

## Entering the Stream

### The nature and attainment of sainthood

[The fundamentals of spiritual growth here and now]  
Pali passages selected and translated by Piya Tan ©2003

#### Introduction

Nowadays, there is a proliferation of books on the Buddha's Teachings. Studying these books would inevitably result in imbibing some of the views and interpretations of the various writers on what the Buddha actually taught, which would result in some wrong views. On the other hand, there are some meditation teachers who advise their students not to study at all but to only meditate. In effect, what they are suggesting is for their students to listen to them only.

(Dhammavuddho Thera, "Liberation: Relevance of Sutta-Vinaya," 1997:2)

And the "middle way," avoiding these two extremes, Dhammavuddho proposes, is to investigate the Buddha's discourses and practise his noble eightfold path, "whether by lay people or by monks".

In December 1997, Dhammavudho Thera gave a talk entitled "Importance of the Buddha's Discourses" to the Theravada Society of Australia. This talk was revised into an article entitled "Liberation: Relevance of Sutta-Vinaya" and published in *Theravada*, the journal of the Theravada Society of Australia (March 1999). The most significant statement that Dhammavudho makes in his article is that "it is clear that hearing Dhamma can make one an Ariyan disciple" (1997:6). He bases all his arguments on the teachings of the Pali Canon.

Of special interest, for example, are his references to **the (Sekha) Uddesa Sutta** (A 3.85/1:231 f) and **the Sa,upadisesa Sutta** (A 9.12/4:378-382), which in essence state that the streamwinner and the once-returner do not need perfect concentration, that is, they do not need dhyana (*jhāna*), nor even need not "meditate" (as the term is popularly taken today) (1997:7). **Bodhi**, in an article based on a careful study of the Pali suttas, entitled "The Jhānas and the lay disciple" (2001:36-64) makes this important statement:

All noble disciples acquire the right concentration of the Noble Eightfold Path, which is defined as the four *Jhānas*. This need not be understood to mean that stream-enterers and once-returners already possess *Jhāna* before they reach stream-entry. The formula for right concentration may imply only that they must eventually attain the *Jhānas* in the course of developing the path to its culmination in *arahantship*.  
(Bodhi 2001:62)

In this study I have selected those references that Dhammavuddho has quoted without giving them in full, and which I will here provide within the scope of this study. In most cases, I have let the texts speak for themselves, or serve as bases for discussion and reflection.

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## 1 Right View

### 1.1 (Magga) Vibhaṅga Sutta (S 45.8)

- 4 And what, bhikshus, is right view?<sup>1</sup>  
 The knowledge of suffering.  
 The knowledge of the arising of suffering. [9]  
 The knowledge of the ending of suffering.  
 The knowledge of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.  
 —This is called right view. (S 45.8/5:8 f)

### 1.2 Niṭṭha Sutta (A 10.63)

1 Bhikshus, all those who have won their goal<sup>2</sup> under me are those **accomplished in right view**.<sup>3</sup> Of those accomplished in right view, five win their goal here (in this life), five win their goal on leaving (here).

Who are the five who win their goal here?

2 The seven-at-most,<sup>4</sup> the clan-to-clan-goer,<sup>5</sup> the single-seeder,<sup>6</sup> the once-returner,<sup>7</sup> and those who are arhats (*arahā*) here and now.

These are the five who win their goal here. Who are those who win their goal on leaving (here)?

3 An attainer of nirvana in the interval [intermediate state],<sup>8</sup> an attainer of nirvana upon landing,<sup>9</sup> an attainer of nirvana without exertion,<sup>10</sup> an attainer of nirvana with exertion,<sup>11</sup> one bound upstream, heading for the Akanitṭha realm.

These are the five who win their goal on leaving (here).

Bhikshus, all those who have won their goal under me are those accomplished in right view. Of those accomplished in right view, five win their goal here (in this life), five win their goal on leaving (here).

(A 10.63/5:119 f)

## 2 The (Sekha) Uddesa Sutta (A 3.85/1:231 f)

[**The (Sekha) Uddesa Sutta** (A 3.85) is a definitive discourse on how the three trainings<sup>12</sup> are related to the attaining of sainthood.<sup>13</sup> The streamwinner is clearly defined here:]

<sup>1</sup> Cf **Paccaya S** (S 12.27): "... a noble disciple thus understands the condition (*paccaya*); thus understands the arising of the condition; thus understands the cessation of the condition; thus understands the way leading to the cessation of the condition: he is then called a noble disciple who is accomplished in right view..." (S 12.27.15/2:43)

<sup>2</sup> "Who have won their goal," *niṭṭhaṅ, gatā*.

<sup>3</sup> "Accomplished in right view," *diṭṭhi, sampanna*.

<sup>4</sup> *Satta-k, khattu, parama*. "Having re-arisen and wandered amongst gods and humans for seven lives at the most, (he) makes an end of suffering." (**Sa, upadisesa S** A 9.12.19/4:381).

<sup>5</sup> *Kolaṃ, kola*. "Having re-arisen and wandered amongst two or three families, (he) makes an end of suffering." (A 9.12.8/4:381).

<sup>6</sup> *Eka, bījī*. "Having taken only one more human rebirth, (he) makes an end of suffering." (A 9.12.8/4:380 f)

<sup>7</sup> *Sakad'āgamī*.

<sup>8</sup> *Antarā, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237). For a discussion of the doctrinal problem here and on the intermediate state, see "Is Rebirth Immediate?" SD 2.17(4-5).

<sup>9</sup> *Upahacca, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237), one who while living beyond half of the life-span, or at the moment of death, attains the holy path for the overcoming of the higher fetters (Pug 1.43). See **Is Rebirth Immediate?** = SD 2.17(4-5).

<sup>10</sup> *Asaṅkhāra, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237), one who overcomes the higher fetters without exertion (Pug 1.44). See **Is Rebirth Immediate?** = SD 2.17(4-5).

<sup>11</sup> *Sa, saṅkhāra, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237), one who overcomes the higher fetters with some exertion (Pug 1.45). See **Is Rebirth Immediate?** = SD 2.17(4-5).

<sup>12</sup> On the 3 trainings, see **(Ti) Sikkhā S** (A 3.88/1:235) = SD 24.10c.

<sup>13</sup> A 3.85/1:231 f, also called **(Mattaso, kāri) Sikkhā S**. See SD 21.6 for a discussion.

1 Bhikshus, sons of family, desiring spiritual welfare, train in these training rules numbering more than 150 that are recited fortnightly. Bhikshus, all these combine to form the three trainings.

What are the three?

