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## Lobha Pariññā Sutta

The Discourse on Fully Understanding Greed | It 9  
 Theme: Fully understanding greed destroys suffering  
 Translated by Piya Tan ©2020

## 1 Summary and significance

### 1.1 SUMMARY

**1.1.1 The Lobha Pariññā Sutta** (It 9) teaches that the full understanding of greed destroys suffering, that is, brings about **arhathood**. The Sutta has only 2 parts:

- (1) The thesis: **that one who directly knows greed is capable of the destruction of suffering**; and
- (2) **the closing verses**, elaborating on the thesis.

### 1.1.2 Arhathood

**1.1.2.1 The prose** of It 9 says that “who has directly known **greed**, has fully understood it, such a mind is rid of *lust*, abandoned it, is capable of the destruction of suffering” [§3]. The one “who has destroyed suffering” is, of course, **the arhat**, who has overcome all the 10 fetters [1.1.2.2]. In the introduction to the translation of **the Lobha Sutta** (It 1), the nature of the arhat is explained in connection with the other 3 kinds of saints: the streamwinner, the once-returner and the non-returner.<sup>1</sup>

**1.1.2.2 The verse** of It 9 (which is the same as that of It 1) should be read to reflect the intention as stated in the prose teaching [1.1.2.1], that is, those who have fully understood greed will attain arhathood [1.1.2.1]. The lines, “they | return not to this world ever again,” mean that they will not be reborn any more, since the arhats have attained nirvana. The arhat is the most liberated of the 4 kinds of path saints or noble individuals (*ariya puggala*).

The differences amongst **the 4 kinds of noble individuals** are best understood in terms of the 10 mental fetters (*dasa samyojana*), traditionally listed as follows:

(1) <u>self-identity view</u>	<i>sakkāya,ditthi</i>	} <u>The 3 fetters: streamwinner</u> +3 roots <sup>2</sup> weakened: <b>once-returner</b>
(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>	} The 5 lower fetters: <b>non-returner</b>
(5) repulsion	<i>paṭigha</i> <sup>3</sup>	
(6) greed for form existence	<i>rūpa,rāga</i>	} The 5 higher fetters: <b>arhat</b>
(7) greed for formless existence	<i>arūpa,rāga</i>	
(8) conceit	<i>māna</i>	
(9) restlessness	<i>uddhacca</i>	
(10) ignorance	<i>avijjā</i>	

**Table 2.** The 10 fetters and sainthood (basic structure)<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See SD 57.26 (1.1.2.1).

<sup>2</sup> “3 roots” = the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*): greed, hate and delusion.

<sup>3</sup> In some places, *paṭigha* is replaced by ill will (*vyāpāda*).

## 1.2 RELATED SUTTA

Both the Lobha Pariññā Sutta (It 9) and **the Lobha Sutta** (It 1), SD 57.26, share the same closing verse [§5]. From the prose of **It 9**, which speaks of the “destruction of suffering” (*dukkha-k.khaya*), that is arhathood. The last line of its verse says that those who have truly abandoned greed “**return not to this world ever again**” (*punāyanti | imañ lokañ kidācanam*) [§5ef], meaning that they are not reborn any more, since they have gained nirvana as **arhats**.

In **It 1**, however, the prose speaks of the abandoning of greed as leading to non-returning.<sup>5</sup> However, here, in **It 9**, the prose is clear: “who has directly known **greed**, has fully understood it, such a mind is rid of *lust*, abandoned it, is capable of the destruction of suffering” [§3]. It speaks of “the destruction of suffering” (*dukkha-k.khaya*), which is **arhathood**.

The verse lines, “return not to this world ever again,” in fact, is a wordplay, a double entendre (double meaning): it can refer to “non-returning” or to the “end of rebirth,” that is, **arhathood**. In the case of It 9, this line clearly should be read as referring to the latter. Hence, there is no contradiction at all, only a wordplay.

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# Lobha Pariññā Sutta

## The Discourse on Fully Understanding Greed

It 9

- 1 This was indeed spoken by the Blessed One, heard by me spoken by the Arhat.<sup>6</sup>

### THE THESIS

2 “The one who has not directly known **greed**, bhikshus, has not fully understood it, such a mind that is not rid of *lust*, not abandoned it, is incapable of the destruction of suffering.”<sup>7</sup>

3 Yet, bhikshus, one who has directly known **greed**, *has* fully understood it, such a mind that *is* rid of *lust*, abandoned it, is capable of the destruction of suffering.”<sup>8</sup>

- 4 The Blessed One said this matter [meaning]<sup>9</sup>; therein [of that matter] he says this:<sup>10</sup>

<p>5 <i>Yena lobhena luddhāse sattā gacchanti duggatim taṃ lobhaṃ samma-d-aññāya pajahanti vipassino</i></p>	<p>“Whatever greed, on account of which greedy beings go to the suffering state, that greed those wise with insight abandon with right understanding;</p>	<p><i>d</i> <i>c</i></p>
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<sup>4</sup> Cf a table on the 10 fetters, the path and the 3 trainings: SD 56.1 (Table 4.4). See also SD 40a.1 (15.4.4) n; SD 49.14 Table 2.

<sup>5</sup> See SD 57.26 (1.1.2.1).

<sup>6</sup> *Vuttam h’etaṃ bhagavata, vuttam arahatā’ti me sutam*. This is said to be spoken by the laywoman **Khujj’uttarā**. See SD 57.26 (2.2); SD 16.14 (1).

<sup>7</sup> *Lobhaṃ bhikkhave anabhijānaṃ aparijānaṃ tattha cittaṃ avirajayaṃ appajahaṃ abhabbo dukkha-k,khayāya*.

<sup>8</sup> *Lobhaṃ kho bhikkhave abhijānaṃ parijānaṃ tattha cittaṃ virajayaṃ pajahaṃ bhabbo dukkha-k,khayāyāti*.

<sup>9</sup> *Attha* is polysemic: we can take “matter” as referring to the preceding, and “meaning” as given in the foll.

<sup>10</sup> *Etam atthaṃ bhagavā avoca, tatth’etaṃ iti vuccati*. This may be seen thus: the former phrase refers to the teaching in meaning (*attha*) (true reality), reflecting the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 noble truths; the latter is its purpose (*attha*).

*pahāya na punāyanti*  
*imaṃ lokam kudācanan'ti*

having abandoned it, they  
return not to this world ever again.”<sup>11</sup>

6 This matter [meaning] too was spoken by the Blessed One. Thus I have heard.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> This verse is the same as that in **It 1** (§5), SD 57.26.

<sup>12</sup> *Ayam pi attho vutto bhagavatā. Iti me sutan ti.* The foll verse is quoted at Kvu 477 (Kvu:SR 273); cf V 2:205.