

# Udakûpama Sutta

## The Discourse on the Water Parable

[The levels of spiritual commitment and attainment]  
(Aᅅguttara Nikāya 7.15/4:11-13)  
Translated by Piya Tan ©2006

### 1 The 7 kinds of person

**1.1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUTTA.** The **Udakûpama Sutta** (A 7.15)—the Discourse on the Water Similes—is about levels of spiritual commitment and attainment, illustrated by a water parable. In a set of seven similes of shipwrecked persons, three kinds of worldlings and four kinds of saints, are given as follows:

<u>Simile</u>	<u>Reference</u>
(1) One who once submerges, remains submerged	the one of habitual wrong view.
(2) One, having emerged, then submerges	the spiritually uncommitted.
(3) One, having emerged, then remains so	the good worldling.
(4) One, having emerged, observes, looks around	the mindful Buddhist (streamwinner).
(5) One, having emerged, swims across	the assertive Buddhist (once-returner).
(6) One, having emerged, gains firm ground	the accomplished Buddhist (non-returner).
(7) One, having emerged, is one who has crossed over	the consummate saint (arhat).

(A 7.15/4:11-13) = (Pug 7.1/71 f)

The importance of this short but instructive discourse is attested by the fact that it is also found in **the Puggala Paññatti** (Pug 7.1/71 f) and quoted in **the Kathā,vatthu** (Kvu 852). The Puggala Paññatti version, however, omits the preamble [§§1-2a] and starts right away with the catechism, which in turn omits the vocative *bhikkhave*, recounting the discourse as a report. This is understandable, as the Sutta uses the person-centred approach (*puggal'ādhiᅇhāna*), while the Puggala Paññatti, an Abhidhamma work, (in spite of its title) uses the idea-centred approach (*dhamm'ādhiᅇhāna*).<sup>1</sup>

From the Sutta's simplicity, it is likely to be an ancient text, certainly a pre-Abhidhamma teaching. However, such a listing of four saints, although ancient, probably does not go back very early in the Buddha's ministry, perhaps during the latter half of the first 20 years or just after that. This is nevertheless a very ancient teaching.

**1.2 SUTTA COMMENTARY.** The **Udakûpama Sutta** (A 7.15) lists seven kinds of persons [1.1]. The first three kinds are worldlings (*puthujjana*), that is, unawakened beings, while the rest are the four kinds of saints or "noble individuals" (*ariya,puggala*). The Manoratha,pūraᅇi, the Aᅅguttara Commentary, only briefly glosses on ten key expressions (AA 4:5), but **the Puggala Paññatti Commentary**, in the Pañca-pakaran'atᅇhakathā,<sup>2</sup> provides more helpful details (PugA 251-253).

Both Commentaries explain the parable as being based on the imagery of "a vessel that is destroyed by being immersed in water,"<sup>3</sup> and the fate of the disaster victims.

**1.2.1 The one who once submerges, remains submerged** (*sakim nimuggo nimuggo 'va hoti*): the immature worldling. The first victim is one who falls into the water and immediately drowns, that is, one of habitual wrong view. This category includes such people as those who hold extreme views of non-causality and non-action, and are of habitually wrong view, such as the six heretical teachers (Makkhali

<sup>1</sup> MA 1:24; Nett 164 f; PmA 449. See **Levels of Learning** = SD 40a.4 (4.3).

<sup>2</sup> "Pañca-pakaran'atᅇhakathā" means "the Commentary on the Five Texts," an Abhidhamma exegesis (on the last five Abhidhamma texts, viz, Kathā,vatthu, Puggala Paññatti, Dhātu,kathā, Yamaka, and Paᅇhāna), attr to Buddhaghosa.

<sup>3</sup> *Hāyati'evā ti caᅇka,vāre āsitta,udakam viya parihāyat'eva* (AA 4:5); *Hāyati e'evā ti caᅇka,vāre* [vl caᅇga,-vāre] *va āsitta,udakam viya ekantena parihāyat'eva* (PugA 251).

Gosāla and others).<sup>4</sup> Wrong view is here traditionally defined in such texts as **the Sāleyyaka Sutta** (M 41) and **the Apanṇaka Sutta** (M 60), as follows:

“There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed.

There is no fruit or result of good or evil actions.

There is no this world, no next world.

There is no mother, no father.

There are no spontaneously born beings.<sup>5</sup>

There are no brahmins and recluses who, living rightly and practising rightly, having directly known and realized for themselves this world and the hereafter, proclaim them.”

(M 41.10/1:287; M 60.5-12/1:402-404)<sup>6</sup>

**1.2.2 The one, having emerged, then submerges** (*ummujjitvā nimujjati*): the spiritually uncommitted. The second kind of boat disaster victim is said to *be able to emerge from the water momentarily, but then sinks under immediately*. Such a person, on account of past good karma and spiritually conducive present conditions, he has *some level of faith, moral shame, moral fear, effort, and wisdom*, that is, the five qualities for wholesome growth [2.1]. He starts off prospering spiritually for a while.

However, after a while, he takes a wrong turn in life, so that he loses his way. This kind of person, as described in **the (Tamo,joti) Puggala Sutta** (S 3.21), is one who fares from light into darkness (*joti-tama,parayāna*), one born into good conditions but falls into evil ways.<sup>7</sup>

The Puggala Paññatti Commentary gives the example of Deva,datta, who, on account of his initial faith in goodness (*sāhu,saddhā*), was able to attain dhyanas and psychic powers, but on account of his various misdeeds, especially attempting to assassinate the Buddha to take over his place, eventually lost all his powers, and was reborn in a suffering state. Such too was the fate of his accomplice, Kokalika. (PugA 251 f).

Such conditions apply both to the house-dweller (*agārika*) as well as to the homeless religionists (*anagārika*) (id). In the case of a householder, he does not educate himself well in Buddhist teachings nor fully keep to his practice. He is characteristically drawn to status, wealth, pleasure, external things and this-worldliness.

If he is **intellectually inclined**, he might take the Buddha only as one of the big names on his list of admired people. The Dharma is just like any other religious teaching that “teaches good.” And he is probably only drawn to titled, well known, charismatic or wealthy monastics or teachers, especially those who share his worldview, or who feed his self-view. He is likely to be amorally goal-oriented, so that the end justifies the means, or that only he is right and everyone else wrong.<sup>8</sup> On a more extreme level, he is likely to be an evangelical sociopath (a religious fanatic with an antisocial personality disorder).

If he is **faith inclined**, he might regard the Buddha as some sort of powerful deity, with whom to negotiate blessings. What “Dharma” he knows is probably *selective knowing* from what he hears from others, or reads from some religious booklets, and is likely to be ritualistic and superstitious by nature. As regard monastics, he respects the robe, the uniform, mostly out of fear and awe, so that such monastics could do no wrong. He neither understands nor cares about the Vinaya, or how the monastics conduct themselves. He is not only a true believer in those he regards as “highly attained” but is often obsequious to them, to the point of condoning their wrongdoings, even to the extent of being an accomplice. He is likely to have been *a monastic slave or servant* in his past life, which explains his present proclivity.<sup>9</sup> A

<sup>4</sup> See **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.16-32/1:52-59) = SD 8.10.

<sup>5</sup> *Opapātika*, said of the rebirth of a non-returner, but also refers to all divine and hell beings. See **Mahāli S** (D 1:27 156).

