

7

Thapati Sutta

The Chamberlain Discourse | S 55.6/5:348-252

Ee **Thapatayo Sutta** The Discourse on the Chamberlains

Theme: The qualities of a streamwinner

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2006, 2013

1 Sutta summary and highlights**1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY**

1.1.1 The Thapati Sutta (S 55.6) is a record of the devotion of two brothers, the chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa, for the Buddha, and the Buddha's teaching on streamwinning to them. The Sutta opens with the Buddha's rains-retreat at Sāvattḥī, when some monks were making robes for the Buddha's use on his Dharma-tour after the rains [§§1-3].

The Thapati Sutta is fully quoted by the Nettī-p, pakaraṇa as an example of a "discourse dealing with morality" (*vāsana, bhāgiya sutta*) (Nett §791).¹ The Sutta, in other words, is an example of the conduct and joy of those who, on account of their moral virtue, rejoice in the Buddha as a testimony of their spirituality. In this case, Isi,datta is a once-returner, and Purāṇa a streamwinner [2.2.2].

1.1.2 The brother's devotion. The chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa, also in Sāvattḥī, post a man on the road outside Sāvattḥī to inform them of the Buddha's departure [§4]. When news of the Buddha's departure finally came, they meet the Buddha as he is leaving [§§5-7].

As the Buddha sits at the foot of a tree, Isi,datta and Purāṇa tell him how they feel deeply saddened to know that he is leaving on his peregrination outside Sāvattḥī² [§§8-12] and how they joyfully welcome his return to Sāvattḥī [§§13-17; 1.2]. The Buddha responds to their sentiment by alluding to the famous statement on the "confinement" of a household life and the "freedom" of renunciation [§18].

1.1.3 Confinement and freedom. Isi,datta and Purāṇa retort that they face a greater "confinement" than the household life, that is, their, tasks in the royal household, where they have to attend to the royal elephants and the rajah's women, as well as taking care of themselves (and their families). Despite working in a worldly place, Isi,datta and Purāṇa are not in any way distracted by any worldliness [§§19-20]. The Buddha responds in the same words regarding confinement [§22].

1.1.4 The 4 qualities of a streamwinner [§§23-24]. The Buddha then lists these 4 qualities of a streamwinner, namely:

- (1) Wise faith in the Buddha,
- (2) Wise faith in the Dharma,
- (3) Wise faith in the Sangha, and
- (4) Accomplished in charity.

The Buddha then declares that these qualities are all found in Isi,datta and Purāṇa themselves, effectively endorsing them as streamwinners [§25]. The Buddha also declares that to be the foremost amongst those in Kosala who partake of a share in giving, that is, one who never fails to participate in a communal giving [§26.1; 3.2], and they rejoice in this [§26.2]. [3]

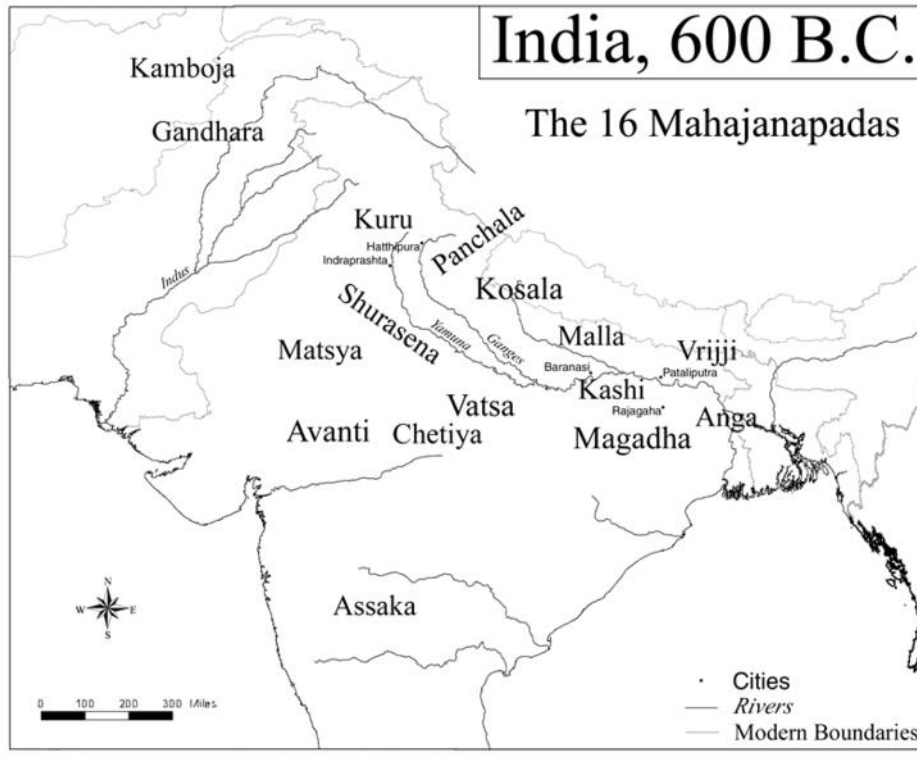
1.2 THE BUDDHA'S PEREGRINATION. In their opening words to the Buddha, the chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa declare their devotion to him by saying that they deeply miss him when they hear the news of his plans to leave Sāvattḥī for his tour, and when he has started on his journey [§8]. They express the same sentiment regarding the Buddha's departing journey through these itinerary of places, namely, from Kosala [§8], southeast to Malla [§9], southeast to Vajjī [§10], southwest to Kāsī [§11], and southeast again to Magadha [§12].

