

8

Assaji Sutta

The Assaji Discourse | S 22.88

Theme: What to do if we cannot attain concentration

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2006, 2013

1 Assaji

1.1 ASSAJI AND THE 5 MONKS. Assaji is the fifth and last member of the “group of 5 monks” (*pañca, vaggiya bhikkhu*), comprising Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma and Assaji.¹ When the Buddha gives the teachings of the Dhamma, cakkā Pavattana Sutta (S 56.11), Assaji is the last to realize the Dharma-eye (that is, attain streamwinning). The Buddha teaches him and Mahānāma, while the other three monks went out for alms (V 1:13). Assaji becomes a streamwinner on the fourth day of the waning fortnight (AA 1:147).² Together with his colleagues, he becomes an arhat, at the end of teaching of the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta (S 22.59).³

1.2 ASSAJI AND SĀRIPUTTA. The Vinaya and other narrative works record that Sāriputta, upon meeting the newly awakened Assaji for the first time, is at once inspired by his peaceful demeanour. Sāriputta follows and waits upon Assaji who is on his almsround, and at the first opportune moment asks him about the Dharma. On being coaxed by Sāriputta to teach Dharma, the initially reluctant Assaji utters to him this famous quatrain on conditionality:

*Ye dhammā hetu-p, pabhavā
tesaṃ hetuṃ tathāgato āha
tesañ ca yo nirodho
evaṃ, vādī mahā, samaṇo*

Whatever states that arise from causes,
their causes the Tathagata [thus-come] has told,
and their ending, too—
thus spoke the great recluse. (Mv 1.13.5+10)⁴

Upon hearing only the first two lines, it is said, Sāriputta attains streamwinning. Then, he realizes that he should meet the Buddha himself for further teachings for higher attainments. But first, he returns to his waiting spiritual companion, Moggallāna, and he, too, upon hearing the first two lines attains streamwinning. They both go before the Buddha and are then declared the chief disciples (*agga, sāvaka*), on account of their aspiration in past lives.⁵ Ever grateful to Assaji for introducing the Dharma to him, Sāriputta would always sleep with his head in the direction of wherever Assaji is at that time.⁶

1.3 ASSAJI AND SACCAKA. According to **the Cūḷa Saccaka Sutta** (M 35), once when Assaji is on almsround in Vesālī, the nirgrantha Saccaka, looking around for someone to debate with, questions him on the Dharma as he is well-known amongst the disciples (*ñāt' aññatara sāvaka*).⁷ In response, Assaji gives him a summary of the teaching as found in the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta (S 22.59).

Confident that he could refute these teachings of the Buddha, Saccaka brings along a large assembly of Licchavis before the Buddha and questions him. This is the occasion recounted in **the Cūḷa Saccaka**

¹ See SD 1.2 (1.3).

² Comy says that Koṇḍañña attained streamwinning on Āsālha full-moon day; Bhaddiya, on the 1st day (the full day); Vappa, on the 2nd day; Mahānāma, on the 3rd day, and Assaji, on the 4th day (AA 1:147). All the 5 attained arhathood at the end of the teaching of Anatta Lakkhaṇa S (S 22.59). On the awakening of the 5 monks, see SD 1.2 (1.3) & SD 45.16 (1.1).

³ S 22.59/3:66-68 ≈ Mv 1.6.38-47 @ V 1:13 f (SD 1.2); J 1:82.

⁴ Mv 1.13.5+10 @ V 1:40, 28*+41, 35* (VA 5:975) = Ap 1.146/1:25 (ApA 231) = Peṭk 10 = ThaA 3:95.

