

# 13a

## Āsava-k,khaya Suttā

The Discourses on the Destruction of the Influxes

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| SD 56.13a(1) | (1) (Indriya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 48.20/5:203)                     |
| SD 56.13a(2) | (2) (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 48.64/5:236)              |
| SD 56.13a(3) | (3) (Anuruddha) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 52.24/5:305 f) = SD 56.13b(14) |
| SD 56.13a(4) | (4) (Ānāpāna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 54.20/5:340 f)                   |
| SD 56.13a(5) | (5) (Sacca) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 56.25/5:434)                       |
| SD 56.13a(6) | (6) (Pañcaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (A 5.70/3:83)                       |
| SD 56.13a(7) | (7) (Dasaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (A 10.122/5:237)                     |
| SD 56.13a(8) | (8) (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (It 102/104-105)                        |

Theme: Destroying the influxes brings arhathood  
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### 1.0 Introduction

#### 1.0.1 OVERALL SUMMARY

Here, we will examine 8 suttas, all with the key phrase *āsava-k,khaya*, “the destruction of the influxes” in their titles. This term refers to the attaining of arhathood; hence, it refers to the highest goal in early Buddhism. These Suttas comprise:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| 5 from the Saṃyutta,    | all dealing with 5 spiritual faculties ( <i>pañc’indriya</i> ); |
| 2 from the Aṅguttara,   | dealing with different meditation methods; and                  |
| 1 from the Iti Vuttaka, | centering on the 4 noble truths ( <i>ariya,sacca</i> ).         |

This comparative intratextual study will give us a good idea on the different ways that the early Buddhist texts define **awakening**. In other words, we are looking at the different tools or vehicles—the teachings—we can use for our journey on the path of awakening.

#### 1.0.2 SUTTA SUMMARIES

##### 1.0.2.1 (Indriya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 48.20/S 5:203), SD 56.13a(1)

This is a brief text which says that **the 5 faculties** (*pañc’indriya*) of faith (*saddh’indriya*), energy or effort (*viriy’indriya*), mindfulness (*sat’indriya*), concentration (*samādh’indriya*) and wisdom (*paññ’indriya*),<sup>1</sup> when cultivated and fulfilled, lead to the destruction of the influxes [1.0.3], that is, the attainment of arhathood.

##### 1.0.2.2 (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 48.64/S 5:236), SD 56.13a(2)

The 5 faculties are first defined [1.1] and said to bring about the ending of the influxes by our abandoning of the fetters (*samyojana*) [Table 1.0.3.2] and uprooting the latent tendencies [*anusaya*] [2.1.4].

##### 1.0.2.3 (Anuruddha) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 52.24/5:305 f), SD 56.13a(3) = SD 56.13b(14)

The Buddha, by fully developing the 4 foundations of mindfulness (*sati’paṭṭhāna*) [3.2] has destroyed the influxes [1.0.3]. On account of this, he has the power to truly understand the level of *the spiritual*

<sup>1</sup> For details on the 5 faculties, see *Pañc’indriya* (SD 10.4).

*faculties* [1.1] in others. This text is unique in being a sutta by itself, as well as being a section of a longer text, **the (Mahā,vagga) Anuruddha Sutta** (S 52.11-24).<sup>2</sup>

#### 1.0.2.4 (Ānāpāna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 54.20/5:340 f), SD 56.13a(4)

Properly cultivating the breath meditation leads to the destruction of the fetters (*samyojana*) [Table 1.2.2], uprooting the latent tendencies [2.1.4] bringing about the destruction of the influxes [1.0.3].

#### 1.0.2.5 (Sacca) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 56.25/5:434), SD 56.13a(5)

When we have fully mastered the 4 noble truths,<sup>3</sup> we will destroy the influxes [1.0.3].

#### 1.0.2.6 (Pañcaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (A 5.70/3:83), SD 56.13a(6)

The 5 practices that bring about the destruction of the influxes.

#### 1.0.2.7 (Dasaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (A 10.122/5:237), SD 56.13a(7)

The 10 rightnesses (*sammatta*)—the noble eightfold path, right knowledge and right freedom—when fully developed, lead to the destruction of the influxes [1.0.3].

#### 1.0.2.8 (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (It 102/104-105), SD 56.13a(8)

The Buddha, having fully mastered the 4 noble truths [5.1], destroyed all his influxes so that he gains final knowledge, that is, full awakening.

### 1.0.3 THE INFLUXES (*āsava*)

#### 1.0.3.1 The 3 influxes

We are bound to this cyclic existence by what are called “influxes” (*āsava*): those of sense-desire (*kām’āsava*), of desire for existence (*bhav’āsava*) and of ignorance (*avijjāsava*). They are so called because they “flow into” (*āsavati*) our lives through our senses, and on their account, we are caught in the “flow towards” the rebirths and redeaths that is samsara.

These 3 influxes are an ancient triad representing our (1) **desire** for sensual pleasures and (2) for existence in the 3 worlds: the sense-world, the form world and the formless world. All this persists because of our (3) ignorance of true reality, that all these are really impermanent; hence, suffering, and without any essence (non-self).

#### The 3 influxes (*āsava*)<sup>4</sup>

|                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| (1) sense-desire | <i>kām’āsava</i>  |
| (2) existence    | <i>bhav’āsava</i> |
| (3) ignorance    | <i>avijjāsava</i> |

<sup>2</sup> S 52.11-24/5:303-306 (SD 56.13b).

<sup>3</sup> For the 4 noble truths, see **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11,5-8), SD 1.1.

<sup>4</sup> The 3 influxes (*āsava*) are listed at **D 2**,99.3/1:84,8-10 + 100.3/1:84,28-30 (SD 8.10); **D 10**,2.36.2/1:209,22 f (SD 40a.13); **D 33**,1.10(20)/3:216,9; **D 34**/3:283 f passim\*; **M 2**,6/1:7,27-37 (SD 30.3); **M 4**,32/1:23,21-24 (SD 44.3), **M 6**,19/1:35,36\* (SD 59.1); **M 9**,70/1:55,10 f (SD 11.14); **M 12**,19/1:76\* (SD 49.1); **M 32**/1:219,7\* (SD 44.12); **M 37**/1:250\* (SD 54.8); **M 39**,21.3/1:279,29 f (SD 10.13); **M 68**/1:464,30\* (SD 37.4); **M 77**/2:22,2\* (SD 49.5); **M 147**/3:-277,26\* (SD 70.7); **S 38.8**/4:256,4 (SD 94.4) = **45.163**/5:56,15 = **47.50**/5:189,29; **A 3.58**/1:165,15\* (SD 94.5), **A 3.59**/1:167,22 fSD 80.16); **A 3.67**/1:196,34 f (SD 43.6); **A 4.198**/2:211,18 f (SD 56.7); **A 5.75**/3:93,15 f (SD 69.2); **A 6.63**/3:414,11 (SD 6.11); **A 8.11**/4:179,4 f = V 3:2; MA 1:62,6 f (ad M 1:6,32 and qu S 4: 256,4); Vbh 347,11. \*Only mentions “influxes” (*āsava*) without listing.

### 1.0.3.2 The 3 influxes and the 10 fetters

(1) The 3 influxes are an ancient set which embodies what later, in the suttas, came to be called **the 10 fetters** (*dasa saṃyojana*) [below]. The two sets of teachings are related in the following manner:

(2) **Sense-desire** (*kāma'āsava*) refers to the view that some kind of permanent self (I, me mine) exists, but because we are not sure what this really implies, we resort to accumulating what we experience “externally” through our senses and thoughts. On account of desiring certain things, we are instinctively compelled to dislike whatever we see as preventing this worldly quest, or simply as being *not* pleasurable.

(3) **Existence** (*bhava*) refers both to the fact that we exist and our desire for prolonging this existence. We exist in a state of *impermanence*; hence, we *suffer* on account of change, uncertainty and death; and we see *neither purpose nor essence* in any of this. We desire to sustain our sensual state, trying to prolong what we see as pleasurable and deny what we see as unpleasurable. Yet, we are actually ignorant of the two opposing but interdependent states. When we are able to experience through meditation the suprasomatic (beyond the senses) states of the form world and the formless world, we are attracted to them, not realizing that despite their sublimity, they, too, are *impermanent, unsatisfactory and without essence* (lacking selfhood).

(4) At the root of all craving and existence is **ignorance**, which prevents us from seeing their true nature. Out of ignorance, we measure ourself (a constructed virtual reality) against others (more constructed virtual realities), caught in the rut of seeing ourself as being “better than” or “inferior to” or “equal with” others. We treat them accordingly, that is, *shadowing* those perceived as being “better,” *rejecting* the “inferior,” and *ignoring* the rest. Yet, all such senseless activities only leave us restless, so that we continue in ignorance, a snake devouring itself, the uroboros.<sup>5</sup>

(5) **Table 1.0.3.2** shows **how the 3 fetters**—an ancient predecessor of the 4 influxes [1.2]—branch out into the various mental fetters. They are “**fetters**” (*saṃyojana*) because they “strongly, persistently” (*saṃ-*) “bind” (*yojana*) us to the world and worldliness. They are related as follows:

#### the 3 influxes (*āsava*)

#### The 10 fetters (*saṃyojana*)

|   |   |   |                               |
|---|---|---|-------------------------------|
| (1) <b>sense-desire</b> ( <i>kāma'āsava</i> ) | { | (1) <u>self-identity view</u> ,             | <i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i>        |
|   |   | (2) <u>spiritual doubt</u> ,                | <i>vicikicchā</i>             |
|   |   | (3) <u>attachment to rituals and vows</u> , | <i>sīla-b, bata, parāmāsa</i> |
| (2) <b>existence</b> ( <i>bhav'āsava</i> )    | { | (4) sensual lust,                           | <i>kāma, rāga</i>             |
|   |   | (5) aversion,                               | <i>paṭigha</i>                |
| (3) <b>ignorance</b> ( <i>avijjāsava</i> )    | { | (6) lust for form existence,                | <i>rūpa, rāga</i>             |
|   |   | (7) lust for formless existence,            | <i>arūpa, rāga</i>            |
|   |   | (8) conceit,                                | <i>māna</i>                   |
|   |   | (9) restlessness,                           | <i>uddhacca</i>               |
|   |   | (10) ignorance.                             | <i>avijjā</i>                 |

**Table 1.0.3.2.** The 3 influxes and the 10 fetters<sup>6</sup> (The underscored are the “3 fetters” [1.0.3.4].)

<sup>5</sup> On the uroboros, see SD 23.3 (1); SD 49.2 (4.3.2.3).

<sup>6</sup> S 5:61; A 5:13; Vbh 377. On how the 4 influxes fit into the 10 fetters, see SD 50.12 (2.5) + Table. On the 10 fetters, see SD 10.16 (1.6.6-8); SD 11.1 (5.1.4); SD 3.3 (2); SD 56.1 (4.4).

### 1.0.3.3 Dating the 4 influxes set

The 4 influxes form a late canonical set that effectively replaces, or rather incorporates, the set of 3 influxes.<sup>7</sup> This quartet is common and found throughout the Pali Canon.

