Bhadraka Sutta
The Discourse to Bhadraka | S 42.11
Theme: How to know the noble truths of true reality
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2019

1 Summary, significance, reconstruction

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

1.1.1 The Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11) is a short teaching on how suffering arises when we are attached to other people. This is true at any time: that suffering is rooted in desire and passion.

1.1.2 The Bhadraka Sutta preserves a short dialogue between the Buddha and the headman Bhadraka, who asks about the arising and passing away of suffering, to which the Buddha gives a very practical answer [§1-7]. The Buddha begins his teaching by pointing out to Bhadraka how we suffer on account of the misfortunes of those whom we care about, but are unaffected by the misfortunes of others [§§8-12]. The reason we suffer is because we have desire and passion for others [§§11-12]. This truth applied in the past, and will apply in the future. [§13]. Bhadraka agrees [§14], and affirms that he suffers, as such, by way of caring about his son [§§16-17] and his wife [§18-20]. The Buddha concludes by restating the teaching that all suffering is rooted in desire. This is called “samsaric suffering.”

1.2 RECONSTRUCTED PASSAGES

1.2.1 Omission (Be and Ee)
Both Be and Ee only has §14.2 but omit §§14.3+4. §14.2 (spoken by Bhadraka) reads:

14.2 “Whatever suffering arises, [329] all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.”

Yaṃ kiñci dukkhaṁ uppajjamānaṁ uppajjati sabban taṁ chanda,mūlakaṁ chanda,nidānam chandi hi mūlaṁ dukkhassāti.

Note here that Bhadraka has paraphrased the Buddha’s specific statements on when and how suffering arises. In §17, the Buddha himself quotes this sentence made by Bhadraka, making the generalization himself. This is, in fact, the sutta thesis, the essence of the Sutta teaching, which, significantly, closes the Sutta, too [§21].

1.2.2 Reconstruction (Se)
As a rule, the protagonist (the recipient of Dharma-teaching) will repeat, in full, the key passages of what has been taught to him. This is, in fact, reported in the Siamese edition of the Bhadraka Sutta:

14.3 Whatever suffering that arose in the past, all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.

Yan kiñci atītam addhānam dukkhaṁ uppajjamānaṁ uppajjī sabban taṁ chanda,mūlakaṁ chanda,nidānam chando hi mūlaṁ dukkhassāti.

14.4 Whatever suffering that will arise in the future, all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.
Both the Burmese edition (Be) and the PTS edition (Ee) omit §14.4; but it occurs in the Sinhala edition (Ce) and the Siamese edition (Se:SR). With the help of the Siamese edition, we are thus able to faithfully reconstruct the passage in translation.¹

Be Ee and Ce omit §14.4, which is found only in the Siamese edition (Se:SR 18:402,12-14)² and the Khmer edition. This is sufficient evidence for reconstructing the full reading. This omission is usually attributed to “transmission error,” which means either the copyist’s omission or the editor’s oversight.

1.3 Sutta significance

1.3.1 “Even as I’m sitting right here, and you’re sitting right there” [§6]

1.3.1.1 The headman Bhadraka asks the Buddha: “... teach me about the arising and the passing away of suffering” [§3]. The Buddha replies that if he were to answer theoretically, this was how suffering arose and passed away in the past [§4], and this will be how it will arise and pass away in the future [§5], Bhadraka will doubt this, since he has no way of verifying them.

The Buddha then, using an amazingly mundane analogy, declares to Bhadraka: “... even as I’m sitting right here, and you’re sitting right there,” he will answer him. Yet, the meaning of this simple analogy seems to have eluded every modern translator so far. To be fair, this simple-worded analogy is profound in significance. It is possible to tease out at least 2 or 3 meanings from it.

1.3.1.2 The most obvious sense of the “sitting” analogy [1.3.1.1] is clearly that the Buddha is referring to a pragmatic teaching, something that is evident like Bhadraka himself sitting before the Buddha listening to him. In other words, the Buddha will give a teaching on suffering that is pragmatic, down to earth, at once apparent and applicable to daily life.

The 2nd meaning of the “sitting” analogy is the difference between the awakened (the Buddha) who fully understands the nature of suffering, and the unawakened (Bhadraka) who needs to learn the Dharma in a gradual way, according to his level of wisdom. In this case, the Buddha uses the well-known idea of “desire and passion [lust]” (chanda,rāga) that keeps us attached to near and dear ones; hence, we suffer when any misfortune befalls them.

The 3rd meaning of the “sitting” analogy points to the nature of samsara, where, with proper Dharma training, we understand how our sufferings arise, and so we can prevent, even stop, them. This is by overcoming desire and passion, that started them in the first place. Samsaric suffering arises through our own bad habits, unwholesome actions recycling themselves, gathering strength and growing in variety each time. When this vicious cycle is fully broken, nirvana arises. Nirvana is then evident just as we are able to see someone sitting before us.

In short, the Buddha is showing Bhadraka what is true and real here and now—just as you are reading this now. This prepares us for the truth regarding the universality of suffering that we will be examining next. The Buddha is teaching us about the empirical and verifiable truth [2.1.0].

¹ Sadly, this reconstruction is missing from the tr by Bodhi (S:B), who, curiously does not use the Siamese Tipiṭaka at all; hence, missing this vital Pali clue. See (1.2).

² This is the Royal Siamese (Syamraṭṭha) ed of the Tipiṭaka, vol 18, page 408, lines 12-14.
1.3.2 The kinds of suffering

1.3.2.1 The Commentary says that the Sutta presents the teaching of samsaric suffering (vatta, dukkha) (SA 3:108,13), that is, suffering arising from the vicissitudes of human life. A vicissitude is an uncertainty, change and becoming-other in our life and its circumstances; hence, they are always in the plural: vicissitudes. They are the changes we undergo, and the changes in others, too. Although all humans undergo similar vicissitudes, we are also painfully affected by the vicissitudes of those whom we love, care about and desire.

1.3.2.2 The Samyutta Commentary mentions the Bandhana Sutta (S 22.117) as another text whose theme is samsaric suffering (vatta, dukkha). The Sutta teaches that we should not “be bound by the bond” (bandhana, baddho) that is the 5 aggregates: form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness. (SA 2:333). We thus have a clue here that vatta, dukkha is closely associated with the 5 aggregates.

The 5 aggregates are, in fact, listed as the last of the 8 sufferings in the definition of dukkha in the Dhamma, cakka Pavattana Sutta (S 56.11), the Buddha’s “1st sermon,” thus:

- (1) birth is suffering;
- (2) decay is suffering;
- (3) disease is suffering;
- (4) death is suffering;
- (5) to be with the unpleasant is suffering;
- (6) to be without the pleasant is suffering;
- (7) not to get what one desires is suffering;
- (8) in short, the 5 aggregates of clinging are suffering. — suffering due to formations (saṅkhāra, dukkhatā)

(1-4) Physical suffering (dukkha, dukkhatā) refers to the true nature of our body, our physical being. (1) we are born; hence, (2) we decay; sometimes this decay is clearly seen and felt as (3) disease; whatever is born must then (4) die. These are the “physical” symptoms of samsara (cyclic life).

(5-7) Mental suffering (vipariṇāma, dukkhatā) results from our emotions of (5) likings and (6) dislikings, and (7) our desires. What we like are rooted in the past; what we desire are projected into the future. But our ideas of the past are constructed through selective memory, distorted recall and personal biases. The future does not exist except in what we project, and when the time actually “comes” we are likely to change our mind or feel disappointed. This is the mental suffering on account of change and uncertainty.

(8) Existential suffering (saṅkhāra, dukkha). The phrase, “in short” (sankhittena) [above], means that the 5 aggregates encapsulate all the kinds of suffering mentioned. In conventional language, we can list out the first 7 sufferings, but in spiritual terms—according to true reality—there are only the 5 aggregates: form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness. They are, by nature, impermanent, unsatisfactory [suffering] and non-self (with no abiding essence).

3 On the 3 types of suffering, see SD 1.1 (6.1).
1.3.2.4 Note that saṅkhāra appears twice. First, as the 4th aggregate, where it is always in the plural: saṅkhārā, “formations.” Simply, this is our psychological state of constructing realities based on a dichotomous bias of liking (lust) and disliking (hate). When our experiences do not seem to fit into either of these categories, we simply ignore them, or we feel boredom or angst.

The saṅkhāra of saṅkhāra, dukkha, “suffering.” Otherwise, it is also in the plural noun, saṅkhārā, since it is a term for the “manyness” (such as the 7 kinds of suffering mentioned) that plague our minds. Technically, this plural saṅkhārā refers to “everything” in our universe: this is not only the world “out there” (represented by aggregate of “form,” rūpa) but, more importantly, how we “sense” (feel, perceive, construct and are conscious of). This is also called “the all” (sabba) [2.1.11].

All these are “constructions”—the mind’s creating and the heart’s imagings—of a virtual world. In other words, we create our own image of the world and live in it. Since all images (like mirages) are only virtually real, they are not true reality. When we take this as being “truly real”—when we see what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and non-self as being permanent, satisfactory or self—we suffer the fruits of our wrong view.5

1.3.2.5 We have, in the “Sutta Summary,” noted the commentarial term “samsaric suffering” (vaṭṭa-dukkha) [1.1.2]. The Commentary notes that this phrase describes the type of teaching the Buddha gives to Bhadraka: that suffering is rooted in desire (chanda, mūlaka). Bhadraka’s sufferings arise from desire and passion for his son and wife. They form his world; hence, this is his samsaric suffering.

