

## 10

## Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta

The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving<sup>1</sup> | M 38

Theme: Consciousness, rebirth and liberation

Translated by Piya Tan ©2003

1 Conditionality of consciousness

**1.1 The Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta** (M 38) teaches the conditionality of consciousness (*viññāṇa*). Consciousness, in other words, is not an entity (like an immortal “soul” or enduring “substance”) transmigrating life after life, but it is a “stream of consciousness” (*viññāṇa,sota*).<sup>2</sup>

**1.2** The average ordinary person is very likely to view things as wholes and entities, even as being fixed and eternal. For example, he may think that there is a permanent “self,” “soul,” “person” or “being” when what he is really experiencing is only a series of mental events comprising a super-rapid series of discrete thought-moments.

Our minds do not simply mirror the sense data that comes streaming in through the six senses, but works [them], shapes [them] in complex ways to construct out of [them] a sense of “me” and “my world.” We conceptualise or “reckon” our world, and we do so in terms of “What is this to *me*?”...

Looking at me speak, you think you “see” me speaking, but you don’t. You see forms by means of eye-consciousness, and hear sounds by means of ear-consciousness, and they are distinctly different.

So the Buddha is training his students to see separately and therefore distinctly—to *vi-pas-sati*, the verb from which we get the noun *vipassanā*, usually translated as “insight” but literally meaning “seeing (*passanā*) separately (*vi*).” When we do not see separately, we assume unity, the one who is seeing and hearing (the self), and the one who is seen and heard (the other). When we see separately we see that each moment of consciousness is distinct and discrete, and so impermanent, arising and ceasing. (Patrick Kearney, Week 3, 2002:3, digital ed)

**1.3** The Buddha teaches that whatever exists are all dependently arisen phenomena (*paṭicca,samuppānā dhammā*) that occur as a process of dependent arising (*paṭicca,samuppāda*).<sup>3</sup> Nothing exists as an in-

<sup>1</sup> A Chin parallel is **MĀ 201** (T1.766b-770a), which, like M 38, locates it in Jeta’s grove outside Sāvattthī. MĀ 201 is titled after the monk Sāti, who in both versions is the cause for the expounding of the sutta (唵帝經 according to a 宋,元 and 明 variant). A quote in Dharmaskandha also titles the sutta after Sāti, T1537 (T26.507c8: 教誨莎底經, the corresponding Skt fragment 4737 folio 5v10 in Dietz 1984:34,1 reads *uktam bhagavatā svātim [bh]ikṣum kai-varttapūrvvīṇam ārabhya*. On MĀ 201, see also Thich Minh Chau 1964:57-58, 127, 165. Lévi 1915:421 notes that the Sarvāstivāda Vinaya includes the present discourse in a list of sūtras known among well instructed lay disciples, T1435 (T23.174b21: 室唎咆那都叉耶時月提, glossed as 索滅解脫經. The Chin Udāna, T212 (T4.734c16), has a discourse quote from 大愛之本末所說, reflecting the title of M 38, which it allocates in Madhyama Āgama (the quote, however, speaks of different types of rebirth).

<sup>2</sup> This is a rare term in the Canon, found only in **Sampasādanīya S** (D 28.7/3:105) which probably refers to the better known commentarial term, *bhavaṅga* (“life-continuum” or the sub-unconscious) or *bhavaṅga,sota* (sub-conscious stream). See BDict: bhavaṅga & Ency Bsm: bhavaṅga.

<sup>3</sup> For detailed discussions, see **(Paṭicca,samuppāda) Vibhaṅga S** (S 12.2), “Dependent Arising” (essay) and **Mahā Nidāna S** (M 15) at SD 5 nos 13-15 respectively.

dependent entity in this world, but we are often beguiled by the continuity of things and events that we think they are permanent.

## 2 Sāti's wrong view

**2.1** The occasion for this teaching is when the monk Sāti the fisherman's son misunderstands the Buddha's teaching, thinking that it is the same consciousness (*viññāṇa*) that continues in the rounds of rebirths [§2].<sup>4</sup> **K R Norman** suggests that:

This would appear to be a recollection by Sāti of some such statements as those found in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad that *viññāna* continues: *idam mahad bhūtam anantam apāram viññāna-ghana eva* [2.4.12], "This great being, endless, unlimited, consisting of nothing but intelligence"; *sa viññāno bhavati, sa viññānam evānvavakrāmati* [4.4.2], "He becomes one with intelligence; what had intelligence departs with him"; *sa vā eṣa mahān aja ātmā yo 'yaṁ viññānamaya prāṇeṣu* [4.4.22], "Verily, he is the great unborn Self who is this (person) consisting of knowledge amongst the senses." (K R Norman, "Aspects of early Buddhism." 1990:24)<sup>5</sup>

Norman adds that Radhakrishnan's note on Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.1 states that "the principle of intelligence (*viññāna*), after having absorbed all the functions of consciousness, proceeds to continue in a new life." (*The Principal Upaniṣads*, London, 1953:270).<sup>6</sup>

**2.2 The Papañca,sūdanī**, the Majjhima Commentary, says that the monk Sāti, a fisherman's son, was not learned. He was a Jātaka reciter, so he thinks that, although the other aggregates (*khandha*) cease now here, now there, consciousness (*viññāṇa*) runs on from this world to the beyond and from the beyond to this world. As such, he concludes that consciousness has no condition (*paccaya*) for arising. The Buddha however teaches that where there is a condition, it arises, and with no condition, there is no arising of consciousness. Sāti therefore professes what the Buddha does not teach, giving a blow to the Conqueror's teaching, a "thief" in his dispensation, who brings bad and suffering to the people. (MA 2:305)

## 3 Gandharva

**3.1** The Mahā Taṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta contains an interesting term, **gandhabba** (Skt *gandharva*) [§26]. The *Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism* gives two meanings of the *gandhabba*:

- (1) A class of heavenly beings, famed particularly for their musical skills. The name, meaning "fragrance-eater," derives from the belief that they feed only on fragrance. [In this sense, it is found only in the Commentaries, J 2:249 f, 3:188; VvA 36, 137; PvA 119.]
- (2) A term for the non-material form a being is believed to take after death, according to some schools of Buddhism. In this ethereal form the spirit of the deceased person passes through the intermediate state or bar-do prior to a new birth, entering the mother's body at the moment of conception. [They inhabit the Cātum,mahā,rājika heaven of the guardian kings of the four quarters. D 2:212; M 1:265 f; A 2:39 (as birds), 4:200 (with asuras and nagas), 204, 207; DhA 420 = Sn 644; Miln 123 ff; cf S 3:250 ff; V 2:106.]

(*Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*, ed Damien Keown, 2003; parenthetical notes added)

<sup>4</sup> See also Gombrich 1996:47 f.

<sup>5</sup> See also Norman, "Death and the Tathāgata," 1991a:256.

<sup>6</sup> Norman 1990:24 (1993:124).

What “continues” after a being’s death is called the “gandharva” (*gandhabba*) [26] or “being to be born” (*sambhavesī*)<sup>7</sup> or, in Abhidhamma terms, the subconscious (*bhavaṅga*), also called the “intermediate being” (*antarā,bhava*), especially in Mahāyāna scripture. This intermediate being is “fuelled by food” (M 38,15) or as stated in the **Kutūhala,sāla S** (S 44.9): “When, Vaccha, a being has laid down this body but has not yet been reborn into another body, it is fuelled by craving, I say!” (S 44.9/4:400).

**3.2** The *bhavaṅga* (lit “existence-factor”) or “life-continuum” is a concept that evolved primarily in the Abhidhamma commentarial tradition to explain the continuity of consciousness and personal identity in the absence of a permanent self (which is denied by the *anattā* doctrine). The life-continuum flows on like a stream (*sota*) from one existence to the next. It is sometimes called *bhavaṅga,citta* (existence-factor consciousness) or “consciousness continuum” and is the foundation of all experience, both conscious and unconscious.

It retains the traces of all impression and sensations, and makes it possible to have recollections of these in the form of memories. At the beginning and end of each individual existence it is known as “rebirth-linking consciousness” (*paṭisandhi*) and “death consciousness” (*cuti,citta*) respectively. The concept of the *bhavaṅga* paved the way for later idealist trends and the evolution of the notion of the *ālaya,vijñāna* or “storehouse of consciousness.”

(*Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*, ed Damien Keown, 2003)

**3.3** In modern Buddhist writings, the terms “**subconscious**” is sometimes used as a translation of *bhavaṅga* (the life-continuum). “Subconscious,” however, is a 20<sup>th</sup> century psychological term, referring to that part of our mind not usually accessible to the conscious process but powerfully influencing it. As the term is imprecise, some academics prefer to use “preconscious” instead. Sometimes the term “**unconscious**” is used instead, but it is used for the “unconscious [non-percipient] beings” (*asañña,satta*), a unique form of beings belonging to the form-dhyana realm.<sup>8</sup>

On the other hand, “**preconscious**,” as a psychoanalytic term, refers to “knowledge, emotions, images, etc, that are not momentarily consciousness but which are easily accessible.”<sup>9</sup> In Buddhist psychology, the “subconscious” refers to the “existential consciousness,” which is reborn, while the “unconscious” refers to the latent tendencies (*anusaya*),<sup>10</sup> or, in post-Buddha metaphysics, the “store-consciousness” (*ālaya,vijñāna*).<sup>11</sup>

**ālaya,vijñāna** (Skt). The eight consciousness, being the substratum or “storehouse” consciousness according to the philosophy of the Yogācāra school. The *ālaya,vijñāna* acts as the receptacle in which the impressions (known as *vāsanā* or *bīja*) of past experience and karmic actions are stored. From it the remaining seven consciousnesses arise and produce all present and future modes of experience in *saṃsāra*. At the moment of enlightenment (*bodhi*), the *ālaya,vijñāna* is transformed into the Mirror-like Awareness or perfect discrimination of a Buddha.

(*Oxford Dictionary of Buddhism*, ed Damien Keown, 2003)

<sup>7</sup> M 38,15/1:261; Sn 147 = Kh no 9.

<sup>8</sup> On *asañña,satta*, see **Sañkhār’upapatti S** (M 120 (22)/3:103), SD 3.4 & SD 1.7 (Table 1.7).

<sup>9</sup> A S Reber, *The Penguin Dictionary of Psychology*, 1985. See **Vyāpāda**, SD 32.5 (3).

<sup>10</sup> See S 36.6.8b @ SD 5.5 (3 kinds), M 18.8 (7 kinds), SD 5.17, + SD 6.14 (5).

<sup>11</sup> On *ālaya,vijñāna*, see SD 17.8b (4.2); also SD 5.16 (14.2).

## 4 The life-continuum

**4.1 §§7-8**, a key passage where the Buddha declares the dependent arising of consciousness and applies the fire simile—which appears to rule out the concept of the “**life-continuum**” (*bhav’āṅga*) (also called “existential consciousness” or “the subconscious”), well known in the Abhidhamma tradition. The fire simile might be seen to imply that, just as there is no latent, non-burning form of fire, so there is no latent form of consciousness, apart from its six form arising dependent on a sense-organ and sense-object.

However, **Peter Harvey** argues that the simile should be understood against the Buddha’s Indian milieu (1995:156).<sup>12</sup> **F O Shrader** has pointed out the relevance of Upanishadic ideas of fire to Buddhist similes, asserting that such ideas:

[T]he common Indian view is, since the oldest times, that an expiring flame does not really go out, but returns into the primitive, pure, invisible state of fire it had before it’s appearance as visible fire.<sup>13</sup> (Shrader 1904-05:167)

**4.2 R H Robinson** similarly asserts that traditional Indians regarded fire as “an indestructible element latent in every bright or warm thing, but especially in fuel. It alternates between manifestation and ‘going home’ to its occult source” (1970:38 f, 1982:44). In a footnote, Harvey however cautions that

Buddhism would not, of course, accept fire as an “indestructible element” but would see it as an element in flux; this would certainly be the Abhidhamma perspective. Nevertheless, some instance of the element would always be present in a material object, so this makes little difference to the general idea of fire. (Harvey 1995:467 n2)

**4.3** The fire simile of the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta [§8.2] (M 1:259 f), then, concludes Harvey,

is to be understood against the background of such ideas. This means that the text does not rule out a latent form of discernment [consciousness], but indirectly alludes to it: just as “different and changing forms of fire arise from the latent form of fire dependent on certain fuels, so different and changing sorts of discernment [consciousness] arise from a latent source dependent on certain sense-organs and sense-objects. (Harvey 1995:157 (§10.5))

## 5 Sutta structure

### 5.1 FRAMEWORK

The framework of the introductory portion of this sutta [§§1-8] is identical to that of **the Alagaddûpama Sutta** (M 22).<sup>14</sup> Like the Alagaddûpama Sutta, **the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta** (M 38), too, teaches that one should regard the Dharma as a skillful means:

<sup>12</sup> Harvey 1995:95 f (§6.13) & 155-160 (ch 10).

