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Sāleyyaka Sutta

The Discourse to the Sāleyyakas or The Discourse to the Inhabitants of Sāla | M 41/1:285-290

Theme: The ten courses of action & choosing your rebirth

Translated by Piya Tan ©2003

1 Dharmafaring

The structure of the Sāleyyaka Sutta is very close to that of **the Cūḷa Kamma, vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 135), both of which deal with the basic nature of karma and rebirth.¹ The sutta opens with the brahmin householders² of Sāla³ (hence the title) asking the Buddha why some people are reborn in happy states while others are born in suffering states [§§1-4]. The Buddha answers that this has to do with “Dharma-faring, harmonious conduct” (*dhmma, cariya sama, cariya*),⁴ that is, our **courses of action** (*kamma, -patha*), whether they are unwholesome (*akusala kamma, patha*) or wholesome (*kusala kamma, patha*) [§5], which the Buddha then elaborates on after being requested [§6] by the brahmin householders: Unwholesome courses of action lead to suffering states [§§7-10]; wholesome courses lead to happy rebirths [§§11-14]. This section on the courses of action [§§7-14] is very close to that of **the Kusalākusala Sañcetanika Sutta** (A 10.206)⁵

In simple terms, the “courses of action” have to do with how we keep or how we break the five precepts (dealing with body and speech), and with our intentions (the mind). As **the Attha, sālinī** (Dhamma, -saṅgaṇī Commentary) says in connection with the courses of action, “in such a case, moral consciousness in the realm of sense arises through the threefold door of action, and not through the five (external) sense-doors.”⁶ These courses of action should be purified and strengthened in ourself so that they become a *habit*, our “way of life” (*carīya*). And yet, warns Nāṇamoli Thera, “If one recognizes any of one’s own actions among them [wholesome courses of action], then just guard against the conceit: ‘I am good.’” (1993:18).

The concluding sections [§§15-42] have the same materials as **the Saikhār’upapatti Sutta** (M 120.-3-36/3:99-103) but are presented in a simpler manner. The list starts with three happy kinds of human birth and goes on to mention all the other heavenly realms except the realm of non-perceptient beings (*asañña, sattā*), where beings exist only in pure form without active consciousness, that is, in existential hibernation, which understandably would not be an attractive state for those seeking a “happy” rebirth.

In the penultimate section, the Buddha declares that one could even aspire towards the attainment of arhathood [§43]. This section is unique in the sense that the “birth” is *here and now*, while the rest are rebirth after this life. The sutta closes with the brahmin householders taking refuge in the Three Jewels [§44].

2 The unwholesome courses of action

2.1 CONSTITUENTS OF THE TEN UNWHOLESOME COURSES OF KARMA. The Sāleyyaka Sutta is the locus classicus for the teaching on the “courses of karma” (*kamma, patha*), of which there are the ten

¹ M 135/3:202-206 = SD 4.15.

² *Brāhmaṇa, gahapatikā*, also spelt as *brāhmaṇa, gahapati*, which is invariably a collective term, never an individual, ie, the landed community of the brahmin villages (*brāhmaṇa, gāma*) or fiefs (*brahma, deya*) as a whole. This classification is based on land-ownership (ie their economic function), who nonetheless still identified with the larger priestly class. As such, individually, they (such as Kūṭa, danta, Caṅkī, etc) are still referred to simply as *brāhmaṇa*. See Chakravarti 1987:72 f.

³ Sāla was a brahmin village whose inhabitants were called Sāleyyakā. Besides Sāleyyaka S, the following were also taught there: **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60) and 2 **Sālā Ss**, the first on the 4 focusses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhānā*) (S 47.4/5:144 f) and the other on the centrality of wisdom and the 5 spiritual faculties (S 5:227).

⁴ On *sama, cariya*, see **Mā Puñña Bhāyī S** (It 1.3.2) Intro (2).

⁵ A 10.206 contains a close parallel of the passages on the ten unwholesome courses of actions [§§7-10] and the ten wholesome courses of actions [§§11-14] (A 10.206/5:292-297 = SD 3.9).

⁶ DhsA 105 = DhsA:PR 140.

wholesome courses of karma (*kusala kamma, patha*) and the ten unwholesome courses of karma (*akusala kamma, patha*). Sāriputta succinctly defines these key aspects of karma in **the Sammā, diṭṭhi Sutta** (M 9), along with the “roots of wholesome karma” (*kusala, mūla*) and the “roots of unwholesome karma” (*akusala, mūla*).⁷ The following notes based only on the sutta Commentary,⁸ with updates to reflect our current conditions.

That which is wholesome (*kusala*) is praiseworthy and brings pleasant result [§6]. Wholesome actions have wholesome roots of non-hate, non-greed and/or non-delusion [§7]. That which is unwholesome (*akusala*) is blameworthy and brings painful result, or it is defiled (with the influxes). They are rooted in greed, hate and delusion [§5], and they build up the latent tendencies of sensual lust, aversion and ignorance. Let us now examine each of the ten unwholesome courses of action (*akusala kamma, patha*) [§4] in terms of their constituent factors.

1. Killing [§8(1)]. “Killing living beings” (*pāṇātipātā*) means the slaughter of a living being, the destruction of a living being. Here a “living being” (*pāṇa*) is, in the conventional sense, a being (*satta*); in the ultimate sense, it is the life-faculty. There are these five constituents (*sambhāra*) of killing a living being:⁹

- (1) a living being (that is, a being with breath and consciousness),
- (2) the awareness that it is a living being,
- (3) the intention to kill,
- (4) the effort, and
- (5) the consequent death of the being.

Killing is wrong because life is of the highest value to all living beings, especially those with higher intelligence. To destroy life is to destroy the chances of the being gaining awakening (overcoming suffering).

2. Stealing [§8(2)], or more technically “taking the not-given” (*adinnādāna*) is the removal of others’ property, that is, taking by theft or deceit. Here, “the not-given” is another’s possession, which its rightful owner has earned or worked for, or justly obtained, and used blamelessly. These are the five constituents of taking the not-given:¹⁰

- (1) another’s property,
- (2) the awareness that it is another’s property,
- (3) the intention to steal,
- (4) the effort, and
- (5) the consequent removal of the object.

Stealing is the removal or enjoyment of any property that rightfully belongs to others, especially on which their lives and those they support depend. Effectively, stealing is taking away the happiness of others, since one’s property brings one happiness.

3. Sexual misconduct [§8(3)], or technically “misconduct in sensual pleasures” (*kāmesu micchācāra*). Here, “sensual pleasures” (*kāmesu*) refers specifically to sexual intercourse. “Misconduct” refers to any transgression by way of any of the “doors” or bodily orifices. In broad terms, it refers to any violation of the person of another (regardless of sex), especially in non-consensual intercourse. However, the following persons are not be violated or sexualized in any way, that is to say:

- (1) minors (children and those below the age of consent);
- (2) those betrothed to another (committed to another or engaged to be married);
- (3) those protected by the law or the state (such as wards of the state);¹¹
- (4) those who are married (ie extramarital sex);

⁷ M 9.3-8/1:46 f = SD 14.1.

⁸ MA 1:196-206. This is tr in Ñāṇamoli 1991:24-39. Where the commentary is cultural-specific (reflecting on mediaeval India or Sri Lanka), they have been revised to reflect the conditions of our own times.

⁹ For details, see comy of the 3rd defeat (*pārājika*) rule (Pārājika 3 = V 3:68-86).

¹⁰ For details, see comy of the 2nd defeat (*pārājika*) rule (Pārājika 2 = V 3:41-67).

¹¹ See §8 n in ref to “one protected by the law” (*sa, paridaṇḍa*) (M 41.8(3)/1:286) = SD 5.7.