However, we also know that there are many who have children and wives, even a large family, but they are not attached to them; hence, such people seem not to be burdened with samsaric suffering. Yet, we also know that such people still suffer in other ways, that is, on account of their greed, hate and delusion. They suffer on account of their defilements (kilesa).

In fact, the Commentaries also speak of 2 kinds of sufferings: samsaric suffering (vaṭṭa dukkha) and suffering due to defilements (kilesa dukkha).6 However, on a deeper level, all unawakened beings have defilements. Beings either show their suffering or do not, but they are still suffering, all the same. For example, we may not show suffering “due to change,” but we still must undergo “physical” suffering; and all of us are somehow burdened with the suffering of “the 5 aggregates.” Broadly, this is the suffering due to mental defilements.

Anyway, samsara (the cycle of rebirths and redeaths) is characterized by samsaric suffering. We, the unawakened, will all go through the recurrent cycle of samsaric suffering (vaṭṭa dukkhe sānśāressanī, DA 1:49). Only when our craving (tanha) ends, the samsaric cycle ends, too (AA 3:74), that is, to say, the ending of samsaric suffering is nirvana (SA 2:313).

1.3.2.6 And here is a quick survey of the sequence in the list of the 3 sufferings. We have seen how “samsaric suffering” is really (in essence) a term for the 5 aggregates. In other words, it refers to all the other kinds of suffering: “samsaric suffering” refers to physical suffering, suffering due to change, and suffering due to the 5 aggregates. In fact, the Sutta Nipāta Commentary uses just this term: vaṭṭa dukkha, dukkha dukkha, saṅkhāra dukkha, viparināma dukkha7 (SnA 1:151).

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5 Further see Saṅkhārā, SD 17.6.
7 Note that the “.” (dot) refers to a compound, and the “,” to a compound within a compound (a complex compound); hence, we have vaṭṭa dukkha, dukkha dukkha, saṅkhāra dukkha, viparināma dukkha. The last dukkha is plural reflecting that it is a set of 4 terms for the kinds of suffering.
We can render this long compound (which seems to be found only in the SnA) as “samsaric suffering, that is to say: physical suffering, suffering due to the 5 aggregates, and suffering due to change.” Note that “suffering due to change” is listed last, whereas in sutta explanations, this comes second last, thus: physical suffering, suffering due to change, and suffering due to the 5 aggregates\(^8\) [1.3.2.3].

In keeping with the oral tradition, we have, for example, the compound, *ātītānāgata,paccuppanna* [3.4.4], meaning “past, present and future,” having 3 syllables (ātīta) + 4 syllables (anāgata) + 4 syllables (paccuppanna). In English, we normally would say, “past, present and future.” The rule of “waxing compounds” are amongst the rules and ways to facilitate the smooth, almost musical, way of reciting so that the texts are more easily remembered.

Hence, following the rule of “waxing compounds,” we have the compound, *vaṭṭa dukkha dukkha sankhāra dukkha vipariṇāma dukkha* coded as \([2.2 : 2.2 : 3.2 : 5.2]\): the elements of a compound are arranged in ascending order according to the syllable length.\(^3\) This explains why *vipariṇāma dukkha* (with the most syllables), “suffering due to change,” is put last. However, when translating or teaching, we would follow the sequence of the 3 sufferings as explained in the suttas, thus: physical suffering, suffering due to change, and suffering due to the 5 aggregates. [1.3.2.3]

### 1.3.3 Suffering as truths

#### 1.3.3.1 In the Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11), the essence of the Buddha’s teaching to Bhadraka is “the arising and passing away of suffering” (*dukkhassa samudayā ca atthaṅgamaṃ ca*). This is, in fact, the same kind of teaching that the Buddha declares to the elder Anurādha (S 22.86) and stated in the Alagaddūpama Sutta (M 22).\(^10\) This is a sutta teaching on the “rise and fall” of things: whatever has arisen must pass away. Not understanding this (the 1st truth) or not accepting it (the 2nd truth) brings suffering upon us.

This essential teaching summarizes the whole of the Buddha’s teaching. “The arising of suffering” (*dukkhassa samudaya*) is a shorthand (synecdoche) for the 1st and the 2nd noble truths: suffering and its arising. “The passing away of suffering” (*dukkhassa atthaṅgama*) is a shorthand for the 3rd and the 4th noble truths: the ending of suffering and the path leading to its ending.\(^11\)

#### 1.3.3.2 The vital significance of this essential teaching of the arising and passing away of suffering is that it invites us to investigate the meaning and purpose of life in a fundamental, yet overarching, way. In early Buddhist terms, what is the meaning of “meaning”? It is the sense or message (*attha*) conveyed by the words (*vyañjana*). By penetrating the semantic meaning of the text, it is then easier for us to know the spiritual sense of the teaching, especially when we have personally experienced the same true reality.

Language is a human construct conditioned by time and space: hence, we speak of the text and its context: the word and its meaning, the teaching and its message—what does it all mean? Hence, we can imagine the teaching to be like a flag displayed on its mast. Only the wind blows (the direction from which it blows doesn’t matter here), the flag “flies” in the wind; then, we can better make sense of it. The flag, ironically, would not function so well if it just “flags.”

Hence, when studying the suttas, or listening to any good Dharma teacher, we should not only understand the words he has spoken (the propositional content or semantic meaning of the teaching or talk),

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8 The cpd actually puts “suffering due to change” (*vupariṇāma dukkha*) last. This odd arrangement is prob to facilitate easier memorization of such a long term, following the rule of “waxing compounds”: the elements of a compound are arranged in an ascending sequence according to length: see CPD 35*.
9 See CPD 35* (Epilegomena).
10 See Anurādha S (S 22.86), SD 21.13; Alagaddūpama S (M 22.38), SD 3.13; SD 40a.1 (11.1.1).
11 See also SD 1.1 (4.0.2.7).

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that is, the “text,” but we should also understand the special context or message of the teaching: its pragmatic meaning or “context.”

Hence, we need to ask, for example, “What is meant by suffering (dukkha) that the Buddha teaches?” and “Why is there suffering and why does the Buddha start his teaching there?” These are questions that help us better understand the 1st and the 2nd truths, respectively.\footnote{12}

1.3.3.3 Once we have understood the meaning—semantic and pragmatic, the medium and the message, text and context—then, we are in a better position to understand the purpose of the Buddha’s teaching, as embodied in the 3rd and the 4th truths. The 3rd noble truth, that is, nirvana, is the “goal” of our Dhamma practice and training, while the 4th truth is the “path,” that is the training or practice itself. This is the Dharma in theory.

The oldest version of the 4-noble-truth formula reverses the sequence of the last two truths: the 3rd truth is the path that leads to the 4th truth, nirvana: this is the natural “practice” model (the 1-2-4-3 sequence of truths). The more familiar truth-sequence (1-2-3-4) is that of the “teaching” model.\footnote{13}

2 Knowledge of suffering and its ending

2.1 EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE: EMPIRICAL TRUTH AND VERIFIABLE TRUTH

2.1.0 Experiential knowledge

2.1.0.0 The Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11) presents the knowledge of “the arising and ending of suffering” as a universal truth: it is true in the present; hence, it was also true in the past, and will be true in the future, too. The Buddha begins his teaching by clarifying to Bhadraka what is meant by the evident or empirical: “even as I’m sitting right here, and you’re sitting right there” [§6].

The statement that “there are … those on whose account sorrow, lamentation physical pain, mental pain, and despair would arise in me if they were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame” [§9], in answer to the Buddha’s question, is an empirical statement. This proposition is either directly verifiable by personal observation, or can be inferred from such observation by the use of inductive reasoning from observing a few people, or even a single person, and the principles deduced therefrom can then be applied to everyone: from the particular we see the universal truth.

Both of these methods work on deductive reasoning, that is, seeing how certain causes constantly bring certain effects. Thus, it is a fact that when we hold dear certain people, when misfortune befalls them, we would invariably suffer negative emotions. We know this from our own experience (empirical) and we can deduce this from the experience of others (inferential).

2.1.0.1 Based on this fundamental principle, the Buddha demonstrates (through Bhadraka) how we can see by our present experience that, right here and now, there are people (and animals that we love and care for) whose death or misfortunes will trouble us: we will suffer sadness, etc. So, too, there are those whose fortunes, here and now, we do not care at all about; hence, we are not really troubled by their misfortunes [§§8-10]. This is an empirical truth.

The Buddha then shows Bhadraka why there is such a universal state of affairs—that we suffer on account of others. Bhadraka himself answers that this is because of our “desire and passion” (chanda,-

\footnote{12} It also helps to understand the nature of polysemy of Pali words and usage: see SD 1.1 (4.4.5).
\footnote{13} On the 4 truths in terms of meaning and purpose of life, see SD 1.1 (4.0.1). On the truth-sequences, see SD 1.1 (6.2.2.2).
rāga) for others. He is able to verify what the Buddha has stated by his own experience [§§11-12]. This is a verifiable truth.

