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The Paṭipatti Suttas

(a) (Magga) Paṭipatti Sutta 1 or Paṭipatti Sutta | S 45.31

(b) (Magga) Paṭipatti Sutta 2 or Paṭipanna Sutta | S 45.32

Themes: On the wrong practice and the right practice of the path

1 Sutta highlights

1.1 RELATED TEACHINGS. Both the **Paṭipatti Sutta 1** (S 45.31) and the **Paṭipatti Sutta 2** (S 45.32) deal with what is wrong and what is right regarding the way of cultivation. As such, they are twin (*yama-ka*) suttas, meaning that they should be studied together.

1.2 RELATED THEMES

1.2.1 They differ only by way of their respective themes, that is,

Paṭipatti Sutta 1 (S 45.31) deals with the wrong practice and the right practice; [sutta 20a]

Paṭipatti Sutta 2 (S 45.32) deals with the wrong practitioner and the right practitioner. [sutta 20b]

1.2.2 The Commentary explains that while in the first, the teaching is given by way of the Dharma or a Dharma-based approach (*dhamma,vasena*), the second is given by way of the person or a person-based approach (*puggala,vasena*) (SA 3:132).

1.2.3 The Dharma-based approach applies the direct language of ultimate reality, that is, in terms of ideas (*dhammādhiṭṭhāna*). The person-based approach, on the other hand, applies a worldly language or worldly conventions, that is, in terms of persons (*puggalādhiṭṭhāna*).¹ While the person-centred approach of teaching points to conventional truths, in terms of “persons,” such as “the practitioner” (*paṭipanna*) [20b], the Dharma-based or idea-centred approach points to a higher reality, even ultimate reality, in terms of ideas, such as “the practice” (*paṭipatti*) [20a].

1.3 RELATED SUTTA. These two ways of teaching are based on the Buddha’s advice, given in the **Neyy’attha Nīt’attha Sutta** (A 2.3.4+5) that we must carefully consider whether its language is *conventional* (based on everyday language describing causes and conditions) or *ultimate* (that is, Dharma language, pointing to the fact that things have no intrinsic nature or abiding essence).²

Those suttas or teachings that tell stories, describe ritual acts, or that talk of “beings,” “gods,” etc, need to have their meaning drawn out (*neyy’attha*), as they do not directly refer to true reality. They use language and words in the form of a story or images to talk *about* true reality. Their meaning is indirect. They are *provisional* (*pariyāya*) teachings, unlike say some Abhidhamma doctrines, which are said to be *explicit* (*nippariyāyena*).³

1.4 GRAMMATICAL NOTE. It is interesting to note that while the limbs of the eightfold path in the **Paṭhama Paṭipatti Sutta** (S 45.31) are given as nouns (eg *sammā,diṭṭhi*), these limbs in the **Dutiya Paṭipatti Sutta** (S 45.32) are given as adjectives, as *sammā,diṭṭhika*. All the other limbs are given in the same way as their respective cognates in the first Sutta. However, it should be noted that the limbs in the second Sutta are all adjectives qualifying the “practitioner” (*paṭipanna*), thus: *sammā,diṭṭhika paṭipanna*, the practitioner who has right view, and so on.

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¹ This duad is usu used in terms of teaching (*desanā*): Nett 164 f; MA 1:24; PmA 449; Nett 164 f; also SD 36.1 (1.10).

² **Neyy’attha Nīt’attha S** (A 2.3.4+5/1:60), SD 2.6b. See also SD 36.1 (3.0).

³ See *Pariyāya Nippariyāya*, SD 33.2 (2.1) & SD 68.2.

