

10

(Anicca) Sīha Sutta

The Lion Discourse (on Impermanence) | S 22.78/3:84-86
 Ee **Paṭhama Sīha Sutta** The First Lion Discourse
 Theme: How to meditate on the 5 aggregates
 Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2009, 2013

1 Sutta summary and significance

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY. **The (Anicca) Sīha Sutta**, true to its title, opens with a parable of the lion [§§3-6] as the king of the beasts whose roar terrifies all the other jungle inhabitants. Similarly, the truth of the Buddha’s teaching—here, on the impermanence of our being [§7]—terrify even the joyful gods in their high heavens [§§8-9]. For, they too are subject to impermanence and death.

Jolted into reality, as it were, the gods reflect thus: “It seems, sirs, that we are impermanent, unstable, ephemeral, all stuck in self-identity” [§8]. This is of course an unawakened view. For it is the self-identity view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*) that fetters us to this world, where what goes up must also come down. Even the highest gods themselves, when their good karma is exhausted, often fall right down into suffering states, like a cosmic “snakes and ladders” game.¹

The Sutta closes with a set of verses on self-identity. These verses embody the essence of impermanence and the danger of self-identity view.²

1.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

1.2.1 The perception of impermanence is a universal Buddhist meditation that both monastic or lay follower is advised to constantly practise, as it invariably leads to streamwinning in this life itself.³ **The (Anicca) Sīha Sutta** (S 22.78), like **the (Anicca) Khandha Sutta** (S 25.10), uses the 5 aggregates as the subject of impermanence.⁴

However, while the (Anicca) Khandha Sutta merely points out that such a practice leads to streamwinning in this life itself, the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta actually explains how to do the reflection on impermanence itself [§7.2]. Furthermore, it also declares that no one—not even the gods in their heavens—are exempt from impermanence, that is, death.

This is understandable, especially because to exist means to be impermanent. Whatever exists must exist in time: these are an inseparable truth and integral facts.

1.2.2 Related sutta. In structure, the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta (S 22.78) is identical to **the (Catukka) Sīha Sutta** (A 4.33),⁵ including using the same parable of the lion, but they differ in their essential teachings. While the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta teaches the impermanence of the 5 aggregates [§7.2], the (Catukka) Sīha Sutta teaches a 4-noble-truth model of the personal existence (*sakkāya*) [2].

2 Reflections on the 5 aggregates

2.0 THE IMPERMANENCE OF THE AGGREGATES

2.0.1 Related suttas. As already noted [1.2], our Sutta here (S 22.78) differs from **the (Catukka) Sīha Sutta** (A 4.33) only in their respective teachings. While (Anicca) Sīha Sutta here teaches the impermanence of the 5 aggregates [§7.2], the (Catukka) Sīha Sutta teaches a 4-noble-truth model of self-identity (*sakkāya*) (A 4.33).⁶ In **the (Anicca) Sīha Sutta**, the Buddha admonishes us to reflect on each of the 5 aggregates—form, feeling, perception, formations, and consciousness—as what they each are, their arising, and their ending.

¹ See (Nānā, karaṇa) **Puggala S 1** (A 4.123/2:126-128), SD 23.8a. On self-identity (*sakkāya*), see **(Catukka) Sīha S** (A 4.33) @ SD 42.15 (2).

² On self-identity view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*), see **Nakula, pitā S** (S 22.1) @ SD 5.4 (4).

³ See **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1/3:225), SD 16.7.

⁴ **(Anicca) Khandha S** (S 25.10/3:227 f), SD 42.17.

⁵ A 4.33/2:33 f = SD 42.15.

⁶ A 4.33,7.2/2:33 = SD 42.15.

2.0.2 Seeing an aggregate for what it is. Here are some simple tips in mindful reflection of the 5 aggregates in our own body or what we can notice in others. Detailed studies of the aggregates have been done elsewhere, especially in SD 17.⁷ Here we will briefly look at how we can reflect on form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness.

2.1 FORM can be seen as **the 6 sense-faculties** or as **the 4 elements**.⁸ Here, we will first reflect on the 4 elements—earth, water, fire, and wind—which comprises our physical body. The fifth element is consciousness, which we will reflect on by way of the sense-faculties [2.5].