⁵ This fact, however, is not mentioned in the early suttas, but only in the later texts: D 14.1.9/2:5; B 26.18/98; Ap 1.114/22, 1.121/23, 23.6/74, 51.17/1:102; V 2:199; Miln 193). Comys: VA 5:976; DA 1:173, 248, 3:875, 878; MA 1:153, 2:200, 3:135; SA 1:216 f; SA 1:217, 3:208; AA 1:140, 150-154, 4:171; DhA 1:96 f, 106, 110, 2:111, 3:236; ThaA 3:93; ThīA 3; ApA 90, 238, 209, 229; VvA 2; CA 4; J 1:85.

⁶ DhA 4:150 f.

⁷ M 35, 5.2/1:228, SD 26.5; MA 2:271.

Sutta (M 35).⁸ The Commentary says that Assaji uses this teaching approach to ensure there are no loopholes in Saccaka’s questioning. (MA 2:275)

2 Sutta highlights

2.1 ASSAJI’S “FAILURE.” The **Assaji Sutta** (S 22.88) records the Buddha visiting the sick Assaji. He complains that he is unable to attain samadhi, here meaning dhyana, because he is unable to calm his breath (“bodily formations”) [§13.2]. When Assaji says that he has “failed” in his meditation, the Buddha rejects such a vocabulary [§14]. The Buddha admonishes him to reflect on impermanence [§§15-19] and non-self [§20].⁹

2.2 THE ARHAT’S CONSTANT ABIDING. The arhat’s review knowledge is then defined [§21.2]. This is followed by a famous pericope on what in our times is popularly called “insight meditation” [§§22-24], that is, a reflection on not being attached to any kind of feeling.¹⁰ However, notice here that it is *not* a meditation, but an arhat’s “constant abiding” (*satata, vihāra*), that is, how he responds to feelings or experiences the world.

If this teaching is interpreted as a meditation, then it is important to note its context, that it is given in harmonious connection with other teachings, and also dhyana, or at least some level of samadhi, as implied in §14. The Sutta closes with the Buddha giving the well known parable of the oil-lamp, whose flame is extinguished when the oil and the wick are exhausted, confirming that Assaji is fully awakened.

2.3 WHICH ASSAJI?

2.3.1 The group of 6. The Assaji Sutta presents an interesting problem. There are only two known (or well known) monks, or hypothetically, we can even speak of *three* monks, in the Pali suttas named Assaji: the Assaji of the first two Suttas,¹¹ the Assaji of the Assaji Sutta (S 22.88) and the notorious leader of the recalcitrant “group of 6 monks” (*cha-b, baggiya*), and who is often paired with Punabbasukā.¹² Let us, for our purposes here, provisionally collate the monks named Assaji, thus:

Assaji 1	the early arhat, one of the group of 5 monks:	Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta , etc [1.1];
Assaji 2	the monk of this Sutta	Assaji Sutta (S 22.88);
Assaji 3	the bad Assaji of the group of 6:	Kīṭā, giri Sutta (M 70) & SD 11.1 (3).

If we take the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta and the Assaji Sutta to be separate suttas, each with their own provenance, then we have to accept that the protagonists in the two suttas only have the same name, but are actually two different individuals, that is, Assaji 1 and Assaji 2, respectively. Although this is possible, we apparently have no other information in the suttas or commentaries on these two persons.

2.3.2 Source of the 2nd Discourse?

2.3.2.1 The main teachings of **the Assaji Sutta** (S 22.88) and **the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta** (S 22.59) are practically identical, except that, in the former, the syntax is in the singular (to Assaji), while in the latter it is in the plural (to the 5 monks). Therefore, we might assume that Assaji 2, the arhat of our Assaji Sutta, is the same as the Assaji of the Dhamma, cakka Pavattana Sutta¹³ and the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta¹⁴ (which records the key events in the Deer Park at Isipatana, outside Benares, in the first year of the Buddha’s ministry).¹⁵ If this hypothesis is acceptable, then the Assaji Sutta provides some interesting narrative details not found in the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta.

⁸ M 35,9-12/1:227-237 & SD 26.5 (2.1).

⁹ S 22.88/3:124-126 @ SD 42.8.

