

2

Listening Beyond the Ear

Right view through listening and skillful consideration

Theme: The nature of noble discipleship

Pali passages selected and translated by Piya Tan ©2003, rev 2016

1 The early Buddhist canon

1.1 The Buddha call his disciples *sāvaka* (Skt *śrāvaka*), meaning “listeners” or “hearers,” showing the importance of listening to the Dharma. The suttas are full of stories of people who become streamwinners (*sotāpanna*), the first stage of sainthood, simply by listening to the discourses of the Buddha and his awakened disciples.

1.2 It is possible to listen to these teachings even today since they have been carefully and skillfully collected and handed out through a chanting tradition called the *bhāṇaka* (reciter) system¹ and later written down² some two decades before the beginning of the Common Era.³ However, we have to listen beyond our ears, that is with both our head and heart (analytically and openly), by listening to their exposition and by reading them ourselves.

1.3 The early teachings of the Buddha and his early disciples are written down in a scriptural language (a *Kunstsprache* or literary language) called **Pāli**, specially used for the purpose. In the early sacred texts, these teachings are known as “the teaching and the discipline” (*dhamma,vinaya*),⁴ or “the true Dharma” (*saddhamma*).⁵ In the Mahā’padesa Sutta (A 4.180), the Buddha uses *Sutta* to refer to the Dharma.⁶

1.4 A canonical system of categorizing the teachings is called the *aṅga* (“limb or part”) system, of which originally there were probably 3,⁷ then 4, later 9 and the Sanskrit tradition even has 12 limbs.⁸ Buddhaghosa, in fact, mentions 7 different classification systems.⁹ The best known system comprises 9 classes of texts, called “**the Teacher’s ninefold teaching**” (*nav’aṅga satthu,sāsana*), of which the first three listed here form the oldest classification:¹⁰

¹ On the *bhāṇaka* system, see Adikaram 1946:24-32 (ch 3); Norman 1983:8 f.; Lamotte 1988a:124-140; Hinüber 1996 §§49, 228;

² **Dīpa,vaṁsa** states that during Vaṭṭa,gāmaṇī Abhaya’s reign (29-18 BCE), the monks who had orally memorized the Tipiṭaka and its Commentaries went on to write them down on ola (palm) leaves due to the dangers of famine, war and the growing power of the newly established Abhaya,giri Vihāra that enjoyed the king’s favour (Dīpv 20.20 f). The **Mahā,vaṁsa** briefly refers to the writing down of the sacred texts at this time (Mahv 33.100 f).

³ See Adikaram 1946:79; Lamotte 1988a:365-371.

⁴ D 2:30; S 5:457; A 1:283.

⁵ M 1:47; S 2:43; A 1:18. Note that the “Abhidhamma” was not mentioned during the 1st Council and as a collection is clearly a post-Buddha compilation. See Warder 1970:10 f, 218-224; Lamotte 1988a:179-191; Hinüber 1996 §129. Monograph: Erich Frauwallner, *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and the Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems*. Albany: State University of NY Press, 1995, esp ch 1 (The Earliest Abhidharma).

⁶ A 4.180/2:167-170.

⁷ M 122.20/3:115. The 3 limbs or classes are: (1) *sutta*, (2) *geyya*, (3) *veyyākaraṇa*.

⁸ “Limbs” (*aṅga*): see Lamotte 1988a:140-149; Hinüber 1996 §10.

⁹ VA 16, DA 1:15, AA 3:5, DhsA 18. See Lamotte 1988a:141 f.

¹⁰ V 3:8; M 1:133; A 2:5, 3:186; see also prec n for Comy refs. For detailed study on *aṅga*, see Sujato, *A History of Mindfulness*, 2004:42-47 (ch 4). See also **Mahā Vedalla S** (M 43), SD 30.2 (2.1)

- (1) **Sutta**, “Pāṭimokkha Sutta,” that is, the monastic code. [Commentary: The two Vinaya Vibhaṅgas; Niddesa.]
- (2) **Geyya**, (lit “songs”) “sung verses,” that is, suttas with verses, eg the Sigāl’ovāda Sutta (D 31) (Childers DPL).
- (3) **Veyyākaraṇa**, “Suttanta” (the discourses). [Comy: Abhidhamma Piṭaka; Suttas without verses and all discourses not included in the other classes.]
- (4) **Gāthā**, “stanzas.” [Comy: Dhammapada; Thera,gāthā; Therī,gāthā; the Sutta Nipāta sections that do not bear “Sutta” in their titles.]
- (5) **Udāna**, “Verses of Uplift.” [Comy: Book 3 (82 suttas) of the Khuddaka Nikāya.]
- (6) **Iti,vuttaka**, “Thus-said Discourses” (compiled by the laywoman Khujj’uttarā) [Comy: Book 4 (112 suttas) of Khuddaka Nikāya. They open with *Vuttam h’etaṃ Bhagavatā*.]
- (7) **Jātaka**, “The Birth Stories” (verses only; the stories are commentarial). [Comy: The 500 Jātaka stories:¹¹ Book 10 of Khuddaka Nikāya.]
- (8) **Abbhuta,dhamma**, “wonderful events” (ie an early biography of the Buddha). [Comy: All Suttas involving marvellous and extraordinary events, eg the Acchariya Suttas (A 4.127-130/2:130-133).
- (9) **Vedalla**, “questions-and-answers, catechisms.” [Comy: All Suttas in the form of question-and-answer that invoke gladness and satisfaction, such as Cūḷa Vedalla Sutta (M 44/1:299), Mahā Vedalla (M 43/1:292), Sammā,diṭṭhi Sutta (M 9/1:46), Sakka,pañha Sutta (D 21/2:263), Saṅkhār’upapatti Sutta (M 120/3:99), Mahā Puṇṇama Sutta (M 109/3:15)

1.5 By the time of the 3rd Buddhist Council (held in Pāṭaliputta) under emperor Asoka in 250 BCE, the word **tipiṭaka** (“the three baskets”) is used to describe the canonical collection of Vinaya, Sutta and Abhidhamma.¹² **The Vinaya Piṭaka** (“the Basket of Discipline”) contains mostly legal texts and disciplinary case studies but also various other aspects of the Teaching. **The Sutta Piṭaka** (“the Basket of Discourses”) contains the bulk of the teachings of the Buddha and his early disciples and as such is the most important collection for our purpose of Sutta study. **The Abhidhamma Piṭaka** (“the Basket of Higher Doctrine”) is basically an anthology of technical texts rearranged (sometimes revised) into systematic lists minus their colourful metaphors and mythology.

1.6 Of special interest to us, as students, desirous of awakening, is the Sutta Piṭaka, comprising 5 collections—the “5 Nikāyas” (*pañca nikāya*), that is:

(1) Dīgha Nikāya	“the Long Discourses”	34 suttas
(2) Majjhima Nikāya	“the Middle-length Discourses”	152 suttas
(3) Saṃyutta Nikāya	“the Connected Discourses”	2889 suttas (traditionally said to be 7762) ¹³
(4) Aṅguttara Nikāya	“the Numerical Discourses”	2344 suttas (traditionally said to be 9557) ¹⁴
(5) Khuddaka Nikāya	“the Minor Discourses”	15 books (Dhammapada, Sutta Nipāta, etc) ¹⁵

¹¹ Current total: 547 Jātaka “paracanonical” stories. There are other apocryphal Jātakas, such as the Fifty Jātakas (*Paṇṇāsa Jātaka*) of SE Asia.

¹² On the development of the Tipiṭaka, see Lamotte 1988a:149-191; Warder 1970:201-224 (ch 7).

¹³ DA 22 f.

¹⁴ DA 22 f.

¹⁵ The Myanmar Canon includes the Sutta,saṅgaha, Nettippakaraṇa, Peṭakopadesa and Milinda,pañha.

