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(Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta

The (Eights) Discourse to Puṇṇiya | **A 8.82**
(Saṅkhitta) Puṇṇiya Sutta The Shorter Puṇṇiya Discourse
 Theme: How to grow in true discipleship
 Translated by Piya Tan ©2020

1 Sutta summary and significance

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

The **(Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 8.82) describes the 8 stages of discipleship, how one evolves from the arising of faith in the 3 jewels, to understanding and practising the Dharma. In other words, this is how we progress from wise faith to right practice of the Buddha's teaching as the basic stages of discipleship.

1.2 SUTTA SIGNIFICANCE: THE STAGES OF DISCIPLESHIP (8, 10, 12 STAGES)

1.2.1 The 8 stages of discipleship:

1.2.1.1 The (Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta (A 8.82) lists the 8 stages of discipleship as follows:

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|--|---|
| (1) One who has faith, | <i>saddho</i> |
| (2) approaches (the Tathagata), | <i>upasaṅkamitā</i> |
| (3) attends (on him), | <i>payirupāsītā</i> |
| (4) questions him, | <i>paripucchitā</i> |
| (5) listens to the Dharma attentively; | <i>ohita,soto dhammaṃ suṇāti</i> |
| (6) having heard the Dharma, he holds it in mind; | <i>sutvā ca dhammaṃ dhāreti</i> |
| (7) of that Dharma that he remembers, he examines its teachings, and | <i>dhammānaṃ atthaṃ upaparikkhati</i> |
| (8) understands both the Dharma and its meaning, and practises in keeping with the Dharma, | <i>attham aññāya dhammam aññāya
dhammānudhamma,paṭipanno hoti</i> |

1.2.1.2 These **8 stages of discipleship** refer to our progressive progress from the very start of the arising of faith in the Dharma in us to the time when we are properly practising the Dharma. This octad is unique in having “**questioning**” (*paripucchitā*) the teacher as a distinct 4th step of discipleship as a Dharma-inspired teacher (A 10.83) or a true practitioner (A 8.82). [Table 1.2.3; 1.2.3.4]

1.2.2 The 10 stages of the disciple teacher:

The **(Dasaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 10.83) lists the 10 stages of the disciple teacher as being endowed with the 8 stages of discipleship plus the following 2 stages (SD 57.23):

- (9) he is a good speaker with a good delivery,
 one endowed with a pleasant voice,
 articulate in enunciation, urbane [polished] in speech,
 clear-voiced, free from hoarseness,
 and that clarifies meanings;

(10) and he is one who **instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens**
his fellow brahmacharis

*sandassako ca hoti samādapako sam-
uttejako sampahaṃsako
sa, brahmacārīnaṃ*

1.2.3 The 12 stages of full discipleship

1.2.3.0 The Caṅkī Sutta (M 95) and the Kīṭā, giri Sutta (M 70) list the following 12 stages of full discipleship:¹

“To the extent of examining (*samannesamāno*)² him (the Buddha or the teacher), he observes (*samanupassati*) that he is purified of states of delusion, he thus puts **faith** in him.³

- | | |
|--|---|
| (1) (Out of faith ,) <u>he approaches</u> him. | <i>(saddhā, jato) upasaṅkamati
payirūpāsati</i> |
| (2) Having approached, <u>he draws near [attends] to him</u> . ⁴ | <i>sotaṃ odahati [paripucchitā]</i> |
| (3) Having drawn near to him, <u>he lends his ear</u> . ⁵ [He questions] ⁶ | <i>dhammaṃ suṇāti</i> |
| (4) Having lent his ear, <u>he listens to the Dharma</u> . | <i>dhammaṃ dhāreti</i> |
| (5) Having heard the Dharma [teachings], <u>he remembers the Dharma</u> . | <i>atthaṃ upaparikkhati</i> |
| (6) Having remembered the Dharma, <u>he examines their meaning</u> . | <i>dhammā nijjhānaṃ khamanti</i> |
| (7) Having examined their meaning, <u>he reflectively accepts them</u> . | <i>sati chando jāyati</i> |
| (8) Having reflectively accepted them, <u>desire⁷ for mindfulness arises</u> . | <i>ussahati</i> |
| (9) Having desire for mindfulness, <u>he exerts himself</u> . | <i>tulayati</i> |
| (10) Exerting himself, <u>he weighs [harmonizes] it</u> . | <i>padahati⁸</i> |
| (11) Having weighed it, <u>he strives</u> . | |
| (12) With a striving mind, he realizes the ultimate truth with his own body, he <u>sees</u> it (true reality) by <u>penetrating it with wisdom</u> . ⁹ | <i>sacchikaroti</i> |

1.2.3.1 “Out of **faith**, he approaches (*upasaṅkamati*) him (the Buddha or the teacher).” [1.2.3.0].

