

10a

Saṅghānussati

Recollection of the Sangha

Aṭṭha Puggala Sutta 1 (A 8.59); **Aṭṭha Puggala Sutta 2** (A 8.60); **Vism 7.89-100**

Theme: The 9 virtues of the noble community

Translated by Piya Tan ©2006, 2014

SD 15.10a(1)

Aṭṭha Puggala Sutta 1

Paṭhama Aṭṭha Puggala Sutta The First Discourse on the 8 Individuals | **A 8.59/4:292**

Traditional: A 8.2.1.9 = Aṅguttara Nikāya 8, Navaka Nipāta 2, Dutiya Paṇṇāsaka 1, Gotamī Vagga 9

Theme: Recollection of the 9 virtues of the noble sangha

- 1 Bhikshus, these 8 individuals are
- | | |
|--|---|
| worthy of offerings, | <i>āhuneyyā</i> |
| worthy of hospitality, | <i>pāhuneyyā</i> |
| worthy of gifts, | <i>dakkhiṇeyyā</i> |
| worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, | <i>añjalī, karaṇīyā</i> |
| a supreme field of merit for the world. | <i>anuttaraṃ puñña-k, khettaṃ lokassa</i> |

What are the 8?¹

- 2 (1) The streamwinner,
 (2) the one practising for the realization of the fruit of streamwinning,
 (3) the once-returner,
 (4) the one practising for the realization of the fruit of once-returning,
 (5) the non-returner,
 (6) the one practising for the realization of the fruit of non-returning,
 (7) the arhat,
 (8) the one practising for the realization of arhathood.

- 3 Bhikshus, these 8 individuals are
- | |
|--|
| worthy of offerings, |
| worthy of hospitality, |
| worthy of gifts, |
| worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms, |
| a supreme field of merit for the world. |

- 4 ²The 4 who are practising the way this sangha is upright, and the 4 standing in the fruits: wise, morally virtuous, mentally still.³

- 5 For people making offerings [sacrifices], those living beings seeking merit, making material [worldly]⁴ gifts for merit, giving to the sangha is of great fruit.⁵

¹ For the Pali of the full section, see (1.5), §2.

² These same 2 verses are spoken by Sakra to the Buddha in **Yajamāna S** (S 11.16/1:233), SD 22.7.

³ These 2 lines: *Esa saṅgho uju, bhūto, | paññā, sīla, samāhito*. Comy glosses *paññā, sīla, samāhito* as “accomplished in wisdom and moral virtue” (*paññāya ca sīlena ca samannāgato*, AA 4:140) Hence, an alt tr is: “Endowed with wisdom and moral virtue,” where *-samāhito* means “endowed with” (as in S 1:48). Here, *samāhito* is contextually taken as “mentally stilled [concentrated]” (D 1:13; S 1:169; A 2:6, 3:312, 343 f, 5:3, 39 f, 329 f; Sn 212, 225, 972; Dh 362; It 119; Pug 35; V 3:4). Only these 2 lines differ from the verses at **Aṭṭha Puggala S 2 (A 8.60)** [1.5].

⁴ *Opadhikam*, “that which has *upadhi* (“substrate” of existence),” alluding to a future acquiring of the 5 aggregates, that is, to say, such a giving conduces to a good (but uncertain) future rebirth rather than to liberation. On

1 The saints, paths and fruitions

1.0 THE BUDDHIST GOAL

1.0.1 The 2 kinds of sangha

1.0.1.1 There are 2 kinds of spiritual communities (*saṅgha*): the holy community of saints (*ariya,saṅgha*) and the conventional community of monastics (*sammuti,saṅgha*). The “sangha” in the recollection on the sangha properly refers the holy community of saints, as evinced by lines: “These are the 4 pairs of persons, | the 8 individuals” (*yad idaṃ cattāri purisa,yugāni, | aṭṭha,purisa,puggalā*) [1.5; 4]. When we meditate on the 9 virtues [4], they are those of the holy community of noble saints.

1.0.1.2 However, the conventional sangha, that is, monastics duly ordained and properly keeping to the Vinaya, are also regarded having these qualities, especially (5-8), that is, to say, they are

(5) worthy of offerings,	<i>āhuneyyo</i>
(6) worthy of hospitality,	<i>pāhuneyyo</i>
(7) worthy of gifts,	<i>dakkhiṇeyyo</i>
(8) worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,	<i>añjali,karaṇīyo</i>
(9) a supreme field of merit for the world.	<i>anuttaraṃ puñña-k,khettaraṃ lokassā ti</i> (M 7,7/1:37; A 6.10,4/3:286)

1.0.1.3 There is a buddhization of brahminical terms here.

Briefly, “offerings” (*āhuna*), in the brahminical sense, refers to whatever is fit as a sacrificial offering, such as “rice-ball offerings” (*ahuna,piṇḍa*).⁵ Instead of wasting them as useless religious offerings, they are more religiously profitable when given to worthy monastics, or better, to the saints. [4(94)]

1.0.1.4 “Hospitality” (*pāhuna*) was shown to the brahmins of old. The noble saints and the virtuous monastics, too, are worthy of hospitality when they come to our house doors for alms. This is not a socializing kind of hospitality, but the welcoming of wonderful opportunity to make merit through giving.⁷ [4(95)]

1.0.1.5 “Gifts” (*dakkhiṇa*) is technically an honorarium (any kind of suitable gift, even cash donations) given to the non-Buddhist teacher. However, gifts to Buddhist saints and monastics totally exclude money, as they are prohibited from handling money and from money-related activities of any kind.⁸ The gifts here refer to proper and allowable gifts given at the right time. [4(97)]

1.0.1.6 “Salutations with the lotus-palms” (*añjali*) is actually simply a social greeting, properly done signifies the joy of meeting someone and showing due respect to the other person. Traditionally, monastics do not anjali the laity, as a reminder to both parties (self and other) that monastics are renunciants and that social distance is in order. As this is purely a cultural gesture, some monastics today feel comfortable return-

upadhi, see **Mahāparinibbāna S** (D 16), SD 9.15; **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (S 22,22), SD 13.2; **Ariya Pariyesanā** (M 26,6), SD 1.11; **The unconscious**, SD 17.8b (4.4). Also SD 20.4 (4.2.2).

⁵ *Cattāro ca paṭipannā cattāro ca phale ṭhitā | esa saṅgho uju,bhūto paññā,sīla,samāhito | yajamānānaṃ manus-sānaṃ puñña,pekkhāna,pāṇinaṃ | karotaṃ opadhikaṃ puññaṃ saṅghe dinnam maha-p,phalan ti.*

⁶ On offerings of such rice-balls, cf *sa,piṇḍi,karama*: SD 48.1 (1.1.1.3).

⁷ On a broader sense of “hospitality,” see 38.4 (5).

⁸ See **Money and monastics**, SD 4.19.

ing an anjali from the laity, or even giving it to them, as a gesture of fellowship, but always keeping the social distance and avoiding any body-contact. [4(97.2)]

1.0.1.7 Only the noble sangha is a true “**field of merit**” (*puñña-k,khetta*) because they have attained awakening or some level of sainthood. Conventional monastics, too, who are morally virtuous, especially when properly assembled as a sangha is a field of merit. Even being charitable to others, such as those doing Dharma work and social service, or given to charity, in the broad sense, especially in deserving circumstances, are also a field of merit. Here, “field of merit” simply means our mental state of lovingkindness, pleasant speech, and wholesome charity being shown. [4(98)]

Below, we will example the commentarial details of all the 9 qualities of the sangha [4].

1.0.2 Saints, monastics and lay

1.0.2.1 The goal of becoming a Buddhist is to live happily here and hereafter, that is, to overcome suffering in this life itself as a basis for spiritual liberation. Traditionally, the early followers are called “listeners” (*sāvaka*; *sg sāvaka*) because they mindfully and wisely listen to the Dharma. Then, reflecting on this, their understanding of true reality grows until they are free of ignorance and craving.