¹ Nett 791/134-137. For a tr, see Nett:Ñ 1962:182-184. The term *vāsana* refers to impression(s) remaining in the mind from past karma, good and bad, producing fruits that are pleasant or painful. It is a post-canonical term for karma (both action and result). In Nett, *vāsana* is used in the sense of moral virtue: for def, see Nett §267.

² Such a Dharma-tour of the Buddha would last at most 9 months, ie, outside of the 3 months of the rains retreat. For details of such tours, see **Arhats who became Bodhisattvas**, SD 27.6b (3.2.1).

However, they express joy at the plans for the Buddha's return journey, and when he has started on such a return journey, that is, from Magadha [§12], to Kāsi [§13], to Vajjī [§14], to Malla [§15], to Kosala [§16], and back in Anātha,piṇḍika's park in Sāvaththī [§17].³ Such an extended journey, on foot with frequent breaks for teaching and rest, is likely to take up the best of 9 months, that is, the period outside of the 3-month rains retreat.

According to the Sutta commentary, these places visited by the Buddha constitute "the middle country" (*majjhima padesa*), that is, the region which the Buddha frequents for teaching the Dharma (SA 3:279). This covers much of the central Gangetic plain.



Source: <http://www.ancient.eu.com/uploads/images/321.png>

2 Isi,datta and Purāna

2.1 MEANINGS OF THAPATI

2.1.1 "Chamberlain." The protagonists of the Thapati Sutta (S 55.6) (other than the Buddha, of course) are Isi,datta and Purāna, the chamberlains (*thapati*) of the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala. They are referred to as *isidatta,purāna*, a dvandva meaning "Isi,datta and Purāna," and their common livelihood is that of *thapatayo*, which is the plural form of *thapati*.

The Pali word *thapati* (Skt *shapati*) means "a master carpenter; a royal officer; an equerry⁴." The usual translation for it is "chamberlain," as it is a more familiar word than equerry, and is yet quite speci-

³ You might like, say, using a pencil, to link up on the map here the places visited by the Buddha as a sort of reflection on the Buddha's Dharma journey.

⁴ An "equerry" is "an officer in the service of a royal or other exalted personage, charged with the care of the horses. At the English Court, an officer of the royal household, charged with the duty of occasional attendance on the sovereign" (OED).

fic. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED), defines him, amongst other things, as “an officer charged with the management of the private chambers of a sovereign or nobleman.”⁵

2.1.2 “Carpenter.” In certain contexts, *thapati* means “master carpenter.” The word of an ordinary carpenter⁶ is *tacchaka*⁷ or *vaḍḍhaki*.⁸ The best known sutta protagonist of this livelihood is Pañcak’āṅga.⁹

2.2 SOCIAL BACKGROUND

2.2.1 Family. According to the **Miḡa,sālā Sutta** (A 6.44), Isi,datta is the uncle the laywoman disciple, Miḡa,sālā. Her father is Purāṇa. In other words, Isi,datta and Purāṇa are brothers.¹⁰ The Sutta also records the Buddha’s revelation of their rebirth as once-returners in Tusita. [2.2.3.4].

2.2.2 Occupation. In the **Dhamma,ceṭiya Sutta** (M 89)¹¹ and the **Thapataya Sutta** (S 55.6),¹² both are “chamberlains” or keepers of the women’s quarters of the rajah Pasenadi.

According to the commentary on the Thapati Sutta, at the time, Isidatta is a once-returner, and Purāṇa a streamwinner who is content with his own wife (that is, he is chaste but not celibate) (SA 3:278).

Since they are lay saints—that is, on account of their impeccable conduct and virtuous dignity—the rajah Pasenadi addresses them as “sirs,” *bhante*.¹³ This is a standard mode by which juniors or servants would address their seniors or masters (similar to the Malay, “tuan”).