- (5) those bound by vows (such as monastics and celibates);
- (6) those who do not give their consent.

There are four constituents of sexual misconduct:

- (1) a forbidden person (any of the four mentioned above);
- (2) the mind to enjoy;
- (3) the effort to engage; and
- (4) enjoying the object, or consenting to the union of sexual organs.¹²

Traditionally, sexual misconduct is said to have occurred when one has an evil intention and does it with a “forbidden” partner or victim: this is merely the “respect for another’s *person*.” However, the essence of the precept against sexual misconduct is that of “respect for another.” In other words, even when one’s spouse or lover declines to have a relationship, one has to respect that refusal. Otherwise, it amounts to breaking the third precept.¹³

4. Lying [§8(4)], or “false speech” (*musā, vāda*): here “false” (*musā*) refers to the verbal effort or body language made by one bent on deceiving another. “False” also means an unreal, untrue statement; and “speech” (*vāda*) refers to the communication of that false statement. There are these four constituents of false speech:

- (1) a false situation;
- (2) the mind to deceive;
- (3) the appropriate effort (verbal or physical);
- (4) the communicating of that intention to another.

Lying is false communication, especially with ill intent. When one *knowingly* withholds the truth or does nothing that could otherwise prevent suffering or harm to another, the fourth precept is broken, too; for example, when one meets a traveller who is heading toward certain death in a dangerous forest, but one with ill intent does not warn him, and as a result he dies.

5. Divisive speech (*pisuṇa, vācā*) [§8(5)], or malicious talk, that is, the communication, by body or by speech, to cause *division* among others or to endear oneself to another. There are these four constituents of divisive speech:

- (1) another party (person or group) to be separated or alienated;
- (2) the intention to divide, or the desire to endear oneself;
- (3) the appropriate effort; and
- (4) the communicating of that intention to that person.

Although divisive speech breaks up a group, it is not divisive to admonish a group of people or cult members bent on vices or false teachings (cheating, gambling, debauchery, superstition, etc), even when some of them, realizing the error of the ways, break away from the group or cult.

6. Harsh speech (*pharusa, vācā*) [§8(6)] is the kind of speech by which one makes both oneself and another feel hurt or negative, the kind of speech which is also itself harsh, being unpleasant both to the ear and to the heart. There are these three constituents of harsh speech:

- (1) another to be abused;
- (2) a hating mind; and
- (3) the abusing.

Only when there is an ill intention in the speaker’s mind, is there harsh speech. This Commentary story illustrates the principle. A village boy, it is said, went to the forest without heeding his mother’s words. Unable to make him turn back, she scolded him, saying: “May a wild buffalo chase you!” Then a buffalo appeared before him in the forest. The boy made an act of truth, saying: “Let it not be as my mother said but as she thought!” The buffalo stood as though tied there. As such, although the means

¹² Comy adds that if the unwilling victim gives “consent” (*adhivāsana*) during the course of union, the victim would then break the precept, too (MA 1:199). Technically, in such cases, the precept is broken only when the person is a *forbidden* one. If the erstwhile unwilling partner (who midway consents) is a free adult, then he or she does not break the precept.

¹³ See further **Sexuality** = SD 31.7.

employed was that of hurting the feelings, but because of the gentleness of her mind it was not harsh speech. Sometimes, parents even say to their children, “May robbers chop you to pieces!” yet they do not even wish a lotus leaf to fall upon them. And teachers and preceptors sometimes say to their pupils, “What is the use of these shameless and heedless brats? Drive them out!” yet they wish for their success in learning and attainment. (MA 1:201)

7. Frivolous chatter (*samphappalāpa, vācā*) [§8(7)], that is, idle gossip, useless talk, which can be communicated verbally and through the body. There are two constituents of frivolous chatter:

- (1) the intention of purposeless chatter; and
- (2) the communicating of it.

Polite conversation (such as asking after another’s health, etc) or telling fairy tales and stories to children for their healthy emotional and moral development are not frivolous chatter. Any kind of well-intentioned talk (free from the three unwholesome roots) aimed at ridding greed, hate or delusion from another’s mind is not frivolous talk.

8. Covetousness (*abhijjhā*) [§8(8)] is the desire for the property of another. It occurs through inclination towards them, with the wish, “Oh, that this were mine!” There are these two constituents of covetousness:

- (1) another’s goods, and
- (2) the inclination for them to be one’s own.

Although greed may arise on account of another’s property, it is not regarded as a karmic act of covetousness, that is, so long as one does not incline to them as one’s own, thinking, “Oh, that this were mine!” (MA 1:201)

9. Ill will (*vyāpāda*) [§8(9)] is that which injures another’s welfare and happiness. It is the mental defect of wishing for the hurt or destruction of others. There are these two constituents of ill will:

- (1) another being,¹⁴ and
- (2) the wish for that being’s harm or destruction.

Even if anger has arisen towards another being, there is no karmic breach so long as one does not wish, “Oh, that this being might be cut off and destroyed!” (MA 1:201 f)

10. Wrong view (*micchā, diṭṭhi*) [§8(10)] is the inability to see things as they really are (such as the denial of good and evil, of karma). There are these two constituents of wrong view:

- (1) a mistaken manner of grasping the ground for the view, and
- (2) the arising of that false basis.

It is more blameworthy when it involves “belief in a fixed destiny” (*niyatā micchā, diṭṭhi*), that is, the denial of the moral efficacy of action (karma).¹⁵ Wrong view is the most difficult course of karma to detect or remove, especially when one is habitually unmindful. One is more likely to see another’s “wrong view” than one’s own. For this reason, patience and compassion are helpful virtues in bringing both oneself and others to the right path. The most important basic spiritual practice here is the mindfulness of impermanence.

2.2 PSYCHOLOGY OF THE 10 UNWHOLESOME COURSES OF KARMA.

2.2.1 The five ways. The Commentaries¹⁶ generally explain that these ten courses of unwholesome karma should be understood in five ways, that is, (1) by way of mental state (*dhammato*), (2) by way of category (*koṭṭhāsato*), (3) by way of object (*arammaṇato*), (4) by way of feeling (*vedanāto*), and (5) by way of root (*mūlato*).

¹⁴ Comys (eg DhsA 101) gives this as “another being” (*para, satta*). Psychologically, we can hate ourselves, too, so that we are negatively affected, but this does not break the precept. Nevertheless, this negative emotion has to be dealt with on a mental level: see *Brahma, vihāra* = SD 38.5 (3.4): Overcoming self-hate.

¹⁵ For various examples, see *Sāmañña, phala S* (D 2.16-33/1:52-59) & *Sandaka S* (M 76.7-18/1:515-518).

¹⁶ DA 3:1048-1051; MA 1:202 f; SA 2:148-151; DhsA 101-104. My own comments are give within [square brackets] or in the footnotes.

(1) As regards **mental state** (*dhammato*), the first seven courses are intentional states (*cetanā, dhamma*) only, that is, actions (bodily and verbal) that intentional. The last three beginning with covetousness are associated with intention (*cetanā, sampayutta*).¹⁷

[The first seven courses are identified with the intention initiating an effort to accomplish the action. Such an intention is an unwholesome karma whether or not the act is completed. If, however, the act is completed (eg the intended victim's death, the taking of another's property, etc), then it becomes a full course of action (*kamma, patha*). Such an action is a potent karma that generates rebirth.]¹⁸

(2) As regards **category** (*koṭṭhāsato*), the eight consisting of the first seven and wrong view are courses of karma (*kamma, patha*) only, not roots (*mūla*). Covetousness and ill will are courses of karma and also roots, because covetousness, as a root, is the unwholesome root greed, and ill will is the unwholesome root hate.