The Commentaries explain the term *sāvaka* in the following ways:

“They all *listen* to his word, hence they are ‘**listeners**’ (*sāvaka*). Others listen as they like, but do not do what needs to be done. But these (disciples) having *heard*, and having practised the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, attain the paths and the fruits; therefore, they are called ‘**listeners**’.” (KhP 183 = SnA 1:278)⁹

“They are **the disciples of the well-farer** because they *hear* the Dharma; because they are born in the noble birth upon hearing the Dharma of the full self-awakened one, they are ‘**listeners**’.”¹⁰ (VvA 195)

1.0.2.2 However, even within the suttas themselves, the term *sāvaka*, came to refer only to those who have actually attained sainthood, that is, are at least streamwinners. Such is the meaning, for example, of the expression, “the community of disciples [listeners]” *sāvaka,sangha*.

Those who keep to the teaching and have awakened to various levels of wisdom and freedom from spiritual ignorance are called noble disciples (*ariya,sāvaka*) or “noble individuals” (*ariya,puggala*)—to use a more common English term, “saints.” They are collectively known as the noble community (*ariya,sangha*), comprising all those who are awakened or on the way to awaken, whether they are monastics or laity.

1.0.3 The 8 kinds of noble individuals

There are 8 kinds of such saints, the “8 individuals” (*aṭṭha purisa,puggala*) or the “4 pairs of persons” (*cattāri purisa,yuga*) [4 (93)]. Each of the 4 kinds of saints are of two kinds, such as the streamwinner: there is the streamwinner of the path (*sotāpanna,magga*, ie, streamwinner-to-be) and the fruition streamwinner (*sotāpanna,phala*, ie, streamwinner-become), and so on.¹¹

⁹ *Sabbe’pi te vacanam suṇantīti sāvakā. Kāmañ ca aññe’pi suṇanti, na pana sutvā kattabba,kiccam karonti, ime pana sutvā kattabam dhammānudhamma-p,paṭipattim katvā magga,phalāni pattā, tasmā sāvakāti vuccanti* (KhP 183 = SnA 1:278).

¹⁰ *Sugatassa sāvakāti sammā,sambuddhassa dhamma,savanante ariyāya jātiyā jātatāya tam dhammam suṇantīti sāvakā* (VvA 195).

¹¹ On the 8 kinds of noble individuals (*aṭṭha ariya,puggala*), see **Aṭṭha Puggala S 2** (A 8.60), SD 15.10a(2).

1.0.4 The path and fruition (*magga,phala*)

1.0.4.1 The term “**path**” (*magga*) [1.0.3] means that he is already walking that path, and as such is on the way “to be” a full-fledged saint, and the **fruition** (*phala*), which means that he has “become” a full-fledged saint of that category.¹² Except for the arhat-become (who has attained the fruition of arhathood), all the other seven saints are known as “learners” (*sekha*), as they still have a few more fetters to break free from [1.0.5.1].

1.0.4.2 It is not difficult to understand the difference between “**path**” and “**fruition**” [1.0.4.1] for the first three kinds of saints—the streamwinners, the once-returners and the non-returners. The “**path streamwinner**,” for example, has reached the path of streamwinning (*sotāpatti,magga*) but not fully realized it yet (that is, not reached the “destination”), while the “**fruition streamwinner**” has fully realized streamwinning itself: he is a full-fledged streamwinner. The same applies to the other two saints.

In the case of the arhat, too, we have two types. First, there is the “**path arhat**,” who has reached the path (*arahatta,magga*)—he has started his “journey” to arhathood—but not reached his destination: he is an arhat-to-be. Then, there is the “**fruition arhat**,” who has reached the goal of arhathood, that is, the fruition of arhathood (*arahatta,phala*): he is a full-fledged arhat.

1.0.4.3 According to the Abhidhamma, the “**supermundane path**” (*lok’uttara magga*) or simply “**path**” (*magga*) is a designation of the moment (*khaṇa*) of attaining one of the 4 stages of sainthood with nirvana as the object. This attainment arises from insight (*vipassanā*) into the impermanence, suffering and non-self-hood of existence, flashing forth and forever transforming the saints’ lives and nature.

By “**fruition**” (*phala*), the Abhidhamma means those moment of consciousness (*citta-k,khaṇa*) which follow *immediately* as a result of the path, and which, in certain circumstances, may repeat for innumerable times during the saint’s life. In other words, when the 5 higher fetters¹³ are overcome, one becomes an arhat of the path. Then, immediately the next moment, the fruition arises—or perhaps, after cycle of repetitive arising of the path-moments. This is an Abhidhamma view, but one that is not found in the suttas—it is difficult to reconcile such a view with, say, the teachings of **the Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 142).

1.0.4.4 That none of the “stages” of sainthood is *momentary* is clear from **the Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 142). In its section of the 14 kinds of “individual gifts” (*pāṭipuggalika dakkhiṇa*) (M 142,5), the Sutta amongst those who are giftworthy, these 8 kinds of noble saints (*aṭṭha ariya,puggala*):¹⁴

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| (1) the arhat and | (2) “one on the way to realize the fruition of arhathood”; ¹⁵ |
| (3) the non-returner and | (4) “one of the way to realize the fruition of non-return”; ¹⁶ |
| (5) the once-returner and | (6) “one on the way to realize the fruition of once-return”; ¹⁷ and |
| (7) the streamwinner and | (8) “one of the way to realize the fruition of streamwinning.” ¹⁸ |

Technically, the odd numbers—(1), (3), (5) and (7)—denote full-fledged saints of fruition (*phala*) in their respective categories, and the even numbers—(2), (4), (6) and (8)—denote “saints of the path” (*magga*) “who have yet to realize fruition”, that is, they are “saints-to-be” in their respective categories.

¹² S 1:220; A 2:56 4:373; Sn 227.

¹³ The 5 higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya sarīyojana*) are (1) lust for form existence, (2) lust for formless existence, (3) conceit, (4) restlessness and (5) ignorance: see **Uddham,bhāgiya S** (S 45.180), SD 50.12.

¹⁴ M 142,5 (10) n (SD 1.9); also SD 2.3 (1.1.3(2)).

¹⁵ *Arahatta,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanne*.

¹⁶ *Anāgāmi,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanne*.

¹⁷ *Sakadāgāmi,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanne*.

¹⁸ *Sotāpatti,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanne*.

The Buddha declares that the great benefits of making a “personal offering” (by way of almsfood, robes, shelter, medicines, or any other allowable offering) to any of these individuals. Common sense tells us that such an act of giving is not possible to be done in a moment, but clearly takes time. This shows that the saints-to-be (those “on the path”)—because they must take time to consume their meals—are not mere mind-moments (as claimed by the Abhidhammikas) but last for a significant duration.¹⁹

1.0.5 Types, not status

1.0.5.1 Often these 4 categories of sainthood are spoken of as “stages” of sainthood, on account of **the mental fetters** (*saṃyojana*) each of the saints overcome.²⁰ Properly speaking, however, they are simply types of saints who, on account of their spiritual development have moved on along the path of awakening, ever closer to nirvana. They are neither “status” nor “stages” in the sense of an hierarchy, but merely allude to how far they have gone on the path to awakening.

1.0.5.2 They may be regarded as stages in the sense that at each successive level, the saint progressively overcomes more and more of the 10 mental fetters [1.0.5.1]; but we need not go through all the “stages” to awaken to liberating wisdom. Indeed, it is sufficient to become a streamwinner (*sotāpanna*); for, in not more than 7 lives, one shall surely have eradicated all the mental fetters and be liberated. Or, we could, of course, under the right conditions, attain non-returning, or even arhathood.