2.2.3 Their sainthood and devotion

2.2.3.1 The Dhamma,ceṭiya Sutta (M 89) says that although Isi,datta and Purāṇa are in the employment of the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, they both show greater respect and devotion to the Buddha than towards the rajah. For example, according to the rajah Pasenadi, once when he is leading his army and resting in cramped quarters, he witnesses that Isi,datta and Purāṇa discussing Dharma before they turn in, when they sleep with their heads in the direction of the Buddha, even with their feet towards the rajah himself!¹⁴

2.2.3.2 The Thapati Sutta (S 55.6) reports how Isi,datta and Purāṇa show their love for the Buddha. They are deeply saddened when the Buddha leaves town on his Dharma-tour, but they are overjoyed to know that he returning to town. The Buddha explains that their pains are due to their living the household life (not being renunciants), and their devotion is that of saints.¹⁵ [1.1.2]

2.2.3.3 The Commentary to the Miḡa,sālā Sutta says that while Purāṇa excels in virtuous conduct, Isi,datta in wisdom. They match each other in their respective excellence (AA 3:376). Here we have two examples of lay people who are fully employed in the royal palace, along with their own families, but they are capable of attaining streamwinning, and then once-return.

2.2.3.4 The Miḡa,sālā Sutta (A 6.44) records that Isi,datta and Purāṇa, on their deaths, are both reborn as once-returners in the Tusita heavens.¹⁶ It also recounts the Buddha’s explanation through Ānanda

⁵ The Lord Chamberlain of the Household, eg, is “a chief officer who shares with the Lord Steward, the Master of the Horse, and the Mistress of the Robes, the oversight of all officers of the Royal Household. He appoints the royal professional men and tradesmen, has control of the actors at the royal theatres, and is the licenser of plays.” (OED)

⁶ Abhidhāna-p, padīpikā 506.

⁷ Dh 80 (cf DhA 2:147); Miln 413. Cf *magga,tacchaka*, “road-builder” (J 6:348).

⁸ Also *vaḍḍhaki*, “a carpenter, builder, architect, mason” (PED). This word is esp characteristic of the Jātakas and later popular literature (J 1:32, 201, 247, 2:170, 6:332 f, 432; Ap 51; DhA 1:269, 4:207; Vism 94; PvA 141; *brāhmaṇa,vaḍḍhaki*, “a brahmin carpenter” (J 4:207); *mahā,vaḍḍhaki*, “chief carpenter, master builder” (Vism 463). Fig “craving” (*taṇhā*) is said to be a *vaḍḍhaki*, “the artificer” (DhA 3:128).

⁹ M 1:396,26 (MA 3:114,7, where he is said to be “an elder carpenter, *vaḍḍhaki,jeṭṭhako*”), M 1:397,27; M 3:145,6.

¹⁰ A 6.44/3:348 = SD 3.2(6).

¹¹ M 89.18/2:123,27 = SD 64,10; MA 3:115,1.

¹² S 55.6/5:348,14 = SD 42.7.

¹³ M 89,18/2:123 & SD 64.10. See also S:W 5:303 n1, S:B 1955 n326.

¹⁴ M 89,18/2:123,27-24,11 = SD 64.10.

¹⁵ S 55.6/5:348-52 = SD 42.7.

¹⁶ A 6.44,2/3:348 = SD 3.2(6).

to the laywoman Miga,sālā given on the reason why both Isi,datta and Purāṇa attain the same destiny upon their rebirth in the heavens.

3 The 4 qualities of a streamwinner

3.1 THE STREAMWINNER’S QUALITIES. The Thapati Sutta gives a list of 4 qualities of a streamwinner [§§23-24] that are similar to the “4 limbs of streamwinning” (*sotāpannassa aṅgāni*), such as that found in **the Pañca Vera Bhaya Sutta 1** (S 12.41) and **the Veḷu,dvāreyya Sutta** (S 55.7) (which follows the Thapati Sutta), where, however, the 4th quality is that of “the accomplishment of moral virtue.”¹⁷ This is in fact the more common listing of the streamwinner’s qualities. “The accomplishment of moral virtue” (*sīla sampadā*) is defined as follows:

He has the virtues dear to the noble ones—unbroken, untorn, unblemished, untarnished, liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished,¹⁸ leading to mental concentration.¹⁹

(S 12.41,14/2:69), SD 3.3(4.2), (S 55.7,16/5:35f), SD 1.5, etc

The two sets of qualities of a streamwinner is collated here:

The 4 qualities of a streamwinner [§§23-24]	The 4 limbs of a streamwinner (S 12.41 etc)
(1) Wise faith in the Buddha	(same)
(2) Wise faith in the Dharma	(same)
(3) Wise faith in the Sangha	(same)
(4) Accomplishment of charity [§24.1(4)] ²⁰	Accomplishment of moral virtue [see above]

3.2 COMMUNAL GIVING

3.2.1 Dāna,samvibhāga,rata. The phrase “delighting to have a share in giving” (*dāna,samvibhāga,rato*)²¹ appears twice in the Thapati Sutta: first as the 4th quality of a streamwinner [§§24.1] and in the Buddha’s closing remark [§26.1]. The Sutta commentary explains this phrase as: “He is one who delights

¹⁷ Respectively S 12.41,10-14/2:69 = SD 3.3(4.2) & S 55.7,13-16/5:355 f = SD 1.5.

