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Ariya, vāsa Sutta 1

The First Discourse on the Noble Abidings | A 10.19

Theme: The 10 qualities of an arhat

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2013

1 Meaning of *ariya, vāsa*

1.1 ETYMOLOGY AND DEFINITION

1.1.1 The term *ariya, vāsa*, meaning “noble abiding(s),” “observance(s) of the noble ones,” or “the noble ones’ way of life,” (usually in the plural) refers to a comprehensive list of qualities of the arhats and the Buddha himself.¹ It comes from *ariya* (adj), “noble” (here referring to the arhat)² + *vāsa*, a verbal noun from √VAS (2),³ “to dwell,” the verb of which is *vasati*, “he dwells.” Here, however, *ariya* has a more limited sense, referring only to the arhat and the Buddha.

It is obvious that the 10 noble abidings describe the way of life of an arhat (including the Buddha), especially the last two qualities which refer to (9) the liberation of mind (*svvimutta, citta = ceto, vimutti*) and (10) the liberation by wisdom (*svvimutta, pañña = paññā, vimutti*). These are the sterling twin qualities of the full-fledged arhat.⁴

1.1.2 The verb *vasati*, when used with *brahma, cariya* or *uposatha*, means “to observe or keep,” as in *brahma, cariyam vasati*, “he lives the holy life,” and *uposatham vasati*, “he keeps the precept-day.” One who keeps such an observance is said to be *vusitava(t)*. Similarly, one keeping to the 10 noble abidings is spoken of as “*ariya, vāsam vasati*. However, as we note below, all the manuscripts of the Ariya, vāsa Suttas use the verb *āvasati*.

The verb *āvasati*, from *ā* + √VAS, “to dwell,” means “to live at or in, inhabit, reside, stay.”⁵ It is also used in a figurative sense as a synonym for *vasati*, that is, “to keep to, practise, observe (the precept day).”⁶ However, we only find its plural form in the suttas, such as in this key sentence from **the Ariya, vāsa Sutta 1** (A 10.19):

Bhikshus, there are these 10 noble abidings in which the noble ones abided, or are abiding, or will abide.

*Dasa-y-ime bhikkhave ariya, vāsā, ye ariyā āvasimsu vā āvasanti vā āvasissanti vā.*⁷ [§1]

1.1.3 This sentence on the noble abidings [1.1.2] refers to the 3 periods of time (the past, the present and the future). There is the past tense (aorist): *āvasimsu*, “they abided (or lived)”; the present tense: *āvasanti*, “they abide,” but here it is better idiomatically rendered as “are abiding” (present continuous); and the future tense: *āvasissanti*, “they will abide.” This is a statement on the immutability of the truth of the

¹ Attr to the Buddha in a paean sung by Sakra, lord of the devas, in the guise of a brahmin youth as he leads the congregation of monks into Rāja, gaha.

² On the 4 kinds of saints, see **Alagaddūpama S** (M 22,42-47), SD 3.13 ≈ **Ānāpāna, sati S** (M 118,9-12), SD 7.13.

³ See DP, sv.

⁴ On *ceto, vimutti* and *paññā, vimutti*, see **Mahā, nidāna S** (D 15,36.2/2:71) & SD 5.17 (10.1), also **Kūṭāgiri S** (M 70,14 etc/1:477 f) & SD 11.1 (5.2).

⁵ M 2:72; S 1:42; Sn 43, 805, 1134; Nm 123, 127; Nc 133; J 6:317.

⁶ Sn 469 f, 1088 (= *saṃvasati āvasati parivasati* Nc 558); PvA 3, 12, 78 (imp *vasatha*); *uposatham vasam* (pres participle) keeping the precept-day (J 6:232); *brahmacarīyam vasati*, “to live the holy life” (M 1:515). For other grammatical forms, see PED: sv *vasati* (2).