2 Studying the Dharma

2.1 In his article, “Liberation: Relevance of Sutta-Vinaya” (1999), **Dhammavuddho**¹⁶ suggests that we should begin sutta study with the *Āṅguttara Nikāya*, followed by the *Saṃyutta*, the *Dīgha* and finally the *Majjhima* (1999:11 f). Of the 15 books of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*, Dhammavuddho regards these 6 as “reliable books”: *Dhammapada*, *Sutta Nipāta*,¹⁷ *Thera,gāthā*, *Therī,gāthā*, *Iti,vuttaka* and *Udāna* (1999:3). However, we can also add the *Jātaka* verses, but the stories are clearly commentarial.

2.2 The Sutta Discovery (SD) translation and essay series is a collection of works arranged by way of related teachings with annotations, commentaries and thematic essays, applying the sutta teachings to the our experiences and the current Buddhist situations. The translations follow an open intertextual approach, which has the great advantage of examining such related topics as a coherent set across various suttas and texts.

2.3 Timely personal sutta study and reflection are a powerful spiritual tonic and energizer. Group sutta study, when properly prepared and executed, is a strong catalyst for spiritual friendship. Either approach—personal study or group study—can serve as an effective part of devotional exercise (*pūjā*) or as a prelude to meditation. We will discover that the humble sutta study promises even higher fruits. “Reading the Suttas is just like sitting next to the Buddha and listening to Him.” (Dhammavuddho 1997:6).

3 Stream or ear?

3.1 Peter Masefield,¹⁸ in his groundbreaking *Divine Revelation in Pali Buddhism* (1986), discusses several interesting ideas regarding the way in which the early disciples gained right view (awakened) “at the end of a specially tailored initiation by the Buddha,” and states that, “on the basis of actual cases recorded [in the Pali Canon], acquisition of the goal of the path was as much the outcome of an oral teaching as had been the path’s entrance,” such progress and attainment occurring “often within minutes and hardly ever in more than seven days” (1986:xvii).

3.2 In fact, the notion of **the Dharma as “sound and listening”** pervades the whole Masefield’s book:

The suggestion that the Dhamma consisted of sound is confirmed most of all by the fact that those who participated in it and who had contact with it as a supermundane entity were called *sāvakas*, hearers, and said to be *sutavant*, who have heard the sound (of the Dhamma), in virtue of which they are further said to possess the *Dhammasota*, the Dhamma-ear (S 2:43 = 45 = 58; cp A 3:285 ff, 5:329 ff). That **sota should be understood here as “ear”** rather than as “stream” can be seen from the fact that the *Dhammasota* is said, in a context of hearing (*savanena*) the Dhamma, to save the one possessing it (A 3:348 ff; A 5:140). For just as the Buddha causes people to see *nibbāna* (M 1:510 ff), by means of causing the *Dhammacakku*, the Dhamma-eye, to arise within them, so too does he cause them to hear that same Dhamma by means of causing the *Dhammasota*, the Dhamma-ear, to arise within them. This is why the gift of the Dharma is likened to a blissful sound (Rawlinson, p 124 n25).

(Masefield 1986:49; emphases added, slightly edited)

¹⁶ That is, Bhikkhu Hye of Malaysia.

¹⁷ *Sutta Nipāta*, esp the last two chapters (*Aṭṭhaka,vagga* and *Pārāyana,vagga*), contains some of the oldest passages in the Canon. See Norman 1983:63-70.

¹⁸ Interestingly, both Masefield and Dhammavuddho are resident in Australia.

3.3 The term *sot'āpanna* (the first stage saint) has popularly been rendered as “streamwinner,” “stream-entrant” or similar translations. In the Saṃyutta, there are six suttas—all entitled **Pācīna Sutta** (S 45.91-96/5:38 f)—comparing the noble eightfold path to each of the rivers Ganges, to the Yamunā, to the Aciravātī, to the Sarabhū and to the Mahī. In the sixth sutta, the path is compared to all the 5 rivers.

3.4 The Commentaries, although glossing *sot'āpanna* as *magga* (the path), ignore such “stream” imageries in the Suttas, for example, *magga,sotaṃ āpanno* (DA 313), *sota,sāṅkhatena āpannā* (AA 2:349), and *ariya,magga,sotaṃ āpannā* (AA 5:44).¹⁹

It is of great interest to find that the term *sota* is not only the Pali equivalent of Vedic *srotas*, or stream, but also of Vedic *śrotas*, or ear, the organ of hearing, the act of hearing or listening to, conversancy with the Veda or sacred knowledge itself (SED sv; cp also *śrotiya*, learner in the Veda), and derived from *śru*, the very same root from which *sāvaka* itself is derived. This, together with the fact that *sotāpanna* is often found written *śrotāpanna* [or *śrota,āpanna*], rather than *srotāpanna* in Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit [see Edgerton's *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*], suggests that in *sotāpanna* we may have a reference to Vedic *śrotas* rather than to *srotas*. This being so, we should have to understand the term *sotāpanna* to mean rather “**one who has come into contact with (or undergone) the hearing.**” Such an understanding would, it may be noted, be consonant with the above commentarial explanations of the term which might be rendered, respectively, as “one who has come into contact with (or undergone) the hearing associated with the ariyan eightfold path,” “one who has come into contact with (or undergone) the hearing associated with the path” and “one who has come into contact with (or undergone) the fruition by way of the path, the so-called hearing.”

That *sota* in the term *sotāpanna* might mean “hearing,” rather than “stream,” may find further support through the presence in the Nikāyas of the term **Dhammasota** which we earlier had cause to suppose were derived from Vedic *śrotas* rather than *srota*. For it was through attainment of the *Dhammasota*, or Dhamma-ear, that one came to hear the sound of the Deathless,²⁰ just as it was through attainment of the *Dhammacakku* [Dhamma-eye] that one came to see *nibbāna* ...
(Masefield 1986:134; emphases added, slightly edited)

3.5 In his 1999 article, Dhammavuddho, too, states that **sot'āpatti**, usually rendered as “streamwinning” or “stream-entry.” Some scholars think that it can also be translated as “**ear-entry**” (or “sound-attainment”) (1999:6), suggesting that we may gain the 1st stage of sainthood through skillfully listening to the Dharma (the thesis of his article).

3.6 Having said that, it is important here that we should read **the Sāriputta Sutta 2** (S 55.5) in the Sotāpatti Saṃyutta, where the stream (*sota*) and the streamwinner (*sotāpanna*) are defined by Sāriputta, in reply to questions asked by the Buddha himself:

“Sāriputta, ‘The stream, the stream,’ so it is said. What now, Sāriputta, is the stream?”

“The stream, bhante, is this noble eightfold path itself, namely, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.”

¹⁹ Tr respectively as “attained to the path stream,” “attained to what is regarded as the stream,” “attained to the stream of the noble path.”

²⁰ Preferred tr of *amata* here is “death-free”: see DEB: amata.

“Sadhu, sadhu! [Excellent! Excellent!] Sāriputta! The stream is indeed this noble eightfold path itself, namely, right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

Now, Sāriputta, ‘Streamwinner, streamwinner,’ so it is said. What now, Sāriputta, is a streamwinner?”

“The streamwinner, bhante, is one who is endowed with this noble eightfold path itself: just as this venerable one of such a name, such a clan.”