The Commentary adds that we should approach the teacher “**respectfully**” (*garūnaṃ samīpaṃ gacchati*, “go near with respect”),⁹ which includes serving him as necessary and not being intrusive or distracting—as the wanderer Sāriputta did when he first saw the elder Assaḍi on the latter’s almsround.¹⁰ The idea here is clearly that we should be able to “feel” the inner peace and outer radiance of a good Dharma teacher.

The Buddha clearly discourages us from blind faith, that is, to believe, follow or respect someone, especially a teacher because of external features or our perception, especially from one’s looks (*rūpa*), voice (*ghosa*), or austerity or holiness (*lūkha*).¹¹ Our faith should arise only from some significant level of wholesome understanding of one’s *moral virtue, mental concentration and wisdom*, or from *teachings* of

¹ For nn, see **Caṅkī S** (M 95,20), SD 21.15; also M 70,23 etc (SD 11.1),

² See SD 21.15 (1.3.2).

³ *Yato naṃ samannesamāno visuddhaṃ mohaṇīyehi dhammehi samanupassati*. On *samannesanā*, see SD 21.15 (1.3.2). For comy on these 12 steps, see foll sections.

⁴ See “venerate” at M 95,14a n + SD 21.15 (5(3) n).

⁵ See SD 21.15 (5(4) n).

⁶ “He questions” (*paripucchitā*), instead of “he lends an ear” (*sotaṃ odahati*), is found in both **A 8.82,15 + A 10.-83,19**, as step 4 in either sutta. [1.2.3.4]

⁷ Also *will* or *will-power* in the simple psychological sense, without any philosophical connotation.

⁸ *Padahati* and *ussahati*: see SD 21.15 (9) n.

⁹ MA 3:193,7.

¹⁰ See SD 42.8 (1.2); SD 51.5 (5.2.3.10).

¹¹ **Rūpa S** (A 4.65/2:71) + SD 3.14 (7); also Pug 4.22/53 f; SD 3.14 (7+8).

Table 1.2.3. Comparative Table of the 12, 10 and 8 steps of discipleship (*unique steps are highlighted in bold*)**The 12 steps of discipleship***full discipleship (ending in arhathood):***Caṅkī Sutta** (M 95,20), SD 21.15;**Kiṭṭhā, giri Sutta** (M 70,23 etc), SD 11.1.

For translation and notes, see SD 57.22 (1.2.3.0).

- (1) *saddhā, jāto ...
upasaṅkamati*
- (2) *payirupāsati*
- (3) ***sotaṃ odahati***
- (4) *ohita, soto dhammaṃ suṇāti*
- (5) *sutvā ca dhammaṃ dhāreti*
- (6) *dhātānaṃ dhammānaṃ atthaṃ
upaparikkhati*
- (7) ***dhamma, nijjhānaṃ khamanti***
- (8) ***dhamma, nijjhāna, khantiyā sati chando
jāyati***
- (9) ***chanda, jāto ussahati***
- (10) ***ussahitvā tuletī***
- (11) ***tulayitvā padahati***
- (12) ***pahitatto samāno Kayena c'eva
paramaṃ saccaṃ sacchikaroti paññāya
ca naṃ ativijjha passati***

The 10 steps of discipleship*the making of a disciple teacher (streamwinner or higher):***(Dasaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 10.83,19), SD 57.23.

For translation, see SD 57.23.

