

Sekha Sutta

The Discourse on the Learner

[The one on the spiritual path to awakening]

(Majjhima Nikāya 53/1:353-359)

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1 The Avassuta Sutta

The Siamese text (M 2:23) gives the title of this sutta as **Sekha Paṭipadā Sutta**, “the discourse on the learner’s way” (or better, **Sekha Paṭipada Sutta**, “the discourse on the learner who walks the path”) [2.1], which is closer to the discourse topic. The Sekha Sutta has no parallel in the Chinese Āgamas. **The Avassuta Sutta** (S 35.243)¹ shares the same introductory narrative, describing how the Sakyas invite the Buddha to their newly built assembly hall and how the Buddha admonishes them in various ways.² Here the same reading ends with these differing passages:

Sekha Sutta: Then he said to the venerable Ānanda:
 “Ānanda, speak to the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu about the learner who has entered the way (to awakening) (*sekho pāṭipado*). My back is aching; I will rest it.” (M 53.5/1:353-354,23)

Avassuta Sutta: ...after which he dismissed them, saying:
 “The night is far spent, Gotamas. Please do what you think is timely here. [The Buddha then tells Moggallāna that the order of monks is “free from sloth and torpor,” and instructs him to give them a Dharma talk.] (S 35.243.7-8/4:183, 29-184,10)

This initial sameness of the two passages misled Akanuma³ to list SĀ 1176⁴ as the parallel to our Sekha Sutta (M 53). However, as noted by Analayo, in *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima Nikāya*,

SA 1176 seems however to be a closer parallel to S 35:202 at S IV 182-188,⁵ since in both these discourses Mahāmoggallāna contrasted a monk under the sway of perceptual experience to a monk able to stay aloof from it. S 35:202 [S:B 35.243] and SĀ 1176 share with M 53 the same introductory narration, which describes how the Sakyas invited the Buddha to their newly built hall, how the Buddha then gave a talk and, once the Sakyas had left, asked one of his disciples to continue instructing the monks. The similarity of the introductory narration may have led Akanuma to assign SĀ 1176 as a parallel to M 53. The two discourses differ however not only on their subject matter but also on their speaker, which in M 53 is Ānanda, while in SĀ 1176 the speaker is Mahāmoggallāna. (Analayo, 2006 ad M53)

2 The learner

2.1 SEKHA PĀṬIPADA. The key word of the sutta clearly is *sekha pāṭipada* [§5], where *sekha* means “learner” and *pāṭipada* is an adjective meaning “of the way,” that is, one who has entered the noble eight-fold path, and bound for awakening. One who is bound for awakening is known as a *sekha*, that is, one of the three lower levels of sainthood: stream-winning, once-return and non-return. The stream-winner, the

¹ S 35.243/4:182-189 (PTS: S 35.202)

² M 53.1-5/1:353-354,23 = S 35.243.1-7/4:182-183,29.

³ Akanuma, *The Comparative Catalogue of Chinese Āgamas & Pāli Nikāyas* (repr Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1990), 1929:166.

⁴ SĀ 1176 = T2.316a.

⁵ This is the PTS ed; foll S:B, this would be S 35.243/4:182-189, ie **Avassuta S** (as qu above).

once-returner and the non-returner are called “learners” because they have yet to attain full liberation as arhats. In the model of “the eight individuals” (*aṭṭha puggala*),⁶ the first seven individuals, that is,

the arhat on the path,	that is, the arhat-to-be,
the non-returner (fruition),	that is, the full-fledged non-returner,
the non-returner on the path,	that is, a non-returner-to-be,
the once-returner (fruition),	that is, the full-fledged once-returner,
the once-returner on the path,	that is, the once-returner-to-be,
the streamwinner (fruition),	that is, the full-fledged streamwinner, and
the streamwinner on the path,	that is, the streamwinner-to-be.

are called “learners” (*sekha*), as they have yet to become arhats. The arhat is called an “adept” (*asekha*),⁷ as he is fully liberated and has nothing more to learn in terms of liberation. He is one who is fully accomplished in all the 15 qualities of conduct (*carāṇa*) [§§7-18] and the three knowledges (*vijjā*) [§§20-22]. The Sekha Sutta gives a very definite list of the arhat’s conduct and knowledge, and the same list appears to a lesser extent in the **Ambaṭṭha Sutta** (D 3).⁸

At the start of the Sekha Sutta, the Buddha, tiring after teaching the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu, instructs Ānanda to discourse on the *sekha pāṭipada* to the assembled Sakyas. As already mentioned, the term *sekha pāṭipada* translates as “the learner who walks the path” [§5], that is, a saint on the noble eightfold path on the way to awakening. Ānanda is at this time a stream-winner, that is, a learner (*sekha*) and also, says the Commentary, one accomplished in the analytic insight of the learner (*sekha, paṭisambhidā, patta*), and is as such capable of discoursing on it (MA 3:27).

In the **Samāṇa-m-acala Sutta 1** (A 4.87), however, we find the phrase, *bhikkhu sekho hoti paṭipado*,⁹ where Comy glosses *paṭipado* as *paṭipannako* (AA 3:112), but as Woodward here notes, “we have *pāṭipado* at M 1:354 [the **Sekha Sutta**, M 53 = SD 21.14]; It 79, which the more correct form.”¹⁰ The reading *pāṭipado* is also found in *sāvako ...pāṭipado pi sekho*, “the disciple... a learner who walks the path” (It 80). Gethin, in *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*, similarly has *sekho pāṭipado* and translates it as the “learner who has come to the way” (2001:218).