“Sadhu, sadhu! Sāriputta! The streamwinner, Sāriputta, is indeed *one who is endowed with this noble eightfold path itself: just as this venerable one of such a name, such a clan.*”

(S 55.5/5:347 f), SD 16.5²¹

3.7 The closing sentence—“this venerable one of such a name, of such a clan” (*āyasmā evaṃ nāmo evaṃ gotto ti*)²²—is puzzling. It is probably a figure suggesting that becoming a streamwinner is like being given a name at birth or some significant time in life, that is, becoming a real part of the family (*gotra,-bhū*). Or, it simply means that the Buddha’s disciples, monastic or lay easily attain streamwinning.²³

4 Right view

4.1 THE 2 CONDITIONS FOR RIGHT VIEW. The Mahā Vedalla Sutta (M 43) is an interesting and insightful dialogue (question-answer) between Mahā Koṭṭhita (the questioner) and Sāriputta (the answerer) covering various points of the Dharma, some of which are rather subtle. Here is the section on right view:

13 [Mahā Koṭṭhita:] “Avuso, how many conditions are there for the arising of right view?

[Sāriputta:] “There are two conditions, avuso, for the arising of right view, namely, another’s voice and wise attention.²⁴

14 ... Here, avuso, right view is assisted **by moral virtue, by learning, by discussion, by meditative calm and by meditative insight.**²⁵ Here, avuso, right view is assisted by these 5 factors when it has the fruition of freedom of mind, the benefit of the fruition of freedom of mind, the fruition of freedom by wisdom, and the benefit of the fruition of freedom by wisdom.²⁶

²¹ Cf UA 306: “‘streamwinner’ means one who, having entered, having attained to the stream that is the path, remains in the fruit of streamwinning” (*sotāpanno ti magga,saṅkhāta,sotaṃ āpajjitvā pāpuṇitvā thito sotāpatti,-phalaṭṭho ti attho*). See also Gethin 2001:247-252 (§7.4 The path as a “stream”).

²² See (**Majjhima**) **Dhānañjāni S** (M 97), SD 4.9(5).

²³ For details on streamwinning and this sentence, see 16.5 (1.4).

²⁴ Comy: “Another’s voice” (*parato ghosa*) is the teaching of the helpful Dharma (*sappāya,dhamma,savana*); “wise attention” (*yoniso manasikāra*) is one’s own attention as skillful means (*attano upāya,manasikāro*). These 2 conditions are necessary for disciples to attain the right view of *insight* and the right view of the supramundane *path*. Sāriputta, hearing a verse (V 1:40) from Assaji, and thus becoming a streamwinner, is an example of hearing “another’s voice.” Both pratyeka buddhas and fully self-awakened buddhas do not rely on “another’s voice,” but gain their all-knowing (ie awakening) through “wise attention.” (MA 2:346)

²⁵ Ie, *silānuggahitā, sutānuggahitā, sākacchā’nuggahitā, samathānuggahitā, vipassanā’nuggahitā*, respectively.

²⁶ M 43,14/1:294 (SD 30.2). Comy: Right view here pertains to the path of arhathood. “Freedom of mind” and “freedom by wisdom” refer to the fruit of arhathood (MA 2:2346). See **Ākaṅkheyya S** (M 6,19/1:35 f), SD 59.1, for a related passage, where Comy says that “mind” and “wisdom” refer respectively to concentration and wisdom associated with the fruit of arhathood. Concentration is called “freedom of mind” (*ceto,vimutti*) because it is freed from *lust*; wisdom is called “freedom by wisdom” (*paññā,vimutti*) because it is freed from *ignorance* (MA 1:164 f). The former is usu the result of meditative calm (*samatha*), while the latter, the result of meditative insight (*vipas-*

4.2 RIGHT VIEW AND VIPASSANĀ. According to the Mahā Vedalla Sutta (M 43), right view has to be supported by moral virtue, by learning, by discussion, by calm and by insight (*vipassanā'nuggahitā*, M 43,13/-1:294). So much has been said in the name of “Vipassanā,” with some even proclaiming it to be “the only way.”²⁷ The short but definitive **Samatha, vipassanā Sutta** (A 2.3.10) in the Sama, citta Vagga is helpful and quoted in full here:

SD 3.2(4.2) (Vijjā Bhāgiya) Samatha Vipassanā Sutta

The Discourse on Calm and Insight (Pertaining to True Knowledge) | **A 2.3.10/1:61 = A:B 2.31**
or, **Vijjā Bhāgiya Sutta** The Discourse Pertaining to True Knowledge
Theme: Samatha and vipassana bring about liberating knowledge

- 10** Bhikshus, there are these 2 things that comprise true knowledge.²⁸ What are the two?
Calm (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*).²⁹
- 11** Bhikshus, when **calm** is cultivated, what benefit does it bring? The mind is developed.
When the mind is developed, what benefit does it bring? All lust is abandoned.
- 12** Bhikshus, when **insight** is cultivated, what benefit does it bring? Wisdom is developed.
When wisdom is developed, what benefit does it bring? All ignorance is abandoned.
- 13** Bhikshus, a mind defiled by lust cannot free itself, and wisdom defiled by ignorance cannot grow.
- 14** Thus, bhikshus, through the fading away of lust there is the freedom of mind (*ceto, vimutti*);
through the fading away of ignorance, there is the freedom by wisdom (*paññā, vimutti*).³⁰ — evaṃ —

sanā). But when they are coupled and described as “influx-free” (*anāsava*), they jointly result from the destruction of the influxes by the path of arhathood. When these 5 factors are fulfilled, the path of arhathood arises and fruits.

²⁷ On the “only way,” see **The one true refuge**, SD 3.1 (3.4).

²⁸ “That comprise true knowledge,” *vijjā, bhāgiya*, lit “have a part of knowledge,” “partake of true knowledge” (A:ÑB 42). According to A:ÑB (1999:280 n3), “true knowledge” (*vijjā*) here may refer to “the 3 knowledges” (*te, vijjā*) or an “eightfold division.” The three knowledges are: (1) the knowledge of the recollection of past lives; (2) the knowledge of the passing away and rebirth of beings according to their karma; (3) the knowledge of the destruction of the mental influxes. The “eightfold division” is: (1) insight knowledge (*vipassanā, ñāṇa*); (2) the power of creating a mind-made body (*mano.mayā iddhi*); (3) psychic powers (*iddhi, vidhā*); (4) the divine ear (*dibba, sota*); (5) the knowledge of reading the minds of others (*parassa ceto, pariya, ñāṇa*); (6) the divine eye (*dibba, cakku* or *cutūpapāta, ñāṇa*); (7) the knowledge of the recollection of one’s past lives (*pubbe, nivāsānussati ñāṇa*); (8) the knowledge of the destruction of the mental influxes (*āsava-k, khaya ñāṇa*) (A 3.100,1-10/1:253-256). On these 6 superknowledges, see SD 27.5a (5).

²⁹ “Calm” (*samatha*) is the “one-pointedness of the mind” (*cittassa eka-g, gatā*), ie mental concentration culminating in the dhyanas (*jhāna*). “**Insight**” (*vipassanā*) is “the knowledge that comprehends the formations” (*saṅkhāra, pariggāhaka, ñāṇa*) as impermanent, unsatisfactory and not self” (AA 2:119).

³⁰ “Freedom of mind” and “freedom by wisdom,” respectively, *ceto, vimutti* (or, freedom by concentration, ie, through destruction of the mental hindrances) and *paññā, vimutti* (freedom through insight) (A 1:60). One who is “freed by wisdom” “may not have reached the 8 freedoms (*vimokkha*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental influxes are destroyed” (M 70.16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly freed in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into 2 types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration. Those who can attain the 8 liberations (*aṭṭha, vimokkha*), which include the 4 formless attainments and the attainment of cessation, are called “freed both ways,” ie, freed from the physical body by means of the formless dhyanas, and from all defilements by the path of arhathood. Arhats like Sāriputta and Moggallāna are “freed both ways” (*ubhato, bhāga, vimutta*). The differences between the two types of freedom are given in **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15,35/2:70 f) and **Kīṭā-**

4.3 When **calm** is developed by itself, independent of insight, it temporarily suppresses the 5 mental hindrances³¹ and heralds the “higher mind” of the dhyanas, characterized by the absence of lust. When calm is developed together with insight, they give rise to the noble path that uproots the underlying latent tendencies (*anusaya*) of sensual lust (by the path of non-return) and of attachment to becoming (by the path of arhathood).³²

4.4 It is clear from this Sutta that “Vipassanā” is not a goal but an aspect of personal development: the cultivation of insight (*vipassanā*) leads to wisdom (*paññā*). As such, **Dhammavuddho** has proposed that *vipassanā* should be rendered as “contemplation” (1997:13 n6). **Sujato** puts it succinctly,

Notice that samatha brings about the fading of lust, vipassanā the fading of ignorance. Lust is a term for the emotional aspect of the defilements; ignorance is a term for the intellectual aspect. At their most general, then, samatha may be regarded as pertaining to emotional development, vipassanā as pertaining to intellectual development.