The 4 influxes (*āsava*) are as follows:<sup>8</sup>

|                  |                    |
|------------------|--------------------|
| (1) sense-desire | <i>kām'āsava</i>   |
| (2) existence    | <i>bhav'āsava</i>  |
| (3) <u>views</u> | <i>diṭṭh'āsava</i> |
| (4) ignorance    | <i>avijjāsava</i>  |

This quartet of the influxes of *sense-desire*, *existence*, *views* and *ignorance* was probably introduced during the middle period of the ministry (that is, between the 15<sup>th</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup> year of the ministry).<sup>9</sup> This was a time when the monks, as a sangha, were already allowed by the Buddha to accept suitable candidates even though they were not arhats.

### 1.0.3.4 Breaking the 3 fetters

The monks, still worldlings, hence “outsiders,”<sup>10</sup> were encouraged—as we are today encouraged—to attain at least streamwinning in this life itself. To do so, we need to overcome at least the 3 fetters subsumed as the influx of **views**, and which also form *the first 3 of the 10 fetters* [Table 1.0.3.2].<sup>11</sup>

Once we are streamwinners, we have taken the first step on the path of awakening, and would awaken within 7 lives at the most.<sup>12</sup> Hence, with the destruction of **the influx of views**, streamwinning arises; further with the destruction of **the influx of sense-desire**, non-returning arises; and further with the destruction of **the influxes of existence and ignorance**, arhathood arises.<sup>13</sup>

— — —

<sup>7</sup> Comy: “There are these 3 influxes: the influxes of sense-desire ... of existence ... of ignorance. Elsewhere in the suttas and the Abhidhamma, there is here, the influx of view, forming the 4 influxes” (*tayo’me ... āsavā kām’āsavo bhav’āsavo avijjāsavo’t’idhā āgatā. aññesu ca suttasu abhidhamme ca te eva diṭṭh’āsavena saha catudhā āgatā*, MA 1:62,6 f (ad M 1:6,32 and qu S 4: 256,4); V 3:5,27 f.

<sup>8</sup> This quartet of influxes are mentioned in **Mahā,parinibbāna S** (D 16, eg §§1.12, 1.14, 1.18, 2.4 etc), SD 9; **Saṅgīti S** (D 33, 4 *oghā* 33,1.11(31), 4 *yogā* (32); **Paṭisambhidā,magga** (Pm 1:94, 117) and **Vibhaṅga** (Vbh 373; 3 *āsava*, 364); D 16 is a canonical post-Buddha word; the other two are Abhidhamma works. For details on **the 4 influxes**, see SD 30.3 (1.3).

<sup>9</sup> On the 2 periods of the Buddha’s ministry, see SD 1.1 (2.2); SD 40a.1 (1.3); the 3 periods: SD 40a.1 (1.3.2.3); the middle period: SD 40a.1 (1.3.2.3); SD 54.8 (1.1.3.3).

<sup>10</sup> On “outsider,” see **(Indriya) Paṭipanna S** (S 48.18), SD 56.11 = SD 47.19.

<sup>11</sup> On the influx of “views” (*diṭṭh’āsava*) as the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 fetters (*saṃyojana*), see SD 30.3 (1.3.3.3).

<sup>12</sup> On the “7-lives-at most” (*satta-k,khattu,parama*) see **Sa,upādi,sesa S** (A 9.12,8-10), SD 3.3(3); also SD 56.8 (Table 1.1.2), under “S 48.24.”

<sup>13</sup> For a comy exposition, see DhsA §§128/1:37-39, 48, 2:369-372; DhsA:P 1:47-51, 63 f, 475-478.

## SD 56.13a(1)

## (Indriya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Indriya) Discourse on the Destruction of Influxes | S 48.20/5:203

Traditional: S 5.4.2.10 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 2, Mudutara Vagga 10

Theme: The 5 faculties and arhathood

### 1.1 MUDU,TARA VAGGA (S 48)

The (Indriya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 48.20), the *indriya* discourse on the destruction of the influxes, is the last of the 10 suttas in the **Mudu,tara Vagga**, whose theme is the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc'indriya*), that is, those of *faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom*.<sup>14</sup> These are spiritual tools of meditation, which, when fully developed, lead to the “destruction of the influxes” (*āsava-k,khaya*), that is, the attaining of **arhathood**.<sup>15</sup>

The first 7 Suttas—S 48.11-17 (SD 56.8-10c)—of the Mudu,tara Vagga deal with different aspects of the faculties.<sup>16</sup> Sutta 8 (S 48.18) describes those who lack these 5 faculties as being “outsiders” to the spiritual life [SD 56.11]. Sutta 9 lists the 4 saints [SD 56.12]. This first Sutta (S 48.20) of this Chapter acts as its climax, defining **the arhat**, the saint who is awakened just like the Buddha himself. The other Suttas in this chapter show how arhathood can be attained.

### 1.2 RELATED SUTTA

The (Indriya) **Arahanta Sutta** (S 48.27) parallels the (Indriya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 48.20) in defining **an arhat** as one who has fully developed the 5 faculties, and calling him “one with influxes destroyed” (*khīṇ'āsava*) [1.0.3]. However, in S 48.20, he is described with 7 epithets beginning with *khīṇ'āsava*, that is, the khīṇ'āsava pericope.<sup>17</sup>

## (1)

## (Indriya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Indriya) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes

S 48.20

2 “Bhikshus, there are these **5 faculties**. What are the five?

- (1) The faculty of faith.
- (2) The faculty of energy.
- (3) The faculty of mindfulness.
- (4) The faculty of concentration.
- (5) The faculty of wisdom.

These are the 5 faculties.

3 It is, bhikshus, because he has cultivated and developed these 5 faculties that a monk,<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup> See SD 56.8 (1.1.1.1).

<sup>15</sup> See SD 56.8 (1.1.0.2).

<sup>16</sup> See SD 56.8 (1.1.0.1).

<sup>17</sup> S 48.27,3/5:205 (SD 56.16).

<sup>18</sup> On “freedom by wisdom” (*paññā,vimuttiṃ*), see SD 10.16 (1.4.2). On its broader sense referring to one who progresses by mastering the 4 noble truths, see SD 10.6 (14.2.3).

<sup>19</sup>by the destruction of the influxes, in this very life,  
attains and dwells in the influx-free freedom of mind, freedom by wisdom,  
realizing it for himself with direct knowledge.”

*dasamam*

## SD 56.13a(2) (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes | S 48.64/5:236  
(Bodhi,pakkhika) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta The (Bodh,pakkhika) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes  
Traditional: S 5.4.7.4 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 2, Bodhipakkhiya Vagga 4  
Theme: The 5 faculties as a limb of awakening, and arhathood

### 2.1 BODHI,PAKKHIYA,DHAMMA

**2.1.1** The term, meaning “states pertaining to awakening” or, simply, “wings of awakening,” comprise the entire teachings of the Buddha pertaining to awakening. They are as follows:<sup>20</sup>

|                                      |                                |                                    |          |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------|
| (1) The 4 focuses of mindfulness     | <i>catu satipaṭṭhāna</i>       | aspects of mindfulness training    | SD 13    |
| (2) The 4 right strivings            | <i>catu samma-p, padhāna</i>   | stages of problem-solving          | SD 10.2  |
| (3) The 4 bases of spiritual success | <i>catu iddhi, pāda</i>        | stages of spiritual accomplishment | SD 10.3  |
| (4) The 5 spiritual faculties        | <i>pañc’indriya</i>            | aspects of personal development    | SD 10.4  |
| (5) The 5 spiritual powers           | <i>pañca bala</i>              | powers of spirituality             | SD 10.5  |
| (6) The 7 awakening-factors          | <i>satta bojjhaṅga</i>         | principles of mental development   | SD 10.15 |
| (7) The noble eightfold path         | <i>ariya aṭṭh’āṅgika magga</i> | spiritual training and its goal    | SD 10.16 |

The various components of the 7 sets altogether combine to become **the 37 wings of awakening** (*satta,-tirīsa bodhi.pakkhiya,dhamma*).<sup>21</sup> [5.2]

**2.1.2** The 5 faculties are here listed in “the wings of awakening chapter” (*bodhi,pakkhiya vagga*), in separate suttas, as capable of being cultivated for the following benefits, that is, they:

|   |                                  |         |
|---|----------------------------------|---------|
| “bring about <u>the abandoning of the fetters,</u> ”                      | (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Saṃyojana Sutta | S 48.61 |
| “bring about <u>the uprooting of the latent tendencies,</u> ”             | (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Anusaya Sutta   | S 48.62 |
| “bring about <u>the full understanding of the course,</u> ” <sup>22</sup> | (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Pariññā Sutta   | S 48.63 |
| “bring about <u>the destruction of the influxes.</u> ”                    | (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Āsava-k,khaya S | S 48.64 |

However, the last sutta (S 48.64) mentions all these 4 themes in that sequence.

These same 4 key teachings are also individually treated in separate suttas in the same sequence, respectively, as S 54.17-20 (S 5:340 f), the last 4 suttas of **Ānāpāna Saṃyutta** [4.1]; and similarly—the

<sup>19</sup> The foll 3 lines: *Āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceto,vimuttirī paññā,vimuttirī diṭṭhe’va dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharatīti.*

<sup>20</sup> See **Bodhi.pakkhiya,dhamma**, (SD 10.1). Reading: Ledi Sayadaw, *Bodhipakkhiyadhamma Dīpanī*, 1971.

<sup>21</sup> See SD 10.1; **Pārīleyya S** (S 22.81,11), SD 6.1; SD 9 (10.3); **Saku’udāyī S** (M 77,15-21), SD 6.18.

<sup>22</sup> Comy: When one has reached nirvana, one fully understands the course of samsara. Hence, nirvana is called the full understanding of the course. (SA 3:133,2-4)

first 3 themes separately, and then all the 4 themes together in the last sutta, in **S 45.42-48** (S 5:28 f) in **the Magga Saṃyutta** (S 45).

### **2.1.3 Bodhi,pakkhika**

**2.1.3.1** Interestingly, the term ***bodhi,pakkhiya***, “wing of awakening,” is only mentioned as the chapter (*vagga*) title.<sup>23</sup> This term is not mentioned at all in any of the suttas in the chapter. Only in the ending of the last 4 suttas—**the Rukkha Suttas 1-4** (S48.67-70)—do we find the only mention of “states conducive to awakening” and each sutta closes with stating that these same 5 faculties are “declared the foremost states” (*aggam akkhāyati*), “that is to say, for awakening” (*yad idam bodhāya*).

**2.1.3.2** This probably suggests that the term ***bodhi.pakkhiya.dhamma*** was not yet used at that time; instead, ***bodhi,pakkhika dhamma*** was used when the teachings were systematized. Up to that time, the 5 faculties set was clearly a key teaching or *the* key teaching embodying the Buddha’s teachings.<sup>24</sup> This also means that these suttas are also very ancient.

