SD 59.1

Ākaṅkheyya Sutta

The Discourse on "If One Should Wish" | **M 6**
Theme: The 1st priority of the 3 trainings in spiritual life
Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2008, 2021

1 Sutta summary and notes

1.1 SUMMARY AND SIGNIFICANCE

1.1.1 Summary and parallels

1.1.1.1 The Ākaṅkheyya Sutta (M 6), the discourse on "If one should wish," describes some essential aspects of monastic life, ranging from the basic mundane needs, the ideal conditions for living and practising, gaining various attainments, up to arhathood itself, that the monastic may wish for (*ākaṅkheyya*) [§3.2], that such wishes are only purposeful in connection with **the 3 trainings** [1.1.4], especially keeping to a moral life [refrain. §§3.2, etc].

The Commentaries also tell us that the Sutta is given by the Buddha unprompted, by his own inclination (*attano ajjhāsayen'eva*) [1.2(1)]. The Chinese parallels, however, differ here by giving their own account of its origin [1.1.2].

1.1.1.2 The Ākaṅkheyya Sutta has a Pali parallel in the Aṅguttara Nikāya book of tens [1.1.1.3], and 2 Chinese parallels found in the Madhyama Āgama and in the Ekottarika Āgama, as follows:[1]

Ākaṅkheyya Sutta	M 6/1:22-26	SD 59.1
Ākaṅkha Sutta	A 10.71/5:131-133	SD 82.12
願經 *yuàn jīng* **Ākaṅkha Sutta**	MĀ 105 (T1.26.595c11-596b8)	
EĀ 37.5	T2.125.712a9-c5	

1.1.1.3 The Ākaṅkha Sutta (A 10.71) is a more compact version of M 6, which lists the 3 lower stages of the path and the 5 mundane superknowledges. However, besides omitting the last 7 wishes, A 10.71 also has different wishes for 5 and 6. [1.1.2.3]

1.1.2 Sutta preamble in other versions

1.1.2.1 The Madhyama Āgama parallel records a preamble stating that a certain monk has come to visit the Buddha to report a reflection he had while in seclusion. This reflection is that the Buddha has taught him the Dharma, so that he is now keeping the precepts, dwelling in an empty place, not neglecting dhyana, and is accomplished in insight. This reflection moves the Buddha to give a more detailed teaching on it.[2]

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[1] The 3 parallel versions agree with M 6 on locating the Sutta in Jeta's Grove by Savatthi. MĀ 105 has been studied and tr by THICH Minh Chau 1964:63, 107, 223-227. A sutta quotation, mentioning a wish for the peaceful liberations [§10] is found in Abhk 2.15 + 8.3 (Pradhan 1967:48,8, 435,8), that may or may not be related to present sutta.

[2] According to MĀ 105 (T1.595c18), the Buddha teaches this particular monk, 因彼比丘故, 告諸比丘 *yīn bǐ bǐqiū gù, gào zhū bǐqiū*, a context also seen in EĀ 37.5 (T2.712a12): 世尊知比丘心中所念, 告諸比丘*shìzūn zhī bǐqiū xīnzhōng suǒ*

1.1.2.2 The Ekôttarika Āgama version, too, has a preamble, but which differs by having a monk in the congregation expressing a wish of hearing a teaching from the Buddha.[3] Aware of this, the Buddha thereupon gives this discourse.

1.1.2.3 Another difference between the parallel versions is that in the Pali suttas, the Buddha starts his teaching by exhorting the monks to "dwell fully in moral virtue, fully in the Pātimokkha, restrained in the restraint of the Pātimokkha, accomplished in conduct and resort, seeing danger in the slightest fault" [§2], which is not found here in the Chinese parallels.

Ākaṅkheyya Sutta (M 6)	**Ākaṅkha Sutta** (A 10.71)
(1) being dear and agreeable to other monks ⟨1⟩	(1) *same* ⟨1⟩
(2) obtain the 4 supports receive benefits ⟨2⟩	(2) *same* ⟨2⟩
(3) givers of the 4 supports receive benefits ⟨3⟩	(3) *same* ⟨3⟩
(4) departed relatives recall them with faith ⟨3⟩	(4) *same* ⟨4⟩
(5) overcome discontent and delight[4]	(5) contentment with supports
(6) overcome fear and terror ⟨6⟩	(6) tolerate vicissitudes
(7) attain the 4 dhyanas ⟨3⟩	(7) overcome discontent and delight ⟨5⟩
(8) attain the formless attainments ⟨8⟩	(8) overcome fear and terror ⟨6⟩
(9) attain streamwinning ⟨9⟩	(9) attain the 4 dhyanas ⟨7⟩
(10) attain once-returning ⟨10⟩	(10) destroy the mental influxes ⟨17⟩
(11) attain nonreturning ⟨11⟩	
(12) attain the superpowers ⟨12⟩	
(13) attain the divine ear ⟨13⟩	
(14) read other's mind ⟨14⟩	
(15) recollect one's past lives ⟨15⟩	
(16) attain the divine eye ⟨16⟩	
(17) destroy the mental influxes ⟨17⟩	

Table 1.1.3a. A comparative list of wishes in the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta and the Ākaṅkha Sutta
Terminal numbers within ⟨angle brackets⟩ show their links between the lists.

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niàn, gào zhū bǐqiū. Comys, however, state that Ākankheyya S is given by the Buddha of his own accord (MA 1:15,-26) [1.1.3(a)].

[3] EĀ 37.5/T2.712a11.