<sup>13</sup> Eg, Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 1.13: *Vahner yathā yoni,gatasya mūrtir na dṛśyate n’aiva ca liṅga,nāsaḥ ... Mahā Saccaka S* (M 36) contains the famous parable of the fire-sticks (M 36,17/1:240 f): see SD 1.12. Even so late a text as **Milinda,pañha** contains this passage: “Sire, just as there is what is called fire, though there is no place for storing it up, a man, rubbing two sticks together, obtains fire’ even so, though there is no place for storing Nirvana, sire, but there is this Nirvana, whereby one practising rightly by means of skillful attention realizes Nirvana.” (Miln 327)

<sup>14</sup> M 22,1-8/1:130-133 (SD 3.13).

Bhikshus, having known the parable of the raft, you should abandon even the Teaching, how much more that which is not the Teaching!<sup>15</sup> (M 38,14/1:135), SD 7.10

The point of **the parable of the raft** is that the Dharma or right view is not a possession, something to have or collect. Although we might say (in conventional terms), “We have right view,” we do not really own it. We do not really *have* right view since, right view, like wrong view, arises and passes away dependent upon conditions. Whatever is impermanent cannot be said to be “I,” “me” or “mine”: it precludes ownership and self.

## 5.2 EARLY TEXT

As an early text, the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta is one of the most complex. It opens with the monk Sāti declaring a wrong view regarding rebirth [§2]; several monks try to correct his wrong view [§3]; having failed, they bring the matter before the Buddha [§4], who then summons him [§5.1]. The Buddha questions him all over again as the monks have done earlier and when Sāti’s wrong views are established [§5.2], and discovers that he has another wrong view about consciousness [§5.3]. The Buddha then goes on to reprimand him [§6].

The Buddha then takes great pains to explain that consciousness is not what Sāti takes it to be, but dependently arisen. First, he declares this to Sāti himself [6] and then addresses the congregation, stating that consciousness is dependently arisen [§7]. Then he shows how consciousness arises in connection with **the 6 sense-bases** [8], after which, applying the catechetical method (*puccā,vissajjanā*),<sup>16</sup> he explains how a “being” arises through “**food**” [§§9-13]. Yet he warns the monks not to cling to such right views, “no matter how pure, how clear,” [§14].

## 5.3 FOOD

The 4 types of food are then mentioned [§15] and showing how they are conditioned by craving and so on by way of **an 8-link dependent arising** ending with ignorance [§16]. Then, restarting with ignorance, he gives the forward cycle of **full 12-link dependent arising**, ending with birth [§17], from which he restarts the cycle, questioning the monks on each link, ending with ignorance [§18]. **The specific conditionality formula of origination** (*samudaya*) is then stated and whole forward dependent arising is recapitulated [§19], and then the reverse (ending) cycle [§20]. The monks are then questioned on this reverse cycle, link by link [§21], closing with its recapitulation beginning with **the specific conditionality of cessation** (*nirodha*) [§22]. The whole first section then concludes with the Buddha catechizing the monks on the immediacy of the Dharma.

<sup>15</sup> *Dhammā pi vo pahātabbā pag’eva adhammā*. Comy takes *dhammā* here to mean “good states”, ie calm and insight (*samatha,vipassanā*), citing **Laṭutikōpama S** (M 66,26-33/1:455) as an example of the teaching of the abandonment of attachment to calm, and the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya S (M 38,14/1:260 f) as one of the abandonment of attachment to insight. Bodhi, however, is of the view that “*dhamma* here signifies not good states themselves, but the teachings, the correct attitude to which was delineated just above in the simile of the snake.” (M:ÑB 1209 n255). See Intro.

<sup>16</sup> For a list of such discourses, see **(Saṃyojana) Koṭṭhita S** (S 35.232), SD 28.4 (2). The term occurs at PvA 2; cf Miln 89 (where unrehearsed questions and answers are meant).

## 6 The 16 doubts

**6.1** Section 23 of the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta lists (cases of) “the sixteen doubts.” They are also listed in such suttas as **the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta** (M 38.23/1:265),<sup>17</sup> **the Sabb’āsava Sutta** (M 2.7 f/1:8) and **the Paccaya Sutta** (S 12.20/2:26 f). **The Visuddhi,magga**<sup>18</sup> discusses the abandonment of these 16 doubts in some detail. **The Saṃyutta Commentary** explains that the basic division expressed in the doubts—between existing and not existing in the past, etc—reflects the antinomy of eternalism and annihilationism. The other doubts pertaining to past lives arise within an eternalist framework. Similar discussions apply to the doubts pertaining to the future and the present (SA 2:241 f).

**6.2 The Bhadd’eka,ratta Sutta** (M 131) presents the 16 doubts in a different manner: by way of the “15 wrong views” (*diṭṭhi*) that are to be avoided (M 131,4+6+8) and their antidotes (M 131,7+9+11). This simple framework showing the wrong views is based on **the 5 aggregates** (*pañca-k,khandha*) wrongly viewed over the three periods of time (past, present, future), thus totalling 15 wrong views. Conversely, the avoidance of them are regarded as 15 right views, that is, no views.<sup>19</sup>

## 7 Developmental psychology

**7.1** The Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta continues with an interesting passage [§§26-29] that would be described in modern parlance as dealing with development psychology. First, there is a statement on human conception [§26] where it is said that conception can only occur when there is coitus, it is the woman’s fertile period and there is an intermediate being or gandharva (*gandhabba*) to “descend” into the zygote. Medical science prescribes only the first two conditions. The absence of the third factor—the intermediate being—evidently explains still birth and some miscarriages.

**7.2** For 9 to 10 lunar months, the mother carries her unborn child (*gabbha*), nourishing it “with her own blood” [§27]. After the child is born, he grows into childhood and enjoys children’s toys and games [§28]. When the child matures into an adolescence and youth, he begins to be captivated by the 5 cords of sense-pleasure, swinging between liking pleasurable things and disliking unpleasurable things [§§29-30].

**7.3** The Sutta then shows how this cycle is broken (between feeling and craving) so that one is spiritually liberated [§31]. Then it goes on to systematically describe the pilgrim’s progress from renunciation [§32] through monastic moral training (the long Lesser Section on Moral Virtue) [§33], through mental cultivation [§§34-36], through overcoming the 5 mental hindrances [§37], into the 4 meditation dhyanas [§39] and final liberation [§40].

## 8 When does life begin?

**8.1** The Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta is an important text in any discussion on the question of when life begins. There are today two opposing camps, as reflected in the issue of abortion, that is, the “life” camp and the “choice” camp. The pro-life advocates based their beliefs and arguments on what the early Buddhist texts call “eternalist view” (*sassata.diṭṭhi*) of life. This view is usually based on a belief in some form of immortal or abiding soul, and since such a soul could not have existed on its own, it must

<sup>17</sup> See SD 7.9.

<sup>18</sup> Vism 19.5 f/599 & 19.21-27/603-605.

<sup>19</sup> See **Bhadd’eka,ratta S** (M 131/3:187-189), SD 7.9 (2).

have been created by a God. Or, such a soul is a spiritual entity, a divine spark that distinguishes humans from all other beings, and so gives human life a unique ethical value.

**8.2** Pro-life advocates believe that the soul enters the embryo during conception (when the sperm successfully merges with the egg in the proper conditions). The embryo, as such, is henceforth a fully-fledged human being, like an adult. To kill such a being is regarded as murder.

The “choice” camp, that is, those who allow or accept abortion under certain (or any) circumstances include the materialists who believe that the primary substance of the world (animate and inanimate) is matter. Under the right conditions, matter can evolve into complex organisms, and when consciousness has emerged in them, they are said to be “life.” The materialists, as such, regard consciousness as an epiphenomenon (or emergent property) of matter, and they generally believe that consciousness emerges in the embryo during the third or fourth month of pregnancy. Before that it is just a non-conscious lump of meat. Such ideas are based on an “annihilistic view” (*uccheda, diṭṭhi*) of life, that also regards this life as our only one with no afterlife.

**8.3** The mainstream Buddhists take a middle way beyond these two extremes of eternalism and of annihilationism. Before we go into the Buddhist stand on this issue, let us look at the Buddhist definition of conception. According to **the Mahā Tanhā,saṅkhaya Sutta**, human conception occurs when these 3 conditions are fulfilled:

- (1) there is coitus,
- (2) it is the woman’s fertile period, and
- (3) there is an “intermediate being” (*gandhabba*) to “descend” into the zygote. [§26]

This effectively means that life (as consciousness) begins with conception.

**8.4 The Mahā Nidāna Sutta** (D 15) clearly states that if consciousness does not arise in the embryo, the mental and physical aspects of life do not take shape:

“Ānanda, how consciousness conditions name-and-form should be known in this manner:

If there were no consciousness to descend into a mother’s womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?”<sup>20</sup>

“Certainly not, bhante.”

If, after descending into the mother’s womb, the consciousness were to depart, would name-and-form be generated in this state of being here?”

“Certainly not, bhante.”

“If the consciousness of a young boy or a young girl were to be cut off, would name-and-form grow, develop and mature?”

“Certainly not, bhante.”

<sup>20</sup> Cf **Titth’āyatana S** (A 3.61) where the Buddha declares: “Based on the 6 elements, there is descent into the womb; | (On account of) such a descent, there is name-and-form; | With name-and-form as condition, there is contact; | With contact as condition, there is feeling. | Now, it is for one who feels that I make known [the 4 noble truths]” (A 3.61,9/1:176). This clearly shows that feeling arises with the descent of the gandharva (rebirth consciousness) into the womb. However, this is not a common interpretation of *viññāṇa-nāma, rūpa* dyad, where “*viññāṇa* in this context became the consciousness that descends into the mother’s womb at conception, while *nāma-rūpa* became the body complex that takes shape and, after developing sense-organs (*saḷ-āyatana*), experiences contact (*phassa*) and so on.” (Bucknell 1999:339). More commonly, *viññāṇa* is “the consummation of the six types of consciousness associated with the sense organs, which makes the version read like an account of the psychological process of sensory perception.” (Bucknell 1999:327): see **Madhu,piṇḍika S** (M 18.16-18/1:111-113). See discussions on *nāma, rūpa* in SD 5.17 (5, 6.1) & **(Paṭicca,samuppāda) Vibhaṅga S** (S 12.2.11/2:3 f) n, SD 5.15..

“Therefore, Ānanda, this is the cause, the source, the origin, the condition for name-and-form, that is to say, consciousness. (D 15,21/2:63 @ SD 5.17)

**8.5 Sujato**, in his article, “When life begins,” published in *Eastern Horizon*, gives an insightful summary of the whole matter:

So the texts state that consciousness is present from the inception of life. A being who is conscious can feel pain, and therefore deserves moral consideration. It goes without saying, however, that the ability of a newly conceived embryo to feel pain is very rudimentary, perhaps comparable to someone in a deep coma or under a deep anaesthetic. According to Buddhism these are states of consciousness, but too dim to be noticed when compared with the glare of waking consciousness. The texts frequently speak of the “growth, increase, and maturing” of the newly reborn consciousness. In accordance with the findings of science, the texts speak of the gradual development of the embryo’s sense faculties. But unlike the scientists, they do not assume that consciousness does not appear until the senses develop. So while the embryo certainly deserves moral consideration, its limited capacity to feel pain means that killing an embryo falls short of “murder.”

There is clear support for this conclusion in the Vinaya. This states that a monk or nun should never, for the whole of their life, intentionally kill a human being, “even to the extent of causing an abortion.” Similarly, they should not have sexual intercourse “even to the depth of a sesame seed.” They should not steal “even as much as a blade of grass.” They should not lay claim to spiritual attainments “even by saying ‘I delight in an empty dwelling.’” So abortion is clearly regarded as intentional killing of a human being; yet it is the least serious act of this kind.

So the Buddhist texts pertaining to abortion provide a classic model for a “middle way,” which accepts some of the propositions of the extreme views, while avoiding their absolutist and simplistic conclusions. Together with the eternalists we believe that an embryo from the time of conception is endowed with a non-physical property that entitles them to moral consideration. However we do not accept that this principle is a spiritual entity, a spark of God’s glory; nor do we accept that this supposed “soul” is a unique distinguishing feature of humanity.

We believe that it is a conditioned stream of consciousness, ever changing and evolving as it passes from life to life. Together with the annihilationists we believe that the weight of moral consideration due to an embryo is not static, but gradually increases with the development of the embryo’s mind towards full awareness. However we do not accept that it can be proved that the inception of consciousness takes place only after three or four months. This is an ethically arbitrary date which simply marks the present day limits of scientific knowledge, but tells us nothing about the moral status of the embryo. (Sujato, “When life begins,” 2003:7)

## 9 Related suttas

**9.1** Sāti’s wrong view as mentioned in the Mahā Taṇhāsaṅkhaya Sutta—“It is this same consciousness, not another, that runs and wanders through the rounds of births” [§2]—falls under the category of eternalism (*sassata, vāda*). There are a number of other occasions involving wrong views: (V 2:25 f; M 1:130, 326; A 5:194).

**9.2** As already mentioned [5], §23 lists (cases of) “the 16 doubts.” This section should be studied with **the Bhaddekaratta Sutta** (M 131) that presents the 16 doubts in a different manner: by way of the “15 wrong views” (*diṭṭhi*).<sup>21</sup>

<sup>21</sup> See **Bhadd’eka,ratta S** (M 131/3:187-189), SD 7.9 (2).



**9.3** Section 30 of the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta should be studied with **the Saññoga Sutta** (A 7.48) which describes how sexual lust arises. (A 7.48/4:57-59), SD 8.7.

