
- (2) listening to the True Dharma (*saddhamma, savanna*),
- (3) wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*), and
- (4) practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma (*dhammānudhamma, paṭipatti*). [3]

This same fourfold definition of the limbs for stream-winning is commonly found in **the Sotāpatti Sāmyutta**.³

The Buddha goes on to ask Sāriputta regarding “the stream” (*sota*) [4] and the stream-winner (*sotāpanna*) [5]. Sāriputta answers accordingly and wins the Buddha’s approval. It is important to understand here that the Buddha is *not* testing Sāriputta, who is, after all, an arhat, but using a method of teaching later known as **the saṅgāyanā** (rehearsal or recital) or **pucchā, vissajjanā** (question-and-answer), that is, where two speakers question one another on the Dharma and discuss it.

The closing sentence—“this venerable one of such a name, of such a clan” (*āyasmā evaṃ nāmo evaṃ gotto ti*) [§5]—appears puzzling. The Commentaries are silent here. Based on the various teachings given in connection with stream-winning, I am convinced that this sentence suggests that stream-winning is commonly an attainment for the lay follower. Of course, there are those who, on entering the stream, would, in this life itself, go on to attain higher states, even arhathood itself. (The vocative *āyasmā* is not a problem here, as it is common enough that laymen, too, besides monks, are addressed as such.)⁴

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¹ *Sotāpanno ti magga, saṅkhāta, sotam āpajjivā pāpuṇivā ṭhito sotāpatti, phalaṭṭho ti attho* (UA 306). See also Gethin 2001:247-252 (§7.4 The path as a ‘stream’).

² On the “8 individuals” (*aṭṭha, purisa, puggala*), see **Aṭṭha, puggala S 1** (A 8.59/4:292) = SD 15.10a. CPD, PED & DP all tr **aṭṭhamaka** as “the eighth” (Pm 2:193 *puthujjana, kalyāṇakam upādāya ~o assāmanta, pañño*, “in terms of a good worldling, the eighth has unrivalled wisdom”; Kvu 243-251; Yam 1:322, 2:197; AA 3:371 *~m atikkamivā pavatta, rucitāya sotāpanno accaruci*, “the stream-winner, having transcended the eighth, shines foremost [outshines] by way of his existing brightness” ad A 3:346, 18*; UA 306; MAT:Be 1:137). **Ñāṇamoli**, in his Nett tr, however, disagreeing with PD & CPD, tr **aṭṭhamaka** as “one who stands (on the path),” arguing that this term is probably not derived from *aṭṭha* (eight), but from *ā + √THĀ*, “standing upon or mounted upon” (Nett:Ñ 32 n99/2). Masefield, foll **Ñāṇamoli**, tr **aṭṭhamaka** as “one aboard”: see also UA:M 773 f.

³ That is, in 20 suttas, S 55.55-74/5:410-413.

⁴ See **Yamaka S** (S 22.86.39/3:113) & **Dhānañjāni S** (M 97) = SD 4.9 Introd (5).

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2 Then the venerable Sāriputta approached the Blessed One and saluted him. Having saluted the Blessed One, he sat down at one side. When the venerable Sāriputta was thus seated at one side, the Blessed One said this to him:

3 “Sāriputta, ‘the limbs for stream-winning (*sotāpatti-y-aṅga*), the limbs for stream-winning,’ so it is said. What now, Sāriputta, are **the limbs for stream-winning?**”

“Bhante,

- (1) associating with the true persons (*sappurisa, samseva*), bhante, is a limb for stream-winning;
- (2) listening to the True Dharma (*saddhamma, savanna*) is a limb for stream-winning;
- (3) wise attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) is a limb for stream-winning;
- (4) practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma (*dhammānudhamma, paṭipatti*) is a limb for stream-winning.”

“Sadhu [excellent], sadhu, Sāriputta!

Associating with the true persons, Sāriputta, is a limb for stream-winning.

Listening to the True Dharma is a limb for stream-winning.

Wise attention is a limb for stream-winning.

Practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma is a limb for stream-winning.

4 Sāriputta, ‘the stream (*sota*), the stream,’ so it is said. What now, Sāriputta, is **the stream?**”

“The stream, bhante, is this noble eightfold path itself, namely,

- right view,
- right thought,
- right speech,
- right action,
- right livelihood,
- right effort,
- right mindfulness,
- right concentration.”

“Sadhu, sadhu, Sāriputta! The stream is indeed this noble eightfold path itself, namely, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. [348]

5 Now, Sāriputta, ‘Stream-winner (*sotāpanna*), stream-winner,’ so it is said. Who now, Sāriputta, is **a stream-winner?**”

“The stream-winner, bhante, is one who is endowed with this noble eightfold path itself: this venerable one of such a name, of such a clan.”⁵

“Sadhu, sadhu! Sāriputta! The stream-winner, bhante, is indeed one who is endowed with this noble eightfold path itself: this venerable one of such a name, of such a clan.”

— evaṃ —

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⁵ *Yo hi bhante iminā ariyena aṭṭhaṅgikena maggena samannāgato, ayaṃ vuccati sotāpanno yo ’yaṃ āyasmā evaṃ nāmo evaṃ gotto ti.*