The training in higher moral virtue, the training in higher mind, the training in higher wisdom.<sup>14</sup>

2 (1) THE STREAMWINNER. Here, bhikshus, a monk **fulfills moral virtue but gains only limited concentration, gains only limited wisdom**. Whatever lesser and minor rule that he might transgress, he rises above them.<sup>15</sup> What is the reason for this?

Here, bhikshus, there is no incapability, I say. For, here he is consistently *virtuous*, established in moral virtue and undertakes to train in the training-rules that are fundamental to the holy life<sup>16</sup> and that befit the holy life.<sup>17</sup>

With the total destruction of the three fetters,<sup>18</sup> he is a **streamwinner**, not bound for the lower world,<sup>19</sup> sure of liberation, destined for awakening, sure of liberation, bound for awakening.

3 (2) THE ONCE-RETURNER. Here, bhikshus, a monk **fulfills moral virtue<sup>20</sup> but gains only limited concentration, gains only limited wisdom**. Whatever lesser and minor rules that he might transgress, he rises above them. What is the reason for this?

Here, bhikshus, there is no incapability, I say. For, here he is consistently *virtuous*, established in moral virtue and undertakes to train in training-rules that are fundamental to the holy life and that befit the holy life.

With the destruction of the three fetters and with the diminishing of lust, hate and delusion, he is a **Once-returned**, returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering.

4 (3) THE NON-RETURNER. Here, bhikshus, a monk fulfills moral virtue, fulfills *concentration*, but gains only limited wisdom. Whatever lesser and minor rules that he might transgress, he rises above them. What is the reason for this?

Here, bhikshus, there is no incapability, I say. For, here he is consistently *virtuous*, established in moral virtue and undertakes to train in training-rules that are fundamental to the holy life and that befit the holy life.

With the destruction of the five lower fetters,<sup>21</sup> he is **spontaneously reborn** (in the Pure Abodes)<sup>22</sup>

<sup>14</sup> That is, *adhi,sīla,sikkhā adhi,citta,sikkhā adhi,paññā,sikkhā*. Alt tr “training in terms of moral virtue, training in terms of the mind, training in terms of wisdom” (here the training aspect is emphasized as against the theoretical moral virtue (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*). Traditionally, the “higher training” (*adhi,sikkhā*) leads to the attainment of absorption (*jhāna*).

<sup>15</sup> Take, for example, the case of Sarakāṇi who, despite breaching the precept against intoxicants in due course dies a streamwinner. See **Sarakāṇi S 1** (S 55.24/5:375-377) = SD 3.6.

<sup>16</sup> “That are fundamental to the holy life,” *ādi,brahmacariyika*. BDict: *ādibrahma,cariyaka sīla* = “Morality of Genuine Pure Conduct.” This comprises right speech, right action, right livelihood (the 3<sup>rd</sup> 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> factors of the noble eightfold path).

<sup>17</sup> “That befit the holy life,” *brahmacariya,sāruppa*. That is, it conduces one to gain the moral virtue connected with the four paths (AA 2:349)

<sup>18</sup> The (first) 3 fetters: see §2(4)n.

<sup>19</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 (*nīraya*), the animal birth (*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>20</sup> “He possesses virtue dear to the noble ones, unbroken, untorn, unmixed, spotless, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, giving rise to concentration”: see **Pañca,bhera,bhaya S** (S 12.41/2:70) = §4.1.14 below.

<sup>21</sup> **The 10 fetters** (*samyojana*) are: (1) self-identity view (*sakkāya,ditṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rules and rites (*sīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*), (5) repulsion (*paṭigha*), (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 ill will

and there attains final nirvana without ever returning from there.

5 (4) THE ARHAT. Here, bhikshus, a monk fulfills moral virtue, fulfills concentration, fulfills wisdom. Whatever lesser and minor rule that he might transgress, he rises above them. What is the reason for this?

Here, bhikshus, there is no incapability, I say. For, here he is consistently virtuous, established in moral virtue and undertakes to train in training-rules that are fundamental to the holy life and that befit the holy life.

He is one **with mental influxes destroyed**,<sup>23</sup> who in this very life, having won through his own direct knowledge the influx-free liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom,<sup>24</sup> abides therein.

Thus, bhikshus, those who train partially gain partial result,<sup>25</sup> those who train fully gain full results. These training-rules are not fruitless,<sup>26</sup> I say!

### 3 The Sa,upadisesa Sutta (A 9.12/4:378-382)

[**The Sa,upadisesa Sutta** (A 9.12) mentions four kinds of non-returners, and, for our purposes here, lists the four kinds of streamwinners [§§8-10], and also stresses on the ease of attaining spiritual awakening through proper practice.<sup>27</sup>]

1 At one time, the Blessed One was dwelling in Anātha,piṇḍika's Park in Jeta's grove near Sāvattihī. Then in the morning, the venerable Sāriputta, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, entered Sāvattihī for alms.

Then the venerable Sāriputta thought:

"It is too early to go into Sāvattihī for alms. What if I were to go to the sectarian wanderers' park?"<sup>28</sup>

Then the venerable Sāriputta went into the sectarian wanderers' park and exchanged greetings with them. When this courteous and friendly exchange was concluded, he sat down at one side

2 Now at that time, this topic of conversation arose amongst the wanderers of other sects who had gathered together there:

(*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*oram, bhāgiya*), so called because they bind one to the lower realms. The rest are the higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya*), that bind one to the higher realms. Either way one is caught in samsara.

<sup>22</sup> That is, reborn in the Pure Abodes (*suddh'āvāsa*), the 5 highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa, loka*) inhabited only by non-returners who assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are Āviha ("Non-declining"), Ātappa ("Unworried"), Sudassā ("Clearly Visible"), Sudassī ("Clear-visioned") and Akanitthā ("Highest") (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

<sup>23</sup> "Mental influxes destroyed," *khīṇ'āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit "in-flow, out-flow") comes from *ā-savati* "flows towards" (ie either "into" or "out" towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints ("deadly taints," RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām'āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav'-āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh'āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijj'āsava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as "floods" (*ogha*) and "yokes" (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [43] 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>24</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>25</sup> "Those who train partially gain partial result," *padesam padesa, kārī*.

<sup>26</sup> "Not fruitless," reading *avañjhāni*.

<sup>27</sup> A 9.12/4:378-382.

<sup>28</sup> "Sectarian wanderers," *nānā, titthiyā paribbājakā*, lit "other-fording wanderers"; fully: "the wanderers of other sects," "heterodox wanderers," ie non-Buddhist wanderers. It is interesting that this is the closest that the Buddhist texts have for "gentile" (a non-Jew), ie an "outsider."