2.2 THE FIFTEEN QUALITIES. In the **Sekha Sutta** (M 53), the Buddha instructs Ānanda to admonish Mahā, nāma on the higher training of the learner who has entered the way to awakening (*sekha pāṭipada*). Ānanda lists “the fifteen qualities” (*pannarasa, dhammā*), which Buddhaghosa later, in his **Visuddhi-magga**, discusses in some detail in his own commentary on the Buddha’s conduct (*carāṇa*), noting it as implying an active movement: “*carāṇa* means that these fifteen qualities are those by which the noble disciples fares (*carati*) and goes (*gacchati*) in the direction of the deathless.”¹¹

The Sekha Sutta goes on to define in some detail (including a delightful parable of the hatchlings), the following fifteen qualities of the learner given in six sets (which are also the Buddha’s qualities by way of “conduct,” *carāṇa*):¹²

1	Restraint by moral virtue	(<i>sīla, saṃvara</i>)	[§7]
2	Guarding of the sense-doors	(<i>indriyesu gutta, dvāra</i>)	[§8]
3	Knowing moderation in eating	(<i>bhojane mattaññutā</i>)	[§9]
4	Devotion to wakefulness	(<i>jāgariyānuyoga</i>)	[§10]
5-10	The seven qualities	(<i>satta saddhamma</i>) ¹³	[§11-17]

⁶ See **Aṭṭha, puggala S** (A 8.59/4:292) = SD 15.10a.

⁷ *Asekha* = *na* + *sekha*, “one who is not a learner.”

⁸ D 3.2.1-2/1:99-101 = SD 21.3.

⁹ A 4.87/2:86,33.

¹⁰ A:W 2:96 n2.

¹¹ *Ime yeva hi pannarasa dhammā, yasmā etehi carati ariya, sāvako gacchati amatam disam, tasmā carāṇan ti vuccati* (Vism 7.31/202). Comy says “the 15 qualities” (*pañca, dasa dhamma*) is the alternative name for “accomplishment in conduct” (*carāṇa, sampanna*) (MA 3:33)

¹² Noted briefly at AA 3:151 and SA 1:217, and more fully at SA 1:219.

11-15 The four form dhyanas (rūpāvacara-j,jhāna) [§18]
(M 53.5-18/1:354-356 = SD 21.14)

The Sekha Sutta illustrates such a noble disciple who walks the path to a hatchling who is capable of breaking out of its shell [§19] and of breaking out of ignorance [§§20-22]. The same parable is found in **the Ceto,khila Sutta** (M 16), where it also illustrates the 15 qualities of a disciple “who is capable of breaking out, capable of self-awakening, capable of attaining the supreme security from bondage,” but it is a different set altogether.¹⁴

2.3 THE THREE KNOWLEDGES. The other set of qualities is referred to as “true knowledge” (*vijjā*), towards which the learner works. This knowledge is threefold, whose nature is respectively represented by the verbs *anussati* (“he recalls”) [§20], *pajānāti* (“he knows or understands”) [§21], and *abhijānāti* (“he directly experiences”) [§22], that is, retrocognition, clairvoyance, and destruction of the influxes,¹⁵ respectively.

When he has attained to this goal, he is called “one accomplished in true knowledge [wisdom]” (*vijjā,sampanna*). From the texts, this true knowledge consists in the three knowledges (*te,vijja*) [§§20-22]. This is confirmed by the Commentaries.¹⁶

Both these modes of conduct and knowledge of the arhat are listed by way of summary very near the end of the sutta [§§23-250]. This set forms the well known “three knowledges” (*te,vijjā*) of the Buddha and the arhats.¹⁷

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¹³ The 7 qualities are: being endowed with faith (*saddho*), with moral shame (*hirimā*), with moral fear (*ottappī*), with wide learning (*bahussuto*), with energy [initiative] (*āradḍha,viriyo*), with mindfulness (*upaṭṭhita,sati*), and with wisdom (*paññavā*) (D 3:252; **Sekha S**, M 53.11-17/1:356 = SD 21.14). Ñāṇamoli notes that PED “traces **saddhamma** (as ‘the true Dharma,’ etc) to *sant + dhamma*; but it is as likely traceable to *srad + dhamma* = (good ground) for the placing of faith (*saddhā*).” (Vism:Ñ 214 n8)

¹⁴ M 16.27/1:104 f.

¹⁵ “Influxes,” *āsava* (lit “in-flow, out-flow”), comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints,” RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsava*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [43] is probably older and is found more frequently in the Suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsava*s is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: *āsava*.

¹⁶ For example, *vijjā,sampanno iti pi ti tīhi vijjāhi vijjā,sampanno iti pi*, “*vijjā,sampanna* means accomplishment in wisdom by way of the three knowledges” (MA 3:33). Buddhaghosa, alluding to **Bhaya,bherava S** (M 4.27-33/1:22 f) to confirm this, adds that **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.2.2/1:100) mentions them as the eight kinds of knowledge (Vism 7.30/202).

¹⁷ See eg **Te,vijja S** (D 13/1:235-252) = SD 1.8.

The Discourse on the Learner (M 53/1:353-359)

The new assembly hall of the Sakyas

1 Thus have I heard.

At one time the Blessed One was staying in Nigrodha's Park near Kapilavatthu in Sakya country.

2 Now at that time, a new assembly hall had recently been built for the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu, and it had not been inhabited by any recluse or brahmin or human being whatsoever.¹⁸ Then the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu approached the Blessed One and saluted him. Having saluted the Blessed One, they sat down at one side. Seated thus at one side, they said this to him:

“Venerable sir, a new assembly hall has recently been built for the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu, and it has not been inhabited by any recluse or brahmin or human being whatsoever. Venerable sir, let the Blessed One be the first to use it. When the Blessed One has used it, then the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu will use it afterwards. This will be for their welfare and [354] happiness for a long time.”¹⁹

3a The Blessed One consented with his silence. Then, knowing that the Blessed One had consented, they rose from their seats, and after saluting him, keeping him on their right, they went to the assembly hall.

3b They covered the assembly hall with all the spreadings [mats],²⁰ prepared seats, set up the water jars,²¹ hung up the oil-lamps.²² Having done so, they approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and stood at one side. Standing thus at one side, they said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, we have covered the whole assembly hall with mats, prepared seats, set up the water jars, hung up the oil-lamps. Please, bhante, let the Blessed One do as he deems fit here.”²³

The Buddha at the new assembly hall

4 Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself, taking his robe and bowl, together with the order of monks approached the assembly hall. Having arrived at the assembly hall, he washed his feet, entered the assembly hall and sat against the middle pillar,²⁴ facing the east.²⁵

¹⁸ *Samañena vā brāhmaṇena vā kenaci manussa, bhūtena vā*. Comy notes that devas are not mentioned as they have taken up residence in the building and the land (the vicinity) (MA 3:17).