2.1.1 Earth. Observe the earth element, that is, hard or solid aspects of our bodies. Begin reflecting with the “skin set”: head-hair, body-hair, nails, teeth and skin.⁹ When we are calm and mindful enough, locate each of these body-parts, feel them gently (noticing their hardness), colour and texture. As we sit in meditation, we can feel the hardness or softness of our cushion or seat. Notice how our hands touch one another, our legs pressing on one another, and any other pressure points on our body. Reflect on each of these as “Earth, earth.”

We take solid food, and this becomes our inner earth element. Consider the earth element within ourself and the earth element all around: they are both the same earth element. They are all impermanent.

2.1.2 Water. Reflect on the water element or liquid aspects of our body: feel the wetness of the saliva in our mouth, and reflect as “water.” Notice our sweat, urine, tears, blood and other body fluids as and when they come to our attention, even on the body of another, if appropriate. Simply note their fluidity, as “water.”

We drink water and liquids. Consider the water element within ourself and the water element all around: they are both the same water element. They are all impermanent.

2.1.3 Fire. The fire element in our bodies includes the warmth we feel, that is, our “skin” temperature, even when we are ill with a high temperature. The fire element also refers to our digestive processes: when we feel the heaviness of a meal or borborygmus (sounds of fluids and gases) in our bellies, we can reflect these as the fire element.

The fire element is the very process of decay that our bodies go through from the day we are born. When we look at our old photos or movies, we can see graphically how we have change on account of the fire element. Even looking in the mirror, we might begin to see how we gradually but surely age. This is the “fire element.”

Consider the fire element within ourself (our body heat and decaying process) and the fire element all around: they are both the same fire element. They are all impermanent.

2.1.4 Wind. The wind element is any kind of bodily movement: when we are walking or running, or swinging or moving a limb, or wiggling a finger or an ear, or turning our heads, or shifting our position. The wind element includes the gases in our system, including the oxygen in our lungs and blood, and also burping and flatulence.

The most important manifestation of the wind element in our bodies is of course our breath. We can feel the breath with the rising and falling of our belly or our chest, or the gentle touch of air at our nose-tip or upper lip. Or, we can simply feel the movement of air in and out that is our breath.

We breathe in and breathe out air. Consider the wind element within ourself and the wind element all around: they are both the same wind element. They are all impermanent.

2.2 FEELINGS are of 3 kinds: pleasant, unpleasant and neutral. Here we shall briefly reflect on feelings in daily life outside of meditation.¹⁰ Each of these 3 kinds of feelings can be either bodily or mental, so that there are altogether 6 kinds of feelings.¹¹

⁷ On form, see *Rūpa*, SD 17.2a; on feeling, see *Vedanā*, SD 17.3; on perception, see *Saññā*, SD 17.5; on perception, see *Saṅkhārā*, SD 17.6; and on consciousness, *Vīññāṇa*, SD 17.8a.

⁸ For theoretical details on form, see *Rūpa*, SD 17.2a.

⁹ This is the first set of the reflections on the 32 parts of the body: see *Mahā Rāhul’ovāda S* (M 62,8-17/1:421-424), SD 3.11.

¹⁰ For feeling in meditation context, see *Vedanā*, SD 17.3.

2.2.1 Bodily feelings. Let us look at **bodily feelings** first. Notice how comfortably seated we are, or standing, or lying down; how relaxed we are: these are pleasurable feelings. After a while, we feel a bit tired of sitting, or standing, or lying down: these are painful feelings. What about our face? There seems to be neither pleasure nor pain there: this is neutral feeling. We can reflect in the same way when we are walking or running.

2.2.2 Mental feelings. Now let us examine **mental feelings**. Suppose we are enjoying reading this; note this as “pleasurable feeling.” After a while we feel tired of reading, or watching TV, or listening to someone; note this as “unpleasant feeling” or “painful feeling.” Then look around; we might see a pile of thing, or the door, and feel nothing special about them; note this as “neutral feeling.”

2.2.3 Learning to feel. Whether we are observing bodily feelings or mental feelings, simple *feel*. Do not comment of them, except for the labelling. Sometimes, even as we are sitting or doing something, and we might notice our thoughts. Then, note them as being “pleasant,” as “unpleasant,” or as “neutral.” If we are not sure how to label a thought, simply note it as “impermanent.”

