

# Kīṭāgiri Sutta

## The Discourse at Kīṭāgiri

[Faith, learning and sainthood]  
(Majjhima Nikāya 70/1:473-481)  
Translated by Piya Tan ©2005

### Introduction

#### 1 Summary and comments

The Kīṭāgiri Sutta<sup>1</sup> is about the position of **faith** (*saddhā*) in regards to sainthood. The sutta opens with the Buddha admonishing the monks not to take food at night for the sake of their health [§2]. When the Buddha and the community arrive at Kīṭāgiri, the monks admonish Assaji and Punabbasu,<sup>2</sup> but they refuse to comply, replying that they found greater benefits of eating “in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time” [§§4-5]. The Buddha summons and questions them [§6].

The Buddha admonishes Assaji and Punabbasu by giving instructions on feelings [§§6-10]. He goes on to show the importance of diligently doing one’s spiritual duties as renunciants [§§11-13]. Seven kinds of saints are mentioned and defined [§§14-21]. The Buddha declares that the spiritual training is a gradual path [§§22-23] and rebukes the recalcitrant monks in one of the most moving passages in the Canon [§§24-27].

Although Assaji and Punabbasu report to the Buddha as summoned and listen to his admonition, apparently they show little regard for him. At a crucial point in the admonition, when the Buddha actually offers to uplift them spiritually, saying:

Bhikshus, there is a four-line exposition, and when it is recited a wise man would quickly understand it. I shall recite it to you, monks. Try to understand it. [§25]

Finally, they apparently repented, saying: “But, venerable sir, who are we to be knowers of Dharma?”<sup>3</sup> [§25]. But the tone is ambiguous.<sup>4</sup>

At the end of the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, “the monks rejoiced and approved of the Blessed One’s word,” but there is no mention whether the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks reformed themselves after that. Apparently, they do not, as we know from **the Vinaya** that the Buddha sends the Sangha to carry out an act of banishment (*pabbājaniya, kamma*) upon the Assaji-Punabbasukas of Kīṭāgiri. In defiance, they leave Kīṭāgiri, and also leave the Order (V 2:9-13, 14, 15). The Buddha then promulgates Saṅghādisesa 13 [3 below].

#### 2 Untimely eating

While in the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, the Buddha is recorded as admonishing the monks against taking food at night (M 70.2), **the Bhaddāli Sutta** (M 65) records the Buddha as declaring that he takes only one meal a

<sup>1</sup> The Āgama cognate of this sutta is at MĀ 195/T1.749c-752c, entitled *Assaji* 阿濕貝.

<sup>2</sup> The sutta has **Assaji, punabbasukā**, but it is not clear whether this refers to the duo, Assaji-Punabbasu, or the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks [3 here] headed by them. There is no clear mention of the Assaji-Punabbasu monks themselves in the Sutta itself. Comy mentions the name *Punabbasuka* (as an individual) throughout; so too the Chinese Āgamas: 《中阿含經》賴中有二比丘。一名；[20] 阿濕；[21] 貝。二名；[22] 弗那婆修」(CBETA, T1.26.-749c11-12); [20] 阿濕貝~Assaji; [21] 貝=貝【宋】【元】【明】[22] 弗那婆修~Punabbasuka. I thank Ven Anālayo for this information. However, it is possible, even likely, that the followers of Assaji-Punabbasu are also present at this congregation.

<sup>3</sup> *Ke ca mayam bhante ke ca dhammassa aññātāro ti*, lit “Who are we, venerable sir, and who are the knowers of the Dharma?” M:ÑB: “Venerable sir, who are we that we should understand the Dhamma.”

<sup>4</sup> See 6.2 below here.

day, not taking food “at the wrong time” (*vikāla*) (M 65.2/1:437).<sup>5</sup> In both suttas, the Buddha says that this moderation in eating keeps him physically healthy and at ease.

**The Laṭukikôpama Sutta** (M 66) relates how the monk Udāyī is unhappy when the Buddha admonishes the monks not to take food “outside the proper time” (M 66.6/1:448 f), and where it appears as if the Buddha has introduced the rules regarding untimely eating in successive stages, that is, first prohibiting only the afternoon meal but allowing a night meal, and then later prohibiting the night meal, too. He does so out of concern for the more delicate monks so that they are not quickly weakened if both meals are prohibited at the same time (MA 3:186).<sup>6</sup>

Udāyī recalls the rules made by the Buddha regarding the proper time for meals, how such rules grew until, in the end, no food is allowed outside the proper time. Udāyī reflects on the hardships that monks faced when seeking alms in the dark of night: they walked into a cesspit, fell into a sewer, walked into a thornbush, bumped into a sleeping cow, met hoodlums who had committed a crime and those planning one (being sexually enticed by women). One night, while Udāyī himself was standing at to the doorsteps of a woman’s house, startled her in the lightning, when she thought that the devil had come for her!

In the end, however, they were very helpful in dispelling unwholesome mental states and instilling wholesome ones. The Buddha agrees, adding that many people are foolish, and consider such sacrifices insignificant, becoming discontented when asked to make them. But this discontentment, small as it is, develops into a bond strong enough to hold them fast. Some people are like little quails caught in traps, unable to escape from their bonds; others are like mighty elephants, bursting through their bonds and going where they wish. There are four types of individuals who train to give up the substrates of existence (*upadhi*),<sup>7</sup>

- (1) when memories and intentions associated with the substrates arise, he does not abandon them;
- (2) when such memories and intentions arise, he abandons them;
- (3) when such memories and intentions arise, he is slow in mindfulness, but he quickly abandons them;
- (4) having understood that the substrates is the root of suffering, he abandons them.

(M 1:447-56; MA 3:169-171)

### 3 The Assaji, punabbasuka monks

**3.1 The group of six monks.** Assaji and Punabbasu were members of the notorious **group of six** (*cha-b, baggiyā*); the others being Mettiya and Bhummajaka [Bhūmajaka] (in Rājagaha),<sup>8</sup> and Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka (in Sāvattihī),<sup>9</sup> each with their own following of 500.<sup>10</sup> **The Vinaya Commentary** says that Mettiya and Bhummajaka were the chief leaders of the group of six (*cha-b, baggiya*).<sup>11</sup> These monks, thinking, “Alms in the countryside are now abundant, now short. Let us not live in one place but in three.” So Paṇḍuka and Lohitaka chose Sāvattihī the capital of the kingdom of Kāśī-Kosala, because of its numerous towns and large population; Mettiya and Bhummajaka chose Rājagaha, the capital of Aṅga-Magadha,

<sup>5</sup> Comy says that this is the rule against eating at the wrong time (MA 4:149), ie **Pācittiya 37** (V 4:85 f). The “wrong time” (*vikāla*), when no solid meals is to be taken, is after noon and before daybreak. Food can only be taken by monastics between daybreak and noon.

<sup>6</sup> In the **Vinaya** account of the introduction of **Pācittiya 37** (V 4:85), on untimely eating, no mention is made of any successive prohibition. On the contrary, the text assumes that it is common knowledge that monks should not take food after noon, and it shows the Buddha laying down the rule against untimely eating with one categorical ruling covering all meals during the “wrong time” (that is, between noon and daybreak).

<sup>7</sup> **Upadhi**, the “residue” that act as the basis for renewed birth. There are 4 kinds: the aggregates (*khandh’upadhi*), the defilements (*kiles’upadhi*), volitional formations (*abhisankhār’upadhi*), and the cords of sense-pleasures (*kāma, guṇ’upadhi*) (MA 3:169).

<sup>8</sup> Cf V 2:76, 3:160, 166, 4:37.

<sup>9</sup> VA 3:614; J 2:387. **Vinaya Comy** says that they were the chief leaders of the group of six (*cha-b, baggiya*) (VA 3:579 ad V 3:160).

<sup>10</sup> V 2:13; J 2:387; MA 3:187.

<sup>11</sup> VA 3:579 ad V 3:160.

for the same reasons and because of its prosperity. **Kīṭāgiri**, between Sāvattī and Āḷāvī,<sup>12</sup> was chosen by Assaji and Punabbasu because it was watered by both monsoons (*dvīhi meghehi*) of the year, produced three crops, and had suitable sites for buildings (VA 3:614)

**The Vinaya** records how they misconducted themselves, doing things that should not be done and neglecting their training rules. So they were called “shameless evil” monks. Besides the offences of the group of six, Assaji and Punabbasu were also the occasions for the introduction of numerous Vinaya rules and disciplinary actions.<sup>13</sup> They used to grow flowers, make wreaths and garlands, and send them to girls and women of respectable families and also to slave girls, to lie with such women, and disregard the precepts regarding the eating of food at the wrong time, using perfumes, visiting shows, singing and playing various kinds of games—violating altogether eighteen precepts (VA 3:625). Their abandoned ways, however, made them popular with the lay people, and virtuous monks who did not belong to their group, were not welcomed by the people of their area.

Hearing of their wrongdoings from a monk sojourning in the area, the Buddha convened the Sangha, and sent Sāriputta and Moggallāna, together with a number of other monks (the Assaji-Punabbasukas were known to be passionate and violent), to carry out the act of banishment (*pabbājanīya, kamma*) against them. When the Sangha arrived in Kīṭāgiri and instructed that the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks should no longer dwell there, the latter abused the monks, accusing them of partiality. They left Kīṭāgiri, and also left the Order. When the matter was reported to the Buddha he had the act of banishment revoked “because it had served no purpose.”<sup>14</sup> Because of the Kīṭāgiri incident, where the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks refused to obey the banishment ruling, the Buddha promulgated **Saṅghādisesa 13** regarding the corrupting of families (V 3:179-184).

In the Dhammapada Commentary (DhA 2:109) we are told that Assaji and Punabbasu had originally been disciples of Sāriputta and Moggallāna. When the two chief disciples admonished them and their followers on their evil ways, some of them reformed themselves but a few retired to the householder’s life. Understandably, the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks had a particular dislike for Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Once when the Buddha, travelling from Sāvattī, accompanied by Sāriputta, Moggallāna and five hundred monks, sent word to the Assaji-Punabbasukas to prepare resting places for them. They sent answer that the Buddha was very welcome, but not Sāriputta and Moggallāna because “they [the chief disciples] are men of evil desires, influenced by evil desires”! (V 2:171). The Commentaries (eg, DA 2:525) mention the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks as an example of those who disregarded all the precepts that they had undertaken to observe.

**3.2 Two monks or more?** The Kīṭāgiri Sutta does not indicate whether the word *Assaji, punabbasukā* refers to two monks (Assaji and Punabbasu), or to their following (including themselves). However, it is useful to note that their actual names are Assaji and Punabbasu, while the vocative plural **Assaji, punabbasukā** probably refers, not to “Assaji and Punabbasu,” but to “Assaji and Punabbasu and their followers,” “the followers of Assaji and Punabbasu with them at their head,” or simply, “the followers of Assaji and Punabbasu,” depending on the context.

It is interesting to note here that the Buddha, in rebuking, addresses them as *bhikkhave*, not as *Assaji, punabbasukā* [vocative plural, “Assaji and Punabbasuka”].

But, **monks** (*bhikkhave*), that faith is not here. Bhikshus, that approaching (a teacher) is not here, too....

Bhikshus, you have lost your way! Bhikshus, you have been going the wrong path! How far you have strayed, bhikshus, from the Dharma and the Vinaya! [§24]

<sup>12</sup> M 1:473; J 2:387.

<sup>13</sup> V 2:107 f, 3:179-184, 4:267; VA 3:613 f ≠ V 2:9; DhA 2:108 ad Dh 77 = Tha 994, cf ThaA Ce 2:115; AA 165; V 2:171; DA 2:252.

<sup>14</sup> V 2:9-13, 14, 15.

This further gives weight to the possibility that he is addressing “the group of monks led by Assaji and Punabbasuka,” and not just Assaji and Punabbasuka. The vocative plural for names is common enough in Pāli, as in the following cases:

*Sāriputtā* (vocative: Sāriputta and Moggallāna) (DhA 2:109; ItA 1:52; J 1:142); and

*Anuruddhā* (vocative: Anuruddha and others) (M 1:206, 1:463, 3:155 = v 1:351; all passim).

The names of the incorrigible duo are most likely “Assaji and *Punabbasu*,” and not “Assaji and *Punabbasuka*” pace the Commentary and the Āgama cognates. *The Critical Pali Dictionary* probably errs where under “Assaji” (CPD 1:519), they are referred to as Assaji and Punabbasukā (the latter is probably a wrong reading). Malalasekera, in *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*, under “**Assaji-Punabbasukā**” defines the dvandva as “the followers of the monks Assaji and Punabbasu,” and **Punabbasu** as

One of the Chabbaggiyā. His followers were called Punabbasukā, and together with the followers of Assaji, they were called Assaji-Punabbasukā. (DPPN 2:231)

The Dhammapada Commentary, in a different context, clearly takes *Assaji, punabbasukā* to mean “the followers of Assaji and Punabbasu with them at their head” (DhA 2:109). The Commentaries add that they each have 500 monks as following.<sup>15</sup> It is possible, even probable, then that the Buddha, in the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, is addressing at least 500 monks with Assaji and Punabbasu at the head.

Moreover, this teaching is given in **Kīṭāgiri**, the Assaji-Punabbasukā headquarters. Apparently, the followers of Assaji and Punabbasu would follow them in what they do or do not (in terms of the Vinaya). Surely, all of them would be present if their leaders are present before the Buddha. This would especially be true since the Buddha rarely visits Kīṭāgiri: in fact, the Kīṭāgiri Sutta is the only account we have of the Buddha’s visit to Kīṭāgiri.