<sup>6</sup> See **Apanṇaka S** (M 60.5-12/1:402-404) where this wrong view is answered.

<sup>7</sup> S 3.21/1:93-96 = SD 28.7. Identical to A 4.85/2:85 f = Pug 4.19/51 f.

<sup>8</sup> See **Nānā Titthiyā S 1** (U 6.4/66-99) = SD 40a.14.

<sup>9</sup> On a more extreme level, esp in God-centred religions, he too (like the intellectually inclined) is likely to be an evangelical sociopath (a religious fanatic with an antisocial personality disorder). In a Buddhist scenario, he is more

wise and compassionate teacher, however, would be able to nurture such a faithful follower to be great spiritual levels.

A monastic who, “having emerged from the water, then submerges,” is one born into good conditions (healthy, intelligent, good-looking, etc) and conducive circumstances (available Dharma teachers, proper monasteries, training facilities, etc), but he is mostly status-conscious, surreptitiously lustful of money and pleasure, politically correct so as to promote an attractive and pious personality, an adept at manipulating people, and is capable of wrongdoing without any remorse. He is usually a Tartuffe.<sup>10</sup>

Psychologically, all this is likely to be a defence mechanism of *rationalism*, that, since he is doing “good works,” it is all right to break any or all of the monastic rules.<sup>11</sup> Typically, he would be someone whose public face is that of the prime mover (such as a CEO) of some social work project, but the painful reality has very tragic and damaging consequences.<sup>12</sup>

**1.2.3 The one, having emerged, then remains so** (*ummujjivā thito hoti*): the good worldling. The third kind of boat disaster victim is a survivor, the first survivor, in fact, who, having surfaced, remains afloat. The good thing about this first survivor is that he has some *stable* (*thita*) level of *faith, moral shame, moral fear, effort, and wisdom*, that is, the five qualities for wholesome growth [2.1].

This kind of person is likely to call himself a Buddhist, even to go for refuge in the Three Jewels, and involve himself in some Buddhist social activity. However, his efforts are limited, due to being a busy person, or lack of inspiration. In other words, he is uncommitted and inconsistent in his Buddhist life. In fact, Buddhism is not very high in his list of priorities, although he may often *think* about it, that is, he is only a *nominal Buddhist*.<sup>13</sup>

All these first three boat disaster victims are known as “worldlings” (*puthujjana*), because they are still strongly in the world’s grasp.<sup>14</sup> In terms of priority (*ādhipateyya*), the worldling generally places the self (*att’ādhipateyya*) or the world (*lok’ādhipateyya*) higher than the Dharma. As such, his Dharma priority (*dhamm’ādhipateyya*) is not very high.<sup>15</sup>

However, this is a very formative and suggestible state: although we have been using the word “persons” throughout our discussion, it should be borne in mind that there are really *no persons*, but *tendencies in us*. Like a well-guided boat in good wind, calm waters on a clear day, we can safely reach our destination.

TWO KINDS OF *PUTHUJJANA*. As such, the Commentaries often speak of **two kinds of worldlings**: the blind worldling (*andha puthujjana*) and the good worldling (*kalyāna puthujjana*). The blind worldling is an unawakened being who does not study the five aggregates, the four elements, the six sense-bases and related teachings, nor question about them, nor listen to them, nor remember them, nor reflect on them; while the good worldling does so.<sup>16</sup>

likely, for example, to set up a website proclaiming his spiritual attainment or use Buddhism to promote himself. Still this is relatively mild compared to the disastrously violent proclivities of a “God”-driven sect leader or terrorist. On mental slavery, see **The Person in Buddhism** = SD 29.6b (7.4).

<sup>10</sup> See **Me: The nature of conceit** = SD 19.2a (2.3.2).

<sup>11</sup> The fate of those who are *generous* (including being socially engaged, etc), says **Jāpussoṇī Sutta** (A 10.177), but *do not keep the precepts* is that they are reborn as well-loved elephants, horses, cows, chickens (that is, as mascots or pets), who would be recipients “of food, drink, garlands and various adornments”! (A 10.177/5:271 f) = SD 2.6.

<sup>12</sup> On the cases of the 2009 Singapore priests Mingyi and Meow Ee, see **Money and Monastics** = SD 4.19 (9.3).

<sup>13</sup> See **Nakula, pitā S** (S 22.1) = SD 5.4 Intro (3.2).

<sup>14</sup> On *puthujjana*, see **Nakula, pitā S** (S 22.1) = SD 5.4 Intro (3). See also **Dhammaññū S** (A 7.64/4:113-117) = SD 30.10 Intro (2.3).

<sup>15</sup> On *ādhipateyya*, see **Ādhipateyya S** (A 3.40/1:147-150) = SD 27.3.

<sup>16</sup> *Tattha yassa khandha, dhātu, āyatan’ādīsu uggaha, paripucchā, savana, dhāraṇa, paccavekkhaṇāni n’atthi, ayam andha, puthujjano. Yassa tāni atthi, so kalyāna, puthujjano.* (DA 1:59 = PmA 1:266; cf PmA 1:205). See **Nakula, pitā S** (S 22.1) = SD 5.4 (3.2).

The Commentaries also use the expression “foolish worldling” (*bāla puthujjana*) here.<sup>17</sup> *Bāla* has a range of related meanings: a young boy, a fool, an immature person. Such a person is “apart, separate” (*puthu*) from the wise. This separateness is not exactly a fixed category as it is a dynamic *phase*, that is, it is possible for the immature worldling to mature in due course into a wise person.

The good worldling, although still unawakened, is open to the Dharma, and reflects and reviews on the true nature of things, especially that of impermanence. While the blind worldling is one who goes *with* the worldly flow (*anusota, gāmi*), the good worldling goes *against* worldly currents (*paṭisota, gāmi*).

He has just managed to hold on to a safe and strong tree trunk or flotsam, as the floods (*ogha*) of sense-desire, existence, views and ignorance<sup>18</sup> wash and drag him around. He is struggling hard to stay afloat and as long as he holds onto the support, he is safe. He has to paddle hard with his arms and legs,<sup>19</sup> and find a way to get nearer to land. But first he must look around for safety.

**1.2.4 The one, having emerged, observes, looks around** (*ummujjitvā vipassati viloketi*): the truly mindful Buddhist or **streamwinner**. This imagery refers to *the first kind of saint*, who,

Upon breaking the three fetters, he becomes a streamwinner (*sotāpanna*), not bound for the lower world,<sup>20</sup> sure of liberation, destined for awakening.<sup>21</sup> [§6a]

“The three fetters”—*self-identity view, attachment to rituals and vows, and spiritual doubt*<sup>22</sup>—are the first three of the ten fetters.<sup>23</sup> Streamwinning (*sotāpatti*) is the minimum goal for anyone who wishes to live the Buddhist life: such a spiritual awakening is gained through the constant practice of *the perception of impermanence*, and is clearly assured so in such texts as the ten discourses of **the Okkanti Saṃyutta** (S 25).<sup>24</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Nm 1:138; Miln 69; VA 5:1032; MA 1:183; SnA 1:99, 2:534; ThaA 2:278, 3:41, 78; ApA 118, 178.