“Avuso, those who die with the aggregates of existence remaining<sup>29</sup> are not liberated from hell, not liberated from the animal birth, not liberated from the ghost realm, not liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.”

3 Then the venerable Sāriputta, neither approving nor disapproving of the word of the wanderers of other sects, rose from his seat and left, thinking:

“I will learn the truth of this matter from the Blessed One himself.”

Then the venerable Sāriputta, having gone into Sāvathī for alms, having returned from almsround [379] and finished his meal, went up to the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the venerable Sāriputta *related to the Blessed One what had happened at the sectarian wanderers’ park, and* this topic of conversation that arose amongst the wanderers of other faiths who had gathered together there:

‘Avusos, those who die with the aggregates of existence remaining are not liberated from hell, not liberated from the animal birth, not liberated from the ghost realm, not liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.’...”

4 “Sāriputta, some of the wanderers of other sects are foolish and unintelligent; some will know those with the aggregates of existence remaining as those with the aggregates of existence remaining; some will know those without aggregates remaining as those without the aggregates remaining.

Sāriputta, there are these nine persons, who having died with the aggregates of existence remaining are liberated from hell, liberated from the animal birth, liberated from the ghost realm, liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.

What are the nine? [380]

5 (1) Here, Sāriputta, a certain person fulfills moral virtue, fulfills concentration, but does not gain wisdom completely. With the utter destruction of the five lower fetters, he becomes **an attainer of nirvana in the intermediate state**.<sup>30</sup>

This, Sāriputta, is the first person, who having died with the aggregates of existence remaining is liberated from hell, liberated from the animal birth, liberated from the ghost realm, liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.

6 (2) Furthermore, Sāriputta, here a certain person fulfills moral virtue, fulfills concentration, but does not gain wisdom completely. With the utter destruction of the five lower fetters, one becomes **an attainer of nirvana upon landing**.<sup>31</sup> This, Sāriputta, is the second person liberated *from the four subhuman planes*.

... (3) ... **an attainer of nirvana without exertion**.<sup>32</sup> This, Sāriputta, is the third person liberated *from the four subhuman planes*.

... (4) ... **an attainer of nirvana with exertion**.<sup>33</sup> This, Sāriputta, is the fourth person liberated *from the four subhuman planes*.

... (5) ... **one bound upstream, heading towards the Akaniṭṭha**<sup>34</sup> **realm**.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>29</sup> “With the aggregates remaining,” *sa, upadisesa*, ie “with a residue of material support to which one grasps (for rebirth),” namely, the aggregates (*khandha*): form, feeling, perception, mental formation, consciousness. In the Suttas, the word is mostly used in such expressions as “One of the 2 fruits may be expected: either perfect wisdom or, if the groups are still remaining (*sati upādi, sese*), non-return” (D 22). Also in “Here the Tathāgata has passed into the nirvana-element in which no more groups are remaining (*anupādi, sesa*)” (A 4.118/2:120)—BDict: upādi.

<sup>30</sup> *antarā, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237).

<sup>31</sup> *upahacca, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237).

<sup>32</sup> *asaṅkhāra, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237).

<sup>33</sup> *sa, saṅkhāra, parinibbāyī* (D 3:237).

<sup>34</sup> Akaniṭṭha. The Suddh’āvāsa or “Pure Abodes” are a group of 5 heavens in the formless realm populated only by non-returners, and where they attain arhathood and nirvana. The 5 Pure Abodes, ie their inhabitants and respective lifespans, are: These worlds are Āviha (“Non-declining,” 1000 MK), Atappa (“Unworried,” 2000 MK), Sudassā (“Clearly Visible,” 4000 MK), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned,” 8000 MK) and Akaniṭṭhā (“Highest,” 16000 MK) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46). MK = *Mahā Kappa*. that is, a full cycle of a world-period or cycle of the

This, Sāriputta, is the fifth person, who having died with the aggregates of existence remaining is liberated from hell, liberated from the animal birth, liberated from the ghost realm, liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.

7 (6) Furthermore, Sāriputta, here a certain person **fulfills moral virtue, but does not gain concentration completely, does not gain wisdom completely.** With the destruction of the three fetters and with the diminishing of lust, hate and delusion, he is a **once-returned**, returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering.

This, Sāriputta, is the sixth person...

8 (7) Furthermore, Sāriputta, here a certain person fulfills moral virtue, but gains only limited concentration, gains only limited wisdom.<sup>36</sup> With the total destruction of the three fetters,<sup>37</sup> he is a **single-seeder**,<sup>38</sup> having taken only one more human birth, [381] makes an end of suffering.<sup>39</sup>

This, Sāriputta, is the seventh person...

9 (8) Furthermore, Sāriputta, here a certain person fulfills moral virtue, but gains only limited concentration, gains only limited wisdom.<sup>40</sup> With the total destruction of the three fetters, he is a **clan-to-clan-goer**,<sup>41</sup> having re-arisen and wandered amongst two or three families, makes an end of suffering.<sup>42</sup>

This, Sāriputta, is the eighth person...

10 (9) Furthermore, Sāriputta, here a certain person fulfills moral virtue, but gains only limited concentration, gains only limited wisdom.<sup>43</sup> With the total destruction of the three fetters, he is a **seven-at-most**,<sup>44</sup> having re-arisen and wandered amongst gods and humans for seven lives at the most, makes an end of suffering.<sup>45</sup>

This, Sāriputta, is the ninth person who having died with the aggregates of existence remaining is liberated from hell, liberated from the animal birth, liberated from the ghost realm, liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.

Sāriputta, some of the wanderers of other sects are foolish and unintelligent; some will know those with the aggregates of existence remaining as those with the aggregates of existence remaining; some will know those without aggregates remaining as those without aggregates of existence remaining.

Sāriputta, these are the nine persons who, having died with the aggregates of existence remaining, are liberated from hell, liberated from the animal birth, liberated from the ghost realm, liberated from the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state.

universe (V 3:4 = D 3:51, 111 = It 99; D 1:14; A 2:142). For celestial map, see **Kevaḍḍha S** (D 11) = SD 1.7; for world cycle, see **Aggañña S** (D 27) = SD 2.19.

<sup>35</sup> *Uddhamisoto Akaniṭṭha.gāmī* (D 3:237).

<sup>36</sup> *Idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismiṃ mattaso,kārī, paññāya mattaso,kārī.* PTS ed has wr: *idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismiṃ na paripūrakārī, paññāya na paripūrakārī.*

<sup>37</sup> They are the first 3 of the 10 fetters (*saṃyojana*), viz: (1) self-identify view (*sakkāya,ditṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), and (3) attachment to rules and rites (*sīla-b,bata,paramāsa*). On the **10 fetters**, see 2(4)n above.