¹⁰ On feeling, see *Vedanā*, SD 17.3.

¹¹ Assaji of the “group of 5” (*pañca, vaggiya*), as mentioned in **Dhamma, cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11/5:420-424), SD 1.1 & **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59/3:66-68), SD 1.2.

¹² On Assaji-Punabbasuka, see **Kīṭā, giri S** (M 70/1:473-481) & SD 11.1 (3).

¹³ On its origin, see **Dhamma, cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11) @ SD 1.1 (8).

¹⁴ **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59/3:66-68), SD 1.2.

¹⁵ That is, the awakening of the 5 monks [1.1].

However, there is an apparent problem here: **the Assaji Sutta** open with locating the Buddha in the Bamboo Grove, which was donated by king Bimbisāra in the second year of the ministry, that is, well after the 5 monks became arhats in the Deer Park [1.1]. As for Assaji, the Sutta locates him in Kassapa-ka's park (*kassapak'ārāma*), which seems to be mentioned only in this Sutta [§2+n]. Such internal evidence suggests that this Assaji is probably different from the Assaji of the group of 5 monks. However, this does not discount the possibility, even probability, that the Sutta teachings are older than those of the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta [2.3.2.3].

2.3.2.2 From the fact that the Assaji Sutta contains the same teachings as the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta, and the clear absence of prominent monks, such as Ānanda or Sāriputta—only Assaji is mentioned in the Assaji Sutta—we can surmise (discounting the Sutta venues) that the Assaji Sutta is an early text, or recounts an ancient event. It is probable that the Assaji Sutta is very much older than the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta (as we have it today), and was recorded by Assaji 1's pupils from his own mouth and handed down as an oral tradition.

As the early sangha grew and became more settled, the Buddha's teachings became more systematic and routinized, so that there is a need to recall and transmit the very early teachings of the Buddha.¹⁶ Following the compilation of the Buddha's first discourse—which we know as the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta—understandably the compilation of the second discourse would follow.¹⁷ Historically, what was taught by the Buddha to Assaji, making him an arhat, was also taught to his four colleagues. Hence, the Assaji Sutta became the model for the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta.¹⁸

2.3.2.3 Or, Assaji 1's pupils recorded a tradition that one of their peers or predecessors (Assaji 2), who is sick, is taught the same teachings as the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta [1.1]. Later on, when the council elders first convened after the Buddha's passing to recite the Dharma-Vinaya—by which time the original 5 monks were either dead or not amongst them, and the actual teachings they received were forgotten—they used the Assaji Sutta teachings for those of the Buddha's famous but forgotten second discourse.

2.3.2.4 Of course, there is also the possibility that there were elders who remembered the ancient teachings of the second discourse (the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta), and were so recorded. Then it is a happy coincidence that both the second discourse and the Assaji Sutta have the same teachings. It is common that the same teachings or themes are used for different audiences. After all, we are here speaking of a 45-year public ministry of the Buddha and his early saints, who were all over the central Gangetic plain and beyond, teaching the Dharma practically everyday.

2.3.3 Dhyana and arhathood. A further significant fact that can be teased out from the close links between the Assaji Sutta and the Anatta Lakkhaṇa Sutta concerns the nature of Assaji's awakening. The Assaji Sutta relates that Assaji has a problem with his meditation, but with the Buddha's help he solves it and as a result gains arhathood. This is a vitally significant fact, as it shows that meditation, especially dhyana, is necessary to the attaining of arhathood.

In other words, listening to the Dharma alone does not bring arhathood. Some stories of the great saints, such as Sāriputta and Bahiya Dāru, cīriya, give us the impression that they awaken merely by listening to the Buddha giving them a special teaching. However, it is imperative to remember the implicit fact that they are all good dhyana-attainers in the first place. It is their dhyana-purified minds that make them the perfect candidates for the attaining of arhathood. As such, it is not merely through listening that they become arhats (although, on the other hand, this “listening effect” may occur in the case of stream-winning).¹⁹

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¹⁶ Esp the teachings of the first 10 or 20 years, before Ānanda became the Buddha's attendant. On the “two periods” of the Buddha's ministry, see & **Levels of learning**, SD 40a.4 (4) & **Notion of diṭṭhi**, SD 40a.1 (1.3).