(3) As regards **object** (*ārammaṇato*), killing living beings, because it has the life-faculty as object, has a formation or “conditioned thing” (*saṅkhāra*)¹⁹ as object, taking what is not given has beings as object or formations as object. Sexual misconduct has formations as object by way of tangible object; but some say it also has beings as object. False speech has beings or formations as object; likewise divisive speech. Harsh speech has only beings as object. Frivolous chatter has either beings or formations as object by way of the seen, heard, sensed and cognized; likewise covetousness. Ill will has only beings as object. Wrong view has formations as object related to the three planes of existence.²⁰

(4) As regards **feeling** (*vedanāto*), killing living beings is associated with painful feeling because, although kings [the authorities, etc], seeing a robber, say laughingly, “Go and execute him,” their intention effecting the action is associated only with pain.

[In other words, the victim suffers pain or death. Moreover, the relatives, beloved and friends of the victim would also suffer. As such, the painful feeling also affects others.]

Taking what is not given has all three feelings.²¹ One who see another's property and takes it with delight has a pleasurable feeling. If he steals it with fear, his feeling is painful. Likewise, if he steals while thinking of the consequences. If he takes it indifferently, then his feeling is the neutral [such as when instructed to do so].

Sexual misconduct has two feelings, pleasant and neutral, but in the mind which effects the action there is no neutral feeling. [In the victim's mind, there might be fear or physical pain, either of which is painful; or there is no feeling, which is neutral. In the case of the forbidden persons, even if they enjoy the act, the precept still broken for the perpetrator.]

False speech has all three feelings; likewise divisive speech. Harsh speech has only painful feeling. Frivolous chatter has all three feelings. Suppose during a Rāmāyaṇa play, which is recited, such as during the scenes of Sītā's abduction or the Bhārata battle, the audience applaud and throw up their turbans, the actor feels delight, which is *pleasurable*. But when the narrator is asked to recite from play from the start again, he is *displeased*, thinking, “Now should I recite something irrelevant or something miscellaneous?” During the ensuing recital, the narrator is indifference, then there is *neutral* feeling.

Covetousness has two feelings, pleasant and neutral; likewise wrong view. Ill will has only painful feeling.

¹⁷ The chief factor in the first seven courses of karma is intention (*cetanā*); the other three courses are identical with the mental factors (*cetasika*) of greed, hatred and wrong view, which are associated with intention in the states of consciousness in which they arise. (MA 1:204 f)

¹⁸ For a detailed analysis of the 10 courses of action, see DhsA 87-102 :: DhsA PR 128-135. See also Abhs:BRS 2nd ed 1999:207.

¹⁹ *Saṅkhāra* here refers to “that which is conditioned,” that is, all forms of being and everything in the universe, except space (which is unconstructed). The only *unconditioned* reality is nirvana. See *Saṅkhāra* = SD 17.6.

²⁰ The 3 worlds are the sense world (*kāma, loka*), the form world (*rūpa, loka*), and the formless world (*arūpa, loka*). See The body in Buddhism = SD 29.6a (5.2) & The person in Buddhism = SD 29.6b (7.2). For details, see *Vīññāṇa-ṭṭhiti* = SD 23.14.

²¹ The full details are only in DhsA 102.

(5) As regards **root** (*mūlato*), killing living beings has two roots, by way of hate and delusion; stealing, by way of hate and delusion, or by way of greed and delusion; sexual misconduct, by way of greed and delusion; false speech, by way of hate and delusion, or by way of greed and delusion; likewise for divisive speech and frivolous chatter; harsh speech, by way of hate and delusion. Covetousness has one root, by way of delusion; likewise ill will. Wrong view has two roots, by way of greed and delusion.

<u>Course of action</u>	<u>Greed</u>		<u>Hate</u>		<u>Delusion</u>
(1) Killing			√	+	√
(2) Stealing	√		√	+	√
(3) Sexual misconduct	√			+	√
(4) False speech	√	or	√	+	√
(5) Divisive speech	√	or	√	+	√
(6) Harsh speech			√	+	√
(7) Frivolous chatter	√	or	√	+	√
(8) Covetousness					√
(9) Ill will					√
(10) Wrong view	√			+	√

It is interesting to note that delusion underlies all the unwholesome courses of action. For, it is delusion, fed by ignorance, and that further feeds both greed and hate. It should be noted that the above is a commentarial analysis. Psychologically, *any of the three roots*—greed, hate or delusion—may motivate a breach of the five precepts. Hence, all the first seven courses of action can be similarly rooted.

One, for example, could kill someone out of desire for a person but is unrequited, or one kills another who is preventing one from loving another. Sexual misconduct could also be done out of hate, as in the case of rape to shame someone, or out of frustration of being rejected. Harsh speech could also be spoken out of greed, such as when one is bribed to do so, or there is something to be gained from it (such as in a political speeches, where one candidates speaks ill of another).

The last three courses of action—covetousness, ill will and wrong view—too, may be rooted in either greed or hate, besides delusion. One could covet another’s property out of greed (say, a better car, hand-phone or job), or out of hate, such as feeling deeply jealous about it. Similarly, ill will could arise out of greed: one desires something but is now allowed to have it. Moreover ill will is an unexpressed form of hate. Finally, wrong view may also arise out of hate, as is often the case in global religions today, where we see mass destruction of unbelievers and their property.

2.2.2 The three doors. The suttas explain that our karmic actions as done through the three “**doors**” (*dvāra*), that is, the body-door (*kāya, dvāra*), the speech-door (*vācī, dvāra*) and the mind-door (*mano-dvāra*). Later Abhidhamma scholars, following the tradition of the Abhidham’attha Saṅgaha (10th-11th century), explain that the body-door is “bodily intimation” (*kāya, viññatti*), a type of mind-produced physical phenomena by which a person expresses by way of the body, an intention arisen in the mind.²²

Such actions are described as “generally occurring” (*bāhulla, vuttito*) because such actions as killing and stealing can also be done by speech, that is, vicariously, by commanding someone else to do it. Even then, such acts are still regarded as bodily karma.

Similarly, the speech-door, denoting “verbal intimation” (*vacī, viññatti*) (including writing, phone messages, etc), is the mind-arisen physical phenomenon by means of which intention is expressed verbally.²³ Although such actions as false speech can also be done bodily, such as gesturing or writing, they are still regarded as verbal karma because it is done through the speech-door.

The last three wrong courses—covetousness, ill will and wrong view—generally occur only in the mind without being intentionally expressed through the body or speech. Such actions are said to occur

²² See Abhs 6.4 :: Abhs:BRS 241 f.

²³ See Abhs 6.4 :: Abhs:BRS 241 f.

through the mind-door, which here is a collective term for consciousness as a whole.²⁴ Covetousness is the mental factor of greed, arisen as the wish to obtain another person's property. Even if the greed arises, but one does not have the wish to appropriate the object, the course of action is incomplete. There is no covetousness.

Ill will is the mental factor of hatred, which fulfills a course of action when it arises with the wish that another being meets with affliction, harm, or death. In short, this is an intentional negative wish. Conversely, a wholesome for another's wellbeing is also karmically potent and has a wholesome benefit for one.

Wrong view is completed as a course of action when it takes the form of one of the morally nihilistic views which deny the efficacy of moral virtue and karma, such as those stated in **the Sāmañña,phala Sutta** (D 2), **the Apaṇṇaka Sutta** (M 60) and **the Sandaka Sutta** (M 76), namely,

- (1) nihilism (*n'atthuka diṭṭhi*), which denies any life after death, no efficacy of good deeds, such as generosity;
- (2) inaction (*akiriya diṭṭhi*), which claims that our actions have no consequence, thus rejecting all moral distinctions;
- (3) non-conditionality (*ahetuka diṭṭhi*), which states that there is no cause or condition for the defiling or the purifying of beings, that we are bad or good by chance or fate, or necessity.

