

19 (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Suttā 1+2

The 1st and 2nd (6-faculty) Discourses on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.29 & S 48.30 (S 5:206 f)

Theme: Mastering the 6 sense-faculties: the *sacca* tetrad

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2020

1 Introduction

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARIES

Both the **(Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa Suttas 1 and 2** have, as their paradigm, the 6 sense-faculties: the eye faculty, the ear faculty, the nose faculty, the body faculty and the mind faculty. Both these Suttas also treat the 6 sense-faculties with the *samudaya* pentad—“arising ... ceasing ... gratification ... danger ... and escape.”

1.1 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE

1.1.1 The 6 sense-faculties—the 5 physical senses and the mind—are the same as the 6 internal sense-bases (*ajjh’āyatana*).¹ Although conventionally, the 5 physical senses are the tools of how we *sense* the world, the reality of it, according to early Buddhism, is that they are how the mind constructs our virtual realities of *sights, sounds, smells, tastes and touches*. In so doing, the mind fails to see, as it really is, the “arising and ceasing” of the sense-experiences.

1.1.2 The fullest or most elaborate treatment of **the *samudaya* pentad** is found in **the Pubbe Sambodha Sutta 1** (S 35.13), SD 14.9. The Sutta takes each of the faculties and reads it in the framework of the *samudaya* pentad. Such a passage is meant to be read fully for personal or group reflection or as a preamble to a sitting meditation. Hence, they should never be abridged in print.

2 The *assāda* triad and the *samudaya* pentad

2.1 Since the paradigm of **the (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 1** (S 48.29) is the 6 sense-faculties [§2], it is easy to see these faculties for what they really are (impermanent, etc), as “arising ... ending,” and “the way leading to its ending,” too, should be understood. This is **the *assāda* triad**, which is actually a simplified version of the *samudaya* pentad.²

The *samudaya* pentad—arising (*samudaya*), ceasing [passing away] (*atthagama*), gratification (*assāda*), danger (*ādīnava*) and escape (*nissaraṇa*)—is a more elaborate application of the 4 noble truths in seeing true reality. The 4 truths are, however, applied in a different order.³

The 1st noble truth encompasses the “**arising**” and “**falling**” of the *samudaya* pentad representing the true nature of things: impermanent, etc. The “**gratification**” and “**danger**” of both the *assāda* triad and the *samudaya* pentad represent the 2nd truth, that is, the arising of suffering, namely, due to *craving*. Finally, the “**escape**” of the *samudaya* pentad encompasses the last 2 truths: the path and nirvana.⁴

¹ *Ajjhatt’āyatana*, “internal sense-bases” 6: **Salāyatana Vibhaṅga S** (M 137,4), SD 29.5.

² On the *assāda* triad, see SD 56.16 (2,2,4,2). On the *assāda* triad and the *samudaya* triad, see SD 56.16 (2.2.4.2+2.2.4.4).

³ On how the *samudaya* pentad is related to the 3 characteristics (impermanence, suffering and non-self), see SD 14.6 (1.1.2).

⁴ The earliest sequence of the 4 truths was prob 1-2-4-3, that is, ... the path, ending with nirvana, such as in **Mahā Salāyatana S** (M 149,11 etc) + SD 41.9 (2.4) ↑SD 53.26 (2).

The following diagram shows how the 3 formulas—the 4 truths, the *assāda* triad and the *samudaya* pentad—are related:

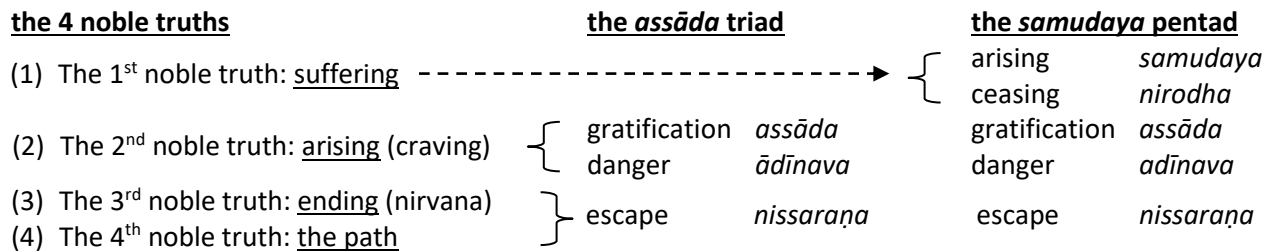


Diagram 2: The truths, *assāda* and *samudaya*

2.2 Diagram 2, at first glance, shows how, from the 4-truth formula, we get the *assāda* triad,⁵ which evolved into the *samudaya* pentad. **The *assāda* triad** simply warns us that when we do *not* understand what **suffering** (*dukkha*) really is, we will *not* be able to recognize it. Hence, we are deluded into seeing what is potentially a source of suffering to be *pleasurable, profitable* or *beneficial*; we perceive this as being *gratifying*.

When we see **gratification** (*assāda*) in this manner, we fall into **danger** (*ādīnava*) or grave disadvantages, that is, wrong faith, wrong application of energy, wrong mindfulness, wrong use of concentration, and wrong (unwholesome) "wisdom." We will suffer the painful consequence of this delusion for a long time to come.