There are 2 kinds of truth we need to note here:
(1) we do know or can know that there are those who suffer misfortunes: this is an empirical truth [2.1.1];
(2) we ourselves experience suffering in the misfortunes of those near and dear: this is a verifiable truth [2.1.2].

These are the 2 bases for experiential knowledge, the kind of sense-based knowing that occurs here and now, that is, which helps us to directly see into true reality. [2.1.1, 2.1.2]

2.1.0.2 Having established this verifiable and empirical truth—which is real and true knowledge—the Buddha shows Bhadraka that, based on this real truth of the present [2.1.0.1], we can thus “draw a conclusion” (nayaṁ neti) that this very same truth also applies to the past as well as to the future. Hence, this is true all the time: it is a universal truth, both real and true: that suffering—sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair [§11]—is rooted in desire and passion [§13].

Bhadraka agrees [§§14-15], and goes on to endorse this truth by stating how his love (desire and passion) for his son, Cira,vāsi [§15] and his wife, Cira.vāsi,mātā [§18], similarly, brings him care and concern, that is, suffering: [§§16-20]. The Sutta teaching ends with the Buddha affirming: “Whatever suffering that arises, all that arises is rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.” [§21]

2.1.1 Empirical truth

2.1.1.1 The Buddha begins his teaching to Bhadraka by affirming that, firstly [2.1.2.1], we do know or can know that there are those who suffer misfortunes: this is an empirical truth. This is the 1st basis for experiential knowledge, the direct seeing of true reality [2.1.0.1]. In a useful way, this is accepting what is really out there, and not imposing our own bias onto such reality: that everyone suffers misfortunes, but we only suffer when misfortune befalls those whom we love or lust after.

In this sense, Buddhism rejects dogmas, unverifiable beliefs and biases that are held up as universal truths, which is common in God-religions. A dogma also tends to be exclusivist: we are right, others wrong; even self-justifying: since we are right, others must be wrong. An empirical truth, on the other hand, even when it is painful or unprofitable, is true universally. Furthermore, the Buddha teaches that to accept such a truth helps us in seeing things “as they really are,” which, in turn, helps us understand deeper and higher truths of life: that such sufferings and predicaments can be ended, even if temporarily, and that we must learn how to do this. In essence, this is what the 4 noble truths are about.

Finally, it is important to remember that empirical knowledge and truth are strictly sense-based. In modern science, the senses are the 5 physical faculties. According to early Buddhism, however, the mind is also a sense in its own right. Hence, we can speak of the 6 senses or sense-bases (saḷ-āyatana). Indeed, according to the Buddha, all that we can know is through the 6 sense-bases, and all that there is to know are the 6 sense-objects. These are the “all”: there is no way of knowing and nothing to be known beyond the “all,” as stated in the Sabba Sutta (S 35.23), SD7.1.

2.1.1.2 However, apparently, not all Buddhist truths are empirical, at once evident from observing what is within us or without us, in self or in others or in nature generally. For example, the doctrines of karma and rebirth cannot be verified in the same way as suffering is verifiable in the way that the Buddha teaches Bhadraka.
Karma is traditionally seen as “consequential”: good begets good, bad begets bad. However, from our common experiences, we often see the bad prospering, while the good often seems to suffer, despite being good. Often enough, it seems that even when the bad does something good, it seems that it is really and only for one’s own benefit. In this sense, we can say that “good and bad” are our own making.

Moreover, this consequential view of karma tends to encourage a selfish attitude of accumulating “good karma” or “merits” (puñña) as if they were something that is measurable or transferable, as viewed by many traditional and ethnic Buddhists.

Such beliefs also devalue our present life—that we cannot be free from suffering nor gain good, here and now; that we can only do so in some future life, often with the help of some external agency, such as “blessings” or dispensations from monastics, priests or holy persons. This would then make such a Buddhism a religion (a system of beliefs), even a sophisticated system of superstitions.

2.1.1.3 Such worldly teachers even cunningly claim of wealth, thus: “You can’t take it with you, but you can send it on ahead!” Give your money and wealth to us religious people, and we will assure that you will get back even more in the future! This is religious conmanship, Tartuffism, preying on the greed and gullibility of the faithful.

Religious gurus who are desperate or cunning enough may take this further. When a thinking or intelligent devotee questions them: Is this what the Buddha taught? They may gingerly claim: Oh! It’s just a joke! To such questioners it may mean: All right, this is not meant to be taken seriously. The obsequious faithful, however, tend to take such words literally!

2.1.1.4 Coming back to the Buddha’s teaching: Can we verify the truth of karma and rebirth from nature itself? Perhaps, by discovering some natural law (niyāma), we better understand and accept the reality, or, at least, the probability, of karma and rebirth. Notice how plants grow from seeds (bīja) or some means of propagation (such as tissue and grafting). In this way, plants propagate themselves.

Such a truth comes under the “law of seeds” (bīja, niyāma), which is one of the 5 natural laws (pañca, niyāma) taught in early Buddhism. Interestingly, this argument works better when we accept this seemingly unsophisticated translation, instead of rendering it with more class, “scientifically,” as “genetics.” Such a translation not only brings on technical problems (eg, there was no such category in the Buddha’s time), and also severely limits the compass of the term to only biological states.

The point remains that humans, too, procreate through seeds (spermatozoa and ova), and it is also possible to “clone” humans by using human cells. By the law of seeds, then, we may conclude that humans not only propagates themselves via biological genes (synchronously), but that each human can perpetuate himself or herself through time (diachronically) via mental “genes,” the cognitive basis or support for rebirth, that is, the rebirth consciousness.  

2.1.1.5 It is difficult, even impossible, to defend the doctrine of karma by empirical means, just as it is untenable to believe in an abiding soul or almighty God. The best, perhaps only, way for the acceptance of the doctrine of karma is that of argument from utility—that it is useful and good to believe in such a doctrine rather than any God-idea. To support this argument, we may add that we would naturally feel good, whether we express it or not, when others are kind to us in some way.

Arguably, we also feel good when we show good to others, too. Some, however, may counter-argue and claim that they feel good by exacting revenge, which is “sweet,” or causing harm to the bad (how-

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14 On the 5 natural laws (pañca, niyāma), see SD 5.6 (2).
15 In later Pali literature, this is called patisandhi, citta (rebirth-consciousness) or bhav’anga (life-continuum): SD 7.10 (3.2).
ever we define this) or that seeing bad people suffering is gratifying. Yet, such a negative state is always rooted in some kind of past pain or present unhappiness. Hence, it cannot be good universally.

In fact, early Buddhism generally favours virtue ethics over consequentialist ethics. Karma is not always good attracting the good, or bad spawning more bad. Karma is about how we act: the quality and frequency of our speech, action and thought. Early Buddhism defines karma as our thought, the intention (cetanā or saṅkappa), behind the act that defines its moral quality. A good thought generates good action (verbal and bodily); also, as a rule, one good thought leads to another. In other words, our habits become us. As we think, so we were, we are, we will be. This is also a kind of evolutionary idea of karma: we better ourselves through our actions (karma). By karma, we create what we are and where we are heading.16

2.1.2 Verifiable truth

2.1.2.1 Secondly [2.1.1.1], the Buddha begins his teaching to Bhadraka by affirming that we ourselves experience suffering on account of those whom we love and care for: this is a verifiable truth. This is the 2nd basis for experiential knowledge, the direct seeing of true reality [2.1.0.1].

To “verify” a statement, we must ascertain whether it is true or false. If the statement is true, then, it is said to be, in principle, verifiable. For the statement—all suffering is rooted in desire [§13]—is, in principle (in theory), verifiable: every person (excluding the insane and mentally incapacitated) would agree with this.

By desire we mean both good (love) and bad (lust), and the emotions in between, that moves us to act or speak, and to think moved by desire. When such a desire (want, wish, hope, etc) is thwarted or destroyed, we would suffer; or when the good that we desire for our near and dear ones are dashed, we suffer, too. We also need to add the proviso that all this is verifiable and true only in the unawakened. The awakened or arhats do not function in this manner since they are spiritually liberated.

2.1.2.2 One problem still remains. How do we verify the doctrines of karma and rebirth? Surely, we cannot monitor every action we have done, much less those of others, to see the good or bad that we have done bringing like fruits that we deserve. Even more difficult it is to verify rebirth: we must have died and then return alive to verify our afterlife, assuming this is any of the 31 planes of existence that early Buddhism speaks of.17

Early Buddhism employs a fascinating way of verifying karma and rebirth: by superknowledge (vijjā or abhiññā), namely, the first 2 of the 3 knowledges (te, vijjā) of an arhat (including the Buddha). The arhat’s 1st superknowledge is that of rebirth, that is, his own past lives; the 2nd that of karma, the knowledge of how beings are born, live and die according to their karma; the 3rd is the knowledge of awakening.18 [2.2.0.3]

The problem with superknowledge is that it is a private experience. Only the Buddha and the arhats have this knowledge. Everyone else, the unawakened, do not have such superknowledges. Of course, we have reports of people, especially the young who are apparently able to recall their past lives. They must undergo special tests for their claims to be verified; even then, such testimonies are the exception rather than the rule.