<sup>18</sup> The **4 floods** (*ogha*), also known as “yokes” (*yoga*), are technically known as “mental influxes” (*āsava*). The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards or inwards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously tr as cankers, taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untr. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsavas*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kāma’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.1.12/2:82, 16.2.4/2:91, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These four are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the canker of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: āsava.

<sup>19</sup> Cf a similar parable at **Alagaddūpama S** (M 22.13/1:134 f) = SD 3.13 & **Āsivīsōpama S** (S 35.238.9/4:174) = SD 28.1.

<sup>20</sup> **Avinīpāta**, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinīpāta*, “the world of suffering”, another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*) (Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 woeful courses (*pañca, gati*) (D 3:234=33.2.1, A 11.68) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal kingdom (*tirachāna, yoni*), the ghost realm (*pitti, visaya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura, kāya*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (*sugati*). For a discussion, see Nyanaponika & Bodhi (tr), *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 1999:14-19.

<sup>21</sup> *So tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhaya sotāpanno hoti avinīpāta, dhammo niyato sambodhi, parāyaṇo*. See **D** 6.13/1:156, **18.1/2:200**; **M** 11.12/3:81; **S** 22.109/3:161, **48.2+3/5:193**, **55.24+25/5:377**, 378; **A** 3.85.2/1:231 f, **4.88.**-2/2:88 f.

<sup>22</sup> Respectively, *sakkāya, diṭṭhi, sīla-b, bata paramāsa*, and *vicikicchā*. See prec n on the 10 fetters & **D** 33.1.10-(10)/3:216; **M** 2.11/1:9; cf **A** 6.86/3:438. On the streamwinner, see **Entering the Stream** = SD 3.3.

<sup>23</sup> **The 10 fetters** (*dasa saṃyojana*) are: (1) self-identity view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rituals and vows (*sīla-b, bata, paramāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma, rāga*), (5) aversion (*paṭigha*), (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa, rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa, rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (or remorse) (*uddhacca*), (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61; A 5:13; Vbh 377). In some places, no 5 (*kāma, rāga*) is replaced by illwill (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*orambhāgiya*), and the rest, the higher fetters (*ud-dhambhāgiya*). The abandonment of the lower 5 fetters makes one a non-returner (*opapātika* or *anāgāmi*) (see **Ānā-pānasati S**, M 118.10 = 7.13).

<sup>24</sup> For the first of the 10, (**Anicca**) **Cakkhu S** (S 25.1/3:225) = SD 16.7.

1.2.4.1 THE IMAGERY OF SIGHT—“(he) observes, looks around” (*vipassati viloketi*)—is attested by the fact, as shown in **the Sabb’āsava Sutta** (M 2), that these three fetters are “influxes to be abandoned by seeing” (*āsavā dassanā pahatabbā*).<sup>25</sup> The Sutta Commentary says that self-identity view and attachment to rituals and vows, being included in **the influx of views** (*diṭṭh’āsava*), are influxes (*āsava*) (they hinder spiritual growth) as well as fetters (*samyojana*) (they hinder mental concentration). Doubt is usually classified only as a fetter, but because it is included here amongst “the influxes to be abandoned by seeing,” it may be spoken as an *influx*. (MA 1:74)

1.2.4.2 RIGHT VIEW. The Sabb’āsava Sutta opens its instruction with the “influxes to be abandoned by seeing” (*āsavā dassanā pahatabba*) in keeping with the eightfold path model. *Right view* comes first, as explained in **the Mahā Cattārisaka Sutta** (M 117), because it is present in all the other seven factors, without which none of them would be “right” (*sammā*), that is, instrumental in bringing us towards awakening.<sup>26</sup>

The most essential basis for streamwinning, the very first confirmed stage of awakening, is that of building our right view (*sammā diṭṭhi*). This *preliminary right view* consists in breaking “the three fetters” [1.2.6], that is:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (1) Abandoning self-identity view<br>( <i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i> )                   | — Basically, this is the understanding, either by way of faith or of wisdom, that our body-mind consists of nothing but the five aggregates, none of which either individually or as a whole, in themselves or externally, or in any way, has any abiding essence.  |
| (2) Abandoning spiritual doubt<br>( <i>vicikicchā</i> )                           | — Overcoming spiritual doubt essentially means being committed to a Dharma-driven spiritual life, that is, understanding, on some useful level, how <i>the Buddha</i> is the most highly evolved being in our times; we accept <i>the Dharma</i> (the true teaching) as our means of personal development; and we work to emulate <i>the Sangha</i> , that is, the noble saints who reflect the Buddha’s qualities. |
| (3) Abandoning attachment to vows and rituals<br>( <i>sīla-b, bata parāmāsa</i> ) | — Rituals and vows mostly <i>externalize</i> our efforts at spiritual growth, which should instead occur <i>internally</i> , that is to say, true liberation is the result of mental concentration arising from inner stillness and clarity; in understanding our minds, we begin to truly understand others and the world.   |

In short, we have accepted our body-mind as a dynamic process, give up superstition, and affirm wise faith in our self-salvation. When we have overcome these three fetters, we are called **streamwinners**, or if we consistently work in this Dharma-moved manner, we are known as “true individuals” (*sappurisa*).

Psychologically, these first three fetters are *cognitive* in nature. As streamwinners, in other words, we have completely given up what cognitive psychologists would call “maladaptive cognitions” or “core beliefs.” When these unwholesome ways of looking at things are given up, our basic understanding and perspective of ourselves, and our lives change for the better. We have a better sense of selfhood—not in the sense of an unchanging soul (*jīva*) or communion with some universal soul (*attā*), but as a truly liberated being, in the sense that we are no more the product of how we perceive the world. As such, we are in a better position to live in true harmony with the world within and without.

1.2.4.3 THE TRUE INDIVIDUAL. Now, let us look at the *sappurisa* as a “house-dwelling” (*agārika*) lay individual or true lay follower.<sup>27</sup> **The (Saṅkhitta) Sappurisa, dāna Sutta** (A 8.37) briefly defines the true lay follower as *a true giver*, that is, one who gives alms that is pure, choice, at the right time, what is

<sup>25</sup> M 2.11/1:9 = SD 30.3.

<sup>26</sup> M 117/3:71-78 = SD 6.10.

<sup>27</sup> See **Sappurisa S** (M 113) = SD 23.7 Intro (3).

allowable, repeatedly, discriminately [after careful examination]; *while giving*, his mind is radiant with faith, and *after the giving* he is happily satisfied.<sup>28</sup>

The true individual understands that there are **two kinds of giving**: the material (*āmisā, dāna*) and the spiritual (*nirāmisā, dāna*).<sup>29</sup> Material giving is made to the Sangha, the true renunciants, by way of giving them *the four basic supports of life* (almsfood, robes, shelter, and medical care) so that they can effectively focus on their spiritual life and duties, and work towards awakening in this life. Such support is also given to others who are in need of it, so they move closer to Dharma-inspired lives. Full-time and committed lay Buddhist workers are also worthy of such support.