<sup>38</sup> *Eka,bhī*.

<sup>39</sup> *Puna ca paramā Sāriputta idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismiṃ mattaso,kārī, paññāya mattaso,kārī. So tinnam saṃyojanānam parikkhayā eka,bhī hoti ekañ-ñeva mānusakam bhavam nibbattetvā dukkhass'antam karoti.*

<sup>40</sup> *Idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismiṃ mattaso,kārī, paññāya mattaso,kārī.*

<sup>41</sup> *Kolaṃ,kola.*

<sup>42</sup> *Puna ca paramā Sāriputta idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismiṃ mattaso,kārī, paññāya mattaso,kārī. So tinnam saṃyojanānam parikkhayā kolaṅkolo hoti, dve vā tīṇi vā kulāni sandhāvitvā saṃsaritvā dukkhass'antakaro.*

<sup>43</sup> *Idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti, samādhismiṃ mattaso,kārī, paññāya mattaso,kārī.*

<sup>44</sup> *Satta-k,khattu,parama.*

<sup>45</sup> *Puna ca paramā Sāriputta idh'ekacco puggalo sīlesu paripūrakārī hoti samādhismiṃ mattaso,kārī, paññāya mattaso,kārī. So tinnam saṃyojanānam parikkhayā satta-k,khattu,paramo hoti, satta-k,khattu,paramam deve ca mānuse ca sandhāvitvā saṃsaritvā dukkhass'antam karoti.*

Not until now, Sāriputta, has this Dharma discourse been declared to bhikshus, nuns, laymen or lay-women. What is the reason for this?

So that after hearing this Dharma discourse, they do not bring heedlessness upon themselves! [382] Moreover, Sāriputta, this Dharma discourse has been given by me simply because of my being questioned. (A 9.12/4:378-382)

## 4 The characteristics of streamwinning

### **4.1 (Sotāpatti) Phala Sutta (S 55.55)**

[THE LIMBS FOR STREAMWINNING]<sup>46</sup>

Bhikshus, these four things when cultivated, often developed, lead to the realization of the fruit of stream-entry. What are the four? [411]

Association with true individuals.<sup>47</sup>

Hearing the True Teaching.

Wise attention.

Practice of the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.

These four things when cultivated, often developed, lead to the realization of the fruit of stream-entry. (S 55.55/5:410 f; A 5.246/2:245)

### **4.2 Pañca Vera,bhaya Sutta (S 12.41/2:68-70)<sup>48</sup>**

THE DISCOURSE ON THE FIVE HATES AND FEARS [THE FOUR LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER]<sup>49</sup>

1 (The Blessed One was) staying at Sāvathī.

2 Then the householder Anātha,piṇḍika went up to the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side. As he was seated thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to him:

#### The five hates and fears

3 “Householder, when the noble disciple’s five hates and fears<sup>50</sup> have been quelled, he is accomplished with the four limbs of streamwinning,<sup>51</sup> and he has clearly seen and thoroughly penetrated with wisdom the noble way—if he wishes<sup>52</sup> he could by himself declare of himself:

<sup>46</sup> *Sotāpatti-y-aṅgāni*, alt tr “limbs of streamwinning” (D 33.1.11(13)/3:227; Pm 2:189 f). These are preliminary practices that lead to the attainment of streamwinning. In **Paññā,vaḍḍhi S** (A 5.246) these same 4 qualities are called *vaḍḍhi,dhamma*, “virtues conducive to growth” (A 5.246/2:245); cf the 5 factors of noble growth (*ariya,vaḍḍhi*): **(Tadah’) Uposatha S** (A 3.70.8b/1:210) = SD 4.18; **Sambadh’okāsa S** (A 6.26.8/3:316) = SD 15.7a; **Pañca Vaḍḍhi S 1** (A 5.63/3:80); **Pañca Vaḍḍhi S 2** (A 5.64/3:80). See S:B 762 n120. Cf (2) *sotāpannassa aṅgāni* in foll para.

<sup>47</sup> “True individuals,” *sappurisa*, also “virtuous persons,” “ideal persons,” ie true spiritual practitioners. The qualities of a *sappurisa* are given at D 33.2.3(6)/3:252, 34.1.8(7)/3:283; M 113; A 7.64/4:113, 8:38/4:144 f & at M 110.14-24/3:23 f.

<sup>48</sup> Uddāna title reads *Saṭṭayham* (?). The importance of this discourse is attested by the fact that it also appears as **Anātha,piṇḍika S 3** (S 55.28/5:288 f): see SD 23.2ab, **Pañca Vera S** (S 55.28/5:387-389), and **Bhaya Vera S** (A 10.92/5:182-184), and also has other names such as **Pañca Bhaya,vera S**.

<sup>49</sup> *Sotāpannassa aṅgāni*. See n below.

<sup>50</sup> “Hates and fears,” *bhayāni verāni*, or “terrors and fears”; alt tr “terrible danger.” Comy glosses as “volitions of fear and hate” (*bhaya,vera,cetanāyo*) (SA 2:72). Cf A 9.27/4:405-407, 10.92/5:182-184, etc. “Hate” (*vera*) here I take as an emotion (expression), while “fear” (*bhaya*) as an internal feeling (unemoted or unexpressed state of mind). See also A 3:204 f, 4:405 f, 5:182; It 57 = Sn 167; Vbh 378. See **(Bhaya) Vera S** (A 5.174/3:204-206) = SD 6.4 Intro.

<sup>51</sup> “The four limbs of streamwinning,” see §2.10n.

<sup>52</sup> *akāṅkhamāno*, also “being without doubt,” “not doubting.”

‘I have destroyed hell, the animal birth, the realm of the departed [ghosts], the plane of misery, the evil destiny, the lower realm. *I am a streamwinner*, not bound for the lower world,<sup>53</sup> sure of liberation, destined for awakening!’

4 What are **the five hates and fears that have been quelled?**

5 (1) Householder, one who harms life, on account of harming life, brings upon himself hate and fear in this life and also brings hate and fear to the next life, too, and he feels (physical) pain and (mental) displeasure.

But for one *who abstains from harming life*, these hate and fear are quelled. [He does not bring upon himself hate and fear in this life nor to the next life, and he does not feel pain and displeasure.]<sup>54</sup>

6 (2) One who takes the not-given, on account of taking the not-given, [69] brings upon himself hate and fear in this life and also brings hate and fear to the next life, too, and he feels (physical) pain and (mental) displeasure.

But for one *who abstains from harming life*, these hate and fear are quelled.