¹⁷ On the other hand, it is possible that with the compilation of 2nd Discourse, the need was then felt by the early elders to put together the 1st Discourse.

¹⁸ On a related origin account, that of Dhammacakkapavattana S, see (S 56.11) @ SD 1.1 (8).

¹⁹ Sāriputta, eg, attains streamwinning upon hearing only the first 2 lines of Assaji's quatrain [1.2]. On streamwinning, see **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3.

The Assaji Discourse

S 22.88

1 At one time, the Blessed One was staying in the squirrels' feeding-ground in the Bamboo Grove outside Rājagaha.

Assaji is ill

2 Now at that time, the venerable Assaji was dwelling in Kassapaka's park,²⁰ in pain, grievously ill.

3 Then the venerable Assaji addressed his attendants:

“Come, avuso [brothers], approach the Blessed One, pay homage to him in my name with your head at his feet, and say,

‘Bhante, the monk Assaji is sick, suffering, gravely ill. He pays homage to the Blessed One with his head at his feet.’

Then say, ‘It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One would visit the monk Assaji out of compassion.’”

4 “Yes, avuso,” the monks replied. They approached the Blessed One, saluted him, and sat down at one side.

5 Sitting thus at one side, those monks said this to the Blessed One:

“Bhante, the venerable Assaji is in pain, gravely ill. He pays homage to the Blessed One with his head at his feet.

It would be good, bhante, if the Blessed One would visit the monk Assaji out of compassion.”

5.2 The Blessed One consented by his silence.

The Buddha visits Assaji

6 Then the Blessed One, having dressed himself and taking robe and bowl, visited the venerable Assaji.

7 The venerable Assaji saw the Blessed One coming in the distance and stirred on his bed.²¹

8 Then the Blessed One said this to him:

“Enough [It's all right], Assaji, do not stir on your bed. There are these seats spread and ready,²² I will sit down there.” The Blessed One then sat down on the spread seat.

9 Seated thus, the Blessed One said this to the venerable Assaji:

“I hope you are bearing it, Assaji. I hope you are getting better, and your pains are abating, not rising; that their abating is evident, not their rising.”

10 “Bhante, I cannot bear it; I am not getting better, and my pains are not abating, but rising; their rising is evident, not their abating.”

11 “I hope then, Assaji, that you are not troubled by remorse and regret.”

“Indeed, bhante, I have a lot of remorse and regret.”

12 “I hope, Assaji, that you have nothing for which to reproach yourself in regard to moral virtue.”

“I have nothing, bhante, for which to reproach myself in regard to virtue.” [125]

13 “Then, Assaji, if you have nothing for which to reproach yourself in regard to moral virtue, why are you troubled by remorse and regret?”

²⁰ This is a park made by the seth Kassapa (*kassapa, setthinā kārite ārāme*, SA 2:315). Apparently, both the seth Kassapa and his park are only mentioned here.

²¹ “Stirred,” *samadhosi* = *samacopi* (from *sañcopati*, he moves, stirs). Some say that he was shaking from a violent fever but Comy says that he was showing respect by making a movement. It is said that even one who is very ill should show respect to a senior by a gesture of rising (SA 2:313).

²² Comy says that in the Buddha's time, a seat is always ready in a monk's quarters in case the Teacher visits (SA 2:314).

Assaji's "failure"

13.2 "Formerly, bhante, when I was ill, I would dwell stilling the bodily formations; but (now) I am unable to attain samadhi.