2.3 PERCEPTION

2.3.1 Recognizing our thoughts. Perception needs a bit of careful observation at our thought-processes, when we experience something as pleasant, painful or neutral, whether bodily or mental. If this is a bodily feeling, note what kind of perception is it: through seeing, or hearing, or smelling, or tasting, or touching. Then try to recall how we felt in a similar way before. This needs some effort at first, but it gets easier with practice.

Notice how often our thoughts come from the past, some event that significant affected us. Also consider how our views about our past (memories) change as we mature, or as we learn more about the reality of things.

2.3.2 Responding to our thoughts. Mental perception refers to how we respond to a thought or feeling. Notice how we relate our response of pleasant, unpleasant or neutral, through association with something we have experience before. Or, we could simply as “Why?” Then examine the reasons for feeling something as pleasant, unpleasant or neutral.

The neutral feeling is more difficult to observe. This can be done in retrospect or reviewing: when we did felt something as being neither pleasant nor painful, then it is neutral. This needs some effort, but try to do this naturally. Again with some practice, we become better at it.

2.4 FORMATIONS

2.4.1 Formations as emotions. Formations here refer to our emotions, such a desiring, disliking and being deluded. “Desiring” here can range from mildly liking to wildly lusting for something. “Disliking” can range from feeling a bit uncomfortable or violently angry. “Deluded” covers emotions of seeing something which is not really there. This is the most difficult of the three reflections, so we should try our best here.¹²

Consider also how our emotions are intimately linked with the 3 unwholesome roots, that is, greed, hate and delusion. Once we have such an emotion, it is a karmic act with its own potential fruit. We need to cultivate lovingkindness constantly to prevent the fruiting of such karmic deeds.¹³

2.4.2 Reactivity. As such, to reflect on formations, we need to take an even closer look at our mental processes. Notice how we *react* to a pleasant (bodily or mental) feeling; notice how we want more of it (or of the source of this pleasure), but do not follow through with this negative ideas. Observe how our body reacts: heart-rate, a clammy feeling, a bit of trembling maybe, and so on.

Next, notice how we *react* to a hating feeling when it occurs. Where do we feel it most? Notice what we feel like doing (just notice *without* following through the negative actions). Observe how our body reacts: heart-rate, a clammy feeling, a bit of trembling maybe, and so on.

¹¹ On the classification of feelings, see **Bahu,vedanīya S** (M 59/1:396-400), SD 30.4 = **Pañcak’aṅga S** (S 36.19/4:223-228), SD 30.1.

¹² As our understanding of the Dharma through sutta study and meditation, this practice becomes easier. The values of learning and mental cultivation become urgent and clear here.

¹³ On how lovingkindness limits the effects of karma, see **Brahma,vihāra**, SD 38.5 (8.2) & **Love**, SD 38.4 (6.3).

2.4.3 Dealing with delusion. Deluded emotions should be first understood before we can usefully reflect on them. A fun way to understand how we are easily deluded is to look at scientific and psychological illusions.¹⁴ When you are in a moving train, notice how the drizzle appears to shift from falling vertically when the train is stationary to moving horizontally when the train is speeding! Or, notice a mirage: it is not there, yet the images are so real.¹⁵

Our own experiences of deluded perception are easier to reflect on in retrospect, by way of review. Recall, for example, how someone appears to be really good or kind, but it turns out that he is really just the contrary. Or, recall how when buying something which we thought would really be good, but it turned out otherwise. On the happy side, there are some people or things that initially appear to be negative, but it turned out they are actually good.

In short, consider how we think or feel tends to make us like or dislike something or someone, or to feel happy or feel sad. Notice too how our emotions rise and fall away, if we do not cling to them. In other words, we should not feed our negative emotions.¹⁶

2.5 CONSCIOUSNESS here is easiest understood, for the sake of reflection, as a momentary series of “event windows” in our life. This is where we reflect on the very basic process of cognition, of our experiencing the world we have ourselves created.