[4] Regarding discontent (*arati*), it is noteworthy that **§7** first speaks of discontent and delight, *arati,rati,saho ass-aṁ*, but goes on to mention *only* discontent, *na ca ma arati saheyya*. The corresponding passage in A 10.71,9/5:-132,14 continues to refer to both, but has variant readings for all occurrences, incl the first, which refer to *only* discontent. MĀ 105/T1.596a1 mentions only discontent, 不樂 *bù lè*, which fits the context better. The cpd ***arati,rati*** recurs in **Kāya,gatā,sati S** (M 119/3:97,20), SD 12.21, where again the Chinese parallel MĀ 81/T1.557b13 only mentions discontent, 不樂 *bù lè* [Analayo, *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya,* 2011:677 n170]. Neumann, *Reden des Buddha* (1896, repr 2003:1133 n414) suggests reading *arati-r-atisaho* in the case of M 119, which he seems to render literally as: "über Unmut hat man Gewalt" ("one has violence over discontent," 1896:897,20), which we may take to mean, "he has overpowered discontent." Then, in M 6, he trs "der Unmutslust will ich Herr sein" ("I will master displeasure," 1896: 36,14), clearly, reading *arati-r-atisaho*); but *atisaho* (*ati* + √SAH) is unattested in the suttas. Hecker 1972:38, commenting on Neumann, remarks that the next quality in §7 only employs ~*saho*, without *ati-*. *Arati* is also the name of Discontent personified, the 2nd of the Māra's 3 daughters: **Māra Dhītu S** (S 4,25), SD 36.6. Here Bingenheimer, "Māra in the Chinese Saṁyukta Āgama," suggests it would better fit with the other two daughters Taṇhā and Rāgā, rather than if she were called Ratī, a reading that reflects her name Chinese tr (2007:56 f). On Māra's 3 daughters, see also Johnston, *Buddhacarita,* 1936:188 n3.

1.1.3 The 17 wishes

1.1.3.1 Of the 17 wishes and benefits from the practice as listed in **M 6**, the Chinese parallels agree on only 2 of them, that is: the ability of attaining the 4 jhanas [§9], and the destruction of the influxes [§19]. The other wishes vary amongst the 4 versions [Table 1.1.3], ranging from relatively mundane ones, such as getting requisites, to the meditative attainments.[5]

It is noteworthy that of **the 17 wishes** listed in the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta (**M 6**), all except 2 of them recur in its Madhyama Āgama parallel (**MĀ 105**), while only 8 are listed in **A 10.71**[6] and the Ekôttarika Āgama version (**EĀ 37.5**). Interestingly, the two Pali suttas (M 6 and A 10.71) differ more greatly in their number of wishes, than between the lists of wishes in the Majjhima sutta and its Madhyama Āgama version.

1.1.3.2 Analayo, in his comparative study of the Majjhima Nikāya, gives the following comparative table of the monk's wishes in **MĀ 105** and **EĀ 37.5**:

MĀ 105	**EĀ 37.5**
(1) be personally taught by the Buddha	(1) *same*
(2) departed relatives gain merits →4	(2) receive requisites →2
(3) supporters gain merits →3	(3) contentment
(4) bear vicissitudes	(4) be recognized by 4 assemblies, etc
(5) bear fear →6	(5) the 4 dhyanas →7
(6) unaffected by evil thoughts	(6) the 4 *iddhipādas*
(7) the 4 dhyanas →7	(7) the 8 liberations
(8) streamwinning	(8) the divine ear →13
(9) once-returning	(9) mind-reading[7]
(10) nonreturning	(10) superpowers →12
(11) formless attainments →8[8]	(11) recollect past lives →15
(12) superpowers, divine ear, mind-reading, recollecting past lives, the divine eye, destruction of the influxes →12, 17; ≠ 1-2	(12) the divine eye →16 (13) the destruction of the influxes →17 ≠ 1, 3-6, 8-11

Table 1.1.3b. A comparative list of wishes in the Chinese parallels

[5] For a sutta quotation mentioning the wish for the peaceful liberations [§10] in Abhk 2.15 + 8.3: [1.1.1.2n]. In Chin parallels: T1558 (T29.17a1), 1559 (T29/176a28), and AbhkṬ; Tib: D (4094) *mngon pa, ju 57a3* or Q (5595) *tu* 62b3.

[6] A 10.71 gives a total of 10 benefits, in line with its location in the Aṅguttara book of tens.

[7] EA 37.5/T2.712a26 first speaks of knowing another's thoughts; then, at T2,712a28 refers to knowing the mental states of beings in terms of its quality, with list comparable to that given in §16.

[8] Analayo (2011:48 n106) discusses here an issue of textual transmission. It is noteworthy that MĀ 105/T1.596a20 abridges its reference to the destruction of the influxes in the wish to attain the formless attainments. Next come the wishes to attain superpowers, the divine ear, mind-reading, recollection of one's past lives, the divine eye, and the destruction of the influxes, ie, all these form a single wish. If MĀ 105, at an earlier stage had moved from the formless attainments directly to the destruction of the influxes, as implied by the abridged version here, its list of wishes would have been similar to A 10.71, which proceeds directly from the 4 dhyanas to the destruction of the influxes (though unlike MĀ 105, A 10.71, too, does not mention the formless attainments). However, the passage at T1.596a20 seems to reflect a general problem in the transmission or translation of MĀ, since similar abridged references to the destruction of the influxes in the context of the formless attainments recur elsewhere in the same collection, where they are also followed by a listing of superpowers that includes the destruction of the influxes: MĀ 81/T1.557c3 and MĀ 147/T1.659a21.