7 (3) One who indulges in sexual misconduct, on account of indulging in sexual misconduct, brings upon himself hate and fear in this life and also brings hate and fear to the next life, too, and he feels (physical) pain and (mental) displeasure.

But for one *who abstains from harming life*, these hate and fear are quelled.

8 (4) One who speaks falsely, on account on speaking falsely, brings upon himself hate and fear in this life and also brings hate and fear to the next life, too, and he feels (physical) pain and (mental) displeasure.

But for one *who abstains from harming life*, these hate and fear are quelled.

9 (5) One who takes strong drinks, distilled drinks, fermented drinks and that which causes heedlessness, on account of taking intoxicants, brings upon himself hate and fear in this life and also brings hate and fear in the next life, and he feels pain and displeasure.

But for one *who abstains from taking intoxicants* these hate and fear are quelled. [He does not bring upon himself hate and fear in this life nor to the next life, and he does not feel pain and displeasure.]

These are the five hates and fears that have been quelled.

### The four limbs of a streamwinner

10 What are **the four limbs of a streamwinner**<sup>55</sup> that he possesses?

11 (1) Here, householder, a noble disciple is accomplished with wise faith<sup>56</sup> in the Buddha thus:

<sup>53</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 birth (*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>54</sup> This extra line here and following each of the other precept statements are missing here but found at A 10.92/5:183 f. “It seems that the logic of the discourse requires this addition; its omission from the present text could be an early scribal error.” (S:B 761n119).

<sup>55</sup> *Sotāpannassa aṅgāni* (D 33.1.11(14)/3:227), ie the qualities of one who has attained streamwinning. Cf (1) *sotāpatti-y-aṅga* above. For a shorter statement on the limbs of a streamwinner, see **Ogadha S** (S 55.2/5:343 f). For the streamwinner’s practice, see (**Agata,phala**) **Mahānāma S** (A 6.40/3:284-288) = SD 15.3. On the faith of the streamwinner, see Gethin 2001:116.

<sup>56</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*. This is a syntactical cpd with *avecca* (Sky *avetya*) absolutive of \**aveti*, “he undergoes, knows, experiences.” [On syntactical cpds, see KR Norman, 1991a:3.] There are 2 kinds of faith (*sad-dhā*): (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlaka,saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith. (M 2:170); (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravati,saddhā*), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320,8, 401,23). “Wise faith” is syn with (2). *Amūlaka* = “not seen, not heard, not suspected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy). **Gethin** speaks of two kinds of faith: the cognitive and the affective (eg ERE: Faith & Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963:387): “Faith in its cognitive dimension is seen as concerning belief in propositions or statements of which one does not—or perhaps cannot—have knowledge proper (however that should be defined); cognitive faith is a mode of knowing in a different

‘So too, is he the Blessed One:<sup>57</sup> for, he is  
arhat,  
fully self-awakened,  
accomplished in wisdom and conduct,  
well-farer,  
knower of worlds,  
peerless guide of tamable people,  
teacher of gods and humans,  
awakened,  
blessed.’

**12** (2) He is accomplished with wise faith in the Dharma thus:

‘Well-taught is the True Teaching of the Blessed One,  
to be self-realized,  
timeless,  
for one to “come and see,”  
accessible [leading onward],  
to be personally known by the wise.’

**13** (3) He is accomplished with wise faith in the Sangha thus:

‘Of good conduct is the Blessed One’s community of holy disciples;  
of upright conduct is the Blessed One’s community of holy disciples;  
of right conduct is the Blessed One’s community of holy disciples;  
of proper conduct is the Blessed One’s community of holy disciples.

These four pairs of persons, the eight individuals, are this Blessed One’s [70] community of holy disciples:

worthy of offerings,  
worthy of hospitality,  
worthy of gifts,  
worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
an incomparable field of merit for the world.’

**14** (4) He is accomplished with moral virtue dear to the noble ones,<sup>58</sup> unbroken, untorn, unmixed, spotless, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished, giving rise to concentration.<sup>59</sup>

These, householder, are the four limbs of streamwinning that he possesses.

category from that knowledge. Faith in its affective dimension is a more straightforward positive response to trust or confidence towards something or somebody...the conception of *saddhā* in Buddhist writings appears almost, if not entirely affective, the cognitive element is completely secondary.” (Gethin 2001:207; my emphases). The stream-inner’s faith is defined in **Vīmaṃsaka S** (M 47) as “his faith is strong, supported by reasons, rooted in vision” (*ākāra, vatī saddhā dassana, mūlikā dalhā*, M 47.16/1:320).

<sup>57</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord]...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see CPD: **iti**: ...*kitti-saddo abhuggato*: “~ *pi so bhagavā: araham sammā-sambuddho*...” (“for the following reasons, too, he is a *bhagavā*: because he is *araham*...”), V 3:1,13 = D 1:49,27 = M 2:133,22 = S 1:219,31 = A 3:312,8, qu Vism 198,4 and Mahvṛ 26,11 (VA 112,4 = DA 146,5 ≠ Vism 198,8: *so bhagavā ~ pi araham ~ pi sammāsambuddho ...iminā ca iminā ca kāraṇenā ti vuttam hoti*). Translating *iti pi so* this way explains the double occurrence of *Bhagavā*. See LS Cousins, “Review of *Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*,” in *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 4, 1997: 165. The Skt parallel to this opening reads: *Iti hi sa bhagavām tathāgato*, but *tathāgato* here is missing from the Pali version. See **Dhajagga S** (S 11.3) = SD 15.5 Intro (2).

<sup>58</sup> “Moral virtue dear to the noble ones,” *ariya, kantāni sīlāni*. The noble one’s moral virtue is explained at Vism 7.101-106/221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the five precepts; hence, this virtue is dear to them (SA 2:74).

<sup>59</sup> “Unbroken,...giving rise to concentration,” *akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññū-pasaṭṭhehi aparāmaṭṭhehi samādhi, samvattanakehi*. See also **Cundi S** (A 5.32/3:36). Cf UA 268. For details, see Vism 1.143-161/51-58, 7.101-106/221 f.

The noble way

15 And what, householder, is **the noble way**<sup>60</sup> that he has clearly seen and thoroughly penetrated with wisdom?