1.0.5.3 Streamwinning is the most basic of the levels of sainthood, and within each of the higher levels are inherent the qualities of the preceding types of sainthood. All the 4 types of saints have caught sight of nirvana. Their main difference is the spiritual distance, so to speak, they still have to cover, that is, how close they actually are to nirvana itself. The arhat is one who has fully attained nirvana, like the Buddha himself.²¹

1.1 THE ARHAT (*arahata*)

1.1.1 The arhat is one who has broken all the 10 mental fetters and whose defilements are all destroyed (*khīṇāsava*); therefore he is an adept (*asekha*), that is, no more a learner (*sekha*). Once an arhat passes away, he is no more reborn but attains final nirvana, free of all suffering. The arhat has done all that needs to be done, and there is nothing more to be done.²² Certainly, there is no more need for becoming a buddha, as wrongly claimed by some later teachings.²³

Although the Buddha and all arhats have the same spiritual liberation, the arhats (and the learners) are known as the Buddha’s followers (*buddhānubuddha*)²⁴ because they arise after the Buddha, the first arhat.

¹⁹ See **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142,3-10) n, SD 1.9. Cf (**Hatthi,gāmaka**) **Ugga S** (A 8.22), where Ugga similarly offers alms to monks who have variously attained some level of sainthood (A 8.22,10), SD 45.15. On the gradual nature of awakening, see SD 49.14 (4).

²⁰ **The 10 fetters** are: (1) Self-identity view (*sakkāya,diṭṭhi*), (2) doubt (*vicikicchā*), (3) attachment to rituals and vows (*sīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*), (4) sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*), (5) repulsion (*paṭigha*), (6) greed for form existence (*rūpa,rāga*), (7) greed for formless existence (*arūpa,rāga*), (8) conceit (*māna*), (9) restlessness (*uddhacca*), (10) ignorance (*avijjā*) (S 5:61, A 10.13/5:17; Vbh 377). In some places, no 5 (*paṭigha*) is replaced by ill will (*vyāpāda*). The first 5 are the lower fetters (*oram,bhāgiya*), and the rest, the higher fetters (*uddham,bhāgiya*).

²¹ See **Sambuddha S** (S 22.58), SD 49.10.

²² See eg **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,56.2/1:203) n, SD 7.14.

²³ See eg **Mahā,nidāna S** (D 15,32), SD 5.17; (**Khandha**) **Silavanta S** (S 22.122) + SD 47.4 (2.3). See also **Arhats who became Bodhisattvas**, SD 27.8b.

²⁴ Tha 679, 1246.

Although the wisdom of an arhat (other than the Buddha) is less than that of the Buddha himself, all the arhats have various types of great spiritual accomplishments.²⁵

1.1.2 The Cūḷa Go,siṅga Sutta (M 31) contains a beautiful passage on the recollection of the noble sangha. After the gradual progress to awakening of the monks Anuruddha, Nandiya, and Kimbila have been detailed, the Sutta goes on to say that if any members of the 4 social classes (nobles, priests, merchants and workers), or the world itself, “were to recall these three sons of family with an inspired heart,” it would be for their good and welfare for a long time.²⁶

1.2 THE NON-RETURNER (*anâgāmi*) (one who does not return to this world) has eliminated the fetters of (4) sensual craving and (5) ill will, thereby fully liberating himself from all the first 5 or “lower” mental fetters (*orambhāgiya samyojana*), thus ensuring his rebirth in the pure abodes (*suddhāvāsa*) of the higher Brahma world (4th dhyana), where the momentum of his spiritual training will lead him to final liberation.

1.3 THE ONCE-RETURNER (*sakadāgāmi*) has not only overcome the first 3 fetters, but by further development on the path, he has removed (4) sensual craving and (5) ill will in their grosser forms, that is, he has attenuated lust, hatred and delusion, and will return to this world only once more before reaching nirvana.

1.4 THE STREAMWINNER (*sotāpanna*, one who has entered the stream leading to nirvana) has broken the first 3 fetters that bind one to cyclic existence (*saṃsāra*), namely: (1) self-identity view, (2) doubts, (3) attachment to rituals and vows. Such a one will take rebirth amongst devas and humans for a maximum of 7 lives, after which he will attain final nirvana. Due to his spiritual attainment, a streamwinner will never break any of the 5 precepts nor be reborn lower than the human realm (A 1:231-235).

All these latter 3 types of saints still remain subject to the 5 higher fetters (*uddhambhāgiya samyojana*): (6) craving for form existence, (7) craving for formless existence, (8) conceit, (9) restlessness, and (10) ignorance. These saints are, however, all endowed with the spiritual faculties of higher moral conduct (*adhisīla*), higher consciousness (*adhicitta*), and higher wisdom (*adhipaññā*) that enable them to progress on the spiritual path without sliding back to the level of the worldling (*puthujjana*). Because they are trained in all the 3 higher trainings (*adhisikkhā*), they are called “**learners**” (*sekha*), that is, they are learning to walk the path of liberation and approaching awakening.²⁷

1.5 THE AṬṬHA, PUGGALA SUTTAS 1 & 2. The 8 noble persons or individuals are defined in **the Aṭṭha, puggala Sutta 1** (A 8.56) and **the Aṭṭha, puggala Sutta 2** (A 8.60)—that is, the 4 pairs of persons (*purisa, yugāni*) in terms of path (*magga*) and fruit (*phala*)—as follows:

²⁵ Buddhaghosa gives a list of 5 kinds of arhats (Vism 710), viz:

(1) those wisdom-freed (*paññā, vimutti*);

(2) those freed both ways (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutti*), ie freed by wisdom and of mind (*ceto, vimutti*), ie he is freed from the physical body (*rūpa, kāyato*) by the formless attainments and from the mental body (*nāma, kāyato*)—ie, from the “mind class” of feeling, perception, mental formations and consciousness—through the path of arhathood. See **Kīṭā, giri S** (70), SD 11.1 5.1 (1) & BDict, qv.

(3) those possessing the threefold knowledge (*te, vijja*), ie of anamnesis or retrocognition (the recollection of past lives), of clairvoyance (“divine eye”), and of the extinction of defilements (D 3:220 275; A 5:211);

(4) those possessing the sixfold superknowledge (*cha-ḷ-abhiññā*), ie psychic powers, clairaudience (“divine ear”), telepathy (mind-reading) and the 3 knowledges mentioned in (3) (D 3:281; A 3:280);

(5) those accomplished in the 4 analytic skills (*paṭisambhidā, patta*) (A 1:24, 3:120; Pm 2:202).

²⁶ M 31, 22.8-12 (SD 44.11).

²⁷ For a psychological expl, see **Udakūpama S** (A 7.15), SD 28.6 (1.2.4.2-1.2.7).

SD 15.10a(1.5)**Aṭṭha Puggala Sutta 2****Dutiya Aṭṭha Puggala Sutta** The Second Discourse on the 8 Individuals | **A 8.60/4:292 f**

Theme: The 8 kind of noble individuals

Traditional: A 8.2.1.10 = Aṅguttara Nikāya 8, Navaka Nipāta 2, Dutiya Paṇṇāsaka 1, Gotamī Vagga 10

- 1 Bhikshus, there are these 8 individuals who are
 worthy of offerings,
 worthy of hospitality,
 worthy of gifts,
 worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,
 a supreme field of merit for the world.

āhuneyyā
pāhuṇeyyā
dakkhiṇeyyā
añjalī,karaṇiyā
anuttaram puñña-k,khettam lokassa

What are the eight?

- 2 They are

- (1) the streamwinner,
 (2) the one practising for the realization
 of the fruit of streamwinning,
 (3) the once-returner,
 (4) the one practising for the realization
 of the fruit of once-returning,
 (5) the non-returner,
 (6) the one practising for the realization
 of the fruit of non-returning,
 (7) the arhat,
 (8) the one practising for the realization of
 arhathood.

sotāpanno
sotāpatti,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanno
sakadāgāmī
sakadāgāmi,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanno
anāgāmī
anāgāmi,phala,sacchikiriyāya paṭipanno
arahā
arahattāya paṭipanno

- 3 These, bhikshus, are the 8 individuals who are
 worthy of offerings,
 worthy of hospitality,
 worthy of gifts,
 worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,
 a supreme field of merit for the world.