1.1.3.3 Similarly, the Ekôttarika Āgama version places its reference to wariness of transgressions within a wider context, as its exposition continues with a listing of the 5 aggregates of morality, concentration, wisdom, freedom [liberation] and knowledge-and-vision of liberation.[9]

According to the Pali commentary, however, the entire Ākaṅkheyya Sutta should be seen as a teaching on exposition of **the benefits of moral conduct** (*sīl'ānisaṁsa,kathā,* MA 1:165,10). This commentarial explanation, however, may seem a bit narrow, only focusing on the observance of the Vinaya, rather than highlighting on the 3 trainings as a whole.[10]

In fact, the Madhyama Āgama version[11] does not mention the diligent observance of the precepts and seeing danger in the slightest fault at all, as stated at the start [§2; A 10.71,2] and end [§20; A 10.71,-13] of the two Pali suttas. Perhaps, these 2 might have been omitted on purpose by the translator, who thought this statement seemed to contradict the overall theme of the Sutta; but this is conjectural at best.

On the other hand, it is clear from the 2 Pali suttas that this passage [§2 etc] is the thesis and starting-point of the sutta. Its significance is shown further as the basis for the 3 trainings, of which, after all, it is an integral part, as evident from the Sutta refrain. [1.1.4]

1.1.4 The refrain on the 3 trainings

1.1.4.1 It is clear from the suttas that a good grounding in moral virtue is the vital start and foundation of a Dharma-based life, especially monastic training [1.1.3.3]. In fact, moral virtue is highlighted, at the start and end of the Sutta, showing that it is the basis for all the different benefits stated. However, *in between* these opening and closing thesis statement, each of the 17 wishes closes with **a refrain**, showing how moral virtue forms the start of the 3 trainings *as a whole,* leading to the final goal.[12]

1.1.4.2 According to the 4 parallel versions [1.1.1.2], the spiritual progress of a monastic starts with a firm foundation in moral conduct; then, dwelling in solitude for the cultivation of calm and insight.[13] The point is that with a good grounding in moral virtue, we happily dwell in solitude, knowing we are fault-free; grounded in moral virtue, our mind quickly and easily focuses into samadhi to gain the calm and clarity that conduces to the rise of insight. Hence, the "3 trainings refrain" follows each of the 17 wishes [§§3.2, 4.2, 5.2, 6.2, 7.2, 8.2, 9.2, 10.2, 11.2, 12.2, 13,2, 14.2, 15.2, 16.2, 17.2, 18.2, 19.2].

1.1.4.3 The Sutta Commentary, in fact, gives a long explanation on just how this works [1.1.4.2]. It explains that the refrain beginning with "**Let him fulfil moral virtue**" [§§3.2 etc], repeated for each of the 17 sections on the wishes for the whole sutta, comprises all the 3 trainings. The phrase about fulfill-

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[9] EA 37.5/T2.712b28: 比丘戒身, 定身, 慧身, 解脫身, 解脫知見身具足者 *bǐqiū jiè shēn, dìng shēn, huì shēn, jiětuō shēn, jiětuō zhī jiàn shēn jù zú zhě* (following a 宋 Sòng, 元 Yuán, 明 Míng, and 聖 Shèng variant reading that adds 身 *shēn* to 定 *dìng*).

[10] For a similar emphasis on moral training, see **Gaṇaka Moggallāna S** (M 107), SD 56.3.

[11] MĀ 105/T1.595c11-596b8.

[12] As noted [1.1.3.3], the MĀ version, however, does not mention the scrupulous observance of the precepts and seeing danger in the slightest fault at all.

[13] **M 6**,3.2/1:33,9, **A 10.71**,2/5:131,12, **MĀ 105**/T1.595c22 and **EA 37.5**/T2.712a14. According to **It 2.2.8**/39,15, a similar set of conditions, leads to nonreturning or arhathood, with the notable difference that instead of mentioning the need to keeping to the Pātimokkha, It 2.2.8/39,9 speaks of delighting in solitude, *paṭisallānârāmā ... viharatha, paṭisallāna,ratā* (SD 41.4). **M 32**/1:213,16 (SD 44.12) and its parallels MĀ 184/T1.727b3 and EĀ 37.3/T2.710c24 in a similar vein begin a comparable set of conditions with delighting in solitude, instead of following the Pātimokkha. A passage similar to the refrain **§3.2** (not neglecting meditation, etc), is found in Śrāvaka,bhūmi (Shukla 1973:352,17 or ŚSG 2008:14,7; T1579/T30.449a4), showing that it has ancient roots.

ing moral virtue signifies the training in higher virtue (*adhisıla,sikkhā*); the phrase, "**be devoted to inner mental calm, not neglect meditation**," refers to the training in the higher mind (*adhicitta,sikkhā*); and the phrase, "**be possessed of insight**," points to the training in the higher wisdom (*adhipaññā,sikkhā*). The phrase, "**resort to empty abodes**," (*brūhetā suññâgārānaṁ*) combines the last 2 trainings, since we resort to an empty hut to cultivate both calm and insight.[14]

1.1.5 The conclusions

1.1.5.1 Both the Pali versions—**the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta** (M 6) and **the Ākaṅkha Sutta** (A 10.71)—conclude with the Buddha repeating his earlier exhortation to fully keep the precepts,[15] on which the whole sutta expands into, respectively, by listing the 17 wishes (M 6) and the 10 wishes (A 10.71), by way of explaining each list in some detail.

This exhortation of the Buddha is not found in the Madhyama Āgama version, although a comparable passage is found in the Ekottarika Āgama version.[16] Thus, **MĀ 105**, instead of mentioning the scrupulous observance of the rules, highlights the Pātimokkha together, dwelling in solitude (practising), and cultivating calm and insight as equally important aspects of monastic training.