⁷ A 5:29,9, 30,3, cf D 3:269,10 = 291,4. Comys: “**The noble abidings** means only they abided, are abiding, will abide in them, that is, the noble abidings,” *ariyāvāsā’ti ariyā eva vasimsu vasanti vasissanti etesūti ariya, vāsā*, (DA 3:1051,3); “**The noble abidings** are the abodes of the noble one: ‘They abided, are abiding, will abide,’ that is to say, ‘the noble abidings’,” *ariya, vāsā’ti ariyānam āvāso, te āvasimsu āvasanti āvasissanti ariyāvāsā* (AA 5:7). Vibhaṅga Comy qu the Sutta sentences and then adds: “For this Sutta shows the state of the path as abiding. Therefore, this is properly stated; *etañ hi suttaṃ maggassa vāsbhāvaṃ dīpeti; tasmā sukathitam evetan’ti* (VbhA 459,-32).

goodness of the noble saint. This is a timeless reality, in the sense that the saint is no more troubled by the world, that is impermanent.

1.2 AN ARIYA, VĀSA RECITER. The Sammoha,vinodanī (the Vibhaṅga Commentary) makes an interesting remark on the term *ariya, vāsa*:

Now the one with disputed view [the disputatious speaker] (*viṭaṇḍin*)⁸ said: “The path goes about destroying a dwelling.” He should be asked, “Are you a reciter of the noble dwellings (*ariya.vāsa, bhāṇaka*) or are you not?”

If he says, “No, I’m not,” then he should be told, “On account of not being such a reciter, you know not.”

If he says, “I am a reciter,” he should be told, “Cite a sutta.” If he does so, it is good. If he does not, then one should cite it oneself, thus:

“Bhikshus, there are these 10 noble abidings in which the noble ones abided, or are abiding, or will abide.” [§2]. For this Sutta shows the state of the path as abiding. Therefore, this is properly stated.⁹ (VbhA 459,28)

Of special interest is the term, *viṭaṇḍī*, which can be translated either as “one of disputed view(s)” or “a disputatious speaker.” In the **Dīpa,vaṁsa**, it clearly refers to some form of Mahāyāna (Dīpv 22.43+45). In the non-Buddhist Nyaya philosophical terminology, *viṭaṇḍā* describes “a negative critique where the proponent does not put forward any arguments to establish his own position” (*Nyāya,sūtra* 1.2.2).¹⁰ As such, it is sometimes negatively applied to the Mādhyamikas.¹¹ As Cousins notes, the occurrence of this term in the Pali commentaries suggests an earlier usage associated with the kind of issue with which the Kathā,vatthu (the latest of the canonical Abhidhamma book) is concerned with, that is, pre-Mahāyāna or proto-Mahāyāna.¹²

2 Occurrences of the *ariya, vāsa* set

2.1 CITATIONS. The 10 noble abidings (*dasa ariya, vāsa*) are listed or explained in these texts:

Vinaya	the 10 abidings (<i>dasa, vāsa</i>) (only as a heading)	Mv 1.22.13/V 1:38,22
Saṅgīti Sutta	the 10 noble abidings (<i>dasa ariya, vāsa</i>)	D 33,3.3(5)/3:269 f
Das’uttara Sutta	the 10 things hard to penetrate (<i>dasa duppaṭivijjhā</i>)	D 34,2.3(7)/3:291
Paṭilīna Sutta	defines only abidings nos 5, 6, and 8	A 4.38/2:41 f @ SD 43.10
Ariya, vāsa Sutta 1	the 10 noble abidings (<i>dasa ariya, vāsa</i>) listed	A 10.19/5:29 @ SD 43.14
Ariya, vāsa Sutta 2	details of the 10 noble abidings (<i>dasa ariya, vāsa</i>)	A 10.20/5:29 f @ SD 43.15

2.1.1 The Mahā,yagga of the **Vinaya** [see above] contains a paeon attributing these 10 qualities (amongst others) to the Buddha himself, and it is sung by Sakra, lord of the devas, in the guise of a brahmin youth as he leads the congregation of monks into Rāja,gaha. There only the brief term *dasa, vāsa*,

⁸ This term recurs in Vbh §§39, 252, 1563. For Pali refs on the *viṭaṇḍī*, See Sodo Mori, “The Viṭaṇḍins (Sophists) as seen in the Pāli Aṭṭhakathā,” in *Essays on the Pāli and Buddhist Civilization*, Tokyo: Soc for the Study of Pali and Buddhist Civilization, 1982:1-18.