- 4 *Cattāro ca paṭipañṇā*
cattāro ca phale ṭhitā
esa saṅgho samukkaṭṭho
sattānam aṭṭha,puggalā

The 4 who are practising the way
 and the 4 standing in the fruits:
 this sangha is exalted,²⁸
 the 8 persons amongst beings.²⁹

- 5 *Yajamānānam manussānam*
puññapekkhāna pāṇinam
karotam opadhikam puññam
ettha dinnam maha-p,phalan'ti

For people making offerings [sacrifices],
 those living beings seeking merit,
 making material [worldly] gifts for merit,
 giving to the sangha is of great fruit.³⁰

— evam —

²⁸ Only this and the next lines differ from the verses in **Attha,puggala S 1** (A 8.59) [below].

²⁹ For details on these 8 noble individuals or saints, see SD 10.16 (11).

³⁰ *Cattāro ca paṭipannā cattāro ca phale ṭhitā | esa saṅgho uju,bhūto puñña,sīla,samāhito | yajamānānam manussānam puñña,pekkhāna,pāṇinam | karotam opadhikam puññam saṅghe dinnam maha-p,phalan ti*. This verse is very similar to the 2 verses spoken by Sakra to the Buddha in **Yajamāna S** (S 1.11,2.5/1:233).

1.6 THE CŪḶA GO,SIṄGA SUTTA (M 31) is an example of a Sutta where the Buddha definitively speaks of the members of the noble sangha as being worthy of meditative recollection. The Sutta recounts how the Buddha visits the monks Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila in Go,siṅga (cow-horn) sal forest-grove, where they are in silent retreat. The Buddha questions them on their personal and spiritual progress, and they all declare that they are living and practising together in joyful and friendly harmony, and have all attained arhathood.

The yaksha Dīgha Parajana exulted in the monks' attainments. The gods, too—from the earth-bound deities up to the brahma gods—rejoice. The Buddha then declares that it would benefit the family from which such monks had gone forth **“were to recall with an inspired heart these three sons of family, it would be for the good and welfare of that family for a long time.”** Similarly, too, if the family generation, the village, the market-town, the city, or the country from which such monks come, should reflect on their spiritual virtues, it would be for their lasting good and welfare.³¹

The same benefits would accrue on to the members of the social classes (kshatriyas, brahmins, vaishyas, shudras) and the world itself (along with its gods) should recollect the virtue of such monks, it would be for their lasting good and welfare.³² At the close of the Sutta, the Buddha praises these monks as examples of those who have “practised for the good of the many, for the happiness of the many, out of compassion for the world, for the benefit, the good and the happiness of the gods and humans.”³³

2 Streamwinning and refuge-going.

2.1 In numerous discourses, the listener, having understood the Buddha's teaching and inspired with faith, then turns to seek refuge in the 3 jewels. The stock formula for refuge-going runs thus:

Excellent, master Gotama! Excellent, master Gotama! Just as if, master Gotama,
 one were to place upright what had been overturned,
 or were to reveal what was hidden,
 or were to show the way to one who was lost,
 or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms,
 in the same way, in numerous ways, the Dharma has been made clear by the master Gotama.

I go to the master Gotama for refuge, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May the master Gotama remember me as a layman who has gone for refuge from this day forth for life. (Sn p15,18-23)³⁴

³¹ M 31,22.2-7/1:210 (SD 44.11).

³² M 31,22.8-12/1:211 (SD 44.11).

³³ M 31,22.12/1:211 (SD 44.11). This is a brief form of the “great commission” pericope, orig given by the Buddha to first 60 arhats and, by default, to all saints and to the Buddhist community as a whole, to propagate the Dharma (Mv 11.1 @ V 1:21), SD 11.2(11); (**Māra**) **Pāsa S 2** (S 4.5/1:105 f; Mvst 3:415 f).

³⁴ *Abhikkantaṃ bho Gotama abhikkantaṃ bho Gotama. Seyyathā pi bho Gotama nikkujjitaṃ vā ukkujjeyya paṭicchannaṃ vā vivareyya mūlhasa vā maggaṃ ācikkheyya andhakāre vā tela, pajjotaṃ dhāreyya, cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhinti ti, evam eva bhotā Gotamena aneka, pariyāyena dhammo pakāsito. Esāhaṃ bhavantaṃ Gotama saraṇaṃ gacchāmi dhammaṃ ca bhikkhu, saṅghaṃ ca. Upāsakaṃ maṃ bhagavā dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇ'upetaṃ saraṇaṃ gataṃ.* (**D** 1:85, 202, **2**:133, **3**:193; **M** 1:368, 371, 379 x3, 391, **2**:97; **S** 4:306, 332, 325, 340); with *bhavaṃ Gotamo* as witness (**V** 3:6; **D** 1:110, 125, 147, 234; **M** 1:24, 184, 205, 489, 501, **2**:44, 145, 157, 177, 184, 208, 213; **3**:7, 206; **S** 1:-174, 175, 177, 178, 179, 180, 182 x2, 183, **2**:23, 75, 184, **4**:113, 231, **5**:12, 75, 126, 174; **A** 1:56, 57, 62, 157, 158, 159, 160, 166, 168, 173, **2**:201, 176, **3**:230, 236, 364, 408, **4**:45, 56, 179, **5**:236, 251, 273, 303; **Sn** 25); with *bhante bhagavā* as witness (**S** 1:70; **A** 2:113, 183, 200, **3**:357, 358, **4**:185, 186, **5**:268); with *bhagavā* as witness (**V** 1:16, 37, 226, 236 x2, 237, 143, **2**:157, 193; **A** 4:185; **U** 49); with *bhavaṃ Ānando* as witness (**D** 1:210; **S** 5:273); with *ayyo Ānando* as witness (**A** 1:219); with *bhavaṃ Kassapo* as witness (**D** 2:352; **S** 4:121); with *bhavaṃ Kaccāno* as witness (**M** 2:90

2.2 The opening paragraph reflects the speaker’s understanding of what he has heard of the Buddha’s teaching, and is inspired by it. This might be said to be his “joyful knowledge of the Dharma” (*dhamma,veda*).³⁵ The closing paragraph is his profession of faith in the 3 jewels—in fact, of naturally becoming a part of them, that is, of the arya-sangha or holy community of noble saints. His faith in the true teaching is shown by his going for refuge “from this day forth for life,” showing his faith, even that he is at least a streamwinner.³⁶ Such a refuge-going marks the beginning of the pilgrim’s progress along the spiritual path by way of “joyful knowledge of the true goal” (*attha,veda*).

2.3 This stock passage containing the 4 parables of Dharma teaching always follows the exclamation of “It is wonderful! It is marvellous!” The Commentaries explain the meaning of **the 4 parables** as follows:

(1) “Just as if one were to set upright what is overturned”—when one turns away from the true Dharma and has fallen into a false Dharma, the Blessed One helps one to free oneself from that false Dharma.

(2) “Just as if one were to reveal what is hidden away”—the Blessed One has revealed the teaching, which has been hidden by the jungle of wrong views from the time when the teaching of the Buddha Kassapa disappeared.

(3) “Just as if one were to point out the right path to the lost”—when one is travelling on a wrong path, the Blessed One pointed out to one the path to heaven and to liberation.

(4) “Just as if one were to bring a lamp into a dark place”—when one is drowned in the darkness of delusion and cannot see the gem-like forms of the Buddha and the other two jewels, the Blessed One brings one the Dharma Lamp that dispels the darkness of delusion concealing those jewels.