1.1.5.2 The Ākaṅkheyya Sutta (M 6) and its Ekôttara Āgama version, **EĀ 37.5**, report that the monks are delighted with the teaching.[17] **The Ākaṅkha Sutta** (A 10.71), which is an abridged version of M 6, does not have a formal conclusion. This gives us a glimpse into the nature of the oral tradition, where a longer discourse is abridged for teaching to the laity, to whom the Aṅguttara suttas are usually addressed.[18]

According to **MĀ 105**, the monks are so inspired by this teaching that they immediately go into solitude to practise diligently and soon became arhats.[19] The Madhyama Āgama discourse's conclusion once again highlights the fact that the theme is not merely the observance of moral virtue, but rather the full practice of all aspects of the 3 trainings of the path.

1.2 SOME INTERESTING POINTS

1.2.1 *Anirākata-j,jhāna*

1.2.1.1 Although we are familiar with ***jhāna*** as meaning "absorption" (in reference to any or all of the 4 form dhyanas), we also see, in the suttas, its usage as simply meaning "meditation."[20] In fact, we see both these usages, for example, in the **Eka,dhamma Accharā Saṅghāṭa Sutta** (A 1.20):

> If a monk cultivates the 1st dhyana for even the duration of a mere finger-snap, then, bhikshus, he is called a monk who dwells as one whose meditation is not in vain (*aritta-j,jhāna*): a doer of the Teacher's teaching, a follower of his advice. He does not eat the country's alms in vain [for nothing].[21] (A 1.20/1:38 = A:Be 1.394)

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[14] MA 1:156,35-159,10.

[15] *Sampanna,sīlā bhikkhave viharatha ... iti yan taṁ vuttā , idam etaṁ paṭicca vuttan'ti* [§20], which recurs at **A 10.71**,18/5:133,5 (SD 82.12).

[16] EA 37.5/T2.125.712b24 concludes its list of wishes by referring to "being afraid of a small transgression, what to say of a major one," 少過常恐, 何況大者 *shǎo guò cháng kǒng, hékuàng dà zhě*.

[17] M 6,21/1:36,8; A 10.71,13/5:133,9; EĀ 37.5/T2.125.712c4.

[18] See SD 58.1 (6.2.4.4).

[19] MĀ 105/T1,26.596a27.

[20] SD 33.1b (4.4.3.2)

This passage is actually the first of a series of 191 variations (Gethin 2001:269) or 181 variations in the Burmese edition (A:Be 1.394-574) of the formula, each substituting the reading "cultivates the 1st dhyana" for a meditation-related subject. These include the other 3 dhyanas, the mental liberation of the 4 divine abodes, the 4 satipatthanas, the 4 right efforts, and various other forms of meditation, that is, the whole of **the Accharā Saṅghāṭa Vagga** (A 1:38-43).[22]

1.2.1.2 ***Jhāna,*** as such, has both the well known sense of deep meditative absorption and the broad sense of Buddhist meditation in general. We also noted above that "meditation" here covers a whole range of practices related to mind-training in inner calm and clarity, the 2nd of the 3 trainings.[23]

> Bhikshus, if a monk should wish, "May I become one to obtain at will, without trouble, without difficulty, *the 4 dhyanas*, the higher minds, dwelling happily here and now," let him fulfill moral virtue; be devoted to inner mental calm, not neglect meditation; be possessed of insight, resort to empty abodes [huts].[24] (M 6,9/1:33), SD 59.1

1.3 CATEGORIES OF SUTTAS BY DELIVERY

According to the Commentaries,[25] the Ākaṅkheyya Sutta is one amongst those discourses given by the Buddha on his own accord (*attano ajjhāsayen'eva*). This is the 1st of **the 4 occasions for discourse-delivery** (*sutta,nikkhepa*), which are as follows:[26]

(1) Based on one's own (the Buddha's) disposition (*att'ajjhāsaya*) (unsolicited by others and without any external prompting, for the benefit of a general audience):

Ākaṅkheyya Sutta	M 33/1:33-36		SD 59.1
Ākaṅkha Sutta[27] [1.1.1.3]	A 10.71/5:131-133		SD 82.12
Vattha Sutta	M 7/1:36-40	Vatthûpama Sutta	SD 28.12
Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta	D 22/2:290-315		SD 13.2
Mahā Saḷ,āyatana Vibhaṅga Sutta[28]	M 149/3:287	Mahā Saḷ,āyatanika Sutta	SD 41.9
Ariya,vaṁsa Sutta	A 4.28/2:27		
Tuvaṭaka Sutta	Sn 4.14/915-934	holographic buddha[29]	SD 59.13

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[21] *Accharā,saṅghāta,mattam pi ce bhikkhave bhikkhu paṭhamaṁ jhānaṁ bhāveti ayaṁ vuccati bhikkhave bhikkhu aritta-j,jhāno viharati satthu sāsana,karo ovāda,paṭikaro amoghaṁ raṭṭha,piṇḍaṁ bhuñjati*. This passage is actually the first of a series of 191 variations (or 181 according to A:Be 1.394-574) of the formula, each substituting the reading "cultivates the 1st dhyana," ie, incl the other 3 dhyanas, the mental liberation of the 4 divine abodes, the 4 satipatthanas, the 4 right efforts, and various other forms of meditation.

[22] A 1:38-43 = A:Be 1.394-574; A:Se 20:20, 50-55; Thai tr A:MMR 32:106 f, 33:214-219. For the full list, see A 1.20; see also Gethin 2001:269.

[23] On the 3 trainings, see **Sīla samādhi paññā** (SD 21.6).

[24] *Ākaṅkheyya ce bhikkhave, catunnaṁ jhānānaṁ ābhicetasikānaṁ diṭṭha,dhamma,sukha,vihārānaṁ nikāma,lābhī assa akicchā,lābhī akasīra,lābhî ti, sīlesv'ev'assa paripūra,kārī ajjhattaṁ ceto,samatham anuyutto anirākata-j,jhāno vipassanāya samannāgato brūhetā suññ'āgārānaṁ*.

