19 (Chaḷ-īndriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Suttā 1+2

The 1st and 2nd (6-faculty) Discourses on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.29 & S 48.30 (S 5:206 f)

Theme: Mastering the 6 sense-faculties: the sacca tetrad
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2020

1 Introduction

1.1 Sutta summaries

Both the (Chaḷ-īndriya) Samaṇa Suttas 1 and 2 have, as their paradigm, the 6 sense-faculties: the eye faculty, the ear faculty, the nose faculty, the body faculty and the mind faculty. Both these Suttas also treat the 6 sense-faculties with the samudaya pentad—“arising … ceasing … gratification … danger … and escape.”

1.1.1 The 6 sense-faculties—the 5 physical senses and the mind—are the same as the 6 internal sense-bases (ajjhāyatanas). Although conventionally, the 5 physical senses are the tools of how we sense the world, the reality of it, according to early Buddhism, is that they are how the mind constructs our virtual realities of sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches. In so doing, the mind fails to see, as it really is, the “arising and ceasing” of the sense-experiences.

1.1.2 The fullest or most elaborate treatment of the samudaya pentad is found in the Pubbe Sambodha Sutta 1 (S 35.13), SD 14.9. The Sutta takes each of the faculties and reads it in the framework of the samudaya pentad. Such a passage is meant to be read fully for personal or group reflection or as a preamble to a sitting meditation. Hence, they should never be abridged in print.

2 The assāda triad and the samudaya pentad

2.1 Since the paradigm of the (Chaḷ-īndriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 1 (S 48.29) is the 6 sense-faculties [§2], it is easy to see these faculties for what they really are (impermanent, etc), as “arising … ending,” and “the way leading to its ending,” too, should be understood. This is the assāda triad, which is actually a simplified version of the samudaya pentad.

The samudaya pentad—arising (samudaya), ceasing [passing away] (atthagama), gratification (assāda), danger (ādīnava) and escape (nissaraṇa)—is a more elaborate application of the 4 noble truths in seeing true reality. The 4 truths are, however, applied in a different order.

The 1st noble truth encompasses the “arising” and “falling” of the samudaya pentad representing the true nature of things: impermanent, etc. The “gratification” and “danger” of both the assāda triad and the samudaya pentad represent the 2nd truth, that is, the arising of suffering, namely, due to craving. Finally, the “escape” of the samudaya pentad encompasses the last 2 truths: the path and nirvana.

2. On the assāda triad, see SD 56.16 (2,2,4,2). On the assāda triad and the samudaga triad, see SD 56.16 (2.2.4.2+2.2.4.4).
3. On how the samudaya pentad is related to the 3 characteristics (impermanence, suffering and non-self), see SD 14.6 (1.1.2).
4. The earliest sequence of the 4 truths was prob 1-2-4-3, that is, ... the path, ending with nirvana, such as in Mahā Śalāyatanika S (M 149,11 etc) + SD 41.9 (2.4) ↑ SD 53.26 (2).

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The following diagram shows how the 3 formulas—the 4 truths, the assāda triad and the samudaya pentad—are related:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>the 4 noble truths</th>
<th>the assāda triad</th>
<th>the samudaya pentad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) The 1st noble truth: suffering</td>
<td></td>
<td>arising samudaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) The 2nd noble truth: arising (craving)</td>
<td>gratification danger assāda ādīnava</td>
<td>ceasing nirodha gratification assāda adīnava</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) The 3rd noble truth: ending (nirvana)</td>
<td>escape nissarāṇa</td>
<td>escape nissarāṇa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) The 4th noble truth: the path</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diagram 2: The truths, assāda and samudaya

2.2 Diagram 2, at first glance, shows how, from the 4-truth formula, we get the assāda triad,⁵ which evolved into the samudaya pentad. The assāda triad simply warns us that when we do not understand what suffering (dukkha) really is, we will not be able to recognize it. Hence, we are deluded into seeing what is potentially a source of suffering to be pleasurable, profitable or beneficial; we perceive this as being gratifying.

When we see gratification (assāda) in this manner, we fall into danger (ādīnava) or grave disadvantages, that is, wrong faith, wrong application of energy, wrong mindfulness, wrong use of concentration, and wrong (unwholesome) “wisdom.” We will suffer the painful consequence of this delusion for a long time to come.

2.3 Similarly, from Diagram 2, we can see how our delusion can lead us astray even when we well know the nature of suffering—that all conditioned things arise and cease—since we fail to see true sense of its gratification (that it is not really satisfying at all). In other words, despite the fact that we know Buddhism or are learned in a lot of things, yet, we choose or are compelled to do wrong and bad.