### **2.1.4 Anusaya**

**2.1.4.1** When we act wholesomely, we are motivated by non-greed (charity), non-hate (lovingkindness) or wisdom (non-delusion). On the other hand, when we act unwholesomely, we are compelled by greed (*lobha*), hate (*dosa*) or delusion (*moha*).<sup>25</sup> These emotional roots (*mūla*) lie just below our conscious mind, that is, on **the preconscious level**. This is our intention (*cetanā*), what we know, a psychological habit or inclination (*nati*), that we may not be aware of or we unthinkingly accept.

Hence, we may not actually be aware that it is a bad or evil act, but we are compelled to do it anyway. Such negative habits include drinking so that we often end up drunk, and breaking other precepts (even while we are drunk, or especially while we are drunk). Or, we enjoy killing for sport or entertainment; we feel a “rush” from such cruelty. This is patently unwholesome karma.

**2.1.4.2** These **3 unwholesome roots** (*akusala mūla*) of greed, hate and delusion, go deep down into our **unconscious**. This part of our mind is so deep and dark that we are normally never even aware of it. Since we are not normally aware of these dark powerful forces within us, controlling our thoughts, speech and acts, they are called **latent tendencies** (*ausaya*).

These latent tendencies are the darker, deeper roots of the emotions behind our acts. *Basically*, they are sensual lust (*kāma,rāga*), aversion (*paṭigha*) and ignorance (*avijjā*).<sup>26</sup> They lie dormant, it seems, in the dark depths of our mind, but ever ready to strike, to close in on us like a Venus fly-trap when a creature slips into its grasp. Once we are caught, it’s almost impossible to escape: we are slowly devoured by the darkness of the latent tendencies.

Only with present **right mindfulness**—being properly aware of our body, our feelings, our thoughts and the realities before us [3.2]—we are able to turn away from unwholesome acts. Through understanding the nature of conditionality, causes and effects, and some understanding of karma (intention and its results), we can train ourself not to fall into the traps baited by the latent tendencies.

<sup>23</sup> This would have been done only when the suttas had been compiled for recitation, ie, earliest during the 1<sup>st</sup> council but by Asoka’s time.

<sup>24</sup> In fact, we see hints of this in, eg, **Ariya Pariyesanā Sutta** (M 26), where the teachings of Ālāra Kālāma (M 26,-15.7) and of Uddaka Rāmā,putta (M 26,16.7) are, in either case, referred to “... faith, ... energy, ... mindfulness, ... concentration, ... wisdom ... .” (SD 1.11).

<sup>25</sup> On the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*), see **Mūla S** (A 3.69), SD 18.2; SD 4.14 (1.5); SD 50.20 (3.1.3).

<sup>26</sup> See **Sammā Diṭṭhi S** (M 9,65-67), SD 11.14; **Anusaya**, SD 31.3 (8.2).

Here, “right mindfulness” is the habit of **examining oneself before** we act, observing it **while** we are acting, and reviewing it **after** the fact.<sup>27</sup> In other words, we should study and learn from our actions— why it is *negative*, how we can *end* it; how we can *prevent* it; and keep it *so*<sup>28</sup>—by bringing them into the light of our conscious mind and wisdom.<sup>29</sup>

(2)

**(Bodhi,pakkhiya) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta**

The (Bodhi,pakkhiya) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes

S 48.64

**2** “These **5 faculties**, bhikshus, when cultivated, well developed, bring about the destruction of the influxes.

**3** What are the five?

- (1) The faculty of faith.
- (2) The faculty of energy.
- (3) The faculty of mindfulness.
- (4) The faculty of concentration.
- (5) The faculty of wisdom.

**4** These 5 faculties, bhikshus, when cultivated, well developed, bring about the abandoning of the fetters,<sup>30</sup>

bring about the uprooting of the latent tendencies,  
bring about the full understanding of the course,<sup>31</sup>  
bring about the destruction of the influxes.<sup>32</sup>

*saṃyojanānaṃ pahānāya saṃvattanti  
anusaya,samugghātāya samvattanri  
addhāna,pariññāya saṃvattanti  
āsavānaṃ khayāya saṃvattanti*

*catuttham*

**SD 13a.14(3) (Anuruddha) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta**

The (Anuruddha) Discourse on the Destruction of Influxes | S 52.24/5:305 f = SD 56.13b.14

S 5.8.2.14 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 8, Anuruddha Saṃyutta 2, Dutiya Vagga 14

Theme: The destruction of the influxes brings about arhathood

**3.1** The Buddha, by fully developing the 4 foundations of mindfulness (sati’paṭṭhāna) [3.2] has destroyed the influxes [1.0.3]. On account of this, he has the power to fully and truly understand the level of *the spiritual faculties* [1.1] in others.

<sup>27</sup> On this teaching, see **Mahā Rāhul’ovāda S** (M 62/1:420-426), SD 3.11.

<sup>28</sup> These are the 4 right efforts: see **(Catu) Padhāna S** (A 4.14/2:16 f), SD 10.2.

<sup>29</sup> See **Anusaya** SD 31.3.

<sup>30</sup> On this key term, and the other 3 in this para, see (2.1.2).

<sup>31</sup> Comy: When one has reached nirvana, one fully understands the course of samsara. Hence, nirvana is called “the full understanding of the course.” (SA 3:133,2-4)

<sup>32</sup> Curiously, Be repeats the whole sutta here for no apparent reason.



## 3.2 SATI'PAṬṬHĀNA

### 3.2.1 Right mindfulness, right concentration

The Buddha's meditation training comprises of 2 limbs, that is, the 7<sup>th</sup> limb, right mindfulness (*sammā,sati*), and the 8<sup>th</sup> limb, right concentration (*sammā,samādhi*). **Right mindfulness** comprises the 4 focuses of mindfulness, while **right concentration** refers to the 4 dhyanas.<sup>33</sup> Essentially, *satipaṭṭhāna* is our preparation and priming the mind to attain dhyana. Using that profound dhyanic calm and clarity, we then go on to see into the true reality of existence: *impermanence, suffering and non-self*.

### 3.2.3 The 4 focuses of mindfulness

**3.2.3.0** The 4 focuses (or foundations) of mindfulness comprise the following:<sup>34</sup>

|                                     |                         |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| (1) the contemplation of the body;  | <i>kāyānupassanā</i>    |
| (2) the contemplation of feelings;  | <i>vedanā'nupassanā</i> |
| (3) the contemplation of the mind ; | <i>cittānupassanā</i>   |
| (4) the contemplation of realities  | <i>dhammānupassanā</i>  |

**3.2.3.1 Contemplating the body** (*kāyānupassanā*) comprises these 5 sets of exercises: the 4 postures, clear knowing, perception of foulness, the 4 elements, and the 9 “corpse” meditations (that is, the 9 stages of bodily decomposition). These are the body-based meditations, the best known of which is the breath meditation. The 1<sup>st</sup> focus of mindfulness, the contemplation of the body, deals with the contemplation of the breath, and of the body postures, parts, and activities, bringing the mind to focus.

**3.2.3.2 Contemplating feelings** (*vedanā'nupassanā*) is actually only one exercise, considering feelings in terms of the affective quality—as either pleasant, painful or neutral—with each being examined again as being either carnal or spiritual. The 2<sup>nd</sup> focus, the contemplation of feeling, deals with the affective tone—pleasant, unpleasant, neutral—that colour every sense-experience, whether a sensation or a mentation.

**3.2.3.3 Contemplating the mind (or mind-consciousness)** (*cittānupassanā*) is also only one exercise, examining any of the 16 states of mind coloured by their mental concomitants.<sup>35</sup> While the first two contemplations or focuses are generally descriptive: we merely keep our attention on what occurs at the present moment, the 3<sup>rd</sup> focus of mindfulness, the contemplation of the mind, is somewhat *evaluative*.

We are to notice when sensual desire is present, or when it is fading away, or when it does not arise any more. This is, in fact, the first of the 5 mental hindrances. We similarly observe the other 4 hindrances—ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt—in the same way. In textual terms, the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> focuses are of about equal length, and are the shortest of the 4 focuses of mindfulness.

**3.2.3.4 Contemplating dharmas** (*dhammānupassanā*)<sup>36</sup> is the most diversified exercise involving these 5 schemes: *the 5 hindrances, the 5 aggregates, the 6 sense-bases, the 7 factors of awakening and*

<sup>33</sup> On right concentration, see SD 10.16 (8).

<sup>34</sup> See **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10), SD 13: Intro SD 13.1 (5), the Sutta SD 13.3.

<sup>35</sup> As in **Pubba S** (S 51.11/5:263-266).

<sup>36</sup> The exact meaning of **dhamma** in *dhammānupassanā* has been disputed. It is often rendered “mind-objects” or “mental objects”—“as if it denoted the sixth external sense base, but this seems too narrow and specific. More

*the 4 noble truths*. The 4<sup>th</sup> focus of mindfulness deals with the contemplation of dharmas, phenomena or realities. This focus covers the whole gamut of Buddhist psychology listed above. In statistical terms, this section contains a total of 108 dharmas or phenomena<sup>37</sup> to be observed.

### (3)

## (Anuruddha) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Anuruddha) Discourse on the Destruction of Influxes

S 52.24

Further, avuso, it is because I have cultivated and well developed these **4 foundations of mindfulness** that, [306] by the destruction of the influxes, in this very life, I attain and dwell in the influx-free freedom of mind, freedom by wisdom, realizing it for myself with direct knowledge.

*cuddasamaṃ*

## SD 56.13a(4)

## (Ānâpâna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Ānâpâna) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes | S 54.20/5:340 f

Traditional: S 5.10.2.10 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 10, Ānâpâna Saṃyutta 2, Dutiya Vagga 10

Theme: Breath meditation, the 5 faculties and arhathood

### 4.1 BREATH MEDITATION

The (Ānâpâna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (S 54.20) centres on the **fetter quartet**, a set of 4 teachings beginning with “the abandoning of the fetters.” These key teachings—the abandoning of the fetters (*sam̐yojana*), the uprooting of the latent tendencies (*anusaya*), the full understanding of the course (*addhāna*) [2.1.2], and the destruction of the influxes (*āsava-k,khaya*)—are individually treated in the same sequence, respectively, as the first 3 suttas, and all the 4 themes listed thus in the 4<sup>th</sup> sutta (S 54.20), thus:

- |                                |         |  |           |
|--------------------------------|---------|--|-----------|
| • the Saṃyojana Pahāna Sutta   | S 54.17 | the abandoning of the fetters          | [1.0.3.2] |
| • the Anusaya Samugghāta Sutta | S 54.18 | the uprooting of the latent tendencies | [2.1.4]   |
| • the Addhāna Pariññā Sutta    | S 54.19 | the full understanding of the course   | [2.1.2 n] |
| • the Āsava-k,khaya Sutta      | S 54.20 | the destruction of the influxes        | [1.0.3]   |

These are the last 4 suttas of **the Ānâpâna Saṃyutta** (D 54), the collected teachings on breath meditation of the Mahā,vagga of the Saṃyutta Nikāya. We see the same sequence of treatment for the 5

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likely *dharmā* here signifies all phenomena, which for purposes of insight are grouped into fixed modes of classification determined by the Dhamma itself—the doctrine or teaching—and culminating in the realization of the ultimate Dhamma comprised within the Four Noble Truths. There are five such schemes [see above].” (Bodhi, S:B 1504 f). A good tr for *dharmā* here would be “phenomena,” “nature of things,” or the anglicized “dharma.”