[25] DA 1:50; MA 1:15, 51,55 f x2;SA 23; AA 2:336,30 x2; UA 30,3 f; ItA 1:35,23 f; BA 64; DhsA 6:33*, 981 f.

[26] For the categorization of the suttas of the Udāna by Dhammapāla, see UA 31 (UA:M 55 f).

[27] Not quoted in Comys as an example.

[28] Text gives Mahā Saḷ-āyatanika Sutta.

[29] This is a case of a "questioning by a hologram" (*nimitta,pucchā*), ie, a holographic buddha (*nimitta,buddha,* SnA 2:562,4) projected by the Buddha (NmA 2:340,14).

and such suttas treating (*hāra,* "conveying") right effort (S 49.1-12/5:244), the path of success (S 5:254), the faculties (S 5:193), the powers (S 5:249), the awakening-factors (S 46.1/5:63), and the path-factors (S 45.1/5:1).

(2) **Based on the disposition of others** (*par'ajjhāsaya*) (for the benefit of a particular individual),
such as the discourses relating to the spiritual maturation leading to his awakening of Rāhula and others:

Cūḷa Rāhul'ovāda Sutta	M 147/3:277-280 = S 35.121/4:105	To Rāhula	SD 70.7
Mahā Rāhul'ovāda Sutta	M 62/1:420	To Rāhula	SD 3.11
Dhamma,cakka-p,pavattana Sutta	S 56.11/5:420 = V 1:10-12	To the 5 monks	SD 1.1
Dhātu Vibhaṅga Sutta	M 140/3:237	To Pukkusāti	SD 4.17

(3) **For the sake of answering a question** (*pucchā,vasika*), whether asked by humans, or non-humans, devas, or brahmas:
such as regarding the awakening-factors (S 46.5/5:72), the hindrances (S 46.56/5:127; cf D 1:246), the 5 aggregates (S 22.82),[30] and questions like "What here is a man's best treasure?" (S 846*; Sn 181);
such as questions in the Devatā Saṁyutta (S 1:1), the Brahma Saṁyutta (S 1,6/1:136), the Māra Saṁyutta (S 1:103); and also:

Sakka Pañha Sutta	D 2:263	Sakra's questions	SD 54.8
Cūḷa Vedalla Sutta	M 44/1:299	by Dhammadinnā	
Mahā Vedalla Sutta	M 43/1:292	by Sāriputta	
Sāmañña,phala Sutta	D 1:47	to Ajāta,sattu	
(Yakkha) Āḷavaka Sutta	S 10.12/846*; Sn p31	to a yaksha	SD 114.12
Sūci,loma Sutta	Sn 2.5/p47	to a yaksha	
Khara,loma Sutta	Sn 2.5: see preceding	with Sūci,loma	

(4) **On the occasion of a matter arising** (*aṭṭh'uppattika*)

Brahma,jāla Sutta	D 1/1:1	the perfect net of views	SD 25
Dhamma,dāyāda Sutta	M 3/1:12	being heirs of the Dharma	SD 2.18
Cūḷa Sīha,nāda Sutta	M 11/1:63	the lion-roar	SD 49.2
Candûpama Sutta	S 16.3/2:197	parable of the moon	SD 38.2
Putta,maṁsûpama	S 12.63/2:97	parable of the son's flesh	SD 20.6
Suriyûpama Sutta [Be]	S 45.147/5:44[31]	parable of the sun	
Dāru-k,khandhûpama	S 35.241/4:179	parable of the floating log	SD 28.5
Aggi-k,khandhûpama	A 7.72/4:128	parable of mass of blaze	SD 52.12
Pheṇa,piṇḍûpama	S 22.95/3:140	parable of the lump of froth	SD 17.12
Paricchattkûpama	A 7.65/4:117	parable of the coral tree	

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[30] **Puṇṇama S S** (S 22.82/3:100), SD 17.11.
[31] See **Suriya S** (S 2.10), SD 86.21; **Suriy'upama S 1+2** (S 56.37+38), SD 49.15 + 49.16,

Ākaṅkheyya Sutta

The Discourse on "If One Should Wish"

M 6

1 [33] Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika's park-monastery in Jeta's grove, outside Sāvatthī.

There, he addressed the monks thus:

"Bhikshus."

"Bhante," they replied to him in assent.

The Blessed One said this:

2 "Bhikshus,[32]
dwell fully accomplished in **moral virtue**,
fully accomplished in the Pātimokkha, restrained in the restraint of the Pātimokkha,
fully accomplished in conduct and resort,[33] and seeing danger in the slightest fault,[34]
train by undertaking the training-rules.[35] [§20]

(1) BEING DEAR AND AGREEABLE

3 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I be **dear and agreeable** to my companions in the holy life,
respected and esteemed by them'—

Refrain on Dharma training and living

3.2 let him fulfil **moral virtue**;[36]	*silesv-ev'assa paripūrakārī*
be devoted to **inner mental calm**,	*ajjhattaṁ ceto,samatham anuyutto*
not neglect **meditation** [dhyana];	*anirākata-j,jhāno*
be possessed of **insight**,	*vipassanāya samannāgato*
resort to **empty abodes** [huts].[37]	*brūhetā suññâgārānaṁ*

[32] This whole para: *Sampanna,sīlā bhikkhave viharatha, sampanna,pātimokkhā paṭimokkha,saṁvara,saṁvutā viharatha ācāra,gocara,sampannā, aṇumattesu vajjesu bhaya,dassavī, samādāya sikkhatha sikkhā,padesu*: M 6,2/-1:33,5 = A 10.71/5:131,7; A 4.12/2:14,12 and It 4.12/118,4. On the key terms in this passage on moral restraint [below], Comy (MA 1:154,7, 155,31) directs us to Vism 1.123-139/1:43-49. On the significance of this key passage, which also closes the Sutta [§20], see (1.1.3.3).