16 SPECIFIC DEPENDENT ARISING. Here, householder, he properly and skillfully attends to dependent arising<sup>61</sup> itself thus:

‘When this is, that is;	<i>imasmim sati idam hoti</i>
When this is not, that is not.	<i>imasmim asati idam na hoti</i>
This arising, that arises;	<i>imass’uppādā idam uppajjati</i>
This ceasing, that ceases.	<i>imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhati</i> <sup>62</sup>

17 DEPENDENT ARISING.<sup>63</sup> That is, with ignorance as condition, mental formations (arise);  
 With mental formations as condition, there is consciousness;  
 with consciousness as condition, there is name-and-form;  
 with name-and-form as condition, there are the six sense-bases;  
 with the six sense-bases as condition, there is contact;  
 with contact as condition, there is feeling;  
 with feeling as condition, there is craving;  
 with craving as condition, there is clinging; ‘  
 with clinging as condition, there is existence;  
 with existence as condition, there is birth;  
 with birth as condition, there is decay-and-death.

There also arise sorrow, lamentation, pain grief and despair.

Such is the arising of this whole mass of suffering.

But with the remainderless fading away and cessation of ignorance, mental formations cease;  
 With the cessation of mental formations, the cessation of consciousness ceases;  
 with the cessation of consciousness as condition, name-and-form ceases;  
 with the cessation of name-and-form as condition, the six sense-bases ceases;  
 with the cessation of the six sense-bases as condition, contact ceases;  
 with the cessation of contact as condition, feeling ceases;  
 with the cessation of feeling as condition, craving ceases;  
 with the cessation of craving as condition, clinging ceases;  
 with the cessation of clinging as condition, existence ceases;  
 with the cessation of existence as condition, birth ceases;  
 with the cessation of birth as condition, there is decay-and-death ceases.

There also cease sorrow, lamentation, pain grief and despair.

Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering.’

This is the noble way that he has clearly seen and thoroughly penetrated with wisdom.

18 Householder, when the noble disciple’s five hates and fears have been quelled, he is accomplished with *the four limbs of streamwinning*, and he has clearly seen and thoroughly penetrated with wisdom the noble way—if he wishes he could by himself declare of himself:

<sup>60</sup> *Ariya nāya*, or “noble method.”

<sup>61</sup> *Paṭicca.samuppāda*: see n after next.

<sup>62</sup> In his *What the Buddha Taught* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed 1967), Walpola Rahula has rearranged the “specific dependent arising” formula thus:

When this is, that is;	<i>imasmim sati idam hoti</i>
This arising, that arises	<i>imass’uppādā idam uppajjati</i>
When this is not, that is not	<i>imasmim asati idam na hoti</i>
This ceasing, that ceases	<i>imassa nirodhā idam nirujjhati.</i> (1967:53)

In his n (same page) he says: “To put it into a modern form: When A is B is; A arising, B rises; When A is not, B is not; A ceasing, B ceases.” (id). Such a change, however, is a scholarly venture, unattested in the Canon.

<sup>63</sup> *Paṭicca,samuppāda*: V 1:1; S 11:1; Vbh 135; Vism 517; Abhdhs 8.2. See **Dependent Arising** = SD 5.12.

‘I have destroyed hell, the animal birth, the ghost realm, the state of misery, the evil destination, the suffering state. I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, sure of liberation, destined for awakening!’”

### 4.3 Sarakāni Sutta 1 (S 55.24)

Even these great sal trees,<sup>64</sup> Mahānāma, if they could understand<sup>65</sup> what is well spoken and what is ill spoken, I would declare them to be streamwinners, no longer bound to the lower world, of fixed destiny, sure of awakening! (S 55.24.13/5:377)

### 4.4 (Sotāpanna) Ānisaṃsā Sutta (A 6.97)

THE DISCOURSE ON THE BENEFITS (OF STREAMWINNING)

- 1 Bhikshus, there are these six benefits in realizing the fruit of streamwinning. What are the six?  
 2 (1) One is sure of the True Teaching (*saddhamma, niyato hoti*);  
 (2) One does not fall back from the Dharma [reality] (*aparihānam, dhammo hoti*);  
 (3) There is a limit to one’s suffering (*pariyanta, katassa dukhaṃ na hoti*);  
 (4) One is endowed with uncommon knowledge (*asādhāraṇena ñāṇena samannāgato hoti*);  
 (5) One has clearly understood causes (*hetu c’assa sudiṭṭho*); and  
 (6) One has clearly understood phenomena arising from causes (*hetu, samuppannā ca dhammā sudiṭṭho*).  
 (A 6.97/3:441)

The streamwinner is sure of the True Teaching because he has broken the fetter of doubt.

He does not fall back from the Dharma because he sees the true nature of reality through understanding impermanence.

His suffering is limited because he has only seven more rebirths at the most.

His “uncommon knowledge” is the supramundane knowledge with nirvana as object, which is not shared by the common uninstructed worldling.

The understanding of causes relates to the application of the specific conditionality<sup>66</sup> in daily life.

The understanding of phenomena arising from causes is the understanding of dependent arising<sup>67</sup>.

## 5 The streamwinner’s faith

The streamwinner is closely associated with the faculty of faith (*saddh’indriya*, so it is useful to understand it more fully. The streamwinner is said to have abandoned **the three fetters** of self-identity view (or more simply, self-view) (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*), and attachment to rituals and vows (*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*).<sup>68</sup>

**5.1 SELF-IDENTITY VIEW. The Pārileyya Sutta** (S 22.81) defines and discusses the self-identity view and its abandonment in some detail as a means for “the immediate destruction of the mental

<sup>64</sup> Comy says that the Buddha was pointing to 4 sal trees (*Shorea robusta*) nearby (AA 3:288).

<sup>65</sup> “Could understand,” *ājāneyyūṃ* (lit “were to understand”), pot 3<sup>rd</sup> pl of *ājānāti*, “to know, to understand, to learn, to realize; to understand, to perceive” (CPD). This verb refers to seeing through illusion directly at reality, a vision that would surely lead to the wisdom called *aññā*, “final knowledge,” the wisdom of the arhats.

<sup>66</sup> *Idap, paccayatā*, ie “When this is, that is; with the arising of this, that arises. When this is not, that is not; with the ending of this, that ends” (S 12.21/2:28), or more briefly, “Whatever is of the nature to arise, all that is of the nature to cease” (V 1:11; D 1:110; M 3:280; S 4:47, 214, 330, 5:423; A 4:143 f), or “Just as this is, so is that. Just as that is, so is this” (Sn 203 = Tha 396). See SD 5.16(2).

<sup>67</sup> *Paṭicca, samuppāda*, ie the 12 links. See (**Kāya**) **Na Tumha S** (S 12.37) = SD 5.14; (**Paṭicca, samuppāda**) **Vibhaṅga S** (A 5.57) = SD 5.15; **Mahā Nidāna S** (M 15) = SD 5.17. See esp SD 5.16.