**9.4** The Sutta’s concluding section [§§26-29] shows a concrete application of dependent arising to the course of an individual existence.<sup>22</sup> Bh Bodhi notes

The passage §§26-29 may be taken to show the factors from consciousness through feeling that result from past ignorance and formations, §40 the causal factors of craving and clinging as they build up a continuation of the saṃsāric round. The following sections (§§31-40), connecting dependent arising to the appearance of the Buddha and his teaching of the Dhamma, shows the practice of the Dhamma to be the means of bringing the round to an end.”

(M:ÑB 1233 n410)

**9.5** This concluding portion of the Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta [§§31-38], ending with the section on sense-restraint and liberation [§40], is elaborated in **the Cūḷa Hatthi,padôpama Sutta** (M 27) which gives a full description of the dhyanas (*jhāna*) and other attainments (M 27,19-26/182-4).

— — —

## Mahā Taṇhā,saṅkhaya Sutta

### The Greater Discourse on the Destruction of Craving

M 38

[256]

**1** Thus have I heard.

At one time the Blessed One was staying in Anāthapiṇḍika’s park in Jeta’s grove, near Sāvathī.

#### SĀTĪ’S WRONG VIEW

##### Sāti’s bad false view

**2** At that time, a bad false view<sup>23</sup> arose in a monk named Sāti, the fisherman’s son:

“As I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness,<sup>24</sup> not another, that runs and flows through the rounds of births.”<sup>25</sup>

**3** Several monks, having heard:

“It is said that a bad false view had arisen in a monk named Sati, the fisherman’s son, thus:

<sup>22</sup> For an example of the social application of dependent arising, see **Mahā Nidāna S** (M 15.9-18/2:58-61), where it shows how social conflicts arise.

<sup>23</sup> “Bad false view” (*pāpakam ditthi,gatam*). *Pāpaka* (“bad, evil”) is often rendered as “pernicious.” *Ditthi,gata*, “recourse to views, field of views: (Ñānamoli, 1994): 6 kinds are given at Pm 1:130, 2 kinds at It 43.

<sup>24</sup> “Consciousness,” *viññāṇa*: see SD 17.8a; also Johansson, 1965:189-215. On *viññāṇa* as a link in dependent arising, see (**Paṭicca,samuppāda**) **Vibhaṅga S** (S 12.2/2:2-4), SD 5.15.

<sup>25</sup> “It is this same consciousness,...the rounds of births,” *tad ev’idaṃ viññāṇam sandhāvati saṃsarati anaññan ti*.

‘As I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness, not another, that runs and flows through the rounds of births’”

3.2 Then, these monks went to the monk Sāti, the fisherman’s son, and asked him, “Avuso Sāti, is it true that such a bad false view has arisen in you, thus:

‘As I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness, not another, that runs and flows through the rounds of births?’”

3.3 “That is very true, avuso. As I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness, not another, that runs and flows through the rounds of births.”

3.4 Then, those monks, desiring to detach him from that bad false view, questioned, pressed and parleyed with him, thus:

“Avuso Sāti, do not say so! Do not misrepresent the Blessed One: it is not good to misrepresent the Blessed One. The Blessed One would not speak thus. For in many ways the Blessed One has stated that consciousness is dependently arisen, [257] since, without a condition, there is no arising of consciousness.”

3.5 Yet although those monks questioned, pressed and parleyed with him, thus, the monk Sāti, the fisherman’s son, still obstinately held on to the bad false view, clinging on to it, and said;

“Avuso, as I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness, not another, that runs and flows through the rounds of births.”

### Sāti holds on to his view

4 Since the monks were unable to detach him from that bad false view, they approached the Blessed One. Having approached the Blessed One, they saluted him, and then sat down at one side.

Seated thus at one side, they told the Blessed One ... [all that had occurred: §§3.1

-3.5] ... and said:

“Bhante, since we could not detach the monk Sāti, the fisherman’s son, from this bad false view, we have reported this matter to the Blessed One.”

5 Then the Blessed One addressed a certain monk, thus:

“Come, [258] bhikshu, tell the monk Sāti, the fisherman’s son, in my name, that the Teacher calls him.”

“Yes, bhante,” the monk replied and then he approached the monk Sāti. Having approached him, the monk said this to him,

“The Teacher calls you, avuso Sāti.”

“Yes, avuso,” he replied, and he went to the Blessed One. Having gone to the Blessed One, he saluted him, and then sat down at one side.

5.2 The Blessed One then asked him:

“Sāti, is it true that the following bad false view has arisen in you: ‘As I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is this same consciousness, not another, that runs and wanders through the rounds of births.’?”

“That is very true, bhante. As I understand the Dharma taught by the Blessed One, it is *this same consciousness*, not another, that runs and wanders through the rounds of births.”

5.3 “**What is this consciousness, Sāti?**”

“Bhante, it is that which speaks and feels<sup>26</sup> here and there; it feels the results of good and bad deeds.”<sup>27</sup>

<sup>26</sup> Native gloss on *vado vedeyyo*, from Sāti’s wrong perspective: “That which speaks, that which feels, and that which experiences now here, now there, karmic fruits that are good and that are bad, that is, *consciousness* (*viñ-ñāṇa*), bhante, that I am speaking of.” (MA 2:305 f). Comy on **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2,8/1:258) glosses “that speaks and feels” (*vado vedeyyo*) as the conviction of the eternalists. *Vada* is the vocal act. *Vedeyyo* is that which experiences

5.4 “Misguided one [You hollow man],<sup>28</sup> to whom have you ever known me to have taught the Dharma in that way? Misguided one, have I not stated in many ways that **consciousness is dependently arisen**;<sup>29</sup> that without a condition there is no arising of consciousness?

But you, misguided one, have misrepresented us by your wrong grasp and injured<sup>30</sup> yourself, and stored up much demerit—for, this will bring you harm and suffering for a long time.”<sup>31</sup>

## CONSCIOUSNESS

### Consciousness is dependently arisen

6 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks thus:

“Bhikshus, what do you think? Has this monk Sāti, the fisherman’s son, kindled even a spark of wisdom in this Dharma and Discipline?”<sup>32</sup>

“How can this be, bhante? No, bhante.”

6.2 When this was said, the monk Sāti, the fisherman’s son, sat silent, dismayed, his shoulders drooping, hanging his head, glum, and at a loss for an answer.<sup>33</sup>

Then knowing that the monk Sati, son of a fisherman, was sitting silent, dismayed, with shoulders drooping and head down, glum, and at a loss for an answer, the Blessed One said this to him:

(*vediyati*). So, it means it experiences, undergoes (*anubhavati*). What does it feel (know, *vedeti*)? It experiences (*paṭisaṃvedeti*) now here, now there, the fruits of karma that are good and that are bad. “Now here, now there” refers to a womb, destiny, station, abode, species, or mental object. (MA 1:71). On the Vedic provenance of the phrase *vado vedeyya*, See Shults 2014:110.

<sup>27</sup> As in **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2,8/1:8) where it is one of a number of examples of “one fallen into view” (*ditṭhi,gata*). This statement by Sāti is his 2<sup>nd</sup> wrong view, the first being stated in §3.

<sup>28</sup> *Mogha,purisa*, lit “empty person.” I’ve followed a safe well-tested translation here. However, while *mogha* evokes more deeply a spiritual lack, “misguided” connotes more of psychosocial errancy. Cf T S Eliot’s “Hollow Men” (where “empty men” is also mentioned) which fully brings out the meaning here but lacks emotional connection for those unfamiliar with the poem.

<sup>29</sup> “Consciousness is dependently arisen,” *paṭicca,samuppannaṃ viññāṇaṃ*. Cf **Mahā Hatthi,padōpama S** (M 28): “These 5 aggregates of clinging are dependently arisen.” (M 28,28/1:191), SD 3.13.

<sup>30</sup> “Injured,” *khaṇasi*, 2<sup>nd</sup> p sg of *khaṇati*: (1) hurts, injures; impairs (V 2:26 = M 1:132; D 1:86; S 1:27; A 1:89, 3:350; Tha 1173); (2) digs; digs up excavates (V 3:48, 76, 4:32; M 2:51; S 1:127; A 4:159; Dh 247, 337; U 15). There is a wordplay here: Sāti harms himself with wrong view, and also dig up his wholesome roots.

<sup>31</sup> Comy notes that Sāti therefore professes what the Buddha does not teach, giving a blow to the Conqueror’s wheel, and is a “thief” in his dispensation. (MA 2:305)

<sup>32</sup> A similar context for this stock phrase is the Buddha’s rebuke of Ariṭṭha (**Alagaddūpama S**, M 22,7/2:132). Comy there remarks that this phrase refers to “one who has not cultivated the ‘warmth of understanding’ (*ñāṇ’-usmā*) that can mature the ‘seed of wisdom’ (*paññā,bījā*, MAṬ) for winning the paths and fruits.” (MA 2:104).

<sup>33</sup> *Tuṇhī,bhūtaṃ maṅku,bhūtaṃ patta-k,khandhaṃ adho,mukhaṃ pajjhāyantaṃ appaṭibhānaṃ viditvā*, D 3:53,-26 = M 1:132,34 = 234,4 = 258,31 = 2:154,27 = 3:298,23 ≠ A 3:57,13 (*dukkhīṃ dummanaṃ patta-k,khandhaṃ +*). **Tuṇhī,bhūto +**, M 1:132,30 (= Comy: *kiñci paṭibhānaṃ apassanto chinna,paṭibhāṇo*, lit “not seeing any wit, wit uprooted,” ie at one’s wit’s ends, at a loss) = 234,2 (= Comy: *uttaraṃ apassanto*, “not seeing a refutation [not knowing how to answer]”) = 258,29 = 2:154,25 = 3:187,18 = 208,22 = M 3:298,21 = S 1:124,12 = A 1:186,29 ≈ A 3:57,11 (*dukkhī dummano patta-k,khandho +*) ≈ D 3:53,22 (instead of final *viditvā*, has *nisīdi*, “he sat”). **Aor pl nisidimsu tuṇhī,bhūto +**, V 3:162,4 = 2:78,24 ≈ D 3:57,13 = A 5:188,18. This stock passage show defeat and resignation, and is used of Māra when he fails in his machinations against the Buddha and his disciples (eg S 1:124). Although reflecting defeat, this passage also suggests lack of contrition on the part of the person. In Mahā Tanhā,saṅkhaya S, Sāti is not mentioned as having recanted his wrong view. For the reason, see prec n. See **Satta Vassa S** (S 4.24,13 n), SD 36.5.

“Misguided one [You hollow man], you will be recognized by your own bad false view. I will question the monks on this matter.”

7 Then the Blessed One addressed the monks thus:<sup>34</sup>

“Bhikshus, do you understand the Dharma taught by me as this monk, Sāti, [259] the fisherman’s son, does when he misrepresents us by his wrong grasp and injures himself and stores up much demerit?”

“No, bhante. For in many ways the Blessed One has stated how consciousness is dependently arisen, since, without a conditions, there is no arising of consciousness.”<sup>35</sup>

“Good, bhikshus. It is good that you understand the Dharma taught by me thus. For in many ways I have spoken on how consciousness is dependently arisen, since, without a condition, there is no arising of consciousness.

But this monks Sāti, the fisherman’s son, misrepresents us by his wrong grasp, and injures himself and stores up much demerit. For, this will lead to this misguided one’s [hollow person’s] harm and pain for a long time.

## Conditionality of consciousness

**8 Bhikshus, consciousness is reckoned by the particular condition dependent upon which it arises.**

When consciousness arises dependent on <u>the eye and forms</u> ,	it is reckoned as <u>eye-consciousness</u> .
When consciousness arises dependent on <u>the ear and sounds</u> ,	it is reckoned as <u>ear-consciousness</u> .
When consciousness arises dependent on <u>the nose and smells</u> ,	it is reckoned as <u>nose-consciousness</u> .
When consciousness arises dependent on <u>the tongue and tastes</u> ,	it is reckoned as <u>tongue-consciousness</u> .
When consciousness arises dependent on <u>the body and touches</u> ,	it is reckoned as <u>body-consciousness</u> .
When consciousness arises dependent on <u>the mind and mind-objects</u> ,	it is reckoned as <u>mind-consciousness</u> .

8.2 THE FIRE SIMILE. Just as **fire** is reckoned by the particular condition dependent upon which it burns:<sup>36</sup>

when fire burns dependent on wood, it is reckoned as	“wood fire”;
when fire burns dependent on wood chips, it is reckoned as	“wood-chip fire”;
when fire burns dependent on grass, it is reckoned as	“grass fire”;
when fire burns dependent on cow-dung, it is reckoned as	“cow-dung fire”;

<sup>34</sup> Comy on **Alaggadūpama S** notes that by questioning the other monks, the Buddha wants to clarify the sangha’s view and to leave no doubt in Ariṭṭha that through his mindset, he had alienated himself from the Sangha. (MA 2:105). Compatibility of view (*diṭṭhi,sāmaññatā*) is the last of the 6 qualities constituting the virtues for the spiritual community (*sāraṇīya,dhamma*, D 3:245, A 3:288 f), the first 5 being: showing lovingkindness in deed, in speech, and in thought; communal sharing, compatibility of moral virtue. However, despite Sāti’s alienation, no disciplinary measure is put upon him. Instead, the Buddha actually clarifies the situation before the assembly in Sāti’s presence which apparently would benefit him in due course. §§7-8 here appears to rule out the possibility of the “life-continuum” (*bhav’aṅga*), a doctrine introduced in the Ahidhamma tradition: see Intro (5).