¹⁹ The last sentence is as at V 1:4 = A 1:115 f = 2:192 ff. “It was believed to be a source of merit for those who construct a new dwelling to invite an eminent religious personage to dwell in it even for a single night before they inhabit it themselves. This belief still continues in Buddhist lands today, and people who have built a new house for themselves will often invite bhikkhus to hold an all-night recitation of *paritta* (protective) suttas in their new home before they move in.” (M:ÑB 1254 f n557.)

²⁰ *Sabba, santhariṃ santh'āgāraṃ santharivā*. Comy says that amongst these spreadings (*attharaka*) are those with artistic designs of elephants, of horses, of lions, of tigers, of the moon, and of the sun (MA 3:18). In Nissag 11-14 (V 3:223-228), *santhata* (past part of *santharati*) refers to a rug or mat: see BC Law, *History of Pali Literature*, 1974 1:53, “rug or mat”; EJ Thomas, *History of Buddhist Thought*, 2nd ed 1951:19, “rug”; *Vinaya Texts* 1:24, “rug or mat” and “mat”; Huber, *Journal Asiatique* 1913: 497, “couverture”; SC Vidyabhusana, *So-sor-thar-pa* [Tib tr of *Mūlasarvāstivāda Prātimokṣa*], 1915:20, “mat.” On *santhata*, see V:H 2:xxi-xxiv.

²¹ The water is for hand-washing, feet-washing or mouth-washing, depending on the person's inclination (MA 3:19).

²² Comy says that the oil lamps were of Greek, Chinese or other designs (*yonaka, rūpaka, cina, rūpak'ādīnam*) [with vll], were placed by hand into lamp-pots (*kappala*) of silver, gold, etc, hung on poles made of silver, gold, etc, and then lit. (MA 3:19)

²³ *Yassa dāni tvaṃ bhante bhagavā kalam mañāsī ti*, lit “Please, bhante Blessed One, do what you think it is now the time to do.” This is stock: **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.103/1:85 = SD 8.10); **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.3.6/-2:104 = SD 13), **Sekha S** (M 53.3/1:354 = SD 21.14), **Kaṇṇaka-t, thala S** (M 90.17/2:132 f = SD 10.8); **Puṇṇ'ovāda S** (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62,31 = SD 20.15), **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:183,15, 30), **Khemā Therī S** (S 44.1/4:379,29), **Vesālī S** (S 54.9/5:321,16, 17) & **Thapatayā S** (S 55.6/5:348,27). See Joy Manné, “On a departure formula and its translation,” *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 1993:27-43.

And the order of monks, having washed their feet, entered the assembly hall, and sat down with their back to the west wall, facing the east, with the Blessed One before them.

And the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu, having washed their feet, entered the assembly hall, and sat down with their back to the east wall, facing the west, with the Blessed One before them.

5 The Blessed One instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened²⁶ the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu with a Dharma talk for much of the night. Then he said to the venerable Ānanda:

“Ānanda, speak to the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu about the learner who walks the path (to awakening).²⁷ My back is aching; I will rest it.”²⁸

“Yes, bhante,” the venerable Ānanda answered in assent.

Then the Blessed One folded his upper robe in four, and laying down lion-like on his right side, placing foot on foot, keeping in mind the time for rising.²⁹

Ānanda speaks on the learner’s way

6 Then, the venerable Ānanda addressed Mahānāma the Sakya,³⁰ thus:³¹

³²“Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple (*ariya, sāvaka*) is one

- (1) accomplished in moral virtue,
- (2) whose sense-doors are guarded,
- (3) who knows moderation in food,
- (4) devoted to wakefulness,
- (5) accomplished in the seven qualities,³³

²⁴ This is the house’s main pillar (*maṅgala-t, thambha*, “auspicious pillar”) (MA 3:18). Evidently, this is the central pillar of the middle, so that the Buddha is sitting right in the centre (or almost in the centre) of the congregation, with the monks behind him and the lay congregation before him.

²⁵ In **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.11), Jīvaka points out to king Ajātasattu where the Buddha sits, thus: “That is the Blessed One, maharajah. That is the Blessed One, maharajah, sitting against the middle pillar, facing the east, before the community of monks.” See **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.11/1:50) = SD 8.10 n.

²⁶ “The Blessed One then instructed (*sandassetvā*), inspired (*samādapetvā*), roused (*samuttejetvā*) and gladdened (*sampahamsetvā*)... with a Dharma talk.” This action sequence reflects the basic structure of the Buddha’s teaching method: (1) the Dharma is shown; (2) the listener/s are filled with enthusiasm; (3) they are fired with commitment; and (4) filled with joy. The Comys (eg DA 1:293; cf VA 1:65; MA 2:35) explain that by instructing, the Buddha dispels the listener’s **delusion**; by inspiring him, **heedlessness** is dispelled; by rousing him, **indolence** is dispelled; and by gladdening, brings the practice to a **conclusion**. In short, when we teach Dharma to benefit others, we should do our best to **bring instruction, inspiration, motivation and joy** to the listener. These four qualities are, in fact, the sixth or last of the ideal skills of a Dharma speaker. See SD 11.4 Introd (4) & also LS Cousins, in his review of *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (tr Nāṇamoli) in JBE 4 1997:272, where gives a slightly different listing of the above. On *ācikkhanti deseti*, etc, see also A 4.92.5(4a) n = SD 14.11b.

²⁷ *Sekho pāṭipado*. Ānanda is at that time a stream-winner, ie a learner (*sekha*), and says Comy, one accomplished in the analytic insight of the learner (*sekha, paṭisambhidā, patta*), and is as such capable of discoursing on it (MA 3:27). See Introd 2.1.

²⁸ Comys explain that during the 6 years of ascetic practices, the Blessed One experienced great bodily pains, as a result of which in his old age, he has back winds (*piṭṭhi, vāta*, possibly rheumatism). Or else, he lies down because he wishes to use the assembly hall for all the four postures, and has used it by way of walking, standing and sitting. (MA 3:28; SA 3:52; cf DA 3:974; AA 5:44; J 1:491; VA 6:1276). See Introd 1.