¹⁸ *Aparāmaṭṭhehi*, “untarnished,” ie unsmirched by craving and wrong view (DA 537); alt tr, “unattached to” on account of craving or wrong view.

¹⁹ *Akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññāpasatṭhehi aparāmaṭṭhehi samādhi,samvattana-kehi*. Found in almost all of the prec 6 suttas in **Veḷu,dvāra Vagga, (Agata,phala) Mahānāma S** (A 6.10/3:286), SD 15.3, and **Cundī Rāja,kumāri S** (A 5.32/3:36), SD 66.4. Details at Vism 1.143-161/51-58. The noble ones do not break any of the five precepts even when they are reborn into a new existence; hence, these virtues are dear to them. See also **Virtue ethics**, SD 18.11(2.2).

²⁰ *Vigata,mala,maccherena cetasā ajjh’āgāraṃ vasati [Ce agāraṃ ajjhāvasati] mutta,cāgo payata,pāṇi vossagga,rato yāca,yogo dāna,samvibhāga,rato*. This passage is stock, found in eg **Dhana S** (A 7.6/4:6), **Nakula,mātā S** (A 8.48/4:268 f) = **(Agata,phala) Mahānāma S** (A 6.10.6/3:287), SD 15.3. **Vata,pada S** (S 11.11) records this as the 5th of Sakra’s 7 vows (S 11.11/1:228). In **Dīgha,jānu S** (A 8.54), this “accomplishment of charity” (*cāga,sampadā*) is the 3rd of 4 accomplishments in spiritual welfare (A 8.54.10-15/4:284 f), SD 5.10. Cf **Sappurisa Dāna S** (A 5.148), SD 22.15 (2) & **Cāgānussati**, SD 15.12. Details at Vism 7.101-106/221 f See Intro (3.2).

²¹ *Dāna,samvibhāga* = *dāna* (“giving”) + *sam* (together) + *vi* (divided)+ *bhāga* (“division, part”): **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30,1.4.1/3:145 + 2.13.1/3:169), SD 36.9; **Thapati S** (S 55.6/5:352), SD 42.7; **Dāna Maha-p,phala S** (A 7.49/4:61, 62×2), SD 2.3; **Dāna S** (It 26/18, 19); **Vism** 306. More commonly as *dāna,samvibhāga,rata*: **Vata,pada S** (S 11.11/1:228), SD 54.2; **Sakka,nāma S** (S 11.12/1:229); **Mahāli S** (S 11.13/1:231); **Thapati S** (S 55.6/5:351), SD 42.7; **Puññābhisanda S 2** (S 55.31/5:392); **(Upāsaka,sampadā) Mahānāma S** (S 55.37/5:395), SD 6.2; **Kāḷi,go-dha S** (S 55.39/5:397); **Abhisanda S 2** (S 55.42/5:400); **Tiṭhāna S** (A 3.42/1:150), **Gandha,jāta S** (A 3.79,2/1:-226,20), **Patta Kamma S** (A 4.61,6/2:66), SD 37.12; **Dhana S** (A 5.47,5/3:53); **(Vitthāra) Anussati-ṭ,ṭhāna S** (A 6.25,6/3:313); **Ariya,dhana S 2** (A 7.6/4:6), SD 37.6; **Dīgha,jānu S** (A 8.54/4:284), SD 5.10; **Ujjaya S** (A 8.55,14/4:289), **Anuruddha S** (A 8.46/4:266,13); **Visākhā S 2** (A 8.47/4:267,14); **Nakula,mātā S** (A 8.48/4:269,2), SD 5.3; **Sampadā S 2** (A 8.76,9/4:324,27); **Mahānāma S 1** (A 11.12,7/5:331,14). Commented upon at Vism 7.101-106/221 f: **Cāgānussati**, SD 15.12. See also **Sappurisa Dāna S** (A 5.148) @ SD 22.15 (2), esp 4.

in giving a share of the giving even if it is just a small one.”²² The Peta,vatthu Commentary defines the lemma “having a share” (*saṃvibhajitvā*) as “having given a share of the giving” (*dāna,saṃvibhāgam katvā*. PvA 242).

The Iti,vuttaka Commentary give a more detailed explanation as follows: “**Of having a share in giving:** The *intention* (*cetanā*) by which the item is to be given, such as food and so on, is first assembled and then given to others either out of pity or out of adoration, this is “giving” (*dāna*); whereas that giving, of sharing, a share of a *single portion* (*eka,desa*) of something from what has been obtained for personal use, this is “having a share” (*saṃvibhāga*).”²³

3.2.2 Group karma. The practice of “having a share in giving” or communal giving is often encouraged in the Buddhist texts and in traditional Buddhist societies. The Dhammapada Commentary²⁴ records this short but very significant discourse by Sāriputta at Rājagaha, which shows the significance of communal giving as group karma:²⁵

Laymen, if one were to give, but does not encourage others to give, wherever one is reborn, one receives the blessing of wealth, but not the blessing of a following [a retinue].