The terms ‘emotional’ and ‘intellectual’ are meant here in their broadest possible connotation. By using the word ‘emotional’ we no more mean being moody and impulsive than by ‘intellectual’ we mean mere reasoning and rational thinking. Rather, we refer to that whole side of experience, half of our mind or world which deals with feelings and intuitions, the soft yin side, and that which deals with understanding and analysis, the penetrating yang side. All of us contain both of these aspects within us. Each of these aspects contains some good and some bad and must be developed in a balanced way if we are to achieve liberation—we cannot enlighten only half our mind.

Many similes can illustrate this mutual support. Vipassanā only is like trying to cut down a tree with a razor blade; samatha only is like using a hammer. Both together is like using a sharp axe—both penetrating and powerful. Or samatha is like the underside of a postage stamp—it sticks—while vipassanā is like the top—it informs. Or samatha is like the left foot, vipassanā like the right foot—one can only move one foot forward by leaning on the other. Or samatha is like the cool breeze at the mountain top, and vipassanā is like the view of the countryside. Or samatha is like the hand which clings to the next rung up the ladder, vipassanā like the hand which lets go of the rung below. This simile contains a warning—if one lets go of both ends before reaching the top, one is likely to end up as a crumpled heap at the foot of the ladder.

(Sujato, *A Pair of Swift Messengers*, 2012:31)

giri S (M 70/1:477 f), SD 11.1. For a full list of the 8 liberations, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (D 15,35/2:70 f), SD 5.17.35. See also D 3:262, 228; **Vimokkha S**, A 8.66/4:306; also M 120.37/3:103, SD 3.4.37. Cf Dhs 372.

³¹ “Mental hindrances” (*nīvaraṇā*): sensual desire (*kāma-c, chanda*), ill will (*vyāpāda*), sloth and torpor (*thīna,-middha*), restlessness and worry (*uddhacca,kukkucca*), spiritual doubt (*vicikicchā*) (A 3:62; Vbh 378). For detailed study, see SD 32.

³² The Aṅguttara Commentary takes “calm” in the latter sense and says that “The mind develops into the path-consciousness (*magga,citta*). Lust (*rāga*) is abandoned due to its opposing the path-consciousness, and the path-consciousness opposing lust. At a moment of lust there is no path-consciousness, at the moment of path-consciousness there is no lust. When lust arises, it obstructs the arising of the path-moment, cutting off its basis; but when the path arises it uproots and eradicates lust.” (AA 2:119)

5 Entering the path

5.1 THE 5 BENEFITS OF LISTENING TO THE DHARMA.

SD 3.2(5.1)

Dhamma-s,savana Sutta

The Discourse on Listening to the Dharma | A 5.202/3:248

Traditional: A 5.5.1.2 = Aṅguttara 5, Pañcaka Nipāta 5, Pañcama Paññāsaka 1, Kimila Vagga 2

Theme: The 5 benefits of listening to the Dharma

- 1 Bhikshus, there are these **5 benefits from listening to the Dharma**. What are the five?
- 2 (1) He hears what has not been heard, *assutaṃ suṇāti*
 (2) Having heard, he purifies himself, *sutaṃ pariyodāpeti*
 (3) He crosses over doubt, *kaṅkhaṃ vitarati*
 (4) He straightens his views, and *diṭṭhiṃ ujum karoti*
 (5) His mind brightens with faith. *cittamassa pasīdati*

These, bhikshus, are the 5 benefits from listening to the Dharma.³³

— evaṃ —

5.2 THE 5 OPPORTUNITIES TO ENTER THE PATH

SD 3.2(5.2)³⁴

Vimutt'āyatana Sutta

The Discourse on the Grounds for Freedom | A 5.26/3:21-24; D 33.2.1(25)/3:241

Traditional: A 5.1.3.6 = Aṅguttara 5, Pañcaka Nipāta 1, Paṭhama Paññāsaka 3, Pañcaṅgika Vagga 6;

D 3,10.5(25.1) = Dīgha 3, Paṭhika Vagga 10, Saṅgīti Sutta 25.1

Theme: Dharma-inspired joy as the basis for freedom

1 Bhikshus, there are these 5 grounds for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom; or where the mental influxes,³⁵ not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety from the yoke is attained.

What are the five?

(1) LISTENING TO THE DHARMA

2 Here, bhikshus, the teacher or a certain colleague in the holy life [a certain fellow brahmachari], in the role of a teacher, teaches the Dharma to a monk.

³³ See **Vicikicchā**, SD 32.8 (4.1).

³⁴ For full annotated tr, see SD 21.5.

³⁵ The term *āsava* (lit “inflow”) comes from *ā-savati* “flows in, flows out” (i.e. either “into” or “out” towards the observer). It has been variously translated as taints (“deadly taints”, RD), corruptions, intoxicants, biases, depravity, misery, evil (influence), influx, or simply left untranslated. The Abhidhamma lists 4 āsava: the influx of (1) sense-desire (*kāma’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence or becoming (*bhav’āsava*), (3) views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), (4) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937). These 4 are also known as “floods” (*ogha*) and “yokes” (*yoga*). The list of 3 influxes (omitting the influx of views) [43] is prob older and is found more frequently in the suttas (D 3:216, 33.1.10(20); M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The destruction of these āsavas is equivalent to arhathood. See BDict under āsava.

2.2 Bhikshus, as the monk listens to the Dharma taught by the teacher or the colleague in the holy life in the role of a teacher,

he knows the goal and knows the Dharma [he understands the spirit of the Dharma and the letter of the Dharma].

2.3 Knowing the Dharma and knowing the goal,

<u>gladness</u>	arises in him;	<i>pāmuja</i>
because of gladness,	<u>zest</u> arises;	<i>pīti</i>
because of zest,	the body becomes <u>tranquil</u> ;	<i>assadha</i>
when the body is tranquil,	he feels <u>happy</u> ;	<i>(sukha</i>
a happy mind becomes	<u>concentrated</u> ;	<i>samādhīyati</i>

2.4 This, bhikshus, is the 1st ground for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom;

or where the mental influxes, not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety from the yoke is attained.

(2) TEACHING THE DHARMA

3 Furthermore, bhikshus, *neither the Teacher nor a certain colleague in the holy life in the role of a teacher, teaches the Dharma to a monk*;

3.2 but he himself teaches the Dharma in detail to others as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory.

3.3 Bhikshus, as the monk **[22]** *teaches the Dharma in detail to others as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory,*

he knows the goal and he knows the Dharma.

3.4 Knowing the goal and knowing the Dharma,

gladness	arises in him;
because of gladness,	zest arises;
because of zest,	the body becomes tranquil;
when the body is tranquil,	he feels happy;
a happy mind becomes	concentrated.

3.5 This, bhikshus, is the 2nd ground for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom;

or where the mental influxes, not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety from the yoke is attained.