#### 4 Assaji-Punabbasuka Vatthu

##### THE STORY OF THE ASSAJI-PUNABBASUKA MONKS

DhA 7.2/2:108-110 = V 2:9-13 (Cv 1.13)<sup>16</sup>

*Ovādeyyānusāseyyā ti*. This Dharma exposition was given by the Teacher while he was residing at Jetavana in reference to the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks, [**DhA 2:109**] but the story begins at Kīṭāgiri.

These two monks [Assaji and Punabbasu], it is said, were the residential pupils (*saddhi, vihārika*) of the chief disciples [Sāriputta and Moggallāna], but they were shameless evil monks. While living at Kīṭāgiri with their following of 500 monks, they planted and caused to be planted flowering trees, and were guilty of various other kinds of misconduct. They violated homes for the sake of getting requisites on which they lived. The monastery was made uninhabitable for morally virtuous monks.

Hearing of their deeds, the Buddha decided to banish them from the Order. For this purpose, the Teacher summoned the two chief disciples, along with a retinue, and said to them:

“Banish those who will not obey your word, but admonish and instruct those who will obey. He who admonishes and instructs is hated by those who lack wisdom, but loved and cherished by the wise.”

And, pointing out the connection and admonishing them in the Dharma, uttered this stanza:

*Ovādeyyānusāseyya  
asabbhā ca nivāraye  
sataṃ hi so piyo hoti  
asataṃ hoti appiyo*

Let one admonish and instruct,  
And forbid what is improper.  
For he would be loved by the good,  
Even if he is not loved by the evil. (Dh 77)

Sāriputta and Moggallāna went there, and admonished and instructed those monks. Some of them received the admonitions of the elders and reformed themselves. Some returned to the lay life. Some were banished from the order.

<sup>15</sup> V 2:13; J 2:387; MA 3:187.

<sup>16</sup> See also DhA:B 2:165.

## 5 Types of saints

**5.1 THE 8 NOBLE INDIVIDUALS.** The Kīṭāgiri Sutta mentions seven kinds of saints,<sup>17</sup> [§14] but the better known list is that of the eight noble individuals (*aṭṭha ariya puggala*),<sup>18</sup> listed here according to their attainment:<sup>19</sup>

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| (1) The path of stream-winning           | ( <i>sotāpatti, magga</i> ),  |
| (2) The fruition of stream-winning       | ( <i>sotāpatti, phala</i> ),  |
| (3) The path of once-return              | ( <i>sākadāgāmi, magga</i> ), |
| (4) The fruition of once-return          | ( <i>sākadāgāmi, phala</i> ), |
| (5) The path of non-return               | ( <i>anāgāmi, magga</i> ),    |
| (6) The fruition of non-return           | ( <i>anāgāmi, phala</i> ),    |
| (7) The path of arhathood [holiness]     | ( <i>arahatta, magga</i> ),   |
| (8) The fruition of arhathood [holiness] | ( <i>arahatta, phala</i> ).   |

In short, there are four kinds of noble individuals (*ariya, puggala*): the stream-winner (*sotāpanna*), the once-returner (*sākadāgāmi*), the non-returner (*anāgāmi*) and the arhat (*arahata*). According to the Abhidhamma, the “**path**” (*magga*)—or more fully, the supramundane path (*lok’uttara magga*)—is a name for the moment of entering into one of the four stages of sainthood, produced by insight wisdom (*vipassanā*) into the impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self of existence. The goal here is nirvana, liberation from suffering.

By “**fruition**” (*phala*) is meant those moments of consciousness that follow immediately as the result of the path, and which in certain circumstances may repeat for innumerable times during one’s life-time.<sup>20</sup>

Here are brief definitions of **the four noble individuals**<sup>21</sup> in connection with the ten mental fetters (*dasa samyojanā*):

**5.1 (1) The stream-winner (*sotāpanna*).** Through the path of stream-winning, one *becomes*<sup>22</sup> free from the first three mental fetters (*tiṇṇa samyojanā*) (so called because they bind one to rebirth and suffering), namely,

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. personality belief           | ( <i>sakkāya diṭṭhi</i> ); <sup>23</sup>         |
| 2. doubt                        | ( <i>vicikicchā</i> ); <sup>24</sup> and         |
| 3. clinging to rituals and vows | ( <i>sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa</i> ). <sup>25</sup> |

**5.1 (2) The once-returner (*sākadāgāmi*).** Through the path of once-return, one goes on to break much of the next two fetters (4-5), namely:

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 4. sensual craving (lustful desires) | ( <i>kāma-c, chanda = kāma, rāga</i> ); <sup>26</sup> |
| 5. ill will                          | ( <i>vyāpāda = dosa</i> ). <sup>27</sup>              |

<sup>17</sup> This well known list of the 7 holy persons is found elsewhere in the Canon: **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.2.3(11)/3:254), **Kīṭāgiri S** (M 70 = SD 11.1), **Bhaddāli Sutta** (M 65.11-12/1:439 f), **Savitṭha S** (A 3.21/1:118-120), and (**Āhoneyā**) **Puggalā S** (A 7.14/4:10 f). See also Pm 2:52; Pug 10, 30-36, 73; Vism 659. On (6-7), see Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, 2001:128-133, 135-137, 347.

<sup>18</sup> V 5:117; MA 1:167; ThaA 206; Or, more commonly, *aṭṭha purisa, puggala* (D 2:94, 3:5, 227; M 1:37; S 1:220, 2:69, 4:272, 279, 304, 5:429; A 1:208, 222, 2:34, 56, 3:36, 212, 286, 4:407, 5:183, 330; It 88).

<sup>19</sup> In A 9.10/4:373 & 10.16/5:23, **the lineage-winner** (*gotra, bhū*), referring both to the person and to the state (**change of lineage**), is mentioned as the 9<sup>th</sup> noble individual. He is one experiencing the lightning-like consciousness between the state of a worldling and that of a stream-winner; def at Pug 12, 13 & Vism 138, Pm 1:66-68; also at Tikap 154 f, 165, 324, etc; VvA 155. On the late Abhidhamma use of *gotra, bhū*, see Abhs 4.21/114 = Abhs:SR 66-68; Abhs:BRS 168, 355; Abhs:WG 136. Cf *upanissaya* (J 1:235).

<sup>20</sup> For a comprehensive comparative table of “Persons according to strength of *indriyas* in descending order,” see Gethin 2001:127 (Table 2).

<sup>21</sup> For a sutta stock passage on the 4 noble individuals, see **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118.9-12/3:80) = SD 7.13.

<sup>22</sup> In the fruition stage, one *is* free from the fetters.

<sup>23</sup> See BDict: *diṭṭhi*. See also “**I**” **the nature of identity** = SD 19.1.

<sup>24</sup> See BDict: *vicikicchā*. See also **Entering the Stream** = SD 3.3(5) & **The notion of *diṭṭhi*** = SD 40.1.

<sup>25</sup> See BDict: *upādāna*. See also **Superstition** = SD 36.7.

<sup>26</sup> See BDict: *rāga*. See also “**Mine**” **the nature of craving** = SD 19.3.



**5.1 (3) The non-returner (*anāgāmi*).** Through the path of non-return, one becomes fully free from fetters (4) and (5). In other words, the non-returner is free from all the “lower fetters” (*oram, bhāgiya saṃyojanā*) (nos 1-5), which bind one to the sense-world. Often, as in the **Ānāpāna, sati Sutta** (M 118), the non-returner is called “one spontaneously-born” (*opāpatikā*)<sup>28</sup> (M 118.10/3:80).

**5.1 (4) The arhat (*arahata*).** Through the path of arhathood, one breaks the other five “higher fetters” (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojanā*), namely:

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

The arhat is typically described as one

with mental influxes<sup>29</sup> destroyed, who has lived the holy life, done what has to be done, laid down the burden, reached their own goal,<sup>30</sup> destroyed the fetters of being, completely liberated through direct knowledge. (M 118.9/3:80)

**5.2 THE 7 NOBLE INDIVIDUALS.** The Kīṭāgiri Sutta mentions a list of seven kinds of individuals (*satta puggala*) [§14]. The same list is found elsewhere in the Canon:

<b>Sampasādanīya Sutta</b>	(D 28.8/3:105),
<b>Saṅgīti Sutta</b>	(D 33.2.3(11)/3:254),
<b>Bhaddāli Sutta</b>	(M 65.11-12/1:439 f),
<b>Saviṭṭha Sutta</b>	(A 3.21/1:118-120), and
<b>(Āhuneyyā) Puggalā Sutta</b>	(A 7.14/4:10 f). <sup>31</sup>

The seven individuals<sup>32</sup> are always listed in the same order, from the highest to the lowest, thus:

- (1) The one liberated both ways [the dual-liberated] (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*),
- (2) The wisdom-liberated (*paññā, vimutta*),
- (3) The body-witness (*kāya, sakkhī*),
- (4) The view-attainer (*diṭṭhi-p, patta*),
- (5) The faith-liberated (*saddhā, vimutto*),
- (6) The truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*), and
- (7) The faith-follower (*saddhā' nusārī*).

<sup>27</sup> See BDict: *mūla*. See also **Mūla S** (A 3.69/1:201-205) = SD 18.2.

<sup>28</sup> That is, reborn in one of the 5 Pure Abodes (*pañca 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 Aviha (Skt *avṛha* or *abrha*, prob “not abundant”; Tib *mi che ba*, “not great”; see BHSD: *avṛha, brhat-phala*), Ātappa (“Serene”), Sudassā (“Of Clear Beauty”), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned”) and Akaṇiṭṭhā (“Supreme”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

<sup>29</sup> “Mental influxes,” *āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati*, meaning “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously tr as influxes, taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 kinds of *āsava*: the influxes of (1) sense-desire (*kām'āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav'āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh'āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjā'sava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*oghā*) or “yokes” (*yogā*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these influxes is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: *āsava*.

<sup>30</sup> *sad-atthā*, may be resolved two ways: (1) *sa-d-atthā*, “one own goal,” (2) *sant + atthā*, “the sublime goal,” “the ideal.”

<sup>31</sup> See also Pm 2:52; Pug 10, 30-36, 73; Vism 659.

<sup>32</sup> The Sutta [§14] simply refers to these 7 as “individuals” (*puggala*), not as “noble individuals” (*ariya, puggala*). This is significant as the last two individuals are not necessarily saints of the path, but those on very close to sainthood, ie to attaining streamwinning. See below 5.2(6) & 5.2(7).

Of these seven saints, according to the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, only the first two have done their “duties with diligence” [§§15, 16], that is, they are totally liberated as arhats. The other five saints still need to “do their duties with diligence” [§§17-21]. The key difference between the two kinds of arhats—the dual-liberated arhat and the wisdom-liberated arhat—is that the former has personal direct experience of the formless attainments (*arūpa samāpatti*), while the latter does not. The uniqueness of the Kīṭāgiri Sutta classification of the seven saints is that it is not only based on path and fruition (as found in the more common eightfold scheme), but also according to their dominant spiritual faculty (*indriya*).<sup>33</sup>

The first three saints are explained in **the Kāya,sakkhī Sutta** (A 9.43),<sup>34</sup> **the Paññā,vimutta Sutta** (A 9.44)<sup>35</sup> and **the Ubhato,bhāga,vimutta Sutta** (A 9.45).<sup>36</sup> According to the Paññā,vimutta Sutta, every noble disciple who has attained any of the dhyanas may, in a limited or relative sense (*pariyāyena*), be regarded as one of the above three saints; but are fully regarded—or, in an absolute sense (*nippariyāyena*)<sup>37</sup>—so after they have attained all the dhyanas and the cessation of perception and feeling (*saññā.veda-yīta,nirodha*).<sup>38</sup> [See 5.4 Summary.]

**5.2 (1) The one liberated both ways [The dual-liberated] (*ubhato,bhāga,vimutta*)** is defined in the Kīṭāgiri Sutta as follows:

<sup>39</sup>Here, bhikkhus, a certain person, having touched the liberations<sup>40</sup> with the body,<sup>41</sup> dwells in those liberations that are peaceful and formless,<sup>42</sup> transcending forms,<sup>43</sup> and his mental influxes are utterly destroyed through his having seen them with **wisdom**. [§15]

**The Puggala Paññatti** defines him, thus:

He touches with the body [personally experiences] and dwells in the eight liberations,<sup>44</sup> and the mental influxes are destroyed by his seeing with wisdom. (Pug 14 = 73 = 73; cf A 4:453)

**The Majjhima Commentary** says that he is “liberated both ways” because he is liberated from the physical body (*rūpa,kāyato*) by the formless attainments and from the mental body (*nāma,kāyato*)—that

<sup>33</sup> *Indriya,vemattatā*, see de Silva 1978:134-136. For **Puggala Paññatti** system of classification of these 7 saints, see Pug 1.30-36/14 f.

<sup>34</sup> A 9.43/451 f.

<sup>35</sup> A 9.44/4:452 f.

<sup>36</sup> A 9.45/4:453.

<sup>37</sup> On *pariyāyena* and *nippariyāyena*, see Gethin 2003:133-136, 150, 172, 307.

<sup>38</sup> The liberations (*vimokkha*) include cessation attainment (*nirodha samāpatti*) (D 15.35/2:70 f).