- (1) *saddho*
- (2) *upasaṅkamitā*
- (3) *payirupāsitā*
- (4) *paripucchitā*
- (5) *ohita, soto dhammaṃ suṇāti*
- (6) *sutvā ca dhammaṃ dhāreti*
- (7) *dhātānaṃ dhammānaṃ atthaṃ
upaparikkhati*
- (8) *attham aññāya dhammam aññāya
dhammānudhamma, paṭipanno hoti*
- (9) *kalyāṇa, vak, karaṇo poriyā vācāya
samannāgato vissatṭhāya anelaḷāya
atthassa viññāpaniyā sabrahmacārīnaṃ*
- (10) *sandassako ca hoti samādapako sam-
uttejako sampahaṃsako sa, brahmacārī-
naṃ*

The 8 steps of discipleship*the making of a disciple (sāvaka), ie, stream-winning or higher:***(Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 8.82,15), SD 57.22.

For translation, see SD 57.22.

- (1) *saddho*
- (2) *upasaṅkamitā*
- (3) *payirupāsitā*
- (4) *paripucchitā*
- (5) *ohita, soto dhammaṃ suṇāti*
- (6) *sutvā ca dhammaṃ dhāreti*
- (7) *dhātānaṃ dhammānaṃ atthaṃ
upaparikkhati*
- (8) *attham aññāya dhammam aññāya
dhammānudhamma, paṭipanno hoti*

any of these 3 trainings. This is called “rooted faith” (*mūlika saddhā*), that is, rooted in moral virtue, concentration and wisdom, or “wise faith” (*avecca-p,pasāda*).¹²

1.2.3.2 “Having approached, he draws near [attends] (*payirūpāsati*) to him.”¹³ [1.2.3.0]. While we are still happy and radiant with wise faith [1.2.3.1]. Faith shines in us like a great radiance revealing goodness in 3 ways: in the teacher, in the teaching and in us. Our faith at once draws us to what we understand to be its source, the teacher.

We are drawn to the teacher because we still do not fully know the teaching, much less understand it. Even less so, do we know or understand our own self. When we remain at this stage of “drawing near,” we are only receiving teachings from him; we are dependent on him. Hence, we can never be better than him; we are just the teacher’s shadow; or worse, we may be blinded by the light that we mistake the teacher to be. In other words, this is a phase of learning from which we need to grow further in tutelage.

In **the (Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 8.82) and **the (Dasaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 10.83), their step 4 is that of questioning the teacher. In the 12-step discipleship, “questioning” is subsumed in its step 4, “he listens to the Dharma.”¹⁴

1.2.3.3 “Having drawn near to him, he lends his ear (*sotaṃ odahati*).”¹⁵ [1.2.3.0]. The idea of drawing near a teacher [1.2.3.2] is to master the teaching. Understandably, we need to direct our attention not to the teacher’s person, voice or austerity—not to attribute charisma to him—but to his wholesome qualities [1.2.3.1], which authenticates the teachings that he delivers. Only when we truly attend to the teaching of the speaker does he become a teacher, and we truly *a listener*. It is the teaching that connects us as a teacher and a listener. The Dharma only arises when we understand it by our own effort or the teacher’s true wisdom.¹⁶

1.2.3.4 “Having lent his ear, he listens to the Dharma (*dhammaṃ suṇāti*).” [1.2.3.0]. “Listening” here refers to directing our mind to the teacher and opening our heart to the teaching. **The Dhamma-s-savana Sutta** (A 5.202) lists these 5 benefits from listening to the Dharma:¹⁷

- (1) we hear what we have not heard before;
- (2) having heard, we purify ourself (with wholesome thoughts);
- (3) we cross over doubts;
- (4) we straighten out [refine] our views; and
- (5) our heart brightens with faith.

Benefits 4+5 imply that we must **ask questions** often (*paripucchitā*)—which is specifically listed as step 4 in **the (Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** [§§6 f] and **the (Dasaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 10.83,6 f), SD 57.23.

For these reasons, too, the teacher should ensure that he *is* teaching the Buddha Dhamma, and not merely entertaining or captivating the crowd with his charisma and charades. Then, he would attract fans and become a cult figure; we are but his followers, his shadow, not true learners of Dharma. We can

¹² Comy glosses *saddhā* as *okappaniya,saddha* [*okappaniya-*], “believable, trustworthy, inspiring faith” (MA 3:-193,6, 426,15), which is not as strong as the sutta terms. On “wise faith,” see **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n) + SD 3.3(4.2). As a description of a streamwinner, see **Ogatha S**, SD 3.3(4.1.4).