Bhante, as I am unable to attain that samadhi, it occurred to me:

'Now, let us not fail!'"²³

14 "Assaji, those ascetics and brahmins who regard samadhi as their essence, samadhi as their recluship, they did not attain that samadhi thinking thus:

'Now, let us not fail!'"²⁴

The aggregate characteristics formula²⁵

15 (1) Now, what do you think, Assaji, is **form** permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory [painful] or satisfactory [pleasurable]?"²⁶

"Unsatisfactory, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

'This is mine, this I am, this is my self.'?"²⁷

"No, bhante."

16 (2) "Now, what do you think, Assaji, is **feeling** permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

"Unsatisfactory, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

'This is mine, this I am, this is my self.'?"

"No, bhante."

17 (3) "Now, what do you think, Assaji, is **perception** permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

"Unsatisfactory, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

'This is mine, this I am, this is my self.'?"

"No, bhante."

18 (4) "Now, what do you think, Assaji, are **formations** permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, bhante."

"Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?"

"Unsatisfactory, bhante."

²³ *No c'assāhaṃ parihāyāmiti.*

²⁴ See esp (**Ekādasaka**) **Cetanā'karaṇīya S** (A 11.2), SD 33.3b; see also (**Dasaka**) **Cetanā'karaṇīya S** (A 10.2/-5:2-4), SD 41.6.

²⁵ This whole section [§§15-19] is as at **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59,12-15/3:67 f), SD 1.2, except in the latter it is in the pl. A shorter version of this and foll sections are given as **Arahatā S 1** (S 22.76/3:82 f), SD 26.7 = **Arahatā S 2** (S 22.77/3:84, without verse), SD 42.8.

²⁶ *Dukkhaṃ vā sukhaṃ vā.*

²⁷ *Etam mama, eso'ham asmi, eso me attā ti.* These are "the 3 graspings" (*ti, vidha gāha*), ie, of view (*diṭṭhi*), of craving (*taṇhā*), of conceit (*māna*) (MA 2:111, 225). The notion "This is mine" arises through craving (*taṇhā*); the notion "This I am" arises through conceit (*māna*); the notion "This is my self" arises through views (*diṭṭhi*). These three considerations represent respectively the 3 kinds of mental proliferation (*papañca*) of self-view (*sakkāya diṭṭhi*), of craving (*taṇhā*), and of conceit (*māna*) (Nm 280; Vbh 393; Nett 37 f). The opposite formula, *n'etaṃ mama, n'eso'ham asmi, na mēso attā ti*, is applied below to the 5 aggregates [§§17-21]. See Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, 1995:32 f. For detailed studies, see **I: The nature of identity**, SD 19.1; **Me: The nature of conceit**, SD 19.-2a; **Mine: The nature of craving**, SD 19.3.

“Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self.’?”

“No, bhante.” [126]

19 (5) “Now, what do you think, Assaji, is **consciousness** permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, bhante.”

“Is what is impermanent unsatisfactory or satisfactory?”

“Unsatisfactory, bhante.”

“Is what is impermanent, unsatisfactory and subject to change fit to be regarded thus:

‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self.’?”

“No, bhante.”

The non-self totality formula²⁸

20 “Therefore, Assaji,

(1) any kind of **form** whatsoever,

whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near²⁹

—all forms should be seen as they really are with right wisdom thus:

‘This is *not* mine, this I am *not*, this is *not* my self.’³⁰

(2) Any kind of **feeling** whatsoever,

whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near

—all feelings should be seen as they really are with right wisdom thus:

‘This is *not* mine, this I am *not*, this is *not* my self.’

(3) Any kind of **perception** whatsoever,

whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near

—all perceptions should be seen as they really are with right wisdom thus:

‘This is *not* mine, this I am *not*, this is *not* my self.’

(4) Any kind of **formations** whatsoever,

whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near

—all formations should be seen as they really are with right wisdom thus:

‘This is *not* mine, this I am *not*, this is *not* my self.’