<sup>37</sup> The 108 dharmas are as follows:

5 hindrances × 5 (presence, absence, arising, letting go, further non-arising) = 25,

5 aggregates × 3 (the aggregate, arising, ceasing) = 15,

6 sense-bases × 6 (faculty, object, fetter resulting from both, letting go of fetter, its further non-arising) = 36,

7 awakening-factors × 4 (presence, absence, arising, perfecting) = 28,

4 truths = 4. For a full list, see Olendzki 2004:16 f.

faculties for 4 suttas (S 48.61-64) in the **Bodhi,pakkhiya Vagga** (S 48) [2.1.2], bringing about the same benefits.

## 4.2 MEDITATION LANGUAGE

### 4.2.1 Speechless joy

**4.2.1.1** Those of us who have experienced profound states of joy or rapture—such as winning a very competitive race, or enjoying the profound beauty of a work of art, or being embraced into the presence of an epiphany of nature—would be lost for words to describe it. A dhyanic experience, indeed, any deep state of mental concentration, leaves us blissfully speechless. This is an ineffably direct experience of truth and reality.<sup>38</sup>

It is vital that we keep this point in mind when we study meditation texts or practise meditation. In fact, we see such language being used in numerous meditation texts, such as that of **the (Ānāpāna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta** (S 54.20), in its description of “the 16 aspects of breath meditation” below [§§4-7].

**4.2.1.2** Note that in aspects 1 + 2 (in the 1<sup>st</sup> tetrad) [§4], the operating verb is “understands” (*pajānāti*). The prefix *pa-* here gives a sense of direct and intense experience. What we see in translation as quotes, “I breathe in long ... “ and so on, are not *speech*, but the highlighting of an instruction by way of a sentence ending with *iti*—which functions very much like quote-marks in English. In both Pali and English, they are used not only for “direct speech,” but also for highlighting words or sentences (as seen in “understands”).<sup>39</sup>

Hence in **§4(1-2)**, we “directly know” or are mindfully aware of our in-and-out-breaths *without thinking about it*. We may also say this as “focusing on the knowing” that we are breathing. In other words, we do not “locate” or fix our attention at any physical spot, but simply keep it “before us” (*parimukha*).<sup>40</sup>

Further, since we may lose our focus, unless we keep our attention “directed” on the breath, we may say that this is **directed** meditation. This somewhat “active” mindfulness is used when the mind is not yet fully focused, but tends to follow some other mental object or to move away from the meditation object.<sup>41</sup>

**4.2.2** For the rest of the breath meditation instructions—aspects 3-16 [§§4-7]—the verb is “trains himself” (*sikkhati*). This is a thought-free mental process: this training is to be gently, even subtly, exerted, so long as breathing is noticeable. Needless to say the breathing here is neither controlled nor forced, but a natural process that is no more a *bodily* cycle, but a subtle, brightening mental process.

Hence, we must understand the 2<sup>nd</sup> tetrad [§5] as a description of the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana and *what we should do* in this connection. The sutta instructions here refer to subtle cognitive processes—unlike any in our non-meditative daily life—with which we are able to execute as stated. Indeed, we may say that these are not actual deliberate acts but rather the result of our pre-meditation **determination** or resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*),<sup>42</sup> based on our understanding of the breath meditation instructions and experience.

**4.2.3** For a beginner who is progressing well with breath meditation, the 2<sup>nd</sup> tetrad [§5] progresses into the 3<sup>rd</sup> tetrad [§6]. Once the mind refines itself, freeing itself of zest and happiness (*pīti,sukha*), it moves

<sup>38</sup> See SD 33.1b (6.2) Do thinking and knowing occur during dhyana?

<sup>39</sup> See *The Oxford Companion to the English Language*, 1992: Quotation marks. For a history of quotation marks: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quotation\\_mark](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quotation_mark)

<sup>40</sup> On *parimukha*, see SD 7.13 (2.3).

<sup>41</sup> On “directed meditaton, see **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10) + SD 24.2 (1).

<sup>42</sup> On *adhiṭṭhāna*, see SD 15.1 (8.6.2; 8.6.4.3)

on into the 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana and so on. At this stage, we go into even more refined levels of **mental renunciation**. Basically, we are letting go of our thoughts, views and distractions.<sup>43</sup>

In an important sense, we *do nothing* but let the calm and clarity build up. By this time, the mind is beautifully bright: the more we unconditionally accept the beautiful bright mind, the brighter, the more beautiful, it becomes, and the greater the joy and peace.

**4.2.4** Finally, in the 4<sup>th</sup> tetrad [§7], we are ready to emerge from the dhyana with a mind that is profoundly calm and clear. On emerging, our mind is powerfully concentrated: this is the best mind and the best time for reflecting on **impermanence** and seeing directly into true reality.

This is an overview of the breath meditation, how it works and its benefits. We should now look into the details of how all this happens in the progress of breath meditation,<sup>44</sup> as laid out in the (Ānâpāna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta:

## (4)

### (Ānâpāna) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Ānâpāna) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes

S 54.20

**1** “Bhikshus, **concentration by mindfulness of breathing**,<sup>45</sup> when cultivated, well developed, brings about the destruction of the influxes.<sup>46</sup>

**2** And how, bhikshus, does *the concentration by mindfulness of breathing, when cultivated, well developed, bring about the destruction of the influxes?*

**3** Here, bhikshus, a monk<sup>47</sup> who has gone to the forest, or to the foot of a tree, or to an empty abode,<sup>48</sup> sits down, and having crossed his legs and keeping his body upright, establishes mindfulness before him.<sup>49</sup>

3.2 —Mindfully indeed he breathes in, mindfully he breathes out.<sup>50</sup>

## THE 16 ASPECTS OF BREATH MEDITATION

<sup>43</sup> On meditation as renunciation, see **Hālidakāni S 1** (S 22.3/3:9-12), SD 10.12; **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.1 (14.7); **Sexuality**, SD 31.7 (1.6.2).

<sup>44</sup> See SD 7.13 (4.4), The progress of breath meditation: The 4 tetrads and 16 aspects.

<sup>45</sup> “Concentration by mindfulness of breathing,” (*ānâpana,sati samādhi*). See S 54.7/5:315 f (SD 24.7).

<sup>46</sup> A more elaborate treatment of this breath meditation is given in **Paṭipôpama S** (S 54.8/5:316-320), SD 62.2, but where, instead of “brings about the destruction of the influxes,” S 54.8 reads “brings about great fruit, great benefit” (*maha-p,phalā mahânisamsā*)—as in **Ānâpāna,sati S** (M 117), SD 7.13.

<sup>47</sup> DA on **Mahā Sati’paṭṭhāna S** with the identical context here says that “monk” (bhikkhu) indicates “whoever undertakes that practice ... is here comprised under the term bhikkhu.” See Dh 142; also Dh 362, 260-270. Cf **Bhikkhu Vagga** (ch 25) and **Brāhmaṇa Vagga** (ch 26) of Dh.

<sup>48</sup> This stock of 3 places (a forest, *arañña*; the foot of a tree, *rukka,mūla*; an empty abode, *suññ’āgāra*) conducive to meditation are at **D** 2:291; **M** 1:56, 297, 398, 425, 2:263, 3:82, 89, 4:297; **S** 5:311, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 323, 329, 336; **A** 1:147, 148, 149, 3:92, 100, 4:437, 5:109, 110, 111; **Pm** 1:175, 2:36. Further see **Ānâpāna,sati S** (M 117,17) n (SD 7.13).

<sup>49</sup> **Parimukham**, lit “around the mouth,” here always used idiomatically and as an adverb, meaning “in front”: see M 117,17 n.

<sup>50</sup> *So sato’va assasati sato passasati*. Cf the sentence for the Buddha’s own breath meditation, where *va* or *eva* is omitted, in **Ichā,naṅgala S** (S 54.11,4), SD 44.9.

4 THE 1<sup>ST</sup> TETRAD: CONTEMPLATING THE BODY

- (1) Breathing *in long* [deep],<sup>51</sup> he understands, 'I breathe *in long* [Long in-breath]';<sup>52</sup>  
Or, breathing *out long* [deep], he understands, 'I breathe *out long* [Long out-breath]';<sup>53</sup>
- (2) Or, breathing *in short*, he understands, 'I breathe *in short* [Short in-breath]';<sup>54</sup>  
Or, breathing *out short*, he understands, 'I breathe *out short* [Short out-breath]';<sup>55</sup>
- (3) He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing **the whole body** (of breath), I will breathe *in*';<sup>56</sup>  
He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing *the whole body (of breath)*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>57</sup>
- (4) He trains himself thus: '**Calming the bodily formation** (of breath), I will breathe *in*';<sup>58</sup>  
He trains himself thus: '*Calming the bodily formation (of breath)*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>59</sup>

5 THE 2<sup>ND</sup> TETRAD: CONTEMPLATING FEELINGS

- (5) He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing **zest** [joy], I will breathe *in*';<sup>60</sup>  
He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing zest [joy], I will breathe *out*';<sup>61</sup>
- (6) He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing **happiness**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>62</sup>

<sup>51</sup> The tr here is idiomatic. On these 4 tetrads and 16 aspects, see Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna*, 2003:133-136. See SD 7.13 (2.3.1.2).

<sup>52</sup> *Dīgharṃ vā assasanto, dīgharṃ assasāmīti pajānāti*. I have rendered these important sentences and those of the first 2 ("noting") tetrads using very short sentences (not grammatically complete sentences) to reflect a "bare noting" (denoted by *pajānāti*) that should occur in meditation whose purpose is mental focus. Only the steps 1-4 are noted by *pajānāti* (he understands or knows); the rest (5-16) are *sikkhati* (he trains) or "training" aspects (ie one has to put in more regulated effort), "I will breathe in ... out," (*assasissāmi ... passasissāmi*). In the breath, see SD 7.13 (2.1). See important n on "mental noting" SD 7.13 (3); SD 56.13a (4.2): meditation language.

<sup>53</sup> *Dīgharṃ vā passasanto, dīgharṃ passasāmīti pajānāti*: SD 7.13 (4.4.1.1).

<sup>54</sup> *Rassarṃ vā assasanto, rassarṃ assasāmīti pajānāti*: SD 7.13 (4.4.1.1).

<sup>55</sup> *Rassarṃ vā passasanto, rassarṃ passasāmīti pajānāti*. In practical terms, focusing on the first 2 factors of this tetrad, that is maintaining our undivided focus on the breath or one's conception of it can lead to dhyana. However, in (**Pabbateyyā**) **Gāvī S**, the Buddha warns Moggallāna not to go into the 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana until he has thoroughly mastered the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana (A 9.35/4:418 f qu at Vism 153 f). See SD 7.13 (4.4.1.2).

<sup>56</sup> *Sabba,kāya,paṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati*: SD 7.13 (4.4.1.3 f).