*Spiritual giving* (*nirāmisā, dāna*) is non-material giving that gives moral, social, psychological, or emotional support to those who need it:

- “Moral support” here is the respecting of another person’s opinion, even when it is different from ours, understanding the mind of that person.
- “Social support” is the willingness to wisely listen to others, to be compassionately present for the benefit of others, and to accept others unconditionally, inspiring them in personal growth—this is “the gift of friendship.”
- “Psychological support” is basically the providing of conditions that are conducive for cultivation of intelligence, wisdom, and happiness.
- “Emotional support” is also called “the gift of fearlessness,” that is, using right speech to counsel and comfort the troubled and fearful.
- “The gift of time” essentially covers all the above types of giving, but it also includes taking time to share our knowledge and skills for the benefit of others.

The highest gift, however, is that of the Dharma: “The gift of the Dharma excels all giving (*sabba, dānam dhamma, dānam jināti*, Dh 354). The gift of the Dharma is the dissemination of the understanding that we are responsible for our actions, and that we can work in influencing how our minds work so that we become more positive. This should motivate us towards seeking inner peace through some level of mental cultivation, leading up to emotional independence,<sup>30</sup> that is, to become a true individual (*sappurisa*).

The *sappurisa*, in the sense of a true practitioner, is found in the Majjhima Nikāya. **The Cūḷa Puṇṇama Sutta** (M 110), for example, defines the *sappurisa*<sup>31</sup> as *one who is morally virtuous, learned, energetic, wise, and holds right view*.<sup>32</sup> Similarly, **the Sappurisa Sutta** (M 113) says that he is one who understands the true purpose of renunciation and the holy life, so that there is nothing he would identify with.<sup>33</sup> In other words, he is a good worldling (*kalyāṇa, puthujjana*).<sup>34</sup> **The (Kula) Dhammaññū Sutta** (A 8.38) declares that a true lay individual arises for the good of all beings: the family, society, religion, and even the gods.<sup>35</sup>

**1.2.5 The one, having emerged, swims across** (*ummuḷjitvā patarati*): the assertive Buddhist or once-returned. This imagery refers to the second kind of saint, who has a greater stability (*thīta*) of faith,

<sup>28</sup> A 8.37/4:243 f.

<sup>29</sup> I don’t think this *pair* of terms is canonical, although the words *āmisā* and *nirāmisā* are. According to **Dve Dāna S** (A 2.8.1), the two kinds of giving are “material giving” (*āmisā, dāna*) and “the gift of Dharma” (*dhamma, dāna*), of which the latter is foremost (*etad-aggā*) (A 2.8.1/1:91). I have used the two above for purposes of the explanation that follows.

<sup>30</sup> See **Emotional Independence** = SD 40a.8.

<sup>31</sup> M:ÑB translates *sappurisa* here as “true man,” and *asappurisa*, as “untrue man.” These literal trs sound all right as long as we do not misconstrue them to refer to manliness or lack of it, or even a man who is faithful to his spouse as against one who is not. Some however may take this tr to be sexist.

<sup>32</sup> M 110/2:20-24 = SD 45.4

<sup>33</sup> M 113/3:37-45 = SD 23.7. On non-identification, see **Atammayatā** = SD 19.13.

<sup>34</sup> On puthujjana, see **Nakula, pitā S** (S 22.1) = SD 5.4 Intro (3). See also **Dhammaññū S** (A 7.64/4:113-117) = SD 30.10 Intro (2.3).

<sup>35</sup> A 8.38/4:244 f = SD 30.10 (embedded).

moral shame, moral fear, effort, and wisdom, that is, the five qualities for wholesome growth [2.1]. He is called a **once-returned** (*sākadāgāmi*), defined thus:

Upon breaking the three fetters, and with the diminishing of lust, hate and delusion, he becomes a once-returned, returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering. [§7a]

Like a streamwinner, the once-returned, too, has overcome the three fetters [1.2.4], but he has also *significantly weakened* the three unwholesome roots (*akusala,mūla*), namely, greed, hate and delusion, the prime movers of unwholesome deeds.<sup>36</sup> As a result, he has drastically reduced the effect of his past karma so that he has only one more life left to exhaust his rebirth-causing karma.

Another way of looking at a once-returned is that his past karma is loosening its grip on him, so that he is *living ever more in the present*. Untroubled by shadows of the past and dreams of the future, he happily and productively lives well the present moment. A once-returned, like a streamwinner, could still remain a lay-person, be economically productive, have a family, and enjoy sense-pleasure in a healthy and precept-based manner.<sup>37</sup>

However, although both the streamwinner and the once-returned may have abandoned “maladaptive cognitions” [1.2.4.2], they have only given up basic beliefs and assumptions, they do not automatically sublimate or correct their latent tendencies, that is, emotions and drives triggered by lust, aversion and ignorance. Cognitively (in our conscious actions), we may relate to our sense-experiences more wholesomely, but we may continue to act in the same neurotic ways.<sup>38</sup>

That is why religious dignitaries, even those who are branded with all kinds of status and titles, still badly mess themselves up, and abuse and hurt others. The point is that they are not even streamwinners yet, despite everything. For, if they were, they would have the strength not to break even the five precepts.

On the other hand, should the once-returned intensify his spiritual practice through the attaining of dhyana, that is, total mental focus, he would become a non-returned [1.2.6] or even an arhat [1.2.7].

**1.2.6 The one, having emerged, gains firm ground** (*ummujjitvā patigādha-p,patto hoti*): the accomplished Buddhist or **non-returned**. This imagery refers to the third kind of saint, the non-returned (*anāgāmi*), who,

with the destruction of the five lower fetters<sup>39</sup> [connected with the lower realms of existence], are *spontaneously reborn*<sup>40</sup> and there attain final nirvana, without ever returning from that world.<sup>41</sup> [§8a]

<sup>36</sup> On *akusala,mūla*, see (**Akusala**) **Añña,titthiyā S** (A 3.68/1:199-201) = SD 16.4; **Mūla S** (A 3.69/1:201-205) = SD 18.2.

<sup>37</sup> See eg **Mahā Vaccha,gotta S** (M 73.7-14/1:492 f).

<sup>38</sup> Take the case of the streamwinner, **Ānanda**, who traumatized by the Buddha’s passing, declares, “Bhante, I have seen the Blessed One in comfort, and I have seen the Blessed One enduring it. And, bhante, my body has become weak [unwieldy] as if drugged [drunk]. I’m disoriented and things are unclear to me as a result of the Blessed One’s illness.” see **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.2.24/2:100) = SD 9; see also S 47.13/5:162; Tha 1034.

<sup>39</sup> The 5 lower fetters are: (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa,rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa,-rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (*uddhacca*), (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61, A 5:13, Vbh 377). In some places, no. 5 (*paṭigha*) is replaced by illwill (*vyāpāda*): for the 10 fetters, see (1.2.4) n.

<sup>40</sup> That is, as a non-returned, reborn in **the Pure Abodes** (*suddh’āvāsa*), the 5 highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa,loka*) inhabited only by non-returneds who assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are **Aviha** (“Non-declining”), **Ātappa** (“Unworried”), **Sudassā** (“Clearly Visible”), **Sudassī** (“Clear-visioned”) and **Akaññhā** (“Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46). It should be noted that one could become a non-returned in this world itself, but upon dying, one is reborn in the Pure Abodes.

<sup>41</sup> *So pañcannaṃ oram,bhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātiko hoti tattha parinibbāyī anāvatti,-dhammo tasmā lokā*. See **M 6.13/1:34**, **118.10/3:80**; **S 55.24+25/5:377**, **378**; **A 3.85.4/1:232**, **256**, **7.15.8/4:13**, **9.36.2/4:423**. For types of non-returneds, see **A 3.86.3/1:233**, **3.87.3/1:234**.