²⁹ “Laying down... the time for rising,” *dakkhiṇena passena sīha, seyyam kappesi pādena pādam accādhāya sato sampajāno uṭṭhāna, saññaṃ manasikarivā*. “Reclining” here is *passa*, lit “lying on the side.” Cf the Buddha’s instruction to Moggallāna in (**Moggallāna**) **Pacalā S** (A 7.58/4:87) = SD 4.11.

³⁰ Comy says that **Mahānāma** is the eldest (*jeṭṭha*) and chief (*pāmokkha*) of the company (*parisa*) at that time (MA 3:29).

³¹ On this section, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7(3.3.2).

³² *Idha Mahānāma ariya, sāvako sīla, sampanno hoti, indriyesu gutta, dvāro hoti, bhōjane mattaññutā hoti, jāgarīyam anuyutto hoti, sattahi saddhamehi samannāgato hoti, catunnaṃ jhānānaṃ abhicetasikānaṃ diṭṭha, dhamma, sukha, vihārānaṃ nikāma, lābhī hoti akiccha, lābhī akasira, lābhī*. Buddhaghosa calls these “the 15 qualities” (*panna-rasa, dhammā*), constituting the Buddha’s “conduct” (*caraṇa*): see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7(3.3.2).

(6) who obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty, the four dhyanas that is the higher mind, providing a pleasant abiding here and now.³⁴ [355]

7 (1) And how, Mahānāma, is a noble disciple **accomplished in moral virtue**?³⁵

Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is morally virtuous:³⁶ he dwells restrained by the restraint of the Pāṭimokkha [the monastic code]; he is accomplished in conduct and resort; and he sees danger in the slightest fault; he trains himself by undertaking the training-rules.³⁷

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is accomplished moral virtue.

8 (2) And how, Mahānāma, is a noble disciple **one whose sense-doors are guarded**?³⁸

³⁹Here, Mahānāma, when a monk sees a form with the eye, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**. So long he dwells unrestrained in that ear-faculty, evil, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the ear-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the ear-faculty.

(3) When he smells a smell with the nose, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that nose-faculty, evil, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the nose-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the nose-faculty.

(4) When he tastes a taste with the tongue, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that tongue-faculty, evil, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the tongue-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the tongue-faculty.

(5) When he feels a touch with the body, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that body-faculty, evil, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the body-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the body-faculty.

(6) When he cognizes a mind-object with the mind, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that mind-faculty, evil, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the mind-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the mind-faculty.⁴⁰

³³ See §11 (5) below.

³⁴ See §18 n below.

³⁵ *Sīla, sampanno hoti*.

³⁶ “Morally virtuous,” *sīlavā*. Cf **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.43-62/1:63-69 = SD 8.10): see §23 n on “conduct.”

³⁷ As in **(Ti) Sikkhā S** (A 3.88/1:235) = SD 24.10c. See **(Sekha) Uddesa S** (A 3.85/1:231 f) = SD 3.3(2) for a fuller def of the 3 higher trainings (*ti adhi, sikkhā*), in terms of the four types of saints. ***

³⁸ *Indriyesu gutta, dvāro hoti*. See **Cūḷa Hatthi, padopama S** (M 27.15/1:180 f). The foll passage forms the def of the 1st right effort, “the exertion of restraint” (*saṃvara-p, padhāna*): see **(Cattaro) Padhāna S** (D 33.1.11(10)/-3:225 = A 4.14.2/2:16) = SD 10.2.

³⁹ This whole para: *Idha Mahānāma bhikkhu cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimitta-g, gāhī hoti nānuyyañjana-g, gāhī. Yatvādhikaraṇaṃ enaṃ cakkhundriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhā, domanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ, tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati, rakkhati cakkhundriyaṃ, cakkhundriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati. On Na nimitta-g, gāhī hoti nānuyyañjana-g, gāhī*, lit “he is not one who grasps at a sign, he is not one who grasps at a detail (feature),” see SD 19.14. Comys say that “**sign**” (*nimitta*) here refers to a grasping arising through one’s sensual lust (*chanda, rāga, vasena*) or on account of merely one’s view (*diṭṭhi, matta, vasena*); “**detail**” (*anuyyañjana*) here refers to finding delight by grasping at another’s limb or body part (eyes, arms, legs, etc) (Nm 2:390; Nc 141, 141; DhsA 400, 402; cf MA 1:75, 4:195; SA 3:4, 394; Nc 1:55; DhA 1:74). On other meanings of *nimitta*, see SD 13 §3.1a.

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple one whose sense-doors are guarded.

9 (3) And how, Mahānāma, is a noble disciple **one who knows moderation in food**?⁴¹

Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple, reflecting wisely, takes food neither for amusement, nor for intoxication, nor for the sake of adorning [fattening],⁴² nor for the sake of beautifying; but only for the support and continuance of this body, for the ending of discomfort, for the sake of supporting the holy life, thinking, ‘Thus I shall ward off old feelings⁴³ without arousing new feelings. And so that I shall go on without blame and dwell mentally at ease.

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is one who knows moderation in food.

10 (4) And how, Mahānāma, is a noble disciple **devoted to wakefulness**?⁴⁴

Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple, during the day, while walking back and forth, while sitting, purifies his mind of obstructive states.

During the first watch of the night,⁴⁵ while walking back and forth, while sitting, he purifies his mind of obstructive states.

During the middle watch of the night,⁴⁶ he lies down lion-like on his right side, placing foot on foot, keeping in mind the time for rising.

During the last watch of the night,⁴⁷ upon rising, while walking back and forth, while sitting, he purifies his mind of obstructive states.

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is devoted to wakefulness.

11 (5) And how, Mahānāma, **[356]** is a noble disciple **accomplished in the seven good qualities**?⁴⁸

i. Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple has faith (*saddho*),⁴⁹ he has faith in the Tathagata’s awakening thus:

‘The Blessed One is such: he is an arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.’⁵⁰

12 ii. He has moral shame (*hirimā*); he has moral shame regarding misconduct with the body, misconduct with speech, misconduct with the mind; he is endowed with moral shame towards evil unwholesome states.⁵¹

⁴⁰ D 2.64/1:70, 10.2.2/1:207, 33.1.11(10)/3:225; M 27.15/1:180, 33.20/1:223, 38.35/1:269, 51.16/1:346, 53.8/1:355, 94.18/2:162, 101.33/2:226; S 35.120/4:104, 35.239/4:176; A 3.16/1:113, 4.14/2:16, 4.37/2:39, 4.164/2:152 (×4), 4.198.11/2:210, 5.76.12/3:99 f, 5.140.11/3:163, 10.99.6/5:206, 11.18.23/5:351. For a detailed analysis, see Vism 1.53-69/20-22. For a study, see SD 19.14.