[33] "**Resort**" (*gocara*) refers to a proper resort for alms, and places that he may visit at the right time (M 1:167,6; Thī 427); otherwise, such places (like a market-place, entertainment areas, etc) are out of bounds (*agocara*) for a monk (V 2:208,22; M 1:11,2); out of sense range (S 5:147,16 f). Psychologically, it refers to the range of the sense-faculties (D 3:58,19; S 5:148,1; Dh 22; Tha 92; Sn 961). M:B errs in saying that it refers to a monk's "proper deportment" which is *ācāra* (n76 ad loc).

[34] "**Seeing danger in the slightest fault**," *aṇumattesu vajjesu bhaya,dassavī:* see SD 51.1 (1.2.2.2).

[35] Comy says that the phrase ***sampanna,sīlā***, "fully in moral virtue," can mean either "accomplished in virtue" (*paripuṇṇa,sīlā*) or "endowed with moral virtue" (*sīla,samaṅgino*) (MA 1:153,27-33). The **Pātimokkha** is the code of monastic discipline, comprising 227 rules. See §2 n.

[36] On *anirākata-j,jhāna*, see SD 33.1b (4.4.3.2); SD 41.4 (2.1.2).

[37] On the significance of this refrain [§§3.2, etc], following each of the 17 wishes, see {1.1.4).

(2) THE 4 SUPPORTS

4 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:

'May I be one to obtain **robes, almsfood, lodging, and medicine, support, and necessities for the sick**'[38] —

4.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect meditation;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to empty abodes*.

(3) BENEFITS FOR SUPPORTERS

5 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:

'May **those whose services** of robes, almsfood, lodging, and medicine, support, and necessities for the sick I use, bring them great fruit and benefit'—

5.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(4) BENEFITS FOR DEPARTED RELATIVES

6 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:

'When my kinsmen and relatives who have **died**, passed away, recall me with faith in their hearts, may that bring them great fruit and great benefit'[39]—

6.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(5) OVERCOMING OF DISCONTENT AND DELIGHT

7 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:

'May I become a conqueror of **discontent and delight**, and may discontent[40] not conquer me; may I dwell overcoming discontent whenever it arises'—

7.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(6) OVERCOMING OF FEAR AND TERROR

8 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:

'May I become a conqueror of **fear and terror**, and may fear and terror not conquer me; may I dwell overcoming fear and terror whenever they arise'[41]—

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[38] "Robes … the sick," *cīvara,piṇḍapāta,senāsana,gilāna.paccaya.bhesajja.parikkhāra.* These are the 4 requisites (*catu,paccaya*) of a renunciant: **Sabb'āsava S (**M 2,13-16), SD 30.3; **Santuṭṭhi S** (A 4.27), SD 104.8.

[39] *Ye me ñāti,sālohitā petā kāla,kata pasanna,cittā anussaranti tesaṁ taṁ maha-p,phalaṁ assa mahânisaṁsan ti.* If relatives reborn in the preta realm or in some lower deva realm recollect with faith these virtuous renunciants, that faith will generate merit for them, protecting them from bad rebirths, and be a support for their attaining nirvana (MA 1:159,27-160,10).

[40] On mention of *only* discontent here, see **Table 1.1.3** (5)n.

[41] For the overcoming of fear and terror, see esp **Bhaya Bherava S** (M 4), SD 44.3

8.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(7) THE 4 FORM DHYANAS

9 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I become one to obtain at will, without trouble, without difficulty, **the 4 dhyanas**, the higher minds, dwelling happily here and now'[42]—

9.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect meditation;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to empty abodes*.

(8) THE FORMLESS ATTAINMENTS

10 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I, with the body, touch[43] and dwell in those **liberations** that are peaceful and formless, transcending forms'[44]—

10.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect meditation;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to empty abodes*.[45] [**34**]

(9) STREAMWINNING

11 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I, with the destruction of the 3 fetters,[46] become **a streamwinner**,
no longer bound for the lower world,[47] surely going over to self-awakening"[48]—

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[42] For refs, see **Kāya,gatā,sati S** (M 119,36), SD 12.1; also **Saṅkhitta Desita Dhamma S** (A 8.63,19), SD 46.6.

[43] Comys gloss "body" as "mental body" (*nāma,kaya*) (DA 1:217; AA 3:121, 167; ItA 2:4; PugA 177), ie, the mind; but in terms of *passaddhi* (ie *sukha*) it refers to both: *kāyikam pi cetasikam pi sukhaṁ vedayati* (DA 1:217), *nāma,-kayo ca karaja,kayo ca* (AA 3:337); but cf DhsA 379,8-12, where torpor and sleep refer to "mental" body (DhsA:P 436).

[44] *Ye te santā vimokhā atikkamma rūpe āruppā te kāyena phassitvā vihareyyan'ti.*

[45] These are the 4 formless attainments for which the full formulas are to be found in **Sallekha S** (M 8,8-11)**, Nivāpa S** (M 25,16-19), etc.

[46] The 3 fetters: (1) self-identity view, (2) doubt, and (3) attachment to rituals and vows; they are the first 3 of the 5 lower fetters [§13 n on the 5 lower fetters].