(D 2; M 60, 76)²⁵

2.3 THE FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS AND THE TEN UNWHOLESOME COURSES OF KARMA. According to its Commentary, **the Sammā,diṭṭhi Sutta** (M 9)²⁶ in its first part [§§3-8], expounds liberation as far as arhathood for one who has the four noble truths as his meditation subject (MA 1:205 f). That is to say, the ten unwholesome courses of karma, with the exception of covetousness, and the ten wholesome courses of karma, are the noble truth of suffering.

The two states—covetousness and the greed that is the root of the unwholesome—are, literally speaking (*nippariyāyena*), the truth of the arising of suffering. Figuratively speaking (*pariyāyena*), however, all the courses of karma are the truth of suffering, and all the wholesome and unwholesome roots are the truth of the arising of suffering. Strictly speaking (*nippariyāyena*), only covetousness and greed, being synonyms of craving (*taṇhā*), are regarded as the arising of suffering. But in a broader sense (*pariyāyena*), all the roots are the truth of arising of suffering, since as roots of karma they help to sustain samsara (the rounds of suffering).

The non-occurrence of both—covetousness and greed—is the truth of the ending of suffering. The noble path that fully understands suffering, abandoning its arising or origins, and understanding its ending, is the truth of the path leading to the ending of suffering. Thus, the first two truths—suffering and the arising of suffering—are stated as they are, but the other two truth—ending of suffering and the path—are understood *implicitly* (as a result of understanding the first two truths). When one knows what suffering really is and the conditions that bring about suffering, one would then know how to end them, and would work towards that effect.

3 Aspiration and rebirth

3.1 CAN WE REALLY CHOOSE OUR REBIRTH? This is one of those suttas where some teachers would put caveats or provisions, even to the point of apparently contradicting the Sutta itself. For example, **Ñāṇamoli**, in his Introduction to his own translation of this sutta remarks:

²⁴ This opinion is found in Abhs:BRS 207. However, it is more correct to say that the consciousness here is something like ***

²⁵ **D 2.16-23/1:52-56 = SD 8.10; M 60.5-12 = 1:401-404 = SD 35.5; M 76.7-18/1:515-519 = SD 35.7.** See Bodhi, *The Discourse on the Fruits of Reclusehip*, Kandy, 1989:69-83. See also Abhs:BRS 207 f.

²⁶ The section of the wholesome and the unwholesome, M 9.3-8/1:46 f.

Beyond this [the sense-world], it is necessary also to be proficient in jhāna and one will gain rebirth among the Brahmas [*brahma, kāyikā devā*] according to proficiency in this. For the next five Brahma-planes, the state of non-returning is required, while for the last four one must have gained the formless attainments. Finally, one may aspire to no rebirth: to Arahantship, but of course the aspiration alone is not sufficient—practice and sufficient insight-wisdom are needed.

(Ñānamoli 1993:18; emphasis added)

This remark is echoed in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (M:ÑB 1236 n427). While this contemporary statement may be true in terms of one’s ongoing practice, I think the teachings here more specifically refer to an aspiration during one’s dying moments. A similar situation on a cosmic scale evidently occurs when the world breaks up, that is, going into its “collapsed” (or “big crunch”) stage,²⁷ when, according to **Buddhaghosa**, the World Marshals (*loka, byūha*) would go about announcing the imminent end of the world, urging:

Cultivate lovingkindness, good sirs, cultivate compassion, cultivate appreciative joy, cultivate equanimity. Care for your mothers; care for your fathers; honour the elders of your clans!”

(Vism 13.34/416)

As result, a sense of urgency arises in the beings here and they cultivate themselves accordingly, and with the destruction of the world they are mostly²⁸ reborn the Ābhassara heaven (Vism 13.35/ 416) [§28].

3.2 ĀBHA DEVA & SUBHA DEVA. The Sāleyyaka Sutta contains two rare terms: *ābha deva* and *subha deva*. The former, *ābha deva* [§25], means “the gods of radiance,” a generic term, referring to a class of form-realm (*rūpāvacara*) deities of the second-dhyana, namely, the Parittābhā [§26], the Appamānābhā [§27], and the Ābhassarā [§28], each with an ascending degree of radiance or brilliance (MA 2:333). The term occurs in only three suttas in the Pāli Canon, that is, in the following places:²⁹

Sāleyyaka Sutta	(M 41.25/1:289)	= SD 5.7
Saṅkhār’upapatti Sutta	(M 120.19/3:102)	= SD 3.4
Anuruddha Sutta	(M 127.13/3:148)	= SD 54.10

The term *ābha deva* is also found in **the Mahāvastu**, a Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit work.³⁰

The term *subha deva* [§29] is found in **the Sāleyyaka Sutta** (M 41.29), following the term *ābha deva*, and which similarly is a generic term for “the gods of glory,” comprising the Paritta,subha [§30], the Appamāna,subha [§31], and the Subhā,kiṇṇa [§32]. This term (*subha deva*), however, is only found in the Sāleyyaka Sutta but nowhere else in the suttas. Both *ābha deva* and *subha deva*, however, are alluded to in the Commentary to the Sāleyyaka Sutta (MA 2:333) and to the Saṅkhār’upapatti Sutta (MA 4:149).

²⁷ See for example **Aggañña S** (D 27.10/3:84 f) in SD 2.19 (2003).

²⁸ “Mostly” (*yebhuyyena*). Commenting on this passage, Buddhaghosa says that “‘mostly’ (*yebhuyyena*) is said because the other beings are born either in higher Brahmā realm or in the formless realms” (DA 1:110). Dhammapāla, in his Subcomy on Buddhaghosa’s texts, adds: “‘or in world-systems other than those in the process of contracting’ is the alternative to be understood by the word *or*. For it is not possible to consider that all beings in the descents at that time are born in the form or formless existence, since it is impossible for those beings in the descents with the longest life span to be reborn in the human realm” (DAṬ 1:201, qu by Rupert Gethin, 1997:198 f). Dhammapāla’s problem with Buddhaghosa’s failure to take into account of beings such as those who have committed one of the 5 heavy karmas “with immediate result [arising in the following birth]” (*ānantariya, kamma*, ie matricide, patricide, killing an arhat, wounding the Buddha, splitting the Sangha) at the end of the aeon (*kappa*). If the karma of such beings have not run out, then surely, concludes Dhammapāla, they must be reborn in the hells of other world systems. Cf Kvu 13.1/476.

²⁹ See Ency of Buddhism 1:11-13; MA I 35,17-18; VbhA 520,4-8: nom m ~ā devā... dīghāyukā vaṇṇavanto sukha,-bahulā (M 3:102,25, Ee wr *Abhā*; MA 4:149,4-5); f yā tā devatā ~ā, sabbā tā parittābhā udāhu sant’ ettha ekaccā devatā appamānābhā? M 3:148,25; gen aho vatāham.... ~ānam devānam...sahavyatam upapajjeyyam (M I 289,17; MA 2:333,7-9); cf **Mvst 2**:314.7, 348.19, 360/15* (CPD: Ābhā). See also M:ÑB 46-48 & n426.

³⁰ **Mvst 2**:314.7, 348.19, 360/15*.

It is possible that originally the category Subha Deva is not listed in the Sāleyyaka Sutta, but found its way there on account of the Commentary.

4 The Sāleyyaka Sutta in perspective

From a close study of the Sāleyyaka Sutta, it can perhaps be said that the ten wholesome courses of action (*dasa kusala kamma, patha*), when properly cultivated, gives us the spiritual foundation for a birth aspiration (*saṅkhār'upapatti*)³¹ to take effect in the manner described in the Sutta. This means that such a habitual karma acts as a karmic momentum during the last moments of our lives, so that we are supported by wholesome karma that conduces to the aspired rebirth.

