

11

Samiddhi Sutta 4

Catuttha Samiddhi Sutta The Fourth Discourse to Samiddhi | S 35.68/4:39 f

[**Samiddhi Loka Pañha** = Samiddhi's Question on the World]

Theme: Our senses are the world

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2007

Introduction

1 An important theme of **the Saḷāyatana Saṃyutta**, the collection discourses on six sense-bases, is that of sense-restraint (*indriya, saṃvara*), as a support for spiritual cultivation. This Saṃyutta constantly employs two formulas for sense-restraint. The first formula is a stock passage on sense-restraint so that “bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure do not overflow in us [overpower us]” (*abhijjhā domanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāsaveyyuṃ*). Examples occur in the following suttas:

the Sāriputta Sutta	(S 35.120/4:103-105)	not grasping any sign or detail; ¹
the Bhāra, dvāja Sutta	(S 35.127/4:110-113)	sense-restraint;
the Rathôpama Sutta	(S 35.239/4:175-177)	sense-restraint, moderate eating, wakefulness;
the Kummôpama Sutta	(S 35.240/4:177-179)	sense-restraint.

This stock passage on *sense-restraint* is usually embedded in the pericope on the gradual training, common in the Dīgha Nikāya (eg **the Sāmañña, phala Sutta**, D 2.64/1:70) and in the Majjhima Nikāya (eg **the Cūḷa Hatthipadopama Sutta**, M 27.15/1:180 f).

2 The second formula presents a contrast between one who is “intent upon a pleasing form and repelled by a displeasing form, etc” (*piya, rūpe rūpe adhimuccati, appiya, rūpe vyāpajjati...*), and one who is *not* swayed by these pairs of opposites. This latter has set up mindfulness of the body, dwells with a boundless mind, and understands the “liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom” where the bad states of lust and aversion cease without remainder. Examples occur in the following suttas:

the (Saṃvara) Lohicca S	(S 35.132/4:116-121)	guarding the sense-doors;
the Avassuta Sutta	(S 35.243/4:182-188)	not measuring sense-experiences;
the Dukkha, dhamma S	(S 35.244/4:188-191)	understanding one's conduct and dwelling;
the Cha, pāṇā Sutta	(S 35.247/4:198-200)	sense-restraint.

3 As noted by **Bodhi** in the Introduction to the Saḷāyatana Saṃyutta, in his translation of the Saṃyutta,

Though no explicit doctrinal allocations are made for these two formulas, it seems the first is prescribed in general for a bhikkhu in the initial stages of training, while the second describes the sense restraint of the trainee (*sekha*), one at a minimal level of stream-enterer, perhaps too the natural sense restraint of the arahant. (S:B 1127)

4 In the case of the Samiddhi Sutta 4 here, although not explicitly stated, from the Sutta's simple structure, it is clear that it employs *the first kind of training* in sense-restraint, that is, so that “bad unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure” do not invade the mind and remain there.

5 A closely related discourse is **the Sabba Sutta** (S 35.23) which gives a more succinct statement of “the all.” There the *all* is simply defined as the six internal sense-organs and the six external sense-objects. The internal senses are our only tools for knowing the *all*, and *all* that we can know are the six external sense-objects.²

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¹ See *Nimitta and anuvyañjana* = SD 19.14.

² S 35.23/4:15 = SD 7.1, see esp the Intro.

The Fourth Discourse to Samiddhi

S 35.68/4:39 f

1 At one time the Blessed One was staying in the squirrels' feeding-ground, in the Bamboo Forest [Veḷu,vana], near Rājagaha.

Samiddhi's question about the world

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

3a “‘The world, the world,’ bhante, it is said. How, bhante, might there be a world, or the definition of world?”

When there is a world

4 “Samiddhi, where there are the eye, forms, eye-consciousness, and states cognizable by the eye-consciousness—*there* is the world or a definition of the world. [Where the eye exists, forms exist, eye-consciousness exists, objects cognizable by the eye-consciousness exist—*there* is the world and a designation for the world.]³

5 Samiddhi, where there are the ear, sounds, ear-consciousness, states cognizable by the ear-consciousness; *there* is the world or a definition of the world.

6 Samiddhi, where there are the nose, smells, nose-consciousness, states cognizable by the nose-consciousness; *there* is the world or a definition of the world.

7 Samiddhi, where there are the tongue, tastes, tongue-consciousness, states cognizable by the tongue-consciousness; *there* is the world or a definition of the world.

8 Samiddhi, where there are the body, touches, body-consciousness, states cognizable by the body-consciousness; *there* is the world or a definition of the world.

9 Samiddhi, where [40] there are the mind, mind-objects, mind-consciousness, states cognizable by the mind-consciousness; *there* is the world or a definition of the world.

When there is no world

10 Samiddhi, where there are no eye, *no* forms, *no* eye-consciousness, and *no* states cognizable by the eye-consciousness—*there* is neither the world nor a definition of world. [Where the eye exists not, forms exist not, eye-consciousness exists not, objects cognizable by the eye-consciousness exist not, *there* is neither the world nor a designation for the world.]⁴

11 Samiddhi, where there are no ear, *no* sounds, *no* ear-consciousness, *no* states cognizable by the ear-consciousness; *there* is neither the world nor a definition of the world.

12 Samiddhi, where there are no nose, *no* smells, *no* nose-consciousness, and *no* states cognizable by the nose-consciousness—*there* is neither the world nor a definition of world.

13 Samiddhi, where there are no tongue, *no* tastes, *no* tongue-consciousness, *no* states cognizable by the tongue-consciousness; *there* is neither the world nor a definition of the world.

14 Samiddhi, where there are no body, *no* touches, *no* body-consciousness, and *no* states cognizable by the body-consciousness—*there* is neither the world nor a definition of world.

15 Samiddhi, where there are no mind, *no* mind-objects, *no* mind-consciousness, and *no* states cognizable by the mind-consciousness—*there* is neither the world nor a definition of world.

— evaṃ —

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³ This is a more literal rendition, as such sounds somewhat technical.

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