2.5.1 How we see. We need at least 3 conditions for the conscious experience of seeing:

- (1) Our *eyes*¹⁷ must be in working order: not too bad-sighted, or momentarily blinded by dust, etc, and there must be enough light and the object is within our field of vision.
- (2) There is *a visual object or shape* before us to be seen and recognized.
- (3) Our *attention* is there focused on this visual object or vision.

Try to observe even now as we read these words. We might move our eyes across these words and not make sense of any of them. We know they are words, but if we do not direct our attention to make out their meaning, they would make no sense.

We see what is before us in an “upright” manner, but the reality is that these images (what we are seeing right now) are formed upside-down on our eyes’ retina. But when these visual impulses reach the brain, the images are rectified, seen as *appearing* upright. Things are not always what they appear to be. What we see is not always what we get.

2.5.2 How we hear. Similarly, we need the three conditions for hearing: the ear, a sound, and our attention. Notice how our mind is able to wander about from sound-source to sound-source, depending on what we want to attend to. We might hear a clock ticking, or a fan turning, or an aircon humming, or the traffic noise, or someone talking. After a while, all these seem to fade away: we have stop attending to them.

This is the same with “sounds” within our minds, like tiny ringings. We seem to notice them at first with some discomfort, but after awhile we simply turn our attention away from them.

2.5.3 How we smell. The three conditions for smelling are: the nose, an odour, and our attention. A pleasant or fragrant smell is easily tolerated, but they are impermanent. Notice that there are moments when we do not seem to detect anything, that is, moments of non-smelling, as it were, even in between our smelling something fragrant.

There is actually more to learn in our experience of an offensive odour. At first, we might even notice a sense of repulsion. However, we can consciously make an effort not to “absorb” more of such an odour,

¹⁴ For more of such illusions, see eg <http://www.scientificpsychic.com/graphics/index.html>.

¹⁵ See *Saññā*, SD 17.4 (1).

¹⁶ On the cultivation of the positive emotions (lovingkindness, compassion, gladness, and equanimity), see *Brahma, vihāra*, SD 38.5.

¹⁷ As these are contemplative exercises, we need not get into scientific details of how seeing occurs, as this would generate thoughts and distract us. However, if we are very familiar with the scientific process, we could use this knowledge to help our reflection without allowing any thought to intervene discursively. This applies to all the other exercises in this set.

and just let go of the negative reaction. One way is to reflect on why some people smell bad, say in a crowded train: they have been working hard and they are now returning home to their loved ones. We might ourselves smell this way if we were working hard out there, too.

2.5.4 How we taste. Just before we start eating, try mindfully chewing a spoonful of rice, or a small morsel of bread, or a piece of potato, or a bit of plain soup. Or even a mindful sip of plain water when we are really thirsty. It really tastes good. Then, as the flood of tastes fill our mouth, we begin to notice conflicting tastes, some tasting better than others, and so on.

Notice too that when we are really hungry, any simple food seems to taste great; or when we are really thirsty, just some water or plain soup tastes really good. Taste, as such, is not an absolute experience, but a subjective one. They are impermanent responses depending of various conditions.

2.5.5 How our body feels. This is a reflection on touch and bodily feelings. Consider how we react to heat or cold, or the weather. Consider too that we do not always have the power of touch or feeling. For example, if we hold something too long or too briefly, we don't feel it at all. Sometimes, when there is a lack of blood circulation in our limbs, we lose our feeling of them. Our experience of feeling is not only impermanent, but only makes sense in terms of change and other experiences.

Now with our finger-tips, just gently touch the table-top or some flat object. Consider what we feel at the finger-tips. Is it the object touched that produces the feeling, or does the feeling arises from our own finger-tips, or rather from our own mind? The answer is clear: all feelings, whether bodily or mental, arise in the mind. In other words, all feelings are conditioned and impermanent.

2.5.6 How we think. Our thinking arises in two ways: through the physical senses and in our mind. In our active waking life, we usually experience and process thoughts in response to our sense-consciousnesses or sense-impressions. We think about what we see, hear, smell, taste, or touch. Then, one thought brings on many others, and this often explodes into a mental proliferation (*papañca*).¹⁸

Our physical senses, in other words, sense only the 5 elements—earth, water, fire, wind and space.¹⁹ They are merely sense-impressions of the basic elements. However, the mind processes these experiences and *names* them according to categories we have invented or are familiar with, such as person, name, tree, house, table, cat, car, money, and so on. Our mind is good in making up things and giving names: these are called “mind-objects” or more simply, *thoughts*.