The tone of this Sutta is inspirational and accommodating: after all, the audience are lay villagers. It is a skillful means given to the laity, not to monks or nuns. From a monastic viewpoint, it is clear that one cannot attain any happy rebirth merely by wishing or praying for it. **The Iṭṭha Sutta** (A 5.43), given by the Buddha to Anāthapiṇḍika, is very instructive, and should be studied as a commentary to the Sāleyyaka Sutta:

Householder, there are these five things that are desirable, beloved and agreeable but difficult to obtain the world. What are the five?

Long life, beauty, happiness, fame, and rebirth in heaven. Of these five things, householder, **I do not teach that they are to be obtained through prayer (*āyācana, hetu*) nor through wishing (*patthanā, hetu*).**³² If one could obtain them through prayer or through wishing, who would not obtain them?...

For a noble disciple, householder, who wishes to have rebirth in heaven, it is not proper that he should pray for rebirth in heaven or take delight in doing so. He should rather follow a way of life that is conducive to rebirth in heaven [such as the practice of giving, moral conduct and mental cultivation]. By following such a path, he would obtain rebirth in heaven.

(A 5.43/3:47-49 abridged) = SD 47.2

Doesn't this passage contradict the teachings of rebirth by aspiration as taught in the Sāleyyaka Sutta? They clearly do *not* since they refer to two very different situations. Firstly, the Iṭṭha Sutta quote refers to worldly wishes (long life, beauty, happiness, and fame), while the Sāleyyaka refers only to rebirth. Secondly, while it is true that *both* Suttas do refer to rebirth, the Iṭṭha Sutta quotes the Buddha as *only* saying, "I do not teach that they are to be obtained through prayer nor through wishing." In other words, prayer or wishes alone (or both together) would not bring about good rebirth, but we need to have *moral virtue*, which is actually the main theme of the Sāleyyaka Sutta.

The Puñña, kiriyā, vatthu Sutta (A 8.36), discussing the three grounds of merit-making, that is, giving (*dāna*), moral virtue (*sīla*) and mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*), give some helpful details. A person who rarely practises generosity, has little moral virtue, and *no* mental cultivation, say the Sutta, is reborn amongst humans, but into unfavourable circumstances (A 8.36.3). In a similar case, where the person does have *some* moral virtue, he is reborn as a human into *favourable* circumstances (A 8.36.4).

In the case of those of who show great generosity *and* great moral virtues, they are reborn in any of the sense-world heavens (A 8.36.5-10). The Sutta further notes that in each heaven, their celestial leader surpasses the other devas of their respective realms in ten blessings.³³ All this is the result of practising the three grounds for merit.³⁴

In short, for really good heavenly rebirth, we need to have great track record of generosity, moral virtue and mental cultivation.

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³¹ See **Saṅkhār'upapatti S** (M 120) = SD 3.4.

³² "Wishing," *patthanā*, also "desire, request, aspiration, request, prayer, vow."

³³ That is, in divine lifespan, divine beauty, divine happiness, divine fame, divine lordship, divine form, divine sound, divine fragrance, divine taste, and divine touch.

³⁴ A 8.36/4:241-243 = SD 22.17.

The Discourse to the Sāleyyakas

M 41/1:285-290

The Buddha visits Sālā

[285] 1 Thus have I heard.

At one time the Blessed One was wandering in Kosala country by stages (on a teaching tour)³⁵ with a large community of monks and eventually arrived at a Kosala village named Sālā.

2 The brahmin householders of Sālā heard this:

“It is said that the recluse Gotama, a Sakya son who went forth from the Sakya clan,³⁶ has been wandering [peregrinating] in the Kosala territories by stages with a large community of monks and has come to Sālā. About this Blessed One, this good report has been spread about, thus:³⁷

‘So too, is he the Blessed One:³⁸ for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-gone, knower of the worlds, unexcelled trainer of tamable people, teacher of beings human and divine, awakened, blessed.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge this world with its gods, its Māras and its Brahmās, this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers and people, he makes it known to others. He teaches the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter. He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.’

It is good to see such arhats.”

3 Then the brahmin householders of Sālā went up to the Blessed One.

Some greeted the Blessed One, and sat down at one side; some exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, and then sat down at one side; some having saluted the Blessed One with lotus palms, sat down at one side; some announced their name and clan before the Blessed One, and then sat down at one side. Some kept silent and sat down at one side.³⁹

Disparity of rebirth

4 Sitting thus at one side, the brahmin householders of Sālā said to the Blessed One:

“What is the cause, master Gotama, what is the condition, that some beings here, with the body’s breaking up, after death,⁴⁰ are reborn in a plane of misery, an evil destiny, a lower realm, in hell?”

³⁵ “Touring...by stages,” *cārikam caramāno*, lit “walking the walk,” that is, wandering about teaching the Dharma and ministering to the people. See n ad loc in **Tevijja S** (D 13.1/1:235) = SD 1.8.

³⁶ A stock passage speaks of the Buddha as “the recluse Gotama, a Sakya son who went forth from the Sakya clan” (*samaṇo...gotamo sakya,putto sakya,kulā pabbajito*): **Mv 22.2/V 1:35**; **D 4.1/1:111, 13.7/1:236**; **M 41.2/1:285**; **A 3.63.1/1:180**; **Sn p103**. On his renunciation, see **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 26.14/1:163) = SD 1.11, **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.6/1:115 = SD 30.5) = SD 30.5), **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.7/1:131) = SD 22.8(7a) & **Caṅkī S** (M 95.9/2:167) = SD 21.15, the last three of which say that he is “from a high family” (*uccā kulā*”).

³⁷ *Evam kalyāṇo kitti,saddo abbhuggato*: **V 1:35**; **D 1:49, 116, 236, 2:317**; **M 1:285, 2:167**; **S 5:352**; **A 1:180, 3:58, 4:80** (*kalyāṇo...abhuggaccheyya*); **Sn p103**; **J 1:509**.

³⁸ Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord]...” On the meaning of *itī pi so*, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

³⁹ The desire to have one’s name announced to a holy person appears to have been a part of pre-Buddhist devotional practice of seeing (*dassana*; Skt *darśana*) a holy person. In **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16), eg, we have the Mallas being announced to the Buddhas, thus: “Venerable sir, the Malla named so-and-so with his children, with his wife, with his servants, with his companions, pay homage with their heads at the Blessed One’s feet” (D 16.22a/2:148). It is customary that those well-disposed to the Buddha would announce their names when visiting him. This passage here and others in the Pali Canon indicate that it was quickly adopted by the Indian Buddhists. It continued in the Buddhist custom of having the donor’s name inscribed in bas-reliefs near or on a stupa, even in locations where the name would not be directly visible to human eyes.

⁴⁰ “With the body’s breaking up, after death,” *kāya,bhedassa param,marañā*. Buddhaghosa explains this phrase as foll: “With the body’s breaking up” (*kāyassa bheda*) means on abandoning the aggregates that are clung to; “after

And what is the cause, master Gotama, what is the condition, that some beings here, with the body's breaking up, after death, are reborn in a state of joy, in a happy destiny, in heaven?" [286]

5 "Householders, it is *because of faring against the Dharma, because of disharmonious conduct*⁴¹ that some beings here, with the body's breaking up, after death, are reborn in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell.

Householders, it is *because of Dharmafaring, because of harmonious conduct*⁴² that some beings here, with the body's breaking up, after death, are reborn in a state of joy, in a happy destination, in heaven."

6 "We do not understand in detail the meaning of master Gotama's word made in brief without explaining in detail. It would be good if master Gotama would teach us the Dharma so that we might understand in detail the meaning of master Gotama's word."