If one were not to give, but encourages others to give, wherever one is reborn, one receives the blessing of a following, but not the blessing of wealth.

If one were not to give, and also does not encourage others to give, wherever one is reborn, one receives not so much as a bellyful of sour porridge, but is without refuge, without support.

If one were to give, and also encourages others to give, wherever one is reborn, in a hundred births, a thousand births, a hundred thousand births, one receives both the blessing of wealth and the blessing of a following. (Sāriputta, DhA 1.7/1:78)²⁶

3.2.3 Secondary derivation. As such, it is clear that the phrase *dāna,saṃvibhāga*, “having a share in giving,” is not a dvandva, but a secondary derivation or taddhita.²⁷ These are noun or adjective compounds formed, not from a root, but secondarily from another word-stem.²⁸

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²² *Dānena c’eva appa,mattakam pi kiñci laddhā tato pi saṃvibhāge rato*, SA 3:280).

²³ *Dāna,saṃvibhāgassāti yāya hi cetanāya ann’ādi,deyya,dhammaṃ saṃharitvā anukampā,pūjāsu aññatara,-vasena paresaṃ dīyati, taṃ dānaṃ. Yāya pana attanā paribhuñjitabba,bhāvena gahita,vatthussa eka,deso saṃvibhajitvā dīyati, ayaṃ saṃvibhāgo* (ItA 1:87).

²⁴ **Deva,datta Vatthu** (DhA 1.7/1:78)

²⁵ *Upāsakā eko sayam dānaṃ deti, param na samādapeti, so nibbatta,nibbatta-ṭ,ṭhāne bhoga,sampadaṃ labhati, no parivāra,sampadaṃ. | Eko sayam dānaṃ na deti, param samādapeti, so nibbatta,nibbatta-ṭ,ṭhāne parivāra,sampadaṃ no bhoga,sampadaṃ. | Eko sayam pi na dānaṃ deti, param pi na samādapeti, so nibbatta,nibbatta-ṭ,ṭhāne kañjika,mattam pi kucchi,pūraṃ na labhati, anātho hoti nippaccayo. | Eko sayam pi dānaṃ deti, param pi samādapeti, so nibbatta,nibbatta-ṭ,ṭhāne atta,bhāva,sate pi atta,bhāva,sahasse pi atta,bhāva,sata,sahasse bhoga,sampadaṃ c’eva labhati parivāra,sampadaṃ ca labhati.*

²⁶ See **Group karma**, SD 39.1 (2.5).

²⁷ As understood by Ñānamoli, who tr it as “giving and sharing” (Nett:Ñ 1962:184,22+30), and followed by Bodhi (S:B 1795,37, 1796,7).

²⁸ See A K Warder, *Introduction to Pali*, 2nd ed 1974:252.

The Chamberlain Discourse

S 55.6/5:348-252

1 Originating in Sāvaththī.

Robe-making for the Buddha

2 Now at the time, some monks were engaged in robe-making for the Blessed One, thinking:

“At the end of three months, with the completion of this robe, the Blessed One will go on a walking tour.”²⁹

Isi,datta and Purāṇa

3 Now at that time, the chamberlains, Isi,datta and Purāṇa,³⁰ were staying in Sādhuka on some business. The chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa heard thus:

“Some monks, it is said, engaged in robe-making for the Blessed One, thinking:

‘At the end of three months, with the completion of this robe, the Blessed One will go on a walking tour.’”

They meet the Buddha

4 Then the chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa posted a man on the road, saying:

“My good man, if you were to see the Blessed One, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, coming, you must tell us!”

5 After waiting there for two or three days, the man saw the Blessed One coming from afar.

Upon seeing him, he approached the chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa, and said this to them:

“Bhante, this Blessed One, the arhat, fully self-awakened one, is coming. Please do as you deem fit.”

6 Then the chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and followed close behind him.

7 Then the Blessed One came down from the road and approached the foot of a certain tree, and sat down on a seat that has been spread out [349].

The chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa then approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the chamberlains Isi,datta and Purāṇa said this to the Blessed One:

The Buddha’s departing journey

8 “Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving Sāvaththī to walk amongst the Kosalas, at that time, we are displeased, we are saddened,³¹ thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* far away from us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* Sāvaththī to walk amongst the Kosalas, at that time, we are displeased, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* far away from us!’