Even when we are physically or socially inactive, especially when we are alone, we can often be “lost in thoughts.” Such thoughts or conceptual impressions arise in our own minds. The mind creates its own ideas of what we have experienced through the 5 physical senses: these are mind-consciousnesses. They create the world we inhabit and project it to others. But it is an unstable, shifting world, subject to the uncertain stream of thoughts that flow through us. We are really momentary beings, deluded by the view that we are cold, solid, unfeeling, eternal rock.²⁰

2.6 SEEING THE ARISING OF AN AGGREGATE. How do the aggregates arise? **Form** (*rūpa*) arises when we give it a name (*nāma*). A thing “exists” when we put our minds to it. In this sense, our world is mind-made. **Feeling** (*vedanā*) arises when any of our sense-faculties attends to an external object.²¹ **Perception** (*saññā*) arises with feeling, when we react with liking towards a pleasurable object, or with dislike towards an unpleasant object, or with neutral feeling towards a neutral object.

Formations (*sankhārā*) arise when we colour our perceptions with greed, grasping at a desirable object, or with hate, rejecting an undesirable object, or ignoring a neutral object. **Consciousness** (*viññāṇa*) is the stage where all these drama, “a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”²² In

¹⁸ On mental proliferation (*papañca*), see **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18) @ SD 6.14 (2).

¹⁹ Modern science speaks of the 4 states of matter as being solids, liquids, gases and plasma. These however are not the same as the early Buddhist conception, esp where the 4 elements are meant to be a reflection of the shifting state or, better, process of matter, that it is impermanent, changing and becoming other. On the 5 elements, see **Mahā Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 61,8-12/1:421-423), SD 3.11. On details of the 4 elements, see **Rūpa**, SD 17.2a.

²⁰ See **Myth in Buddhism**, SD 36.1 (1.3.3).

²¹ See esp **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18,16-19/1:111-113), SD 6.14.

²² Shakespeare, *Macbeth* 5.5.28-30.

meditation, we go back to the real basics, and work to see life clearly and directly on its most fundamental level, as it were. This training is well exemplified in the famous “Bāhiya’s teaching” given by the Buddha in the **Māluṅkya,putta Sutta** (S 35.95) and the **(Arahatta) Bāhiya Sutta** (U 1.10).

Here,²³ regarding things²⁴ seen, heard, sensed²⁵ and cognized [known] by you:²⁶

in the seen	there will only be the seen;
in the heard	there will only be the heard;
in the sensed	there will only be the sensed;
in the cognized	there will only be the cognized.

(S 35.95,12/4:73), SD 5.9 = (U 1.10,16/8), SD 33.7

This teaching trains us to simply be aware our conscious experiences just as they are without any judgement or evaluation. This is the most fundamental level of our conscious experience that unconditionally accepts, even welcomes, our sense-experiences as they arrive, just as we welcome guests into our home (the mind). The training is to accept our experiences just as they are, without making them more than they really are, and also to understand that they are all fleeting experiences, which brings us to the last part of our training here.

2.7 SEEING AN ENDING OF AN AGGREGATE. Whatever arises, must also end; whatever exists must exist in time; hence, everything in our world of time and space is impermanent. Change is vitally important in our lives, as it gives meaning to our lives. It means we must treasure the moment—watch it as it arises and then it is gone forever. This is, in fact, the essence of love: the fact that nothing is forever should move us to unconditionally love those close to us, our friends, other living beings, our environment.

When we see that all our sense-experiences arise and fall away just as they have arisen, we begin to understand that we can never really *own* anything in this world. Our wealth, for example, is merely a temporary control of resources, and if use them wisely and happily, both for ourselves and others, then we have truly *enjoyed* life. Even greater than this is the moment we spend with another living being: this can be personal taste of the truth (like being with someone dying), or our basking in beauty (such as watching a clear moonless starry night sky).