Because the Dharma has been revealed in these ways by the Blessed One, it is said that “the Dharma has been shown by the Blessed One in diverse ways.”

(DA 1:228 f, AA 2:106 f, SnA 155 f, UA 286 f)

This stock passage usually describes the arising of the “dustless, stainless Dharma-eye” (*virajam vītamalam dhamma,cakkhum*),³⁷ the means by which we see the true nature of impermanence. It signals the attainment of one or other of the three lower supramundane paths, that is, streamwinning, once-returning, or non-returning (DA 237), most often the first of these.³⁸

3 A missing verse?

3.1 In the study on **the Dhajagga Sutta** (S 11.3),³⁹ we noted that the Sanghānussati has a noticeable hiatus after the line *sāmīci,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho*, which abruptly goes on with *yad idam cattāri purisa,yugāni atṭha purisa,puggalā*, where, as a rule, *yad idam* would refer back to a previous statement which it expands. This preceding passage (in **bold italics** below), apparently missing from the Saṅghānuss-

x2; S 1:67, 68); with *bhavam Udeno* as witness (M 2:162, 163); with *bhava Piṅgiyānī* as witness (A 3:239). For a pl version (ie taking refuge as a group), see **Venāga,pura S** (A 3.63.7b/1:184), SD 21.1.

³⁵ On *attha,veda* (foll para) & *dhamma,veda*, see **(Agata,phala) Mahānāma S** (A 6.10/3:284-288), SD 15.3 (3).

³⁶ It is however possible that this stock passage could have been used in cases where the postulant is only moved by the Buddha’s teaching but is still not yet a saint. However, as a rule this stock passage points to one’s attaining of streamwinning. It would be very curious that such a passage is reflective of merely an intellectual or social exercise in merely applauding a teaching given.

³⁷ V 1:11, 16, 40; D 1:86, 110, 2:288; S 4:47; A 4: 186; U 50.

³⁸ Eg DA 278, AA 4:102, cf AA 2:356 ad A 1:242.

³⁹ S 11.3.15 @ SD 15.5 (2). For a more detailed study, see **Brahma,vihāra S** (A 10.208/5:299), SD 2.10.

Saṅghānussmṛti

suprapatipanno bhagavataḥ śrāvaka,saṅghaḥ
nyāya,pratipannaḥ
rju,dr̥ṣṭi,pratipannaḥ
dharmānudharma,pratipannaḥ anudharma,cārī |

⁴²santi saṅghe *srotāpatti,phala*,sākṣātkriyāyai
pratipannakāḥ

santi saṅghe *srotāpannāḥ*

santi saṅghe *sakṛdāgāmi,phala*,sākṣātkriyāyai
pratipannakāḥ

santi saṅghe *sakṛdāgāmināḥ*

santi saṅghe *anāgāmi,phala*,sākṣātkriyāyai
pratipannakāḥ

santi saṅghe *anāgāmināḥ*

santi saṅghe *arhat,phala*,sākṣātkriyāyai
pratipannakāḥ

santi saṅghe *arhatāḥ* |

yad uta catvāri puruṣa,yugāni
aṣṭu puruṣa,pudgalaḥ

⁴⁴eṣa bhagavataḥ śrāvaka,saṅghaḥ
śīla,sampannaḥ samādhi,sampannaḥ
śraddhā,sampannaḥ śruta,sampannaḥ
vimkutaḥ,sampannaḥ vimukti,jñāna,-
darśana.sampannaḥ |

⁴⁵āhavanīyaḥ

prāhavanīyaḥ

añjali,karaṇīyaḥ

samīci,karaṇīyaḥ

anuttaraṃ puṇya,kṣetraṃ dakṣiṇīyo lokasya |

Saṅghānussati

supaṭipanno⁴⁰ bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
uju,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
ñāya,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho
sāmīci,paṭipanno⁴¹ bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho

[*sotāpanno*
sotāpatti,phala,sacchikiriya paṭipanno

sakadāgāmī
sakadāgāmi,phala,sacchikiriya paṭipanno

anāgāmī
anāgāmi,phala,sacchikiriya paṭipanno

arahā
arahattāya paṭipanno |]

yad idaṃ cattāri purisa,yugāni
aṭṭha purisa,puggalā
esa bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho

āhuneyyo

pāhuneyyo

dakkhiṇeyyo

añjali,karaṇīyo

anuttaraṃ puñña-k,khettaṃ lokassā ti |

Recollection of the sangha (Pali version)

The Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the good way [moral virtue];
... keeps to the straight way [concentration];
... keeps to the true way [the eightfold path];
... keeps to the proper way [attainment of the path]. (S 1:220,7) [15]

[There is the streamwinner;
the one on the path to realizing the fruit of streamwinning.

There is the once-returner;
the one on the path to realizing the fruit of once-returning.

There is the non-returner;
the one on the path to realizing the fruit of non-returning.

There is the arhat [the worthy saint];
the one on the path to realizing arhathood.]

(A 4:292,12 = D 3:255)⁴³

These are 4 pairs of persons,
the 8 individuals: | (S 1:220,11) [15]

The Blessed One's community of disciples is
accomplished in moral virtue, in concentration,
in faith, in learning,
in the knowledge and vision of liberation;*

[*This italicized passage is from the Sanskrit.]

worthy of offerings,
worthy of hospitality,
worthy of gifts,
worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,
a supreme field of merit for the world.

(S 1:220,12) [15]

⁴⁰ Ee Se *supaṭipanno*; Be Nāl Se *suppaṭipanno* throughout para.

⁴¹ *Sāmīci* is found in line 22 of the Skt Saṅghānussmṛti.

⁴² Artha,viniścaya Sūtra 46,3.

⁴³ This parallel, missing from Buddhānussati stock passage, is from **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,3.1(3)/3:255) & **Aṭṭha,puggala S 1** (A 8.59/4:292,12; A:Be [III] 115,26; A:Nāl 383,12; A:Se 23:301,6: no vii except that the *vagga* is called *Sandhāna*- in Se and *Gotamī*- in Be and Nāl. See **Aṭṭha,puggala S 1** (A 8.59), SD 15.10a.

⁴⁴ Artha,viniścaya Sūtra 47,6.

⁴⁵ Artha,viniścaya Sūtra 47,7.

sati verse, is found in **the Aṭṭha,puggala Sutta 1** (A 8.59).⁴⁶ This missing passage, however, is found in the Sanskrit version of the Saṅghānusmṛti of **the Dhvajāgra Sūtra**,⁴⁷ as shown in **Table 3** below.

3.2 As noted, the missing passage is found in **the Aṭṭha,puggala Sutta 1** (A 8.59) and **the Saṅgīti Sutta** (D 33). It fits nicely into the middle of the Saṅghānusatti verse, giving a good flow of ideas. However, there is no need to revise the current version of the Saṅghānusatti verse, as we as yet do not know the real reason/s for its absence (if there is any reason at all). Nevertheless, most reciters or meditators when they reach this point in the verse, knowing to whom this passage refers, would mentally fill in the 8 types of saints.

4 Buddhaghosa's commentary

Buddhaghosa, in his magnum opus, **the Visuddhi,magga**, explains the 9 qualities or virtues (*guna*) of noble sangha.

Saṅghānusatti

The Recollection of the Saṅgha

based on Vism 7.89-100/218-221

89 One who wishes to cultivate the recollection of the sangha should go into solitary retreat [spend personal quiet time] and recollect the virtues [qualities] of the sangha, thus:⁴⁸

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>(1) <i>supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i></p> <p>(2) <i>uju,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i></p> <p>(3) <i>ñāya,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i></p> <p>(4) <i>sāmīci,paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i>⁴⁹</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;"><i>yad idaṃ cattāri purisa,yugāni</i>
<i>aṭṭha,purisa,puggalā</i>
<i>esa bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho</i></p> <p>(5) <i>āhuneyyo</i></p> | <p>The Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised]; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the straight way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the true way; the Blessed One's community of disciples keeps to the proper way.⁵⁰ These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals, this Blessed One's community of disciples is worthy of offerings,⁵¹</p> |
|---|---|

⁴⁶ See n ad loc.