<sup>35</sup> Although it is not mentioned who or how many monks are behind these words, apparently, one of the monks, probably an elder, speaks on behalf of the assembly.

<sup>36</sup> The following are the fuel mentioned above for the fires in Pali: *kaṭṭha* (wood, stick, twig), *sakalika* (splinter, chip), *tiṇa* (grass), *go,maya* (cow-dung), *thusa* (chaff), *saṅkāra* (rubbish, refuse). The Pali word for “fuel,” *upādāna*, also means “clinging”, since clinging adds fuel to our craving (*taṇhā*). Our desire works closely with our self-view and self-identity: in fact, we are what we desire. “Bhikshus, one having sensual desires is reborn as an individual (*atta,bhāva*) into this or that existence depending on one’s merit or on one’s demerit.” (**Nibbedhika (Pariyāya) S**, A 6.63.4.3/3:411). This passage centring around the fire simile is a sort of abridgement of **Aditta,pariyāya S** (S 35.28), SD 1.3.

when fire burns dependent on chaff, it is reckoned as “chaff fire”;  
 when fire burns dependent on refuse, it is reckoned as “refuse fire”;  
 even so, too, bhikshus, consciousness is reckoned by the particular condition dependent upon which it arises.

When consciousness arises dependent on the eye and forms, it is reckoned as eye-consciousness ....

When consciousness arises [260] dependent on the mind and mind-objects, it is reckoned as mind-consciousness.

## BEING, CONDITIONALITY & FOOD

### Existence according to specific conditionality<sup>37</sup>

9 Bhikshus, do you see thus, ‘This being [*This* has come into being].?’<sup>38</sup>

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, do you see thus, ‘Its coming into being is on account of *that* (condition) as food.’?”<sup>39</sup>

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, do you see thus, ‘With the ending of that food, that which has come into being is subject to ending.’?”<sup>40</sup>

“Yes, bhante.”

10 “Bhikshus, does doubt arise when you are uncertain thus, ‘Has this (being) come into being?’”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, does doubt arise when you are uncertain thus, ‘Does its coming into being arise with that as food?’”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, does doubt arise when you are uncertain thus, ‘With the ending of that food, is what that has come into being subject to ending?’”

“Yes, bhante.”

11 “Bhikshus, is doubt abandoned in you when you see as it really is with proper wisdom thus, ‘This (being) has come into being.’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, is doubt abandoned in you when you see as it really is with proper wisdom thus, ‘Its coming into being is on account of that (condition) as food.’?”

<sup>37</sup> The tr here may seem awkward is the difficulty of the English idiom to capture the simplicity of the Pali statement on specific conditionality (*idap,paccayattā*): see **Dependent Arising**, SD 5.16 (2)+(6).

<sup>38</sup> *Bhūtam idan ti bhikkhave passathā ti*. Comy: “**This**” refers to the five aggregates (MA 2:307). Having shown the conditionality of consciousness, the Buddha now shows the conditionality of all aggregates, which arise through conditions, their “food” and pass away with the ending of those conditions. I have amplified this reading with “being” in agreement with the syntax, rather than amplifying it with “the 5 aggregates” or “the fivefold aggregate.”

<sup>39</sup> *Tad āhāra,sambhavan ti bhikkhave passathā ti*. Comy takes “**that**,” *tad* [*taṃ* before a vowel], as a nominative representing the subject [*taṃ khandha,pañcakam*], but, notes Bodhi, “it seems more likely that it qualifies *āhāra* and that both should be taken as ablatives [tr “from”], the subject *idam* being understood. This interpretation seems confirmed by the third statement, *tad-āhāra,nirodhā yaṃ bhūtaṃ taṃ nirodha,dhammaṃ*. Horner’s ‘This is the origination of nutriment’ [M:H 1:315] is clearly wrong.” (M:ÑB 1232 n405). This important passage [9] “indicates that rebirth occurs because, by grasping at various things, discernment [consciousness] is made to be ‘dependent’ (*nissita*) on them. S 2:66 [**Cetanā S 2**, S 12.39] complements this by saying ‘When discernment [consciousness] is supported (*patiṭṭhite*) and growing, there is descent (*avakkanti*) of mind-and-body,’ ie a being develops in the womb to bring another birth.” (Harvey 1995:96). See §26 below on the nature of conception.

<sup>40</sup> *Tad āhāra,nirodhā yaṃ bhūtaṃ taṃ nirodha,dhamman ti bhikkhave passathā ti*.

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, is doubt abandoned in you when you see as it really is with proper wisdom thus, ‘With the ending of that food, that which has come into being is subject to ending.’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

**12** “Bhikshus, are you thus free from doubt here thus, ‘This being [This has come into being].’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, are you thus free from doubt here thus, ‘Its coming into being is on account of *that* (condition) as food.’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, are you thus free from doubt here thus, ‘With the ending of that food, that which has come into being is subject to ending.’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

**13** “Bhikshus, has it been properly seen by you as it really is with proper wisdom thus, ‘This being [This has come into being].’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, has it been properly seen by you as it really is with proper wisdom thus, ‘Its coming into being is on account of *that* (condition) as food.’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, has it been properly seen by you as it really is with proper wisdom thus, ‘With the ending of that food, that which has come into being is subject to ending.’?”

“Yes, bhante.”

**14** “Bhikshus, no matter how pure, how clear, **[261]** this view may be, if you stick to it, prize it, be acquisitive about it,<sup>41</sup> treat it as a possession,<sup>42</sup> would you then understand that the Dharma has been taught as being comparable to a raft<sup>43</sup> that is for crossing over [the waters to the far shore], not for the purpose of grasping?”

“No, bhante.”

“Bhikshus, no matter how pure, how clear, this view may be, if you do *not* stick to it, do *not* prize it, are *not* acquisitive about it, do *not* treat it as a possession, would you then understand that the Dharma has been taught as being comparable to a raft, which is for crossing over [the waters to the far shore], not for the purpose of grasping?”

“Yes, bhante.”

## THE 4 KINDS OF FOOD

### Food and dependent arising

**15** “Bhikshus, there are these **4 kinds of food**<sup>44</sup> that sustain beings who have come into being or who are seeking birth.<sup>45</sup> What are the four?”

<sup>41</sup> “Be acquisitive about it,” *dhanāyati* (denom of *dhana*, “treasure”) lit “make a treasure of it,” he desires (like money), wishes for, strives after. Also read as *vanāyati*, he hankers after.

<sup>42</sup> This verse up to here qu in Comy to **Alagaddûpama S** (M 22) (MA 22.21/2:109).

<sup>43</sup> “Being comparable to a raft,” *kullûpamam*. The whole phrase can be alt tr as “would you then understand the Dharma as taught in the parable of the raft ... ?” See **Alagaddûpama S** (M 22.13/1:134). “This is said to show the bhikkhus that they should not cling even to the right view of insight meditation” (M:ÑB 1233 n406).

<sup>44</sup> Comy: The Buddha gives the teachings of this verse and the next to link up the “foods” with dependent arising to show his wisdom covers not merely the 5 aggregates but also the whole sequence of conditions (*paccayā, param-parā*) responsible for their being (MA 2:308). They are called “food” (*āhāra*) because they serve as *special conditions*

They are:

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| (1) <u>material food</u> , gross or subtle; | <i>kabaḷiṅkāra āhāra</i> |
| (2) <u>contact</u> as the second;           | <i>phassa</i>            |
| (3) <u>mental volition</u> as the third;    | <i>mano,sañcetanā</i>    |
| (4) <u>consciousness</u> as the fourth.     | <i>viññāṇa</i>           |

**16** And, bhikshus, these 4 kinds of food—what is their source; what is their cause; from what are they born and produced?<sup>46</sup>

These four kinds of food have **craving** as their source;<sup>47</sup> they have craving as their cause; they are born from craving; they are produced by craving.

And this craving, bhikshus—what is its source; what is its cause; from what is it born and produced?

This craving has **feeling** as its source; it has feeling as its cause; it is born from feeling; it is produced by feeling.

And this feeling, bhikshus—what is its source; what is its cause; from what is it born and produced?

This feeling has **contact** as its source; it has contact as its cause; it is born from contact; it is produced by contact.

And this contact, bhikshus—what is its source; what is its cause; from what is it born and produced?

This contact has **the sixfold sense-base** as its source; it has contact as its cause; it is born from contact; it is produced by contact.

And this sixfold sense-base, bhikshus—what is its source; what is its cause; from what is it born and produced?

This sixfold sense-base has **name-and-form** as its source; it has name-and-form as its cause; it is born from name-and-form; it is produced by name-and-form.

And this name-and-form, bhikshus—what is its source; what is its cause; from what is it born and produced?

This name-and-form has **consciousness** as its source; it has consciousness as its cause; it is born from consciousness; it is produced by consciousness.

And this consciousness, bhikshus—what is its source; what is its cause; from what is it born and produced?

This consciousness has **formations** as its source; it has formations as its cause; it is born from formations; it is produced by formations.

for the personal life-continuity (*ajjhatika,santatiyā visesa,paccayatā*). For material food (*kabaḷiṅkāra āhāra*) is a special condition for the physical body of those beings who subsist on material food. In the mental body, contact is the special condition for feeling, mental volition for consciousness, and consciousness for name-and-form. **The products of food** (what it nourishes): (1) Material food put into the mouth produces the groups of form with nutritive essence as the eighth (*oja'aṭṭhamaka,rūpāni*, an Abhidhamma term for the simplest cluster of material states); (2) contact as food (*phass'āhāra*) produces the three kinds of feeling [pleasurable, painful, neutral]; (3) mental volition as food (*mano,sañcetanāhāra*) produces the 3 kinds of existence [sense-world, form-world, formless world]; and (4) consciousness as food (*viññāṇ'āhāra*) produces name-and-form (*nāma,rūpa*) at rebirth. (MA 1:207 ff; SA 2:22-27; KhA 75 ff). See **Āhāra S** (S 12.11/2:11-13) in SD 7. Also see Nyanaponika 1967.

<sup>45</sup> "Who are seeking birth," *sambhavesī*. Some Buddhists are of the opinion that the term *sambhavesī* may refer to the "intermediate state" (*antarā,bhava*, Tib *bardo*) or "intermediate being" (*antarā,bhava sattva*) which links one birth to the next and which, according to "Northern" Buddhism (ie Mahayana and Vajrayana), may last up to 49 days. During that period, the deceased's "conscious principle" (*rnam shes*) encounters many visions of both peaceful and wrathful deities which are personifications of one's past karma. See **Karaṇīya Metta S** (Khp 9 = Sn 1.7) in SD 38.3 n5c.2.

<sup>46</sup> See **Cūḷa Sīha,nāda S** (M 11,14/1:67).

<sup>47</sup> Craving is regarded as the source of "food" because the craving of previous lives is the source of the present individuality, which depends upon and continually consumes the 4 "foods" in this existence.

And these formations, bhikshus—what is their source; what is their cause; from what are they born and produced?

These formations have **ignorance** as their source; they have ignorance as their cause; they are born from ignorance; they are produced by ignorance.

## DEPENDENT ARISING

### Dependent arising: Forward sequence

**17** Thus, bhikshus, with ignorance as condition, there are volitional formations;<sup>48</sup>  
 with volitional formations as condition, there is consciousness;  
 with consciousness as condition, there is name-and-form;  
 with name-and-form as condition, there is the sixfold sense-base;  
 with the sixfold sense-base as condition, there is contact;  
 with contact as condition, there is feeling;  
 with feeling as condition, there is craving;<sup>49</sup>  
 with craving as condition, there is clinging;  
 with clinging as condition, there is existence;  
 with existence as condition, there is birth;  
 with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

### Dependent arising: Forward sequence catechism

**18** (1) ‘**With birth as condition, there is decay-and-death,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does decay-and-death have birth as condition or not, or how is it here?”<sup>50</sup>

“Bhante, decay-and-death has birth as condition. Thus we understand it here as ‘With birth as condition, there is decay-and-death.’”

(2) “‘**With existence as condition, there is birth,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does birth have existence as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, birth has existence as condition. [262] Thus we understand it here as ‘With existence as condition, there is birth.’”

(3) “‘**With clinging as condition, there is existence,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does existence have clinging as condition or not, or how is it here?”

<sup>48</sup> Comy: When it is said, “With ignorance as condition, there are volitional formations,” the meaning should be understood thus: “It is ignorance and it is a condition; hence ‘ignorance-as-condition’ (*avijjā ca sā paccayā cāti avijjā, paccayā*). Through that ignorance-as-condition, volitional formations come to be (*tasmā avijjā, paccayā saṅkhārā sambhavanti*)” (SA 2:9 f). Bodhi: “This explanation suggests that the verb *sambhavanti*, which in the text occurs only at the end of the whole formula, should be connected to each proposition, thus establishing that each conditioned state arises through its condition. The twelve terms of the formula are treated analytically in [the **Vibhaṅga S**].” (S:B 725 n1)

<sup>49</sup> In (**Samuday’atthaṅgama**) **Loka S** (S 12.44), the dependent arising is shown to be broken here when “with the utter fading away and ending of that same craving comes cessation of clinging...” the rest of the chain breaks accordingly leading to the ending of “this whole mass of suffering.” (S 12.44/2:71-73)

<sup>50</sup> “Or how is it here?” *kathaṃ vā ettha hotī ti*, ie “or how do you understand this?”.