<sup>57</sup> *Sabba,kāya,paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Experiencing the whole body (of breath)," *sabba,kāya,paṭisaṃvedī*. MA glosses *sabba,kāya* as "the whole body of breath," ie, its 3 phases of each in-breath and out-breath through its 3 phases of beginning, middle and end. See SD 7.13 (4.4.1.3 f).

<sup>58</sup> *Passambhayarṃ kāya,saṅkhāraṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "The bodily formation," *kāya,saṅkhāra*. The bodily formation is the in-and-out-breathing itself (M 44,13/1:301; S 41.6/4:293,15: *assāsa,passāsa kāya,saṅkhāro*). See SD 7.13 (4.4.1.5).

<sup>59</sup> *Passambhayarṃ kāya,saṅkhāraṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati*. At this point even after the breath has been calmed down but we still do not feel zest (*pīti*) or the breath's radiance (the "beautiful breath"), then, we should direct our attention to wilfully (but gently) arouse it: see SD 7.13 (4.4.1.5).

<sup>60</sup> *Pīti,paṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Zest," *pīti*. Sometimes tr as "rapture," but "**zest**" is closer to evoking a more subtle yet enthusing nature of *pīti*. We experience zest in 2 ways: by attaining either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana in which zest is present, we experience it in the mode of calm (*samatha*); or, by emerging from that dhyana and reflecting that zest is subject to destruction, we experience zest by way of insight (*vipassanā*). Psychologically, *pīti* is a kind of "joyful interest," as such may be associated with wholesome, unwholesome or neutral states (BDict: *pīti*). Zest belongs to the formation group (*saṅkhāra-k, khandha*) while happiness (*sukha*) belongs to the feeling group (*vedanā-k, khandha*). Zest is compared to when a thirsty man lost in the desert finds water; happiness (*sukha*) is how he feels when he is drinking the water. See Vism 4.94 ff. See SD 7.13 (4.4.2.1).

<sup>61</sup> *Pīti,paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati*. See SD 7.13 (4.4.2.2).

<sup>62</sup> *Sukha,paṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati*. See SD 7.13 (4.4.2.2).

- He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing *happiness*, I will breathe out';<sup>63</sup>  
 (7) He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing **the mental formations**,<sup>64</sup> I will breathe *in*';  
 He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing *the mental formations*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>65</sup>  
 (8) He trains himself thus: '**Calming the mental formations**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>66</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: 'Calming *the mental formations*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>67</sup>

#### 6 THE 3<sup>RD</sup> TETRAD: CONTEMPLATING THE MIND

- (9) He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing **the mind**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>68</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: 'Experiencing *the mind*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>69</sup>  
 (10) He trains himself thus: '**Gladdening the mind**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>70</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: 'Gladdening *the mind*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>71</sup>  
 (11) He trains himself thus: '**Concentrating the mind**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>72</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: 'Concentrating *the mind*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>73</sup>  
 (12) He trains himself thus: '**Freeing the mind**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>74</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: 'Freeing *the mind*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>75</sup>

#### 7 THE 4<sup>TH</sup> TETRAD: CONTEMPLATING DHARMAS<sup>76</sup>

- (13) He trains himself thus: 'Contemplating **impermanence**, I will breathe *in*';<sup>77</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: 'Contemplating *impermanence*, I will breathe *out*';<sup>78</sup>  
 (14) He trains himself thus: 'Contemplating **fading away** (of lust), I will breathe *in*'<sup>79</sup>

<sup>63</sup> *Sukha,paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati*. See SD 7.13 (4.4.2.2).

<sup>64</sup> Or, "mental functions." On *kaya,saṅkhāra*, see **Cūḷa Vedalla S** (M 44,14); see SD 7.13 (4.4.2.3).

<sup>65</sup> *Citta,saṅkhāra,paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati*. See SD 7.13 (4.4.2.3-5).

<sup>66</sup> *Passambhayam citta,saṅkhāraṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Calming the mental formations [mental functions]," *passambhayam citta,saṅkhāraṃ*. See SD 7.13 (4.4.2.6).

<sup>67</sup> *Passambhayam citta,saṅkhāraṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati*.

<sup>68</sup> *Citta,paṭisaṃvedī assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Experiencing the mind," *citta, paṭisaṃvedī*. Here, it refers to the 4 dhyanas. See SD 7.13 (2.3.3.1-3).

<sup>69</sup> *Citta,paṭisaṃvedī passasissāmīti sikkhati*. SD 7.13 (4.4.3.1-3).

<sup>70</sup> *Abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Gladdening the mind" (*abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ*), ie refining the meditation sign. SD 7.13 (4.4.3.4).

<sup>71</sup> *Abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati*. SD 7.13 (4.4.3.4 f).

<sup>72</sup> *Samādahaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati*. SD 7.13 (4.4.3.6).

<sup>73</sup> *Samādahaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Concentrating the mind" (*samādahaṃ cittaṃ*), ie, sustaining the meditation sign (*nimitta*). SD 7.13 (4.4.3.6).

<sup>74</sup> *Vimocayaṃ cittaṃ assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Freeing the mind" (*vimocayaṃ cittaṃ*). SD 7.13 (4.4.3.7).

<sup>75</sup> *Vimocayaṃ cittaṃ passasissāmīti sikkhati*. SD 7.13 (4.4.3.7).

<sup>76</sup> These last 4 aspects, ie, **the 4<sup>th</sup> tetrad** [§7], relate to the meditator who has just emerged from the dhyana. The first thing we should do then is to review that state: "What was that?" "How did that arise?" "How do I feel?" "Why do I feel that way?" "What have I been doing all this time?" "What worked and what failed?" "What was the result of the meditation?" "Why is it happy?" All such reflections give rise to deep insight. Having reflected thus, we either take up *satipaṭṭhāna* (the 4 focuses of mindfulness) or just go directly to the last 4 aspects of breath meditation (as taught here). We have any one of these 4 aspects, (13)-(16), to contemplate on after emerging from dhyana. See SD 13.1 (5D.4).

<sup>77</sup> *Aniccānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Contemplating impermanence," *aniccānupassī*, ie contemplating the 5 aggregates as impermanent because they undergo rise, fall and change, or momentary dissolution. See (4.4.4.1).

<sup>78</sup> *Aniccānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati*: SD 7.13 (4.4.4.1 f).

<sup>79</sup> *Virāgānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*. "Contemplating fading away," *virāgānupassī*. See (4.4.4.3).

- He trains himself thus: ‘Contemplating *fading away* (of lust), I will breathe *out*’;<sup>80</sup>  
 (15) He trains himself thus: ‘Contemplating **cessation** (of suffering), I will breathe *in*’;<sup>81</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: ‘Contemplating *cessation* (of suffering), I will breathe *out*’;<sup>82</sup>  
 (16) He trains himself thus: ‘Contemplating **letting go**<sup>83</sup> (of defilements), I will breathe *in*’;<sup>84</sup>  
 He trains himself thus: ‘Contemplating *letting go* (of defilements), I will breathe *out*’.<sup>85</sup>

8 In this manner, bhikshus, concentration by mindfulness of breathing, when cultivated, well developed, brings about the destruction of the influxes.”

*dasamaṃ*

## SD 56.13a(5) (Sacca) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Sacca) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes | S 56.25/5:434

Traditional: S 5.12.3.5 Saṃyutta Nikaya 5, Mahāvagga 12, Sacca Saṃyutta 3, Koṭigāma Vagga 5

Theme: Mastery of the noble truths leads to arhathood

**5.1 The (Sacca) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta** (S 56.25), applies a different skilful means of reaching the same goal of destroying the influxes (attaining arhathood). The means here is that of the mastery of **the 4 noble truths**. In other words, the 4 noble truths—like the 5 faculties—are also one of the “wings of awakening” (*bodhi,pakkhiya dhamma*).

**5.2** In the course of the Buddha’s teaching the Dharma, he applies various skilful means for the destruction of the influxes—that is, the attaining of arhathood. One of the oldest skilful means or “wings of awakening” is, of course, the 5 faculties—now we have the mastery of the 4 noble truths. In due course, there is the final list of the 7 sets of teachings, totalling **the 37 wings of awakening** (*bodhi.pakkhiya dhamma*). [2.1.1]

**5.3** For a related sutta, see **the (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta** (It 102), SD 56.13a(8).

<sup>80</sup> *Virāgānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati*: SD 7.13 (4.4.4.3).

<sup>81</sup> *Nirodhānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*: SD 7.13 (4.4.4.4).

<sup>82</sup> *Nirodhānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati*: SD 7.13 (4.4.4.4).

<sup>83</sup> Alt tr: “relinquishment.”

<sup>84</sup> *Paṭinissaggānupassī assasissāmīti sikkhati*. “Contemplating relinquishment [letting go],” *paṭinissaggānupassī*, ie the giving up (*pariccāga*) or abandoning (*pahāna*) of defilements through insight and the entering into (*pakkhandana*) nirvana by attaining the path: SD 7.13 (4.4.4.5).

<sup>85</sup> *Paṭinissaggānupassī passasissāmīti sikkhati*: SD 7.13 (4.4.4.5 f).

(5)

## (Sacca) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Sacca) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes  
S 56.25

1 “Bhikshus, **the destruction of the influxes** is for one who knows, who sees, I say; not for one who knows not, sees not.<sup>86</sup>

2 And, bhikshus, what is it that **one sees, one knows**, that brings about the destruction of the influxes?

3 The destruction of the influxes is brought about

for one who sees, who knows, thus:

‘This is **suffering**’;

for one who sees, who knows, thus:

‘This is **the arising** of suffering’;

for one who sees, who knows, thus:

‘This is **the ending** of suffering’;

for one who sees, who knows, thus:

‘This is **the path** leading to the ending of suffering.’

For one who knows thus, sees thus, there is the destruction of the influxes.

4 Therefore, bhikshus,

there should be **devotion** to (mastering):

‘*This is suffering.*’

there should be devotion to (mastering):

‘*This is the arising of suffering.*’

there should be devotion to (mastering):

‘*This is the ending of suffering.*’

there should be devotion to (mastering):

‘*This is the path to the ending of suffering.*’”

*pañcamarṃ*

## SD 56.13a(6)

## (Pañcaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Fives) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes | A 5.70/3:83

Traditional: A 5.2.2.10 Āṅguttara Nikāya 5, Pañcaka Nipāta 2, Dutiya Paṇṇāsaka 2, Saññā Vagga 10

Theme: The 5 meditations leading to arhathood

### 6.1 A FEW TERMS RELATED TO ARHATHOOD

#### 6.1.1 Revulsion (*nibbidā*)

In the **Pañcaka Nipāta** (the book of fives) of the Āṅguttara, the sutta that precedes A 5.70, the **(Pañcaka) Nibbidā Sutta** (A 5.69), has the very same set of 5 meditations that are applied to the “longer” *nibbidā* stock phrase, that is, “it conduces [leads] to **utter revulsion**, to dispassion, to ending (of suffering), to peace [stilling], to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to nirvana” (*etaṃ ekanta,nibbidāya vi-rāgāya nirodhāya upasamāya abhiññāya sambodhāya nibbānāya samvattanti*).<sup>87</sup>

This stock phrase refers to the attaining of nirvana, which is synonymous with the gaining of arhat-hood. We see the same set of 5 meditations more briefly stated in **A 5.70** for the attaining of arhathood.