⁴⁷ This Skt passage is found in Skilling, *Mahāsūtras*, 1994 1:269-275.

⁴⁸ This verse occurs in the canon at **D** 2:94, 3:5, 227; **M** 1:37, 446, 447, 3:137, 220; **S** 2:704:272, 279, 304, 5:343 **A** 1:208, 222, 244, 245, 246, 2:34, 56, 171, 3:36, 134×3, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 212, 248×2, 279×2, 282, 286, 387, 390, 4:13, 14, 117, 146, 290, 407, 5:67×2, 183, 198, 201, 330; **It** 88; **Kvu** 549×2, 551, 553.

⁴⁹ On the recluse's proper way of training (*samaṇa,sāmīci-p,paṭipadā*), see **Cūḷa Assa,pura S** (M 40/1:281-284), SD 41.8.

⁵⁰ There seems to be an abrupt break here, with the mention of "These four pairs of persons..." which seems to refer back to some missing passage, which evidently is found in the Skt version: see (3): Saṅghānusmṛti & **Aṭṭha,-puggala S 1** (A 4:292 = D 33,3.1(3)/3:255).

⁵¹ *Āhuneyyo*. That is, worthy of receiving sacrifices or offerings. The Skt cognate *āhavanīya* refers to that which was offered as an oblation as in *āhuneyy'aggī*, one of the 3 brahminical sacrificial fires (the one in the east).

(6) <i>pāhuneyyo</i>	worthy of hospitality, ⁵²
(7) <i>dakkhiṇeyyo</i>	worthy of gifts, ⁵³
(8) <i>añjali,karaṇīyo</i>	worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,
(9) <i>anuttaram puñña-k,khettam lokassā ti</i>	a supreme field of merit for the world. (M 7,7/1:37; A 6.10,4/3:286)

[*Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho*, “The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way.”]

90 Therein, “keeps to the good way” (*supaṭipanna*) means “well entered on the way” (*suṭṭhu paṭipanna*). What is meant is that he has entered on a way (*paṭipanna*), that is the right way (*sammā paṭipadā*), the way that is irreversible, the way that conforms (with reality), the way that is free from hostility, the way that is in keeping with the Dharma.

They listen (*suṇanti*) attentively the Blessed One’s instruction, thus they are “listeners” [disciples] (*sāvaka*).

The community of disciples is the sangha of those listeners. The meaning is that the totality of disciples forms a discipleship (*sāvaka,samūha*) because it comprises those compatible both in moral virtue and in right view. [219]

That right way, being straight (*uju*) [99.2], not bent, not crooked, not twisted, is called noble (*ariya*) and true (*ñāya*) and, on account of its being fitting, is known as proper [right] (*sāmīci*). Therefore, the noble community that has entered on that way, it is said, also *keeps to the straight way, keeps to the true way, and keeps to the proper way.*⁵⁴

91 Furthermore, the sangha *keeps to the good way* because it has entered on the way in keeping with what is instructed in the well-proclaimed Dharma and Vinaya, and because it has entered on the undisputed [clear] way (*apaṇṇaka,paṭipada*).

It *keeps to the straight way* because it has entered on the way that avoids the two extremes⁵⁵ and takes the middle way,⁵⁶ and because it has entered on the way of the abandonment of the ways of body, speech and mind that are bent, crooked and twisted.

It *keeps to the proper way* because it has entered on the way of those who are worthy of proper acts (of veneration, etc). ...

93 *Yad idam*, “these (that have been previously mentioned).” The 4 pairs of persons (*cattāri purisa,yugāni*): Taking them in pairs, the one who stands in the first path and the one who stands in the first fruition as one pair; in this way, there are 4 pairs.

The 8 individuals (*aṭṭha,purisa,puggalā*): Taking them individually, the one who stands in the first path as one and the one who stands in the first fruition as one; in this way, there are eight individuals.

And here in the compound *purisa,puggala* (persons), the words *purisa* and *puggala* have the same meaning, but it is expressed in this way to suit differing individuality in terms of the teaching.⁵⁷

⁵² *Pāhuneyyo*: see **Love**, SD 38.4 (6.2).

⁵³ *Dakkhiṇeyyo*. Traditionally refers to honoraria or gifts to teachers after completion of tutelage under them. Specifically refers to offerings made for the benefit of the departed by way of dedication of merits to them.

⁵⁴ On the recluse’s proper way of training (*samaṇa,sāmīci-p,paṭipadā*), see **Cūḷa Assa,pura S** (M 40/1:281-284), SD 41.8.

⁵⁵ That is, sensual indulgence (annihilationism) and of self-torture (eternalism): see foll n.

⁵⁶ See **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11,2-3/5:420), SD 1.1 (3).

⁵⁷ ItA adds: In this connection, *purisa* or *puggala* are terms with the same meaning, but this is said by way of their ability (or need) to be guided (*veneyya*) (ItA 2:208).

This Blessed One's community of disciples (*esa bhagavato sāvaka,saṅgho*): This community of the Blessed One's disciples taken in pairs as the 4 pairs of persons (*purisa*), and individually as the 8 persons (*purisa,puggala*).⁵⁸

94 Āhuneyyo, “worthy of offerings.” A gift [sacrifice] (*āhuna*) is what one brings that is fit for offering [sacrificing], meaning, what is brought from afar and worthy of being given to the morally virtuous. It is a name for the four requisites.⁵⁹ The sangha is worthy of receiving the gift [sacrifice] because it makes it bear great fruit, thus it is “worthy of offerings” (*āhuneyya*).

[NOTE] The Sanskrit cognate *āhavanīya* refers to that which is offered as an oblation as in *āhuneyy-aggī*, one of the three brahminical sacrificial fires (the one in the east).

95 Or, alternatively, all kinds of wealth [property] that one has brought from afar, that is worthy of being given (*hunitabba*) here, is what should be offered to (*āhavanīya*). Or, what is worthy of being offered by the Sakyas and others, is what should be offered.

And to the brahmins, fire is said to be what is worth making offerings to (*āhavanīya*); for they hold the belief that what is offered [sacrificed] to it brings great fruit. [220] But if a sacrifice were offered for the sake of its great fruit, then the sangha should be sacrificed to. For great is the fruit of what is sacrificed [offered] to the sangha. Thus, it is said:

Even if for a hundred years, one were tend the fire in the forest,
If one were to honour those of cultivated minds for even a moment,
That homage is far better than that hundred years of sacrifice. (Dh 107)

And the word *āhavanīya* (“that which should be offered to”), which is used in the sects (*nikāya*),⁶⁰ is the same in meaning as this word *ahuneyya* (“worthy of offerings”). The difference is merely in the syllables. Thus it is “worthy of offerings.”

96 Pāhuneyyo, “worthy of hospitality.” Giving made to visitors from all the quarters is called “hospitality” (*pāhuna*),⁶¹ prepared with respect for the sake of beloved and dear relatives and friends. The term *pahuna* also refers to the “meal for a guest.”⁶²

But even more than being hospitable to such objects of hospitality, it is fitting (*yutta*) to give to the sangha, too. For, there is no object of hospitality so worthy of it as the sangha, since it is encountered in a Buddha-period, and wholly endowed with lovable and endearing qualities.

So it is “worthy of hospitality” since the hospitality is fit to be given to it, and it is fit to receive it.