"Then, listen, householders, pay close attention, I will speak."

"Yes, master Gotama!" the brahmin householders of Sālā replied in assent to the Blessed One.

Unwholesome courses of conduct⁴³

The Blessed One said this:

7 "Householders,

threefold is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, through the body;

fourfold is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, through speech;

threefold is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, through the mind.

(A) Unwholesome bodily conduct

8 And how, householders, is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, **through body** threefold?

(1) Here, householders, a certain person is one who destroys living beings, cruel, bloody-handed, given to cruelty and violence, merciless to living beings.⁴⁴

(2) Here again, he takes what is not given: in a village or in a forest,⁴⁵ he takes by way of theft, the possessions of others that are of service to them

(3) Here again, householders, he commits sexual misconduct: falling into such a conduct with those protected by their mother, protected by their father, [protected by their parents,] protected by their brother, protected by their sister, protected by a relative, one with a husband, one protected by the law,⁴⁶ even with one adorned with a string of garlands [in betrothal to another].⁴⁷

death" (*param, marañā*) means that in-between state (*tad-antaram*), in the grasping of the aggregates that have been generated (*abhinibbatta-k, khandha, gahaṇe*). Or, "with the body's breaking up" means the interruption of the life-faculty, and "after death" means after the death-consciousness (*cuti, cittato uddham*). (Vism 13.91/427; cf NcA 69). See **Deva, dūta S** (M 130.2/3:178 = SD 2.23).

⁴¹ "Disharmonious conduct," *visama, cariyā*, alt tr "conflicting life," that is, conduct that goes contrary to the 10 courses of wholesome action (*kusala kamma, patha*) [§§7-10] (AA 2:105, 5:38). I take *sama* here as polysemous with the senses of being at a "level" with oneself and others, ie harmonious and wholesomely engaged. The purpose of the wholesome courses of conduct is the preparation for a life of mental "calm." In fact, moral virtue entails the "calming" of body and speech, which samadhi entails calming of the mind. I think "harmonious" nicely covers these senses, ie, one's conduct should be *in harmony* with the wholesome courses of karma. See foll n.

⁴² "Harmonious conduct," *sama, cariyā*, that is, conduct in keeping to the 10 courses of wholesome action (*kusala kamma, patha*) [§§11-14]. *Sama, cariyā* also tr as "peaceful conduct, calm living" (A 1:55; S 1:96, 101 f; It 16, 52; Dh 388). See prec n.

⁴³ For details on this heading and the following, see Intro (2).

⁴⁴ *Idha gahapatayo ekacco paṇātipātī hoti, luddo lohita, pāṇi hata-p, pahate niviṭṭho adayāpanno pāṇa, bhūtesu.*

⁴⁵ "In a village or in a forest," *gāma, gatam vā araṇṇa 'gatam va*, lit "gone to the village or gone to the forest."

⁴⁶ Comy: *Yo itthan, nāman itthim gacchati, tassa ettako daṇḍo 'ti evam gāman vā geham vā vīthim vā uddissa ṭhapita, daṇḍā, pana saparidaṇḍā nāma*, "This penalty is placed in connection with a village, house or street, thus: 'Whoever goes to such and such a woman gets such a penalty'—this is called *sa, paridaṇḍā* (MA 2:330). This appa-

Thus, householders, threefold is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, through the body.

(B) Unwholesome verbal conduct

9 And how, householders, is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, **through speech** fourfold?

(4) Here, householders, a certain person speaks falsehood: when questioned as a witness before a council, before a congregation, in the midst of relatives, in the midst of a guild [or company], in the midst of the royal court [a court of law] and questioned thus: ‘Sir, tell us what you know!’ Not knowing, he says he knows, or knowing, he says he knows not; having not seen, he says he saw, or having seen, he says he did not see—consciously lying thus for his own sake, for the sake of others, or for some small material⁴⁸ gain.

(5) Here again, he speaks divisive words: what he has heard here (from others), he repeats it there (to others) to divide them; what he has heard there, he repeats it here to divide them—thus he divides the united, who encourages the divided (to remain so) [rejoicing in division]; being pleased at discord,⁴⁹ enjoying discord, delighting in discord, saying words conducive to discord.⁵⁰

(6) Here again, he speaks harsh words—he utters words that are rough, hard, hurting to others, offensive to others, ever angry,⁵¹ inconducive to mental concentration. [287]

(7) Here again, he chatters frivolously [utters useless talk]—at the wrong time, he speaks what is false, what is unbeneficial, what is not the Teaching [Dharma], what is not the Discipline [Vinaya]; at the wrong time, he speaks words not worth treasuring, baseless, undefined [rambling], not connected with the goal [of spiritual liberation].

Thus, householders, fourfold is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, through speech.

(C) Unwholesome mental conduct

10 And how, householders, is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, **through mind** threefold?

(8) Here, householder, a certain person is covetous—he covets the possessions of others that are of service to them, thinking, ‘Oh, may what belongs to others become mine!’

(9) Here again, he is one with a malevolent mind, a mind of wicked thoughts, thinking, ‘May these beings be killed or slaughtered or wiped out or destroyed or not exist!’

(10) Here again, he is one with wrong view, with distorted vision, thinking,⁵² ‘There is nothing given,⁵³ nothing offered, nothing sacrificed. There is no fruit or result of good or evil actions. There is no this

rently refers to where prostitution is illegal. In modern terms, this rule also covers “wards of the court,” ie, minors involved in some kind of legal process or adjudication.

⁴⁷ *Mātu, rakkhitā pitu, rakkhitā [mātā, pitu, rakkhitā] bhātu, rakkhitā, bhagini, rakkhitā ñāti, rakkhitā sa-s, sāmikā sa, paridaṇḍā antamaso mālā, guṇa, parirakkhitā pi.* These “protected women” are listed as ten in the Vinaya as *mātā, rakkhitā, pitu, rakkhitā, mātā, pitu, rakkhitā, bhātura, rakkhitā, bhagini, rakkhitā, ñāti, rakkhitā, gotta, rakkhitā* (those protected by the clan), *dhamma, rakkhitā* (those protected by custom), *sārakkhā* (those “under (natural) protection,” ie the betrothed [*mālā, guṇa, parirakkhitā*] and married women [*sa-s, sāmikā*], incl women of the royal harem), *sa, paridaṇḍā* (V 3:139). The “one with a husband” and “one who has been garlanded in betrothal to another” of Sāleyyaka S come under the category of *sārakkhā* in the Vinaya. On *sa, paridaṇḍā*, see prec n.

⁴⁸ “Material,” *āmisā*, alt tr “worldly.”

⁴⁹ “Discord,” *vagga*, fr *vi-agga* (Skt *vyagra*) opp of *sāmagga*, “concord.” See M 1:286; It 11 = V 2:205.

⁵⁰ On dealing with slander, see eg **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1.1.5/1:4).

⁵¹ “Ever angry,” *kodha, samantā*, lit “angry all around.”

⁵² In **Sāmañña, phala S**, this view is attributed to Ajita Kesakambalī, the hair-blanket ascetic (D 2..23/1:55). He wore a cloak of human hair. His materialist view is answered in **Apaṇṇaka S** (M 60.5-12 = 1:401-404). Medhātithi, defining *haitukāḥ* at Manu 4.30 (*The Principal Upaniṣads*, ed S Radhakrishnan, 1:243) asserts that the *nāstikas* (who reject the establish brahminical system) upheld the doctrines of *nāsti para, loko nāsti dattam nāsti hutam iti*

world,⁵⁴ there is no next world;⁵⁵ there is no mother, no father;⁵⁶ there are no spontaneously born beings;⁵⁷ there are no recluses or brahmins who, living rightly and practising rightly, having directly known and realized for themselves this world and the hereafter, proclaim them.⁵⁸

Thus, householder, threefold is the faring against the Dharma, disharmonious conduct, through the mind.