Here, again, we have to resort to the argument by utility, that such teachings are more helpful, and less harmful, than beliefs in a God-idea or abiding soul. Even then, not all Buddhists would agree, not in

16 See Virtue ethics, SD 11.18a.
17 On the 31 planes, see SD 1.7 App.
18 Te, vijjā S (D 13): SD 1.8 (2.2.2); Cūla Hatthi, padopama S (M 27,23-25) + SD 40.5.

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the same way, how good or useful such beliefs are. Perhaps, we may find some usefulness in these doctrines when they work with virtue ethics. [2.1.1.4].

2.2 THE 4 WAYS OF KNOWING

2.2.0 Defining the 4 kinds of knowledge

2.2.0.1 The Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11)—although a short and straightforward teaching on “the arising and passing away of suffering,” it contains sufficient depth to serve as a basis for the study of early Buddhist epistemology, how knowledge, especially liberating wisdom, arises. What kinds of knowledge are there according to the suttas and Commentaries?

The Saṅgīti Sutta (D 33) and the Vibhaṅga give this list of the 4 kinds of knowledge:19

(1) knowledge of states dhamma ūnāna [2.2.1]
(2) inferential knowledge anvya ūnāna [2.2.2]
(3) knowledge of limits pariya ūnāna [2.2.3]
(4) conventional knowledge sammuti ūnāna [2.2.4]

These very same 4 knowledges are listed in the Das’uttara Sutta (D 34), where it is said that they “should be made to arise” (uppādetabbā), that is, we should cultivate them for our spiritual growth.20

2.2.0.2 The Vibhaṅga says that other than the first 3 knowledges, all knowledges and wisdoms are “conventional knowledge” (sammuti,ūnāna) (Vbh 330).21 This implies that the first 3 knowledges are not conventional or worldly knowledge, that they are the wisdom of the path. Or, they are the kind of wisdom (although called “knowledge”) that leads us to the path of awakening. This is clear from the “knowledge of states” (dhama,ūnāna), which is the direct knowledge of the path (SA 2:67). [2.2.1]

It should also be noted that, throughout the Tipiṭaka, there is no mention of “ultimate knowledge” (param’attha,ūnāna) as opposed to “conventional knowledge” (sammuti,ūnāna).22 The doctrine of the “two truths” (dve sacca), that is, “ultimate truth” (param’attha sacca)23 and “conventional truth” (sammuti sacca), is only found in the Commentaries and later works.24 The Vibhaṅga statement (Vbh 330) is probably the locus classicus, the canonical root, for the later doctrine of the 2 truths. [2.2.4.2]

2.2.0.3 In this connection, we should also note that the Das’uttara Sutta (D 34) lists the “3 knowledges” (ūnāna) as being those of the past (aṭṭha,ūnāna), the future (anāgat’aṁsa,ūnāna) and the present (paccuppannaṁsa ūnāna).25 The Commentaries further explain that, in terms of the arhat’s “3 knowledges” (te,viṭṭha) [2.1.2.2], “the knowledge of the past” is the knowledge of past lives (pubbe,nivāsa,-ūnāna); “the knowledge of the present and the future” is the divine eye (dibba,cakkhu) or clairvoyance; and the destruction of the mental influxes (āsava-k,khaya) refers to all of the virtues that are both

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20 D 34,1.5(8)/3:277.
21 Ṭhapetvā dhamme ūnāna anvaye ūnāna paricce ūnāna avasesā paññā sammuti.ūnāna (Vbh 330,4), qu at DA 3:1020,17, thus: Ṭhapetvā dhamme ūnāna ṭhapetvā anvaye ūnāna ṭhapetvā paricce ūnāna avasesaṁ sammuti.ūnāna. See (2.2.4).
23 Patoda S (A 4.113) has the word parama,sacca, with vl paramattha,sacca, where it simply means “the supreme truth” without any contrasting “conventional” truth (A 4.113/2:115,12 f).
24 AA 1:95; KvuA 34. See Jayatilleke 1963:351 (§610)
25 D 34,1.4(8)/3:275,19-21.
iya) as well as supramundane (lok’uttara): all these are collectively found in the omniscient one (the fully self-awakened Buddha).  

2.2.1 Dhamma ̃nāṇa

2.2.1.1 Dhamma ̃nāṇa (knowledge of states) is defined in the Vibhaṅga as the (direct) knowledge of the path (magga, ̃nāṇa, SA 2:67), that is, the stages of noble sainthood. In other words, this is a special knowledge of the supramundane states, that is, the wisdom connected with the 4 paths and 4 fruits. The 4 paths (magga) are those of the “4 true persons”: the streamwinners, the once-returners, the non-returners and the arhats who have reached the path but are yet to be full-fledged. Their respective fruits (phala) are the arising of full-fledged noble saints.  

The Vibhaṅga explains this term in some detail. Having fully understood the 4 noble truths here and now, they draw the conclusion (nayam neti) that in the past, too, the practitioners come to realize these very same 4 noble truths in the same manner. In the future, too, practitioners will come to realize the same truths (Vbh 329,8-27). This way of knowing is technically known as “inferential knowledge” [2.2.2].

2.2.1.2 This means that these 4 pairs of persons or 8 noble individuals have all understood the 4 noble truths at their respective levels: the arhat being the one who has fully understood them. In the Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11), the 4 noble truths are presented in its 2-truth formula: “the arising and passing away of suffering” [§3 etc].

Hence, the Digha Commentary says: “The knowledge of states is the truth that is the cessation (of suffering) found within the 4 truths, with the realization of the 4 truths all at once. Further, the Vibhaṅga says: ‘Therein what is dhamme ̃nāṇa? The knowledge regarding the path and the fruits.’ (Vbh 796/329)”  

The meaning of this 2-truth formula has been more fully discussed elsewhere [1.3.3].

2.2.2 Anvaya ̃nāṇa

2.2.2.1 Anvaya ̃nāṇa (the “drift of Dharma” knowledge) is inferential knowledge (anugamana, ̃nāṇa), conclusive knowledge (nayana, ̃nāṇa), reasoned knowledge (kārana, ̃nāṇa) (VbhA 417,5). For our practical purposes, we can take these commentarial explanations of the terms as approximating, respectively, empirical, inferential and inductive knowledge. This is the knowledge by which an arhat knows that he is fully awakened, that is to say, by way of “review knowledge.”

26 Ettāvatā ca pubbe, nibbāna, ̃nāṇena atil’aṁso, ̃nāṇam, dibba, cakkhunā paccuppānāgam oṁsa, ̃nāṇam, āsava-k, khayena sakala, lokiyā, lokuttara, guṇan’ti evam tihi vijjāhi sabbe’pi sabbaññu, guṇe saṅghahetvā ... . (MA 1:128; AA 4:90, 143; VA 1:169)

27 On the 4 noble saints, see (Catukka) Samaṇa S (A 4.239), SD 49.14; SD 10.16 (11-14); on the 8 individuals, see Āṭṭha Puggala S Z (A 8.60) SD 15.10a(2).

28 Dhamme ̃nāṇan’ti eka, paṭivedha, vasena catu, sacca, dhamme ̃nāṇam catu, sacca abhantare nirodha, sacce dhamme ̃nāṇam ca. Yathāha “tattha katamaṁ dhamme ̃nāṇaṁ? Catūsu maggesu catūsu phalesu ̃nānan’ti” (Vbh 796/329) (DA 3:1019 f). On when one knows any of the 4 truths one knows them all, see Gavampati S (S 56.30), SD 53.1.

29 “Empirical” means “based on experience, observation and perception,” ie, that which “follows” (anugamana) or is consequent to, resulting from our sense-experiences. See (2.1.1).

30 Nayana, ̃nāṇa is lit, “knowledge by conclusion”; hence, inferential.

31 Technically, “inductive” means “characterized by the inference of general principles or laws from particular instances.” This inference works with our reasoning; hence, inductive. These philosophical terms have been used purely for convenience. It is wise not to be caught up with these terms as used in western philosophy.

32 Anuaye ̃nāṇaṁ, dhamma, ̃nāṇam anugamane ̃nāṇa, paccavekkhaṇa, ̃nāṇass’etaṁ ̃nāṇaṁ (SA 2:67).
“Inferential knowledge” (anvaya ṇāṇa) is so closely related to the “knowledge of states” (dhamma ṇāṇa) that the Vibhaṅga actually defines them together [2.2.1.1]. “The knowledge of states” is the present understanding of the “paths,” that is, the 4 stages of sainthood. With this understanding, one infers these states were such in the past, and will be so in the future: this is “inferential knowledge.”

2.2.2.2 The Dīgha Commentary defines inferential knowledge, thus:

“Anvaye ṇāṇa means: Having seen the 4 truths by review knowledge, one then applies this by way of inferential knowledge to both the past and the future, thus: Just this is the truth that is suffering: just this is the truth of its arising, that is craving; just this is the truth that is its ending (nirvana); just this is the truth that is the path (the noble eightfold path).