(3) RECITING THE DHARMA

4 (3) Furthermore, bhikshus, *neither the Teacher or a certain colleague in the holy life in the role of a teacher, teaches the Dharma to a monk*;

4.2 *nor he himself teaches the Dharma in detail to others as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory*;

4.3 but he himself recites the Dharma in detail to others, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory.

4.4 Bhikshus, as the monk recites the Dharma in detail to others, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory, he knows the goal and he knows the Dharma.

4.5 Knowing the Dharma and knowing the goal,

gladness	arises in him;
because of gladness,	zest arises;
because of zest,	the body becomes tranquil;

when the body is tranquil, he feels happy;
a happy mind becomes concentrated.

4.6 This, bhikshus, is the 3rd ground for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom;
or where the mental influxes, not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety from the yoke is attained.

(4) APPLYING THE MIND TO DHARMA

5 Furthermore, bhikshus, *neither the Teacher nor a certain colleague in the holy life in the role of a teacher, teaches the Dharma to a monk;*

5.2 *nor he himself teaches the Dharma in detail to others as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory;*

5.3 *nor does he recite the Dharma in detail to others, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory;*

5.4 but he himself applies his mind to the Dharma, sustains the thought, mentally reflects on it, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory.

5.5 Bhikshus, as this monk applies his mind to the Dharma, sustains the thought, mentally reflects on it, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory,
he knows the goal and he knows the Dharma.

5.6 Knowing the Dharma and knowing the goal,
gladness arises in him;
because of gladness, zest arises;
because of zest, the body becomes tranquil;
when the body is tranquil, he feels happy;
a happy mind becomes concentrated.

5.7 This, bhikshus, is the 4th ground for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom;
or where the mental influxes, not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety from the yoke is attained.

(5) PROPERLY GRASPING A CONCENTRATION-SIGN

6 (5) Furthermore, bhikshus, *neither the Teacher nor a certain colleague in the holy life in the role of a teacher, teaches the Dharma to a monk;*

6.2 *nor does he himself teach the Dharma in detail to others, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory;*

6.3 *nor does he recite the Dharma in detail to others as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory;*

6.4 *nor does he apply his mind, initiate his application, sustain his application, to the Dharma, as he has heard it, as he has mastered it in theory;*

6.5 but he himself properly grasps some concentration-sign, having properly considered it, having applied his mind to it, having well penetrated it with wisdom.

6.6 Bhikshus, as this monk properly grasps some concentration-sign, having properly considered it, having applied his mind to it, having well penetrated it with wisdom,
he knows the goal and he knows the Dharma.

6.7 Knowing the Dharma and knowing the goal,
gladness arises in him;
because of gladness, zest arises;
because of zest, the body becomes tranquil;

when the body is tranquil, he feels happy;
a happy mind becomes concentrated.

6.8 This, bhikshus, is the 5th ground for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom;
or where the mental influxes, not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety [24] from the yoke is attained.

7 These, bhikshus, are the 5 grounds for freedom where the unfreed mind of a monk, dwelling heedful and exertive, finds freedom; or where the mental influxes, not wholly destroyed become wholly destroyed, where the unattained unsurpassed safety from the yoke is attained.³⁶

— evaṃ —

5.3 OVERCOMING THE MENTAL HINDRANCES

SD 3.2(5.3)

Anīvaraṇa Sutta

The Without Hindrances Discourse | S 46.38b/5:95 f³⁷

Traditional: S 5.2.4.8 = Saṃyutta Nikāya 5, Mahāvagga 2, Bojjhaṅga Saṃyutta 4, Nīvaraṇa Vagga 8

Theme: The mental hindrances and the awakening-factors

8 Bhikshus, when a noble disciple listens to the Dharma, giving it attention with resolve, directing his whole mind to it, he is open-eared,³⁸
then, the 5 mental hindrances (*pañca, nīvaraṇa*) are not present in him.
At that time, the 7 awakening factors are developed to perfection.

9 And what are **the 5 mental hindrances** that are not present at that time?

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (1) The mental hindrance of <u>sensual desire</u> is not present at that time. | <i>kāma-c, chanda</i> |
| (2) The mental hindrance of <u>ill will</u> is not present at that time. | <i>vyāpāda</i> |
| (3) The mental hindrance of <u>sloth and torpor</u> is not present at that time. | <i>thīna, middha</i> |
| (4) The mental hindrance of <u>restlessness and worry</u> is not present at that time. | <i>uddhacca, kukkuccha</i> |
| (5) The mental hindrance of <u>spiritual doubt</u> is not present at that time. | <i>vicikicchā</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 5 mental hindrances that are not present at that time.

10 And what are **the 7 awakening-factors** (*satta bojjhaṅga*) that are brought to fulfillment through cultivation in him?

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| (1) The awakening-factor of <u>mindfulness</u> is developed to perfection at that time. | <i>sati</i> |
| (2) The awakening-factor of <u>mental investigation</u> is developed to perfection at that time. | <i>dhamma, vicaya</i> |
| (3) The awakening-factor of <u>effort</u> is developed to perfection at that time. | <i>viriya</i> |

³⁶ This closing para is a rare arhathood declaration: see **Poṭṭhapāda S** (D 9,56.3-56.4) n, SD 7.14.

³⁷ PTS ed treats this text as a part of **Āvaraṇa Nīvaraṇa S** (S 5:94-96). The Sinhalese ed however treats this Sutta separately: see S:B 1906 n80.

³⁸ "Giving it attention with resolve...open-eared," *aṭṭhi, katvā manasikatvā sabba, cetaso sammannāharitvā ohita, soto*.

- (4) The awakening-factor of zest [joy] *pīti*
is developed to perfection at that time.
- (5) The awakening-factor of tranquillity *passaddhi*
is developed to perfection at that time.
- (6) The awakening-factor of concentration *samādhī*
is developed to perfection at that time.
- (7) The awakening-factor of equanimity *upekkhā*
is developed to perfection at that time. **[96]**
These, bhikshus, are the 7 awakening-factors that are developed to perfection.

11 Bhikshus, when a noble disciple listens to the Dharma, giving it attention with resolve, directing his whole mind to it, he is open-eared,
Then, the 5 mental hindrances are not present in him.

12 At that time, the 7 awakening factors come to fulfillment through cultivation.

— evaṃ —

6 Measure not others

6.1 The (Chakka) Miga,sālā Sutta describes these **6 kinds of persons**, that is,
2 kinds of gentle [mild-mannered] and popular persons,
2 kinds of persons able to manage their anger and conceit, but have greed, and
2 kinds of persons able to manage their anger and conceit, but are prone to verbal exchanges.

For each pair,

- (1) one neither learns nor masters the Dharma, and so does not experience temporary freedom;
(2) the other learns and masters the Dharma, and so experiences temporary freedom.
“Temporary freedom” (*sāmayika vimutti*) here refers to zest and gladness (*pīti, pāmojja*), or simply “Dharma joy.” [§5.2n]

6.2 The Sutta’s import is that whether we are morally wholesome or we have some moral weaknesses (not too serious ones), we still can and must learn and master the Dharma enough to enjoy the “temporary freedom” of its zest and gladness. Such Dharma joy will empower us to abandon our unwholesome habits and cultivate wholesome ones.

SD 3.2(6)

(Chakka) Miga,sālā Sutta

The (Sixes) Discourse on Miga,sālā | **A 6.44/3:347-351** ≈ A 10.75 (SD 99.8)
Traditional: A 6.1.5.2 = Aṅguttara 6, Chakka Nipāta 1, Paṭhama Paṇṇāsaka 5, Dhammika Vagga 2
Theme: Judge not others through appearances

Miga,sālā’s question³⁹ [cf A 5:137]

1 [At one time, the Blessed One was staying in Anātha,piṇḍika’s park in Jeta’s grove near Sāvattihī.]⁴⁰

³⁹ Cf (Dasaka) Miga,sāla S (A 10.75/5:137), SD 99.8.