[47] ***Avinīpāta,*** alt tr "not fated for birth in a suffering state"; opp of *vinīpāta,* "the world of ruin/suffering," another name for the 4 woeful courses (*duggati*) or the 4 lower worlds (*apāya*), esp as *niraya,tiracchāna,pettivisaya,asura-kāyā* (KhpA 189,12 = DA 2:496,11 (on D 2:55,27) = SA 2:97,5 (on S 2:92,16); Vism 13.92 f). Sometimes 5 courses (*pañca,gati*) (D 33,2.1(4)/3:234; A 9.68/4:459) are mentioned: the hells (*niraya*), the animal birth (*tirachāna,yoni*), the ghost realm (*petti-* or *pitti,visaya*), the human world (*manussa*) and the heavenly world (*deva*). Of these, the first 3 are woeful, with the asura-demons (*asura,kāya*) as the fourth woeful course. The remaining two are "happy courses" (*sugati*). For a discussion, see A:ÑB 1999:14-19. See **Pañca,gati S** (A 9.68/4:459), SD 2.20. On a late work, **Pañca,gati,dīpana**, ed L Feer (JPTS 1884:152 ff); tr Feer, *Annales du Musée Guimet* 5, 1883:514-528: sv Naraka,kaṇ-ḍa, Tiracchāna~, Peta~, Manussa~, Deva~.

[48] ***Sotāpanno*** *assaṁ avinipāta,dhammo niyato sambodhi,parāyano ti.* The 3 fetters (*saṁyojana*) destroyed by the streamwinner are: (1) self-identity view, (2) doubt, and (3) attachment to rituals and vows [§13 n], which, in **Sabb'āsava S** (M 2,11.2), these are called "influxes to be abandoned by seeing" (*dassana pahatabb'āsava*), (M 2,5),

11.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect meditation;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to empty abodes*.

(10) ONCE-RETURNING

12 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I, with the destruction of the 3 fetters and with the diminishing of lust, hate and delusion,
become **a once-returner**, returning once to this world to make an end of suffering'[49]—

12.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(11) NONRETURNING

13 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I, with the destruction of the 5 lower fetters,[50]
be spontaneously reborn (in the pure abodes),[51] and there attain final nirvana,
without ever returning from that world' [52]—

13.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(12) THE VARIOUS PSYCHIC POWERS

14 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:[53]
'May I wield **the manifold supernormal powers:**[54]
Having been one, may I become many; having been many, may I become one.
May I appear; may I disappear.
May I go unimpeded through walls, ramparts, and mountains as if through space.

SD 30.3. These fetters are the first 3 of the 10 fetters (*dasa saṁyojana*): SD 10.16 (1.6.6-8); SD 11.1 (5.1.4); SD 3.3 (2); SD 56.1 (4.4). Further see **Entering the stream,** SD 3.3.

[49] See **Alagaddûpama S** (M 22,44), SD 3.13; **Anâpāna,sati S** (M 118,11), SD 7.13.

[50] The "lower fetters" are the 1st 5 of **the 10 fetters** (*dasa saṁyojana*) are: (1) self-identity view (*sakkāya,diṭṭhi*), (2) spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) clinging to rituals and vows (*sīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*), (5) repulsion (*paṭigha*), (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa,rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa,rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (*uddhacca*), (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61; A 5:13; Vbh 377). In some places, no. 4 (*kāma,rāga*) is replaced by ill will (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*orambhāgiya*), and the rest, the higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya*). The abandonment of the lower 5 fetters makes one a nonreturner (*opapātika* or *anāgāmī*) (see **Ānāpānasati S**, M 118,10 (SD 7.13). This verse technically refers to the nonreturner, but here is spoken of an arhat, one who has broken all 10 fetters: see **Laṭukikôpama S** (M 66,17/1:454), SD 28.11.

[51] *Opapātika,* that is, reborn in the pure abodes (*suddh'āvāsa*), the 5 highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa,-loka*) where only nonreturners assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are Āviha ("non-declining"), Ātappa ("unworried"), Sudassā ("clearly Visible"), Sudassī ("cear-visioned") and Akaṇiṭṭhā ("highest") (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46).

[52] In addition to the first 3 fetters, the nonreturner destroys the other 2 "lower fetters" of sensual desire and ill will. The nonreturner is reborn in a special region of the brahma-world called the pure abodes, and there makes an end of suffering. On the nonreturner, see SD 10.16 (13).

[53] §§14-19 present the 6 kinds of direct knowledges (*abhiññā*). See M:B 37; for details, see Vsm 12 + 13.

[54] Cf **Kevaḍḍha S** (D 11.5) where the Buddha disapproves of the exhibiting of such powers.

May I dive in and out of the earth as if it were water.
May I walk on water without sinking as if it were dry land.
Sitting cross-legged, may I fly through the air like a winged bird.
With my hand, may I touch and stroke even the sun and the moon, so mighty and powerful.
May I have power over my body up to as far as the Brahmā worlds'—

14.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(13) THE DIVINE EAR

15 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I, with **the divine ear element**,[55] purified and surpassing the human,
hear both kinds of sounds, divine and human, whether near or far'—

15.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

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(14) MIND-READING

16 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:
'May I **understand the minds of other beings**, of other persons,
having encompassed them with my own mind.[56]

May I understand a mind affected by lust as	affected by lust
and a mind unaffected by lust as	unaffected by lust;
may I understand a mind affected by hate as	affected by hate
and a mind unaffected by hate as	unaffected by hate;
may I understand a mind affected by delusion	as affected by delusion
and a mind unaffected by delusion as	unaffected by delusion;
may I understand a contracted mind as	narrowed [contracted][57]
and a distracted mind as	distracted;[58]
may I understand an exalted mind as	great [exalted][59]
and an unexalted mind as	small [unexalted];
may I understand a surpassed mind as	surpassed
and an unsurpassed mind as	unsurpassed;[60]

[55] "Divine-ear element," *dibba,sota,dhātu,* clairaudience: the ability to hear beyond the normal distance or range of the human ear, a sort of "inner ear" that is able to hear and understand sounds and voices of even non-humans (such as animals), and even those beyond this world.

[56] **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,34) explains these as "contemplating the mind in the mind," SD 13.3.