Householders, it is because of such faring against the Dharma, because of disharmonious conduct, that certain beings here, with the body's breaking up, after death, are reborn in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell.

THE DHARMAFARER

Wholesome courses of conduct

11 “Householders, threefold is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, through the body; fourfold is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, through speech; threefold is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, through the mind.

12 And how, householders, is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, **through body** threefold?

(1) Here, householder, a certain person, having given up killing living beings, refrains from harming living beings, lays down rod and sword, conscientious, merciful, dwells beneficial and compassionate to all living beings.⁵⁹

(2) Here again, having given up taking the not-given, he refrains from taking the not-given—in a village or in a forest, he does not take, by way of theft, others' possessions that are of service to them.

(3) Here again, having given up sexual misconduct, he refrains from sexual misconduct—not falling into such a conduct with those protected by their mother, protected by their father, [protected by their parents,] protected by their brother, protected by their sister, protected by relatives, one with a husband, one protected by the law, not even with one adorned with a string of garlands [in betrothal to another].

Thus, householder, threefold is Dharmafaring, [288] harmonious conduct, through the body.

13 And how, householders, is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, **through speech** fourfold?

(4) Here, householders, a certain person, having given up speaking falsehood, refrains from speaking falsehood—when questioned as a witness before a council, before a congregation, in the midst of relatives, in the midst of a guild [or company], in the midst of the royal court [a court of law] and questioned thus: ‘Sir, tell us what you know!’ Not knowing, he says he knows not, or knowing, he says he knows;

(“there is no hereafter [next world], no value in giving, no value in sacrifice”), which does not *n’atthi ayam loko*, as in the Buddhist formula. For a discussion, see **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1) = SD 25.1(VII) n on “no next world” in qu on Ajita Kesambala (from *Sāmañña, phala S*).

⁵³ “There is nothing given,” *n’atthi dinnam*. MA 2:332 = DA 165 says that this means there is no fruit of (or no value in) giving. Cf D 1:55; M 1:401, 515; S 3:206.

⁵⁴ “There is no this world,” *n’atthi ayam loko*, lit “this world does not exist, the next world does not exist.” On the problem of associating these two differing views to Ajita Kesambala, see **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.22-24/1:55 f) = SD 8. See Jayatilleke 1963:79 f, 91 f).

⁵⁵ “There is no this world, there is no next world.” Comys explain that “(a) ‘there is no this world’ means that when one is established in the next world, this world does not exist; (b) ‘there is no next world’ means that when one is established in this world, the next world does not exist.” (MA 2:332 = DA 1:165). Deeds done in such a deterministic system would not carry over into the afterlife, even if this view concedes to a hereafter.

⁵⁶ “There is no father, no mother.” Comys explain “there is no fruit of good or of evil behaviour (towards them)” (MA 2:332=DA 1:165).

⁵⁷ *Opapātika*, said of the rebirth of a non-returner, but here also refers to all divine and hell beings. See **Mahāli S** (D 1:27 156).

⁵⁸ Comy: This last statement is made regarding the non-existence of “all-knowing” (*sabbaññū*) Buddhas (MA 2:322), in other words, awakening is impossible.

⁵⁹ *Idha gahapatayo ekacco pānātipātāṃ pahāya pānātipātā paṭivirato hoti, nihita, daṇḍo nihita, sattho lajjī dayāpanno sabba, pāṇa, bhūta, hitānukampī viharati.*

having not seen, he says he did not see, or having seen, he says he saw—not consciously telling a lie thus for his own sake, for the sake of others, or (even) for some small material gain.

(5) Here again, having given up divisive speech, he refrains from divisive speech—what he has heard here (from others), he does not repeat it there (to others) to divide them; what he has heard there, he does not repeat it here to divide them—thus he is one who unites the disunited, or who discourages the divided (from remaining so) [not rejoicing in division]; he is pleased at concord, enjoying concord, delighting in concord, saying words conducive to concord.

(6) Here again, having given up harsh speech, he refrains from harsh speech—he utters words that are blameless, pleasant to the ear, touching the heart, urbane, loved by the masses, pleasant to the masses.

(7) Here again, having given up useless talk, he refrains from useless talk—he speaks at the right time, what is true, what is beneficial, what is the Teaching, what is the Discipline; at the right time, he speaks words worth treasuring, well-founded, well-defined [not rambling], connected with the goal [of spiritual liberation].

Thus, householders, fourfold is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, through speech.

14 And how, householders, is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, **through mind** threefold?

(8) Here, householders, a certain person is not covetous—he covets not the possessions of others that are of service to them, thinking, ‘Oh, may what belongs to others become mine!’

(9) Here again, he is one without a malevolent mind, a mind without wicked thoughts, thinking, ‘May these beings be free from hate; may they be free from suffering; may they be free from evil;’⁶⁰ may they continue to be happy!’⁶¹

(10) Here again, he is one has right view, without distorted vision, thinking,

‘There is what is given, what is offered, what is sacrificed.

There is fruit and result of good or evil actions.

There is this world, there is the next world.

There is mother, there is father.

There are beings that are reborn.

There are recluses and brahmins who, living rightly and practising rightly, having directly known and realized for themselves this world and the hereafter, proclaim them.’

Thus, householder, threefold is Dharmafaring, harmonious conduct, through mind.

Householders, it is because of such Dharmafaring, because of harmonious conduct, that certain beings here, with the body’s breaking up, after death, are reborn in a state of joy, in a happy destination, in heaven. [289]

REBIRTH BY ASPIRATION⁶²

Rebirth in the human world

15 (5a)⁶³ If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in **fellowship with wealthy nobles [kshatriyas]**!’⁶⁴

⁶⁰ “Be free from evil,” *anīgha*, resolved as *an + īgha*, instead of *a + nigha* (affliction, trouble, woe). The ideas connoted by *a-nigha* overlap with the preceding “free from hate, free from suffering.”

⁶¹ *Ime sattā averā abyāpajjhā anīghā sukhī attānam pariharantu*. Cf A 2:3, 228, 253.

⁶² This section in essence parallels **Saṅkhār’upapatti S** (M 120.3-36/3:99-103). The list of heavenly realms here is also found in **Vibhaṅga** (Vbh 18.6/422-426) which mentions their respective life-spans.

⁶³ This numbering continues from the first four suffering states (*apāya, bhūmi*): (1) the hells (*niraya*), (2) the animal kingdom (*tiracchāna, yoni*), (3) the realm of the departed (*pitti, visāya*), and (4) the demon hosts (*asura, kāya*).

⁶⁴ **Saṅkhār’upapatti S** says here and of all the rebirth aspirations that follow: “He fixes his mind upon it, resolves his mind on it, cultivates his mind on it. These aspirations and this abiding of his, thus developed, thus often cultivated, leads him to be reborn there. This, bhikshus, is the path, the way that leads to rebirth there.” (M 120.3/3:99)

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with wealthy kshatriyas.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

16 (5b) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in **fellowship with wealthy priests [brahmins]!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with wealthy brahmins.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

17 (5c) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in **fellowship with wealthy householders!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with wealthy householders.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

Rebirth in the divine sense-worlds

18 (6) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with the devas of **the Four Great Kings** (*cātum, mahā, rājikā*)!’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the devas of the Four Great Kings!’