<sup>39</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phassitvā viharati, paññāya c’assa disvā āsavā parikkhiṇā honti.*

<sup>40</sup> “Liberations” (*vimokkhā*, vl *vimokkhā*) refer to **the 8 liberations** (*aṭṭha vimokkhā*), which briefly are: (1) dhyana via internal (body-based) *kaṣiṇa* practice; (2) dhyana via external *kaṣiṇa* practice; (3) dhyana via colour *kaṣiṇa* or the divine abodes; (4) the sphere of the infinity of space; (5) the sphere of the infinity of consciousness; (6) the sphere of nothingness; (7) the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; and (8) the cessation of perception and feeling. For details, see **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.3.33/2:111n) = SD 9, **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f) = SD 5.17, **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.3.1(11)/3:262), **Vimokkhā S** (A 8.66/4:306), **Saṅkhār’upapatti S** (M 120.37/3:103) = SD 3.4.37; also SD 5.17 Intro (10).

<sup>41</sup> *Kāyena phassitvā viharati*. *Phassitvā* has vll: *phusitvā* (Be Se), *phussitvā*. MA defines *phassitvā* thus: Having touched, mastered, attained it with the mental body (*nāma,kāyena phassitvā pāpuṇitvā adhigantvā ti vuttam hoti*) (MA 1:162), ie experienced directly in one’s own person (body and mind), an idiomatic expression for personal experience. Cf A 2:87.

<sup>42</sup> “Formless,” ie, devoid of material shape in terms of sense-object and of their result (MA 1:162).

<sup>43</sup> That is, having passed beyond the form dhyanas (*rūpa jhānā*) (MA 1:162).

<sup>44</sup> See above n on “Liberations.”

is, from the mind class of feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness)—through the path of arhathood.<sup>45</sup>

The **Dīgha Commentary** (DA 2:514) cites the **Sutta Nipāta** which speaks of “liberation of the mind-body” (*nāma,kāyā vimutto*, Sn 1074). Here “mind-body” (*nāma,kāya*) refers to the “formless aggregates” (*arūpino khandhā*)—feeling, perception and formations<sup>46</sup>—but is more technically defined in the **Paṭisambhidā,magga**, thus: “Feeling, perception, intention, contact, attention and naming are the mental body, and also what are called mind-formations” (*vedanā saññā cetanā phasso manasikāro nāmañ ca, nāma,kāyo ca, ye ca vuccanti citta,sankhārā*, Pm 1:183).<sup>47</sup> The meaning here is that these saints still have the “mind-body” (as they are conscious beings), but they are not controlled or confused by them.

The Commentaries also say that the one liberated both ways includes those who attain arhathood after emerging from one or other of the four formless attainments, and those who gain it after emerging from the attainment of cessation<sup>48</sup> (DA 3:889; MA 3:188).

According to the **Saṃyutta Commentary**, the dual-liberated is so called because he is liberated from the form body by the formless attainments, and from the mental body by the “foremost path” (*agga,magg-ena; that is, the arhat-path*) (SA 1:278). The former liberation is also called “liberation of mind” (*ceto,-vimutti*) and the latter “liberation through wisdom” (*paññā,vimutti*). The former by itself, however, is merely temporary, being a liberation through suppression.<sup>49</sup>

The **Majjhima Commentary** adds that the dual-liberated includes those who attain arhathood after emerging from one or other of the four formless attainments, and one who attains it after emerging from the attainment of cessation (MA 3:188).

<sup>45</sup> DA 2:514, 3:889; MA 3:188; AA 4:207; SnA 2:594.

<sup>46</sup> Consciousness (*viññāṇa*) is not listed here as it is present in all the other aggregates: see SD 17.8a(10).

<sup>47</sup> On *nāma,kāya* and *rūpa,kāya*, see **Mahā,nidāna S** (D 15.20(1)/2:62) = SD 5.17 n.

<sup>48</sup> “Cessation” (*nirodha*), or more fully, “the cessation of perception and feeling,” *saññā,vedayita nirodha*. This anomalous state, fully described in **Visuddhi,magga** (Vism 23.16-52702-709), is a combination of deep meditative calm and insight where all mental states temporarily shut down (Vism 23.43/707 f), “devoid of even subtle feeling and cognition, due to turning away from even the very refined peace of the fourth formless level” (Harvey 1993:10 digital ed). Here the heart-beat and breathing stop (M 1:301 f), but a residual metabolism keeps the body alive for up to 7 days (Vism 23.42/707). Only an arhat or a non-returner can experience this cessation (A 3:194; 23.18/Vism 702, 23.49/708). On emerging from cessation, they experience the fruit of their respective attainment (Vism 708). “It is thus one possible route to experiencing Nibbāna.” (Harvey 1993:10 digital ed). While a dead person has neither vitality nor heat, and their sense-organs “broken up,” a person in cessation still has vitality and heat, and his sense-organs are “purified” (M 1:296; D 2:334; Vism 23.51/709). According to Buddhaghosa, cessation is “the non-occurrence of the mind (*citta*) and mental states as a result of their progressive cessation” (Vism 23.18/ 702). Such a person is “without mind” (Vism 23.43/ 707). Even the sub-conscious (*bhavaṅga*), present in dreamless sleep, is absent; such a person is effectively only body without any mental states whatsoever. In modern terms, “deep hibernation” or “suspended animation” might give some idea of this state of cessation. On “the progressive cessation of formations” (*anupubba,sankhārānaṃ nirodha*), see S 36.11/4:217. See **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43) = SD 30.2 Intro (3).

<sup>49</sup> “Liberation through suppression” (*vikkhambhana,vimutti* = *vikkhambhana,pahāna*). The **Paṭisambhidā,-magga** and **Visuddhi,magga** gives 5 kinds of “liberation” called “cessation” (*nirodha*), elsewhere variously called “abandonment” (*pahāna*), “liberation (or deliverance)” (*vimutti*), “seclusion” (*viveka*), “detachment” (*virāga*), and “relinquishment” (*vossagga*). The 5 liberations are: (1) cessation by suppression (*vikkhambhana nirodha*), eg, the temporary overcoming of the 5 hindrances during dhyana; (2) cessation by displacement (*tad-aṅga nirodha*), ie the substitution of the opposite quality, eg the personality view (*sakkāya diṭṭhi*) is overcome by determining the mental and physical phenomena, the view of uncausedness of existence by investigation into the conditions, the idea of eternity by contemplation of impermanence, the idea of happiness by the contemplation of unsatisfactoriness; (3) cessation by cutting off (*samuccheda nirodha*), eg, through the knowledge of the noble path (*ariya,magga*), the mental fetters and other evil cannot continue; (4) cessation by tranquilization (*paṭipassaddhi nirodha*), the mental fetters disappear at the moment of path-entrance (*magga*), and from the moment of fruition (*phala*) onwards, they are forever stilled; (5) cessation by escape (*nissaraṇa nirodha*) is identical with cessation and nirvana. (Pm 1:27, 220 f; the first 3 at Vism 22.110-112/693 f). These 5 terms (*vikkhambhana*, etc) are, as such, not found in the 4 Nikāyas, but are listed and explained at Pm 2:179 ff. See BDict: *pahāna*.



However, there are variations here. **The Paññā,vimutta Sutta** (A 9.44), for example, defines the “one wisdom-liberated” in these words:

<sup>50</sup>He dwells having attained the first dhyana... he knows that with wisdom ... To that extent, too, avuso, he is called “**one wisdom-liberated**,” in a broad sense, by the Blessed One.  
(A 9.45/4:452)

**The Ubhato,bhāga,vimutta Sutta**<sup>51</sup> (A 9.45) similarly speaks of one “liberated both ways” even though he has only attained the first dhyana:

<sup>52</sup>He dwells having attained to the first dhyana, he dwells there in that base (āyatana), having touched it with his body... he knows that with wisdom ... To that extent, too, avuso, he is called “**one liberated both ways**,” in a broad sense,<sup>53</sup> by the Blessed One.  
(A 9.45/4:453)

The underscored phrase is missing from the Paññā,vimutta Sutta definition of the “one wisdom-liberated.” Evidently, the “one liberated both ways” is able to stay in the first dhyana as long as he wishes (normally not beyond seven days at a time),<sup>54</sup> while the “one wisdom-liberated” has only a temporary experience of it.

The dual liberation of the arhat “liberated both ways,” however, should not be confused with the “influx-free liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom” (*anāsava ceto,vimutti paññā,vimutti*), which is shared by all arhats, whether they experience the formless attainments or not.<sup>55</sup>

**5.2 (2) The wisdom-liberated (paññā,vimutta)** is defined in the Kīṭā,giri Sutta as follows:

<sup>56</sup>Here, bhikkhus, a certain person does not dwell in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, having touched the liberations with the body, but his mental influxes are utterly destroyed through his having seen them with **wisdom**.<sup>57</sup> [§16]

As mentioned earlier [5.2.1], **the Paññā,vimutta Sutta** (A 9.44) defines the “one wisdom-liberated” thus:

He dwells having attained to the first dhyana... he knows that with wisdom ... To that extent, too, avuso, he is called “**one wisdom-liberated**,” in a broad sense, by the Blessed One.  
(A 9.45/4:453)

According to the Commentary on **the Ārabhati Sutta** (A 5.142/3:165-167), this saint’s wisdom is associated with arhat-fruit (arahatta,phala) (AA 3:288). **The Commentaries** says that the wisdom-liberated arhat may be one of the five kinds: either a bare insight practitioner (*sukkhā,vipassaka*), or has attain-

<sup>50</sup> *Paṭhamam jhānam upasampajja viharati...paññāya ca nam pajānāti, ettāvatā pi kho āvuso paññā,vimutto vutto Bhagavatā pariyāyena.*

<sup>51</sup> A 9.45/4:453. Cf D 2:71; M 1:439; A 1:74, 4:453; Pug 14, 72, 73.

<sup>52</sup> *Paṭhamam jhānam upasampajja viharati, yathā yathā ca tad āyatanam tathā tathā nam kāyena phassivā viharati, paññāya ca nam pajānāti, ettāvatā pi kho āvuso ubhato,bhāga,vimutto vutto Bhagavatā pariyāyena.*

<sup>53</sup> “In a broad sense,” *pariyāyena*. Gethin discusses the meanings of *pariyāyena* and *nippariyāyena*, and concludes, “In the former [*pariyāyena*], terms are in some sense convertible, that is, the meanings are not necessarily fixed or final, rather they conform to the particular circumstances or reasons (*karāṇa*) that govern or motivate the particular teaching, the particular context in which they occur. In the latter, terms are used with fixed technical meanings, universally valid and not subject to the particular circumstances of their usage” (1992:135). In short, *pariyāyena* means “broadly, loosely, figuratively” and *nippariyāyena* means “narrowly, in a fixed sense, literally.”

<sup>54</sup> See eg how the newly awakened Buddha meditated for 7 successive weeks with a break after each week:

**Dhamma and Abhidhamma** = SD 16.1(5).

<sup>55</sup> See Bodhi 1984:49-51

<sup>56</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phassivā viharati, paññāya c’assa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti.*

<sup>57</sup> “His mental influxes...with wisdom,” *paññāya c’assa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti*, Pug 31; Pug 14 = 73; qu at DA 2:512; cf S 4:453.

ed to arhathood after arising from one of the (four) dhyanas.<sup>58</sup> The “bare insight practitioner,” however, is not mentioned in the Nikāyas, and as such generally not recognized by the Sutta-based teachers, but is a popular notion with the contemporary “Vipassana” system.<sup>59</sup>

The term is often linked to “liberation of mind” (*ceto, vimutti*), which in the highest sense refers to the fruition of arhathood; in particular, the concentration associated with it, as in the phrase: “liberation of mind and liberation by wisdom.” Here, “the liberation of mind” (*ceto, vimutti*) or, liberation by concentration, is achieved through destruction of the mental hindrances, and “the liberation by wisdom” (*paññā, vimutti*) is liberation through insight (A 1:60). One who is “liberated by wisdom” “may not have attained the eight liberations (*vimokkha*)<sup>60</sup> in his own body, but his mental influxes are destroyed through seeing them with wisdom” (M 70.16/1:478).

All arhats are perfectly liberated in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types—“liberated both ways” (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*) and “liberated by wisdom” (*paññā, vimutta*)—on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain the eight liberations, which include the 4 formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called “liberated both ways,” that is, liberated from the physical body by means of the formless absorptions, 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 Sutta** (D 15/2:70 f)<sup>61</sup> and **Kīṭāgiri Sutta** (M 70/1:477 f).<sup>62</sup>

**5.2 (2A) Sainthood and liberation of mind.** 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. The twin liberations of the arhat “liberated both ways” should not be confused with another twin liberations in connection with arhathood often mentioned in the suttas, that is, “the liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom” (*ceto, vimutti paññā, vimutti*).<sup>63</sup> These twin liberations are common to all arhats, and appears in the stock phrase<sup>64</sup>

... right here and now having realized for himself through direct knowledge, attains and dwells in the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom<sup>65</sup> that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes?<sup>66</sup>

<sup>58</sup> MA 3:188; PugA 191.