Such moments are fleeting, but our memories of them enrich us beyond all worldly wealth. These presence of joy in our lives give meaning to our happiness, which allows to truly enjoy inner peace. Even more beautiful than this is that our perception of impermanence is a natural preparation for spiritual liberation. This is like comfortably sitting in a pleasant and safe boat, flowing with the gentle river currents for the wide open sea to board a bigger and safer vessel called Nirvana.²⁷

— — —

²³ The vocative is here omitted: this teaching is given, on separate occasions, to Māluṅkya,putta and to Bāhiya Dāru, ciriya.

²⁴ “Regarding things seen, heard, sensed and cognized,” *diṭṭha, suta, muta, viññatabbesu dhammesu*, lit “in things that are to be seen, to be heard, to be sensed, to be cognized.” See **Diṭṭha Suta Muta Viññāta**, SD 53.5.

²⁵ *Muta*, that is, what is tasted, smelt and touched. See prev n.

²⁶ This verse is the crux of the sutta and *satipaṭṭhāna*. In sutta terms, such experiences are not to be seen as “This is mine” (*etam mama*) (which arises through craving, *taṇhā*), or as “This I am” (*eso ’ham asmi*) (due to conceit, *māna*), or as “This is my self” (*eso me attā*) (due to wrong view, *diṭṭhi*) (**Anattā Lakkhaṇa S**, S 3:68). In short, such experiences are not “beliefs” but direct experiences of reality. See Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, 1995:32 f. In simple Abhidhamma terms, such a process should be left at the sense-doors, and not be allowed to reach the mind-door. As long as the experience of sensing is mindfully left at its sense-door and taken for what it really is, that is an experience of reality (*param’attha*); after it has reached the mind-door and evaluated, it becomes conventional (*paññatti*) reality, that brings one suffering due to greed, hate or delusion. When such sense-experiences are mindfully left on the reality level, one would in due course see the three characteristics of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and non-self. See Mahasi Sayadaw, *A Discourse on Malukyaputta Sutta*, tr U Htin Fatt, Rangoon, 1981.

²⁷ On streamwinning, see **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3.

The Lion Discourse (on Impermanence)

S 22.78/3:84-86

- 1 Originating in Sāvattḥī.
- 2 There the Blessed One addressed the monks and said this:

The parable of the lion

3 “The lion, bhikshus, king of the beasts, in the evening emerges from his lair. Having emerged, he stretches himself, surveys the four quarters all around, roars his lion-roar thrice, and then leaves for his hunting-ground. [85]

4 Bhikshus, when the animals and creatures hear roar of the lion, the king of the beasts, they, for the most part, are struck with fear, urgency,²⁸ and trembling.²⁹

Those that live in holes, enter their holes; the water-dwellers head into the waters; the forest-dwellers, seek the forests; winged birds resort to the skies.³⁰

5 Bhikshus, those royal elephants bound by stout bonds, in the villages, market towns and capitals —they, break and burst their bonds, and flee about in terror, defeacating and urinating.

6 Bhikshus, so greatly powerful is the lion, the king of the beasts, amongst the animals and creatures, of great might and great majesty.

The Buddha’s advent

7.1 Even so, bhikshus, when there arises in the world the Tathagata, the worthy, fully self-awakened, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

7.2 He teaches the Dharma, thus:³¹

‘This is <u>form</u> ,	this is the arising of form,	this is the ending of form,
This is <u>feeling</u> ,	this is the arising of feeling,	this is the ending of feeling,
This is <u>perception</u> ,	this is the arising of perception,	this is the ending of perception,
These are <u>formations</u> ,	this is the arising of formations,	this is the ending of formations,
This is <u>consciousness</u> ,	this is the arising of consciousness,	this is the ending of consciousness,

The Dharma’s effect

8 Bhikshus, those devas [heavenly beings], long-lived, beauteous, great in joy, long dwelling in their divine mansions—

hearing the Tathagata’s Dharma teaching, for the most part, are struck with fear, urgency, and trembling, thus:

‘It seems, sirs, we are but impermanent, when we thought we were permanent!

It seems, sirs, we are but unstable, when we thought we were stable!

²⁸ On “urgency” (*saṃvega*), usu (in human contexts), tr as “sense of urgency, spiritual urgency.” In the context here, that of animals, this emotion is that of fearful apprehension. See SD 9 (7f).