Hence, it is said (in the Vibhaṅga): ‘Headman, by means of this truth that is seen, understood, immediately attained, immersed in, one draws the conclusion regarding the past and the future.’ [S 42.11,-13]33 (DA 3:1020,3-9)

Thus, one directly understood (abhāraṇāmsu) the 4 noble truths here and now. One then draws the conclusion (nayaṁ neti) that in the past, too, practitioners came to realize these very same 4 noble truths in the same manner. In the future, too, practitioners will come to realize the same truths (Vbh 329,8-27). From our present knowledge of the 4 truths, we can, when we have reached the path, infer by review-knowledge that these truths applied in the past, too, and will apply in the future, too. This is inferential knowledge: it leads to wisdom.34

2.2.2.3 Thus, the Buddha, after explaining to the headman Bhadraka how, in the present, we suffer on account of desire or passion for others, goes on to show that this applies to the past and the future, too, thus:

“Headman, by means of this truth [this dharma] that is seen, understood, immediately attained,35 immersed in, we draw a conclusion (nayaṁ nehi) regarding the past and the future.”36 [§13].

Technically, this is “inferential knowledge” or understanding of the drift of the Dharma (anvya dhamma), that is, review knowledge (especially of an arhat). After one becomes an arhat, one then examines how one’s mind has been liberated.37 This is, of course, the highest spiritual attainment, according to early Buddhism.

2.2.2.4 In the Bhadraka Sutta (§ 42.11), we see the Buddha implicitly using the streamwinning teaching [2.3] for Bhadraka, who is a layman. For a layman who inquires about “the arising and passing away of suffering,” suggests that his mind is concerned about the true nature of life: hence, he is likely to be ready to reach the path of the streamwinner.

Since Bhadraka is spiritually ready, the Buddha uses an idea that seems to contradict all that has been taught before that is time-based, that is, based on the present, the past and the future. Simply, put: Time is suffering [2.2.2.5]. The ironic silence of this truth must have rung a clear note of familiarity and

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33 Anvaye ṇāṇan’ti cattāri saccāni paccavekkhato disvā yathā idāni, evam atite’pi anāgata’pi ime’va pañca-k.-khandaḥ dukkha,saccāṃ, ayam eva tanhā samudaya,saccam, ayam eva nirodho nirodha,saccāṃ, ayam eva maggo magga,sacc’an’ti evam tassa ṇānassa anugatiyaṃ ṇānāṃ. Ten’āha “so iminā dhammānā ṇānena diṭṭhena pattena viditena pariyogālīhena atitānāgata nayaṁ neti.” [Vbh 796/329,10 f] (DA 3:1020,3-9). Vibhaṅga actually reads: iminā tvaṃ gāmani dhammena diṭṭhena viditena akālikena pattena pariyogālīhena atitānāgata nayaṁ nehi [§13]. Vbh adds ṇāṭena, omits akālikena, and puts pattena earlier before viditena. Otherwise, the two passages agree on the details.

34 The Vbh def here then closes with the Abhidhamma “wisdom pericope” [2.2.3.2].

35 “Immediately attained,” akālēna pattena. See (2.2.2.5; 2.3.1.3).

36 Iminā tvaṃ gāmani dhammena diṭṭhena viditena akālikena pattena pariyogālīhena atitānāgata nayaṁ nehi.

37 See ṇāṇa Vatthu S 1 (S 12,33,3-5), SD 85.11 [2.4], and Vbh 329; DA 3:1020.
truth in Bhadraka, since he immediately responds by agreeing with what the Buddha has taught him thus far, and corroborates it by relating how it is true about his suffering for his son, Cira,vāsī §§14-17, and for his wife, too §§18-20. The Sutta then closes with the thesis statement: that suffering is rooted in desire. [§21]

2.2.2.5 While desire keeps us caught in time, seeing the true nature of desire, frees us from its slavish chores, its captive cycle of this and that: “this truth [this dharma] that is seen, understood, immediately attained (akālena pattena), immersed in” [§13]. The depth of this idea of timelessness is encapsulated in a single Pali word: akālikena, “that which has nothing to do with time.”

In the phrase, “immediately attained,” akālena pattena, akāla is polysemic: it is pregnant with multiple senses all of which may apply in the same context. As a virtue of the Dharma, ākala means “having nothing to do with time.” Although this sense is inherent here, contextually, it has the sense of “taking no time,” that is, immediately evident (to the wise).

We thus see here how words often act as mere “headers” for a rich register of senses: although we have rendered akālika contextually as “immediately,” this is only as far as words (vyañjana) go, but the sense or meaning (attha) is much richer. It is the sutta teacher’s wisdom and skill to show how a single word like akālika, akālena, etc (grammatical forms of akāla) can embrace all of the Buddha Dharma!

2.2.2.6 The nature of time and spirituality is highlighted in the Samiddhi Sutta (S 1.20), where the young monk, Samiddhi, tells the forest deity who was trying to seduce him that the Buddha teaches, thus:

“Sense-pleasures are time-consuming (kālika), full of suffering, full of despair, and great is the danger therein, while the Dharma is visible right here, immediate [time-free].”

2.2.3 Pariya ṇāna

2.2.3.1 The 2nd knowledge—“the knowledge of limits”—goes by a number of Pali variants:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pali Term</th>
<th>Source(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pariya ṇāna</td>
<td>D 3:83 f, 3:100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pariye ṇāna</td>
<td>Vbh:Be 329; DA 3:1020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paricce ṇāna</td>
<td>Vbh:Ec 329,28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pariccheda,ṇāna</td>
<td>VbhA 417,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paricchede ṇāna</td>
<td>D 3:226,34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

However, all these terms, despite their variant spellings, mean the same things: “The knowledge of the limits of the minds of others. Thus, it is said in the Dīgha Commentary: “Here, a monk [a meditator] understands, by (his own) mind, the limits of the minds of other individuals, other beings” [Vbh 796/329,-28-330,2], which should be referred to for details (in the Vibhaṅga).”

2.2.3.2 The Vibhaṅga, in fact, defines it as the vicarious knowledge of the minds (“of other individuals, other beings,” para,sattānam para,puggalānam), which is the same as mind-contemplation (cittā-nupassanā), the 3rd of the 4 satipatthanas. It is defined in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta (M 10) and elsewhere, thus:

38 SD 1.1 (4.4.5); DEB sv.
39 On akālika as a Dharma virtue, see SD 15.9 (2.3).
40 S 1.20,5 + SD 21.4 (2.2; 3.1.5).
42 M 10,34/1:59 (SD 13.3).
Here, bhikshus, he understands with (his own) mind the minds of other individuals, thus:43

1. he understands a **lustful mind** as
   or, he understands a **lust-free mind** as
   ‘Lustful mind,’
   ‘Lust-free mind.’

2. Or, he understands a **hating mind** as
   or, he understands a **hate-free mind** as
   ‘Hating mind,’
   ‘Hate-free mind.

3. Or, he understands a **deluded mind** as
   or, he understands an **undeluded mind** as
   ‘Deluded mind,’
   ‘Undeluded mind.’

4. Or, he understands a **narrowed [constricted] mind** as
   or, he understands a **distracted mind** as
   ‘Narrowed mind,’
   ‘Distracted mind.’

5. Or, he understands a **great [exalted] mind** as
   or, he understands a **small mind [unexalted] mind** as
   ‘Great mind [Exalted mind],’
   ‘Small mind [Unexalted mind].’

6. Or, he understands a **surpassable mind** as
   or, he understands an **unsurpassable mind** as
   ‘Surpassable mind,’
   ‘Unsurpassable mind.’

7. Or, he understands a **concentrated mind** as
   or, he understands an **unconcentrated mind** as
   ‘Concentrated mind,’
   ‘Unconcentrated mind.’

8. Or, he understands a **freed mind** as
   or, he understands an **unfreed mind** as
   ‘Freed mind,’
   ‘Unfreed mind.’

(M 10,34), SD 13

The Vibhaṅga definition of the knowledge of limits continues, thus:

THE WISDOM PERICOPE. That which is wisdom (paññā), understanding (paññānaññā), investigation (vīcaya), research (pavucaya), dharma investigation (dhamma.vicaya), discernment (sallakkhanā), differentiation (paccupalakkhanā), learning (pandiccaṁ), proficiency (kosalla), subtlety (nepuñña), analysis (vabhavyā), mental analysis (cintā,upaparikkhā), breadth (bhūri), sagacity (medhā), guidance (parināyikā), insight (vipassana), full awareness (sampajañña), the goad (patoda), wisdom (paññā), the faculty of wisdom (paññīnāriyām), the power of wisdom (paññā, bala), the sword of wisdom (paññā, sattha), the palace of wisdom (paññā, pāsāda), the light of wisdom (paññā, āloka), the radiance of wisdom (paññā, obhāsa), the torch of wisdom (paññā, pājījota), the jewel of wisdom (paññā, ratana), non-delusion (amoha), examination of states (dhamma, vicaya), right view (sammā, dīthi).48

(Vbh 329,29-330,2)

This last paragraph is a stock passage that also defines “full awareness” (sampajāna), which is another name for this practice (Vbh 250,24-32).