The five fetters (that is, the “lower fetters”) overcome by the non-returner are as follows:

- |                                    |                                    |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| (1) personality view               | ( <i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i> ),        |
| (2) spiritual doubt                | ( <i>vicikicchā</i> ),             |
| (3) attachment to rituals and vows | ( <i>sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa</i> ), |
| (4) sensual lust                   | ( <i>kāma, rāga</i> ),             |
| (5) aversion                       | ( <i>paṭigha</i> ),                |

Technically, these five are known as **the “lower fetters”** (*oram.bhāgiya saṃyojana*), since they bind us to the lower realms, that is, the sense-worlds (the lower heavens, the human world, and the subhuman realms). They are called “sense-worlds” (*kāma, loka*) because their inhabitants depend on the six senses (the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind). The suprasensory realms are the form worlds (*rūpa, loka*) and the formless worlds (*arūpa, loka*).

The first three fetters have been discussed above [1.2.4]. The non-returner not only has all the spiritual qualities of the streamwinner and the once-returner, but he is also free from liking and disliking in terms of sense-experiences. The reason for this is that the non-returner is a practitioner who has supreme moral virtue so that his meditation is excellent. In fact, he is a dhyana-attainer,<sup>42</sup> which means that he enjoys a high level of bliss that transcends those of the senses. In other words, since he enjoys suprasensory bliss, he is in no way attracted to any sense-pleasure.

Such a person is an excellent candidate for monkhood, but many laymen non-returners are mentioned in the early texts.<sup>43</sup> The non-returner, like the streamwinner and the once-returner, still has the five higher fetters [1.2.7], which are minor spiritual aberrations (such as desire for higher rebirth levels and still has some spiritual ignorance). All these are temporary, however, as they are overcome within a few lives at the most, on the attainment of arhathood.

**1.2.7 The one, having emerged, is one who has crossed over** (*ummuḍḍitvā tiṇṇo hoti pāraṅgato thale tiṭṭhati brāhmaṇo*): the consummate saint or arhat. The first and last kind of boat disaster survivor refers to the four and highest kind of saint, **the arhat** (*arahata*). He is described in the Suttas as follows:

With the destruction of the mental influxes,<sup>44</sup> he attains and dwells here and now [in this life itself] in the influx-free liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom,<sup>45</sup> realizing them for himself with direct knowledge.<sup>46</sup> [§9a]

The arhat has overcome all the five lower fetters, as well as **the five “higher fetters”** (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojana*), which are as follows (and which are still found in the first three types of saints):

- |                                  |                         |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (6) greed for form existence     | ( <i>rūpa, rāga</i> ),  |
| (7) greed for formless existence | ( <i>arūpa, rāga</i> ), |
| (8) conceit                      | ( <i>māna</i> ),        |
| (9) restlessness                 | ( <i>uddhacca</i> ),    |
| (10) ignorance                   | ( <i>avijjā</i> )       |

<sup>42</sup> See **Entering the Stream** = SD 3.3 (2): (**Sekha**) **Uddesa S** (A 3.85/1:231 f).

<sup>43</sup> See **Laymen Saints** = SD 8.6 (9). The most famous lay non-returner is Citta the householder (S 41.9/4:300-302; AA 1:187 f). See also **Dīghāvu S** (S 55.3/5:344-347) = SD 23.16; see also SD 8.6 (11). For cosmological location of the Pure Abodes, see SD 1.7 (Table 1.7).

<sup>44</sup> “Mental influxes,” *āsava*: see (1.2.3) n on the “4 floods.”

<sup>45</sup> The one liberated of mind has destroyed all the mental hindrances, and as such could attain dhyana at will. The one liberated by wisdom “may not have reached the eight liberations (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed” (M 70.16/ 1:478): see SD 11.1 (5.2) for details; also **Mahā Suññata S** (M 122) = SD 11.4 Intro (3.3).

<sup>46</sup> *So āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceto, vimuttiṃ paññā, vimuttiṃ diṭṭh’eva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharati.* **M 40.14/1:284, 41.43/289, 291, 120.37/3:103; S 55.24+25/5:377, 378; A 3.13/1:109, 3.85.5/-1:232, 3.8.2/1:234, 3.100.10/1:256, 4.88.5/2:89, 4.159.5/2:146, 5.23.11/3:19, 5.28.20/3:29, 5.68.2/3:83, 7.15.9/4:13, 145, 9.35.3/4:422.**

Although the non-returner is free from rebirth in the sense-worlds, he might still fondly think of the joy and peace of *the suprasensory realms* (the form and formless realms), and even wish to be reborn there. He becomes more aware of others who lack the understanding and attainment that he has, and might feel a sense of superiority, comparing himself to them: this is *conceit*. As a result of all this, along with a powerful sense of love for the Dharma, he might experience some sense of *restlessness* at the sufferings or failings of others. In short, there is still a bit of *spiritual ignorance* in him. The arhat has overcome all this.

The arhat, as we have already said, has overcome not only the first five fetters, but also the five higher fetters. This second set of fetters are rooted deep in the unconscious, into the affective and motivational bases of behavior (the roots of feeling and karmic volition). It is relatively easier to transform cognitions and beliefs, making them wholesome [1.2.4], than to change our affects, motivations, and impulses. In simpler terms: it is easier to change the way we think than to actually correct our feelings and actions that are motivated by the latent tendencies.

Understandably, the core of this deepest group of fetters is “conceit” (*māna*), the remnant of the tendency to compare and measure self with others—this is the root of *narcissism*, which often hallucinates the intelligent, the intellectual, and the adolescents of all ages seeking self-meaning. This is what drives some of us to take “Vipassana” or the “Abhidhamma” as a sort of holy grail or philosopher’s stone that holds the final key to all the secrets of life. Yet our lives remain essentially unchanged, and when the attention we crave lags, we turn to the New Age lifestyle or other sources seen as self-empowering.

So we are always looking for the truth *out there*, seeking for our self *out there*. Usually, I notice, the child in us matures up in our 30s, when we humbly confess and forego our fanaticism, dogmatism and self-centredness decades back. The child is now a man. Otherwise, the snake continues to bite its own tail, and painfully so, continuing even into the next life.

The higher fetters, as such, have to do with rooting out the residues of narcissistic attachment to the self, of finally freeing the mind from self-idolization and from idolizing others (as transference and counter-transference, and various defence mechanisms).<sup>47</sup>

The arhat is often said to be one “who has destroyed the influxes” (*khīṇ’āsava*). Here “influx” (*āsava*) is simply a more ancient term for “fetter” (*saṃyojana*). Some Suttas and the Abhidhamma list **four types of influxes** (*āsava*), namely:

- |  |                                      |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| (1) the influx of sense-desire           | ( <i>kām’āsava</i> ),                |
| (2) the influx of (desire for) existence | ( <i>bhav’āsava</i> ),               |
| (3) the influx of views                  | ( <i>diṭṭh’āsava</i> ), and          |
| (4) the influx of ignorance              | ( <i>avijjāsava</i> ). <sup>48</sup> |

This set of four influxes is also known as the “floods” (*ogha*) (since they can overwhelm us) or the “yokes” (*yogā*) (since we can be bound to them).