<sup>86</sup> Cf **Upanisā S** (S 12.23/2:29,24 f), SD 6.12; **Vāsi,jaṭa S** (S 22.101/3:142,26 f). SD 15.2.

<sup>87</sup> **(Pañcaka) Nibbidā S** (A 5.69/3:83), SD 20.1(6.1.7); also **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,28/1:189), SD 11.14; **Cūḷa Māluṅkyā-putta S** (M 63,8/1:431), SD 5.8; **(Bojjhaṅga) Nibbidā S** (S 46.20/5:82), **(Magga) Paṭipanna S** (S 47.32/5:179), SD 47.-21; **(Iddhi,pāda) Nibbidā S** (S 51.4/5:255), (S 55.12/5:361); **Satthu,sāsana S** (A 7.79/4:143), SD 104.1; **Dhovana S** (A 10.107/5:216). See SD 20.1 (2.2.2). For a full list of *nibbidā* passages, see SD 20.1 Appendix. For the shorter stock phrase, see **Alaaddūpama S** (M 22,29), SD 3.13.



### 6.1.2 Freedom of mind, freedom by wisdom

The **(Pañcaka) Ceto,vimutti Sutta 1** (A 5.71), the sutta that follows A 5.70 in the Pañcaka Nipāta [6.1.1], and the first sutta of **the Yodh'ājīva Vagga** (the warrior chapter), treats the same set of 5 meditations in a more elaborate context. The monk (meditator) who fully cultivates these 5 meditations will gain “the freedom of mind”<sup>88</sup> and “the freedom through wisdom” as their fruits. The 5 meditations bring about arhathood, which is here called “freedom of mind, freedom through wisdom” (*ceto,vimutti paññā,-vimutti*).

These 2 phrases work as a single compound to refer to the attainment and the wisdom of the fruition of arhathood (*arahatta,phala*), that is, full-fledged arhathood.<sup>89</sup> While the first phrase, the “**freedom of mind**,” refers to the arhat’s mind being liberated from all defilements through the 4 dhyanas, it is always complemented (or implied) by the second phrase, the “**freedom through wisdom**,” basically meaning that he has fully mastered the 4 noble truths.<sup>90</sup> Hence, the two terms give a single sense of having attained spiritual freedom (*vimutti*).

### 6.2 RELATED SUTTAS

These 5 methods—along the disadvantages (of formations, *ādīnava,saññā*, DAṬ 3:335) are given in **Saññā Sutta 1** (A 5.61/3:79). Besides the (Pañcaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (A 5.69), the pentad of meditations is also found in the following suttas:

- **(Pañcaka) Nibbidā Sutta**      A 5.69/3:83                      SD 20.1(6.1.7)
- **(Pañcaka) Gilāna Sutta**      A 5.121/3:142 f
- **Sati Supaṭṭhita Sutta**      A 5:122/3:143

The first 4 practices are recorded in **the Māra Tajjaniya Sutta** (M 50,18), as being taught by the past buddha Kakusandha (the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 5 buddhas to arise in our world cycle), SD 36.4.

**The (Pañcaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta** (A 5.70) gives a basic description of the practice of the 5 meditations that lead to arhathood, thus:

## (6)

### (Pañcaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Fives) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes  
A 5.70

**1** “Bhikshus, these **5 states** when cultivated, well developed, bring about the destruction of the influxes. What are the five?”

Here, bhikshus, a monk dwells<sup>91</sup>

- |  |                                    |
|--|------------------------------------|
| (1) contemplating impurity in the body;      | <i>asubhānupassī kāye</i>          |
| (2) perceiving the repulsiveness of food;    | <i>āhāre paṭikūla,saññī</i>        |
| (3) perceiving non-delight in all the world; | <i>sabba,loke anabhirata,saññī</i> |

<sup>88</sup> On the wisdom-freed arhat, see SD 4.25 (3.1); SD 10.16 (14.2); SD 50.26 (1.4.3). On *ceto,vimutti paññā,vimutti*, see **Jhānābhiññā S** (S 16.9,29+30), SD 50.7.

<sup>89</sup> See **Jhānābhiññā S** (S 16.9,29+30), SD 50.7.

<sup>90</sup> On the full mastery of the 4 noble truths, ie, its 3 phases in 12 modes, see SD 1.1 (5+6).

<sup>91</sup> For a list of a dozen such perceptions (*saññā*), see SD 17.4 (9.5.3).

- (4) perceiving impermanence in all formations;<sup>92</sup> *sabba,saṅkhāresu aniccā'nupassī*  
 (5) having well established the perception of death internally. *maraṇa,saññā ajjhataṃ supaṭṭhitā*<sup>93</sup>

These 5 things, bhikshus, when cultivated, well developed, bring about the destruction of the influxes."

*dasamaṃ*

## SD 56.13a(7) (Dasaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Tens) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes | A 10.122/5:237

Traditional: A 10.3.2.10 Aṅguttara Nikāya 10, Dasaka Nipāta 3, Tatiya Paṇṇāsaka 2 Paccorohaṇi Vg 10

Theme: The 10 things leading to arhatood

### 7.1 THE MUNDANE EIGHTFOLD PATH

#### 7.1.1 The "outsider"

**7.1.1.1 The (Indriya) Paṭipanna Sutta** (S 48.18) records the Buddha as stating that when we lack the 5 faculties—faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom—we are, in reality, still "**outsiders**" (*bāhira*).<sup>94</sup> This means that we are not yet on the noble eightfold path: *to be on the path means* that we should at least be streamwinners.

Those who are not yet streamwinners, that is, who have not reached the path of awakening, especially those still caught up in sensual pleasures and worldliness, are said to be "**worldlings**" (*puthujjana*). They are caught in the crowds and crowdedness of the world of impermanence, suffering and non-self.

With an understanding of the Buddha's teaching, we can rise above the "uninstructed worldlings" (*assutavā puthujjanā*)—we should be properly "instructed" (*sutavā*) in the Buddha's teaching so that we can head for the path. The best place to begin our inner quest is in studying the suttas and practising their teachings.

**7.1.1.2** We should properly understand what it means to be "outsiders" to the path. This is *not a* statement about status, which is some kind of title conferred by some Buddhist or monastic authority, that, for example, streamwinners are on a higher status than us. The suttas use this term to remind us of the actual **state** that we are in right now, when we do not aspire or have not aspired for streamwinning in this life itself.<sup>95</sup>

Having aspired to attain streamwinning in this life itself is again not a *status*, but a state or task we remind ourself we have taken up. This task is that of habitually reflecting on **impermanence**.<sup>96</sup> Then, keeping the 5 precepts is our moral training; the perception of impermanence (*anicca,saññā*) is our mindfulness training; both of this will bring us some level of practical wisdom and the merits (good karma) to live as "good worldlings" (*kalyāṇa puthujjana*).

<sup>92</sup> "Formations" (*saṅkhārā*) are conditioned states, ie, all of our universe, animate and inanimate: they are of the nature of arising and ceasing. For details, see *Saṅkhārā*, SD 17.6.

<sup>93</sup> The full Pali sentence is *maraṇa,saññā kho pan'assa ajjhataṃ supaṭṭhitā hoti*.

<sup>94</sup> S 48.18,4/5:202 (SD 56.11 = SD 47.19).

<sup>95</sup> See **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3.

<sup>96</sup> See **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

**7.1.1.3 As a good worldling**—a spiritual state conducive to Dharma training—our task is to understand the true purpose of Dharma-life, so that we understand what it means to aspire to streamwinning in this life itself. We accept the true reality of **impermanence** either out of faith (accepting the sutta teachings on impermanence) or through wisdom (investigating the suttas on the teachings on impermanence). Doing so—and habitually reflecting on impermanence—the Buddha guarantees us that we will attain streamwinning in this life itself or definitely at our dying moment (when we are propelled by habitual karma into a new birth): this is the essence of **the (Anicca) Cakkhu Sutta** (S 25.1).

Technically, even as “good worldlings” [7.1.1] we are still “outsiders,” but this is merely our current state of practice. We are like qualified candidates who have signed up for a university course, and awaiting classes to start. Then, we are *no more outsiders*; as streamwinners we are true “learners” (*sekha*). [7.1.2]

**7.1.1.4** In this connection, we should distinguish 2 kinds of path-limbs: the mundane (*lokiya*) and the supramundane (*lok’uttara*). **The mundane** refers to the way of the worldly, those who have not yet reached the path. We are thus still, subtly for sure, bound and tethered (*yoga*), swept around and drowned in the floods (*ogha*) of sense-desires, existence, views and ignorance: these are **the 4 influxes**, respectively, of *kāma’āsava*, *bhav’āsava*, *diṭṭh’āsava* and *avijjāsava* [1.0.3].

We are, of course, capable of doing **good** (*puñña*) and **wholesome acts** (*kusala*) despite being burdened with the influxes. Indeed, *because* we are hounded by these defiling and limiting states that deprive us of true freedom, we should grow in merit and wisdom.

In this connection, the Buddha states in **the Mahā Cattārisaka Sutta** (M 117), thus:

“Bhikshus, there are **2 kinds of right view**, I say ...

(1) the right view with influxes,<sup>97</sup> partaking of merit,<sup>98</sup> ripening in birth-bases<sup>99</sup> [acquisition of aggregates];<sup>100</sup>

(2) the right view that is noble, without influx, supramundane, a path-factor.<sup>101</sup>

And, bhikshus, what is **the right view that is noble, without influxes, supramundane, a path-factor**?

It is the wisdom, the faculty of wisdom, the power of wisdom, the awakening-factor of dharma-discernment,<sup>102</sup> the right view as a path-factor, of one whose mind is noble, whose mind is without influxes, conversant with the noble path, cultivating the noble path—

this, bhikshus, is the right view that is noble, without influx, supramundane, a path-factor.”

(M 117,7+8) SD 6.10

<sup>97</sup> “With influxes,” *s’āsava = sa + āsava*. See §13 n & Intro (4) n above.

<sup>98</sup> “Partaking of merit,” *puñña, bhāgiya*, lit “having a share of merit,” or “concerned with merit” (Gethin 2001: 216).

<sup>99</sup> “Birth-bases,” *upadhi*, lit “that on which something is laid or rests, bases, foundation, substratum.” See Intro (4) n above.

<sup>100</sup> “With influxes, ... in the form of birth-bases [acquisition of aggregates],” *s’āsavā puñña, bhāgiyā upadhi, vepakkā*. See SD 6.10 (4) n.

<sup>101</sup> “Of the noble ones, ... a path-factor,” *ariyā anāsavā lokuttarā magg’āṅgā*. This is another Abhidhamma and commentarial term, reflecting the idea that the path is only a moment (*khaṇa*), ie, when any of the 4 stages of sainthood is attained. See Analayo, *The Dawn of Abhidhamma*, 2014:134.