¹³ See “venerate” at M 95,14a n + SD 21.15 (5(3) n).

¹⁴ See SD 57.22 (1.2.3.0 + 1.2.3.4).

¹⁵ See SD 21.15 (5(4) n).

¹⁶ See **Vimutt’āyatana S** (A 5.26), esp the 1st + 2nd grounds (when listening to the Dharma, and when teaching it, respectively) for liberation (SD 21.5).

¹⁷ A 5.202/3:248, (SD 3.2(5.1)).

never be better than him, especially when he is unawakened and holds wrong views.¹⁸ Only when we love and live the Dhamma will we grow as individuals out of the shadows of emotional dependence and spiritual ignorance. [1.2.3.2]

1.2.3.5 “Having heard the Dharma [teachings], he remembers the Dharma (*dhammaṃ dhāreti*).” [1.2.3.0]. Having heard the Dharma, we should remember them. In other words, the listening should be “deep” (*sotaṃ odahati*, “to fix the ear to” the teaching) [1.2.3.4]. To forget the teaching is not to hear it. And we are likely to forget teachings despite our best efforts; hence, we need to listen to the same teaching, as it were, again and again. In truth, whenever we listen to a teaching that is well taught, it is a *new* lesson.

We remember it by connecting it with what we have heard before and with our own experiences. To properly remember a teaching means that it is no more an external event, but our own experience. We have *become* the teaching in some subtle spiritual metamorphosis like a caterpillar in its safe cocoon of self-understanding. In this way, we become “well-versed in the Dharma by remembering it” (*paṇṇaṃ katvā dhāreti*).¹⁹

1.2.3.6 “Having remembered the Dharma, he examines their meaning (*atthaṃ upaparikkhati*).” [1.2.3.0]. What contributes to our true growth, that spiritual metamorphosis [1.2.3.6]? We need to keep examining the Dharma that we have remembered and known. The Pali term here is quite specific: “he examines the meaning” of those teachings. Like many important Pali words, *attha* is polysemic: it can mean “meaning” or “sense,” and also “purpose” or “goal.”

From our study, it is well known that the first 2 truths refer to **the meaning of life**: (1) that suffering (*dukkha*) is universal (to exist is change; change is unsatisfactory); (2) that suffering arises from craving (*taṇhā*) (a thirst for grasping and clinging to the impermanent and unsatisfactory). Why is it necessary to understand *the meaning of life*? When we truly understand it, we then really know what **the purpose of life** is, that is, to grow, evolve, out of *all* that is suffering or unsatisfactory.²⁰

1.2.3.7 “Having examined their meaning, he reflectively accepts them (*dhammā nijjhānam²¹ khamanti*).” [1.2.3.0]. **A 8.82** (the 8 steps of discipleship) and **A 10.83** (the 10 steps) have instead: “he understands both the Dharma and its meaning, and practises in keeping with the Dharma,” which gives a broader, more general, approach to the practice. A 8.82 lays out the steps of training for becoming a Dharma practitioner (not just a statistical or nominal Buddhist), while A 10.83 gives the steps for becoming a Dharma-inspired teacher.

In all these cases, we need to understand the meaning of the Buddha’s teaching: the question remains, “What is the meaning of ‘meaning?’” Having understood **the meaning** of the Buddha’s teaching in terms of the first 2 noble truths, we then examine its **purpose** (ie, the last 2 noble truths): to practise the Dharma for reaching the path of awakening, and attain the path at least as streamwinners, if not nirvana itself.²²

The basic (or main) practice here is that of **reflecting (or perception) on the impermanence** (*anicca-saññā*) of everything, the “**all**” (*sabba*). This refers to understanding that *all* that we know with (the means

¹⁸ On famous teachers holding wrong views, see **(Ahita) Thera S** (A 5.88), SD 40a.16.

¹⁹ MA 3:193,9.

²⁰ On the 4 noble truths, see **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11), SD 1.1.

²¹ **Nijjhāna-k,khanti** (f) [*nijjhāna + khanti*¹ DP sv], receptivity to, readiness to accept, reflection: ThīA 268,13; CA 319,28. The vb for *nijjhāna* is *nijjhāyati* or *nijjhāti*, looks at, observes carefully; scrutinises; reflects on; meditates (on) (M 1:334,18 f, 3:14,5; A 5:323,18; S 3:140,27, 142,32*).