9 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving the Kosalas to walk amongst the Malas, at that time, we are displeased, we are saddened, thinking:

²⁹ *Tena kho pana समयेना sambahulā bhikkhū bhagavato cīvara,kammaṃ karonti, “Niṭṭhita,cīvaro bhagavā te,-mās’accayena cārikam pakkamissatīti.* As at **Bhaddāli S** (M 65/1:438,9), SD 56.2; **Thapati S** (S 55.6/5:348,11), SD 42.7; (**Mahānāma**) **Gilāyana S** (S 55.54/5:408,9), SD 4.10; **Mahānāma S 1** (A 11.12/5:328,12); **Mahānāma S 2** (A 11.13/5:332,28); **Nandiya S** (A 11.14/5:335,8). “Walking tour,” *cārika*, ie on a Dharma teaching peregrination.

³⁰ See Intro (2).

³¹ “At that time, we are displeased,” *hoti no tasmim samaye anattamanatā*; alt tr “we feel no delight in that moment.” While the tr above means that the chamberlains are saddened at the *thought* of the Buddha’s leaving, this alt tr refers to their sadness to know that the Buddha *has* left.

‘The Blessed One *will be* far away from us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* the Kosalas to walk amongst the Mallas, we are displeased, at that time, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* far away from us!’

10 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving the Mallas to walk amongst the Vajjīs, at that time, we are displeased, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* far away from us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* the Mallas to walk amongst the Vajjīs, we are displeased, at that time, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* far away from us!’

11 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving the Vajjīs to walk in Kāsī [amongst the Kāsīs],³² at that time, we are displeased, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* far away from us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* the Vajjīs to walk in Kāsī, at that time, we are displeased, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* far away from us!’

12 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving Kāsī [the Kāsīs] to walk in Magadha [amongst the Māgadhas], at that time, [350] we are displeased, we are saddened, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* far away from us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* Kāsī [the Kāsīs] to walk in Magadha, at that time, we are displeased in no small way,³³ we are saddened in no small way, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* far away from us!’

The Buddha’s return journey

13 But, bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving Magadha [the Māgadhas] to walk in Kāsī [amongst the Kāsīs], at that time, [350] we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* near to us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* Magadha to walk in Kāsī, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* near to us!’

14 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving Kāsī [the Kāsīs] to walk amongst the Vajjīs, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* near to us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* Kāsī to walk amongst the Vajjīs, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* near to us!’

15 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving the Vajjīs to walk amongst the Mallas, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* near to us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* the Vajjīs to walk amongst the Mallas, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* near to us!’

16 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving the Mallas to walk amongst the Kosalas [in Kosala], at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* near to us!’

Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *has left* the Mallas to walk amongst the Kosalas, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

³² Be Ce *kāsīsu*; Ee Se *kāsīm*.

³³ “In no small way,” *anappakā* = *na* (“not”) + *appa* (“little”) + *ka* (adj suffix), lit “not a little, very much.” This is because this is when the Buddha is the farthest away from the chamberlains, who are in Sāvattthī of the Kosalas.

‘The Blessed One *is* near to us!’

17.1 Bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *will be* leaving the Kosalas to walk in Sāvattthī, at that time, we are pleased, we are delighted, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *will be* near to us!’

17.2 But, bhante, when we hear that the Blessed One *is residing* in Anātha,piṇḍika’s park in Jeta’s grove at Sāvattthī, at that time, we are pleased in no small way, we are delighted in no small way, thinking:

‘The Blessed One *is* near to us!’”

The freedom of renunciation

18.1 “Indeed, chamberlains, that’s because the household life is a confinement, a dusty path. The going-forth is like the open air.³⁴

18.2 This is enough for you, chamberlains, to be diligent!”

The brothers’ spirituality

19.1 “There is, bhante, another confinement that is even more confining and regarded as truly more confining, than that.”³⁵ [351]

19.2 “Now, what, chamberlains, is the other confinement that is even more confining and regarded as truly more confining, than that?”

20.1 “Here, bhante, when the Kosala rajah Pasenadi wishes to visit the royal garden [pleasure-grounds], we have to prepare the Kosala rajah Pasenadi’s royal elephants, and to seat his consorts, one before him, the other behind him.³⁶

20.2 And, bhante, the fragrance of these sisters³⁷ is just like that of a perfume casket that is left open—so are these women decked with fragrance.³⁸

20.3 And, bhante, the bodily touch of these sisters is just like that of tuft of down or of cotton—so are these royal maidens raised in comfort.³⁹

20.4 And, bhante, at times, too, we have to look after [guard] the royal elephants; we have to look after the sisters, too; we have to look after ourselves, too.⁴⁰