<sup>68</sup> M 1:9; S 5:357; Dhs 182.

influxes.” A being who holds such a view is said to be “trapped in self-identity” (*sakkāya pariyāpanno*),<sup>69</sup> which literally means “included in self-identity” or “enmeshed in self-identity.” In **the Sīha Sutta** (S 22.78) the devas who regard themselves as permanent, stable and eternal are really “impermanent, unstable, not eternal, trapped in self-identity” (S 3:85). The Commentary there explains the expression as “included within the five aggregates.” Thus, when the Buddha teaches them the Dharma sealed with the three characteristics [impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, not-self], exposing the faults in the round of existence, the fear of knowledge enters them. (SA 2:288).

The self-identity view is also *the wrong view* that any of the five aggregates is permanent or the self. Each of the five aggregates—form, feelings, perception, formations and consciousness—are in turn taken as self, as what self possesses, as being in the self, and as what the self is in, totalling twenty types of self-identity views.<sup>70</sup> In each case, the Buddha points out that the formation (*saṅkhāra*), the craving (*taṇhā*), the feeling (*vedanā*), the contact (*phassa*) and the ignorance (*avijjā*) that add up to the self-identity view are “impermanent, constructed, and arise by way of conditions” (*aniccā saṅkhatā paṭicca, samuppannā*).

It is knowing and seeing this truth that leads to the immediate destruction of the mental influxes. Technically, this is known as “the ending of self-view” (*sakkāya, nirodha*), and is a synonym for the third noble truth. In **the (Mahānāma) Gilayāna Sutta** (S 55.54), the Buddha teaches the layman Mahānāma how to give terminal counselling to a dying person so that he attains awakening, that is, by directing the mind to the cessation of self-identity.<sup>71</sup> The abandoning of the self-identity view, in other words, leads to streamwinning.<sup>72</sup>

**5.2 DOUBT. The Dhamma,saṅgaṇī** explains both self-identity view and attachment to rituals and vows as examples of wrong view (*micchā, diṭṭhi*) only associated with a mind (*citta*) that has greed (*lobha*) as a component,<sup>73</sup> and that these two fetters are particular manifestations of that greed (or attachment).

Doubt (*vicikicchā*) is defined by **the Dhamma,saṅgaṇī** as follows:

- doubt regarding the Teacher (more specifically, the Buddha’s awakening),
- doubt regarding the Dharma (as the path to awakening),
- doubt regarding the Sangha (that is, the community of saints),
- doubt regarding the spiritual training,
- doubt regarding the past,
- doubt regarding the future,
- doubt regarding the past and future, and
- doubt regarding the way in which states arise according to various conditions.<sup>74</sup>

It is clear here that doubt is defined in an exactly opposite manner to faith (*saddhā*) and joyful faith (*pasāda*). While faith here is the steady confidence and lucid joy with regard the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha, doubt is uncertainty about them.

In **the Cetokhila Sutta** (M 16), the five types of mental hardness (*cetokhila*), or spiritual barrenness, are defined as uncertainty and hostility regarding the Teacher, the Dharma, the Sangha, the training and fellow practitioners (*brahma, carī*).<sup>75</sup> The removal of these five types of mental hardness allows an environment conducive to spiritual development to arise, beginning with faith that is firm, lucid and joyful. Gethin adds a helpful note:

<sup>69</sup> **(Mahānāma) Gilayāna S** (S 55.54) says that even the highest heavens are “trapped in self-identity” (*sakkāya, pariyāpanno*), and when we direct our mind to the cessation of self-identity, we gain the “cessation of self-view” (*sakkāya, nirodha*) (S 55.54.17/2:410) = SD 4.10.

<sup>70</sup> See Gethin 1986:44 f.

<sup>71</sup> S 55.54/2:410 = SD 4.10

<sup>72</sup> See **Samanupassanā S** (S 22.47/3:46 f) = SD 26.12.

<sup>73</sup> Dhs 75-80, 182 f.

<sup>74</sup> *Satthari kaṅkhati vicikicchati, dhamme kaṅkhati vicikicchati, saṅghe kaṅkhati vicikicchati, sikkhāya kaṅkhati vicikicchati, pubbatne kaṅkhati vicikicchati, aparante kaṅkhati vicikicchati, pubbantāparante kaṅkhati vicikicchati, idap, paccayatā, paṭicca, samuppannesu dhammesu kaṅkhati vicikicchati* (Dhs 183).

<sup>75</sup> M 16.3-7/1:101.

The thinking behind the association of *sotāpatti* and *saddhā* can perhaps be expressed in the following way. The relinquishing of attachment to individuality [*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*] and precept and vow [*sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa*] makes way for the establishing of firm confidence (regarded as having a psychological affinity with attachment); this in turn disperses doubt and uncertainty. The proper establishing of *saddhā*, the abandoning of *sakkāya-diṭṭhi*, *vicikicchā* and *sīla-bbata, parāmāsa* are, according to the logic of the dynamics of Buddhist thought, different aspects of the same process, each one involving each of the others. (Gethin 2001:116)

**5.3 ATTACHMENT TO RITUALS AND VOWS. The Caṇḍāla Sutta** (A 5.175) speaks of a false follower—called an outcaste follower (*upāsaka, caṇḍāla*), a stained follower (*upāsaka, mala*), a low follower (*upāsaka, paṭikiṭṭho*)—in the following manner:

- (1) He lacks faith.
- (2) He lacks moral virtue.
- (3) He believes in rituals to invoke luck.
- (4) He relies on luck, not on karma.
- (5) He seeks the gift-worthy outside the Teaching and there gives his priority.

The same sutta then defines a true disciple—called a jewel disciple (*upāsaka, ratana*), a lotus follower (*upāsaka, paduma*), a white-lotus follower (*upāsaka, puṇḍarīka*)—in the manner contrary to those of a false follower, namely:

- (1) He has faith (*saddho*).
- (2) He has moral virtue (*sīlava*).
- (3) He does not believe in rituals to invoke luck (*akotuhala, maṅgaliko*).
- (4) He relies on karma, not on luck (*kammaṃ pacceṭi no maṅgalam*).
- (5) He does not seek the gift-worthy outside the Teaching but gives his priority here (in the Teaching). (A 5.175/3:206)<sup>76</sup>

It is clear here that the true disciple, especially a streamwinner, is not superstitious. The third fetter—attachment to rituals and vows—in essence refers to relying of external means of dealing with problems, instead of looking within and understanding the nature of the mind, and dealing directly with it at the source (*yoniso, manasikāra*).