But those who take the text as *pāhavanīya* (“worthy to be shown hospitality”) hold that the sangha is worthy to be placed first, and so what is to be given should first of all be brought here and given (*sabba,paṭhamam ānetvā ettha hunitabbam*), and for that reason it is “worthy to be shown hospitality” (*pāhavanīya*), or since it is worthy of offerings in all respects (*sabba,pakārena āhāvanam arahati*); thus it is “worthy to be shown hospitality” (*pāhavanīya*). Here this is called *pāhuneyya* in just the same sense.

⁵⁸ On *purisa,puggala*, further see SD 29.6b (5.3); SD 52.3 (1.3.3.2).

⁵⁹ *Catu,paccaya*, ie almsfood or food, robes or clothing, lodging and shelter, and medicine and medical support (V 1:58).

⁶⁰ “In the Sarvāstivāda and so on,” VismṬ 230.

⁶¹ D 1:97 = M 2:154; Vism 230; DA 1:267. Skt *prāhavana*, “meal for a guest”; from Skt *prāhuna* or *prāghūna*, “guest”; cf *prāhavanīya*, “worthy of being received as a guest.” Cf *āhuna,pāhuna* (“sacrifice and offering”), VvA 155.

⁶² D 1:97 = M 2:154; Vism 230; DA 1:267.

97 *Dakkhiṇeyyo*, “worthy of gifts.” What is given out of faith in the world to come is called a “gift” (*dakkhiṇa*). The sangha is worthy of that gift, or it is helpful to that giving because it purifies it, making it of great fruit; thus it is “worthy of gifts” (*dakkhiṇeyya*).

[NOTES]

(1) *Dakkhiṇā* specifically refers to offerings made for the benefit of the departed by way of dedication of merits to them (Kh 7).⁶³

(2) *Dakkhiṇā* is a teacher’s honorarium (VvA 229 f).

(3) *Dakkhiṇa* (cp Lat dexter) means the “right” hand. Hence, one keeps one right side to the object of respect when saluting or taking leave, as in the phrase, *padakkhiṇam karoti*.⁶⁴ In the Orient, it is also the hand with which one offers things.

98 *Anuttaram puñña-kkhettaṃ lokassa*, “a supreme field of merit for the world”: an incomparable place in all the world for growing merit. Just as the place for growing the king’s or a courtier’s rice or corn is the king’s rice-field or the king’s corn-field, so the sangha is the place for growing all the world’s merit.

For the various kinds of merit bringing welfare and happiness for the world grow depending on the sangha.

Therefore, the sangha is “a supreme field of merit for the world.”

98.2 *Añjali,karaṇīyo*, “worthy of salutation with the lotus palms.” It is worthy of being given by the whole world the lotus-palm salutation (*añjali,kamma*) by placing both hands (palms together) above the head. Thus, it is “worthy of salutation with the lotus palms.”

99 When one recollects the virtues of the sangha in this way, by way of “the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way” and so on, [221] then

... his mind is not obsessed by lust, not obsessed by hate, not obsessed by delusion. At that time, his mind is straight, inspired by the sangha.

(Agata,phala) Mahānāma Sutta (A 6.10,4/3:286), SD 15.3

5 The meaning of *khetta*

5.1 KINDS OF FIELDS

The 9th and last virtue of the sangha in the Saṅghānussati verse is that it is “a supreme field of merit for the world.” The world “field” (*khetta*) is, of course, used in a figurative sense, invoking fertility and plenty, that is, the efficacious spiritual benefits of supporting the noble disciples as a community or individually. The image of a field is understandable as agriculture was a key economy of the central Gangetic plain during the Buddha’s time.

The Pali word *khetta* (Vedic *kṣetra*; cf *ḥṣiti*, dwelling-place, the earth) literally means a field, a plot of land, arable land, a site.⁶⁵ It is used as a mark of wealth or possession in the definition of a kshatriya (*khattiya*; Skt *kṣatriya*), “the lord of the fields” (D 3:93). In the same way, it is connected with *vatthu*, that is, *khetta,vatthu* (field and goods) to denote objects of trade.⁶⁶

⁶³ Kh 7.12/6 (SD 2.7).

⁶⁴ V 1:17; S 1:138; A 1:294, 2:21, 182, 3:198; Sn 1010; J 1:50, 60, 3:392.

⁶⁵ D 1:231; S 1:134, 4:315 (3 kinds); A 1:229 = 239 4:237; Sn 524; J 1:153; Pv 2:9.68 = DhA 3:220; DhA 1:98; PvA 62; Miln 47.

The **Mahā Niddesa** (Nm 248) explains *khetta* as consisting of 7 kinds of grain (*satta dhaññāni*), namely, (high-grade) winter rice (*sāli*),⁶⁷ monsoon rice (*vīhi*), kidney-beans (*mugga*), beans (*māsa*), barley (*yava*), wheat (*godhūma*) and sesame (*tila*), which form the “first” (natural) grains (*pubb’aññāni*),⁶⁸ as distinguished from *apar’aññāni*, that is, prepared items of the seven mentioned.⁶⁹ The Mahā Niddesa glosses *vatthu* (goods) as those of the household (*ghara*), of the granary (*koṭṭhaka*), of the earlier time (*pure*), of later time (*pacchā*), of the monastery (*ārāma*), and of the monastic residence (*vihāra*) (Nm 248).⁷⁰

5.2 BUDDHA-FIELDS

The **Visuddhi,magga** mentions 3 kinds of Buddha-fields (Vism 13:31):

- (1) the field of birth (*jāti,khetta*), which covers the 10,000 world-systems that quake when the Buddha is born, awakens, passes away, etc.
- (2) the field of authority or efficacy (*āṇā,khetta*), which covers the 100,000 world-systems where the parittas⁷¹ are efficacious, that is, the Ratana Sutta (Sn no 13), the Khandha Paritta (Vin 2:109; A 2:72), the Dhajagga Paritta (S 1:218), the Āṭānāṭiya Paritta (D 3:194) and the Mora Paritta (J 2:33).
- (3) the field of range (*visaya,khetta*; also: sphere, vision) is boundless depending on the Buddha's wish (A 1:228).

When the physical universe is destroyed during the collapsing cycle, the first two fields are affected. When the universe re-evolves, they reappear at the same time.⁷²

Based on this idea of the range (*visaya*) and the field (*khetta*) of the Buddha, there later evolved in the Mahāyāna, the doctrine of Buddha-fields (*Buddha,kṣetra*), for example, in the Saddharma,puṇḍarīka Sūtra (p210), the Large Sukhāvātī,vyūha, the Smaller Sukhāvātī,vyūha, and the Suvarṇābhasottama Sūtra.⁷³

5.3 FIELDS OF MERIT

As mentioned earlier [5.1], *khetta* is used in the Saṅghānussati verse in a figurative sense. Figuratively, the term *khetta* means the soil of merit, the deposit of good deeds, which like a fertile field, bears fruit to the advantage of the giver of gifts or doer of good (Vism 220).⁷⁴ The Vimāna Vatthu Commentary mentions the 3 accomplishments (*sampatti*) of merit-making as:⁷⁵

⁶⁶ D 1:5, 3:164; S 2:41 5:473 = A 2:209;A 5:137; Sn 769;DA 1:78 = MA 2:210 = AA ad A 2:209; Pug 58; PvA 3.

⁶⁷ Rice as *vīhi* (Skt *vīhi*) (*Oryza sativa*), or broadcast rice, had its origins in India around 3000 BCE and was certainly known to later Vedic people. It was a rainy season crop ripening in autumn but whose yield was limited. This form of rice when cooked is called *odana* (ts), ie boiled rice. The change came when the people learned and used the art of paddy transplantation or wet paddy production, which was grown as a winter crop. This better quality rice was known as *sāli* (Skt *śāli*) (R S Sharma, *Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India*, 1983:96, 161f). This is the surplus that created the institutions of kings (Collins, “The Discourse on What is Primary (*Aggañña Sutta*),” 1993:309). For other socioeconomic factors of the Ganges Plain during the Buddha’s time, see **Mahā,pari-nibbāna S** (D 16), SD 9 (7).