2.3 Similarly, from **Diagram 2**, we can see how our delusion can lead us astray even when we well know the nature of suffering—that all conditioned things *arise* and *cease*—since we fail to see true sense of its **gratification** (that it is not really *satisfying* at all). In other words, despite the fact that we know Buddhism or are learned in a lot of things, yet, we choose or are compelled to do wrong and bad.

We then put ourself in the real **danger**, the painful disadvantages, of suffering, the bitter fruit of such action (or non-action). However, in either case—whether it is the *assāda* triad or the *samudaya* pentad—when we do see the danger and disadvantages of wrong or bad actions, then, we are able to find the **escape** (*nissaraṇa*) from their bitter fruits.

Then, we have cultivated our faith in right and good; we exert our energy in the wholesomeness of moral living; we cultivate mindfulness in keeping our mind calm and clear; as a result, wisdom, the wholesome application of knowledge and skills, so that we are free from suffering and gain true happiness. We have well cultivated **the 5 spiritual faculties**.

2.4 Another implication of **Diagram 2**—based on the idea that the simpler structure evolves into more complicated structure—is that the *assāda* triad [2.1] is the oldest of the models. From it is derived the *samudaya* pentad. In between these 2 formulas is the 4-truth model, which seems to have evolved from the *assāda* triad, and then evolved into the *samudaya* pentad.

However, we must also consider the possibility of parallel or separate developments, where both the *assāda* triad and the *samudaya* pentad are formulas used by the Buddha, based on the 4 noble truth teachings in connection with different paradigms. The *assāda* triad, for example, is applied to the 5 spir-

⁵ For a similar explanation of the *assāda* triad, see also SD 14.6 (2).

itual faculties,⁶ while the better known *samudaya* pentad is used for the 5 aggregates,⁷ the 6 sense-faculties⁸ and the 5 feeling faculties.⁹ Then, there is also the *sacca* tetrad, based on the 4 noble truths.¹⁰

SD 56.19a (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 1

The 1st (6-faculty) Discourse on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.29/5:206
S 5.4.3.9 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 3, Chaḷindriya 9
Theme: Mastering the 6 sense-faculties: the *samudaya* pentad

2 “Bhikshus, there are these **6 faculties**. What are the six?

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| (1) The eye faculty; | <i>cakkhu’ndriya</i> |
| (2) the ear faculty; | <i>sot’indriya</i> |
| (3) the nose faculty; | <i>ghān’indriya</i> |
| (4) the tongue faculty; | <i>jivh’indriya</i> |
| (5) the body faculty; | <i>kāy’indriya</i> |
| (6) the mind faculty. | <i>man’indriya</i> |

THE SAMUDAYA PENTAD

3 Those ascetics or brahmins, bhikshus, who do not understand, as they really are, **the arising and the ceasing, the gratification, the danger, and the escape** regarding these 6 faculties: I do *not* consider them to be ascetics among ascetics or brahmins among brahmins, and these venerable ones do *not*, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, in this very life, enter and dwell in the goal of recluseship or the goal of brahminhood.

4 But, bhikshus, those ascetics and brahmins who do understand, as they really are, **the arising and the ceasing, the gratification, the danger, and the escape** regarding these 6 faculties: they I consider to be ascetics among ascetics and brahmins among brahmins, *and these venerable ones, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge, in this very life, enter and dwell in the goal of recluseship or the goal of brahminhood.*”

— *navamaṃ* —

⁶ (Indriya) Araḥanta S 1 (S 48.4), SD 56.16a.

⁷ (Khandha) Araḥanta S (S 22,110), SD 56.16.e.

⁸ (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Araḥanta S (S 48.33), SD 56.16d.

⁹ (Sukh’indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 2 (S 48.35), SD 56.20c.

¹⁰ (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa S 2 (S 48.30), SD 56.19b.

SD 56.19b (Cha-ḷ-indriya) Samaṇa,brāhmaṇa Sutta 2

The 2nd (6-faculty) Discourse on Recluses and Brahmins | S 48.30/5:206 f
 S 5.4.3.9 Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 4, Indriya Saṃyutta 3, Chaḷindriya 10
 Theme: Mastering the 6 sense-faculties: the *sacca* tetrad

THE SACCA TETRAD

3 “Those ascetics or brahmins, bhikshus,
 (1) who do not understand **the eye faculty**, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
 (2) who do *not* understand **the ear faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (3) who do *not* understand **the nose faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (4) who do *not* understand **the tongue faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (5) who do *not* understand **the body faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (6) who do *not* understand **the mind faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 —I do not consider them to be ascetics among ascetics or brahmins among brahmins,
 and these venerable ones do *not*, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge,
 in this very life attain and dwell in the goal of asceticism or the goal of brahminhood. [207]

4 But, bhikshus, those ascetics and brahmins,
 (1) who do understand **the eye faculty**, its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending;
 (2) who *do* understand **the ear faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (3) who *do* understand **the nose faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (4) who *do* understand **the tongue faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (5) who *do* understand **the body faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 (6) who *do* understand **the mind faculty**, *its arising, its ending, and the way leading to its ending*;
 —they I consider to be ascetics among ascetics or brahmins among brahmins,
 and these venerable ones, by realizing it for themselves with direct knowledge,
 in this very life attain and dwell in the goal of recluseship or the goal of brahminhood.”

— dasamaṃ —

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