<sup>59</sup> See eg the following. **Mahasi Sayadaw**, *Saṭipatthana Vipassana*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed, 2005:283 f. Burmese teacher, **Ledi Sayadaw**, *The Manuals of Buddhism*, under *Bodhipakkhiya Dīpanī*, ch 8: the eight *maggaṅga*, where *sukkhavipassaka-sotāpanna* is mentioned: <http://www.ubakhin.com/ledi/manual6h.htm>. Thai Abhidhamma teacher, **Sujin Bori-harnwanaket**, speaks of “two kinds of *ariya-savaka*, namely, the *sukkhavipassaka* and the *cetovimutti*”: see “Summary of Paramatthadhamma part VIII,” under “The 3 *pariñā*”: <http://www.dhammadownload.com/paramat8.html> (dated April 14 2000, p16).

<sup>60</sup> On the 8 liberations, see 5.2(1) n above.

<sup>61</sup> See Bodhi 1984:48 f.

<sup>62</sup> See BDic: *ceto-vimutti*.

<sup>63</sup> D 1:156, 167, 251, 3:78, 108, 248, 5:135 f; S 2:265; M 1:197, 205, 296, 3:145; A 1:124, 2:6, 36, 3:84; Sn 725, 727 = It 106; It 20, 75, 97; Pug 27, 62; Vbh 86.

<sup>64</sup> See prec n for citations. See also Gunaratana 1985:201-203.

<sup>65</sup> “**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 through insight) (A 1:60). One who is *liberated by wisdom* “may not have reached the 8 deliverances (*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 deliverances (*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. Saḷha, like the arhats Sāriputta and Moggallāna, is “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). For full list of the 8 deliverances, see **Mahā**

**The Samaṇa-m-ācala Sutta** (A 4.87) clearly shows that these twin liberations—“the liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom” (*ceto, vimutti paññā, vimutti*)—apply to both types of arhats, that is, the one liberated both ways (“the white lotus recluse”) and the wisdom-liberated (“the red lotus recluse”), thus:

And how, monks, is a person a white lotus recluse (*samaṇa, puṇḍarīka*)?

THE WISDOM-LIBERATED. Here, bhikshus, a monk, right here and now having realized it for himself through direct knowledge, attains and dwells in the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes. Yet he does not dwell experiencing the eight liberations<sup>67</sup> with his body.

In this way, bhikshus, is a person a white lotus recluse.

And how, monks, is a person a red lotus recluse (*samaṇa, paduma*)?

THE ONE LIBERATED BOTH WAYS. Here, bhikshus, a monk, having right here and now realized it for himself through direct knowledge, attains and dwells in the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes. And he dwells touching the eight liberations with his body.

In this way, bhikshus, is a person a red lotus recluse. (A 4.87/4:86-88) = SD 20.13

Those arhats who can attain the eight liberations (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*),<sup>68</sup> which include the four formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are said to be “liberated both ways” (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*), that is, they are liberated from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood.<sup>69</sup> Arhats like Sāriputta and Moggallāna are “liberated both ways.”

The “liberation of mind” (*ceto, vimutti*), on a simple level, refers to a temporary liberation by concentration, that is, through the destruction of the mental hindrances, such as stated in **the Mahā Vedalla Sutta** (M 43), where the fourth dhyana, the four divine abodes (*brahma, vihāra*), and the base of nothingness, are said to be forms of liberation of mind.<sup>70</sup> Elsewhere, such as in **the Mahā Sāropama Sutta** (M 29), the liberation of mind is regarded as the final goal of mental training, where it is known as “the unshakable liberation of mind” (*akuppa ceto, vimutti*).<sup>71</sup> This is said to be “the chief of all liberations of mind,” such as when the Buddha, just after the Great Awakening, declares, “Unshakable is the liberation of mind” (S 56.11).<sup>72</sup> Elsewhere he declares

This is the goal of the holy life, bhikshus, this is the heartwood [the essence], this is the consummation—the unshakable liberation of mind. (M 29.7/1:197; M 43.37/1:298)

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**Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f). For full list of the 8 deliverances, 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.

<sup>66</sup> “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 4 *āsavas*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.1.12/2:82, 16.2.4/2:91, 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) 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>67</sup> “The eight liberations” (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*): 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.

<sup>68</sup> See §35 f (Sutta ending) for the 8 liberations.

<sup>69</sup> See §35 in text.

<sup>70</sup> M 43.26-37/1:296-298.

<sup>71</sup> M 29.7/1:197.

<sup>72</sup> S 56.11/5:423 = SD 1.1.

The term “liberation by wisdom” (*paññā, vimutti*), on the other hand, is almost always used in reference to the arhat’s permanent liberation from ignorance through his full penetration of the four noble truths. As such, while “liberation by wisdom” refers to the arhat’s release from ignorance, his “liberation of mind” indicates his mental release from craving and its associated defilements. Hence, it is said:

With the fading away of lust, there is liberation of mind; with the fading away of ignorance there is the liberation of wisdom (*rāga, virāgā ceto, vimutti avijjā, virāgā paññā, vimutti*).  
(**Dhamma Vijjā, bhāgiya Sutta**, A 2.3.3(10)/1:61)

When he knows and sees thus, his mind is liberated from the influx of sense-desire, from the influx of existence, from the influx of ignorance...  
(**Cūḷa Hatthi, padopama Sutta**, M 27.26/1:183 f)

In the Cūḷa Hatthi, padopama Sutta quote, release from the first two influxes—of sense-desire and of existence—refer to the liberation of mind, and the release from the third influx (of ignorance), to the liberation by wisdom.<sup>73</sup>

It should be noted, however, that although the wisdom-liberated (*paññā, vimutta*) arhat<sup>74</sup> lacks the direct experience of the eight liberations (*vimokkha = jhāna*), but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed. As such, like the arhat liberated both ways, he too has both the liberation of mind (*ceto, vimutti*) and the liberation by wisdom (*paññā, vimutti*).

**5.2 (2B) Sainthood and the spiritual faculties.** The next three types of saints—the *body-witness*, the *view-attainer* and the *faith-liberated*—are not really categories in themselves, but typologies, reflective of which spiritual faculty (*indriya*) is dominant or instrumental in leading to the person’s liberation, as follows:

The body-witness	( <i>kāya, sakkhī</i> )	the faculty of concentrations	( <i>samādh’indriya</i> ).
The view-attainer	( <i>diṭṭhi-p, patta</i> )	the faculty of wisdom	( <i>paññ’indriya</i> ).
The faith-liberated	( <i>saddhā, vimutta</i> )	the faculty of faith	( <i>saddh’indriya</i> ).

These typologies characterize any of the learners (*sekha*), that is, those who have not attained the fruit of arhathood, namely, the stream-winner, the once-returned, the non-returned, and the arhat of the path. In **the Kāya, sakkhī Sutta** (A 9.43), the Buddha declares that it is difficult to say which of these three saint-types is the most excellent, as each of them is on the way to awakening.<sup>75</sup>

Altogether there are actually seven types of learners, that is, to say, two each (path and fruit) of the first three, and the arhat of the path. We shall examine each of these saint types in turn.

**5.2 (3) The body-witness (*kāya, sakkhī*)**<sup>76</sup> is defined in the Kīṭāgiri Sutta as follows:

<sup>77</sup>Here, bhikkhus, a certain person, having touched the liberations with the body, dwells in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, but only some of his mental influxes are destroyed through his having seen them with wisdom. [§17]

A **body-witness** (*kāya, sakkhī*), literally meaning “physical witness,” is one who has physically experienced all the stages of dhyana.<sup>78</sup> This category includes the six individuals—from the one attained to the fruition of stream-winning up to the one on the path of arhathood—who first experience the formless attainments and subsequently realize nirvana (MA 3:189).

<sup>73</sup> See Gunaratana 1985:202.

<sup>74</sup> See §33 n text.

<sup>75</sup> A 9.43/4:451-453.

<sup>76</sup> On *kāya, sakkhī*, see **Kāya, sakkhī S** (A 9.43/4:451 f).

<sup>77</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phassitvā viharati, paññāya c’assa disvā ekacce āsavā parikkhīṇā honti.*

<sup>78</sup> D 3:105 & DA 889; M 1:478; A 4:451; Pm 2:52; Kvu 58.

**The Kāya,sakkhī Sutta** (A 9.43)<sup>79</sup> defines the body-witness as follows:

<sup>80</sup>He dwells having attained to the first dhyana, he dwells there in that base (*āyatana*), having touched it with his body. To that extent, too, avuso, he is called “**body-witness**,” in a broad sense,<sup>81</sup> by the Blessed One. (A 9.45/4:453)

In terms of spiritual faculty (*indriya*), concentration (*samādhi*) is dominant in the body-witness. The Commentary on the Kāya,sakkhī Sutta adds that

Because the first dhyana is realized by means of this mental body (*nāma,kāya*),<sup>82</sup> therefore in a broad sense (*pariyāyena*), he is called a body-witness. (AA 4:206)

The body-witness category has the same quality as the six types of wisdom-liberated arhats—the one attained to the fruition of stream-winning and those one on the path of arhathood—only that they do *not* experience the formless attainments, but subsequently realize nirvana (MA 3:189).

Bodhi notes that **the Majjhima Mahā Ṭikā** stresses that one or other of the formless attainments, including cessation, is needed to qualify as a body witness.<sup>83</sup> **The Puggala Paññatti**, however, merely substitutes the eight liberations (M:Ñ 1275 n704).

**5.2 (4) The view-attainer (*dīṭṭhi-p,patta*)** is defined in the Kīṭā,giri Sutta as follows:

<sup>84</sup>Here, bhikshus, a certain person, not having touched the liberations with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, but *only some* of his mental influxes are destroyed through his having seen them with wisdom. And he has understood [seen] and examined with wisdom<sup>85</sup> the teachings proclaimed by the Tathagata.<sup>86</sup> [§18]

**The Majjhima Commentary** says that the view-attainer includes the same six body-witnesses—from the stream-winner to the path arhat—but without attainment of the formless attainments (MA 3:189 f). The view-attainer has wisdom as the dominant spiritual faculty. **The Puggala Paññatti** defines him as the Kīṭā,giri Sutta does: one who has understood the four noble truths and who has understood and examined with wisdom the teachings proclaimed by the Buddha (Pug 15). In terms of spiritual faculty (*indriya*), wisdom (*paññā*) is dominant in the view-attainer.

**5.2 (5) The faith-liberated (*saddhā,vimutto*)** is defined in the Kīṭā,giri Sutta as follows:

<sup>87</sup>Here, bhikshus, a certain person, not touched with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, but *only some* of his mental influxes are destroyed through his having seen them with wisdom, and his faith is planted, rooted and established in the Tathagata.<sup>88</sup> [§19]

<sup>79</sup> A 9.43/4:451-453.

<sup>80</sup> *Paṭhamam jhānam upasampajja viharati, yathā yathā ca tad āyatanam tathā tathā nam kāyena phassitvā viharati, ettāvata pi kho āvuso kāya,sakkhī vutto Bhagavatā pariyāyena.*

<sup>81</sup> “In a broad sense,” *pariyāyena*, see 5.2. In above.

<sup>82</sup> For *kāya* meaning the 3 mental factors (ie the aggregates of feeling, perception and mental formations, Dhs 40), see Vism:P 806 n2, DhsA:PR 1:199, Abhs:SR 96 n3.

<sup>83</sup> Cf M 1:439; A 4:451; Pug 14, 73.

<sup>84</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te na kāyena phassitvā viharati, paññāya c’assa disvā ekacce āsavā parikkhīṇā honti. Tathāgata-p,paveditā c’assa dhammā paññāya vodiṭṭhā honti vocaritā.* The syntax of this sentence dictates in insertion of a further “not” in the middle of the English tr.

<sup>85</sup> “Understood [seen] and examined with wisdom,” *paññāya vodiṭṭhā honti vocaritā*. Pug 15; see A 4:363 on the power of wisdom (*paññā bala*).

<sup>86</sup> *Tathāgata-p,paveditā c’assa dhammā paññāya vodiṭṭhā honti vocaritā.*

<sup>87</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te na kāyena phassitvā viharati, paññāya c’assa disvā ekacce āsavā parikkhīṇā honti, Tathāgate c’assa saddhā niviṭṭhā hoti mūla,jātā patiṭṭhitā.*

<sup>88</sup> *Tathāgate c’assa saddhā niviṭṭhā hoti mūla,jātā patiṭṭhitā.*



The Majjhima Commentary again says that the faith-liberated includes the same six individuals included under body-witness—from the stream-winner to the path arhat—but without attainment of the formless attainments (MA 3:189 f). For the body-witness, faith is the dominant spiritual faculty. **The Puggala Paññatti** defines him like the view-attainer, but adds that he has not understood the teachings with wisdom to the level of the view-attainer.<sup>89</sup> **The Visuddhi.magga** says that one who is filled with resolution (*adhimokkha*) and, in considering the formations as impermanent, gains the faculty of faith, at the path-moment of streamwinning, is called faith follower.<sup>90</sup> In terms of spiritual faculty (*indriya*), faith (*saddhā*) is dominant in the faith-liberated.

**5.2 (6) The truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*)**<sup>91</sup> is defined in the Kīṭāgiri Sutta as follows:

<sup>92</sup>Here, bhikkhus, a certain person, not having touched the liberations with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, and his mental influxes are *not yet destroyed* through his having seen them with wisdom, but those for whom the truths proclaimed by the Tathagata are accepted only after some pondering over them with wisdom.