⁴⁰ This line only at A 10.75/5:137,21 (SD 99.8).

1.2 Then, early in the morning, the venerable Ānanda, having dressed himself, taking robe and bowl, approached the house of the female lay follower **Miga,sālā** and sat down on the prepared seat.

1.3 Then, the female lay follower Migasālā, having approached the venerable Ānanda, saluted him and sat down at one side.

Sitting thus at one side, the female lay follower Migasālā said this to the venerable Ānanda:

2 “How, venerable Ānanda, should this teaching given by the Blessed One be understood—that is, regarding the fact that one who lives the holy life (of celibacy) and one who does not, will both meet the same destiny in the [348] next life?”

2.2 Bhante, my father,⁴¹ **Purāṇa**,⁴² lived the holy life, living apart,⁴³ abstaining from sexual intercourse, the way of the village.

When he died, the Blessed One declared that he arose as a once-returner, a being⁴⁴ in Tusita heaven.

2.3 Bhante, my beloved paternal uncle,⁴⁵ **Isidatta**, is *not* celibate, contented with his wife, but when he died, the Blessed One declared that he, *too*, arose as a once-returner, a being in Tusita heaven.

2.4 How, venerable Ānanda, should this teaching given by the Blessed One be understood—that is, regarding the fact that one who lives the holy life and one who does not will *both* meet the same destiny in the next life?”

[Ānanda:] “That’s the way it is, sister, as declared by the Blessed One.”⁴⁶

Ānanda consults the Buddha

3 Then, the venerable Ānanda, having received his almsfood from the house of the female lay follower Migasālā, rose from his seat and left.

4 Then, the venerable Ānanda, having returned from his almsround and finished his meal, approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat down at one side.

Sitting thus at one side, the venerable Ānanda said this to the Blessed One:

⁴¹ “Father,” *pitā*.

⁴² Purāṇa and Isidatta (see next para). In **Dhamma,cetiya S** (M 89,18/2:124), SD 64.10, and **Thapati S** (S 55.6/-5:348-352), SD 42.7, both are “chamberlains” or keepers of the women’s quarters (*thapataya*; Skt *sthatapaya*) of king Pasenadi. Comy to Thapati S says that at the time (in the Sutta) Isidatta is a once-returner, Purāṇa, a streamwinner, content with his own wife (ie, he is chaste but not celibate) (SA 3:278). King Pasenadi addresses them as “reverend sirs,” *bhante* (M 89,18/2:123), SD 4.9 (4). See also S:W 5:303 n1, S:B 1955 n326.

⁴³ “Living apart,” *anācārī*. This is a pun: (1) “living alone, leading a solitary life”; (2) “living distant from evil.”

⁴⁴ All MSS gives *sakadāgāmi,satto*, except Be, which has *sakadāgāmi,patti*. Comy glosses it as “an individual who is a once-returner” (*sakadāgāmi,puggalo*, AA 3:372), hence supporting the reading *satto*. There is no good reason to choose *patto* over *satto*, which fits the context of Migasālā’s speech very well. We should give priority to the Sutta *as is*, unless there is good reason to think otherwise.

⁴⁵ “Paternal uncle,” Be *petteyyo’pi*; Be:Ka Ce Ee *petteyyo piyo*; Ke Se *piyu piyo*. (A 10.75: Ce *pettā pi yo*; Ee *pettā piyo*). *Petteyya* (lit “father-loving”) means “showing filial piety towards one’s father” (PED, properly *petteyyatā*, D 3:145, 169; Dh 332), which does not seem to fit here. The correct reading is prob **pettāpiya**, “father’s brother, paternal uncle” (PED; PTC: *petteyyo*), which is the Sinhala (Ce) (*pettā pi yo*) and the Pali Text Society (Ee) (*pettā piyo*) readings (that is, we need to join up the words, which is allowed in textual reading in such cases).

⁴⁶ *Evam kho pan’etaṃ bhaginī bhagavatā vyākatan’ti*. Comy, however, says that Ānanda did not know the reason (*thero kāraṇaṃ ajānanto*, AA 3:372). Ānanda’s brief answer prob means that he has heard or known the Buddha having said so, but he has no psychic powers to verify it (he is only a streamwinner then). We cannot assume (from silence alone) that Ānanda does not know the answer simply because the Buddha’s explanation comes towards the end of the Sutta. As Ānanda is the Buddha’s personal attendant, he often hears them or the Buddha recounts them to him (J 4:96; ThaA 3:112): see Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples*, 2013, ch 6.3.

4.2 “Here, bhante, I, early in the morning, having dressed, taking robe and bowl, approached the house of the female lay follower **Miga,sālā** and sat down on the prepared seat.

4.3 Then, the female lay follower Migasālā, having approached me, saluted and sat down at one side. Sitting thus at one side, the female lay follower Migasālā said this to me:

4.4 ‘How, venerable Ānanda, should this teaching given by the Blessed One be understood—that is, regarding the fact that one who lives the holy life (of celibacy) and one who does not, will both meet the same destiny in the next life?’”

4.5 Bhante, my father **Purāṇa** lived the holy life, living apart, abstaining from sexual intercourse, the way of the village. When he died, the Blessed One declared that he arose as a once-returned, a being in Tusita heaven.

4.6 Bhante, my beloved paternal uncle, **Isidatta**, is not celibate, contented with his wife, but when he died, the Blessed One declared that he, too, arose as a once-returned, [349] a being in Tusita heaven.

4.7 How, venerable Ānanda, should this teaching given by the Blessed One be understood—that is, regarding the fact that one who lives the holy life and one who does not will both meet the same destiny in the next life?’

4.8 When this was said, bhante, I said this to the lay follower Miga,sālā,
‘That’s the way it is, sister, as declared by the Blessed One’.”

4.9 “But who, Ānanda, is the female lay follower, **Migasālā**, an immature, inexperienced, young woman, with only a young woman’s wisdom,⁴⁷ to have the knowledge of the diversity⁴⁸ of individuals?⁴⁹

Popular, but lacking wisdom

4.10 Ānanda, there are these **6 kinds of persons** existing in the world. And what are the six?

5 (1) Here, Ānanda, a certain person is **gentle**, a joy to associate with, the delight of fellow brahmaris on account of having the same mind.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ “[A] young woman, with only a young woman’s wisdom,” *ammakā* [or *ambakā*] *ammaka,paññā*. Comy says this phrase refers to “women, an accomplishment perceived only of women” (AA 3:374). The *Ṭikā* says that *ammakā* (or *ambakā*) refer to women in general (*ammakā’ti mātugāmo*) used here metaphorically (*upacāra,vacana*) (AAṬ:Be 3:113). *Ammakā* or *ambakā* should not be confused with *āmaka* (“raw, uncooked,” and perhaps by extension, “unripe, immature.”) The Pali here might seem harsh to the modern feminist, esp when the Buddha later tells Ānanda “not to be a measurer of persons” (*mā puggalesu pamāṇikā*). Clearly, she must be a very young woman with little Dharma understanding. The Buddha’s stern reply reflects his disapproval of Migajālā’s presumptuous, even cavalier, attitude towards saints, when she should have rejoiced at the news of her father’s and uncle’s attainments. Instead, she tries to *measure* goodness and sainthood! Hence, the Sutta theme on “measures.” The Chin parallel, however, tr it simply as 鹿住優婆夷愚癡少智 (*Lù Zhù yōu pó yí yú chī shǎo zhì*, T2.99.258a11) “The lay-follower Migasālā is foolish, with little wisdom.” We should understand such remarks as a cultural idiom of the times or that it specifically applies to Miga,sālā’s cavalier remark. This remark should not be understood as demeaning *all* woman, considering the other teachings about women’s abilities to awaken even to arhathood (see Therī,gāthā, Iti,vuttaka, etc).