⁴¹ *Bhojane mattaññutā hoti*. See **Mahā Assapura S** (M 39.8/1:273).

⁴² *Na maṇḍanāya*, here, according to Buddhaghosa, “not for the sake of smartening, as with royal harem, courtesans, etc; not for the sake of plumpness in all the limbs” (Vism 1.89/32).

⁴³ That is, of hunger, weakness, etc.

⁴⁴ *Jāgariyaṃ anuyutto hoti*. See **Mahā Assapura S** (M 39.9/1:273).

⁴⁵ Between 6.00-10.00 pm.

⁴⁶ Between 10.00-2.00 am.

⁴⁷ Between 2.00-6.00 am.

⁴⁸ *Sattahi saddhamehi samannāgato hoti*. Comy glosses: *sundara, dhammehi sataṃ vā sappurisānaṃ dhammehi* (“with beautiful dharmas or with the dharmas of a true person”) (MA 3:29): I’m not sure what to make of *sataṃ* here: it is prob wr, which perhaps should read *sattehi*. *Anguttara Comy glosses saddhamehi as sudhamehi* (“with good dharmas”) (AA 4:56). Cf D 3:252, 282; M 3:23; A 4:108 ff.

⁴⁹ Cf S 5:196.

⁵⁰ For detailed study on this passage on the Buddha’s 9 virtues, see **Buddhānussati** = SD 15.7.

⁵¹ Moral shame, *hiri* (Skt *hrī*), is a sense of disgust with evil. The *Abhidhamma* defines moral shame as “to be ashamed of what one ought to be ashamed of, to be ashamed of performing evil and unwholesome deeds” (Pug 24); cf Dhs:R 18 f. It is one of the 7 noble treasures (*ariya, dhanāni*, DA 2:34; ThaA 240; VvA 113), ie treasures of generosity (*cāga, dhanāni*, D 3:163, 251; A 4:5; VvA 113; cf A 3:53): faith, moral conduct, moral shame, moral fear, learning, generosity, wisdom. Cf Sn 77, 462 (= D 1:168), 719. Moral shame is often paired with moral fear (*ottappa*) (eg M 1:271; S 2:220; A 2:78; It 34; Tikap 61; J 1:127; Vism 221; DhA 3:73), and, as the foundation for morality, called “the world-protectors” (*loka, pāla*, A 1:51), since they are the preconditions for a functional society. The term

13 iii. He has moral fear (*ottappī*); he has moral fear regarding misconduct with the body, misconduct with speech, misconduct with the mind; he is endowed with moral fear towards evil unwholesome states.⁵²

14 iv. He has much learning (*bahussuto*), remembers what he has learned, consolidates what he has learned. Those teachings that are good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and the letter [both in meaning and phrasing], that affirms the holy life fully complete and pure—such teachings he has learned much, remembered, recited verbally, investigated with the mind, and penetrated well by view.⁵³

15 v. He dwells exerting effort [initiative] (*āraddha, viriyo*)⁵⁴ for the abandoning of unwholesome states, for the undertaking of wholesome states; he is vigorous, steadfast in striving, unrelentingly working on the wholesome states.

16 vi. He is mindful (*satimā*),⁵⁵ endowed with the highest mindfulness and prudence [discrimination],⁵⁶ and he remembers and recollects⁵⁷ what was done and what was spoken long ago.

17 vii. He is wise (*paññavā*),⁵⁸ he is endowed with noble penetrative wisdom regarding the rise and passing away, leading to the complete destruction of suffering.⁵⁹

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is accomplished in the seven qualities.

18 (6) And how, Mahānāma, is a noble disciple one who obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty,⁶⁰ the four dhyanas, that is, the higher consciousness, and provide a pleasant abiding here and now?⁶¹

ottappa is derived from *apa* + √*TRAP* (to be abashed) [Skt **āpatrapya* > *apatrapā* (Trenckner)]. Andersen suggests that this etym must be preferred to that of Childers: **autappya* > *uttāpa*, *ut* + √*TAP* (heat) (PG 62). Edgerton (BHSD) has *apatrāpya* and the cpd *hrīr-apatrāpya* (P *hiri, ottappa*). According to Visuddhi, magga, the proximate cause for moral shame is self-respect, while for moral fear it is respect for others. **Out of self-respect** (*attāna garu katvā*), one, like the daughter of a good family, rejects evil-doing through moral shame. **Out of respect for others** (*param garu katvā*), one, like a courtesan, rejects evil-doing through moral fear (Vism 14.142/464 f). The former is sometimes known as self-regarding moral conduct (motivated by the *shame* the deed entails), while the latter as other-regarding moral conduct (motivated by the healthy *fear* of karmic repercussion). As such these two actions are known as the two bright states that protect the world, if not for which “one would neither respect one’s mother, nor one’s mother’s sister, nor one’s brother’s wife, nor one’s teacher’s wife” (A 1:50). [In his tr, Nānamoli renders *hiri* as “conscience,” but apparently mistranslates *ottappati* as “is ashamed” and *ottappa* as “shame,” Vism:Ñ 524 f.] See **Abhabba S** (A 10.76/5:144-149) = SD 2.4 & **Hiri Ottappa S** (A 2.9/1:50) = SD 2.5.

⁵²Moral fear, see prec n.

⁵³ Cf **Gopaka Moggallāna S** (M 108.15/3:11) = SD 33.5; (**Ahitāya**) **Thera S** (A 5.88/3:114-116) = SD 40.16.

⁵⁴ Cf M 85.58/2:95; S 48.9/5.14.4; A 5:197/3:11, A 7.4.4/4:3; U 4.1.11/37.

⁵⁵ Cf S 5:197; A 3:11.