²⁸ This whole section up to “the arhat’s review knowledge” [§§20-21] is mutatis mutandis at **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59,17-22), SD 1,2 & **Cūḷa Saccaka S** (M 35,24.2/1:234 f), SD 26.5. These are the characteristics of a **learner** (*sekha*). The arhat, on the other hand, not only has the right view of non-self, but has also abandoned all clinging, as the Buddha explains in the foll §22. The “**specific non-self formula**” is the line, “This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.” The combined “**aggregate characteristics formula**” [§15-19] and the “**non-self totality formula**” [§17-21] is called **the general non-self formula**.”

²⁹ See S 22.48/3:47 + SD 17.1 (3.2). This classification of the aggregates (by way of the totality formula) is expl in detail in the Vibhaṅga and briefly in the Visuddhimagga: “**internal**” = physical sense-organs; “**external**” = physical sense-objects; “**gross**” = that which impinges (physical internal and external senses, with touch = earth, wind, fire); “**subtle**” = that which does not impinge (mind, mind-objects, mind-consciousness, and water); “**inferior**” = unpleasant and unacceptable sense-experiences [sense-world existence]; “**superior**” = pleasant and acceptable sense-experiences [form & formless existences]; “**far**” = subtle objects (“difficult to penetrate”); “**near**” = gross objects (“easy to penetrate”) (Vbh 1-13; Vism 14.73/450 f; Abhs 6.7). “Whether or not the details of the Vibhaṅga exposition are accepted as valid for the *nikāyas*, it seems clear that this formula is intended to indicate how each *khandha* is to be seen as a class of states, manifold in nature and displaying a considerable variety and also a certain hierarchy” (Gethin 1986:41).

³⁰ *N’etaṃ mama, n’eso ’ham asmi, na mēso attā ti*. A brief version, “There can be no considering that (element) as ‘I’ or ‘mine’ or ‘I am’” (*ahan ti vā maman ti vā asmī ti vā*) is found in **Mahā Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 28/1:184-191 §§6b-7, 11b-12, 16b-17, 21b-22). This is opp of “the 3 grasplings” (*ti, vidha gāha*) formula: *etaṃ mama, eso ’ham asmi, eso me attā ti* [§§12-16]. In **Anatta Lakkhaṇa S** (S 22.59.12-16/3:68), this formula is applied to the 5 aggregates & in **Pārileyya S** (S 22.81/3:94-99), SD 6.1) to the 4 primary elements. See also (**Dhātu**) **Rāhula S** (A 4.177/-2:164 f). See **Pārileyya S**, SD 6.1 (5). See Peter Harvey, *The Selfless Mind*, 1995a:32 f.

- (5) Any kind of **consciousness** whatsoever,
 whether past, future or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near
 —all consciousnesses should be seen as they really are with right wisdom thus:
 ‘This is *not* mine, this I am *not*, this is *not* my self.’

Revulsion towards the 5 aggregates

- 21** Seeing thus, Assaji, the learned noble disciple
 is revulsed [disenchanted]³¹ with form,
 is revulsed with feeling,
 is revulsed with perception,
 is revulsed with formations,
 is revulsed with consciousness.

Liberation: The arhat’s review knowledge

- 21.2 Through revulsion, he becomes dispassionate.
 Through dispassion, his mind is freed.
 When it is freed, there arises the knowledge: ‘Freed!’³²
 He understands:
 ‘Destroyed is birth.
 The holy life has been lived.
 What needs to be done has been done.
 There is no more of this state of being.’