That is to say, he has these qualities [**the five spiritual faculties**], namely: the faculty of faith, the faculty of effort, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom. [§20]

**The Sarakāṇi Sutta 1** (S 55.24) lists and defines six noble individuals, beginning with the four saints (arhat, non-returned, once-returned, stream-winner) [§§7-10], followed by the truth-follower and the faith-follower [§§11-12], both of whom the sutta describes without specifically mentioning them. Of the truth-follower, the Buddha explains:<sup>93</sup>

Here, Mahānāma, some person does not possess wise faith in *the Three Jewels*. He is not one of joyous wisdom, nor of quick wisdom, and he has not attained liberation. However, he has these five things [the five spiritual faculties]—the faculty of faith, the faculty of effort, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom.<sup>94</sup> And he accepts the teachings proclaimed by the Tathāgata only after some pondering over it with wisdom.<sup>95</sup>

This person, too, Mahānāma, is freed from hell, the animal kingdom, the ghost realm and the suffering states. (S 55.24.11/5:377; also S 55.25/5:379)

The Majjhima Commentary says that the truth-follower and the faith-follower are individuals on the path of stream-winning, that is, practising for the fruition of stream-winning. While in **the truth-follower**, faculty of wisdom (*paññā* 'indriya) predominates, in **the faith-follower**, the faculty of faith (*saddhā* 'indriya) predominates (MA 3:190). When they attain the fruit of sainthood, they are respectively called truth-

<sup>89</sup> Pug 194; cf AA 2:148, 190.

<sup>90</sup> Vism 21.74-78/659 f.

<sup>91</sup> For further details on the truth-follower, see **Cakkhu S** (S 25.1/3:225) = SD 16.7 Intro (1).

<sup>92</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te na kāyena phassitvā viharati, paññāya c'assa disvā āsavā aparikkhīnā honti. Tathāgata-p, paveditā c'assa dhammā paññāya mattaso nijjhānam khamanti, api c'assa ime dhammā honti seyyathīdam saddh'indriyam viriy'indriyam sat'indriyam samādh'indriyam paññ'indriyam.*

<sup>93</sup> “Truth-follower,” *dhammānusārī*, alt tr “Dharma-follower.” Although **Sarakāṇi S** does not specifically mention it here, this section describes the truth-follower, while the next section describes the faith-follower (*saddhā-nusārī*). They are defined in **Kīṭāgiri S** (M 70.20-21/1:479). According to **Cakkhu S** (S 25.1/3:225), these two types of person have reached the plane of the noble ones but have not yet realized the fruit of stream-winning, but will do so before they die. See S:B 1098 nn268-269.

<sup>94</sup> The 5 spiritual faculties, see §§20, 21 & **Sarakāṇi S** (S 55.24) = SD 3.6 Intro.

<sup>95</sup> *C'assa dhammā paññāya mattaso nijjhānam khamanti.* I render *mattaso* here as “only...some”. See S:B 1099 n269.

follower and faith-follower.<sup>96</sup> According to **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1/3:225), both the truth-follower and the faith-follower have reached the plane of the noble ones, but have not yet realized the fruit of stream-winning, and will do so before they die.<sup>97</sup>

**The Visuddhi,magga** says that one who is filled with wisdom and, in considering the formations as not self, gains the faculty of wisdom, at the moment of stream-winning, is called a truth follower.<sup>98</sup> **The Abhidharma,kośa** makes an interesting note that while the truth-follower seeks the truth by himself, that is, meditating and practising, guided mainly his study of the texts, the faith-follower does the same under the guidance of a teacher (Abhk 6.291-b & 6.63a-c).<sup>99</sup>

**5.2 (7) The faith-follower (*saddhā'nusāri*)**<sup>100</sup> is defined in the Kīṭāgiri Sutta as follows:

<sup>101</sup>Here, bhikkhus, a certain person, not having touched the liberations with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, and his mental influxes are *not yet destroyed* through his having seen them with wisdom, but he has mere faith in and mere love for the Tathagata.<sup>102</sup>

That is to say, he has these qualities [**the five spiritual faculties**], namely: the faculty of faith, the faculty of effort, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, the faculty of wisdom. [§21]

In **the Sarakāṇi Sutta 1** (S 55.24), the Buddha defines the faith-follower to Mahānāma, thus:<sup>103</sup>

Here, Mahānāma, some person does not possess wise faith in the Buddha, in the Dharma and in the Sangha. He is not one of joyous wisdom, nor of quick wisdom, and he has not attained liberation. However, he has the five spiritual faculties. And he holds mere faith in the Tathāgata, mere love for him.<sup>104</sup>

This person, too, Mahānāma, is freed from hell, the animal kingdom, the ghost realm and the suffering states. (S 55.24.12/5:377)

As previously mentioned, the faith-follower is strong in the faculty of faith (*saddh'indriya*), and grows through the guidance of a teacher.

**5.3 THE VISUDDHI,MAGGA LIST.** In his Visuddhi,magga, Buddhaghosa gives a different sequence of the seven saints thus: (1) the faith-follower (*saddhā'nusāri*), (2) the faith-liberated (*saddhā,vimutta*),

<sup>96</sup> See M 70.20-21; also Pug 1.35 f/15; Vism 21.75.

<sup>97</sup> S 25.1/3:225 = SD 16.7. See S:B 1098 nn268-269.

<sup>98</sup> Vism 21.74-78/659 f.

<sup>99</sup> See Abhk:Pr 1989:952, 1016.

<sup>100</sup> For further details on the faith-follower, see **Cakkhu S** (S 25.1/3:225) = SD 16.7 Intro (1).

<sup>101</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokhā atikkamma rūpe aruppā te na kāyena phassivā viharatī, paññāya c'assa disvā āsavā aparikkhīnā hontī. Tathāgate c'assa saddhā,mattam hoti pema,mattam, api c'assa ime dhammā hontī seyyathīdam saddh'indriyam viriy'indriyam sat'indriyam samādh'indriyam paññ'indriyam.*

<sup>102</sup> *Tathāgatassa c'assa saddhā,mattam hoti pema,mattam.* This stock phrase is found in different contexts in **Alaggadūpama S** (M 22.47/ 1:143) = SD 3.13, **Bhaddāli S** (M 65.27/1:444) & Kīṭāgiri S (M 70.21/1:479). Cf **Sarakāṇi S 1** (S 55.24-375=377) = SD 3.6, **Sarakāṇi S** (25/4:378-380). Comy on **Bhaddali S** (M65) explains that he keeps himself going by some worldly faith and worldly love towards the teacher and preceptor. Through the support of other monks, he remains a renunciant and may eventually become a great recluse who has attained the direct knowledges (MA 3:154).

<sup>103</sup> Although not specifically mentioned in the Sutta itself, this section describes the faith-follower.

<sup>104</sup> "Mere faith...mere love," *saddhā,mattam hoti pema,mattam.* The "mere" here emphasizes the quality it qualifies. A similar statement is found in **Alagaddūpama S** (M 22.4/ 1:141) & **Bhaddāli S** (M 1:444/ 65.27): "Those who have mere faith in me and mere love for me," (*yesam mayi saddhā,mattam pema,mattam*). Comy explains that this refers to the insight practitioners (*vipassaka puggalā*) who have not attained any supramundane state, not gaining even stream-entry, they are reborn in a heaven. On the other hand, we can take this passage as is, that is, anyone who has "mere faith, mere love" in the Buddha are reborn in a heaven, without going against the grain of early Buddhism. See M:NB 2001:1212 n274.

(3) the body-witness (*kāya,sakkhī*), (4) the one liberated both ways (*ubhato,bhāga,vimutta*), (5) the truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*), (6) the view-attainer (*diṭṭhi-p,patta*) and (7) the wisdom-liberated (*paññā,-vimutta*) (Vism 21.74-78/659 f). Buddhaghosa gives the following explanation:

(1) One who mentally attends to the impermanent (*aniccato manasikaronto*), having great resolution, attains the faculty of faith (*saddh'indriya*), and at the moment of stream-winning, he is **a faith-follower**.

(2) In the case of the other seven [that is, in the three higher paths and the four fruitions,] they become those who are **faith-liberated**.

(3) One who mentally attends to the unsatisfactory (*dukkhato manasikaronto*), having great tranquillity, attains the faculty of concentration (*samādh'indriya*): he is called a **body-witness** throughout [in all eight instances].

(4) When one attains to the highest fruition, reaching the formless dhyanas, one is called **dual-liberated**.

(5) And one who mentally attends to the not-self (*anattato manasikaronto*), having great wisdom, attains to the faculty of wisdom (*paññ'indriya*): at the moment of the stream-winning path, he is a **truth-follower**.

(6) In the (other) six instances, he becomes **a view-attainer**; and

(7) In the case of the highest fruition, he becomes one **wisdom-liberated**. (Vism 21.75/659 f)

Here Buddhaghosa says that the faith-follower and the faith-liberated train themselves in the mindfulness of impermanence; the body-witness and the dual-liberated in the mindfulness of unsatisfactoriness; and the truth-follower, the view-attainer and the wisdom-liberated in the mindfulness of not-self. This approach however is rather novel and has no basis in the Suttas, where the perception of impermanence (*anicca,saññā*), for example, has no direct connection with the faculty of faith, but is closely related to wisdom. This is “the wisdom directed towards arising and passing away” (*uday'attha,gāmiyā paññā*), that is, the highest wisdom, whether as a faculty (*indriya*) or as a spiritual power (*bala*).<sup>105</sup> In other words, the degree to which faith, concentration or wisdom are developed by the different noble disciples may not have a direct connection with the three characteristics.<sup>106</sup>

**5.4 SUMMARY.** The qualities of the seven kinds of noble individuals is summarized as follows. (1) The one liberated both ways [The dual-liberated] (*ubhato,bhāga,vimutta*), and (2) the wisdom-liberated (*paññā,vimutta*), are arhats, fully liberated, who have done their “duties with diligence,” while the rest still need to do so.

(1) The *ubhato,bhāga,vimutta* experiences the eight liberations (*vimokkha*),<sup>107</sup> and liberation of mind through the formless attainments (*arūpa samāpatti*), and is liberated by wisdom.

(2) The *paññā,vimutta* is liberated by wisdom without experiencing the eight liberations.

[(3) The body-witness (*kāya,sakkhī*), (4) the view-attainer (*diṭṭhi-p,patta*), ie, one who has attained right view, and (5) the faith-liberated (*saddhā,vimutta*), are the once-returned, the non-returned, and the one on the arhat-path, who have destroyed some of the influxes<sup>108</sup> through wisdom:]

(3) The *kāya,sakkhī* has strong samadhi (attains dhyana), experiences the eight liberations, and have destroyed some of the influxes through wisdom.

(4) The *diṭṭhi-p,patta* fully understands the 4 noble truths, and have destroyed some of the influxes through wisdom.

<sup>105</sup> S 48.9/5:197; A 5.2/3:2. See S:B 1931 n195.

<sup>106</sup> I am grateful to Ven Anālayo for pointing this out in his study of the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, undertaken by him as part of his forthcoming research of the Majjhima Nikāya discourses in the light of their Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan counterparts (Mar 2005). The **Madhyama Āgama** (MĀ 127 = T 1.616a11, which has no Pali counterpart) lists a total of 27 noble disciples; cf Thich Minh Chau 1991:26 f.

<sup>107</sup> D 16.3.33/2:111n = SD 9.

<sup>108</sup> See 5.1(4) n on mental influxes.

(5) The *saddhā, vimutta* fully understands the 4 noble truths and is strong in the faith faculty (*saddh'indriya*), and have destroyed some of the influxes through wisdom.

[(6) The truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*), and (7) the faith-follower (*saddhā'nusārī*) are both stream-winners-to-be:]

(6) The *dhammānusārī* works towards stream-winning on the basis of strong wisdom, and on attaining stream-winning he is said to be “attained to right view” (*diṭṭhi-p, patta*).

(7) The *saddhā'nusārī* works towards stream-winning on the basis of strong faith, and on attaining stream-winning he is said to be “liberated by faith” (*saddhā, vimutta*).

## 6 Difficult passages

**6.1 THE FOUR-LINE EXPOSITION.** Towards the end of the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, the Buddha declares:

Bhikshus, there is a **four-line exposition** (*catu-p, padam veyyakaraṇam*), and when it is recited a wise man would quickly understand it through wisdom.

I shall recite [show] it to you, monks. You will understand it from me (*ājānissatha mētam*).

[§25; cf Dh 273]

The Majjhima Commentary says that this is the teaching of the four noble truths (MA 2:193). Apparently, the Commentary is itself uncertain of the exegesis here, adding that there is a further way of understanding the four-line exposition by way of exerting oneself until one gains the four-limbed effort (*caturāṅga viriya*) (MA 2:194).

**Bodhi** notes, “However, no mention is made here of the Four Noble Truths. Possibly, the four-phrased statement is the resolution on effort just below [§27(4)], with each clause counting as a phrase (the conditional clause being taken as two phrase).” (M:NB 1275 n710).

**Analayo**, at the close of his study of the Kīṭāgiri Sutta, undertaken as a part of his forthcoming research of the Majjhima Nikāya discourses in the light of the Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan counterparts, remarks:

Though the commentarial explanations turn out to be unconvincing, they indicate that the absence of a fourfold presentation, after the Buddha had announced that he would deliver such a presentation, was seen as problematic by the commentators. In this respect the Chinese version appear[s] to have preserved a more convincing fourfold presentation, covering the proper attitude of the disciple, the disciple’s experience of happiness, the disciple’s development of wholesome-ness, and the disciple’s successful realisation. (Analayo, 2005:224 at M 1:481)

However, considering the Buddha’s promise that “when it is recited a wise man would quickly understand it,” my own surmise is that this “four-line exposition” is most probably the set of four instructions that close of the Sutta [§27].