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43 *Idha bhikkhu para,sattānam para,puggalānam cetasā ceto parica paññānāti,* (Vbh 329,29 f).
44 “Narrowed mind,” *sāṅkhittam cittam,* ie “narrowed” or “compressed” due to sloth and torpor.
45 “Distracted mind,” *vikkhittham cittam,* ie “distracted” by restlessness and worry.
46 “Great mind” or “the mind grown great,” *maha-g, gataṁ cittam,* ie made great or “exalted” because all the mental hindrances have been overcome, thus attaining a form dhyana or a formless attainment. See *Catuttha Jhāna Pañha S* ([S 40.4] @ SD 24.14 (4)). Properly speaking, only the first 4 form dhyanas are called jhāna, while the higher 4 formless bases are called *samāpatti* (attainment); and that the 4 formless attainments actually belong to the 4th form dhyana since they all possess the same two factors (ie equanimity and samadhi).
47 Unsurpassable (anuttaram) mind, prob syn with “great” mind. See D:W 592 n667 & Anālayo 2005 ad M 1:59.
2.2.4 Sammuti ṇāṇa

2.2.4.1 The 4th knowledge is “conventional knowledge,” given in Pali variously as sammuti, ṇāṇa, sammutiyā ṇāṇa or sammati ṇāṇa. This knowledge is defined in the Vibhaṅga and the Dīgha Commentary quoting it, by way of exclusion, as “Other than the 3 knowledges—those of the (supramundane) states, of inference, of the limits of other’s minds—it is said to be conventional knowledge.”

The Vibhaṅga adds that “it is conventional knowledge because it is commonly believed to be knowledge.” In other words, it simply refers to “worldly knowledge”: a knowledge, at best, about things, without a full understanding of what it all means, and what we should do about it. However, our learning starts here—with conventional knowledge—we observe, for example how suffering arises for everyone, everywhere, all the time in this world and universe. This is especially true of us and for us. Then, we have started to “see, attain, know, immerse ourself in” that truth.

2.2.4.2 As we have already noted, there is no dichotomy of “conventional knowledge” (sammuti- ṇāṇa) or “conventional truth” (sammuti,sacca) and “ultimate truth” (param’attha,sacca) [2.2.0.2]. This dichotomy arose only later in the commentaries, such as the Kathā, vatthu Commentary [2.2.4.2] and later works. The Kathā, vatthu itself, however, does not mention “ultimate knowledge or truth” (param’- attha ṇāṇa; param’attha sacca) at all.

The 2 truths are only mentioned in its Commentary (KvuA 84,5 f) in a polemical discussion to show the distinction between worldly knowledge and spiritual (liberating) knowledge. The Kathā, vatthu, in fact, only discusses a difference of views as to whether “conventional knowledge has only truth as its object and nothing else” (sammuti, ṇāṇaṁ sacc’ārammaṇañ ñeva na aññ’ārammaṇañ’ti, Kvu 1:310,32 f).

Scholars think that “[from the Commentary] this discourse [in the Kathā, vatthu] is to purge the incorrect tenet held by the Andhakas, that the word ‘truth’ is to be applied without any distinction being drawn between popular and philosophical truth” (that is, between conventional truth and ultimate truth).

If we accept this, and it is relevant, then, it seems that there is no difference between the knowledge of medicine and medical requisites, and the 4 noble truths (Kvu 311). However, with this conventional knowledge alone, we will not be able to fully comprehend the 4 truths. Hence, we must conclude that this comprehension of the 4 truths comes only with “ultimate knowledge.” Indeed, both early Buddhism and later teachings agree on this point: that all the 4 truths alone define ultimate truth.

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49 Sammuti, ṇāṇa (D 3:226,34; VbhA 417,17-20; KvuA 84); sammutiyā ṇāṇa (D:Be ad loc); sammati ṇāṇa (Vbh 330,4). For a Kvu sectarian discussion on this knowledge (Kvu 310), see Jayatilleke 1963:367


51 ṇāṇaṁ’ti sammutatā sammuti, ṇāṇaṁ nāma hoti (VbhA 417,18 f).

52 Andhaka, “those from Andhra,” a collective term used in the introduction of KvuA to refer to the Rājagiriya, Siddhārthika, Pūrvaśaila and Aparaśaila (the first 2 mentioned in Dipv; the last 2 belonged to the 18 pre-sectarian schools, about 200 years AB: PDB 1091 f), which seem to have been related to the Caiyta or Caitaka school, a collateral line of the Mahāsāṅghika school, which itself flourished alongside early Mahāyāna, sharing similar ideas.


54 See Jayatilleke 1963:367 f.
2.3 STREAMWINNING—REACHING THE PATH

2.3.1 The real truth

2.3.1.1 The Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11) relates how the Buddha answers the headman Bhadraka’s question on “the arising and passing away of suffering” [§3]. The Buddha begins his answer by noting that right here and now in Uruvela, kappa, the market-town outside which they are, there are those who are suffering “sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair” on account of the misfortunes of their near and dear ones, and there are those who do not [§§9-10]. This conventional knowledge (sammatti nāṇa), when understood as it really is, as a fact about common suffering is a statement of the 1st noble truth—there is suffering.

Then, the Buddha asks Bhadraka what is the reason for the suffering in those who are suffering. Bhadraka rightly replies that it is desire and passion. This is the 2nd noble truth—the arising of suffering, which is rooted in craving [§§11-12]. Theoretically, this seems to be all that the Buddha teaches Bhadraka. Yet, this understanding of the present state—this basic form of “the knowledge of states” (dhamma nāṇa) [2.2.0.1]—is sufficient for Bhadraka to use to broaden and deepen his understanding of the truths.

2.3.1.2 The Buddha then teaches Bhadraka how to apply his knowledge of states to infer, to “draw a conclusion” (nayam neti), that this also holds true for the past and the future. Even in the past, there were those who suffered thus (“sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair”) on account of the misfortunes of their near and dear one. And in the future, too, this will occur. This is “inferential knowledge.” This broader understanding universalizes the truths of suffering and its arising: there is suffering; it arises rooted in craving (desire and passion).

In effect, this is all that the Buddha teaches Bhadraka, as recorded in the Bhadraka Sutta. Bhadraka very well understands and accepts these truths, from his experiences—that he, too, suffers on account of his desire and passion for his son, Ciravāsi [§614-17], and for his wife [§618-20]. This is “the knowledge of limits” (pariya nāṇa): that his mind is “limited” or afflicted by suffering. The Buddha then concludes his teaching, which is confirmed by the very last line of the Sutta, where he declares:

“In this way, headman, it should be understood: Whatever suffering that arises, all that arises rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.” [§21]

2.3.1.3 On closer examination of the Bhadraka Sutta, we will see that the Buddha actually goes beyond merely stating the 1st and the 2nd truths to Bhadraka. He does indirectly, in essence, allude to the 3rd truth (nirvana) and the 4th truth (the path). This highly significant allusion is found in the phrase: “Headman, by means of this truth [this dharma] that is seen, understood, immediately attained, immersed in, one draws the conclusion regarding the past and the future” [§13].

Especially significant is the phrase, “by means of this truth that is seen, understood, immediately attained, immersed in” (imin dhammena ditthena viditena akālikena pattena pariyogālha). Of the 4 highlighted terms, the first two—“seen, understood” (ditthena viditena) refers to the attaining of the path (that is, the 3 trainings): training in moral virtue, mental concentration and wisdom helps us “see and understand” the noble truths. The last three words (or two phrases)—“immediately attained, immersed in” (akālikena pattend pariyogālha)—refer to the attaining of nirvana, the 4th truth.

2.3.1.4 The phrase, “by means of this truth that is seen, understood, immediately attained, immersed in” [2.3.1.3] is an important line found in the dhamma, cakkhu pericope, describing the streamwinner’s attaining of the Dharma-eye. We see this important phrase, for example, in connection with the brahmin Pokkhara, sāti’s attaining of streamwinning, as reported in the Ambaṭṭha Sutta (D 3), thus:

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“... even so, in the brahmin Pokkharasāti, while seated right there, there arose the dust-free stainless Dharma-eye [vision of truth], thus:

‘All that is of the nature of arising is of the nature of ending.’

This passage affirms that the brahmin Pokkharasāti, Ambattha’s teacher, has attained streamwinning. The vesārajja pericope (on moral courage) then immediately follows. [2.3.1.5]

2.3.2 Moral courage

2.3.2.1 While the dhamma, cakkhu pericope declares the person’s attaining of the Dharma-eye, that is, streamwinning, the vesārajja pericope describes the quality of such an individual: moral courage. Here is the pericope describing the brahmin Pokkharasāti, following his attaining of streamwinning. Note that the first 4 terms are also found in the Bhadraka Sutta) [2.3.1.4], thus:

THE VESĀRAJJA PERICOPE:

Then, the brahmin Pokkharasāti, having seen the Dharma [the truth],

having attained the Dharma,

having known the Dharma,

having immersed himself in the Dharma,

having crossed over doubt,

having abandoned uncertainty,

having won moral courage [intrepidity],

independent of others, in the Teacher’s teaching,

said this to the Blessed One:

“Excellent, bhante! Excellent, bhante! ...