²² Here, the 4 truths follow the “practice sequence,” 1-2-4-3, instead of the better known “teaching sequence.” See **Mahā Saḷ-āyatanika S** (M 149,11 etc) + SD 41.9 (2.4); SD 53.26 (2).

of knowledge) are our 6 senses (seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching/feeling and thinking); and that *all* that we can know (what is known) are the 6 sense-objects (forms,²³ sounds, smells, tastes, touches and thoughts)—as taught in **the Sabba Sutta** (S 35.23).²⁴

When we reflect on the impermanence, say, of our physical body, we have a better understanding of its true nature. Then, applying this wisdom to all other sense-objects or to the 5 aggregates (form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness), we see that “all” is impermanent. Whatever is impermanent is unsatisfactory (suffering). That which is impermanent and unsatisfactory has no essence, no selfhood.

To master a part of the teaching is to master the whole of it. When we act with self-effort, we broaden and deepen our understanding, seeing how the various aspects of the teachings connect together. These aspects, in full, constitute the 37 wings of awakening (*satta, tirīsa bodhi, pakkhiya dhamma*), which is a summary of the Buddha’s teachings.²⁵

1.2.3.8 “Having reflectively accepted them, desire²⁶ for mindfulness arises (*sati chando jāyati*).”

[1.2.3.0]. The Commentary explains *chando jāyati* as meaning “there arises (in him) the desire to act with wholesome desire” (*kattu, kamyatā kusala, chando jāyati*).²⁷ What is it that motivates us, that moves us on to train and grow in the Dharma?

Once we see and understand the meaning of life in the light of true reality, we are overcome with a powerful sense of urgency (*saṃvega*). We truly see this world blazing with greed, hate and delusion, a burning house, and we at once rush out of it. We now see **the purpose** of the Buddha’s teachings and practices: to prepare our body and mind for freedom from the worldly blaze.

We now seek to understand in greater depth the nature of moral virtue and precepts, and to cultivate them. A proper moral life wards off bodily limitations and distractions: we still the storms of our physical senses, so that our mind is clear of craving and repulsion, sufficient to serve as a firm foundation for mental training.

In the case of **A 10.83** (the 10 steps)—regarding the discipleship or training of a Dharma teacher—this step defines his 9th quality as an effective teacher: “He is a good speaker with a good delivery, has a pleasant voice, articulate in enunciation, urbane [polished] in speech, clear-voiced, free from hoarseness, and that clarifies meanings.”²⁸ These seem to refer to a person’s natural qualities. However, for most of us, we must make conscious (mindful) efforts to effectively teach the Dharma, or we need to undergo training in such skills.

1.2.3.9 “Having desire for mindfulness, he exerts himself (*ussahati*).” [1.2.3.0]. “Desire for mindfulness” simply means our will (*chanda*) and energy (*virīya*) are directed to self-understanding. Our will arising out of Dharma joy fires up with the energy to focus all our mind (*citta*) to investigate (*vīmaṃsā*) [1.2.3.10] what we really are, what is the *all* that is our experience. [1.2.3.7]

These are “**the 4 bases of success**” (*iddhi, pāda*) which builds up our meditation practice.²⁹ As a start, we notice ever more clearly how we—*our body and mind*—can hinder our personal development and

²³ “Form” (*rūpa*) here has the narrow sense of “the seen,” although this comprises of the same 4 elements (earth, water, fire, wind) as the broader “form,” referring to the body as a whole and all that is experienced.

²⁴ See **Sabba S** (S 35.23), SD 7.1.

²⁵ The 37 wings of awakening comprise the whole of the Buddha’s teachings in these 7 sets, viz: 4 focuses of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*), 4 right efforts (*samma-p, padhāna*), 4 bases of success (*iddhi, pāda*), 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*), 5 spiritual powers (*bala*), 7 limbs of awakening (*bojjhaṅga*), and noble eightfold path (*ariyaṭṭhaṅgika magga*): **Bodhi, pakkhiya, dhamma** (SD 10.1); SD 56.13a(2) (2.1).

²⁶ Also *will* or *will-power* in the simple psychological sense, without any philosophical connotation.