⁴⁸ “Diversity,” *paro,pariya* fr *para + pariya*, lit “lower and higher (states).” Closely related to *paroparā = parôvarā* (**Anusota S**, A 4.5/2:6) which Comy glosses as *parôparā ti parôvarā uttama,lāmakā kusalākusalāti attho*, “*paroparā = parovarā*, which means “excellent or low,” “wholesome or unwholesome” (AA 3:5). Cf *parôvara = para avara*, “high and low, far and near” (Sn 353, 475, 704, 1048, 1148; cf SnA 1:350). See PED: *paropariya* & *pariya*.

⁴⁹ *Kā c’ānanda miga,sālā upāsikā bālā avyattā ammakā ammaka,paññā ke ca purisa,puggala,paropariye ñāṇe*. *Ke ... ñāṇe* is interesting, as *ke* is a Magadhism for nom sg masc *ko*; also in **Pāṭika S** (D 24/3:24,19). Comy glosses *purisa,puggala,paro,pariya,ñāṇa* as “the knowledge of other persons’ superiority or inferiority in terms of sharpness or dullness” (*purisa,puggalānaṃ tikkha.mudu,vasena indriya,paro,pariya,ñāṇaṃ*, AA 3:372).

⁵⁰ *Idh’ānanda ekacco puggalo sorato hoti sukha,sarṇvāso, abhinandanti sabrahmacārī ekatta,vāsena*. I have taken *ek’atta* as Skt *ek’ātman*, “of one mind”: see CPD: ²ekatta & SD 26.9 (2.1.2).

5.2 However, he is not shaped by what he has heard.
He is not shaped by great learning⁵¹ that he has not penetrated it with right view, too.
And he does not attain temporary freedom.⁵²

5.3 When the body has broken up, after death, he undergoes decline, not excellence.⁵³ He goes the way of decline, not the way of excellence.

Popular, with wisdom

5.4 (2) Here, too, Ānanda, a certain person is **gentle**, a joy to associate with, the delight of fellow brahmacharis on account of having the same mind.

5.5 However, he is shaped by what he has heard.
He is shaped by great learning that he has well understood with right view,⁵⁴ too.
And he gains temporary freedom.

5.6 When his body has broken up, after death, he undergoes excellence, not decline; he goes the way of excellence, not the way of decline.

Refrain (1)

5.7 Now, Ānanda, there are those measurers who measure, thus:⁵⁵
'The characteristics of this person are just the same as those of the other, but why is one lowly and the other exalted?'

That thought, Ānanda, is to their loss and grief for a long time.⁵⁶

5.8 Now, here, Ānanda, *this person is gentle, a joy to associate with, the delight of fellow brahmacharis on account of having the same mind,*

5.9 *who is shaped by what he has heard;*
who is shaped by great learning that he has well understood with right view; and
who gains temporary freedom, too—

⁵¹ "Great learning," *bahu, sacca*, lit "much listening": *sacca* here comes from *suta* (heard) + *ya*.

⁵² *Sāmayikam pi vimuttiṃ na labhati. Sāmayika* is adj of *samaya*, "time, occasion" (see PED for other meanings); also spelt *sāmāyika* (see PED). Comy says that since he does not (even) occasionally listen to the Dharma, he does not attain zest and gladness (*pīti, pāmojja*) (AA 3:373). "**Temporary freedom**" (*sāmayika vimutti*), or more specifically, *sāmayika ceto, vimutti* (temporary freedom of mind), refers to the mundane meditative attainments (*lokiya samāpatti*), ie, the dhyanas (*jhāna*) and formless attainments (*arūpa samāpatti*)—esp as "temporary liberation" (*samaya, vimokkha*), which Paṭisambhidā, magga distinguishes from "permanent liberation" (*asamaya, vimokkha*), ie, the 4 paths, the 4 fruits, and nirvana, Pm 2:40,16-17). It is so called because the mind has momentarily abandoned (*tad-aṅga pahāna*) its opposing mental hindrances and is resolved upon its object. On "**permanent liberation**," see **Mahā Sārōpama S** (M 29,17.7/1:197), SD 53.8.

⁵³ "He undergoes decline, not excellence," *hānāya pareti no visesāya*. "Distinction," *visesa*, alt tr "excellence." It refers to any of the dhyanas (*jhāna*) or any of the 4 stages of sainthood: streamwinner (*soṭ'āpanna*), once-returner (*sākad'āgāmī*), non-returner (*anāgāmī*) and arhat (*arahanta*) (D 1:156). For definitions, see eg **Āṇāpāna, sati S** (M 112,9-12/3:80). Cf story of Sāriputta's meeting with Assaji: when Sāriputta realizes that he does not have any higher excellence (*upari, visesa*), ie any higher attainment than streamwinning, he decides to meet the Buddha himself (DhA 1:94).

⁵⁴ "Well understood with right view," *diṭṭhiyā pi suppaṭividdham*.

⁵⁵ *Tatr'ānanda pamāṇikā pamiṇanti*, or, "Now here, Ānanda, the judgemental judge thus." The allusion here is to our being conceited, ie, comparing self with others in terms of being better than, inferior to, or as good as: see **Me: The nature of conceit**, SD 19.2a.

⁵⁶ *Taṃ hi tesarṃ ānanda hoti dīgha, rattarṃ ahitāya dukkhāya*. Comy says that *taṃ* here refers to "the act of measuring (or judging)" (*pamāṇa, karaṇarṃ*, AA 3:373).

5.10 this [350] person, Ānanda, is more excellent, more exalted, than that previous person.

What is the reason for this?

Because, Ānanda, **the Dharma-stream**⁵⁷ carries⁵⁸ this person along. Who would know this,⁵⁹ but the Tathāgata?

5.11 Therefore, Ānanda, be not a judge of persons, take no measure of persons!⁶⁰

A person, Ānanda, is ruined by taking measure of persons,

but I, Ānanda, and those like me, may take the measure of persons.⁶¹

Greedy, without wisdom

6 (3) Here, too, Ānanda, a certain person is able to manage his anger and conceit,⁶² but **states of greed** arise in him occasionally.⁶³

6.2 However, he is not shaped by what he has heard.

He is not shaped by great learning that he has not penetrated it with right view, too.

And he does not attain temporary freedom.

6.3 When his body has broken up, after death, he undergoes decline, not excellence; he goes the way of decline, not the way of excellence.⁶⁴

Greedy, but with wisdom

7 (4) Here, too, Ānanda, for a certain person is able to manage⁶⁵ his anger and conceit, *but states of greed* arise in him occasionally.

7.2 However, he is shaped by what he has heard.

⁵⁷ "Dharma-stream," *dhmma,sota*. Obviously here, the Buddha is referring either to streamwinning or one on the way to streamwinning. Hare (S:WH 5:96 etc) renders it as "ear of Dharma"; while both Hare (S:WH 3:248 etc) & Bodhi (S:B 1:564 etc) render it as "stream of Dharma." Occurrences: *~m samāpanna* (S 2:42, 43, 45, 58 f, 80); *~samāpanna* ["entered the stream of Dharma"] (A 3:285-288, 5:356 f, 360); *~m upānaya* ["carried along by the stream of Dharma"] (Ap 1:101 Subhadda Thera 9); *~o nibbahati* ["the stream of Dharma carries (one) along"] (A 3:350 f, 5:140, 143). Comy here explains *dhmma,soto nibbahati* as "*sūram hutvā pavattamāna,vipassanā,ñāṇam ariya,bhūmiri sampāpeti*, "Insight knowledge, having become heroic [strong], takes him along to reach the ground of the noble ones" (AA 3:375; cf Masefield 1986:79) [I thank Nina van Gorkom on her research assistance here.] The Pali *sota* has two Skt forms: (a) *śrotra* → *śrotas* √śru → *suṇāti* ("he hears"), the ear; (b) *śrotas* → *srotas* √śru → *savati* ("it flows"), stream (of water). Comparing the Pali occurrences of the sentences with their BHS cognates or parallels in the Āgamas provides insight into their usages. Dhammavuddho thinks that *sot'āpatti* [*sot'āpanna* = "stream-winner"] usually rendered as "*stream-entry*" may also be translated as "*ear-entry*" (1999:6), suggesting that one could gain the first stage of sainthood through skillful listening to the Dharma (the thesis of his 1999 article). See (3).