⁹ *Viṭaṇḍa, vādī pan’āha* “maggo nāma vāsaṃ viddhamsento gacchati, nanu tvam maggo vāsoti vadesīti? So vattabbo “tvam ariya.vāsa, bhāṇako hosi na hosīti? Sace pana “na homīti vadati, “abhāṇakatāya na jānāsīti vattabbo. Sace “bhāṇako’smīti vadati, ”suttam āharāti vattabbo. Sace āharati, icc’etaṃ kusalam; no ce āharati sayam āharitabbam “dasa-y-ime, bhikkhave, ariya, vāsā, ye ariyā āvasimsu vā āvasanti vā āvasissanti vā’ti. Etañ hi suttam maggassa vāsa, bhāvaṃ dīpeti. Tasmā sukathitam evetan’ti. (VbhA 459)

¹⁰ L S Cousins’ n in VbhA:CMS 2:219 n91.

¹¹ See D S Ruegg, *LA Théorie du Tathāgatagarbha et du Gotra*, Paris, 1969:338 & “Towards a chronology of the Madhyamaka school,” in L A Hercus et al, *Indological and Buddhist Studies*, Delhi, 1982:521 nn 65, 66.

¹² L S Cousins’ n in VbhA:CMS 2:219 n91.

“the 10 abidings” is used (VA 973). This Vinaya verse is quoted in the Jātaka Nidāna, kathā (J 1:84)¹³ and the Apadāna Commentary (ApA 89).

2.1.2 The Saṅgīti Sutta (D 33) first briefly lists the 10 noble abidings, and then by way of questioning how each of them is fulfilled, answers them just as in **the Ariya, vāsa Sutta 2** (A 10.20)¹⁴ [2.1.6].

2.1.3 The Das’uttara Sutta (D 34) repeats the definition of the 10 noble abidings in **the Saṅgīti Sutta**, but simply called them “the 10 things hard to penetrate” (*dasa duppaṭivijjhā*).¹⁵

2.1.4 The Paṭilīna Sutta (A 4.38) describes the 3 wholesome qualities of a “withdrawn” (*paṭilīna*) meditator, that is, he is one “who has put aside personal truths” (*panuṇṇa, pacceka, sacca*), “completely given up seeking” (*samavaya, saṭṭh’esana*) and “stilled bodily activity” (*passaddha, kāya, saṅkhāra*).¹⁶ These qualities form noble abidings nos 5, 6, and 8. It is likely that the Paṭilīna Sutta, being a short Sutta, dealing with an accomplished dhyana-attainer, or all the 4 kinds of saints, or more specifically, the non-returner and the arhat, is an earlier work. In due course, all the related teachings were collated into a more comprehensive set of 10 noble abidings as a sort of definitive standard for the awakened saint, that is, the Buddha and the arhat.

2.1.5 The Ariya, vāsa Sutta 1 (A 10.19) lists the 10 noble abidings without any comment.¹⁷ At first glance, we might think that this Sutta is redundant, because **the Ariya, vāsa Sutta 2** (A 10.20) also has this listing, along with its definitions of each of them. However, if we take the Ariya, vāsa Sutta 2 as the “teaching” Sutta, then we would take the Ariya, vāsa Sutta 1 as the “reflective” Sutta, the one that we would use for reflecting on before we go on to sit in meditation.

2.1.6 The Ariya, vāsa Sutta 2 (A 10.20) lists the 10 noble abidings, and then defines each of them in turn,¹⁸ summarized thus:¹⁹

- (1) The one of noble abiding has overcome the 5 mental hindrances [§4], which means that he is a dhyana-attainer.
- (2) He is one who is accomplished in sense-restraint regarding all his 6 sense-faculties. [§5]
- (3) His mind is well guarded with mindfulness. [§6]
- (4) He is mentally well-adjusted and mindful in the use of his life-supports, so that no mental defilements arise in this connection. [§7]
- (5) Rejecting all philosophical and religious speculating, and disputatious engagements, he understands the nature of views. [§8]
- (6) He has given up all religious shopping around or using the religious life as a quest for any kind of worldliness. [§9]
- (7) His mind is pure and peaceful, free of any thought of greed, ill will or violence. [§10]
- (8) He is an accomplished dhyana-attainer to even the 4th dhyana (when breathing stops). [§11]
- (9) His mind is fully liberated from the 3 unwholesome roots. [§12]
- (10) He is totally awakened through his wisdom in fully understanding the 4 noble truths (even if he is still unable to attain the 4 formless attainments).²⁰ [§13]