(The Dharma exultation and request for refuge-going follow.) (D 3.2.22/1:110), SD 21.3

2.3.2.2 The Udāna Commentary on the (Suppabuddha) Kuṭṭhi Sutta (U 5.3) explains the key terms of the vesārajja pericope as follows:

“Therein, diṭṭha, dhamma means one who has seen the Dharma, that is, by way of having seen the Dharma that is the noble truths. The other term (dhamma) here should be inferred in the same way (that is, as the noble truths). Thus, in this connection, the word dhamma is the same as diṭṭha, dhamma. 60

55 Evam eva pokkhara,sātissa brāhmaṇassa tasmiṁ yeva āsane virajāṁ vita, malam dhamma, cakkhum udapādi. Comy says that the “Dharma-eye” (dhamma, cakkhu) is the path of stream-winning: in Brahmayu S (M 91,36/ 2:-145), it refers to the 3 paths (tiṇṇa maggam), ie culminating in non-returning; in Cūla Rāhułovāda S (M 147,9/ 3:280), the destruction of influxes (āsava-k, khaya). The following sentence: “All that is subject to arising is subject to ending,” shows the mode in which the path arises. The path takes ending (nirvana) as its object, but its function is to penetrate all conditioned states as being subject to arising and ending. (MA 3:92)

56 D 3.2.21/1:110, 14 f), SD 21.3.

57 See Vesārajja S (S 4.8) + SD 51.19 (3.3).

58 “The Dharma [the truth]” (dhamma) here refers to the 4 noble truths. Having seen the truth for himself, he cuts off the fetter of doubt and now has “the noble and liberating view that accordingly leads the practitioner to the complete destruction of suffering” (yā’yaṁ diṭṭhi ariyā niyāṇikā niyāyī tak, karassa sammā, dukkha-k, khaya, Kosambiya S, M 48,7/1:322), SD 64.1

59 “Having seen the Dharma in the Teacher’s teaching,” diṭṭha, dhammo patto, dhammo vidita, dhammo pariyogalha, dhammo tiṇna, vicikiccho vigatha, khām, katho vesārajja-p, patto apara-p, paccayo natthu, sāsane. As in the case of Yasa’s father (Mv 1.7.10/V 1:16), SD 11.2(7).
Since there is also what is called “seeing” (dassana) that is different from “knowledge and vision” (ñāṇa, dassana), as patta, dhammadho (“one who has attained the Dharma”) is said with the aim of excluding this. Further, since there is known to exist, too, an attained state (patta, dhammadho) that is different from knowledge-attainment (ñāṇa, sampattito), vidita, dhammadho (“one who has known the Dharma”) is said with the aim of distinguishing it from that.\(^\text{61}\)

Moreover, since this same state of being one who has known the Dharma can also arise fully in terms of dharmas (path-states), one is said to be pariyogalha, dhammadho (“one who is totally immersed in the Dharma”) to show the fact that Dharma has been fully known; thus, that very same realization of the truths of his, as previously mentioned, has been explained.\(^\text{62}\)

For path-knowledge, as it fulfills the functions of full understanding and so on by way of a single realization, is also comprehensively spoken of as being totally immersed in that dharmma to be fully understood, unlike other kinds of knowledge.

Hence, it is said: “He is ‘one who has seen the Dharma,’ since the Dharma, that is, the noble truths have been seen by him.” Hence, for that very same reason, he is said to be ‘one who has crossed over doubt’ (tinna, vicikicca), and so on.\(^\text{63}\)  (UA 285,17-30)

In simple terms, this commentarial jargon means: since one has “seen” (personally experienced) the Dharma (true reality), one is said to be diṭṭha, dhammadho; through “knowing and seeing the Dharma” (understanding true reality) one is said to be patta, dhammadho, who has attained Dharma; one has directly known this: hence, one is called vidita, dhammadho. Such a one “completely immersed” in Dharma is pariyogalha, dhammadho, that is, one’s whole being is Dharma, free of all self-conceptions, doubts, and running after what is outside.

2.3.3 The morally courageous

2.3.3.1 When one attains streamwinning, one is said, in simple terms, to “have seen the Dharma, attained it, known it, immersed oneself in it, crossed over doubt, won moral courage, independent of others, in the Teacher’s teaching” (diṭṭha, dhammadho patta, dhammadho pariyo, galha, dhammadho tinna, vicikiccho vigata, kathakatho vesārajja-p, patta aparā-p, paccayo)\(^\text{64}\) [.1]. “Having won moral courage” (vesārajja-p, patta) is unique in this set of qualities of a streamwinner by way of being the result of all the other qualities mentioned.

A streamwinner has moral courage in the sense that he has overcome self-centredness and narcissism (the fear of losing to others by thinking in terms of “I, me, mine”); he has overcome doubts (since he has fully well understood the Dhamma of change); and he is no more superstitious (he does not need to seek solace or security outside of himself, since he is immersed in the Dharma: he sees the Dharma within himself).

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\(^\text{60}\) Tattha diṭṭha, dhammadho’ti diṭṭho ariya, sacca, dhammadho etenāti diṭṭha, dhammadho. Sesa, padesu’pi es’eva nayo. Tattha ‘diṭṭhad, hammo’ti c’ettha sāmañña, vacano dhamma, sado. (UA 285,17 f)

\(^\text{61}\) Dassanāṁ nāma űṇa, dassanato aṇīṃ pi atthi, taṁ nivattan’atthāṁ “patta, dhammadho’ti vuttam. Patta, dhamm ca űṇa, sampattiyā aṇīṃ pi vijji tato visesan’atthāṁ “vidita, dhammadho’ti vuttam. (UA 285,21-23)

\(^\text{62}\) Sā paṇāyaṁ vidita, dhammattā dhammesu eko, desenāpi hoti nippadesa, vasena taṁ dossetum dossetum “pariyogalha, dhammadho’ti vuttam. Ten’assa yathā vutta, saccădhintyang yeva dipito. (UA 285,23-26)


\(^\text{64}\) D 2:41, 42, 43; V 1:12, 13, 18, 19, 20, 23, 181. http://dharmafarer.org
2.3.3.2 Besides the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti [2.3.3.1], the suttas and the Vinaya mention many other laymen as having gained streamwinning. Here is a list of the best known of the streamwinners mentioned in the suttas and the Vinaya:

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2.3.3.3 The Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11) is a testimony to what the Buddha teaches (the 4 truths) and what our task is: to understand at least one of these 4 truths. According to the Gavampati Sutta (S 56.30), when we understand any of the 4 truths, we will understand all of them. It’s like a net with 4 corners: when we pull any of the 4 corners, we will pull the whole net.

To understand any of the 4 truths, especially the first—the truth that is suffering—we can start, for example, by observing how impermanence work on us and those who are near and dear to us. The reflection on impermanence includes noticing how things change, how people change; how our fortunes are so uncertain—that we are all beset with decay, disease and death. This is a reflection on impermanence related to the 1st noble truth. [§8]

Bhadraka is also taught to reflect on the 2nd noble truth: on how craving (our love and passion for others) brings us suffering, especially when we become aware of their misfortunes: their death, imprisonment, losses or blame [§8]. He is then taught to use this perception to infer that this is truth all the time, whether in the past or in the future [§13]. Indeed, we can use this inferential knowledge (anvaya ñāṇa) [2.2.2] to reflect on how this is true, not only for us, but for everyone else, too.

Reflecting on impermanence in this manner, we will see, attain, know and immerse ourselves in the Dharma. We directly experience true reality and so personally see the Dharma. This is when the Dharma-eye arises in us and we become streamwinners. This can and should happen in this life itself. It starts by our aspiration to streamwinning here and now.

65 Gavampati S (S 56.30), SD 53.1.

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2.4 RELATED SUTTA

The spiritual knowledge that is succinctly stated in the Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11) is given in greater technical detail in the Ņāṇa,vatthu Sutta 1 (S 12.33), which should also be studied following the former. It gives a list of the 44 “grounds for knowledge” (paññāvatthu), that is, the 11 links of dependent arising (minus “ignorance”)—decay-and-death, birth, existence, clinging, craving, feeling, contact, the 6 sense-bases, name-and-form, consciousness, and formations—being worked on in the framework of the 4 noble truths (the ground, its arising, its ending, and the path leading to its ending): thus totaling 44 grounds.

Each cycle of a ground for knowledge is a case of one’s knowledge of states (dhamma Ńāna) [2.2.1], which is then applied—as inference knowledge (anvaya Ńāna) [2.2.2] to the past and the future. When these knowledges are mastered, one attains streamwinning. (SD 85.11)

3 Persons

3.1 BHADRAKA

Apparently, Bhadraka, the headman of the prosperous market-town of Uruvela,kappa [§1] is mentioned only here in the Bhadraka Sutta (S 42.11). However, when he questions the Buddha about the arising and passing away of suffering, the Buddha gives a deceptively simple answer with profound implications regarding the early Buddhist theory of knowledge.

From the Sutta, we know that he has a son, probably an only son, Cirā,vasī [§2], and a wife [§§18-20], both of whom he loves dearly. It is this love that the Buddha uses as the basis for his teaching on suffering as recorded in the Sutta.

3.2 CIRA,VASĪ

Cirā,vasī is the headman Bhadraka’s son, probably his only one. Hence, he loves him dearly, and all the more so, since he is “staying in a lodging abroad” (bahī,ūvasate paṭivasati) [§15]. The Commentary explains that the boy is dwelling abroad, learning some arts (bahī nagare kiñci sippam uggananto vasa- ti, SA 3:108,11-13). It is possible that he is away in Takkasilā, which is famed for such training. His father, a headman, can easily afford to school him in such a prestigious residential ashram.