In comparative terms, *the influx of sense-desire* is a synecdoche (blanket term) for the five lower fetters [1.2.6]. This is understandable because every one of these five fetters are fed by the three unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*), namely, greed (*dosa*), hate (*lobha*) and delusion (*moha*). The once-returner not only abandons the three fetters but significantly weakens these three roots. The non-returner abandons all the five fetters, but there are still the remnants of the delusion root.

In the older texts, only three kinds of influxes—that is, omitting the influx of views—are usually listed.<sup>49</sup> In this early model, *the influx of sense-desire* refers to the five lower fetters [1.2.6]. *The influx of existence* refers to the fetters of desire for form existence and for formless existence. *The influx of ignorance* would cover conceit, restlessness and ignorance. Both models effectively cover the same aspects, and is a matter of how they are explained to the practitioner.

The ten fetters (*dasa saṃyojana*) can be subsumed under the three influxes (*āsava*) in this manner:

<sup>47</sup> On transference & defence mechanisms, see **Gadrabha Samaṇa S** (S 3.81) = SD 24.10b. See Jack Engler, 2000: 3 (online), 7 (print).

<sup>48</sup> D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937. On the origin of this set of 4 influxes, see **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2) = SD 30.3 (1.3.1 f).

<sup>49</sup> D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63.

<u>The 10 fetters (<i>saṃyojana</i>)</u>		<u>The 3 influxes (<i>āsava</i>)</u>
(1) personality view	( <i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i> )	} (1) the influx of sense-desire
(2) spiritual doubt	( <i>vicikicchā</i> )	
(3) attachment to rituals and vows	( <i>sīla-b, bata parāmāsa</i> )	
(4) sensual lust	( <i>kāma, rāga</i> )	
(5) aversion	( <i>paṭigha</i> )	
(6) greed for form existence	( <i>rūpa, rāga</i> )	} (2) the influx of existence
(7) greed for formless existence	( <i>arūpa, rāga</i> )	
(8) conceit	( <i>māna</i> )	} (3) the influx of ignorance
(9) restlessness	( <i>uddhacca</i> )	
(10) ignorance	( <i>avijjā</i> )	

*The influx of desire for existence* clearly refers to the fetters of desire for form existence and for formless existence. *The influx of views* would cover conceit and restlessness, as both of them arise on account of not fully understanding the true nature of the mind and reality, even at this level of sainthood. Such spiritual difficulties, however, are not easily noticeable by the unawakened. In fact, a learner (that is a streamwinner, a once-returned, or a non-returned) often is aware of the presence of such aberrations, and constantly works at them to weaken and remove them. Or, he could consciously suppress them, but they still lie latent in him, due to *the influx of ignorance* (which is the same as the *fetter of ignorance*), until the attainment of arhathood. Anyway, these karmic remnants are not as toxic or weakening as the first three fetters, which should urgently be removed or at least suppressed.

To recapitulate: While the blind worldling is one who goes *with* the worldly flow (*anusota, gāmī*) [1.2.1-2], the good worldling tries to go *against* worldly currents (*paṭisota, gāmī*), or at least stays afloat. *The good worldling*, although still unawakened, is open to the Dharma, and reflects and reviews on the true nature of things, especially that of impermanence [1.2.3]. In this model, the learners on the path are said to be the “stable-minded” (*thit’atta*) [1.2.4-6], and beyond this is the non-learner, the arhat [1.2.7].<sup>50</sup>

## 2 Bases for spiritual training

**2.1 THE GROWTH OF WHOLESOME STATES.** From **the Naḷaka, pāna Sutta 1** (A 10.67), where Sāriputta explains these qualities in terms of the Buddhist training, we can call these five, “the qualities for the growth of wholesome states” (*kusala, dhamma vuḍḍhi, dhamma*), namely,<sup>51</sup>

(1) faith	( <i>saddhā</i> ),	
(2) moral shame	( <i>hiri</i> ),	
(3) moral fear	( <i>ottappa</i> ),	
(4) effort	( <i>virīya</i> ), and	
(5) wisdom	( <i>paññā</i> ).	(A 10.67/5:122-125)

These five qualities are clearly an elaboration of **the three trainings** (*ti, sikkhā*). Faith, moral shame and moral fear constitute the training in moral virtue (*śīla sikkhā*). Any effective practice must begin with some **wise faith**, that is, confidence arising through learning and questioning with a wise teacher.<sup>52</sup> Moral

<sup>50</sup> NettA (Be 248 = VRI 364). See **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2) = SD 30.3 Intro 1.3.2.

<sup>51</sup> For a comparison with the 5 qualities of noble growth (*ariya vadḍhi*) and the 8 characteristics of spiritual friendship (*kalyāṇa.mitta, lakkhaṇa*), see **Dūta S** (A 8.16) = SD 46.7 Intro (8.2). Brahmavamso, in his *Mindfulness, Bliss and Beyond*, lists them as 7 qualities, namely, “moral shame, fear of karmic consequences of wrongdoing, faith, energy, mindfulness, samādhi and wisdom” (2006: 232), conflating the 5 qualities that conduce to spiritual growth with the 5 spiritual faculties; however, see the 7 qualities for spiritual growth [2.3]. The Udakūpama Sutta actually lists only 5 qualities.

<sup>52</sup> See the 12 steps to wisdom: **Caṅki S** (M 95.20-33/2:174-176) = SD 21.15.

shame and moral fear are the two pillars of moral virtue that are the foundations of a healthy and productive society.<sup>53</sup>

**Moral shame** is an other-regarding sensitivity: we should not rob others of their wealth, for example, out of the consideration that they have worked hard and honestly for it, or for fear of the shame that comes with the misdeed. **Moral fear** is a healthy fear of the karmic consequences of an evil deed.

**Effort** here refers both to keeping up moral training as well as the training in mental concentration (*samādhi sikkhā*), that is, training the mind to let go of all mental distractions,<sup>54</sup> so that the mind is totally focused and still.<sup>55</sup>

The calm mind is easily directed to become clear so that wrong views are straightened. The calm mind has a longer attention span than the distracted mind, and is able to remember teachings more correctly and fully. Such teachings are useful for regular reflection so that we are inspired and energized to meditation more deeply. In due course, we have a more direct experience of true reality, that is, greater **wisdom**. This is the training in wisdom (*paññā sikkhā*).<sup>56</sup>

The five qualities that promote wholesome states are explained by Sāriputta in **the Naḷaka, pāna Sutta 1** (A 10.67), where he states that for those without these five qualities, it is to be expected that, come day or night, there would surely be no growth of wholesome states, only their waning.<sup>57</sup> However, for those who cultivate these qualities, it is to be expected that, come day or night, there would surely be only growth of wholesome states, not their waning.<sup>58</sup> The Buddha then endorses Sāriputta's teaching.<sup>59</sup>

**2.2 THE FIVE POWERS.** As the five powers (*pañca bala*), these qualities are:

- |                          |                                 |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| (1) faith                | ( <i>saddhā</i> ),              |
| (2) effort               | ( <i>virīya</i> ),              |
| (3) mindfulness          | ( <i>satī</i> ),                |
| (4) mental concentration | ( <i>samādhi</i> ), and         |
| (5) wisdom               | ( <i>paññā</i> ). <sup>60</sup> |

These are the five powers or natural qualities of an arhat; in a learner or an unawakened practitioner, these same five are called "the five faculties" (*pañc'indriya*), since they still need to be cultivated.<sup>61</sup> These five faculties are the bases for a successful meditation practice.