[57] "Narrowed mind," *saṅkhittaṁ cittaṁ,* ie "narrowed" or "compressed" [contracted] due to sloth and torpor.

[58] "Distracted mind," *vikkhittaṁ cittaṁ,* ie "distracted" by restlessness and worry.

[59] "Great mind" or "the mind grown great," *maha-g,gataṁ cittaṁ*, 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).

[60] Unsurpassable (*anuttaraṁ*) mind, may be syn with "great" mind or perhaps well calmed for the moment. See D:W 592 n667 & Anālayo 2005 ad M 1:59.

may I understand a concentrated mind as concentrated **[35]**
and an unconcentrated mind as unconcentrated;
may I understand a freed mind as freed
and an unfreed mind as unfreed'—

16.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes**.*

(15) RECOLLECTION OF ONE'S PAST LIVES

17 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:[61]
'May I **recollect my manifold past lives**,[62] that is,
1 birth, 2 births, 3 births, 4, 5,
10, 20, 30, 40, 50,
100, 1,000, 100,000,
many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion,
many aeons of cosmic contraction and expansion, (recollecting),
'There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance.
Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such the end of my life.
Passing away from that state, I re-arose there.
There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance.[63]
Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such my life-span.
Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.'[64]
Thus, may I recollect my manifold past lives with their aspects and their particulars'[65]—

17.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes**.*

(16) RECOLLECTION OF THE REBIRTHS OF OTHERS

18 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:[66]
'May I, with **the divine eye** [clairvoyance],[67] purified and surpassing the human—
see beings passing away and re-appearing,
and I know how they are inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate,
faring in accordance with their karma:

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[61] The foll passage—the 1st of the arhat's 3 knowledges (*ti,vijjā*), that of the knowledge of one's own past lives (*pubba,nivāsânussati,ñāṇa*), of the rebirth of others according of karma (*cutûpāpāta,ñāṇa*), and of the destruction of the influxes (*āsava-k,khaya,ñāṇa*)—recurs mutatis mutandis in **Bhaya Bherava S** (M 4,27), SD 44.3.

[62] *Pubbe,nivāsanânussati*, lit "recollection of past abodes."

[63] Comy says that this refers to the Bodhisattva's penultimate birth, ie, in Tusita heaven. He was a devaputta named Seta,ketu ("white flag" or "white comet"); his clan was that of the devas as they had only one; his complexion was golden; his food, celestial in nature; and the only discomfort he felt was that of formations (*saṅkhāra,-dukkha*) (ie with neither physical nor emotional pains); and his lifespan was 57 crores and 6 million earth years (576,000,000 years!) (MA 1:126; VA 1:161).

[64] Here on earth, amongst humans, in queen Mahā Māyā's womb (MA 1:126).

[65] This knowledge is detailed at Vism 13.13-71/411-423.

[66] The following passage—the 2nd of the 3 knowledges (*ti,vijjā*) of the arhat (the knowledge of the rebirth of beings according to karma)—recurs mutatis mutandis in **Bhaya Bherava S** (M 4,29), SD 44.3.

[67] *Dibba,cakkhu*, clairvoyance, not to be confused with the Dharma-eye (*dhamma,cakkhu*) (see n in §102).

'These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech, and mind,
who reviled the noble ones, held wrong views
and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—
after death, when the body had broken up,
had re-arisen in a plane of misery, a bad destination, a lower realm, in hell.
But these beings—who were endowed with good conduct of body, speech, and mind,
who did not revile the noble ones, who held right views
and undertook actions under the influence of right views—
after death, when the body had broken up, had re-arisen in a happy destination, in heaven.'
Thus, by means of the divine eye, may I see beings passing away and re-appearing,
and understood how they fared according to their karma[68]—

18.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

(17) ARHATHOOD

19 Bhikshus, if a monk should wish:[69]
'May I, by realizing for myself with direct knowledge,
here and now enter upon and dwell in the freedom of mind and freedom by wisdom
that are influx-free[70] with **the destruction of the influxes**'[71]—**[36]**

19.2 *let him fulfil **moral virtue**;*
*be devoted to **inner mental calm**, not neglect **meditation**;*
*be possessed of **insight**, resort to **empty abodes***.

20 So it was with reference to this that it was said:
'Bhikshus,
dwell fully in moral virtue, fully in the Pātimokkha, restrained in the restraint of the Pātimokkha,
perfect in conduct and resort, and seeing danger in the slightest fault,
train by undertaking the training-rules.'" [§2]

21 That is what the Blessed One said. The monks were satisfied and rejoiced in the Blessed One's word.

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[68] Detailed in Vism 13.72-101/423-429. See also **Karma,** SD 18.1.

[69] This is the well known **3rd** of the 3 knowledges (*ti,vijjā*), that of the destruction of the influxes (*āsava-k,khaya,-ñāṇa*), ie, arhathood.

[70] The Abhidhamma lists 4 influxes: of (1) sense-desire (*kām'āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence or becoming (*bhav'āsava*), (3) views (*diṭṭh'āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjâsava*) (D 16,2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as "floods" (*oghā*) and "yokes" (*yogā*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influxes of views) is prob older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 33,1.10(20)/3:216; M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these influxes is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: *āsava*.

[71] Comy: In this passage, "mind" and "wisdom" signify, respectively, the concentration and wisdom associated with the fruit of arhathood. Concentration is called "freedom of mind" (*ceto,vimutti*) because it is freed from lust; wisdom is called "freedom by wisdom" (*paññā,vimutti*) because it is freed from ignorance. The former is normally the result of calm (*samatha*), the latter the result of insight (*vipassanā*). But when they are coupled and described as influx-free (*anāsava*), they jointly arise from the destruction of the influxes by the supramundane path of arhathood. (MA 1:164,27-165,9)