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

19 (7) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Tāvātimsa devas [the heaven of the 33 devas]!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Tāvātimsa devas.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

20 (8) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Yāma devas!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Yāma devas.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

21 (9) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Tusita devas!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Tusita devas.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

22 (10) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Nimmāṇa, ratī devas [who delight in creating]!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Nimmāṇa, ratī devas.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

23 (11) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Para,nimmita,vasavattī devas [who lord over the creation of others]**!⁶⁵

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with **the Para,nimmita,vasavattī devas**.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

Rebirth among the Brahmas (1st dhyana)

24 (12) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of brahma world (*brahma,kāyikā devā*)!**'

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of the brahma world.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

Rebirth among the Radiant Gods (2nd dhyana)

25 (13) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of radiance (*ābha deva*)!**⁶⁶,

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of radiance.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

26 (14) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of limited radiance (*paritt'ābhā devā*)!**'

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of limited radiance.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

27 (15) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of boundless radiance (*appamāṇ'ābhā devā*)!**'

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of boundless radiance.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

28 (16) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of streaming radiance (*ābhassarā devā*)!**⁶⁷,

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of streaming radiance.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

⁶⁵ Māra the evil one is said to reside in this heaven, lording over a part of it (MA 1:33 f). The ruler of this realm here is called Vasavattī (D 1:219; A 4:243). Māra is also called Vasavattī (but distinct from his namesake) because he is “lord with great power over the 6 sense realms” (*māro mahānubhāvo cha,kāmāvacar'issaro vasavattī*, MA 2:201). Māra is also called Pajāpati, “the lord of creation,” because he lords over this “generation” (*pajā*) of living beings (M 1.9/1:2; MA ad loc).

⁶⁶ “The gods of radiance,” *ābha devā*. See Intro (3.2).

⁶⁷ “Streaming gods,” *ābhassara*. This is where beings of the sense world and the form world are reborn when their worlds are destroyed during the collapsing cycle (or “Big Crunch”). See **Aggañña S** (D 27.10/3:84 f) = SD 2.19.

Rebirth among the Glorious Gods (3rd dhyana)

29 (17) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of glory** (*subha deva*)!⁶⁸

It is indeed possible for him, with the body’s breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of glory.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

30 (18) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, , with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of limited glory** (*paritta,subhā devā*)!’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body’s breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of limited glory.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

31 (19) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of boundless glory** (*appamāṇa,subhā devā*)!’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body’s breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of boundless glory.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

32 (20) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of radiant glory**⁶⁹ (*subhā,kiṇṇā devā*)!’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body’s breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of radiant glory.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

Rebirth in the Form Realms (4th dhyana)

33 (21) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of abundant fruit** (*veha-p,phalā devā*)!’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body’s breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of abundant fruit.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

[(22) The realm of non-percipient beings (*asañña,sattā*).]⁷⁰

Rebirth in the Pure Abodes⁷¹ (4th dhyana)

34 (23) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body’s breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Aviha gods** (*avihā devā*)!’

⁶⁸ Found only in Ee (PTS), but omitted in other MSS. “The gods of radiance,” *ābha devā*. See Intro (3.2)

⁶⁹ Alt tr “Steady Glory.”

⁷⁰ Understandably the realm of non-percipient or unconscious beings (*asañña,sattā*) is not very attractive since beings here exist only physically without any consciousness. Once when a thought arises in them, they fall from that state. See Nyanatiloka, *Guide Through the Abhidhamma-Piṭaka*, 3rd ed 1971:68, 79, 96, 99, 105, 107, 109.

⁷¹ The Pure Abodes (*suddh’āvāsa*) are the five 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 Akaṇiṭṭhā (“Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Aviha gods.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

35 (24) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Atappa gods [who are serene] (*atappā devā*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Atappa gods.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

36 (25) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Sudassa gods [who are beautiful] (*sudassā devā*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Sudassa gods.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

37 (26) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Sudassī gods [who are clear-sighted] (*sudassī devā*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Sudassī gods.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

38 (27) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the Akaniṭṭha gods [the Supreme Brahmās] (*akaniṭṭhā devā*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the Akaniṭṭha gods.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

Rebirth in the Formless Realms

39 (28) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the realm of infinite space (*ākāsānañc'āyatana*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the realm of infinite space.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

40 (29) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the realm of infinite consciousness (*viññāṇañc'āyatana*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the realm of infinite consciousness.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

41 (30) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the realm of nothingness (*ākīñcaññ'āyatana*)!**’

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the realm of nothingness.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

42 (31) If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

‘Oh how I wish, with the body's breaking up, after death,

I would arise in fellowship with **the gods of the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception** (*n'eva,saññā,nāsaññāyatana*)!'

It is indeed possible for him, with the body's breaking up, after death, to arise in fellowship with the gods of the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct.

Spiritual liberation

43 If, householders, the Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct, should wish:

'Oh how I wish that *right here and now*, having realized for myself through direct knowledge, after attaining, dwell in the liberation of mind and liberation through wisdom⁷² that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes.⁷³

It is indeed possible for him, right here and now, having realized for himself through direct knowledge, after attaining, to dwell in the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes.

What is the reason for this? He is a Dharmafarer, one of harmonious conduct." [290]

Refuge-taking

44 When this was spoken, the brahmin householders of Sālā said:

"Excellent, master Gotama! Excellent, master Gotama! Just as if, master Gotama, one were to place upright what had been overturned, or were to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one

⁷² "Liberation of mind and liberation through wisdom," respectively: *ceto,vimutti* (or, liberation by concentration, ie through destruction of the mental hindrances) and *paññā,vimutti* (liberation by wisdom). One who is "liberated by wisdom" (*paññā,vimutta*) "may not have reached the 8 liberations (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed" (M 70.16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly liberated in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain the 8 liberations (*aṭṭha,vimokkha*), which include the four formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called *liberated both ways*, that is, liberated from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the Path of arhathood. Arhats like Sāriputta and Moggallāna are "liberated both ways" (*ubhato,bhāga,vimutta*). The differences between the two types of liberation are given in **Mahā,nidāna S** (D 2:70 f) and **Kīṭāgiri S** (M 1:477 f), esp Intro 5.2(2A).

Aṅguttara mentions the two states that partake of spiritual knowledge (*vijjā,bhāgiyā*) as, namely, calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*). The cultivation of calm leads to the destruction of passion and the cultivation of insight to the destruction of ignorance (A 2.4.10/1:61). The distinction between the two is expressed by "liberation of mind" (*ceto,vimutti*) and "liberation by wisdom" (*paññā,vimutti*) respectively. "However, these two expressions are not simply equivalent in value relative to realization. While 'freedom by wisdom' (*paññā,vimutti*) refers to the realization of *Nibbāna*, 'freedom of the mind' (*cetovimutti*), unless further specified as 'unshakeable' (*akuppa*), does not imply the same. 'Freedom of the mind' can also connote temporary experiences of mental freedom, such as the attainment of the four dhyana, or the development of the divine abodes (*brahmavihāra*) [eg M 1:296]. Thus this passage is not presenting two different approaches to realization but two aspects of the meditative path, one of which is not sufficient by itself to bring realization" (Analayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The direct path to realization*, 2003:89 f). See Lily de Silva, "Cetovimutti, paññāvimutti and ubhatobhāgavimutti," *Pāli Buddhist Review* 3,3 1978:118-145.

For full list of the 8 liberations, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f). For full list of the 8 liberations, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f) = SD 5.17.35. See also D 3:262, 228; **Vimokkha S**, A 8.66/4:306; also M 120.37/3:103 = SD 3.4.37.

⁷³ "Mental influxes," *āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit "inflow, outflow") 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 four *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām'āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav'āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh'āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These four are also known as "floods" (*ogha*) and "yokes" (*yoga*). The list of three 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 under *āsava*.

who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way master Gotama has, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by master Gotama.

We go to master Gotama for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May master Gotama remember us as laymen⁷⁴ who have gone for refuge from this day forth for life.”

— evaṃ —

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⁷⁴ *Upāsake*.