Bhadraka Sutta

The Discourse to Bhadraka

S 42.11

The headman Bhadraka

1 At one time, the Blessed One was staying amongst the Mallas. There was a market-town of the Mallas named Uruvela,kappa.68

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66 S 12.33/2:56-59 (SD 85.11).
67 Ņāna,vatthu S 2 (S 12.34) gives 77 objects of knowledge (7 x 11) (SD 85.12); def in detail at Vbh 306-344.
68 Ekaṁ samayaṁ bhagavā mallesu viharati, uruvela, kappam nāma mallānāṁ nīgam. This sentence does not actually tell where the Buddha is staying. A similar sentence structure is used in the opening of Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S (D 22,1), SD 13.2, Satipaṭṭhāna S (M 10,1.1 n), SD 13.1; Mahā, nidāna S (D 15,1), SD 5.17; see http://dharmafarer.org
Then, the headman Bhadraka\(^{69}\) approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side.

Sitting at one side, the headman Bhadraka said to the Blessed One:

“"It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One would teach me about the arising and the passing away of suffering.""\(^{70}\)

“If I, headman, were to teach you about the arising and the passing away of suffering regarding the past, saying, ‘So it was in the past,’ doubt and uncertainty about that might arise in you.\(^{71}\)

And if I, headman, were to teach you about the arising and the passing away of suffering regarding the future, saying, ‘So it will be in the future,’ doubt and uncertainty about that might arise in you.

**THE ARISING AND PASSING AWAY OF SUFFERING**

Instead, headman, even as I’m sitting right here, and you’re sitting right there,\(^{72}\) I will teach you about the arising and the passing away of suffering.\(^{73}\)

Listen well, pay close attention, I will speak.”

"Yes, bhante," the headman Bhadraka said to the Blessed One.

The verifiable truth

(1) SUFFERING ON ACCOUNT OF OTHERS

[4] The Blessed One said this:

“What do you think, headman? Are there any people in Uruvela,kappa on whose account sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair\(^{74}\) would arise in you if they were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame?\(^{75}\)

There are such people, bhante, in Uruvela,kappa on whose account sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would arise in me if they were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame.\(^{76}\)

(2) NOT SUFFERING ON ACCOUNT OF OTHERS

“But, headman, are there any people in Uruvela,kappa on whose account sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would not arise in you in such an event?”

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\(^{69}\) On Bhadraka, see (3.1).

\(^{70}\) Sadhu me bhante bhagavā dukkhassa samudayā ca atthaṅgamaṇ ca desetūti.

\(^{71}\) Tatra te siyā kaṅkhā siyā vimati. We need to verify how suffering was always true or will always be true by merely stating it. We can only know this from the present reality before us. The Buddha is preparing Bhadraka for an understanding that is founded in truth and experience rather than mere doctrinal truth.

\(^{72}\) The Buddha is clearly speaking figuratively, meaning that he is going to teach something experiential and verifiable, rather than the speculative or what needs some kind of superknowledge to ascertain. See (2).

\(^{73}\) Api câham gāmaṇi idh’eva nisinnena ādhyeyavā te nisinnasā dukkhasa samudayaṇ ca atthaṅgamaṇ ca desessāmi, See (1.3.1).

\(^{74}\) Phrase in **bold**: soka,parideva,dukkha,domanass’upāyāsā.

\(^{75}\) **Underscored** phrase: vadhena vā bandhena vā jāniyā vā garahāya vā.
10.2 “There are such people, bhante, in Uruvela, kappa on whose account sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would not arise in me in such an event.”

Knowledge by experience

11 [6] “Now, headman, what is the cause, what is the reason, that, on account of some people in Uruvela, kappa, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would arise in you when they suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame?

11.2 And, headman, what is the cause, what is the reason, that, on account of some people in Uruvela, kappa, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would not arise in you when they suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame?”

12 “Bhante, those people in Uruvela, kappa, on account of whom sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would arise in me when they suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame—they are those for whom I have desire and passion [lust].

12.2 But, bhante, those people in Uruvela, kappa, on account of whom sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair would not arise in me when they suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame—they are those for whom I have no desire and passion.”

Knowledge by inference

13 “Headman, by means of this truth [this dharma] that is seen, understood, immediately attained, immersed in, one draws the conclusion for the past and the future, thus:

13.2 ‘Whatever suffering that arose in the past, all that arose rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.

13.3 Whatever suffering will arise in the future, all that will arise rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.”

Bhadraka approves

14 “It is wonderful, bhante! It is amazing, bhante!

How well, bhante, this has been spoken by the Blessed One:

14.2 ‘Whatever suffering arises, all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.

14.3 Whatever suffering that arose in the past, all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering."

76 Be omits this second question, prob through transmission or copying error. It is found in the Ce Ee Se.

77 “Desire and passion,” chanda, rāga.

78 “Immediately attained,” akālīna pattenā. See (2.2.2.3).

79 “Draw a conclusion,” nayāma neti. See (2.2.2.2).

80 Iminā tvaṁ gāmanī dhammena diṭṭhena viditena akālīkaṇṇa pattenā pariyojāhena atitānāgata nayāṁ nehī.

81 Be subhāsitaṁ c’iḍāṁ; Ce Ee subhāsitaṁ idāṁ; Se subhāsitañ c’idaṁ.

82 Yathā kiṁci dukkharāṁ uppa jamānaṁ uppaṭṭi jīvaṇaṁ taṁ chanda, mūlakāṁ chanda, nidānaṁ chandi hi mūlāṁ dukkhasūti. Note here that Bhadraka has paraphrased the Buddha’s specific statements on when and how suffering arises. In §17, the Buddha himself quotes this sentence made by Bhadraka, making the generalization himself. This is, in fact, the sutta thesis, the essence of the Sutta teaching, which, significantly, closes the Sutta, too [§21]. See (1.3.1).

See (1.1.2.).

83 Be subhāsitaṁ c’iḍāṁ; Ce Ee subhāsitaṁ idāṁ; Se subhāsitañ c’idaṁ.

Http://dharmafarer.org
14.4 Whatever suffering that will arise in the future, all that is rooted in desire, has desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.

The boy Cira, vāsī

15 [7] Bhante, I have a boy named Cira, vāsī, who stays in a lodging abroad.

15.2 Until that man returns, bhante, I am worried, thinking, ‘I hope my boy Cira, vāsī has not met with any affliction!’

16 [8] “What do you think, headman? If the boy Cira, vāsī were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame, would sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair arise in you?”

16.2 “Bhante, if my boy Cira, vāsī were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame, even my life would be upset, so how could sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair not arise in me?”

17 In this way, too, headman, it can be understood:

‘Whatever suffering arises, all that arises rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.’

Cira, vāsī’s mother

18 [9] “What do you think, headman? Before you saw [met] Cira, vāsī’s mother or heard about her, did you have any desire, attachment or affection for her?”

19 “Then, was it, headman, on account of seeing her or hearing about her that this desire, attachment and affection arose in you?”

20 [10] “What do you think, headman? If Cira, vāsī’s mother were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame, would sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair arise in you?”

20.2 “Bhante, if my Cira, vāsī’s mother were to suffer death or imprisonment or losses or blame, even my life would be upset, so how could sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain, and despair not arise in me?”

Suffering is rooted in desire

21 [11] “In this way, headman, it should be understood.

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83 Yaṅkiñci atītam addhānaṁ dukkhaṁ uppajjamānaṁ uppajji sabban taṁ chanda, mūlaṁ chanda, nidānaṁ chando hi mūlaṁ dukkhassāti. Be Ee omit this sentence; found in Ce Se: see (1.3.2).

84 Yaṅkiñci anāgatam addhānaṁ dukkhaṁ uppajjamānaṁ uppajjissati sabbantaṁ chanda, mūlaṁ chanda, - nidānaṁ chando hi mūlaṁ dukkhassāti. Be Ee Ce omit this sentence. Found only in Ke Se: see (1.3.2).

85 Atthi me bhanye cira, vāsī nāma kumāro bahi, āvase the pativasati. See (3.2).

86 This and foll lines: Yāvākkivaṁ ca bhante so puriso nāgcacchati, tassa me hot’eva aññhatthaṁ “mā h’eva cira, vāsissa kumārassa kiñci abādhayethāti. Be abādhayithāti; Be: Ka Ce Ke Ee Sa abādhayethāti.

87 Tam kinn maññasi gāmanī yadda te ciravāsissa mātā* aditthā āsi assutā, ahosi ciravāsissa mātuyā chando vā rāgo vā pemaṁ vā’ti. Be Se ciravāsī, mātā; Ce Ee ciravāsissa mātā. 
‘Whatever suffering that arises, all that arises rooted in desire, with desire as its source; for, desire is the root of suffering.’"

— evam —

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88 Iminā’pi kho etam gāmanī pariyāyena veditabbāṁ. With this pariyāya phrase, the Buddha affirms Bhadraka’s understanding as in accordance with the teaching he has taught—that Bhadraka has properly understood the teaching. On pariyāyena, see Pariyāya nippariyāya, SD 68.2.