“Bhante, existence has clinging as condition. Thus we understand it here as ‘With clinging as condition, there is existence.’”

(4) **“With craving as condition, there is clinging,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does clinging have craving as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, clinging has craving as condition. Thus we understand it here as ‘With craving as condition, there is clinging.’”

(5) **“With feeling as condition, there is craving,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does craving have feeling as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, craving has feeling as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With feeling as condition, there is craving.’”

(6) **“With contact as condition, there is feeling,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does feeling have contact as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, feeling has contact as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With contact as condition, there is feeling.’”

(7) **“With the sixfold sense-base as condition, there is contact,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does contact have the sixfold sense-base as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, contact has the sixfold sense-base as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With the sixfold sense-base as condition, there is contact.’”

(8) **“With name-and-form as condition, there is the sixfold sense-base,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does the sixfold sense-base have name-and-form as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, the sixfold sense-base has name-and-form as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With name-and-form as condition, there is the sixfold sense-base.’”

(9) **“With consciousness as condition, there is name-and-form,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does name-and-form have consciousness as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, name-and-form has consciousness as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With consciousness as condition, there is name-and-form.’”

(10) **“With volitional formations as condition, there is consciousness,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does consciousness have volitional formations as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, consciousness has volitional formations as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With volitional formations as condition, there is consciousness.’”

(11) **“With ignorance as condition, there are volitional formations,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, do volitional formations have ignorance as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, volitional formations have ignorance as condition. Thus, we understand it here as ‘With ignorance as condition, there are volitional formations.’”<sup>51</sup>

## Recapitulation on dependent arising

**19** “Good, bhikshus! So you say, and I too say thus.<sup>52</sup>

‘When this is, that is; [263] with the arising of this, that arises.’<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> *Avijjā, paccaya saṅkhārā ti.* M:ÑB erroneously renders this as “With formations as condition ignorance.” (M:ÑB 355).

<sup>52</sup> This statement confirms “the compatibility of view” (*diṭṭhi, samāññatā*), one of the virtues conducing to the spiritual community. See §7n & **Sama, jīva S** (A 4.55) in SD 5.1 Intro.

<sup>53</sup> This line is a statement of **the “specific conditionality”** (*idap, paccayatā*) of arising (*samudaya*)—together with the statement on cessation, *nirodha* [22]—is a general principle of conditionality inherent in all existence, and of

That is, with ignorance as condition, there are  
 with volitional formations as condition, there is  
 with consciousness as condition, there is  
 with name-and-form as condition, there is  
 with the sixfold sense-base as condition, there is  
 with contact as condition, there is  
 with feeling as condition, there is  
 with craving as condition, there is  
 with clinging as condition, there is  
 with existence as condition, there is  
 with birth as condition there arise

volitional formations;  
 consciousness;  
 name-and-form;  
 the sixfold sense-base;  
 contact;  
 feeling;  
 craving;  
 clinging;  
 existence;  
 birth;  
 decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation,  
 physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

### Dependent ending

**20** But with the utter fading away and ending of ignorance,

with the ending of volitional formations,  
 with the ending of consciousness,  
 with the ending of name-and-form,  
 with the ending of the sixfold sense-base,  
 with the ending of contact,  
 with the ending of feeling,  
 with the ending of craving,  
 with the ending of clinging,  
 with the ending of existence,  
 with the ending of birth, there end

volitional formations end [do not arise],<sup>54</sup>  
 consciousness ends,  
 name-and-form ends,  
 the sixfold sense-base ends  
 contact ends,  
 feeling ends,  
 craving ends,  
 clinging ends,  
 existence ends,  
 birth ends,  
 decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical  
 pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the ending of this whole mass of suffering.<sup>55</sup>

---

which the main expression is that of dependent arising. This particular statement here is a “sufficient condition” (ie a cause that must always produce the effect). For details, see “Dependent Arising” (essay) in SD 5.12.6.

<sup>54</sup> Payutto (1994) remarks: “Generally speaking, the word ‘cease’ [or ‘end’] means to do away with something which has already arisen, or the stopping of something which has already begun. However, *nirodha* in the teaching of Dependent Origination (as also in *dukkhanirodha*, the third of the Noble Truths) means non-arising, or non-existence, of something because the cause of its arising is done away with. For example, the phrase ‘when *avijjā* is *nirodha*, *saṅkhārā* are also *nirodha*,’ which is usually taken to mean, “with the cessation of ignorance, volitional impulse cease,” in fact means that ‘when there is no ignorance, or no arising of ignorance, or when there is no longer any problem with ignorance, there is no volitional impulses, volitional impulses do not arise, or there is no longer any problem from volitional impulses.’ It does not mean that ignorance already arisen must be done away with before the volitional impulses which have already arisen will also be done away.” (1994:107-108) In this context, he suggests that the reverse (cessation) cycle of dependent arising might be better rendered as: “being free of ignorance, there is freedom from volitional impulses...,” or “when ignorance is gone, volitional impulses are gone ...,” or “when ignorance is no longer a problem, volitional impulses are no longer a problem.” (1994:107). See **Kaccā(ya)na, gotta S** (S 12.15) SD 6 (3).

<sup>55</sup> Comy: By “ending” (*nirodha*) in all these phrases Nirvana is meant. For all those phenomena end in dependence on Nirvana, and therefore the latter is spoken of as their ending. Thus in this Sutta, the Blessed One teaches

## Dependent ending catechism

21 (1) **‘With the ending of birth, decay-and-death ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does decay-and-death end with the ending of birth or not, or how is it here?<sup>56</sup>

“Bhante, decay-and-death ends with the ending of birth. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of birth, decay-and-death ends.’”

(2) **“‘With the ending of existence, birth ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does birth end with the ending of existence or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, birth ends with the ending of existence. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of existence, birth ends.’”

(3) **“‘With the ending of clinging, existence ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does existence end with the ending of clinging or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, existence ends with the ending of clinging. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of clinging, existence ends.’”

(4) **“‘With the ending of craving, clinging ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does clinging end with the ending of craving or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, clinging ends with the ending of craving as condition. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of craving, clinging ends.’”

(5) **“‘With the ending of feeling, craving ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does craving end with the ending of feeling as condition, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, craving ends with the ending of feeling. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of feeling, craving ends.’”

(6) **“‘With the ending of contact, feeling ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does feeling [264] end with the ending of contact as condition or not, or how is it here?”

“Bhante, feeling ends with the ending of contact. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of contact, feeling ends.’”

(7) **“‘With the ending of the sixfold sense-base, contact ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does contact end with the ending of the sixfold sense-base as condition or not, or how do you understand it?”

“Bhante, contact ends with the ending of the sixfold sense-base. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of the sixfold sense-base, contact ends.’”

(8) **“‘With the ending of name-and-form, the sixfold sense-base ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does the sixfold sense-base end with the ending of name-and-form as condition or not, or how do you understand it?”

“Bhante, the sixfold sense-base ends with the ending of name-and-form. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of name-and-form, the sixfold sense-base ends.’”

(9) **“‘With the ending of consciousness, name-and-form ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does name-and-form end with the ending of consciousness as condition or not, or how do you understand it?”

“Bhante, name-and-form ends with the ending of consciousness. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of consciousness, name-and-form ends.’”

(10) **“‘With the ending of volitional formations, consciousness ends,’** so it is said. Now, bhikshus, does consciousness end with the ending of volitional formations or not, or how do you understand it?”

“Bhante, consciousness ends with the ending of volitional formations. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of volitional formations, consciousness ends.’”

---

the round of existence (*vaṭṭa*) and the ending of the round (*vivaṭṭa*) by 12 phrases and brought the discourse to a climax in arhathood (SA 2:18).

<sup>56</sup> “Or how is it here?” *katham vā ettha hotī ti*, lit “or how is it here?”.

(11) “‘**With the ending of ignorance, volitional formations ends,**’ so it is said. Now, bhikshus, do volitional formations end with the ending of ignorance or not, or how do you understand it?”

“Bhante, volitional formations end with the ending of ignorance. Thus we understand it here as ‘With the ending of ignorance, volitional formations end.’”

### Recapitulation on dependent ending

**22** “Good, bhikshus! So you say, and I too say thus:

‘When this is not, that is not; with the ending of this, that ends.’<sup>57</sup>

That is, with the ending of ignorance,	volitional formations end [do not arise],
with the ending of volitional formations,	consciousness ends,
with the ending of consciousness,	name-and-form ends,
with the ending of name-and-form,	the sixfold sense-base ends
with the ending of the sixfold sense-base,	contact ends,
with the ending of contact,	feeling ends,
with the ending of feeling,	craving ends,
with the ending of craving,	clinging ends,
with the ending of clinging,	existence ends,
with the ending of existence,	birth ends,
with the ending of birth, there end	decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the ending of this whole mass of suffering.

### The 16 speculative doubts

**23** Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, **[265]** would you run back to the past,<sup>58</sup> thus:

- (1) ‘Were we in the past?’
- (2) ‘Were we not in the past?’
- (3) ‘What were we in the past?’
- (4) ‘How were we in the past?’
- (5) ‘Having been what, did we become in the past?’”

“No, bhante.”

23.2 “Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, would you run ahead to the future, thus:

- (6) ‘Will we be in the future?’
- (7) ‘Are we not in the future?’
- (8) ‘What will we be in the future?’
- (9) ‘How will we be in the future?’
- (10) ‘Having been what, what will we become in the future?’”<sup>59</sup>

<sup>57</sup> This line is a statement of the “**specific conditionality**” (*idap, paccayatā*) of cessation (*nirodha*)—together with the statement on origination, *samudaya* [19]—is a general principle of conditionality inherent in all existence, and of which the main expression is that of dependent arising. This particular statement here is a “necessary condition” (ie a cause without which there would be no effect). For details, see **Dependent Arising**, SD 5.12.6.

<sup>58</sup> *Paṭidhāveyyātha* is 3 pl opt of *paṭidhāvati* (he runs back to, runs near): cf *pubbantam* ... ~ (“would run back to the past,” M 1:265,1) ≈ *pubbantam...paṭidhāvissati* (S 2:26,27); opp *aparantam ādhāveyyātha* (“would run ahead to the future,” M 2:265,7) ≈ *aparantam upadhāvissati* (vl *apadhāvissati*), S 2:26,33); cf M 108,7/3:9,8 (SD 33.5). See **Paccaya S** (S 12.20/2:26 f). On the 16 doubts, see **Bhaddekaratta S** (M 131/3:187-189), SD 7.9 (2).

<sup>59</sup> See **Sabb’āsava S** (M 2,7/1:8).

“No, bhante.”

23.3 “Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, would you now be inwardly uncertain about the present, thus:

(11) ‘Am I?’

(12) ‘Am I not?’

(13) ‘What am I?’

(14) ‘How am I?’

(15) ‘Where has this being come from?’

(16) ‘Where will it [this being] go?’”

“No, bhante.”

### True measure of wisdom<sup>60</sup>

24 “Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, would you speak thus:

‘The teacher [Gotama] is respected by us.<sup>61</sup> We speak as we do out of respect for the teacher?’”<sup>62</sup>

“No, bhante.”

24.2 “Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, would you speak thus:

‘The recluse [Gotama] says thus, and we speak thus following the word of the recluse?’”<sup>63</sup>

“No, bhante.”

24.3 “Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, would you turn to another teacher?”

“No, bhante.”

24.4 “Bhikshus, knowing thus, seeing thus, would you resort to<sup>64</sup> the observances [rules], strange arguments, and auspicious and portentous rites and practices<sup>65</sup> of common [worldly] recluses and brahmins, taking them as the essence [the heart of the holy life]?”

“No, bhante.”

24.5 “Come now, bhikshus, do you speak only of what you have known, seen<sup>66</sup> and understood for yourselves?”

“Yes, bhante.”

<sup>60</sup> This section reflects the vital early Buddhist spirit that the Dharma takes first priority, and should be studied alongside **Apannaka S** (M 60/1:400-413), SD 35.4 and **Kesa,puttiya (Kālāma) S** (A 3.65/1:188-193), SD 35.4.

<sup>61</sup> This and the next sentence: *satthā no garu, satthu, gāravena ca mayam vādemā*. “The teacher is respected by us,” *satthā no garu*, alt tr: “Our teacher is respected/respectable.” Comy glosses *garu* (“respected”) here means *bhārika* (“grievous, burdensome, to be followed unwillingly,” MA 2:309).

<sup>62</sup> The two assertions here [24ab] are conflated into one forming the last of the 10 “doubtworthy positions” (*kaṅkhāniya-ṭ, thānā*) of **Kesaputtiya S** (A 3.65), SD 35.4, where it is not regarded as a valid source of spiritual knowledge (A 3.65.3b/1:189)

<sup>63</sup> “And we speak at the instruction of the recluse,” PTS Be Se *samaṇā ca na ca mayam*; Ce (Buddha Jayanti) *samaṇa, vacanena ca mayam*. Here Bodhi proposes that the latter is the better reading, which I follow. “The Recluse” here is the Buddha.