⁶⁸ V 3:151 4:267; Nc 314; J 2:185; Miln 106; DA 1:78, 270; DhA 4:81.

⁶⁹ V 3:50, 4:48, 265, 267; cf V:H 1:83.4.

⁷⁰ Cf Sn 858, Dhs 597, Vbh 71 f.

⁷¹ See **Dhajagga S** (S 11.3), SD 15.6 (1).

⁷² Cf MA 4:114.

⁷³ See Ency Bsm: Buddhakṣetra.

⁷⁴ Cf *khetta,jina*, “field-conqueror,” Sn 523, 524.

⁷⁵ See also **Cāgānussati**, SD 15.12.

- (1) accomplishment of the field (*khetta,sampatti*), that is, the worthy recipient of the gift (the noble sangha, the Buddha, awakened disciples, etc);
- (2) accomplishment of mind (*citta,sampatti*), that is, purity of intention; and
- (3) accomplishment of means (*payoga,sampatti*), that is, the purity of the procuring the gift. (VvA 102)

6 Benefits of practising the recollection of the sangha

99.2 So when he has suppressed the mental hindrances, by preventing obsession (*pariyuṭṭhāna*) due to greed, etc, and his mind is straight (*uju*) before the meditation subject, then his initial application and sustained application occur with an inclination towards the sangha’s virtues.

As he continues to exercise initial application and sustained application on the sangha’s virtues, zest (*pīti*) arises in him. With a zestful mind, with the zest as a basis [proximate cause], his bodily and mental disturbances gain tranquillity (*passaddhi*). When the disturbances have been tranquillized, bodily and mental joy (*sukha*) arise in him. Being joyful, his mind, taking the sangha’s virtues as objects, becomes concentrated (*samādhīyati*), so that the dhyana-factors eventually arise in a single thought-moment.

But due to the depth of the sangha’s qualities, or else due to his being occupied in recollecting qualities of many kinds, he only reaches access concentration,⁷⁶ not full concentration (*appanā*), that is, dhyana. That (access concentration) is itself regarded as the recollection of the Dharma, because it has arisen by virtue of the recollecting of the sangha’s qualities.

100 [BENEFITS] When a monk is devoted to this recollection of the sangha, he is respectful and deferential to the sangha. He attains great faith, great mindfulness, great wisdom and great merit. He has much zest and gladness. He conquers fear and dread. He is able to withstand pain. He comes to feel that he is living in the presence of the sangha.

And his body, while occupied with the recollection of the sangha’s virtues, is worthy of veneration as an uposatha-hall (*uposatha,ghara*). His mind tends towards the attainment of the sangha’s virtues.

When he is confronted by an opportunity for transgression, due to his clear recollection of the sangha’s good qualities, moral shame and moral fear⁷⁷ as though he were before the sangha itself.

If he penetrates no higher, he would at least cross over to a happy destiny.

Therefore, one who is truly wise would surely cultivate heedfulness,

In this way, one always has great power (*anubhāva*) through recollection of the sangha.

(Vism 7.99-100/220 f)

⁷⁶ “Access concentration” (*upacāra*). In meditation, an entirely clear and immovable image (*nimitta*) arising at a high degree of concentration is called **counter-image** (*paṭibhāga,nimitta*). As soon as this image arises, the stage of neighbourhood (or access) concentration (*upacāra,samādhi*) is reached. For details, see SD 13.1 (3.1.4) (7); also see BDict: *kaṣiṇa,samādhi*.

⁷⁷ Moral shame (*hiri*) 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. 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). For detailed n, see **Abhabba S** (A 10.76,20/5:146), SD 2.4 n. See **Hiri Ottappa S** (A 2.9/1:50), SD 2.5(2c).

7 The 80 great elders

7.1 The Commentaries often refer to “the 80 great elders” (*asīti mahā,thera*)⁷⁸ without listing who they are. A full list, however, is given in **the Thera,gātha Commentary**, which mentions the 80 great elders (ThaA 3:205 f), according to their monastic seniority (excluding the 1st 60 arhats), as follows:

- | | | |
|-------|--|--|
| 1-5 | (The 5 monks) Aññāsi Koṇḍañña, Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahānāma, Assaji, | } The 1st 60 arhats
[7.2] |
| 6 | Nālaka | |
| 7-11 | (Yasa and his four friends) Yasa, Vimala, Subāhu, Puṇṇaji, Gavampati | |
| 12-14 | (The Kassapa brothers) Uruvela Kassapa, Nadī Kassapa, Gayā Kassapa | |
| 15-16 | Sāriputtā, Mahā Moggallāna | |
| 17 | Mahā Kassapa | |
| 18 | Mahā Kaccāyana | |
| 19 | Mahā Koṭṭhika | |
| 20 | Mahā Kappina | |
| 21 | Mahā Cunda | |
| 22 | Anuruddha | |
| 23 | Kaṅkhā,revata | |
| 24 | Ānanda | |
| 25-29 | Nandaka, Bhagu, Nanda, Kimila, Bhaddiya | |
| 30 | Rāhula | |
| 31 | Sīvali | |
| 32 | Upāli | |
| 33 | Dabba Malla,putta | |
| 34 | Upasena | |
| 35 | Khadira,vaniya Revata | |
| 36 | Puṇṇa Mantāṇi,putta | |
| 37 | Puṇṇa Sunāparantaka | |
| 38 | Soṇa Kuṭi,kaṇṇa | |
| 39 | Soṇā Koḷivīsa | |
| 40 | Rādha | |
| 41 | Subhūti | |
| 42 | Aṅgulimāla | |
| 43 | Vakkali | |
| 44 | Kāl’udāyī | |
| 45 | Mahā Udāyī | |
| 46 | Pilinda,vaccha | |
| 47 | Sobhita | |
| 48 | Kumāra Kassapa | |
| 49 | Raṭṭha,pāla | |
| 50 | Vaṅgīsa | |
| 51 | Sabhiya | |
| 52 | Sela | |
| 53 | Upavāna | |
| 54 | Meghiya | |
| 55 | Sāgata | |

⁷⁸ Mentioned as a group at Vism 98; DhA 1:14.

- 56 Nāgita
 57 Lakunṭaka Bhaddiya
 58 Piṇḍola Bhāradvāja
 59-60 Mahā Panthaka, Cūḷa Panthaka
 61 Bākula
 62 Kuṇḍadhāna
 63 Bāhiya Dāru,cīriya
 64 Yasoja
 65-80 (The 16 youths) Ajita, Tissa Metteyya, Puṇṇaka, Mettagū, Dhotaka, Upasiva, Nanda (Māṇava), Hemaka, Todeyya, Kappa, Jatu,kaṇṇi, Bhadrāvudha, Udaya, Posāla, Mogha,rājā, Piṅgiya.
 (ThaA 3:205)⁷⁹

These 80 great elders all awakened (became arhats) during the Buddha's life-time and are the inspirational models for the reflection of the noble sangha, that is, the spiritual community of saints. However, there is no similar list of nun elders.

7.2 The first 60 arhats comprise the first 11 great disciples (above), including Yasa's 50 friends;⁸⁰ his 4 close friends are already listed as nos. 8-11.⁸¹ Furthermore, the "**group of 30 fortunate youths**" (*timsa,-matta bhadda,vaggiya sahayaka*) converted by the Buddha⁸² are not included amongst the 80 elders.⁸³

Clearly, the number "60" is a rounded figure: rounding and approximation is a numerical trend in the Pali texts.

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⁷⁹ See SD 55.11 (3.4.2.2).

⁸⁰ Mv 1;10 @ V 1:20 (SD 11.2)

⁸¹ Mv 1.11.1 @ V 1:21 f (SD 11.2).

⁸² Mv 1.14 @ V 1:23 f.

⁸³ See SD 55.22 (3.4.2.2).