In **the Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), the Buddha tells Ānanda’s regarding the spiritual destiny of various disciples at Nādikā, and teaches him the Dharma Mirror or Mirror of the Dharma (*dharm’ādāsa*)—that is, *the four limbs of a streamwinner* [4.2]<sup>77</sup>—by which if one wishes, one could declare of oneself,

“I have destroyed hell, the animal birth, the realm of the departed [ghosts], the plane of misery, the evil destiny, the lower realm. I am a streamwinner, not bound for the lower world, sure of liberation, destined for awakening!” (D 16.2.8/2:93)

## 6 The lesser streamwinner

If one thinks that even becoming a streamwinner in this life is difficult, if not impossible, then one could become a “lesser streamwinner.”<sup>78</sup> The term *cūḷa, sotāpanna* or *cullaka, sotāpanna* is a commentarial one, and is not found in the Canon. However, the notion of a “lesser streamwinner” is found in the ten

<sup>76</sup> For a similar list, see **Parihāna S** (A 7.27/4:25), also called **Hani S**, and **(Upāsaka) Parābhava S** (A 5.176/4:26). See SD 12.14 Intro (2). See also **Kiñci Saṅkhāra S** (A 6.93) = SD 12.14.

<sup>77</sup> See **Laymen Saints** = SD 8.6(14).

<sup>78</sup> *Cūḷa, sotāpanna, culla, sotāpanna*, or *cullaka sotāpanna*. For further discussion on “lesser streamwinner,” see “Laymen Saints” = SD 8.6(14b).

suttas of **the Okkanti Saṃyutta**,<sup>79</sup> the key passages of which—as found in its first discourse, **the Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1),<sup>80</sup> for example—runs as follows:

The eye, bhikkhus, is impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.

The ear is impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.

The nose is impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.

The tongue is impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.

The body is impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.

The mind is impermanent, changing, becoming otherwise.

Bhikkhus, one who has faith thus, who firmly believes these truths [is convinced of these truths], is called **a faith-follower**,...

Bhikkhus, one who accepts these truths after pondering over them with some wisdom thus,<sup>81</sup> is called **a truth-follower**,

he has entered the fixed course of rightness, entered the plane of superior persons, gone beyond the plane of the worldlings.<sup>82</sup>

He is incapable of doing any intentional deed by which he might be reborn in hell, or in the animal birth, or in the ghost realm. He is incapable of dying without attaining the fruit of stream-winning.<sup>83</sup> (S 25.1/3:225)

## 7 The certainty of streamwinning

The purpose of practising the Buddha's Dharma is to free ourselves from suffering here and now. The main hindrance to this simple but vital truth is *the thought* that we are “incapable” of entering the stream to awakening in this life. As mentioned earlier [6], the ten suttas of **the Okkanti Saṃyutta** (S 25) guarantees our attaining of streamwinning *in this life itself* if we constantly practise the perception of impermanence.<sup>84</sup>

The possibility of gaining streamwinning here and now is further supported by Nakula,mātā's declaration to severely ill Nakula,pitā (by way of bedside counselling), thus:

Now, householder, it might be that you think, ‘After I am gone, the housewife Nakula,mātā might not find a footing, a foothold, and solace in the Teaching and Discipline, might not be one who has crossed over doubt, gone beyond uncertainty, won full confidence, who, independent of others, dwells in the Teacher's Teaching.’<sup>85</sup>

Householder, you should not see things that way. Householder, for as long as there are the white-clad female lay disciples of the Blessed One who shall find a footing, a foothold, and solace in this Teaching and Discipline, crossed over doubt, gone beyond uncertainty, won full confidence, who, independent of others, dwell in the Teacher's Teaching, I am one amongst them.

If anyone should doubt or question this, let him go and ask the Blessed One who is residing in the Deer Park in the Bhesakaḷā Forest at Sumsumāra,giri in the Bhaggā country.

<sup>79</sup> S 25.1-10/3:225-228.

<sup>80</sup> S 25.1/3:225 = SD 16.7. See also Gethin 2001:133-138.

<sup>81</sup> *Yassa kho bhikkhave ime dhammā evaṃ paññāya mattaso nijjhānam khamanti.*

<sup>82</sup> *Yo bhikkhave ime dhamme evaṃ saddahati adhimuccati, ayaṃ vuccati saddhā'nusārī okkanto sammatta,-niyāmaṃ sappurisa,bhūmiṃ okkanto vītivatto putthajjana,bhūmiṃ.* The operative verbs here are *saddahati* (“he has faith (in)”) and *adhimuccati* (“he resolves, adheres to, is sure of”). I have rendered *adhimuccati* here as “(he) firmly believes....”

<sup>83</sup> *Abhabbo taṃ kammaṃ kātuṃ yaṃ kammaṃ katvā nirayaṃ vā tiracchāna,yoniṃ vā petti,visayaṃ vā uppajjeyya. Abhabbo ca tāva kālaṃ kātuṃ yāva na sotāpatti,phalaṃ sacchikaroti.*

<sup>84</sup> S 25.1-10/3:225-228 = SD 16.7.

<sup>85</sup> “Find a firm footing...in the Teacher's Teaching,” *imasmim dhamma,vinaye ogādha-p,pattā paṭigādha-p,pattā assāsa-p,pattā tiṇṇa,vicikicchā vigata,kathaṃ,kathā vesārajjā-p,pattā apara-p,paccayā satthu sāsane viharantiyo.* This passage defines a streamwinner's qualities. On *ogādha-p,pattā*, cf UA 345.

(A 6.16.2f/3:297) = SD 5.2

At the end of the Sutta, the Buddha himself endorses Nakula,mātā's statement.<sup>86</sup>

The message of the ten short but remarkable suttas of the Okkanti Samyutta is clear: whether we merely have *faith* in the impermanence of all that exists (the world) (that is, as a faith-follower, *saddhā-nusārī*), or accept this truth through *wisdom*, that is, after wisely examining (that is, as a truth-follower, *dhammānusārī*), we are assured of becoming a streamwinner. We would not die without having realized the fruit of streamwinning.<sup>87</sup> The alternative is surely devastating (rebirth in subhuman planes), but the blessings of streamwinning are immeasurable:

<i>Pathavyā eka,rajjena</i>	Better than absolute power over the earth,	
<i>saggassa gamanena vā</i>	Or even going to heaven,	
<i>sabba,lokāhipaccena</i>	Or, lordship over all the worlds,	
<i>sotāpatti,phalam varam</i>	Is the noble fruit of streamwinning.	(Dh 178)

— evam —

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<sup>86</sup> A 6.16.4/3:298 = SD 5.2.

<sup>87</sup> On the lesser streamwinner, see (Anicca) Cakkhu S (S 25.1/3:225) = SD 16.7 Intro (1) esp (1.6).