²⁷ MA 3:193, 10 f.

²⁸ See A 10.83, 19 (SD 57.23).

²⁹ See **Cattāro Iddhi, pāda**, SD 10.3.

spiritual progress. By respecting the body—taking it for what it really is (impermanent, unsatisfactory, nonself)—we are freer to work with our mind.

We see even more clearly how our own **mind** is *impermanent, unsatisfactory and nonself*. We begin by watching the physical manifestation of the mind as our “momentary” breath in our breath meditation. As we closely watch the in-and-out breath, its rise-and-fall, we notice it stilling itself. It’s like we have been running, feeling no more reason for running, slow down to walking; then, we stand; we sit; finally, lie down comfortably. The mind is free from hindrances and settles down in calm and joy.³⁰

In the case of **A 10.83** (the 10 steps)—regarding the discipleship or training of Dharma teacher—this step defines his 10th quality as an effective teacher: “He is one who **instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens** his fellow brahmacharis [celibate renunciants].”³¹ These qualities are often mentioned in the suttas in reference to teachings given by the Buddha and the arhats. Here, they refer to the qualities of a Dharma-inspired teacher who is also a practitioner and exemplar.

Following are the last 3 steps of the 12 steps of discipleship or “full discipleship” ending in the attaining of the path of awakening itself, as a streamwinner and so on.

1.2.3.10 “Exerting himself, he weighs [harmonizes] (*tulayati*) (his practice).” [1.2.3.0]. The Commentary explains this stage as our harmonizing with the true reality that is impermanence, suffering and nonself (*aniccam dukkham anattā’ti tulayati*). In practical terms, it is easiest for us to reflect on impermanence, such as noting how our breath comes in, goes out, or some sensation of our body rising with the in-breath, falling with the out-breath.

As we reflect on impermanence, over time, we are, in some way, harmonizing (or we should be harmonizing) our effort with concentration (and vice versa), and harmonizing our faith and our wisdom. This harmonizing is done through investigating [1.2.3.9] our mental states while meditating, when we are not in samadhi (concentration). Notice when we are putting in too much effort (then, let go); notice when we are too lax or lethargic (then, take a deep conscious breath to freshen up, or switch meditation, or do some walking meditation).

1.2.3.11 “Having weighed it, he resolutely strives (*padahati*) (for the path).”³² [1.2.3.0]. At this stage, we work more diligently and skillfully to go deeper into our meditation, become more mentally focused. The Commentary explains that this is done by harmonizing through “scrutinizing (mental states) with insight, we strive to attain the striving of the path.”³³ This is the stage when we go into deep concentration, even dhyana, to fully calm and clear our mind. Upon emerging from such a profoundly focused state, we reflect on that mind as being “mind-made; hence, conditioned and impermanent, unsatisfactory and nonself.” This is to prepare the mind to be fully calm and clear for the last step. [1.2.3.12]

1.2.3.12 “With a resolute [striving] mind, he realizes (*sacchikaroti*) the ultimate truth with his own body, he sees it by penetrating it with wisdom.” [1.2.3.0]. This last step refers to any of the path-attainment or its fruition: streamwinning, once-returning, non-returning, even arhathood itself. Having emerged from dhyana or any level of samadhi, we simply dwell in its joyful peace for as long as necessary. Then, we direct the mind to see its impermanence or conditionality (nonself).

³⁰ On the parable of the walker, see **Vitakka Santhāna S** (M 20,6.3), SD 1.6.

³¹ See A 10.83,19 (SD 57.23).

³² *Padahati* and *ussahati*: see SD 21.15 (9) n.

³³ *Evam tīraṇa, vipassanāya tulayanto magga, padhānam padahati* (MA 3:193,14 f). On a deeper level, this refers to the 2nd of 3 kinds of full understanding (*pariññā*), ie, that of the known (*ñāta, pariññā*), through scrutiny (*tīraṇa, pariññā*) and that is abandonment (*pahāna, pariññā*): SD 49.2 (4.3.5.5); SD 3.8 (6.2).

