1 Sutta summary and related sutta

1.1.1 Summary

1.1.1.1 The (Saṅkhitta) Sampanna Sutta (S 48.19), the (short) discourse on the accomplished, is also called the (Indriya) Sampanna Sutta, the (indriya) discourse on the accomplished. Repeated as SD 10.4 (4.5), it is a short text on the 5 spiritual faculties—faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom—and how they are “accomplished” (sampanna) in the sense of “leading to peace, leading to self-awakening” (upasama,gāmiṁ samabhāgāmiṁ).

Such a spiritually accomplished individual is a noble disciple (ariya,sāvaka): a streamwinner-to-be, a streamwinner-become, a once-returner-to-be, a once-returner-become, a non-returner-to-be, a non-returner-become, an arhat-to-be, an arhat-become. These are called “the 8 individuals” (aṭṭha,purisa,puggalā).

1.1.1.2 Both upasama and sambodha are here synonyms for nirvana, as evident from the Saṁyutta commentary on the closely related (Indriya) Sampanna Sutta (S 35.153), where the Buddha answers the same question. It should however be noted that this is not a “definition” of nirvana (which, by nature, is undefinable and without attributes). At best, this is simply an attempt at describing the death-free state of true awakening and freedom.

1.1.2 Related Sutta

The Indriya Sampanna Sutta (S 35.153) is a discourse on the mastering of the spiritual faculties through the sense-faculties by way of seeing their true nature of being impermanent by way of insight. The Sutta Commentary explains the key term “accomplished in the faculties” (indriya,sampanna) as “fully endowed with the faculties” (paripuṇna indriya).

One who has attained arhathood by examining the 6 sense-faculties with insight is said to be “accomplished in faculties” because his faculties [the sense-faculties] are tamed [disciplined] (nibbīsevāna), or because he has the 5 spiritual faculties (pañc’indriya) of faith, etc, which have arisen on account of his mastering (sammasanto) the 6 sense-faculties (cha indriya)—the eye, etc—with insight. (SA 2:403,28, 3:327,5)

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1 See Āṭṭha Puggala S 2 (A 8.60) SD 15.10a(1.5).
2 See SD 10.4 (4.6.5).
3 S 35.153/4:140 (SD 10.4(4.6)).
4 Nibbīsevāna = nis (“out”) + vi-sevāna (“away from associating”) (S 2:210, 351, 5:34, 381, 456, 6:255; DhA 1:288, 296; VvA 284.
5 Sammasanto, abs of sammasati, “to touch, seize, grasp, know thoroughly, master (S 2:107; Dh 374; Miln 325); to think, meditate on (J 6:379; J 1:74, 75); fem sammasanti (ThA 62).
6 For other details, see SD 10.4 (4.6).
(Sañkhitta) Sampanna Sutta
The (Short) Discourse on Accomplished
S 48.19

2 Then, a certain monk approached the Blessed One, saluted him, sat down at one side. Sitting at one side, he said to the Blessed One:
   "Bhante, it is said, 'Accomplished in the faculties (indriya, sampanno), accomplished in the faculties.' In what way, bhante, is one accomplished in the faculties?"

3 "Here, bhikshu, a monk
   (1) cultivates the faculty of faith, leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; saddh'indriya
   (2) cultivates the faculty of energy, leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; viriy'indriya
   (3) cultivates the faculty of mindfulness, leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; sat'indriya
   (4) cultivates the faculty of concentration, leading to peace, leading to self-awakening; samādh'indriya
   (5) cultivates the faculty of wisdom, leading to peace, leading to self-awakening. paññ'indriya

4 Thus far, bhikshu, a monk is said to be accomplished in the faculties."

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7 Repeated at SD 10.4(4.5).
8 This question is again asked in Indriya Sampanna S (S 35.153/4:140), SD 10.4(4.6) & S:B ch IV n152.
9 This Sutta is repeated at SD 10.4(4.5). The same question is asked in Indriya Sampanna S (S 35.153/4:140), SD 10.4 (4.6). On "accomplished in the faculties" (indriya, sampanna), see (3).