20a

Paṭhama Paṭipatti Sutta

The First Discourse on Practice | S 45.31⁴

(Magga) Paṭipatti Sutta | The Discourse on the Practice (of the Path)

Theme: The wrong practice and the right practice

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- 1 Originating in Sāvathī.
- 2 Bhikshus, I will teach you regarding the right practice and the wrong practice.⁵ Listen now.
- 3 And what, bhikshus, is **the wrong practice**? It is as follows:

(1) wrong view,	<i>micchā diṭṭhi</i>
(2) wrong thought [wrong intention],	<i>micchā saṅkappa</i>
(3) wrong speech,	<i>micchā vācā</i>
(4) wrong action,	<i>micchā kammantā</i>
(5) wrong livelihood,	<i>micchā ājīva</i>
(6) wrong effort,	<i>micchā vāyāma</i>
(7) wrong mindfulness,	<i>micchā sati</i>
(8) wrong stillness [wrong concentration].	<i>micchā samādhi</i>

This, bhikshus, is called wrong practice.

- 4 And what, bhikshus, is **the right practice**? It is as follows:

(1) right view,	<i>sammā diṭṭhi</i>
(2) right thought [right intention],	<i>sammā saṅkappa</i>
(3) right speech,	<i>sammā vācā</i>
(4) right action,	<i>sammā kammantā</i>
(5) right livelihood,	<i>sammā ājīva</i>
(6) right effort,	<i>sammā vāyāma</i>
(7) right mindfulness,	<i>sammā sati</i>
(8) right stillness [right concentration].	<i>sammā samādhi</i>

This, bhikshus, is called right practice.

— evaṃ —

⁴ Comy does not number these suttas, and the rest of chs 4 (*paṭipatti, vagga; añña, titthiya peyyāla; suriyassa peyyāla; eka, dhamma, peyyāla 1+2; gaṅga, peyyāla*) and ch 5 (*appamāda, vagga*)—pp 41-45—which is unusual. Feer (ed) discusses this at some length, and concludes that these 2 chs “are inserted, apparently as a lengthening of the fourth chapter, but without any numerical designation” (S:eF 5:vi).

⁵ *Micchā, paṭipattiñ ca vo bhikkhave desessāmi sammā, paṭipattiñ ca.*

20b

Dutiya Paṭipatti Sutta

The Second Discourse on Practice | S 45.32

(Magga) Paṭipanna Sutta | The Discourse on the Practitioner (of the Path)

Theme: The one who practises the wrong way and the one who practises the right way

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- 1 Originating in Sāvathī.
 2 Bhikshus, I will teach you regarding the wrong practitioner and the right practitioner.⁶ Listen now.

3 And what, bhikshus, is **the wrong practitioner** [the one who practises wrongly]?⁷

Here, bhikshus, a certain person is one

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|---|------------------------|
| (1) with wrong view, | <i>micchā diṭṭhika</i> |
| (2) with wrong thought [wrong intention], | <i>micchā saṅkappa</i> |
| (3) with wrong speech, | <i>micchā vācā</i> |
| (4) with wrong action, | <i>micchā kammantā</i> |
| (5) with wrong livelihood, | <i>micchā ājīva</i> |
| (6) with wrong effort, | <i>micchā vāyāma</i> |
| (7) with wrong mindfulness, | <i>micchā sati</i> |
| (8) with wrong stillness [wrong concentration]. | <i>micchā samādhi</i> |

This, bhikshus, is called the wrong practitioner.

4 And what, bhikshus, is **the right practitioner** [the one who practises rightly]?

Here, bhikshus, a certain person is one

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| (1) with right view, | <i>sammā diṭṭhika</i> |
| (2) with right thought [right intention], | <i>sammā saṅkappa</i> |
| (3) with right speech, | <i>sammā vācā</i> |
| (4) with right action, | <i>sammā kammantā</i> |
| (5) with right livelihood, | <i>sammā ājīva</i> |
| (6) with right effort, | <i>sammā vāyāma</i> |
| (7) with right mindfulness, | <i>sammā sati</i> |
| (8) with right stillness [right concentration]. | <i>sammā samādhi</i> |

This, bhikshus, is called the right practitioner.

— evaṃ —

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⁶ *Micchā,paṭipannaṅ ca vo bhikkhave desessāmi sammā,paṭipannaṅ ca.* Alt tr: "...the one practising wrongly and the one practising rightly."

⁷ *Katamo ca bhikkhave micchā,paṭipanno,*