For this reason, the Commentary explains “a resolute mind” as one that is directed or “sent out” (*pahitatto’ti pesitatto*).³⁴ When this last step is properly done, we overcome at least 3 of the 10 mental fetters (*samyojana*)—self-identity view, doubt and attachment to rituals and vows.³⁵ With that we become a streamwinner; we have reached the path of awakening, and certain of awakening within 7 lives at the most.³⁶

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(Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta

The (Eights) Discourse to Puṇṇiya

A 8.82

1 Then, the venerable **Puṇṇiya** approached the Blessed One. Having approached, saluted him, and sat down at one side. Sitting at one side, the venerable Puṇṇiya said this to the Blessed One:

1.2 “Bhante, what is the reason, the condition, that **it occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma**, that at times it does *not* occur to him to do so?”³⁷

2 (1) “When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has **faith**, but does not approach him, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

3 (2) But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk has faith and (out of faith) **approaches him**, it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

4 (3) When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has *faith, approaches him*, but does not attend on him, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

5 But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk has *faith, approaches him, and attends on him*, it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

6 (4) When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him*, but does not ask questions, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

7 But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, and questions him*, it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

³⁴ MA 3:193,16. Be *pesita,citto*; cf MA 2:80 n1; ThaA 143.

³⁵ On the 3 fetters, see **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8; 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).

³⁶ On streamwinning, see S 22.109, SD 17.1a(2.3); SD 52.10a (1.2.2.2-1.2.2.3); **Entering the stream**, SD 3.3, On the fetters and sainthood, see SD 50.11 (diag 2.2.2).

³⁷ *Tathāgataṃ dhamma,desanā paṭibhāti*, lit, “a Dharma-teaching occurs to the Tathagata.” This is Pali idiom: **Anaṅgaṇa S** (M 5,31.1), SD 37.7.

8 (5) When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him*, but does not listen to the Dharma attentively, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

9 But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him*, and **listens to the Dharma attentively**, it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

10 (6) When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him, listens to the Dharma attentively*, but, having heard it, does not hold it in mind, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

11 But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him, listens to the Dharma attentively*, and **having heard it, holds it in mind**, it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

12 (7) When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him, listens to the Dharma attentively, and, having heard it, he holds it in mind* but does not examine the meaning of the teachings that he remembers, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

13 But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him, listens to the Dharma attentively, having heard it, holding it in mind*, he **examines the meaning of the teachings that he remembers**, it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

14 (8) When, Puṇṇiya, a monk has *faith, approaches him, attends on him, questions him, listens to the Dharma attentively, and, having heard it, holding it in mind, examines the meaning of the teachings that he remembers*, but understands neither the Dharma nor its meaning, and practises it not in keeping with the Dharma, it does *not* occur to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

15 But, Puṇṇiya, when a monk

- (1) has faith, **[338]**
 - (2) approaches (the Tathagata),
 - (3) attends (on him),
 - (4) questions him,
 - (5) listens to the Dharma attentively;
 - (6) having heard the Dharma, he holds it in mind,
 - (7) examines the meaning of the teachings he remembers,
 - (8) understands both the Dharma and its meaning, and practises in keeping with the Dharma,
- it *thus* occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.

saddho
upasaṅkamitā
payirupāsītā
paripucchītā
ohita, soto ca dhammaṃ suṇāti
sutvā ca dhammaṃ dhāreti
dhammānaṃ atthaṃ upaparikkhati
attham aññāya dhammam aññāya
dhammānudhamma, paṭipanno hoti

When, Puṇṇiya, one has these 8 qualities, it definitely occurs to the Tathagata to teach the Dharma.”³⁸

³⁸ *Ekanta, paṭibhāṇā tathāgataṃ dhamma, desanā hoti. Ekanta, paṭibhāṇa (mfn), "definitely occurring to" (with acc); imehi ... dhammehi samannāgato (Ce Ee so; Be Se + A 5:155,20 -ā; samannāgato'ti sāmī, atthe paccattaṃ, samannāgatassāti vuttaṃ hoti, AA 4:158,1) ~ā (Be so; Ee ~am) tathāgataṃ dhamma, desanā hoti, A 4:338,6 (tathāgata-tassa ~ā dhamma, desanā hoti, ekanten'eva paṭibhāti upaṭṭhātīti attho, AA) ≈ 5:155,21 (Ee ekantaṃ paṭibhāti ...).*

evaṃ

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