²⁹ *Ye hi keci bhikkhave tiracchāna, gatā pāṇā sīhassa miga, rañño nadato saddaṃ suṇanti, yebhuyyena bhayaṃ saṃvegaṃ santāsaṃ āpajjanti.* The term “trembling” (*santāsa*) here might refer, amongst other things, to “delirium tremens” (DT), which usu includes extremely intense feelings of “impending doom.” Other symptoms are severe anxiety and feelings of imminent death.

³⁰ *Bilāṃ bilāsayā pavisanti, dakāṃ dakāsayā pavisanti, vanāṃ vanāsayā pavisanti, ākāsaṃ pakkhino bhajanti.*

³¹ In structure, our Sutta here (S 22.78) is identical to **(Catukka) Sīha S** (A 4.33), except for this teaching. While (Anicca) Sīha S here teaches the impermanence of the 5 aggregates, (Catukka) Sīha S teaches a 4-noble-truth model of the personal existence (*sakkāya*) (A 4.33/2:33 f), SD 42.10. Comy glosses “composed of self-identity” as the 5 aggregates (*sakkāya, pariyāpannāti pañca-k, khandha, pariyāpannā*, SA 2:288). However, the gods here are either declaring their own wrong view of *sakkāya, diṭṭhi*, or simply stating a common wrong view. See Intro (1.1).

It seems, sirs, we are but ephemeral, when we thought we were eternal!

It seems, sirs, that we are impermanent, unstable, ephemeral, all stuck in self-identity.³²

9 Bhikshus, so greatly powerful is the Tathagata, of such great might, such great majesty, in the world with its devas.”

10 The Blessed One said this. Having said that, the Teacher, the Sugata [the well-farer],³³ further said this: [86]

The verses on self-identity

11 *Yadā buddho abhiññāya
dhamma,cakkaṃ pavattayi
sa,devakassa lokassa
satthā appatipuggalo*

When the Buddha, through direct knowledge,
turned the wheel of truth
in this world with its devas,
the teacher, without a rival, (teaching)

12 *Sakkāyaṃ ca nirodhaṃ ca
sakkāyassa ca sambhavaṃ
ariyaṃ c’atthaṅgikam maggaṃ
dukkhūpasama,gāminam*

the ending of self-identity,
and the arising of self-identity,
and the noble eightfold path,
the way to the stilling of suffering,

13 *ye pi dīgh’āyukā devā
vaṇṇavanto yasassino
bhītā santāsam āpādum
sīhass’ev’itare migā*

even the long-lived devas
beauteous, of great fame,
are terrified, struck with trembling,
just as the other beasts hearing the lion’s roar, saying:

14 *Avītivattā sakkāyam
aniccā kira bho mayam
sutvā arahato vākyam
vipamuttassa tādinōti.*³⁴

“We’ve not overcome self-identity:
we’re impermanent, sir, it seems,
hearing the arhat’s word,
the liberated, one who is such.”

— evaṃ —

130228; 130302; 130409; 130503r

³² *Mayam pi kira bho aniccā addhuvā asassatā sakkāya,pariyāpannāti.* “All stuck in self-identity” is a free tr to bring out the full sense of *sakkāya pari* (all around) + *āpanna* (“attained, reached, got into, fallen into”). This is the main theme of (Catukka) **Siha S** (A 4.33/2:33 f), SD 42.15. On “self-identity” (*sak,kāya*), see Intro (1.1).

³³ “**Sugata**,” from *su* (good, well) + *gata* (gone) here untr since it is polysemic; a common epithet of the Buddha, variously translated: (1) emphasis on *su*:- the Sublime One (Ñāṇanamoli), the Fortunate One (Bodhi); (2) emphasis on *-gata*: the well-gone, the Well-farer (Rhys Davids, Woodward, Horner, Walshe, Norman). If there is a need for choice, I think “well-farer” (I prefer the initial letter in low case) is most suitable here, even though “well-gone” is more technically accurate.

³⁴ Cf Dh 95; U 3.8/31. On *tādino*, see **Sabba Kamma Jaha S** (U 3.1.12/21) + SD 39.3 (1.4).