**6.2 “BUT, VENERABLE SIR, WHO ARE WE TO BE KNOWERS OF THE DHARMA?”** Although Assaji and Punabbasu report to the Buddha as summoned and listen to his admonition, apparently they show little regard for him. At a crucial point in the admonition, when the Buddha actually offers to uplift them spiritually, saying:

[Buddha:]

**25** “Bhikshus, there is a four-line exposition, and when it is recited a wise man would quickly understand it through wisdom.

I shall recite [show] it to you, monks. You will understand it from me.”

[Assaji-Punabbasu:]

“**But, venerable sir, who are we to be knowers of the Dharma?**”<sup>109</sup>

<sup>109</sup> *Ke ca mayam bhante ke ca dhammassa aññātāro ti*, lit “Who are we, venerable sir, and who are the knowers of the Dharma?” M:NB: “Venerable sir, who are we that we should understand the Dhamma.”

[Buddha:]

26 “Bhikshus, even with a teacher who dwells concerned with material things, an heir to material things, attached to material things, such haggling (by his followers) would not be proper: ‘If we get this, we will do this. If we don’t get this, we won’t do it. What more, bhikshus, with the Tathagata, who is totally detached from material things?’<sup>110</sup> [§25-26]

The reply of Assaji-Punabbasu to the Buddha’s offer is interesting. Two interpretations are possible here: the first is that they are repentant; the other is that they remain incorrigible. They appear to be repentant, saying: “But, venerable sir, who are we to be knowers of Dharma?” [§25], that is, they realize that they have not been keeping up with their duties and training. This sentiment of Assaji-Punabbasu is also reflected in the Madhyama Āgama:

[0752b11] 阿濕貝及弗那婆修曰。世尊。我等是誰。何由知法？

Assaji & Punabbasu said, “World Honoured One, who are we to know the Dharma?”

(MĀ 195 = T1.752b11)<sup>111</sup>

On the other hand, it is possible that Assaji-Punabbasu’s retort is a sarcastic one. It should be noted that, in effect, this remark rudely interrupts the Buddha just when he is about to give his “four-line exposition,” saying, “I shall recite it to you monks. Try to understand it.” Usually such an announcement would be followed by the monks’ assent, for example, in **the Araṇa Vibhaṅga Sutta**, the Buddha announces:

“Bhikshus, I will teach you the analysis of non-conflict. Listen and pay close attention to it: I am going to speak.”

“Yes, venerable sir,” the monks replied in assent.

(M 139.2/3:230)

Significantly, the Buddha then rebukes Assaji and Punabbasu (or the following with them at the head) by comparing their reaction to “haggling” that would not befit even a materialistic teacher. Apparently, the two monks are suggesting to the Buddha that they are unable to keep to the training-rule against taking food at the wrong time and asking for some sort of dispensation from such rules.<sup>112</sup>

If this construal of the passage is right, then it makes sense why the Buddha repeats the need for **faith** in the spiritual training [§27].

**6.3 “THE BLESSED ONE KNOWS; I DO NOT KNOW.”** This last sentence should not be misconstrued to mean that one must have blind faith in the Buddha, an attitude clearly absent from the early texts. The Commentary explains this sentence thus: “The Blessed One knows the advantages in eating at one sitting (*ek’āsana, bhojana*); I do not. But, because of my faith, I will eat only at one sitting, giving up eating three times daily” (MA 3:194).

Anālayo, in his forthcoming comparative study of the Majjhima Nikāya with Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan cognates, notes that the sentence “**the Blessed One knows, I do not know**” (*jānāti bhagavā, sāvako ’ham asmi*) is not found in the Chinese version and gives these insightful explanations:

Instead of the maxim “the Blessed One knows, I do not know,” the Chinese version describes the faithful disciple’s wish to benefit from the Buddha’s teaching of the Dhamma.<sup>113</sup>

<sup>110</sup> *Kim pana bhikkhave yaṃ Tathāgato sabbaso āmisehi viśamsaṭṭho viharati*. IB Horner: “So what has this to do with the Tathāgata who lives dissociated from material things?”

<sup>111</sup> The Taishō referencing system is: T = Taishō, sutra = document no <1>, volume <26>, page <749>, register <c>, line/s <11-12>. See Epilgomena: Textual conventions I:F(2) for more details.

<sup>112</sup> As noted earlier [Intro 1], there is no mention whether the Assaji-Punabbasuka monks reformed themselves after that. Apparently, they do not, as we know from **the Vinaya** that the Buddha sends the Sangha to carry out an act of banishment (*pabbājaniya, kamma*) upon the Assaji-Punabbasukas of Kīṭā, giri. In defiance, they leave Kīṭā, giri, and also leave the Order (V 2:9-13, 14, 15). The Buddha then promulgates Saṅghādisesa 13 [Intro 3 above].

<sup>113</sup> “The Blessed One teaches the Dhamma to me... may I for a long time get its meaning and get benefit, welfare and happiness [from it],” 世尊為我說法。[善逝為我說法。]令我長夜得義·得饒益安隱快樂 (MĀ 195 = T1.752b17). (Based on Anālayo’s fn)



When evaluating this difference, the problem with Assaji and Punabbasuka appears to have been that they presumed to be better able to assess the situation than the Buddha. This much can be seen at an earlier point in both versions, since when told by other monks that by abstaining from eating at night they will experience health and a comfortable abiding, Assaji and Punabbasuka had replied that they were experiencing this already now, so why should they give up the benefit visible now in favour of something that to come in the future.<sup>114</sup> This type of attitude would indeed seem to require some injunction of the type “the Blessed One knows, we do not know,” such as found in the Pāli version of the present page.

On the other hand, however, the Chinese version’s presentation would however be less prone to a misunderstanding. Though Assaji and Punabbasuka should have just followed the rule to abstain from eating at night, based on accepting the Buddha’s superior insight into what is good for them, if extracted from the present context the statement “the Buddha knows, I do not know” could be misunderstood to imply blind obedience. Such was, however, not the attitude the Buddha expected from his disciples. (Anālayo, 2005)

In the **Vīmaṃsaka Sutta** (M 47), the **Apaṇṇaka Sutta** (M 60) and the **Kesaputtiya Sutta** (A 3.65), for example, the Buddha exhorts in clear terms on thorough investigation, even checking his own claim of awakening. In such discourses as the **Alagaddūpama Sutta** (M 22), the **Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta** (M 38) and the **Cūḷa Māluṅkyā,putta Sutta** (M 63), we see how the Buddha openly questions anyone who hold wrong view and patiently laying out the proper teachings for their (and our) benefit. The **Meghiya Sutta** (U 4.1) shows his Buddha’s characteristic patience in dealing with Meghiya, one of the difficult disciples, stressing on the importance of spiritual friendship (U 4.1/34-37).

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<sup>114</sup> M 70.4b/1:474,4 and MĀ 195 = T1.749c29 (Anālayo).

## The Discourse at Kīṭā,giri

(M 70/1:473-481)

1 Thus have I heard.

### The Buddha abstains from untimely eating

At one time the Blessed One wandering in Kāsī country by stages (on a teaching tour).<sup>115</sup> There he addressed the monks:

2 “Bhikshus, I abstain from eating at night. By abstaining from eating at night, I am free from illness and affliction, and I enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.”<sup>116</sup>

Come now, bhikshus, abstain from eating at night. By so doing, you, too, will be free from illness and affliction, and enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.”

“Yes, venerable sir,” the monks answered the Blessed One in assent.

3 Then, the Blessed One, wandering in Kāsī country by stages<sup>117</sup> [on a teaching tour] with a large community of bhikshus, eventually arrived at a Kāsī market town named Kīṭā,giri. There he lived at the Kāsī market town of Kīṭā,giri.

### Assaji-Punabbasuka enjoy untimely eating

4a Now at that time, the monks called Assaji and Punabbasu<sup>118</sup> were residing at Kīṭā,giri.<sup>119</sup>

Then a number of monks went to the monks Assaji and Punabbasu, and said this to them:

“Avuso, the Blessed One and the community of monks abstain from eating at night. By so doing, they are free from illness and affliction, and they enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.

Come now, avuso, abstain from eating at night. By so doing, you, too, will be free from illness and affliction, and enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.” [474]

4b When this was said, the monks Assaji and Punabbasu said this to the monks:

“Avuso, we eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time. By so doing, we are free from illness and affliction, and we enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.

*Why should we abandon what is visible right here, and run after what is time-bound?* [Why should we give up an immediate benefit for one that has not yet come?]<sup>120</sup>

We shall eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time.”

<sup>115</sup> “Touring...by stages,” *cārikam caramāno*, lit “walking the walk,” that is, wandering about teaching the Dharma and ministering the people. See n ad loc in **Tevijja S** (D 13.1/1:235) = SD 1.8.

<sup>116</sup> “I am free from illness...abide in comfort,” *appābādhatāṇ ca sañjānāmi appātāṅkataṇ ca lahuṭṭhānaṇ ca balaṇ ca phāsu, vihāraṇ ca*. In **Bhaddāli S** (M 65), the Buddha declares that he takes only one meal a day and this keeps him physically healthy and at ease (M 65.2/1:437).

<sup>117</sup> “Wandering by stages,” *cārikam caramāno*, lit “walking the walk,” ie, wandering about teaching the Dharma and ministering the people.

<sup>118</sup> On the names of these duo, see Intro 3.

<sup>119</sup> **Kīṭā,giri** lay btw Sāvattihī and Āḷavī (M 1:473; J 2:387). Assaji and Punabbasu and their following chose it because it was watered by both monsoons (*dvīhi meghehi*) of the year, produced three crops, and had suitable sites for buildings (VA 3:614). The monsoons are seasonal winds that blow from approx 6 months from the northeast and six months from the southwest, principally in Africa and southern Asia. The Indian monsoon prevails during June-July, and withdraws during Sep-Nov each year. Both seasons bring heavy rains and strong winds. Torrential rains and disastrous floods are common during Jul-Aug.

<sup>120</sup> *Te mayam kiṃ sandiṭṭhikam hitvā kālikam anudhāvissāma. Kālīka* (mf) has the foll meanings: dependent on time; related to or limited to a particular time (now or in the future, ie temporary or delayed); what is dependent on time; what belongs to the future (V 1:252; M 1:474 & MA 3:187; S 1:9 & SA 1:42, 9; J 3:394). Comy explains *kālīka* as *anāgate kāle pattabbam ānisaṃsam*, “benefits to be obtained at a future time” (MA 3:187). However, we can also take *kālīka* here as “limited by time,” since the rule limits eating only after dawn and before noon. *Sandiṭṭhika* and *kālīka* are here clearly antonyms: see **Dhammānussati** = SD 15.9 (2)3 n. This rhetorical question is made in an imperative tone by a devata to seduce the monk Samiddhi: see (**Devatā**) **Samiddhi S** (S 1.20.4/1:8-12) = SD 21.4.

**5a** Since the monks were unable to convince the monks Assaji and Punabbasu, they approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One, they saluted him and then sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, they said this to the Blessed One:

“Venerable sir, we here went to the monks Assaji and Punabbasu, and said this to them:

‘Avuso, the Blessed One and the community of monks abstain from eating at night. By so doing, they are free from illness and affliction, and they enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.

Come now, avuso, abstain from eating at night. By so doing, you, too, will be free from illness and affliction, and enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.’

**5b** When this was said, the monks Assaji and Punabbasu told us:

‘Avuso, we eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time. By so doing, we are free from illness and affliction, and we enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.

Why should we abandon what is seen here and now to seek it at a future time?

We shall eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time.’

Venerable sir, we have been unable to convince the monks Assaji and Punabbasu. We present this matter before the Blessed One.”

### The Buddha questions Assaji-Punabbasuka

**6a** Then the Blessed One addressed a certain monk thus:

“Come now, monk, tell the monks Assaji and Punabbasu that the Teacher calls them.”

“Yes, venerable sir,” the monk answered the Blessed One in assent.

Then he went to the monks Assaji and Punabbasu, and said this to them:

“Venerable sirs, the Teacher calls you.”

“Yes, friend,” the monks Assaji and Punabbasu answered the monk in assent.

Then they approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One, they saluted him and then sat down at one side.

**6b** When they are sitting thus at one side, the Blessed One said this to them:

“Bhikshus, is it true that when some monks approached you, *saying that the Blessed One and the community of monks abstain from eating at night... [475]...and exhort you to do the same so that you, too, will be free from illness and affliction, and enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort,*

you told them:

‘Avuso, we eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time. By so doing, we are free from illness and affliction, and we enjoy health and strength, and dwell in comfort.

Why should we abandon what is seen here and now to seek it at a future time?

We shall eat in the evening, in the morning, in the day, outside the proper time.’?”

“Yes, venerable sir.”

### Regarding feelings (summary)

**6c** “Bhikshus, have you ever known me to have taught the Dharma in this way:

‘Whatever this person experiences, whether pleasant or painful or neutral, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states grow.’?”<sup>121</sup>

“No, venerable sir.”

**7a** “What now, bhikshus, haven’t you known me to have taught the Dharma in this way:

TWO KINDS OF PLEASANT FEELINGS. ‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of pleasant feeling, unwholesome states grow in him and wholesome states lessen; but when one feels another kind of pleasant feeling, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states grow.’<sup>122</sup>

<sup>121</sup> Comy: This is said in direct reference to the pleasure of eating at night, which is not conducive to a monk’s training (MA 3:187).