The "five qualities for the growth of wholesome states" [2.1] are basic qualities, the minimum necessary conditions, for any practitioner, especially a beginner. Understandably, the focus here would be on *moral virtue* (that is, moral shame and moral fear). When moral virtue is strong, it is easier to *meditate*, which leads inner calm and clarity. These are the bases for *wisdom*, which clears away wrong views and straighten the mind. In essence, this is the "three trainings" (*ti, sikkhā*).<sup>62</sup>

With the addition of "great learning" (*bāhu, sacca*), the following are the "five qualities of learner's spiritual intrepidity" (*pañca sekha, vesārajja, karaṇa, dhamma*): faith, moral virtue, great learning, exertion of effort (*viriy'ārambha*), and wisdom (A 5.101), that is, they are the qualities of the saints, short of the arhat.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>53</sup> See **Hiri Ottapa S** (A 2.9/1:50) = SD 2.5.

<sup>54</sup> On the 5 mental hindrances, see SD 32 esp **Pañca, nīvarana** = SD 32.1.

<sup>55</sup> On meditation, see **Bhāvanā** = SD 15.1.

<sup>56</sup> On the three trainings, see **Sīla samādhi pañña** & SD 21.6 Intro (5).

<sup>57</sup> *Tassa yā ratti vā divaso vā āgacchati, hāni yeva pātikaṅkhā kusalesu dhammesu no vuddhi.*

<sup>58</sup> *Tassa yā ratti vā divaso vā āgacchati, vuddhi yeva pātikaṅkhā kusalesu dhammesu no parihāni.*

<sup>59</sup> A 10.67/5:123. The same list, in more concise form, is found in **Ovāda S 2** (S 16.7/3:127), where the lack of these 5 qualities are said to contribute to the decline of the Dharma: see **The Dharma-ending Age** = SD 1.10 (4).

<sup>60</sup> D 3:239; A 3:10; Vbh 342.

<sup>61</sup> See **Āpaṇa S** (S 48.50/5:225 f) = SD 10.4.

<sup>62</sup> See **Sīla samādhi pañña** = SD 21.6.

<sup>63</sup> A 5.101/3:127 = SD 28.9a (3.1).

In the **Ovāda Sutta 2** (S 16.7), Mahā Kassapa informs the Buddha that the monks lack faith in the good, lack a sense of shame and fear towards wrongdoing, and are slack and devoid of wisdom. Kassapa compares such monks, in their state of decline, to the waning moon, which daily loses its beauty (faith), its roundness (moral shame), its splendour (moral fear), its height (effort) and its width (wisdom). The Buddha applauds him and repeats the whole admonition by way of affirmation. (S 16.7/2:208-210)

**2.3 THE 7 QUALITIES FOR SPIRITUAL GROWTH.** In the **Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), the Buddha says,

Bhikshus, so long as monks

(1) have faith [are faithful],<sup>64</sup>

(2) have moral shame,

(3) have moral fear,

(4) are learned [have heard much], [79]

(5) are those who exert themselves (in spiritual development),

(6) are established in mindfulness,

(7) are wise,

—then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline.

Bhikshus, so long as these seven conditions for non-decline endure amongst the monks, then, bhikshus, growth for the monks is to be expected, not their decline. (D 16.1.8/2:78 f) = SD 9

The seven qualities for spiritual growth are clearly an expanded version of the five faculties (*pañc'-indriya*) [2.2]. Both lists begin with *faith*, which is usually the starting-point and basis for spiritual growth: we use something or do an action knowing that it would work. The faculty of *effort* essentially entails the avoidance of negative states and cultivation of wholesome states that would bring about and sustain the faculty of *mindfulness*.

The qualities of moral shame and moral fear—as the cultivation of moral virtue—constitute the first level of the faculty of *effort*. This is followed by learning the theoretical aspects of the Dharma can further inspire us to further such effort. All this is conducive to the faculties of *mindfulness* and of *mental concentration*, resulting in the faculty of *wisdom*. The last two stages of both sets are essentially the same.

They are both bases of spiritual training. — — —

<sup>64</sup> Comy here (DA 2:529) mentions 4 kinds of faith:

(1) faith through attainment (*āgamānīya,saddhā*, other Comys: *āgamana,saddhā*), that is, the faith of the “omniscient” Bodhisattva [one bound to become a fully self-awakened one] by mastering it since his firm resolve (to become Buddha) (*sabbāññū,bodhisattānam saddhā abhinīhārato paṭṭhāya āgatattā*);

(2) faith through realization [understanding] (*adhigama,saddhā*), that is, the attainment of the noble saints through realization [understanding] (*ariya,sāvakanānam paṭivedhena adhigatattā*);

(3) faith by conviction (*okappana,saddhā*), ie, conviction by way of unshakability [unshakable faith] when it is said [when he hears the words], “Buddha, Dharma, Saṅgha” (*Buddho dhammo saṅgho ti vutte acala,bhāvena okappanam*);

(4) faith of calm joy [“confidence of trust” (Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:115 n51)] (*pasāda,-saddhā*), that is, the arising of calm and joyful faith (*pasād'uppatti*). (DA 2:529; MA 3:325 f = AA 3:257)

See **Pubba,koṭṭhaka S** (S 48.44/5:220-222) = SD 10.7 Intro (1) (2005).

# The Discourse on the Water Parable

(A 7.15/4:11-13)

## The 7 kinds of people

**1** Bhikshus, there are found in the world these seven who are like persons in water.

What are the seven?

**2a** (1) Here, bhikshus, a certain person once submerges, remains submerged [drowns].

(2) Here, again, bhikshus, there is a certain person, having emerged, then submerges.

(3) Here, again, bhikshus, there is a certain person, having emerged, remains so.

(4) Here, again, bhikshus, there is a certain person, having emerged, observes and looks around.

(5) Here, again, bhikshus, there is a certain person, having emerged, swims across.

(6) Here, again, bhikshus, there is a certain person, having emerged, gains firm ground.

(7) Here, again, bhikshus, there is a certain person, having emerged, is one who has crossed over, gone to the far shore—he stands on land as a brahmin.

## (1) The drowning

**2b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who once submerges, remains submerged [drowns]?<sup>65</sup>

**3** Here, bhikshus, a certain person who is accomplished in states that are utterly dark and unwholesome.

This, bhikshus, is the person who once submerges, remains submerged.

## (2) The emerging

**3b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, then submerges?<sup>66</sup>

**4a** Here, bhikshus, a certain person emerges, thinking,

“Good is *faith* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral shame* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral fear* in wholesome states!

Good is *effort* in wholesome states!

Good is *wisdom* in wholesome states!”<sup>67</sup>

Yet that faith of his neither stands nor grows, but only dwindles away.

Yet that moral shame of his neither stands nor grows, but only dwindles away.

Yet that moral fear of his neither stands nor grows, but only dwindles away.

Yet that effort of his neither stands nor grows, but only dwindles away.

Yet that wisdom of his neither stands nor grows, but only dwindles away.

This, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, then submerges.