⁵⁶ “Mindfulness and prudence,” *sati, nepakka*; on *nepakka*, see Vbh 249; VbhA 311 f.

⁵⁷ “Remembers and recollects,” Comy distinguishes between *sarita* (remembering once) and *anussarita* (remembering again and again) (MA 3:30). Bodhi: “Here the text explains *sati*, mindfulness, by reference to its original meaning of memory. The relationship between the two senses of *sati*—memory and attentiveness—may be formulated thus: keen attentiveness to the present forms the basis for an accurate memory of the past. MA takes the mention of *sati* here to imply all seven factors of enlightenment [*bojjhaṅga* = SD 10.15], among which it is the first.” (M:ÑB 1255 n560)

⁵⁸ Cf **Bodhi Rāja, kumāra S** (M 85.57-58/2:95).

⁵⁹ This refers to the wisdom of insight and of the path, capable of penetrating the rise and fall of the 5 aggregates. Comy: Here, path wisdom (*magga, paññā*) is called “penetrative” (*nibbedhikā*) because it penetrates and up-roots the masses (*khandha*) of greed, of hate and of delusion. Insight wisdom (*vipassanā, paññā*) is called penetrative because it penetrates them momentarily (*tad-aṅga, vasaṇa*) and because it leads to the path. (MA 3:31)

⁶⁰ “Obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty,” see foll n.

⁶¹ Comy alludes to **Ākañkheyya S**, where the Buddha admonishes one wishing to attain the dhyanas to this effect should keep the precepts (M 6.9/1:33; MA 3:29). Comy glosses *nikāma, lābhī* as “attaining it whenever he desires it” (*yathā, kāma, lābhī*); *akiccha, lābhī* as “attaining it without difficulty” (*adukkhā, lābhī*); and *akasira, lābhī* as “attaining it abundantly” (*vipula, lābhī*) (DA 3:897). This passage is stock: **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28.19/3:113), **Sekha S** (M 53.6+18+19+23/1:354, 356, 357, 358), **Gopaka Moggallāna S** (M 108.17/3:11), **Kāya, gatā, sati S** (M

Here, Mahānāma, a noble disciple, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome mental states, he reaches and dwells in the **first dhyana**, accompanied by initial application and sustained application, accompanied by zest and happiness, born of solitude.⁶² He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body⁶³ with the zest and happiness born of solitude.⁶⁴

With the stilling of initial application and sustained application, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he reaches and dwells in **the second dhyana**, free from initial application and sustained application, accompanied by zest and happiness born of concentration.⁶⁵ He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the zest and happiness born of concentration.

With the fading away of zest, he remains equanimous, mindful and clearly knowing, and experiences happiness with the body. He reaches and dwells in **the third dhyana**, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’ He permeates and pervades, suffuses and fills this very body with the happiness free from zest.

With the abandoning of pleasure and pain—and with the earlier ending of happiness and suffering—he reaches and dwells in **the fourth dhyana**, that is neither painful nor pleasant, and with mindfulness fully purified by equanimity. He sits, pervading the body with a pure, bright mind,⁶⁶ so that there is no part of his entire body that is not pervaded by a pure, bright mind.

In this way, Mahānāma, a noble disciple is one who obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty, the four dhyanas that is the higher mind, providing a pleasant abiding here and now.

Summary

19a Mahānāma, when a noble disciple is
 thus one accomplished in moral virtue,
 thus one whose sense-doors are guarded,
 thus one who knows moderation in food,
 thus one devoted to wakefulness,
 thus one accomplished in the seven qualities, [357]
 thus one who obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty, the four dhyanas that is the
 higher mind, providing a pleasant abiding here and now—

this noble disciple, Mahānāma, is called a learner who walks the path (*sekha, paṭipada*): one who is not a rotten egg,⁶⁷ who is capable of breaking out,⁶⁸ capable of self-awakening, capable of attaining the supreme security from bondage [the yoke].

119.36/3:98), **Navaka Bhikkhu S** (S 21.4/2:278), **Mahā Kappina S** (S 54.7/5:316), **Venāga, pura S** (A 1:181-184 ×9), **Uruvela S 2** (A 4.22.3/2:23), **Vassa, kāra S** (A 4.35.3/2:36 f), **Putta S** (A 4.87.5/2:87), **Nāgita S** (A 5.30.2/3:31 ×3), **Sumaṇā Rāja, kumārī S** (A 5.31.7/3:33), **Phasu, vihāra S** (A 5:104/3:132), **Asekha S** (A 5.106/3:134), **Catuddisa S** (A 5.109/3:135), **Arañña S** (A 5.110/3:135), **Nāgita S** (A 6.42.2/3:342 ×2), **Yasa S** (A 8.86.2+3+4+5/4:341-343 ×6), **Kosala S 2** (A 10.30.9+10/5:67 f ×4), **Subhūti S** (A 11.15.13/5:341).

⁶² On the omission of “one-pointedness of mind” (*cittassa ek’aggatā*) and “concentration” (*samādhi*) here, see **Laymen and Dhyana** = SD 8.5.

⁶³ Here “body” (*kāya*) refers to the “mental body” (*nāma, kāya*), ie feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saññā*), formations (*saṅkhāra*), and consciousness (*viññāṇa*) (Vism 4.175/169).

⁶⁴ These are the dhyana factors: *vitakka vicāra pīti sukha* *ek’aggatā*, respectively.

⁶⁵ The 2nd dhyana is known as “the noble silence” (*ariya, tuṅhī, bhāva*) because within it applied thought and sustained thought (thinking and discursion, *vitakka, vicāra*) cease, and with their cessation, speech cannot occur. (S 2:273); cf. S 4:293 where *vitakka* and *vicāra* are called verbal formation (*vacī, saṅkhāra*), the mental factors responsible for speech. In Ariya, pariyesanā S (M 1:161), the Buddha exhorts the monks when assembled to “either speak on the Dharma or observe the noble silence” (ie either talk Dharma or meditate).

⁶⁶ See **Accharā Vagga** (A 1.6.1-2): “Bhikshus, this mind is radiant (*pabhassara*), but it is defiled by defilements from outside. The uninstructed ordinary person does not understand this as it really is. As such, for him there is no personal development.” (A 1:10). On reaching the 4th dhyana, the practitioner becomes directly aware of the truly and naturally pure nature of the mind. See also A:NB 1999 §4.