2.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE *ARIYA, VĀSA* SET

2.2.1 Sutta age. The Ariya, vāsa Sutta 1 shows a remarkable set of familiar technical terms. Such a lack of technicality clearly reflects the possible earliness of the Sutta. However, for such a systematic set

¹³ This is the intro to Jātaka Comy (with its stories and glosses). This intro is an important account of the Buddha’s lives from the time of his first aspiration as a Bodhisattva Sumedha before the Buddha Dīpaṅkara, through his penultimate rebirth in Tusita, and his life on earth up to the donation of Jetavana. For an Eng tr, see N A Jayawickrama, *The Story of the Buddha*, Oxford: PTS, 1990.

¹⁴ D 33,3.3(5)/3:269 f.

¹⁵ D 34,2.3(7)/3:291.

¹⁶ A 4.38/2:41 f @ SD 43.10.

¹⁷ A 10.19/5:29 @ SD 43.14

¹⁸ A 10.20/5:29-32 @ SD 43.15.

¹⁹ For details of each of these 10 noble abidings, see SD 43.15 (2).

²⁰ The arhat who is also able to attain the 4 formless attainments (*arūpa samāpatti*) is known as “the one liberated both ways” (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*): see SD 43.15 (2.10).

possibly means that it is not too early either. It is possible this Sutta belongs sometime in the middle years of the Buddha's public ministry, that is, late during the first period, or early in the second period.²¹

Note here how the 10 terms are known by their later technical terms, thus:

<u>The 10 noble abidings</u>	<u>(ariya,vāsa)</u>	<u>Technical terms</u>	
(1) abandoned the 5 factors	<i>pañc'aṅga, vipphāhīno hoti</i>	the 5 hindrances	<i>pañc'indriya</i>
(2) accomplished in the 6 limbs	<i>cha-l-aṅga, samannāgato</i>	sense-restraint	<i>driya, samvara</i>
(3) guarded in the one	<i>ek'ārakkho</i>	full awareness	<i>sampajañña</i>
(4) the 4 mental supports	<i>catur'āpasseno</i>	moral virtue regard- ing the supports	<i>paccaya, san- nissita, sīla</i>
(5) put aside personal truths	<i>paṇunna, pacceka, sacco</i>	learner	<i>sekhā</i>
(6) completely given up seeking	<i>samavaya, saṭṭh'esano</i>	non-learner	<i>asekha</i>
(7) with untroubling thoughts	<i>anāvila, saṅkappo</i>	mental calm	<i>samatha</i>
(8) bodily activity stilled	<i>passaddha, kāya, saṅkhāro</i>	dhyana	<i>jhāna</i>
(9) mentally well liberated	<i>suvimutta, citto</i>	mental liberation	<i>ceto, vimutti</i>
(10) well liberated in wisdom	<i>suvimutta, paññā</i>	liberation by wisdom	<i>paññā, vimutti</i>

Note how the non-technical references to the arhat's various mental qualities, and how later we have the technical terms related to such states. Such technical terms are very useful in regard to the training of the practitioner. Indeed, these terms become vitally staple in the developed suttas of the second period.

2.2.2 Ecumenical dialogue

2.2.2.1 As we have noted, the Vibhaṅga Commentary upholds the Ariya,vāsa Sutta (that is, the teaching of the 10 noble abodes) as a sort of spiritual standard, even a sort of "confession of faith," that distinguishes an orthodox Dharma practitioner from a heterodox "**disputatious speaker**" (*vitaṇḍin*) [1.2], or simply a true Buddhist from a false one.

These *vitaṇḍins* are the precursors or an early version of the Mahāyāna and later Buddhisms or forms of Buddhism. In other words, these new developments, although claiming the Buddha as their teacher, went their own way to divert from the Buddha's teaching, even to displace the Buddha with their own ideals or deity.

2.2.2.2 It is clear from such discourses as **the Udumbarikā Siha,nāda Sutta** (D 25) that the Buddha, although the world's first spiritual missionary, is not a self-righteous evangelist preaching with a vengeance or blindness to the spiritual state of the audience. Essentially, this means that as Buddhists, we are not out to convert anyone. It is meaningless to "convert" another when they do not really understand the nature of religious conversion, and vital difference between having faith in some belief and really knowing how to identify and solve their real personal problems. This fact applies just as well to the different kinds of Buddhists that we meet or have to deal with.²²

2.2.2.3 A useful skill to have in ecumenical dialogue, or reaching out to our own fellow Buddhists, is that of **deep listening**. This is a listening to understand what the other person's views really are, and why he holds them. Often those who hold such views are not receptive of any other, except what they see as endorsing, or at least not contradicting, their own.