## (3) The one who merely remains afloat

**4b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, remains so?<sup>68</sup> [12]

**5a** Here, bhikshus, a certain person emerges, thinking,

“Good is *faith* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral shame* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral fear* in wholesome states!

<sup>65</sup> *Kathaṅ ca, bhikkhave, puggalo sakim nimuggo nimuggo ’va hoti?*

<sup>66</sup> *Kathaṅ ca, bhikkhave, puggalo ummujjitvā nimujjati?*

<sup>67</sup> These are “the qualities for the growth of wholesome states” (*kusala, dhamma vuddhi, dhamma*): see Intro (2.1).

<sup>68</sup> *Kathaṅ ca, bhikkhave, puggalo ummujjitvā thito hoti?* In this case, the person could simply remain afloat, or at best, come into shallow water so that we could stand in it. In either case, there is the danger that marine predators could still attack, or powerful currents or waves could wash him away.

Good is *effort* in wholesome states!

Good is *wisdom* in wholesome states!”

But that faith of his neither dwindles away nor grows; it just stands.

But that moral shame of his neither dwindles away nor grows; it just stands.

But that moral fear of his neither dwindles away nor grows; it just stands.

But that effort of his neither dwindles away nor grows; it just stands.

But that wisdom of his neither dwindles away nor grows; it just stands.

This, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, remains so [stands].

#### (4) The mindful observer

**5b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, observes, looks around?<sup>69</sup>

**6a** Here, bhikshus, a certain person, thinking,

“Good is *faith* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral shame* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral fear* in wholesome states!

Good is *effort* in wholesome states!

Good is *wisdom* in wholesome states!”

Upon breaking the three fetters,<sup>70</sup> he becomes a **streamwinner**, not bound for the lower world,<sup>71</sup> sure of liberation, destined for awakening.<sup>72</sup>

This, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, observes and looks around.

#### (5) The one swims across the waters

**6b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, swims across?<sup>73</sup>

**7a** Here, bhikshus, a person, thinking,

“Good is *faith* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral shame* in wholesome states!

Good is *moral fear* in wholesome states!

Good is *effort* in wholesome states!

Good is *wisdom* in wholesome states!”

Upon breaking the three fetters, and with the diminishing of lust, hate and delusion, he becomes a **once-returner**, returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering.<sup>74</sup>

This, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, swims across.

#### (6) The one who finds firm ground

**7b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, gains firm ground?<sup>75</sup>

<sup>69</sup> *Idha pana, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ummujjitvā vipassati viloketi.* The imagery of sight: (he) “observes, looks around” (*vipassati viloketi*), ie, he surveys for some sage floating object or landfall. Here, “seeing” (*dassana*) refers to the destruction of the 3 fetters are “influxes to be abandoned by seeing” (*āsavā dassanā pahatabbā*): see **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2.11/1:9).

<sup>70</sup> Viz, self-identity view, attachment to rituals and vows, and spiritual doubt: see **D 33.1.10(10)/3:216**; **M 2.11/-1:9**; cf **A 6.86/3:438**.

<sup>71</sup> *Avinīpāta*: see (1.2.4) n on “the lower world.”

<sup>72</sup> *So tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā sotāpanno hoti avini,pāta,dhammo niyato sambodhi,parāyaṇo.* See **D 6.13/1:156**, **18.1/2:200**; **M 11.12/3:81**; **S 22.109/3:161**, **48.2+3/5:193**, **55.24+25/5:377**, 378; **A 3.85.2/1:231 f**, **4.88.-2/2:88 f**.

<sup>73</sup> *Idha pana, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ummujjitvā patarati.* Here, the survivor swims towards a safe floating object, or heads for the nearest land.

<sup>74</sup> *Ce Ee Se So tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā rāga,dosa,mohānaṃ tanuttā sakadāgāmī hoti, sakid eva [Ke sakim deva] imam lokam āgantvā dukkhass’antaṃ karoti [Be Ke dukkhass’anta,karo hoti].* See **D 6.13/1:156**, **18.1/-2:200**; **M 6.12/1:34**, **118.11/3:81**; **S 55.24+25/5:377**, 378; **A 4.88.3/2:89**.

<sup>75</sup> *Idha pana, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ummujjitvā patigādha-p,patto hoti.*

**8a** Here, bhikshus, a person, thinking,  
 “Good is *faith* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *moral shame* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *moral fear* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *effort* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *wisdom* in wholesome states!”

With the destruction of the five lower fetters,<sup>76</sup> are **spontaneously reborn**<sup>77</sup> and there attain final nirvana, without ever returning from that world.<sup>78</sup>

This, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, gains firm ground.

### (7) The one crossed over to the other shore

**8b** And how, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, is one who has crossed over, gone to the far shore—he stands on land as a brahmin?<sup>79</sup> [13]

**9a** Here, bhikshus, a person, thinking,  
 “Good is *faith* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *moral shame* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *moral fear* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *effort* in wholesome states!  
 Good is *wisdom* in wholesome states!”

With the destruction of the mental influxes,<sup>80</sup> he attains and dwells here and now [in this life itself] in the influx-free liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom,<sup>81</sup> realizing them for himself with direct knowledge.<sup>82</sup>

**9b** This, bhikshus, is the person who, having emerged, is one who has crossed over, gone to the far shore—he stands on land as a brahmin.

Bhikshus, there are found in the world these seven who are like persons in water.

— evaṃ —

<sup>76</sup> Connected with the lower realms of existence, viz (1) personality view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rules and rites (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma, rāga*), (5) aversion (*paṭigha*). On the 10 fetters, see Intro (1.2.6).

<sup>77</sup> That is, as a non-returner, reborn in **the Pure Abodes** (*suddh’āvāsa*): see Intro (1.2.6).

<sup>78</sup> *So pañcannaṃ oram, bhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayaṃ opapātiko hoti tattha parinibbāyī anāvatti, dhammo tasmā lokā*. See **M 6.13/1:34**, **118.10/3:80**; **S 55.24+25/5:377**, **378**; **A 3.85.4/1:232**, **256**, **7.15.8/4:13**, **9.36.2/4:423**. For types of non-returners, see **A 3.86.3/1:233**, **3.87.3/1:234**.

<sup>79</sup> Be Ee *Idha pana, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ummujjitvā tiṇṇo hoti pāraṅgato* [Ke Ce Se *pāragato*] *thale tiṭṭhati brāhmaṇo*. Cf **Samudda S 1** (S 35.228/4:157); **Āsīvisôpama S** (S 35.238.9/4:178) = SD 28.1.

<sup>80</sup> “Mental influxes,” *āsava*, also tr as “cankers, corruptions”: see Intro (1.2.7).

<sup>81</sup> See Intro (1.2.7).

<sup>82</sup> *So āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceto, vimuttim paññā, vimuttim diṭṭh’eva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharati*. **M 40.14/1:284**, **41.43/289**, **291**, **120.37/3:103**; **S 55.24+25/5:377**, **378**; **A 3.13/1:109**, **3.85.5/1:232**, **3.8.2/1:234**, **3.100.10/1:256**, **4.88.5/2:89**, **4.159.5/2:146**, **5.23.11/3:19**, **5.28.20/3:29**, **5.68.2/3:83**, **7.15.9/4:13**, **145**, **9.35.3/4:422**.

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