The arhat’s constant abiding³³

- 22** If he feels a pleasant feeling,
 he understands: ‘It is impermanent’;
 he understands: ‘It is not grasped at [coveted]’;
 he understands: ‘It is not delighted in.’
aniccā ti
anajjhositā ti
anabhinanditā ti
- 22.2 If he feels a painful feeling,
 he understands: ‘It is impermanent’;
 he understands: ‘It is not grasped at [coveted]’;
 he understands: ‘It is not delighted in.’
- 22.3 If he feels a neutral feeling,
 he understands: ‘It is impermanent’;
 he understands: ‘It is not grasped at [coveted]’;
 he understands: ‘It is not delighted in.’
- 23** If he feels a pleasant feeling, he feels detached³⁴ regarding it.
 If he feels a painful feeling, he feels detached regarding it.
 If he feels a neutral feeling, he feels detached regarding it.³⁵
- 24** When he feels a body-bounded feeling,³⁶

³¹ On revulsion, see *Nibbidā*, SD 20.1.

³² *Vimuttissimim vimuttam iti nāṇam hoti*, or “When freed, there is the knowledge, it (the mind) is freed.” Note that the self is not addressed here.

³³ Comy says that after the arhat’s review knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa, nāṇa*), has been stated, this passage presents his constant abiding (*satata, vihāra*) (SA 2:78). This passage recurs with different figures at **Parivīmaṁsana S** (S 12.52,15-18/2:82 f), SD 11.5; **Assaji S** (S 22.88,22-26/3:126), SD 42.8; **Gelaṅṅa S 1** (S 36.7,9-12/4:213); **Gelaṅṅa S 2** (S 36.8,7-12/4:213); **Paḍipōpama S** (S 54.8,30-31/5:319 f), SD 62.2. [23n]

³⁴ *Viṣaṁyutta = vi*, “away” + *saṁ*, “together” + *yutta*, “yoked.”

³⁵ A better known and more detailed set of such practices is that of the “5 perceptions” (*pañca saññā*): see **Tikaṇḍaki S** (A 5.144), SD 2.12.

he understands, ‘I feel a body-bounded feeling.’

When he feels a life-bounded feeling,³⁷

he understands, ‘I feel a life-bounded feeling.’

He understands, ‘With the breaking up of the body following the ending of life, all that is felt and not delighted in, will be cooled [quenched] right here.’³⁸

Parable of the oil-lamp

25 Assaji, just as an oil-lamp were to burn dependent on the oil and the wick, but with the exhaustion of the oil or the wick, it would be extinguished through lack of fuel,³⁹

26 even so, Assaji, *when a monk feels a body-bounded feeling, he understands, ‘I feel a body-bounded feeling.’*

When he feels a life-bounded feeling, he understands, ‘I feel a life-bounded feeling.’

He understands, ‘With the breaking up of the body following the ending of life, all that is felt, not delighted in, will be cooled right here.’”

— evaṃ —

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³⁶ “A body-bounded feeling,” *kāya,pariyantikam vedanam*, or “a feeling ending (co-terminous) with the body.” Comy: This means that it is a feeling that is delimited by the body. As long as the body with its 5 sense-doors continues, the feelings arising there continue. (SA 2:78).

³⁷ “A life-bounded feeling,” *jivita,pariyantikam vedanam*, or “a feeling ending (co-terminous) with life.” Comy: This means that it is a feeling that is delimited by life. As long as life continues, the feelings arising at the mind-door continue. (SA 2:79).

³⁸ *Kāyassa bheda uddham jivita,pariyādānā idh’eva sabba,vedayitāni anabhinanditāni sīti,bhavissantīti pajānāti.* “Will be cooled right here,” *idh’eva...sīti,bhavissati.* Comy: They will be cooled right here, without having gone elsewhere by way of rebirth, subject to no further occurrence, without the struggle and distress of their occurrence. (SA 2:80)

³⁹ As at **Gelaṇṇā S 1** (S 36.7/4:213); **Gelaṇṇā S 2** (S 36.8/4:214); **Padipôpama S** (S 54.8/5:319), SD 62.2. Similar lamp parables in **Dhātu Vibhaṅga S** (M 140,24.3/3:245), SD 4.17; **Saṃyojana S 1** (S 12.53/2:86×2); **Saṃyojana S 2** (S 12.54/2:87×2).