⁵⁸ "Carries ... along," *nibbahati*. Hare thinks that "*Nibbahati* is either from *vbarh*, to increase, or *Vvah*, to carry, with *nis*, 'out,' 'to completion'." (A:WH 3:248 n1). See prev n.

⁵⁹ "This," *tad antaram* (vl *tad anantaram*). Comy: *tad antaram tam karaṇam*, "this reason" (AA 3:375).

⁶⁰ *Tasmā ti h'ānanda mā puggalesu pamāṇikā ahuvattha, mā puggalesu pamāṇam gaṇhittha*.

⁶¹ *Ahaṃ vā ānanda puggalesu pamāṇam gaṇheyyam, yo vā pan'assa mādiso*. "Those like me" refers to the arhats who, like the Buddha, have powers of mind-reading so that they are able to rightly "read" a person, esp for the sake for admonishing or healing him.

⁶² "Anger and conceit," *kodha,māno*, found only here, and as "anger, conceit and scorn: (*kodha,māna,makkha*) in (Assu) Tissa S (S 21.9/2:282). On conceit (*māna*), see **Me: The nature of conceit**, SD 19.2a.

⁶³ *Idha pan'ānanda ekaccassa puggalassa kodha,māno adhigato hoti, samayena samayam c'assa lobha,dhammā uppajjanti*.

⁶⁴ He is reborn in a human rebirth not conducive to spiritual cultivation, or in one of the subhuman realms.

⁶⁵ "Able to manage," a somewhat free tr of *adhigato* (pp of *adhigacchati*, "to come to possess"), which is taken here in the figurative sense of "have understood."

He is shaped by great learning that he has well understood with right view, too.

And he gains temporary freedom.

7.3 When the body has broken up, after death he undergoes excellence, not decline; he goes the way of excellence, not the way of decline.

Refrain (2)

7.4 Now, Ānanda, there are those measurers who measure thus:

'The characteristics of this person are just the same as those of the previous one, but why is one lowly and the other exalted?'

That thought, Ānanda, is to their loss and grief for a long time.

7.5 Now, here, Ānanda, this person is able to manage his anger and conceit, but states of **greed** arise in him occasionally,

7.6 who is shaped by what he has heard;

who is shaped by great learning that he has well understood with right view; and

who gains temporary freedom, too—

7.7 this person, Ānanda, is more excellent, more exalted, than that previous person.

What is the reason for this?

Because, Ānanda, the Dharma-stream carries this person along. Who would know this except the Tathāgata?

7.8 Therefore, Ānanda, be not judges of persons, hold not onto the measure of persons.

A person, Ānanda, is ruined by holding on to the measure of persons,

but I, Ānanda, and those like me, may take the measure of persons.

Quarrelsome, without wisdom

8 (5) Here, too, Ānanda, a certain person is able to manage⁶⁶ his anger and conceit, but **verbal exchanges**⁶⁷ arise for him occasionally.

8.2 However, he is not shaped by what he has heard.

He is not shaped by great learning that he has not penetrated it with right view, too.

And he does not attain temporary freedom.

8.3 When the body has broken up, after death, he undergoes decline, not excellence; he goes the way of decline, not the way of excellence.

Quarrelsome, with wisdom

9 (6) Here, too, Ānanda, a certain person is able to manage⁶⁸ his anger and conceit, but **verbal exchanges** arise for him occasionally.

⁶⁶ "Able to manage" [§7n].

⁶⁷ "Verbal exchanges," Ce AA:Ce *vacī,saṃsāra* (Ce, preferable), Be Ee Se *vacī,saṅkhārā*. **Vacī,saṃsāra** recurs at A 2.6.12/1:80,4), where it refers to agumentation between two factions of monks. Comy glosses it as "with words by way of talk and countertalk" (*ālāpa,sallāpa,vasena vacanena'va*, AA 3:373), also "words flowing (between parties) on account of reviling and counter-reviling" (*akkosana,paccakkosana,vasena saṃsaramānā vācā*, AA 2:151): the form *allāpa,sallāpa* is more common. **Vacī,saṅkhārā** (PED: "antecedent or requisite for speech" or "verbal formations": M 1:301; A 3:350 vl *vacī,saṃsāra*; S 4:293; VbhA 167; Vism 531): it is too technical to fit here; "verbal formations occur more often in us than just "occasionally."

⁶⁸ "Able to manage," a somewhat free tr of *adhigato* (pp of *adhigacchati*, "to come to possess"), which is taken here in the figurative sense of "having understood."

9.2 However, he is shaped by what he has heard.

He is shaped by great learning that he has well understood with right view; too.

He gains temporary freedom, too.

9.3 When the body has broken up, after death, he undergoes excellence, [351] not decline; he goes the way of excellence, not the way of decline.

Refrain (3)

9.4 Now, Ānanda, there are those measurers who measure thus:

'The characteristics of this person are the same as those of the previous one, but why is one lowly and the other exalted?'

That thought, Ānanda, is to their loss and pain for a long time.

9.5 Now, here, Ānanda, this person is able to manage his anger and conceit, but **verbal exchanges** arise for him occasionally,

9.6 who is shaped by what he has heard;

who is shaped by great learning that he has well understood with right view; and

who gains temporary freedom, too—

9.7 this person, Ānanda, is more excellent, more exalted, than that previous person.

What is the reason for this?

Because, Ānanda, the Dharma-stream carries this person along. Who would know this, except the Tathāgata?

9.8 Therefore, Ānanda, be not judges of persons, hold not onto the measure of persons!

A person, Ānanda, is ruined by holding on to the measure of persons,

but I, Ānanda, and those like me, may take the measure of persons.

Conclusion

10 But who, Ānanda, is the female lay follower, Migasālā, immature, inexperienced, young mother, with only a young mother's wisdom, to have the knowledge of the diversity of individuals?

11 Ānanda, these are the 6 kinds of persons existing in the world.

Different strengths of Purāṇa and of Isidatta

12 Whatever moral virtue, Ānanda, that **Purāṇa** possesses, that moral virtue Isidatta possesses *not*.⁶⁹ Here Purāṇa would not know of Isidatta's destiny.⁷⁰

13 Whatever wisdom, Ānanda, that **Isidatta** possesses, that wisdom Purāṇa possess *not*. Here Isidatta would not know of Purāṇa's destiny.

14 Thus, Ānanda, both these persons are lowly [weak] in one factor.⁷¹

— evaṃ —

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⁶⁹ *Yathā,rūpena ānanda sīlena purāṇo samannāgato ahoṣi, tathā,rūpena sīlena isi,datto samannāgato abhaviṣṣa.*

⁷⁰ *Na-y-idha purāṇo isi,dattassa gatim pi aññassa.*

⁷¹ *Iti kho ānanda ime puggalā ubho ek'aṅga,hīnāti.* Comy says that Purāṇa excelled in moral virtue, while Isidatta in wisdom. Purāṇa's moral virtue matched Isidatta's wisdom, while Isidatta's wisdom matched Purāṇa's moral virtue (AA 3:376,9). On how a drunkard attains streamwinning, see **Sarakāni S 1** (S 55.24/5:375-377), SD 3.6.