This is also called **the "why" approach**. When a view is expressed or explained, we ask "why" the person thinks so. This approach might end up in some absurd answer given by the other person, which may help him to realize he is wrong. It is good if he is able to see his own wrong view without our having to say it to him. Otherwise, as his learning and wisdom grow, what we have shared with him would help him think rightly for himself.

If what we hear from the other person troubles us, or reveals itself as a part of a troubling broader pattern, we should carefully note the key ideas, define them well, and give a helpful response by way of a Dharma-moved **reflection**. Such a reflection should compassionately explain the dangers or disadvantages

²¹ On the 2 periods, see **Notion of diṭṭhi**, SD 40a.1 (1.3).

²² See SD 1.4 (2): The Buddha's challenge to religion.

es of the view, and what the suttas have to say. Even if such a reflection does not change the views of the intended person, if it is published widely enough, it would warn others of the wrong view and how to think for themselves.

2.2.2.4 In an **open forum**, whether amongst different kinds of Buddhists or different faiths, we need to be civil and yet stand up for the Dharma. One helpful way is the “recycle” method. Listen carefully to a key or good idea by the speaker, even if it is a statement of that person’s faith, then remodel it on a Dharma teaching or approach. For example, if the speaker claims that we all need to be “reborn” anew into that faith, we can carefully, even with a touch of humour, explain that Buddhists believe rebirth to occur to us whether we like it or not, but the difference is that it depends on our own actions and decisions.

Another effective, even enjoyable, way of stressing a point or rebutting a wrong view, is the use of stories and parables. There are many parables of the Buddha and Jātaka stories we can use, or we even re-tell such charming anecdotes as those of the Sufi Nasruddin (which are in fact often quoted by Buddhist speakers). The point here is not to belittle or confuse the audience, but highlight our point with wit and charm in good humour.

2.2.3 A spiritual standard

2.2.3.1 After the Buddha’s time, while forest Buddhism continues mostly the way it was in the Buddha’s time, urban Buddhism became more organized and wealthier. In such a situation, understandably there would be competition for financial, material and worldly support by the wealthy and the powerful.

Donors and supporters would obviously be attracted to those monastics who at least appear to be Vinaya-abiding, knowledgeable in the Dharma, and perhaps have some “psychic” powers or charisma—this is true even today. As such, it would be more advantageous for such monastics to be tolerant of one another, despite their differing practices and beliefs.

2.2.3.2 The stricter monastics and monasteries, especially if they are more inclined to the contemplative tradition, would attract a sizable patronage of the wealthy and the powerful for the other urban monastics would probably have to excel in some other ways to support themselves. Those who were not inclined to meditation, or did not do it well enough, would probably find it more profitable to excel in an academic mastery of Buddhism, even take up an academic career.

This academic approach—the burden of the books (*gantha, dhura*)²³—eventually led to the rise of the great Buddhist universities, the world’s first. Their curriculum, of course, included meditation, but the emphasis was, as a rule, “academic” or “scholarly” meditation: our modern counterpart of this would be something like “*jhāna studies*” or “*dhyana science*” or a “psychology of meditation.” In short, this is a worldly face of a contemplative tradition.

Historically, this was the period of the rise of a more book-based and philosophically inclined Buddhism, such as seen in the Mahāyāna. This was not a unified event like the history of western Christianity, but more of a free-for-all theological and polemical development, with brilliant or opportune gurus or writers who fabricated their own doctrines or compiled their own texts. A good example of this revisionist and heterodox work is the Lotus Sutra, that notoriously declare that arhats still need to attain Buddhahood (in the Mahāyāna sense)²⁴ and promotes itself above all else, including a terrible curse.²⁵ These are self-destructive teachings that we must correct and avoid with great spiritual diligence and wisdom.