We then put ourself in the real danger, the painful disadvantages, of suffering, the bitter fruit of such action (or non-action). However, in either case—whether it is the assāda triad or the samudaya pentad—when we do see the danger and disadvantages of wrong or bad actions, then, we are able to find the escape (nissarāṇa) from their bitter fruits.

Then, we have cultivated our faith in right and good; we exert our energy in the wholesomeness of moral living; we cultivate mindfulness in keeping our mind calm and clear; as a result, wisdom, the wholesome application of knowledge and skills, so that we are free from suffering and gain true happiness. We have well cultivated the 5 spiritual faculties.

2.4 Another implication of Diagram 2—based on the idea that the simpler structure evolves into more complicated structure—is that the assāda triad [2.1] is the oldest of the models. From it is derived the samudaya pentad. In between these 2 formulas is the 4-truth model, which seems to have evolved from the assāda triad, and then evolved into the samudaya pentad.

However, we must also consider the possibility of parallel or separate developments, where both the assāda triad and the samudaya pentad are formulas used by the Buddha, based on the 4 noble truth teachings in connection with different paradigms. The assāda triad, for example, is applied to the 5 spir-

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⁵ For a similar explanation of the assāda triad, see also SD 14.6 (2).
Itual faculties, while the better known *samudaya* pentad is used for the 5 aggregates, the 6 sense-faculties and the 5 feeling faculties. Then, there is also the *sacca* tetrad, based on the 4 noble truths.

### SD 56.19a (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 1

The 1st (6-faculty) Discourse on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.29/5:206

S 5.4.3.9 Sarīyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Sarīyutta 3, Chaḷ-indriya Vagga 9+10

Theme: Mastering the 6 sense-faculties: the *samudaya* pentad

2  “Bhikshus, there are these 6 faculties. What are the six?

   (1) The eye faculty;  
   (2) the ear faculty;  
   (3) the nose faculty;  
   (4) the tongue faculty;  
   (5) the body faculty;  
   (6) the mind faculty.

**The *samudaya* pentad**

3  Those ascetics or brahmins, bhikshus, who do not understand, as they really are, the *arising* and the *ceasing*, the *gratification*, the *danger*, and the *escape* regarding these 6 faculties: I do not consider them to be ascetics among ascetics or brahmins among brahmins, and these venerable ones do not, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, in this very life, enter and dwell in the goal of reclusehip or the goal of brahminhood.

4  But, bhikshus, those ascetics and brahmins who do understand, as they really are, the *arising* and the *ceasing*, the *gratification*, the *danger*, and the *escape* regarding these 6 faculties: they I consider to be ascetics among ascetics and brahmins among brahmins, and these venerable ones, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, in this very life, enter and dwell in the goal of reclusehip or the goal of brahminhood.”

— navamaṁ —

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6 *(Indriya)* Arahanta S 1 (S 48.4), SD 56.16a.
7 *(Khandha)* Arahanta S (S 22,110), SD 56.16.e.
8 *(Cha-ḷ-indriya)* Arahanta S (S 48.33), SD 56.16d.
9 *(Sukh-Śindriya)* Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 2 (S 48.35), SD 56.20c.
10 *(Cha-ḷ-indriya)* Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa S 2 (S 48.30), SD 56.19b.
(Chaḷ-i-indentriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 2

The 2nd (6-faculty) Discourse on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.30/5:206 f
S 5.4.3.9 Saṁyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṁyutta 3, Chaḷindriya 10

Theme: Mastering the 6 sense-faculties: the sacca tetrad

3 "Those ascetics or brahmins, bhikṣus,
(1) who do not understand the eye faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(2) who do not understand the ear faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(3) who do not understand the nose faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(4) who do not understand the tongue faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(5) who do not understand the body faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(6) who do not understand the mind faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending:
—I do not consider them to be ascetics among ascetics or brahmins among brahmins,
and these venerable ones do not, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge,
in this very life attain and dwell in the goal of asceticism or the goal of brahminhood. [207]

4 But, bhikṣus, those ascetics and brahmins,
(1) who do understand the eye faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(2) who do understand the ear faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(3) who do understand the nose faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(4) who do understand the tongue faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(5) who do understand the body faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
(6) who do understand the mind faculty, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending:
—they I consider to be ascetics among ascetics or brahmins among brahmins,
and these venerable ones, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge,
in this very life attain and dwell in the goal of recluseship or the goal of brahminhood.”

— dasamāṁ —

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