<sup>64</sup> “Would you resort to,” *paccāgaccheyyātha*, or “would you return to, fall back on.”

<sup>65</sup> “The observances [rules], strange arguments, and auspicious and portentous rites and practices,” *vata, kotūhala, maṅgalāni*. The word *kotūhala* or *kutūhala* here is probably confused with *kolāhala*, “tumult, chaos.” *Kotūhala*: “eagerness, excitement; curiosity; excited talk, vehement discussion.” However, as a cpd with the prefix -*maṅgalika*, the reading should be *kotūhala* or *kutūhala*, thus *kotūhala, maṅgala* (“auspicious and portentous rites and practices”) (A 3:439; J 1:373). Cf A 3:206, 439. See A:H 3:151 n4.

<sup>66</sup> “Seen,” *diṭṭham*, ie seen with the eye of wisdom (*paññā, cakkhu*) (MA 2:309).

**25** “Good, bhikshus! So have you been guided by me with this Dharma, seen here and now [to be realized in this life], timeless, for one to come and see, accessible [leading onward], to be personally known by the wise.

For it is in reference to this that it has been said:

‘Bhikshus, this Dharma is **seen here and now, timeless, for one to come and see, accessible, to be personally known by the wise.**’”

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

### Conception and growth<sup>67</sup>

**26** Bhikshus, **the descent of the being-to-be born**<sup>68</sup> occurs through the coming together of 3 things.<sup>69</sup> Here<sup>70</sup> there is union of the mother and the father, but the mother is not in season, and the gandharva<sup>71</sup> is not present, there is no **[266]** descent into the womb.

Where there is the union of the mother and the father, and the mother is in season, but the gandharva is not present, there is no descent into the womb.

But where

- (1) there is the union of the mother and the father,
- (2) the mother is in season, and
- (3) the gandharva [being to be born] is present,

<sup>67</sup> This section [26-29] shows a concrete application of dependent arising to the course of individual existence. “The passage §§26-29 may be taken to show the factors from consciousness through feeling that result from past ignorance and formations, §40 the causal factors of craving and clinging as they build up a continuation of the saṃsāric round. The following section [31-40], connecting dependent arising to the appearance of the Buddha and his teaching of the Dhamma, shows the practice of the Dhamma to be the means of bringing the round to an end.” (M:ÑB 1233 n410). See §9 & n (Harvey) therein.

<sup>68</sup> *Gabbhassāvakkanti*, ie conception. Here, the “being-to-be-born,” *gandhabba*, does not refer to a “heavenly minstrel” or any celestial being. It is used here and in *Assalāyana S* (M 93,18/2:157), SD 40a.2, in this sense of a being arriving for rebirth. *Mahā Nidāna S* (D 15,21/2:63), SD 5.17, speaks of consciousness as “descending into the mother’s womb” without mentioning *gandhabba*, but cf §4.2. [7]

<sup>69</sup> See *Assalāyana S* (M 93,18/2:156 f); Miln 123; Divy 1:440. *Sampasādanīya S* (D 28) describes the following 4 types of conception, also listed in *Saṅgīti S* (D 33): (1) one enters the mother’s womb, remains there and leaves it unknowing; (2) one enters the womb knowing, remains there unknowing, but leaves it unknowing; (3) one enters the womb knowing, remains there knowing, but leaves it unknowing; (4) one enters the womb knowing, remains there knowing, leaves it knowing (D 28,5/3:103; 33,1.11(37)/3:231). See also Harvey 1995:96 (§6.14).

<sup>70</sup> “Here,” *idha*, ie in this world of beings (MA 2:310). On the types of “world,” see *Rohitassa S* (S 2.26/1:61 f) in SD 7 (1).

<sup>71</sup> “Gandharva” (*gandhabba*). Comy explains it as the being that is descending into the womb: the being about to enter the womb (*tatrūpaka,satta*); about to come into that situation, driven on by the force of karma (MA 2:310). The exact meaning of *gandhabba* is not given in the Pali Canon. It is mentioned only here and in *Assalāyana S* (M 93,18/:156 f), SD 40a.2. *Mahā Nidāna S* (D 15) says: “If there were no consciousness to descend into a mother’s womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?” (D 15,21/2:63). Thus, remarks Bodhi, “we might identify the *gandhabba* here as the stream of consciousness, conceived more animistically as coming over from the previous existence and bringing along its total accumulation of kammic tendencies and personality traits.” (M:ÑB 1234 n411). There is also enough evidence from the Canon to show that rebirth need not be immediate, and that the intermediate state (*antarā,bhava*) exists. See eg *Kutūhala,sāla S* (S 44.9): “When, Vaccha, a being has laid down this body but has not yet been reborn into another body, it is fuelled by craving, I say!” (S 44.9/4:400). See O H de A Wijesekera, 1945, where he suggests that *gandhabba* means a “saṃsāric being in the intermediate stage (between death and birth).” See SD 54.8 (5.4.2); also *Is rebirth immediate?* (SD 2.17).

there is descent into the womb.

**27** Bhikshus, the mother then carries the child<sup>72</sup> as a heavy burden in her womb with much anxiety for 9 or 10 lunar months.

Then, bhikshus, after nine or ten lunar months of carrying the child as a heavy burden in her womb with much anxiety, she delivers the child. When the child is born, she nourishes it with her own blood—for the mother’s breast-milk is called blood in the noble one’s Discipline.

**28** Bhikshus, when this very boy grows up, comes to the maturing of his faculties,<sup>73</sup> plays such games<sup>74</sup> as these: toy ploughs, tipcat [stick-game], turning somersaults [acrobatics], playing with toy windmills, toy measures, toy chariots, toy bows.

**29** Bhikshus, when the child grows up and his faculties mature (further), he enjoys himself, endowed with **the 5 cords of sense-pleasure**<sup>75</sup>—

with *forms* cognizable by the eye that are wished for, desirable, agreeable and pleasing, connected with sense-desire, arousing lust;

with *sounds* cognizable by the ear wished for, desirable, agreeable and pleasing, connected with sense-desire, arousing lust.

with *smells* cognizable by the nose wished for, desirable, agreeable and pleasing, connected with sense-desire, arousing lust.

with *tastes* cognizable by the tongue wished for, desirable, agreeable and pleasing, connected with sense-desire, arousing lust.

with *touches* cognizable by the body that are wished for, desirable, agreeable and pleasing, connected with sense-desire, arousing lust.

### Continuation of the round of births<sup>76</sup>

**30** (1) On seeing a form<sup>77</sup> with the eye, he lusts after<sup>78</sup> it if it is pleasurable. He dislikes it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind,<sup>79</sup> and he does not understand it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom<sup>80</sup> wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

<sup>72</sup> “Child,” *gabbham*. The word has a range of meanings: “womb, embryo, foetus, sprout, calyx (of a flower), inner chamber.”

<sup>73</sup> As in **Upāli S** (A 10.99/5:203). See also D 2:305; M 1:49; S 2:42 ff. Here the maturing is in regards of the development from infancy to childhood.

<sup>74</sup> Games listed are: *vaṅkakaṃ ghaṭṭikaṃ mokkhacikaṃ cingulakaṃ pattāḥhakaṃ rathakaṃ dhanukaṃ*. See V 3:180, D 1:6 for these and other games. See also V:H 1:316 f.

<sup>75</sup> As at D 1:245; M 1:85, 92, 226, 3:234; A 3:411. Def as “gratification of desire” (*kamānaṃ assāda*) at **Cūḷa Dukkha-k,khandha S** (M 14,6/1:92), SD 4.7; also at **Mahā Dukkha-k,khandha S** (M 13,7-15/1:85-88), SD 6.9. See **Mahā Suññata S** (M 122,14/3:114), SD 11.4.

<sup>76</sup> This section [30] should be read with **Saññoga S** (A 7.48/4:57-59) which describes how sexual feelings arise.

<sup>77</sup> See **Lohicca S** (S 35.132/4:120) & **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:184).

<sup>78</sup> “Lusts after,” *sārajjati*. Comy glosses as *rāgaṃ uppādeti*, “arouses lust” (MA 2:311). S 4:120, 184 read *adhimuccati*, “he inclines to.”

<sup>79</sup> “Limited mind,” *paritta,cetaso*. The opp, *appamāṇa,cetaso* means “immeasurable mind” (M 1:270, S 4:120, 186). Cf *paritto appātumo appa,dukkha,vihārī ... aparitto mah’attā appamāṇa,vihārī* (A 1:249). Comy explains *paritta* as *akusala*, “unskilled, unwholesome” (MA 2:311).

<sup>80</sup> “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 Liberations (*vimokkha = jhāna*) in his own body, but through seeing with wisdom, his mental cankers are destroyed” (M 70,16/1:478). All arhats are perfectly freed in the same way from ignorance and suffering, but are distinguished into two types on the basis of their proficiency in concentration.

Engaged as he is in liking and disliking,<sup>81</sup> whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it.<sup>82</sup>

As he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it, delight arises in him and remains.

Now delight in feeling is clinging.

with his clinging as condition, there is existence;

with existence as condition, there is birth;

with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(2) On hearing a sound with the ear, he lusts after it if it is pleasurable. He dislikes it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind, and he does not understand it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Engaged as he is in liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it.

As he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it, delight arises in him and remains.

Now delight in feeling is clinging.

with his clinging as condition, there is existence;

with existence as condition, there is birth;

with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(3) On smelling a smell with the nose, he lusts after it if it is pleasurable. He dislikes it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind, and he does not understand it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Engaged as he is in liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it.

As he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it, delight arises in him and remains.

Now delight in feeling is clinging.

with his clinging as condition, there is existence;

with existence as condition, there is birth;

---

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”, that is, 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 2:70 f) and **Kiṭṭā, giri S** (M 1:477 f).

<sup>81</sup> “Liking and disliking,” *anurodha, virodha*, also “compliance and opposition.” Qu at Kvu 485; cf A 4:158, S 1:111. Comy glosses as *rāgañ c’eva dosañ ca*, “attachment as well as hatred” (MA 2:311).

<sup>82</sup> Comy explains that he delights in the painful feeling by clinging to it with the thoughts of “I am suffering” (*aham dukkhito*) and “This pain is mine” (*mama dukkhan*) (MA 2:211). Examples of delight in pain can be found in masochism, sadism, extreme sports, ascetic practices, religious penances and self-infliction of pain to reinforces one’s own ego.



with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(4) On tasting a **taste** with the tongue, he lusts after it if it is pleasurable. He dislikes it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind, and he does not understand it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Engaged as he is in liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it.

As he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it, delight arises in him and remains.

Now delight in feeling is clinging.

with his clinging as condition, there is existence;

with existence as condition, there is birth;

with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(5) On feeling a **touch** with the body, he lusts after it if it is pleasurable. He dislikes it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind, and he does not understand it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Engaged as he is in liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it.

As he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it, delight arises in him and remains.

Now delight in feeling is clinging.

with his clinging as condition, there is existence;

with existence as condition, there is birth;

with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

(6) On cognizing a **mind-object** with the mind, he lusts after it if it is pleasurable. [267] He dislikes it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body unestablished, with a limited mind, and he does not understand it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Engaged as he is in liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it.

As he delights in that feeling, welcomes it, and remains holding on to it, delight arises in him and remains.

Now delight in feeling is clinging.

with his clinging as condition, there is existence;

with existence as condition, there is birth;

with birth as condition there arise decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

—Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

## ENDING OF THE ROUND OF BIRTHS<sup>83</sup>

### Ending of the round: the gradual training

**31** <sup>84</sup>Here, bhikshus, there arises in the world the Tathāgata [Thus Come], an Arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well-farer, knower of the worlds,<sup>85</sup> unexcelled trainer of tamable persons, teacher of beings human and divine, awakened, blessed.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge this world with its gods, its Māras [evil ones], and its Brahmās [high gods], this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers<sup>86</sup> and people, he makes it known to others. He teaches the Dharma, good in its beginning, good in its middle, good in its end, endowed with meaning and phrasing. He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.

**32** A householder or householder's son, hearing the Dharma, gains faith<sup>87</sup> in the Tathāgata and reflects:

'The household life is stifling, a dusty path.<sup>88</sup> The life of renunciation is like the open air.<sup>89</sup> It is not easy living in a house to practise the holy life completely, in all its purity, like a polished conch-shell. What if I were to shave off my hair and beard, put on the saffron robes, and go forth from the household life into homelessness?'

32.2 Then, after some time, he abandons all his pile of wealth, little or great, and circle of relatives, small or large, shaves off his hair and beard, puts on the saffron robes, and goes forth from the household life into homelessness.

<sup>83</sup> This section here [§§31-38] is elaborated in **Cūḷa Hatthi, padōpama S** (M 27,19-26) which gives a full description of the dhyanas (*jhāna*) and other attainments (M 27,19-26/182-4).

<sup>84</sup> §§31-32 form the renunciation pericope: see (**Ānanda**) **Subha S** (D 10,1.7) n, SD 40a.13.

<sup>85</sup> Comys give 3 senses of the word "world" (*loka*): (1) The world of formations (*saṅkhāra loka*), (2) The world of beings (*satta loka*), (3) The world of space (ie of space-time) (*okāsa loka*). (Vism 7.37/204 f; DA 1:173 f; MA 1:397, 2:200). For details, see **Rohitassa S** (S 2.26/1:61 f) in SD 7.1 Intro.