<sup>122</sup> Comy says that the former pleasant feeling is the joy of the household life (*gehasita, sukha*); the latter is the joy of renunciation (*nekkhamma, sukha*) (MA 3:187). Similarly, the two following sentences refer to painful feeling and to neutral feeling as respectively of the household life and of renunciation. On 6 kinds of joys of the household

**7b** TWO KINDS OF PAINFUL FEELINGS. Here, when one feels a certain kind of painful feeling, unwholesome states grow in him and wholesome states lessen; but when one feels another kind of painful feeling, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states grow.<sup>123</sup>

**7c** TWO KINDS OF NEUTRAL FEELINGS. Here, when one feels a certain kind of neutral feeling, unwholesome states grow in him and wholesome states lessen; but when one feels another kind of neutral feeling, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states grow.<sup>124</sup>

“Yes, venerable sir.”

“Good, monks.”<sup>125</sup>

### Right view regarding feelings

**8a** PLEASANT FEELINGS, UNWHOLESOME & WHOLESOME. And, bhikshus, if I were not to have known, not to have seen, not to have found, not to have realized, not to have touched [not to have attained]<sup>126</sup> with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of pleasant feeling, *unwholesome states increase in him and wholesome states lessen,*’

would it be fitting for me, not knowing that, to say:

‘Abandon such a kind of pleasant feeling.’<sup>127</sup>

“No, venerable sir.”

**8b** “But, bhikshus, because I have known, seen, found, realized, touched [attained] with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of pleasant feeling, [476] unwholesome states increase in him and wholesome states lessen,’

that I therefore say:

‘Abandon such a kind of pleasant feeling.’<sup>128</sup>

**8c** And, bhikshus, if I were not to have known, not to have seen, not to have found, not to have realized, not to have touched with wisdom, thus:

& 6 kinds of joy of renunciation, see **Salāyatana Vibhaṅga S** (M 137.9-15/3:217-219). See also Analayo 2003: 164-168.

<sup>123</sup> The first painful feeling clearly refers to such as those of self-mortification (“painful, ignoble, unprofitable,” **Dhamma,cakka-p,pavattana S**, S 56.11.3/5:421). The latter painful feeling refers to those pains arising in connection with one’s spiritual effort, such as during meditation, where wise attention could be applied with regard to their impermanent nature: see **Sall’atṭhena S**, S 36.6/4:207-210) = SD 5.5 & **Nakula,pitā S** (S 22.1/3:1-5) = SD 5.4. See also Analayo 2003: 168-170.

<sup>124</sup> MĀ 195 inadvertently omits this section on neutral feeling. In the case of neutral feelings, they should be regarded “according to reality” (ie as impermanent, unsatisfactory, not self). The former kind of neutral feeling here refers to “carnal [worldly] equanimity” (*sāmisa upekkhā*), “that arises in dependence on the five cords of sense-pleasure.” The latter neutral feeling is “spiritual equanimity” (*nirāmisa upekkhā*), that of the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana, “which is neither painful nor pleasant and includes the purification of mindfulness by equanimity” (**Suddhika Nirāmisa S**, S 36.31/4:235-237). On how ignorance towards neutral feeling fuels the latent tendency of ignorance, see **Sall’atṭhena S**, S 36.6/4:207-210) = SD 5.5. See also Analayo 2003:171 f.

<sup>125</sup> Bodhi: “§§8-10 serve to provide, by appeal to the Buddha’s perfect understanding, the grounds for his injunction to abandon all feelings based on the household life and to develop the feelings based on renunciation.” (M:ÑB 1273 n697)

<sup>126</sup> “Not to have touched [not to have attained],” *aphassitam*, (fig) “not perceived, unattained” (M 1:475 = S 5:221 = DhA 2:186 = Nm 178; A 2:244; Tha 945), neg pp of *phasseti*, “he touches, attains” (J 5:251; Miln 338, 340), caus of *phusati* (1), “(lit) he touches” (DA 1:62; Vism 463); (fig) “he attains, reaches” (only in the specific sense of attaining to the highest spiritual goal) (D 1:13 = 3:30); ger *phussa*, “touching, feeling, realizing” (D 1:45, 54). See Abhs:SR 133 n2; CPD: *aphassitam*; PED: *phusati*. See Intro (6) on *phassitvā*.

<sup>127</sup> Comy says this is in reference to “the six household mental pleasures” (*cha gehasita,somanassa,vasena*) (MA 3:187), ie, pleasure arising through the six senses. See **Aṭṭha.sata S** (S 36.22.7/S 4:232; Vbh 381).

<sup>128</sup> Comy says this is in reference to “the six mental pleasures of renunciation” (*cha nekkhamma,somanassa,-vasena*) (MA 3:187); cf S 4:232.

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of pleasant feeling, *unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states increase,*’

would it be fitting for me, not knowing that, to say:

‘Attain and dwell in such a kind of pleasant feeling.’?’

“No, venerable sir.”

**8d** “But, bhikshus, because I have known, seen, found, realized, touched with wisdom thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of pleasurable feeling, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states increase,’

that I therefore say:

‘Attain and dwell in such a kind of pleasurable feeling.’

**9a** PAINFUL FEELINGS, UNWHOLESOME & WHOLESOME. And, bhikshus, if I were not to have known, not to have seen, not to have found, not to have realized, not to have touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of painful feeling, *unwholesome states increase in him and wholesome states lessen,*’

would it be fitting for me, not knowing that, to say:

‘Abandon such a kind of painful feeling.’?’

“No, venerable sir.”

**9b** “But, bhikshus, because I have known, seen, found, realized, touched with wisdom thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of painful feeling, unwholesome states increase in him and wholesome states lessen,’

that I therefore say:

‘Abandon such a kind of painful feeling.’

**9c** If, bhikshus, I were not to have known, not to have seen, not to have found, not to have realized, not to have touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of painful feeling, *unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states increase,*’

would it be fitting for me, not knowing that, to say:

‘Attain and dwell in such a kind of painful feeling.’?’

“No venerable sir.”

**9d** “But, bhikshus, because I have known, seen, found, realized, touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of painful feeling, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states increase,’

that I therefore say:

‘Attain and dwell in such a kind of painful feeling.’

**10a** NEUTRAL FEELINGS, UNWHOLESOME & WHOLESOME. And, bhikshus, if I were not to have known, not to have seen, not to have found, not to have realized, not to have touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of neutral feeling, *unwholesome states increase in him and wholesome states lessen,*’

would it be fitting for me, not knowing that, to say:

‘Abandon such a kind of neutral feeling.’?’

“No, venerable sir.”

**10b** “But, bhikshus, because I have known, seen, found, realized, touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of neutral feeling, unwholesome states increase in him and wholesome states lessen,’

that I therefore say:

‘Abandon such a kind of neutral feeling.’

**10c** If, bhikshus, I were not to have known, not to have seen, not to have found, not to have realized, not to have touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of neutral feeling, *unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states increase,*’



would it be fitting for me, not knowing that, to say:  
‘Attain and dwell in such a kind of neutral feeling.’?”

“No venerable sir.”

**10d** “But, bhikshus, because I have known, seen, found, realized, touched with wisdom, thus:

‘Here, when one feels a certain kind of neutral feeling, unwholesome states lessen in him and wholesome states increase,’

that I therefore say: [477]

‘Attain and dwell in such a neutral kind of feeling.’

### Working with diligence

**11** Bhikshus, I do not say of all monks that they still have to do their duties with diligence, nor do I say of all monks that they do not have to do their duties with diligence any more.

**12** Bhikshus, I do not say of those monks who are **arhats**—those with mental influxes destroyed, who have lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached their own goal, destroyed the fetters of being, liberated through right knowledge<sup>129</sup>—that they still have to do their duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

They have diligently done their duties. They are no more capable of being negligent.

**13** Bhikshus, I say of such monks who are **learners**<sup>130</sup>—whose minds have not yet reached the goal,<sup>131</sup> and who are still aspiring to the supreme security from bondage—that they still have to do their duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

Because when those venerable ones make use of suitable resting places and associate with spiritual friends and balance their spiritual faculties,<sup>132</sup> they may, by realizing for themselves through direct knowledge here and now attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

Seeing this fruit of diligence for these monks, bhikshus, I say that they still have to do their duties with diligence.

### Seven kinds of persons

**14** Bhikshus, there are these seven kinds of individuals to be found in the world.<sup>133</sup>

What are the seven?

They are:

- (1) The one liberated both ways [The dual-liberated] (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*),
- (2) The wisdom-liberated (*paññā, vimutta*),
- (3) The body-witness (*kāya, sakkhī*),
- (4) The view-attainer (*diṭṭhi-p, patta*),
- (5) The faith-liberated (*saddhā, vimutto*),
- (6) The truth-follower (*dhammānusārī*), and
- (7) The faith-follower (*saddhā ’nusārī*).

<sup>129</sup> “Arhats—those with mental influxes destroyed...utterly liberated through final knowledge,” *arahanto khīṇ’-āsavā vusitavanto kata, karaṇīyā ohita, bhārā anuppatta, sad’attha parikkhīṇa, bhava, saṃyojanā samma-d-aññā vimutta*.

<sup>130</sup> “Learners,” *sekhā*. They are the first 7 of the 8 noble individuals (*aṭṭha ariya purisa, puggala*), ie, all except the last, ie, the arhat of the path, who is an “adept” (*asekha*, lit “non-learner”). See **Sekha S** (M 53) = SD 21.14.

<sup>131</sup> As at M 1:4.

<sup>132</sup> “Spiritual faculties,” *indriya*. See §§20, 21.

<sup>133</sup> As in **Bhaddāli S** (M 1:439). Cf *Vism* 659 where the 7 are listed in a different order. See Intro (5) esp 5.2 above.

**15** (1) THE ONE LIBERATED BOTH WAYS [THE DUAL-LIBERATED].<sup>134</sup> And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is one liberated both ways?

<sup>135</sup>Here, bhikshus, a certain person, dwells, having touched with the body,<sup>136</sup> those liberations,<sup>137</sup> peaceful and formless,<sup>138</sup> that transcend form,<sup>139</sup> and his mental influxes are utterly destroyed through his seeing with wisdom.

This, bhikshus, is called one liberated both ways.

I do *not* say of such a monk that he still has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

He has diligently done his work. He is incapable of being negligent.

**16** (2) THE WISDOM-LIBERATED. And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is the wisdom-liberated?

<sup>140</sup>Here, bhikshus, a certain person dwells *not* having touched with the body those liberations that are peaceful and formless, that transcend form, *but* his mental influxes are utterly destroyed through his seeing with wisdom.

This individual, bhikshus, is called [478] the wisdom-liberated.

I do *not* say of such a monk that he still has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

He has diligently done his work. He is incapable of being negligent.

**17** (3) THE BODY-WITNESS.<sup>141</sup> And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is a body-witness?

<sup>142</sup>Here, bhikshus, a certain person, dwells, having touched with the body those liberations that are peaceful and formless, that transcend form, but *only some* of his mental influxes are destroyed through his seeing with wisdom.

This individual, bhikshus, is called a body-witness.

I say of such a monk that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

When the venerable one makes use of suitable resting places, and associates with spiritual friends, and balances his spiritual faculties, he may, by realizing for himself, through direct knowledge here and now attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

Seeing this fruit of diligence for such a monk, I say that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

**18** (4) THE VIEW-ATTAINER. And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is a view-attainer?

<sup>143</sup>Here, bhikshus, a certain person dwells, *not* having touched with the body those liberations that are peaceful and formless, that transcend form, but *only some* of his mental influxes are destroyed through his

<sup>134</sup> *Ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*, see Intro 5.2(1) above.

<sup>135</sup> *Idha bhikkhave ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phassitvā viharati, paññāya c'assa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti.*

<sup>136</sup> *Kāyena phassitvā viharati. Phassitvā* has vll: *phusitvā* (Be Se), *phussitvā*. MA defines *phassitvā* thus: Having touched, mastered, attained it with the mental body *nāma, kāyena phassitvā pāpūṇitvā adhigantvā ti vuttam hoti* (MA 1:162), ie experienced in one's own person (body and mind), an idiomatic expression for personal experience. Cf A 2:87.

<sup>137</sup> Here the "liberations" (*vimokkhā*, vl *vimokkhā*) refer to the "eight liberations" (*aṭṭha vimokkhā*). On *aṭṭha vimokkhā*, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f), **Saṅgīti S** (D 33.3.1(11)/3:262) & SD 5.17 Intro (10).

<sup>138</sup> "Formless," ie, devoid of material shape in terms of sense-object and of their result (MA 1:162).

<sup>139</sup> That is, having passed beyond the form dhyanas (*rūpa jhānā*) (MA 1:162).

<sup>140</sup> *Idha, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te na kāyena phusitvā viharati, paññāya cassa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti.* "His mental influxes...with wisdom," *paññāya c'assa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti*, Pug 14 = 73; qu at DA 2:512; cf S 4:453. See Intro 5.2(2) above.

<sup>141</sup> "Body-witness," *kāya, sakkhī*. See Intro 5.2(3) above.

<sup>142</sup> *Idha, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phusitvā viharati, paññāya cassa disvā ekacce āsavā parikkhīṇā honti.*

seeing with wisdom. And he has understood [seen] and examined with wisdom<sup>144</sup> the teachings proclaimed by the Tathagata.