⁶⁷ *Apuccaṇḍatāya*, fr *a* (not) + *pīti* (rotten) + *aṇḍa* (egg). From this line to end, this para here parallels **Ceto, khila S** (M 16), but *apuccaṇḍatāya* is omitted (M 16.27/1:104 f).

19b THE PARABLE OF THE HATCHLING. ⁶⁹Suppose, Mahānāma, there were a hen with eight or ten or twelve eggs, which she has properly sat on, properly brooded, properly incubated. ⁷⁰Even though she may not wish, ‘Oh that my chicks would pierce their shells with the points of their claws or with their beaks, and hatch out safely!’ yet the chicks are capable of piercing their shells with the points of their claws or with their beaks, and hatching out safely.

So, too, when a noble disciple who is
 thus one accomplished in moral virtue,
 thus one whose sense-doors are guarded,
 thus one who knows moderation in food,
 thus one devoted to wakefulness,
 thus one accomplished in the seven qualities,
 thus one who obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty, the four dhyanas that is the

higher mind, providing a pleasant abiding here and now—

this noble disciple, Mahānāma, is called a learner who walks the path: one who is not a rotten egg, who is capable of breaking out, capable of self-awakening, capable of attaining the supreme security from bondage.

Breaking out of the shell

20 (1) REBIRTH: THE RECOLLECTION OF PAST LIVES (RETROCOGNITION). Mahānāma, attaining to that supreme mindfulness whose purity is due to equanimity, ⁷¹this noble disciple recollects manifold past existence, ⁷²that is to say, one birth, two births, three births, four births, five births, ten births, twenty births, thirty births, forty births, fifty births, one hundred births, one thousand births, one hundred thousand births, many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion, many aeons of cosmic contraction and expansion, thus:

‘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. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure and pain, such my life-span. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.’

Thus, Mahānāma, he recollects his manifold past existence in its various modes and details. ⁷³

This, Mahānāma, is the first breaking out like that of the hen’s chicks from their shells.

21 (2) KARMA: THE DIVINE EYE (CLAIRVOYANCE). Mahānāma, attaining to that supreme mindfulness whose purity is due to equanimity, this noble disciple, sees—by means of the divine eye [clairvoyance], ⁷⁴purified and surpassing the human—beings passing away and re-arising, and he knows how they are inferior and superior, beautiful and ugly, fortunate and unfortunate, faring in accordance with their karma:

⁶⁸ Comy: He is capable of (attaining) various kinds of knowledge (*ñāṇa, pabhedāya bhabbo*) (MA 3:32). See foll n.

⁶⁹ This parable is as at **Ceto, khila S** (M 16.27/1:104 f), where it illustrates the 15 qualities of a disciple “who is capable of breaking out, capable of self-awakening, capable of attaining the supreme security from bondage.” In **Sekha S**, the same parable illustrates a different set of 15 qualities of such a disciple. See MA 2:69 f.

⁷⁰ *Seyyathā pi Mahānāma kukkuṭiyā aṇḍāni aṭṭha vā dasa vā dvādasa vā, tan’assu kukkuṭiyā sammā adhisayitāni sammā pariseditāni sammā paribhāvitāni.*

⁷¹ This refers to the 4th dhyana: see **Potaliya S** (M 54.22-24/1:367).

⁷² *Aneka, vihitam pubbe, nivāsam anussarati*, ie retrocognition. The remainder of this is expanded into 4 sections in **Brahma, jāla S** (D 1.1.31-34/1:13-16) and 3 sections in **Sampasādaniya S** (D 27.15-17/3:107-112 = SD 10.12). In both cases, each explains how the eternalist view arose.

⁷³ For a parable on this, see **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2.94/1:81). This knowledge is detailed at Vism 13.13-71/411-423.

⁷⁴ *dibba, cakkhu*, clairvoyance, not to be confused with the Dharma-eye (*dhamma, cakkhu*) (see **Sāmañña, phala S** D 2.102 n = SD 8.10).

‘These beings—who were endowed with evil 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 has broken up, are reborn in a plane of misery, an evil 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 has broken up, are reborn in a happy destination, in heaven.’

Thus, Mahānāma, by means of the divine eye, he sees beings passing away and re-arising, and how they fare according to their karma.⁷⁵

This, Mahānāma, is the second breaking out like that of the hen’s chicks from their shells.

22 (3) AWAKENING: THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INFLUXES. Mahānāma, attaining to that supreme mindfulness whose purity is due to equanimity, this noble disciple, right here and now having realized for himself through direct knowledge, after attaining, dwells in the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom⁷⁶ that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes.⁷⁷ **[358]**

This, Mahānāma, is the third breaking out like that of the hen’s chicks from their shells.⁷⁸

The noble disciple’s knowledge and conduct

23 Mahānāma, when a noble disciple is accomplished in moral virtue, this is so of his conduct, too.⁷⁹

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple is one whose sense-doors are guarded, this is so of his conduct, too.

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple knows moderation in food, this is so of his conduct, too.

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple devoted to wakefulness, this is so of his conduct, too.

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple is accomplished in the seven qualities, this is so of his conduct, too.

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple is one who obtains at will, with neither trouble nor difficulty, the four dhyanas that is the higher mind, providing a pleasant abiding here and now—this is so of his conduct, too.

24 Mahānāma, when a noble disciple recollects manifold past existence, that is to say, ...he recollects his manifold past lives in their modes and details—this is so of his true knowledge [wisdom], too.

⁷⁵ For a parable on this, see **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.96/1:83).