Some of these texts could have been innovated or evolved in the mouths of followers of the groups that had formed around such luminaries. The general tendency was to popularize Buddhism and show it to be more engaged with the world and satisfying the wishes and needs of the masses, or at least the devotees. For example, the early Buddhist notion of the *bodhisatta* as a historical precursor of the awakened buddha is now viewed as a socially-engaged model of compassion on one level and a god-like figure of cosmic dimensions on another. A classic example of this is the Mahāyāna **Bodhisattva**.

²³ The other burden is that of meditation (*vipassanā, dhura*). On the 2 burdens (*dhura*), see **(Dullābha) Mahā Cunda S** (A 6.46), SD 4.6.

²⁴ See eg “Prediction for the 500 disciples” (*pañca, bhikṣu, sata, vyākaraṇa, parivartaḥ*).

²⁵ See esp the verse at the end of ch 3, “A parable” (*aupamyā, parivartaḥ*). Further see SD 40b (2.8.2). For other Mahāyāna “Sutras” revising early Buddhism or attacking the historical Buddha, see SD 40b (2.8.3).

2.2.3.3 As religious competition grew within Buddhism, and sectarian threats loomed from without, the Buddhist skies of India and Central Asia grew darker, and in their shadows we see the Siddhas, the charismatic holy men or religious adepts who were conceived as being totally in harmony with their environment, who were under no constraint whatsoever, and, as free agents, were believed to be able to manipulate the cosmic forces both within and without. This period (around 500-1500) was dominated by the indigenizations, innovations and shamanism of Tantric Buddhism.

2.2.3.4 Such a Buddhism obviously did not mushroom by chance, but arose and evolved as a response to the moods and needs of society. During the next 500 years (1500-2000), we have a Buddhism that centred around **the Seths**,²⁶ professionals, entrepreneurs or luminaries, especially those with social status and wealth, or some kind of respectable titles, which were perceived as blessings of good karma, and, as such, worthy of emulation and respect as teachers or leaders.

This period started off with western colonialism, which brought the westerners into contact with oriental culture and Buddhism. It was a Buddhist development deeply influenced by western pioneers of Buddhism, who saw Buddhism as a counterweight against Christianity. A significant development here is that of Protestant Buddhism, mostly championed by modernist Sinhalese Buddhists.²⁷

The English language brought by our western colonizers helped to create a kind of Buddhist oikoumene or commonwealth that welcomed foreign Buddhist missions, which richly provided a constant and generous flow of meritorious funds to the mother temples (and individuals) in Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar.

As the colonized countries gained independence, grew economically, and modernized (that is, westernized), more local Buddhists became more wealthy, and more of the wealthy became Buddhists. The wealthy Buddhists (the Seths) saw themselves as leaders and teachers, and the masses followed as masses do. This was the age of corporate Buddhism.²⁸

2.2.3.5 We are now in the age of **the Vidyadharas** (2000-2500?), the professional experts, dominated by book-learned and guru-centred Buddhists who try to “modernize” Buddhism (mostly by way of a more liberal attitude towards money and sexuality),²⁹ or at least to see it through the lenses of science, information technology and worldly ways.

A key development of this is, of course, the psychologization of Buddhism, the growing colonization and plagiarization by professional mind-scientists and academics, and the secularization and domestication of monastics, who are more comfortable working as salaried professionals or careerists than wearing the robes or shaving their heads.³⁰ Buddhists today are faced with increasingly sophisticated, even respectable, deceptions, on account of seeing and constructing Buddhism from our worldly bias than in benefiting from what early Buddhism has to offer in spiritual awakening.

There are also signs that some necks of the forest traditions are becoming more urbanized and domesticated, as they become more socially engaged to provide meditation training for a growing number of lay enthusiasts and patrons, and also those who aspire to the monastic life. This may well be a good sign of the advent of a “middle earth” of Dharma practitioners who need not go deep into the forests of northern Thailand or rural Myanmar, but to simply renounce as anagarikas to become monks and nuns in due course.

If such “urban” or “suburban forest” traditions maintain their contemplative depth and scriptural breadth, protecting the Vinaya and protected by the Dharma, then they will become vital centres for the revival, even reform, of Buddhism today. This Dharma resurgence will only occur if its Buddhism is less

²⁶ Skt *śreṣṭhī*, P *seṭṭhī*. *Seth* is a modern Hindi word for a wealthy entrepreneur or businessman. The traditional definition of *seṭṭhī* is given in the PED as “foreman of a guild, treasurer, banker, “City man,” wealthy merchant, V 1:15 f, 271 f, 2:110 f, 157, S 1:89...etc.”