<sup>102</sup> “Dharma-discernment,” *dhamma, vicaya*, lit “taking apart of dharmas (mental and physical states),” also tr as “discrimination of dharmas.” It may mean “investigation of the Dhamma,” but here it means: “investigation of bodily and mental phenomena.” See M 117 n ad loc (SD 6.10).

In **supramundane right view**, wisdom is a faculty, power, awakening-factor and path-factor—this means that *wisdom* guides us, empowers us, keeps our mind focused, so that we are heading for the path; and if we are already on it, to help us progress further up the path. This definition refers to our cognitive function (how our mind works) rather than right view as an objective theory.

Right view is usually defined as the knowledge of the 4 noble truths (eg, **the Sacca,vibhaṅga Sutta**, M 141).<sup>103</sup> In other words, an intellectual or conceptual understanding of the noble truths is mundane right view, while the direct knowledge of the truth by realizing nirvana is supramundane right view.

### 7.1.2 The learner

**7.1.2.1** Once we have reached the noble path as streamwinners—having broken the 3 fetters of *self-identity view, doubt, and attachment to rituals and vows*<sup>104</sup>—we become **learners** (*sekha*), those who are truly ready and able to learn and train on the path. We are then endowed with the 5 faculties: we have *faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom*, each at various strengths. We are certainly bound for awakening.

#### The 5 lower fetters (*oram, bhāgiya saṃyojana*) [SD 50.11]

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| (1) <u>self-identity view</u>             | <i>sakkāya, ditṭhi</i>        |
| (2) <u>spiritual doubt</u>                | <i>vicikicchā</i>             |
| (3) <u>attachment to rituals and vows</u> | <i>sīla-b. bata, parāmāsa</i> |
| (4) sensual lust                          | <i>kāma, rāga</i>             |
| (5) repulsion <i>or</i> ill will          | <i>paṭigha (or, vyāpāda)</i>  |

The 3 fetters (underscored), overcome by **the streamwinner** and **the once-returned** (lust, hate and delusion are weakened).

The 5 lower fetters, overcome by **the non-returned**.

#### The 5 higher fetters (*uddham, bhāgiya saṃyojana*) [SD 50.12]

|                                 |                    |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| (6) lust for form existence     | <i>rūpa, rāga</i>  |
| (7) lust for formless existence | <i>arūpa, rāga</i> |
| (8) conceit                     | <i>māna</i>        |
| (9) restlessness                | <i>uddhacca</i>    |
| (10) ignorance                  | <i>avijjā</i>      |

“fetters that obtain becoming”<sup>105</sup>

The 5 higher fetters: overcome by **the arhat**.

“fetters that obtain rebirth”<sup>106</sup>

**Table 7.1.2.2.** The 10 fetters and sainthood [= SD 50.12 Table 2.2.2]

**7.1.2.2** What or how does a learner learn? He learns to progress up **the noble eightfold path** (*ariya, atṭh’āṅgika magga*) by understanding true nature. Having broken the 3 fetters—those of self-identity view, doubt and attachment to rituals and vows [7.1.2.1]—he works to understand the nature of the 3 unwholesome roots [2.1.4.2], thus weakening them, so that he becomes a **once-returned**. He will be reborn one last time to resolve what remains of the potency of his past karma, and in that life attains arhat-hood.

**The non-returned** (who is no more reborn in the sense-world) is one who has broken all the 5 lower fetters: *the 3 fetters* [above], *sensual lust* and *repulsion*. They are called “internal fetters” (*ajjhatta saṃ-*

<sup>103</sup> M 141,24/3:251 (SD 11.11).

<sup>104</sup> See SD 56.9 (2.3.2.2).

<sup>105</sup> “Fetters that obtain existence,” *bhava, paṭilābha saṃyojana*. This and the “fetters that obtain rebirth”: see **(Catukka) Saṃyojana S** (A 4.131), SD 50.19.

<sup>106</sup> “Fetters that obtain rebirth,” *upapatti, paṭilābha saṃyojana*: see prec n.

*yojana*) because they imprison us in the world of senses with a physical sense-based body.<sup>107</sup> The non-returner is reborn in the highest of the form-dhyana world, the pure abodes (*suddh'āvāsa*).<sup>108</sup>

**The arhat** is no more reborn because he has broken not only the lower 5 fetters, but also the 5 higher fetters: *lust for form existence, lust for formless existence, conceit, restlessness and ignorance*. These are called “external fetters” (*bahiddhā saṃyojanā*) since they imprison even the learners—the streamwinners, the once-returners and the non-returners—to the form world or the formless world.

**7.1.2.3** This figure of speech should not be misconstrued as meaning that we must advance following the sequence of the 8 limbs until we reach our destination. If this were the case, then we should have first realized right view and the penetration into true reality before all the other limbs, and the goal seems to be the 8<sup>th</sup> limb, right concentration!

In practice, however, the path takes the form of **the 3 trainings** (*sikkha-t, taya*), thus:

### mundane path

“outsiders” working for streamwinning

#### **1. right view**

2. right thought (intention)

6. right effort

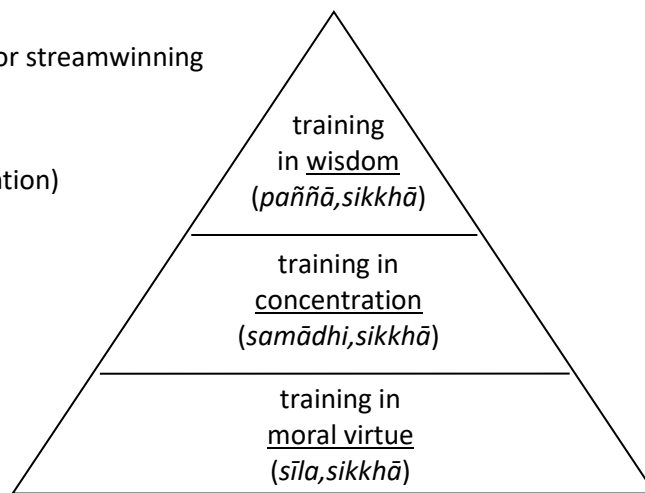
7. right mindfulness

8. right concentration

3. right speech

4. right bodily action

5. right livelihood



### supramundane path

the “noble path”

#### **10. right freedom**

#### **9. right knowledge**

1. right view

2. right thought

6. right effort

7. right mindfulness

8. right concentration

3. right speech

4. right bodily action

5. right livelihood

**Table 7.1.2.** The 3 trainings and the supramundane path

**7.1.2.4** The path limbs not only do *not* arise one after another [7.1.2.3], they, at least in part, arise simultaneously as coexistent mental factors (*cetasika*) in a consciousness (*citta*). As a rule, then, at least 3 links are inseparably linked with any karmically wholesome consciousness, namely, 2, 6 and 7, that is, right thought, right effort and right mindfulness—as stated in **the Mahā Cattārisaka Sutta** (M 117). Hence, as soon as any of these limbs arises, the other two will do so, too.<sup>109</sup>

**Right view**, however, is always present in each and every one of the other 7 limbs, that makes them “right” (*sammā*). However, right view is not necessarily present in every wholesome state of consciousness: for example, we can be generous or kind to someone but with a deluded notion of expecting greater profit in return or making improper offerings (like giving money to monastics).<sup>110</sup> In other words, right view is certainly absent from an unwholesome consciousness (the mind behind an act).

<sup>107</sup> On these “internal fetters,” and the “external fetters” below, see **Ajjhatta Bahiddhā Saññojana S** (A 2.4.5), SD 80.5.

<sup>108</sup> See SD 23.14 (Table 3).

<sup>109</sup> M 117,9/3:72 & passim (SD 6.10).

<sup>110</sup> See **Money and monastics**, SD 4.19-23.

## 7.2 THE SUPRAMUNDANE EIGHTFOLD PATH

### 7.2.1 The non-learner (*asekha*)

When a learner [7.1.2] accomplishes his path-training, attaining at least streamwinning, he becomes a **true disciple** (*sāvaka*), as one of 8 types of noble individuals.<sup>111</sup> The streamwinner, the once-returner and the non-returner, despite being on the path, have yet to complete their journey: they need to assert themselves to attain arhathood.<sup>112</sup>

An **arhat** is one who has completed the higher moral training (*adhisīla, sikkha*), the higher mind training (*adhicitta, sikkhā*), and the higher wisdom training (*adhipaññā, sikkha*); hence, he needs no more training, he is an adept (*asekha*). This is, in fact, a name for the arhat, the fully awakened noble individual, one mentally freed just like the Buddha.<sup>113</sup>

### 7.2.2 The 10 rightnesses

**7.2.2.1 The 10 rightnesses** (*dasa sammatta*)<sup>114</sup> comprise the supramundane noble eightfold path and 2 more supramundane limbs: those of right knowledge (*sammā, ñāṇa*) and right freedom (*sammā, vimutti*) [Table 7.1.2]. The additional two limbs or path-factors denote the arhat's attainment. **Right knowledge** (*sammā ñāṇa*) is his review knowledge (*paccavekkhaṇa ñāṇa*) confirming that he has destroyed all defilements, and **right freedom** (*sammā vimutti*) is his total freedom from defilements (MA 4:135).

Hence, the **Mahā Cattārīsaka Sutta** (M 117) records the Buddha as declaring thus:

Thus, bhikshus, the learner on the path is endowed with 8 limbs, but the arhat with 10 limbs.  
(M 117,34/3:75 f), SD 6.10<sup>115</sup>

(7)

## (Dasaka) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Tens) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes  
A 10.122

**1** Bhikshus, these 10 things, when cultivated, well developed, lead to the destruction of the influxes. What are the ten?

**2** THE 10 RIGHTNESSES (*sammatta*)

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| (1) Right view;                | <i>sammā, diṭṭhi</i>   |
| (2) right thought [intention]; | <i>sammā, saṅkappa</i> |

<sup>111</sup> See **Aṭṭha Puggala S 2** (A 8.60), SD 15.10a(1.5).

<sup>112</sup> Of such individuals, it is said, "There is here something more to be done" (*atthi c'ev'ettha uttarim karaṇīyam atthi c'ev'ettha uttarim karaṇīyam*): (**Ānanda**) **Subha S** (D 10,1.31 + passim), SD 40a.13; **Assa, pura S** (M 39,3.5/1:-271), SD 10.13; **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114), SD 39.8 (1.1.1.8); (**Gaha, pati**) **Potaliya S** (M 54,14), SD 43.8; SD 51.17 (3.4.2.5).

<sup>113</sup> See **Sambuddha S** (S 22.58), SD 49.10.

<sup>114</sup> M 1:42; A 5:212.