⁷⁶ “**Liberation of mind and liberation through wisdom**,” respectively, *ceto,vimutti* (or, liberation by concentration, ie through destruction of the mental hindrances) and *paññā,vimutti* (liberation through insight) (A 1:60). One who is *liberated by wisdom* “may not have reached the 8 deliverances (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed” (M 70.16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly liberated in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain **the 8 deliverances** (*aṭṭha,vimokkha*), which include the four formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called *liberated both ways*, that is, liberated from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood. Saḷha, like the arhats Sāriputta and Moggallāna, is “liberated both ways” (*ubhato,bhāga,vimutta*). The differences between the two types of liberation are given in **Mahā,nidāna S** (D 2:70 f) and **Kiṭṭāgiri S** (M 1:477 f). For full list of the 8 deliverances, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f). For full list of the 8 deliverances, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15.35/2:70 f) = SD 5.17.35. See also D 3:262, 228; **Vimokkha S**, A 8.66/4:306; also M 120.37/3:103 = SD 3.4.37.

⁷⁷ “**Mental influxes**,” *āsava*. The term *āsava* (lit “inflow, outflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows towards” (ie either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints”, RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 *āsavas*: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.1.12/2:82, 16.2.4/2:91, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) is probably older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these *āsavas* is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict: *āsava*.

⁷⁸ At this point, the disciple ceases to be a learner (*sekha*), as he has broken through into arhathood.

⁷⁹ *Yam pi Mahānāma ariya,sāvako sīla,sampanno hoti idam pi’ssa hoti caraṇasmim*. That is, he is endowed with proper conduct, too. From §7 to the last “this is so of his true knowledge [wisdom]” below, cp **Sāmañña,phala S** (D 2.43-62/1:63-69 = SD 8.10): where each section ends with *idam pi’ssa hoti sīlasim*.

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple sees—by means of the divine eye [clairvoyance], purified and surpassing the human—beings passing away and re-arising, . . . and how they fare according to their karma—this is so of his true knowledge [wisdom], too.⁸⁰

Mahānāma, when a noble disciple, right here and now having realized for himself through direct knowledge, having attained it, dwells in the liberation of mind and the liberation by wisdom that are influx-free with the destruction of the mental influxes—this is so of his true knowledge [wisdom], too.

25 This noble disciple, Mahānāma, is said to be accomplished in true knowledge [wisdom], or accomplished in conduct, or accomplished in knowledge and conduct.⁸¹

Sanañ,kumāra Gāthā⁸²

Now, Mahānāma, this verse was uttered by the brahma Sanañ,kumāra,⁸³ thus:

<i>Khattiyo seṭṭho jane tasmiṃ</i>	For those who look up to clan,
<i>ye gotta,paṭisārino</i>	the kshatriya is the best in this generation.
<i>vijjā,carāṇa,sampanno</i>	the one endowed with wisdom and conduct
<i>so seṭṭho deva,mānuse.</i>	is the best amongst gods and humans. ⁸⁴

This verse, Mahānāma, is well-sung, not ill-sung, by the brahma Sanañ,kumāra, well-spoken, not ill-spoken, endowed with meaning, not without meaning—the Blessed One approves of it.

26 Then the Blessed One rose and addressed the venerable Ānanda, thus:

“Sadhu [excellent], sadhu, Ānanda! It is good that you have spoken to the Sakyas of Kapilavatthu about the learner who walks the path.” [359]

This is what the venerable Ānanda said. The Teacher approved. The Sakyas of Kapilavatthu, joyful, approved of the venerable Ānanda’s word.

— evaṃ —

060409; 071119; 081228; 091026

⁸⁰ These 15 qualities (*dhamma*) of conduct (*carāṇa*) and the 3 knowledges (*vijjā*) constitute the complete course of training of the learner (*sekha*), and are better known as an epithet of the arhat, ie *vijjā,carāṇa,sampanna*, “accomplished in wisdom and conduct”: see *Vism* 7.30 f/202 & also above, *Introd* 2.2-2.3.

⁸¹ This whole section is a canonical copy on the Buddha’s quality of *vijjā,carāṇa sampanna*: see *A* 2:163, 5:326 f; *Vism* 202; and also *Buddhānussati* = *SD* 15.7(3.3).

⁸² Sanañ,kumāra’s verse is well known: **Ambaṭṭha S** (*D* 3.1.28/3:99, expl as *sāmañña,phala*); **Aggañña S** (*D* 27.32/1:97, sutta conclusion); **Sekha S** (*M* 53.25/1:358, spoken by Ānanda); the verse only is at **Sanañ,kumāra S** (*S* 6.11/1:153), **Mahā Kappina S** (*S* 21.11/2:284, with *Dh* 387), & **Mora,nivāpa S** (*A* 11.11/5:327 f); cf **Soṇa,-daṇḍa S** (*D* 4.13-16/1:121, on the true brahmin), **Jana,vasabha S** (*D* 18.17-29/2:210-218, on Sanañ,kumāra). (At *S* 2:284, where it appears with *Dh* 387, it is attributed to the Buddha, giving it even greater endorsement). The name **Sanañ,kumāra** means or “Ever Young” or “Eternal Virgin.” Like the true brahmins of old, he practised “the celibate divine life” (*komāra,brahma,cariya*, *A* 3:224 ff), a term I think that is better rendered as “living the celibate ever since he was just a boy,” since *brahma,cariya* itself connotes celibacy. Buddhaghosa says that in a former birth, Sanañ,kumāra practised *jhāna* while yet a boy (*kumāra*) at the stage where his hair was tied in five top-knots and was reborn in the brahma world. Even as a brahma he often retained his youthful looks, hence his name (*MA* 3:33; *SA* 1:219). The oldest mention of Sanañ,kumāra is in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (ch 7). In the *Mahābharata* (3:185, Bombay ed), he expresses a sentiment very similar to that of his verse here. Rhys Davids (*D:RD* 2:292 n3, cf 1:121 n1) sees the Sanañ,kumāra story as the Indian counterpart of the Arthurian legend of Galahad. It is possible that the closing section [32], with the well-known verse, had been conveniently added later: it is unlikely for two young brahmins, albeit converts, to play up to the kshatriyas, esp when these two have been at the centre of **Vāseṭṭha S** that teaches equality of all the castes (*M* 98 = *Sn* no 9/p115-123). Cf Collins, “The Discourse on What is Primary,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 21, 1993a:376 n31.1.

⁸³ Sanañ,kumāra. See prec n.

⁸⁴ Lines cd are explained in **Ambaṭṭha S** (*D* 3.1.28/3:99) in terms of the *sāmañña,phala*. See header n above.