³⁴ *Tasmā ti ha thapatayo sambādho ghar’āvāso rajā,patho, abbhokāso pabbajjā.* Without *tasmā ti ha thapatayo*, this is stock: **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,12/1:240,20), SD 49.4; **Mahā Taṇhā Saṅkhaya S** (M 38,32/1:267,24), SD 7.10; **Kandaraka S** (M 51,13/1:344,30), SD 32.9; **Saṅgārava S** (M 100,9/2:211,29), SD 10.9; **Deva,daha S** (M 101,31/2:226,8), SD 18.4; **Cha-b,bisodhana S** (M 112,12/3:33,8), SD 59.7; **Danta,bhūmi S** (M 125,14/3:134,2), SD 46.3; **Cvara S** (S 16.11,14/2:219,25), SD 77.5; **Thapati S** (S 55.6,18+22/5:350,23, 351,21), SD 42.7; **Attan Tapa S** (A 4.198,7/2:208,23) = (Pug 4.24/57,12), SD 56.7; **(Durabhisambhava) Upāli S** (A 10.99,5/5:204,17), SD 30.9.

³⁵ *Atthi kho no bhante etamhā sambādhā añño sambādho sambādha,taro c’eva sambādha,saṅkhāta,taro cāti.*

³⁶ *Idha mayam bhante yadā rājā pasenadi kosalo uyyāna,bhūmim niyyātu,kāmo hoti, ye te rañño pasenadissa kosalassa nāgā opavayhā [Be Ce Ee so; Se oparuyhā], te kappetvā, yā tā rañño pasenadissa kosalassa pajāpatiyo piyā manāpā, tā ekam purato ekam pacchato nisīdāpema.*

³⁷ They are “sisters” (*bhaginī*): hence, they are likely to be **Somā and Sakulā**, both being devout followers of the Buddha. They are mentioned in **Kaṇṇaka-t,thala S** (M 90,3/2:125 f = SD 10.8; MA 3:356). Somā is prob the eminent laywoman listed in A 8.99/4:347,21, without any detail. There is the nun Somā of **Somā S** (S 5.2/1:128), whose verses are in S 5.2* = Thī 60-61 (but the 3rd verses in S 5.2 & Thī 63 differ). Comy identifies here as the daughter of king Bimbisāra’s chaplain (ThīA 64) :: ThīA:P 87-90. The name Somā does not appear anywhere else in the suttas. There is a nun **Sakulā** (Ce Ee Ke Se; but Be *bakulā*) of Sāvattthī (AA 1:367) who is declared the foremost of nuns with the divine eye (A 1.242/1:25), and whose verses are at Thī 97-101:: ThīA:P 120-125; Ap 2:570*, 572*, 596*. There is no evidence that the 2 consorts and the 2 nuns are the same people.

³⁸ *Tāsam kho pana bhante bhaginīnam eva,rūpo gandho hoti, seyyathā’pi nāma gandha,karaṇḍakassa tāvad eva vivariyamānassa yathā tam rāja,kaññānam [Be Se so; Ce rājārahena] gandhena vibhūsitānam.*

³⁹ *Tāsam kho pana bhante bhaginīnam eva,rūpo kāya,samphasso hoti, seyyathā’pi nāma tūla,picuno vā kappāsa,-picuno vā yathā tam rāja,kaññānam sukhe thitānam [Se so; Be Ce Ee sukhe,dhitānam].*

21.1 Yet we know not any bad thought that arising towards these sisters.

21.2 This, bhante, is the other confinement that is even more confining and regarded as truly more confining than that.”⁴¹

22.1 “Indeed, chamberlains, that’s because the household life is a confinement, a dusty path. The going-forth is like the open air.

22.2 This is enough for you, chamberlains, to be diligent!”

The 4 qualities of a streamwinner

23 The noble disciple, chamberlains, who has these **four qualities is a streamwinner**,⁴² not bound for the lower world,⁴³ sure of liberation, bound for awakening.

What are the four?

24.1 (1) Here, chamberlains, the noble disciple is accomplished in wise faith⁴⁴ in the Buddha thus: ‘So too, is he the Blessed One:⁴⁵ for, he is

arhat,
fully self-awakened,
accomplished in wisdom and conduct,
well-farer,
knower of worlds,
peerless guide of tamable persons,

⁴⁰ *Tasmim kho pana bhante samaye nāgo pi rakkhitabbo hoti, tā pi bhaginiyo rakkhitabbā honti, attā pi rakkhitabbo hoti.*

⁴¹ Ie, more confined that the one mentioned by the Buddha at §18.1.

⁴² Here simply called “the 4 qualities” (*catu dhamma*) of streamwinning. See (4) below & Intro (1.1.4).

⁴³ *Avinīpāta*, alt tr “not fated for birth in a suffering state”; opp of *vinīpāta*, “the world of suffering,” another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggatī*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*) (Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 woeful courses (*pañca, gati*) (D 3:234=33.2.1, A 11.68) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal birth (*tirachāna, yoni*), the ghost realm (*pitti, visaya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first three are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura, kāya*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are “happy courses” (*sugati*). For a discussion, see Nyanaponika & Bodhi (tr), *Numerical Discourses of the Buddha*, 1999:14-19. See **Pañsa, gati S** (A 9.68/4:459) = SD 2.29.