<sup>115</sup> On the ten-limbed rightness (nature of the full spiritual path), see SD 10.16 (1.2.2); **Saṅgīti S** (D 33,3.3(6)/3:-271); **Das'uttara S** (D 34,2.2(10)/3:292); **Micchatta S** (A 10.103); **Samaṇa Vg, Paccorohaṇi Vg, Parisuddha Vg, Sādhū Vg, Ariya, magga Vg, Puggala Vg** (A 10.103-166), excl A 10.101-102; cf **Sallekha S** (M 8,12(11-20)/1:42), SD 51.8. See also SD 20.4 (3); SD 42.15 (3).

|                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| (3) right speech;        | <i>sammā,vācā</i>     |
| (4) right action;        | <i>sammā,kammantā</i> |
| (5) right livelihood     | <i>sammā,ājīva</i>    |
| (6) right effort;        | <i>sammā,vāyāma</i>   |
| (7) right mindfulness;   | <i>sammā,sati</i>     |
| (8) right concentration; | <i>sammā,samādhi</i>  |
| (9) right knowledge;     | <i>sammā,ñāṇa</i>     |
| (10) right freedom.      | <i>sammā,vimutti</i>  |

3 These 10 things, bhikshus, when cultivated, well developed, lead to the destruction of the influxes.

*dasamaṃ*

## SD 56.13a(8)

## (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Iti,vuttaka) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes | It 102/103 f

Traditional: It 4.3 or 4.1.3 Itivuttaka 4, Catukkanipāta 3

Theme: The 5 practices leading to arhathood

### 8.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

The (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta (It 102) is a brief text that defines **arhathood** as the destruction of the influxes (*āsava-k,khaya*) [1.0.3] by the mastery of the 4 noble truths [5.1]. The Sutta closes with 3 quatrains where the Buddha speaks of *diligence and wisdom* whereby we see the destruction of the influxes and the arising of final knowledge.

### 8.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

#### 8.2.1 Related sutta with same verse

The (Iti) Indriya Sutta (It 62) has these 3 verses. The first of which is the same as that in It 102,5 below:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| (1) <i>Sekhassa sikkhamānassa<br/>uju,maggānusārino<br/>khayasmim̄ paṭhamam̄ ñāṇam̄<br/>tato aññā anantarā</i>          | To the learner who is under training,<br>following the straight path,<br>there is first the knowledge in destruction (of the influxes),<br>followed immediately by final knowledge. |
| (2) <i>Tato aññā,vimuttassa<br/>ñāṇam̄ ve hoti tadino<br/>akuppā me vimuttīti<br/>bhava,sam̄yojana-k,khayā</i>          | For that one who is freed by final knowledge<br>there is such knowledge as this:<br>“Unshakable is my freedom<br>by the destruction of the fetters of being!”                       |
| (3) <i>Sa ve indriya,sampanno<br/>santo santi,pade rato<br/>dhāreti antimam̄ deham̄<br/>jetvā māram̄ sa,vāhanan̄’ti</i> | He, indeed, is one with accomplished faculties,<br>at peace, delighting in the realm of peace.<br>He bears the final body,<br>having conquered Māra with his horde. <sup>116</sup>  |

<sup>116</sup> *Māram̄ sa,vāhanam̄*. Comys give 2 senses for *sa,vahana*: “with a vehicle,” ie, on an elephant, and “with an army,” A 2:15,29\*; Sn 442; vl *sa,vāhinim̄*, Dh 175d; Tha 1166d; Ap 3.17.9/62,19. Both readings found in the suttas.

The first 2 verses recur in **the (Tika) Sekkha Sutta** (A 3.84)<sup>117</sup> and **the Vedanā Sutta 2** (It 62/53).

The 1<sup>st</sup> verse and the 1<sup>st</sup> line of 2<sup>nd</sup> verse recur in **the (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta** (It 102) [§§5+6a]. In fact, the verses in both these suttas (**It 62 + 102**) reflect very similar teachings on the arhat. The 1<sup>st</sup> verse is also quoted in the Iti,vuttaka Commentary (ItA 1:115).

## 8.2.2 Mention of *āsava-k,khaya* in the suttas

**“The destruction of the influxes”**—those of *sense-desires, existence, views and ignorance*, that bind us to ignorance, flood us with suffering—is variously described in the following suttas and texts.<sup>118</sup>

### 8.2.1.1 The Sabb’āsava Sutta (M 2)<sup>119</sup> opens by stating, thus:

“Bhikshus, I say that **the destruction of the influxes** is for one who knows, who sees, not for one who neither knows nor sees.

And knowing what, bhikshus, seeing what, is there the destruction of the influxes?

There is **wise attention** (*yoniso manasikāra*) and **unwise attention** (*ayoniso manasikāra*).

On account of unwise attention, bhikshus, unarisen influxes arise, and arisen influxes grow.

On account of wise attention, bhikshus, unarisen influxes do not arise, and arisen influxes are abandoned.” (M 2,3+4/1:7), SD 30.3

We see here that the Sutta defines **“knowing, seeing”** (*janato passato*) as “wise attention” (*yoniso manasikāra*). The Sutta then goes on to list **7 ways** by which the influxes should be abandoned, that is, *by seeing, by restraint, by reflective use, by endurance, by avoidance, by removal, and by cultivation*. The rest of the Sutta details each of these 7 ways. (ItA 2:149,18-22)

**8.2.1.2** In such sutta passages as **“through the destruction of the influxes ... the freedom of mind ... that are influx-free”** (*āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceto,vimuttiṃ*) and so on, it is “the abandonment, the utter destruction, the non-arising, the destruction mode, the non-existence,”<sup>120</sup> that is spoken of as the destruction of the influxes.

These passages occur in the following suttas:<sup>121</sup>

|                               |               |          |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| <b>Cūḷa Assa,pura Sutta</b>   | M 40,14/1:284 | SD 41.8  |
| <b>(Arahatta) Nanda Sutta</b> | U 3.2/24      | SD 43.7  |
| <b>Kalyāṇa,sīla Sutta</b>     | It 3.5.8/97   | SD 89.17 |

**8.2.1.3** In such passages as **“through the destruction of the influxes, he is a recluse”** (*āsavānaṃ khayā samaṇo hoti*) and so forth, it refers to the individual’s fruition on the path. This example is from:<sup>122</sup>

|                             |               |         |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|
| <b>Cūḷa Assa,pura Sutta</b> | M 40,14/1:284 | SD 41.8 |
|-----------------------------|---------------|---------|

<sup>117</sup> A 3.84/1:231 with *añño* for It 106’s *aññā* (SD 50.5(2)).

<sup>118</sup> These quotes are given in the Sutta’s comy: ItA 2:149,18-150,21.

<sup>119</sup> Comy calls this **the Sabb’āsava,samvara Pariyāya**, the exhortation on restraining all the influxes.

<sup>120</sup> *Sutta,padesu āsavānaṃ pahānaṃ accanta-k,khaya asamuppādo khīṇ’ākāro nātthi,bhāvo āsava-k,khaya’ti vutto.* (ItA 2:149,21 f)

<sup>121</sup> ItA 2:149,20-22.

<sup>122</sup> ItA 2:149,22. Qu at ItA 1:115.



**8.2.1.4** In this **Dhammapada** verse, *āsava-k,khaya* refers to nirvana itself, thus:

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><i>Para,vajjānupassissa<br/>niccaṃ ujjhāna,saññino</i><sup>123</sup><br/><i>āsavā tassa vaḍḍhanti<br/>ārā so āsava-k,khayā</i> (Dh 253)</p> | <p>For one who sees others' faults,<br/>who is ever fault-finding—<br/>his influxes only grows:<br/>he is far from the influxes' destruction,<br/>(ItA 2:149,24 f; quoted at ItA 1:115)</p> |
|--|---|

### 8.3 RELATED SUTTAS

For a related sutta, see **the (Sacca) Asava-k,khaya Sutta** (S 56.25), SD 56.13a(5).

The same teaching is also found in **the Sabb'āsava Sutta** (M 2,11/1:9), SD 30.3. [8.2.1.1]

(8)

## (Iti) Āsava-k,khaya Sutta

The (Iti,vuttaka) Discourse on the Destruction of the Influxes  
It 102

**1** This was indeed spoken by the Blessed One, spoken by the Arhat, thus have I heard:<sup>124</sup>

**2** “I, bhikshus, speak of the destruction of the influxes for one who knows, who sees,<sup>125</sup> not for one who knows not, sees not.

And knowing what, bhikshus, seeing what, that is **the destruction of the influxes**?

**3** KNOWING AND SEEING THE 4 NOBLE TRUTHS

- (1) There is the destruction of the influxes  
for one who knows, who sees thus: ‘This is suffering.’”
- (2) There is the destruction of the influxes  
for one who knows, who sees thus: ‘This is the arising of suffering.’”
- (3) There is the destruction of the influxes  
for one who knows, who sees thus: ‘This is the ending of suffering.’”
- (4) There is the destruction of the influxes  
for one who knows, who sees thus: ‘This is the path leading to the ending of suffering.’”

Bhikshus, knowing thus, bhikshus, seeing thus, there is the destruction of the influxes

**4** The Blessed One spoke on this matter. In this connection, he said this:

**5** *Sekhassa sikkhamānassa* To the learner who is under training,  
*uju,maggānusārino* following the path that is straight,

<sup>123</sup> *Ujjhāna,saññino* occurs at Tha 958a; comy: ThaA 3:86,3 f.

<sup>124</sup> This is said to be spoken by the laywoman **Khujj'uttarā**: see SD 16.14 (1). For comys: MA 1:63 f (MAPṬ:Be 1:146 ff); SA 2:53 f (SAPṬ:Be 2:62 ff).

<sup>125</sup> “For one who knows, one who sees,” *jānato passato*. Comy says that although both these phrases are synonymous, they have different senses here: (1) *Janato* has the characteristic of knowledge (*ñāṇa,lakkhaṇa*), while *passato* the power of knowledge (*ñāṇa-p,pabhāva*); the former is appropriate understanding (*anubodha*), the latter penetration (*paṭivedha*); (2) *passata* is the vision (*dassana*) of the path, *janato* is cultivation (*bhāvanā*) of the path; (3) one *knows* suffering, but *sees* its ending. (ItA 2:149,1-17)

- khayasmim̐ paṭhamam̐ ñāṇam̐*  
*tato aññā anantarā* there is first the knowledge in destruction (of the influxes),  
followed immediately by final knowledge.
- 6** *Tato aññā vimuttassa*  
*vimutti,ñāṇam̐ uttamam̐* After that, for him freed by final knowledge,  
*uppajjati khaye ñāṇam̐* there is the supreme knowledge that is freedom.  
*khīṇā saṃyojanā iti* There arises the knowledge of destruction:  
thus the fetters are destroyed.
- 7** *Na tv-ev'idaṃ kusītena*  
*bālena-m-avijānatā<sup>126</sup>* Indeed, this is not for the indolent,  
*nibbānam̐ adhigantabbam̐* a fool lacking in understanding:  
*sabba, gantha-p, pamocanan'ti* the realization of nirvana,  
the loosening of all knots.

This matter, too, was spoken by the Blessed One. Thus I have heard.

*Tikaṃ*

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<sup>126</sup> *Avijānatā* (mfn) (neg part of *vi* + *√jñā*, to know), “not understanding” (ItA 2:151,12). See Dh 38, 60; Tha 276 (cf 275); MA 1:39,12\*.