This individual, bhikshus, is called a view-attainer.<sup>145</sup>

I say of such a monk that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

When the venerable one makes use of suitable resting places, and associates with spiritual friends, and balances his spiritual faculties, he may, by realizing for himself, through direct knowledge here and now attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

Seeing this fruit of diligence for such a monk, I say that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

**19 (5) THE FAITH-LIBERATED.** And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is the faith-liberated?

Here, bhikshus, a certain person, not having touched with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, but only some of his mental influxes are destroyed through his having seen them with wisdom, and his faith is planted, rooted and established in the Tathagata.<sup>146</sup>

This individual, bhikshus, is called the faith-liberated.

I say of such a monk that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

When the venerable one makes use of suitable [479] resting places, and associates with spiritual friends, and balances his spiritual faculties, he may, by realizing for himself, through direct knowledge here and now attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

Seeing this fruit of diligence for such a monk, I say that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

**20 (6) THE TRUTH-FOLLOWER.** And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is a truth-follower?

Here, bhikshus, a certain person, not having touched with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, but his mental influxes are not yet destroyed through his having seen them with wisdom, but those for whom the truths proclaimed by the Tathagata are accepted only after some pondering over them with wisdom.

That is to say, he has these qualities [**the five spiritual faculties**], namely:

- the faculty of faith,
- the faculty of effort,
- the faculty of mindfulness,
- the faculty of concentration,
- the faculty of wisdom.

This individual, bhikshus, is called a truth-follower.

I say of such a monk that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

When the venerable one makes use of suitable resting places, and associates with spiritual friends, and balances his spiritual faculties, he may, by realizing for himself, through direct knowledge here and now attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

Seeing this fruit of diligence for such a monk, I say that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

<sup>143</sup> *Idha, bhikkhave, ekacco puggalo ye te santā vimokkhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te na kāyena phusitvā viharati, paññāya cassa disvā ekacce āsavā parikkhīnā honti, tathāgata-p, paveditā cassa dhammā paññāya vodiṭṭhā hoti vocaritā.*

<sup>144</sup> “Understood [seen] and examined with wisdom,” *paññāya vodiṭṭhā honti vocaritā*. Pug 15; see A 4:363 on the power of wisdom (*paññā bala*).

<sup>145</sup> “View-attainer,” *diṭṭhi-p, patta*. Comy qu M 2:38 = Pug 15 = 43 ff, all of which speak of understanding the 4 noble truths as they really are.

<sup>146</sup> *Tathāgate c’assa saddhā niviṭṭhā hoti mūla, jātā patiṭṭhitā*. See Intro 5.2(5) above.

21 (7) THE FAITH-FOLLOWER. And, bhikshus, what sort of individual is a faith-follower?

Here, bhikshus, a certain person, not having touched with the body, dwells not in those liberations that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms, and his mental influxes are not yet destroyed through his having seen them with wisdom, but he has mere faith in and mere love for the Tathagata.<sup>147</sup>

That is to say, he has these qualities [**the five spiritual faculties**], namely:

- the faculty of faith,
- the faculty of effort,
- the faculty of mindfulness,
- the faculty of concentration,
- the faculty of wisdom.

This individual, bhikshus, is called a faith-follower.

I say of such a monk that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

What is the reason for this?

When the venerable one makes use of suitable resting places, and associates with spiritual friends, and balances his spiritual faculties, he may, by realizing for himself, through direct knowledge here and now attain and dwell in that supreme goal of the holy life for the sake of which sons of family rightly go forth from the household life into the homeless life.

Seeing this fruit of diligence for such a monk, I say that he *still* has to do his duties with diligence.

### The gradual training

22 Bhikshus, I do not say that final knowledge is achieved all at once. On the contrary, **final knowledge is achieved by gradual training, by gradual practice, [480] by gradual progress**.<sup>148</sup>

23 And how, bhikshus, is final knowledge achieved by gradual training, by gradual practice, by gradual progress?<sup>149</sup>

Here, bhikshus,

- (1) he who has faith (in a teacher) approaches him.
- (2) Approaching him, he respectfully draws near to him.
- (3) Respectfully drawing near to him, he lends his ear [listens attentively] to him.
- (4) He who lends his ear, listens to the Dharma.
- (5) Having listened to the Dharma, he remembers [memorizes] it.<sup>150</sup>
- (6) Having remembered the teachings, he investigates their meaning.
- (7) Having investigated their meaning, he reflectively accepts<sup>151</sup> the teachings.<sup>152</sup>
- (8) Having reflectively accepted the teachings, desire [will-power] arises in him.
- (9) When desire [will-power] has arisen in him, he exerts himself [he applies his will].<sup>153</sup>

<sup>147</sup> *Tathāgatassa c'assa saddhā, mattam hoti pema, mattam*. See Intro 5.3(7) above.

<sup>148</sup> This whole para: *Nāham bhikkhave ādiken'eva aññ'ārāghanam vadāmi, api na bhikkhave anupubba, sikkhā anupubba, kiriyā anupubba, paṭipadā aññ'ārāghanā hoti*.

<sup>149</sup> This 12-stage learning progress is given in **Caṅkī S** (M 95 = SD 21.15) first in normal sequence (M 95.20/-2:173) and then in reverse (M 95.21b/2:174). Cf A 4:336, 5:154.

<sup>150</sup> This and next line: *Sutvā dhammam dhāreti | dhātānam dhammānam attham upaparikkhati*: here we *dhammam* (sg) in the first line becomes *dhammānam* (pl) in the second line. In the first line, *dhammam* refers to the Teaching as a whole; in the second line, individual aspects or topics are meant.

<sup>151</sup> **Nijjhānam khamanti**, lit “insights are endured,” ie “capable of bearing insights”; idiomatic meaning “he is pleased with, approves of, finds pleasure in” (M 1:133 f; 479 f, 2:173, 175; S 3:225, 228, 5:377, 379; Vv 84.17). **Khanti** usually means “patience” but here it means “choice, receptivity, preference, acceptance.” The BHSD defines *kṣānti* as “intellectual receptivity; the being ready in advance to accept knowledge.” *Khanti* is often used in the Canon in this latter sense (see SD 12.13(2a) for refs). The phrase can also be freely rendered as “a receptivity in harmony with true reality.” On **dhamma, nijjhāna, khanti**, see **Kesa, puttīya S** (A 3.65) = SD 35.4 Comy 3a(8). On *khanti* as “mental receptivity,” see **Aniccā S** (A 6.98) = SD 12.13(3).

<sup>152</sup> This and the next line: *Attham upaparikkhatto dhammā nijjhānam khamanti; dhamma, nijjhāna, khantiyā sati chando jāyato*. M:ÑB: “when he examines their meaning, he gains a reflective acceptance of those teachings.”

- (10) Having exerted himself [Having applied his will], he weighs [balances his practice].  
 (11) Having weighed [balanced his practice], he strives on.  
 (12) Having strived, he realizes through his own body the supreme truth and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom.<sup>154</sup>

### The monks are rebuked

- 24 But, bhikshus,<sup>155</sup> that faith is not here.  
 Bhikshus, that approaching (a teacher) is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that respectfully drawing near is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that lending the ear is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that listening to the Dharma is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that remembering of the Dharma is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that investigating of their meaning is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that reflectively accepting of the teachings is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that desire [will-power] is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that exertion is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that weighing [balancing the practice] is not here, too.  
 Bhikshus, that striving is not here, too.

Bhikshus, you have lost your way! Bhikshus, you have been going the wrong path! How far you have strayed, bhikshus, from the Dharma and the Vinaya!

### The four-line exposition

25 Bhikshus, there is a **four-line exposition**,<sup>156</sup> and when it is recited a wise man would quickly understand it through wisdom.

I shall recite [show] it to you, monks. You will understand it from me.”<sup>157</sup>

“But, venerable sir, who are we to be knowers of the Dharma?”<sup>158</sup>

26 “Bhikshus, even with a teacher who dwells concerned with material things, an heir to material things, attached to material things, such haggling (by his followers) would not be proper:

‘If we get this, we will do this. If we don’t get this, we won’t do it? What more, bhikshus, with the Tathagata, who is totally detached from material things?’<sup>159</sup>

27 (1) Bhikshus, for a disciple with faith who is intent on fathoming the Teacher’s Teaching, he should be one who conducts himself in accordance in the Dharma, thus:

‘The Blessed One is the teacher; I am a disciple. The Blessed One knows; I do not know.’<sup>160</sup>

(2) Bhikshus, for a disciple with faith who is intent on fathoming the Teacher’s Teaching, the Teacher’s Teaching is nourishing and vitalizing.<sup>161</sup>

(3) Bhikshus, for a disciple with faith who is intent on fathoming the Teacher’s Teaching, [481] he should be one who conducts himself in accordance in the Dharma, thus:

<sup>153</sup> From here to end of para: *Chanda.jāto ussahati; ussahitvā tuletī; tulayitvā padahati; pahitatto samāno kāyena c’eva paramam saccam sacchikaroti paññāya ca nam ativijjha passati.* On *ussahati*, see CPD: I have conflated both the normal (“he is able”) and conative (“he strives”) senses in the English tr.

<sup>154</sup> Be Ee: *Pahitatto samāno kāyena c’eva paramam saccam sacchikaroti, paññāya ca nam ativijjha passati.*

<sup>155</sup> It is interesting to note here that the Buddha, in rebuking, address them *bhikkhave*, not as *Assaji, punabbasuka*. This further gives weight to the possibility that he is addressing “the group of monks led by Assaji and Punabbasuka,” and not just Assaji and Punabbasuka.

<sup>156</sup> “A four-lined exposition,” *catu-p,adam veyyakaraṇam*. Cf Dh 273. See Intro (6.1) above.

<sup>157</sup> *Uddisissāmi vo bhikkhave ājānissatha mētan ti.*

<sup>158</sup> *Ke ca mayam bhante ke ca dhammassa aññātāro ti*, lit “Who are we, venerable sir, and who are the knowers of the Dharma?” M:ÑB: “Venerable sir, who are we that we should understand the Dhamma.” See Intro (6.2) above.

<sup>159</sup> *Kim pana bhikkhave yam Tathāgato sabbaso āmisehi visamsaṭṭho viharati.* IB Horner: “So what has this to do with the Tathāgata who lives dissociated from material things?”

<sup>160</sup> On this apparently enigmatic statement, see Intro (6.3) above.

<sup>161</sup> “Nourishing and vitalizing,” *rumhaniyam...ojavantam*.



‘Willingly, I will let only skin, sinews and bones remain; let my body dry up, and flesh and blood, too; but there will be no end in my effort until I have won what can be won by personal strength, personal effort, personal striving!’<sup>162</sup>

(4) Bhikshus, for a disciple with faith who is intent on fathoming the Teacher’s Teaching, without doubt one of two fruits is to be expected:<sup>163</sup> either arhathood in this very life or, if there is any residue [substrate] of clinging left,<sup>164</sup> non-return.<sup>165</sup>

This is what the Blessed One said. The monks rejoiced and approved of the Blessed One’s word.

— evaṃ —

<sup>162</sup> *Kāmaṃ taco ca nahāru ca aṭṭhī ca avasissatu, sarīre upasussatu maṃsa,lohitaṃ, yaṃ taṃ purisa-t,thāmena purisa,viriyena purisa,parakkamena pattabbaṃ na taṃ apāpuṇitvā viriyassa santhānaṃ bhavissatī ti.* Comy: By this the Buddha shows that the ideal disciple practises by putting forth effort, resolving, “I shall not rise again until I have attained arhathood!” (MA 2:194 f). See **Dasa,bala S 2** (S 12.22.6/2:28), **Ghaṭa S** (S 21.3.10/2:275); **Kamma,-kāraṇa Vagga** (A 2.1.5/1:50); cf **Padhāna S** (Sn 433 f).

<sup>163</sup> “Without doubt...is to be expected,” *pāṭikaṅkham*. I have applied both senses of the word here.

<sup>164</sup> *Upādi*, “trace (of clinging)”, according to Comys “material support (the result of past karma)” (MA 4:55, UA 151), i.e. the 5 Aggregates (*khandha*). In the Suttas, the term mostly occurs in this context and in the sentence, “Here the Tathāgata passed into the remainderless (*anupādi,sesa*) nirvana-element.” (A 4:118). Cf secular use in the parable of the man shot with a dart, “trace (of poison)” (M 105.19). In D:W 350 (2 places), Walshe renders it as “substrate”, probably confounding it for *upadhi* (life-basis), which is a very close term.

<sup>165</sup> “One of two fruits...or...non-return,” as at **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 2:314); **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 1:62); **Kīṭāgiri S** (M 1:481); **Aññātara S** (S 5:129); **Nirodha S** (S 5:133); **Añña S** (S 5:191); **Phala S 1** (S 5:236); **Phala S 1** (S 5:311); **Phala S 1** (S 5:314); **Iddhi,pāda S** (A 3:82); **Sati Supaṭṭhita S** (A 3:143); **Pabbajjā S** (A 5:108); **Paṭisallāna S** (It 39); **Sikkānisamsa S** (It 40); **Jāgariyo S** (It 41); **Dvayatānupassanā S** (Sn pp140, 148). “Either final knowledge...or...non-return,” *diṭṭhe ca dhamme aññā sati vā upādisese anāgāmitā ti.*

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