⁴⁴ “Wise faith,” *avecca-p, pasāda*. This is a syntactical cpd with *avecca* (Sky *avetya*) absolutive of **aveti*, “he undergoes, knows, experiences.” [On syntactical cpds, see K R Norman, 1991a:3.] There are 2 kinds of faith (*saddhā*): (1) “rootless faith” (*amūlika, saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith. (M 2:170,21); (2) “faith with a good cause” (*ākāravati, saddhā*), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320,8, 401,23). “Wise faith” is syn with (2). **Amūlika** = “not seen, not heard, not suspected” (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy). **Gethin** speaks of two kinds of faith: the cognitive and the affective (eg ERE: Faith & Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963:387): “Faith in its cognitive dimension is seen as concerning belief in propositions or statements of which one does not—or perhaps cannot—have knowledge proper (however that should be defined); cognitive faith is a mode of knowing in a different category from that knowledge. Faith in its affective dimension is a more straightforward positive response to trust or confidence towards something or somebody...the conception of *saddhā* in Buddhist writings appears almost, if not entirely affective, the cognitive element is completely secondary.” (Gethin 2001:207; my emphases). The streamwinner’s faith is defined in **Vimaṃsaka S** (M 47) as “his faith is strong, supported by reasons, rooted in vision” (*ākāra, vatī saddhā dassana, mūlikā dalhā*, M 47.16/1:320).

⁴⁵ Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord]...” On the meaning of **iti pi so**, see CPD: **iti**: ...*kitti-saddo abbhuggato*: “~ **pi so bhagavā**: *arahaṃ sammā-sambuddho*...” (“for the following reasons, too, he is a *bhagavā*: because he is *arahaṃ*...”), V 3:1,13 = D 1:49,27 = M 2:133,22 = S 1:219,31 = A 3:312,8, qu Vism 198,4 and MahvṬ 26,11 (VA 112,4 = DA 146,5 ≈ Vism 198,8: *so bhagavā ~ pi arahaṃ ~ pi sammāsambuddho ...iminā ca iminā ca kāraṇenā ti vuttam hoti*). Translating *iti pi so* this way explains the double occurrence of *Bhagavā*. See L S Cousins, “Review of *Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*,” in *Journal of Buddhist Ethics* 4, 1997: 165. The Skt parallel to this opening reads: *Iti hi sa bhagavāṃ tathāgato*, but *tathāgato* here is missing from the Pali version. See **Dhajagga S** (S 11.3) = SD 15.5 (2).

teacher of gods and humans,
awakened,
blessed.’

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

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

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

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

These four pairs of persons,

the eight individuals, are this Blessed One’s community of holy disciples:
worthy of offerings,
worthy of hospitality,
worthy of gifts,
worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,
an incomparable field of merit for the world.’

(4) He dwells at home with a heart free from the stain of stinginess, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in giving, devoted to charity, delighting to have a share in giving.⁴⁶

24.2 The noble disciple, chamberlains, who has these four qualities is a streamwinner [352], not bound for the lower world, sure of liberation, bound for awakening.

The chamberlains as streamwinners

25.1 Now, chamberlains,

(1) you are accomplished in wise faith in the Buddha thus:

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

(2) You are accomplished with wise faith in the Dharma thus:

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

(3) You are accomplished with wise faith in the Sangha thus:

⁴⁶ *Vigata, mala, maccherena cetasā ajjh’āgāram vasati* [Ce *agāram ajjhāvasati*] *mutta, cāgo payata, pāṇi vossagga, rato yāca, yogo dāna, saṁvibhāga, rato*. See Intro (3.1).

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

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

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

(4) You dwell at home with a heart free from the stain of stinginess, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in giving, devoted to charity, delighting to have a share in giving.

25.2 Whatever, in your family, that is suitable for giving, all that you have unreservedly shared with the morally virtuous and good by nature.⁴⁷

26.1 What do you think, chamberlains, how many people are there amongst these Kosalas who are your equals in regard to partaking of a share in giving.⁴⁸

26.2 “This, bhante, is a gain for us! This, bhante, is well-gained by us, that the Blessed One knows thus of us!”

— evaṃ —

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⁴⁷ *Yaṃ kho pana kiñci kule deyya, dhammaṃ, sabbam taṃ appaṭivibhattaṃ sīlavantehi kalyāṇa, dhammehi.*

⁴⁸ *Taṃ kiṃ maññatha thapatayo, kati, vidhā [Se kati viyā] te kosalesu manussā ye tumhākaṃ samasamā yad idaṃ dāna, saṃvibhāgēti [Se dāna, saṃbhogehīti].*