<sup>86</sup> *deva*, here in the sense of "devas by convention" (*sammati, deva*), ie kings. The other 2 types of *deva* are "gods by rebirth" (*upapatti, deva*) and "gods by purification" (*visuddhi, deva*), ie the buddhas, pratyeka buddhas and arhats. (Nc 307 KhA 123). See n7.

<sup>87</sup> "Faith," *saddhā*. There are 2 kinds of faith (*saddhā*): (1) "rootless faith" (*amūlika, saddhā*), baseless or irrational faith, blind faith. (M 2:170,21); (2) "faith with a good cause" (*ākāravati, saddhā*), faith founded on seeing (M 1:320,-8, 401,23); also called *avecca-p, pasāda* (S 12.41.11/2:69). "Wise faith" is syn with (2). *Amūlika* = "not seen, not heard, not suspected" (V 2:243 3:163 & Comy). **Gethin** speaks of two kinds of faith: the cognitive and the affective (eg ERE: Faith & Jayatilleke, *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*, 1963:387): "Faith in its cognitive dimension is seen as concerning belief in propositions or statements of which one does not—or perhaps cannot—have knowledge proper (however that should be defined); cognitive faith is a mode of knowing in a different category from that knowledge. Faith in its affective dimension is a more straightforward positive response to trust or confidence towards something or somebody ... the conception of *saddhā* in Buddhist writings appears almost, if not entirely affective, the cognitive element is completely secondary." (Gethin 2001:107; my emphases).

<sup>88</sup> *Sambādhō gharavāso rajā, patho*. There is a wordplay on *sambādha*, "crowded, stifling, narrow, full of hindrances," which also refers to the sexual organ, male (V 1:216, 2:134) or female (V 4:259; Sn 609; J 1:61, 4:260). *Rajā, patha*, "a dusty path," here refers to "the dust of passion," and to "the path of returning" (*āgamana, patha*), ie rebirth (DA 1:180,17 = MA 2:179,20; UA 237,27).

<sup>89</sup> *Sambādhō ghar'āvāso rajā, patho, abbhokāso pabbajjā*. This is stock: **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,12/1:240,20), SD 49.4; **Mahā Taṇhā Saṅkhaya S** (M 38,32/1:267,24), SD 7.10; **Kandaraka S** (M 51,13/1:344,30), SD 32.9; **Saṅgārava S** (M 100,9/2:211,29), SD 10.9; **Deva, dāha S** (M 101,31/2:226,8), SD 18,4; **Cha-b, bisodhana S** (M 112,12/3:33,8), SD 59.7; **Danta, bhūmi S** (M 125,14/3:134,2), SD 46.3; **Cīvara S** (S 16.11,14/2:219,25), SD 77.5; **Thapati S** (S 55.6,18+22/-5:350,23, 351,21), SD 42.7; **Attan Tapa S** (A 4.198,7/2:208,23) = (Pug 4.24/57,12), SD 56.7; **Upāli S** (A 10.99,5/-5:204,17), SD 30.9.

## THE LESSER SECTION ON MORAL VIRTUE<sup>90</sup>

**33** Having thus gone forth, he is one accomplished in the training along with the livelihood of monks.

### Novice's precepts 1-3

(1) having abandoned the destruction of life, he abstains from destroying life. He dwells with rod and sword laid down, conscientious,<sup>91</sup> merciful, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings.

(2) Having abandoned the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given.

**[268]** He takes only what is given, accepts only what is given, lives not by stealth but by means of a pure mind.

(3) Having abandoned incelibacy, he lives a celibate life,<sup>92</sup> living apart, refraining from coupling, the way of the village.<sup>93</sup>

### Right Speech

(4) Having abandoned false speech, he abstains from false speech.

He speaks the truth, the truth is his bond,<sup>94</sup> trustworthy, reliable, no deceiver of the world.<sup>95</sup>

(5) Having abandoned divisive speech, he abstains from divisive speech.

What he has heard here he does not tell there to break those people apart from these people here.

What he has heard there he does not tell here to break these people apart from those people there.

Thus reconciling those who have broken apart or consolidating those who are united, he loves concord, delights in concord, enjoys concord, speaks words conducive to concord.<sup>96</sup>

(6) Having abandoned abusive speech, he abstains from abusive speech.

He speaks words that are gentle, pleasant to the ear, loving, touching the heart, urbane, delightful and pleasing to the people.<sup>97</sup>

(7) Having abandoned idle chatter, he abstains from idle chatter.

he speaks at the right time,<sup>98</sup> speaks what is true, speaks what is beneficial,<sup>99</sup>

<sup>90</sup> This section [33] as at **Brahma,jāla S** (D 1,8-27/1:4-11); cf **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41,7-14/1:287), **Kandaraka S** (M 51,14-19/1:345-7), **Cha-b,bisodhana S** (M 112,13-17/3:33-36); also A 2:208, 4:249; Pug 56.

<sup>91</sup> *lajjī*, “feel shame, modest”, explain in the Comy on S 1:73 as “one who has moral shame (*hiri*) and moral fear (*ottappa*).” Opp *alajjī*, shameless.

<sup>92</sup> *Brahma,carīya* is the supreme conduct or holy life, ie celibacy. Dīgha Comy points out that it involves refraining from other forms of erotic behaviour besides intercourse (DA 1:73).

<sup>93</sup> *gāma,dhamma*, ie the way of the householder, vulgar (in the sense of being associated with the masses) (MA 2:206 = DA 1:72). See **Gavesī S** (A 5.180,17) n, SD 47.15.

<sup>94</sup> “The truth is his bond,” *sacca,sandha*. Comy glosses as *saccena saccam sandahati*, “he joins truth with truth” (MA 1:206 = DA 1:73).

<sup>95</sup> *Sacca,vādī sacca,sandho theto paccayiko avisarivādako lokassa*. This line as in **Lakkhaṇa S** (D 30,2.16/3:170) @ SD 36.9.

<sup>96</sup> This para is stock, eg **Sāleyyaka S** (M 41,9/1:286 f), SD 5.7 & **Sevitabbāsevitabba S** (M 114,6.7/3:49), SD 39.8.

<sup>97</sup> *Yā sā vācā nelā kaṇṇa,sukhā pemaṇiyā hadayaṇ,gamā porī bahu.jana,kantā bahu.jana,manāpā tathā,rūpiṇ vācam bhāsītā hoti*.

<sup>98</sup> *Kāla,vādī ... bhāsītā hoti kālena*. Here, *kāla-* means “befitting the occasion,” while *kālena* means “in time,” ie neither too early nor too late.

<sup>99</sup> *Bhūta,vādī attha,vādī*. Comy glosses *attha,vādī*, as that he speaks about what is connected with the spiritual goal here and now, and hereafter (MA 2:208; DA 1:76). However, here, I have rendered *attha* as “the beneficial,

speaks what is the teaching,<sup>100</sup> what is the discipline;<sup>101</sup>  
 he speaks words worth treasuring, spoken in time, well-reasoned, well-defined [not rambling],  
 connected with the goal.<sup>102</sup>

## Respecting plant life

(8) He abstains from damaging seeds and plant life.<sup>103</sup>

## Novice's precepts 6-10

(9) He eats only once a day, refraining from the evening meal and from food at improper times.<sup>104</sup>

(10) He abstains from dancing, singing, music and from watching shows.<sup>105</sup>

(11) He abstains from wearing garlands and from beautifying himself with scents and make-up.<sup>106</sup>

(12) He abstains from high and luxurious beds and seats.<sup>107</sup>

(13) He abstains from accepting gold and silver [money].<sup>108</sup>

## Abstaining from wrong livelihood

(14) He abstains from accepting uncooked grain; raw meat;<sup>109</sup> women and girls; male and female slaves; goats and sheep, fowl and pigs; elephants, cattle, horses, and mares.

(15) He abstains from accepting fields and lands [property].<sup>110</sup>

(16) He abstains from running messages [or errands].<sup>111</sup>

(17) He abstains from buying and selling.

the good (incl the goal),” which fits the flow of ideas better. As *attha* (as “goal”) appears at the end of this stock passage, I have rendered this closing word as “the goal,” which seems more fitting.

<sup>100</sup> He speaks on the 9 supramundane things (*nava lok’uttara, dhamma*) (MA 2:208 = DA 1:76), ie the 4 paths, 4 fruitions, nirvana (Dhs 1094).

<sup>101</sup> *Dhamma, vādī vinaya, vādī*. The disciplines of restraint (*saṁvara*) (of the senses) and of letting go (*pahāna*) (of defilements) (MA 2:208 = DA 1:76). We can also connect *attha, vādī* (in the prec line) here, as alt have “He speaks on meanings, he speaks on teachings, he speaks on the discipline.”

<sup>102</sup> *Nidhāna, vatim vācam bhāsītā kālena sâpadesam pariyanta, vatim attha, samhitam*. *Pariyanta, vati* means “within limits, well defined.” On “the goal” (*attha*), see n on “speaks on the beneficial” above here.

<sup>103</sup> Curiously, this replaces the precept against intoxicants which is omitted. As at D 1:10. On *bija, gāma, bhūta, gāma*, see Pāc 11 (V 4:34); see also D 1:5; MA 2:208.

<sup>104</sup> “Improper times” here means between noon and the following dawn (V 1:83, 4:86); cf S 5:470; A 1:212; Kvu 2.6.

<sup>105</sup> *A dukkaṭa* (wrong-doing) offence for monks (V 2:108); a *pācittiya* for nuns (V 4:267). Cf D 1:6, Kvu 2.7.

<sup>106</sup> Cf Kvu 2.8.

<sup>107</sup> See Pāc 87; V 1:192, 2:163; D 1:7; A 1:181. Comy says that the “high beds” are those that exceed the prescribed measurements and the “large beds” are those that are not allowable (MA 2:209).

<sup>108</sup> See Nissaggiya 18 (V 3:236 ff); Kvu 2.10. For detailed discussion, see “Money and Monastics” (essay) in SD 4.19-23.

<sup>109</sup> “Raw meat.” See V 3:208 where the nun Uppala.vaṇṇā prepares or roasts meat before offering to the Buddha.

<sup>110</sup> The Buddha however accepted land from rajahs like Bimbisāra and Pasenadi, and others like Anāthapiṇḍika and Visākhā, which were all received in the name of the Sangha. What is connoted here is accepting land on a personal basis.

<sup>111</sup> “Running messages.” See D 1:8; S 3:239.

(18) He abstains from dealing with false scales, false metals,<sup>112</sup> and false measures.<sup>113</sup>

(19) He abstains from bribery, deception, and fraud.

(20) He abstains from wounding, executing, imprisoning, highway robbery, plunder, and violence.<sup>114</sup>

## MENTAL CULTIVATION

### Contentment

**34** He is content with robes to protect his body and with almsfood to maintain his belly, and wherever he goes he sets out only with these<sup>115</sup> with him.

Here, just as a bird, wherever it goes, flies with its wings as its only burden, so, too, he is content with robes to protect his body<sup>116</sup> and with almsfood to maintain his belly, and wherever he goes, he takes only these with him.<sup>117</sup>

Possessing this [269] aggregate of noble virtue, he experiences within himself a joy that is undefiled.<sup>118</sup>

### Sense-restraint

**35** <sup>119</sup>When he sees a form with the eye, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail.**

So long he dwells unrestrained in that eye-faculty, bad, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure<sup>120</sup> might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

<sup>112</sup> “False metals,” *kaṃsa, kūṭa*. See Nun’s Nis 11, 12 & n at V:H 3:230. Comy however says that *kaṃsa* refers to a bronze bowl with a veneer of golden colour presented as a golden bowl to mislead others. (MA 2:210 = DA 1:79).

<sup>113</sup> Comys mention 3 methods: *hadaya, bheda* (“heartbreak”), used in measuring ghee, oil, etc; *sikhā, bheda* (“heap break”), used in measuring sesamum, husked rice, etc; *raju, bheda* (“cord break”), used in measuring fields and sites (MA 2:210 = DA 1:79). *Sikhā* refers to a pyramid-shaped heap of grain on a tray of prescribed measurements.

<sup>114</sup> Dīgha Comy says that they kidnap victims by hiding in the snow and by hiding in a thicket (DA 1:80).

<sup>115</sup> “These,” ie the 8 requisites (*aṭṭha parikkhāra*): a small razor (*khuddaka, vāsi*), needle (*sūci*), water-strainer (*parissāvana*), almsbowl (*patta*) with a shoulder-strap, the triple robe (*ti, cīvara*), belt (*kāya, paṭibandha*) (MA 2:213 = DA 1:297; DA 1:206 = J 1:65; DhA 2:61; J 4:342, 5:254). Explained in detail at DA 1:206 f.

<sup>116</sup> As in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,66/1:71), SD 8.10.

<sup>117</sup> This whole section (Contentment) up to here as in “the mental development” section of **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,66/1:71). This para (the bird parable): D 2,66/1:71= M 51,15/1:346 = 38,34/1:268 = 112,14/3:35 = A 4.198,10/-2:209 f.

<sup>118</sup> *So iminā ariyena indriya saṃvarena samannāgato ajjhataṃ abyāseka, sukhaṃ paṭisaṃvedeti*. Cf **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,63/1:70).