²⁷ On Protestant Buddhism, see SD 41.1 (1.2): Meditation and modernism.

²⁸ On the 5 periods of Buddhism, see SD 17.8c (10.1.3).

²⁹ See eg **Bad friendship**. SD 64.17.

³⁰ On purification of livelihood, see SD 37.8 (4.3); also (1.5.3.2), on earning royalties. See also **Money and monastics**, SD 4.19-23.

teacher-centred, more Dharma-inspired; if the monastics spend less time on the Internet, but more time meditating for arhathood; if they are neither elitist nor patronizing,³¹ nor exploit charisma and cultism;³² if they remain unworried about money; if they truly renounce the world and put personal progress and awakening foremost, as it is in the Buddha's time.

2.2.3.6 Like any organized human effort, urban Buddhism (including the forest monastics in urban or suburban settings) have to contend with the vagaries of society and the times. The more Dharma-moved of such monastics and Buddhist workers who remember the ancient advice of the Buddha and sutta teachings (and of course the Vinaya) would ensure that the lifeblood of the Buddha Dharma—our mind-teachings and the meditation-teachings of the suttas are well preserved, well practised, well taught, and well realized.

The Dharma is our home and heart. We need to know their vitality as the core and spirit our being, and how the rest of our body affects the heart. We need to understand why and how these peripheral systems arise and flourish, and to educate and influence them to the true Dharma. We must be familiar with the environment of our home, so that we are better prepared to deal with difficulties and emergencies that our neighbourhood may present.

We therefore need to keep our whole body healthy with the right kind of food, effort, and friends. We need to keep our home and neighbourhood safe and liveable. There is a place in Buddhism for everyone who has at least some desire for self-betterment. The true health of such a heart is how strong it is in the face of any task and any challenge. The true wealth of our home is in being the centre of a community that turns to the Buddha and returns to the true Dharma that fully frees us of all our views so that we can truly live as well-liberated beings.

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The First Discourse on the Noble Abidings

A 10.19

1 Bhikshus, there are these 10 noble abidings³³ in which the noble ones abided, or are abiding, or will abide.³⁴

What are the ten?

2 Here, bhikshus, a monk is one who

(1) has abandoned the 5 factors;

pañc'aṅga, vipphāhīno hoti

(2) is accomplished in the 6 limbs;

cha-l-aṅga, samannāgato

(3) is guarded in the one;

ek'ārakkho

(4) has the 4 mental supports;

catur'āpasseno

(5) has put aside personal truths;

*paṇunna, pacceka, sacco*³⁵

³¹ Such as hobnobbing with the rich and powerful, while distancing themselves from the poorer laity and common masses in need of spiritual counsel and personal succour. A good example is that of foreign religious who routinely visit local Buddhist communities giving teachings and socializing with the affluent and the docile for purposes of fund-raising, patronage and services. A true monastic would have the moral courage (*vesārajja*) to say *no* to proposals and activities that would reflect wrongly or badly on them. They should neither fear nor spoil wayward and worldly elites, followers and admirers.

³² These are often more the laity's fault in idolizing their gurus, esp those who tend to promote themselves (such as addressing or hinting at their alleged attainments) along with their Dharma teachings. We must urgently remind ourselves to place the teaching above the teacher: see **The teacher or the teaching**, SD 3.14.

³³ Be *ariyāvāsā* throughout except in D 33+34; Ce Se Ee *ariya, vāsā*. [1.1.1]

³⁴ For a longer version of this Sutta and its location, see **Ariya, vāsa S 2** (A 10.20), SD 43.15.

³⁵ Be (vl) *paṇunna, pacceka, sacco*.

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|---|--------------------------------|
| (6) has completely given up seeking; | <i>samavaya,saṭṭh'esano</i> |
| (7) with untroubling thoughts [intentions]; | <i>anāvila,sankappo</i> |
| (8) whose bodily activity is stilled; | <i>passaddh,akāya,sankhāro</i> |
| (9) who is mentally well liberated; | <i>svimutta,citto</i> |
| (10) who is well liberated in wisdom. | <i>svimutta,pañño</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 10 noble abidings in which the noble ones abided, or are abiding, or will abide.

— evaṃ —

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