<sup>119</sup> This whole para: *Idha bhikkhave bhikkhu cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimitta-g, gāhī hoti nānuvyañjana-g, gāhī. Yatvādhikaraṇaṃ enaṃ cakkhundriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhā, domanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāsaveyyuṃ, tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati, rakkhati cakkhundriyaṃ, cakkhundriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati*. On *Na nimitta-g, gāhī hoti nānuvyañjana-g, gāhī*, lit “he is not one who grasps at a sign, he is not one who grasps at a detail (feature),” see SD 19.14. Comys say that “**sign**” (*nimitta*) here refers to a grasping arising through one’s sensual lust (*chanda, rāga, vasena*) or on account of merely one’s view (*diṭṭhi, matta, vasena*); “**detail**” (*anuvyañjana*) here refers to finding delight by grasping at another’s limb or body part (eyes, arms, legs, etc) (Nm 2:390; Nc 141, 141; DhA 400, 402; cf MA 1:75, 4:195; SA 3:4, 394; Nc 1:55; DhA 1:74). On other meanings of *nimitta*, see SD 13 §3.1a.

<sup>120</sup> “Covetousness and displeasure,” *abhijjhā, domanassaṃ*, which Walshe (1995:335 & n632) renders as “hankering and fretting for the world”; alt tr “covetousness and displeasure” or “longing and loathing.” MA says that longing and displeasure signify the first two hindrances—sensual desire and ill will—principal hindrances to be over-

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the eye-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the eye-faculty.

(2) When he hears a sound with the ear, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that ear-faculty, bad, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the ear-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the ear-faculty.

(3) When he smells a smell with the nose, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that nose-faculty, bad, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the nose-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the nose-faculty.

(4) When he tastes a taste with the tongue, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that tongue-faculty, bad, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the tongue-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the tongue-faculty.

(5) When he feels a touch with the body, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that body-faculty, bad, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the body-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the body-faculty.

(6) When he cognizes a mind-object with the mind, **he grasps neither its sign nor its detail**.

So long he dwells unrestrained in that mind-faculty, bad, unwholesome states of covetousness and displeasure might overwhelm him, to that extent, he therefore keeps himself restrained.

He practises the restraint of it. He guards the restraint of the mind-faculty, he commits himself to the restraint of the mind-faculty.<sup>121</sup>

Possessing this noble sense-restraint, he experiences within himself a joy that is undefiled.

---

come for the practice to succeed. They thus represent the contemplation of mind-objects, which begins with the five hindrances. Cf M 39,13/1:274; see also **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,13) and **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,36) on how to deal with the hindrances in one's meditation. The monk effects the abandoning of the hindrances by the contemplations of impermanence, fading away (of lust), cessation (of suffering) and letting go (of defilements), and thus comes to look upon the object with equanimity. On **abhijjhā,domanassa**, there is an interesting related passage from **Pubba or Pubb'eva Sambodha S** (A 3.101): "Bhikshus, before my awakening, when I was still a bodhisattva, this thought occurred to me... 'Whatever physical and mental joy (*sukha,somanassa*) there is in the world, that is the gratification (*assāda*) in the world; that the world is impermanent, suffering and of the nature to change, that is the disadvantages (*ādīnava*) in the world—the removal and abandoning of desire and lust for the world, that is the escape from the world'." (A 3.101/1:258, pointed out to me by Robert Eddison).

<sup>121</sup> D 2,64/1:70, 10,2.2/1:207, 33,1.11(10)/3:225; M 27,15/1:180, 33,20/1:223, 38,35/1:269, 51.16/1:346, 53,8/-1:355, 94,18/2:162, 101,33/2:226; S 35.120/4:104, 35.239/4:176; A 3.16/1:113, 4.14/2:16, 4.37/2:39, 4.164/2:152 (×4), 4.198.11/2:210, 5.76.12/3:99 f, 5.140.11/3:163, 10.99.6/5:206, 11.18.23/5:351. For a detailed analysis, see Vism 1.53-69/20-22. For a study, see SD 19.14.

## Mindfulness and clear comprehension<sup>122</sup>

<p><b>36</b> In going forward or back, in looking forward or back, in bending or stretching, in carrying his upper robe, outer robe and bowl, in eating, drinking, chewing and tasting, in voiding or peeing, in walking, in standing, in sitting, in being asleep, in being awake,<sup>123</sup> in talking, or in remaining silent,</p>	<p>he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing; he clearly comprehends what he is doing.</p>
---	--

## Preparing for meditation

**37** Possessing this aggregate of noble virtue,  
and possessing this aggregate of noble sense-restraint,  
and possessing this noble mindfulness and clear comprehension,<sup>124</sup>

37.2 he seeks out a secluded dwelling: a forest, the foot of a tree, a mountain, a glen, a hillside cave, a charnel ground, a jungle grove, the open air, a heap of straw.<sup>125</sup>

## Overcoming the 5 mental hindrances<sup>126</sup>

**38** Returning from his almsround, after his meal, he sits down, crosses his legs, holds his body erect, and establishes mindfulness before him.<sup>127</sup>

(1) Abandoning **covetousness** with regard to the world, he dwells with a mind devoid of covetousness. He cleanses his mind of covetousness.

(2) Abandoning **ill will and anger**, he dwells with a mind devoid of ill will, sympathetic with the welfare of all living beings. He cleanses his mind of ill will and anger.

(3) Abandoning **sloth and torpor**, he dwells with a mind devoid of sloth and torpor, mindful, alert, perceiving light. He cleanses his mind of sloth and torpor.

(4) Abandoning **restlessness and worry**, he dwells undisturbed, his mind inwardly stilled. He cleanses his mind of restlessness and worry.

(5) Abandoning **spiritual doubt**, he dwells having crossed over doubt, with no perplexity with regard to wholesome mental states. He cleanses his mind of doubt. **[270]**

<sup>122</sup> *Sati, sampajañña* = *sati*, “mindfulness” + *sampajañña*, “clear comprehension.” In **Satipaṭṭhāna S**, however, this section is treated as “clear comprehension” (*sampajañña*) and as “mindfulness” (*sati*). **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,67/1:71) reading: *sati, sampajāna, kārī*, “he acts with mindfulness and clear comprehension,” so, too, below here [§36]. As in **Mahā Satipaṭṭhāna S** (D 22,4/2:293) = **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,8/1:57), SD 13 (3.6.1+2+3).

<sup>123</sup> “In being asleep, in being awake” *sutte jāgarite*. Comy glosses *sutte* as *sayane*, “lying down, sleeping.” See SD 13 (3.6.3).

<sup>124</sup> As in **Sāmañña, phala S** (D 2,67/1:71).

<sup>125</sup> “He seeks out ... a heap of straw,” see **Mahā Assa, pura S** on wakefulness (M 39,12/1:274) & **Gaṇaka Moggallāna S** (M 107,8/3:3). On conducive meditation spots, see **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39,12.2) n, SD 10.13.

<sup>126</sup> As in **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,36/1:60). See details in **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39,12-18/1:274 f), SD 10.13.

<sup>127</sup> Comy. He applies mindfulness towards his meditation subject; or he sets it up in the region of the mouth. As such, it is said in the Vibhaṅga: “This mindfulness is set up, set up well, at the tip of the nose or at the sign of the mouth” (Vbh §537/252). Nṭ: The “sign of the mouth” (*mukha, nimitta*) is the middle region of the upper lip, against which the air strikes when it comes out of the nose.

## The 4 dhyanas

**39** (1) Having abandoned the 5 mental hindrances, impurities of the mind that weaken wisdom, quite detached from sense-objects,<sup>128</sup> detached from unwholesome mental states, he enters and remains in **the 1<sup>st</sup> dhyana**, accompanied by initial application (*vitakka*) and sustained application (*vicāra*), accompanied by zest (*pīti*) and happiness (*sukha*) born of seclusion.

(2) Furthermore, bhikshus, with the stilling of initial application and sustained application, by gaining inner tranquillity and oneness of mind, he enters and remains in **the 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana**, free from initial application and sustained application, accompanied by zest and happiness born of concentration.<sup>129</sup>

(3) And furthermore, bhikshus, with the fading away of zest, he dwells equanimous, mindful and clearly comprehending, and experiences happiness with the body. He enters and remains in **the 3<sup>rd</sup> dhyana**, of which the noble ones declare, ‘Happily he dwells in equanimity and mindfulness.’

(4) And furthermore, bhikshus, with the abandoning of joy and pain—and with the earlier disappearance of joy and pain—he enters and dwells in **the 4<sup>th</sup> dhyana**, that is neither pleasant nor painful and contains mindfulness fully purified by equanimity.

## WISDOM & FREEDOM

### Total ending of the round

**40** On seeing a form with the eye, he does not lust after it if it is pleasurable. He does not dislike it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind,<sup>130</sup> and he understands it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Having thus abandoned liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights not in that feeling, does not welcome it, and does not remain holding on to it.<sup>131</sup>

As he does not do so, delight in feelings does not arise and remain in him.

With the non-arising of this delight, clinging ends [does not arise];

with the ending of clinging, existence ends;

with the ending of existence, birth ends;

with the ending of birth: decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair end.

—Such is the ending [non-arising] of this whole mass of suffering.

<sup>128</sup> On the tr of *kāmehi* (pl), see SD 8.4 (5.1.1.1).

<sup>129</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> dhyana is known as “the noble silence” (*ariya, tuṇhī, bhāva*) because within it initial application and sustained application (thinking and discursion, *vitakka, vicāra*) cease, and with their cessation, speech cannot occur (S 2:273); cf. S 4:293 where *vitakka* and *vicāra* are called verbal formation (*vacī, saṅkhāra*), the mental factors responsible for speech. In **Ariya Pariyesanā S** (M 1:161), the Buddha exhorts the monks when assembled to “either speak on the Dharma or observe the noble silence” (ie either talk Dharma or meditate).

<sup>130</sup> Comy: An immeasurable mind (*appamāṇa, cetaso*) is a supramundane mind, that is to say, he has gained the path (MA 2:311). Cf *aparitto mah’attā appamāṇa, vihārī* (A 1:249).

<sup>131</sup> Bodhi: “This statement reveals that the chain of dependent origination is broken at the link between feeling and craving. Feeling arises necessarily because the body acquired through past craving is subject to the maturation of past kamma. However, if one does not delight in feeling, craving will not have the opportunity to arise and set off reactions of like and dislike that provide further fuel for the round, and thus the round will come to an end.” (M:ÑB 1234 n141)



40.2 On hearing a sound with the ear, he does not lust after it if it is pleasurable. He does not dislike it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind, and he understands it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Having thus abandoned liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights not in that feeling, does not welcome it, and does not remain holding on to it.

As he does not do so, delight in feelings does not arise and remain in him.

With the non-arising of this delight, clinging ends [does not arise];

with the ending of clinging, existence ends;

with the ending of existence, birth ends;

with the ending of birth: decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair end.

—Such is the ending [non-arising] of this whole mass of suffering.

40.3 On smelling a smell with the nose, he does not lust after it if it is pleasurable. He does not dislike it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind, and he understands it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Having thus abandoned liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights not in that feeling, does not welcome it, and does not remain holding on to it.

As he does not do so, delight in feelings does not arise and remain in him.

With the non-arising of this delight, clinging ends [does not arise];

with the ending of clinging, existence ends;

with the ending of existence, birth ends;

with the ending of birth: decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair end.

—Such is the ending [non-arising] of this whole mass of suffering.

40.4 On tasting a taste with the tongue, he does not lust after it if it is pleasurable. He does not dislike it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind, and he understands it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Having thus abandoned liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights not in that feeling, does not welcome it, and does not remain holding on to it.

As he does not do so, delight in feelings does not arise and remain in him.

With the non-arising of this delight, clinging ends [does not arise];

with the ending of clinging, existence ends;

with the ending of existence, birth ends;

with the ending of birth: decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair end.

—Such is the ending [non-arising] of this whole mass of suffering.

40.5 On feeling a touch with the body, he does not lust after it if it is pleasurable. He does not dislike it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind, and he understands it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Having thus abandoned liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights not in that feeling, does not welcome it, and does not remain holding on to it.

As he does not do so, delight in feelings does not arise and remain in him.

*With the non-arising of this delight, clinging ends [does not arise];  
with the ending of clinging, existence ends;  
with the ending of existence, birth ends;  
with the ending of birth: decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and  
despair end.*

—Such is the ending [non-arising] of this whole mass of suffering.

40.6 On cognizing a mind-object with the mind, he does not lust after it if it is pleasurable. He does not dislike it if it is unpleasurable. He dwells with mindfulness of the body established, with an immeasurable mind, and he understands it as it really is the freedom of mind and the freedom by wisdom wherein those bad unwholesome states cease without remainder.

Having thus abandoned liking and disliking, whatever feeling he feels—whether pleasant or painful or neutral—he delights not in that feeling, does not welcome it, and does not remain holding on to it.

As he does not do so, delight in feelings does not arise and remain in him.

*With the non-arising of this delight, clinging ends [does not arise];  
with the ending of clinging, existence ends;  
with the ending of existence, birth ends;  
with the ending of birth: decay-and-death, sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and  
despair end [do not arise].*

—Such is the ending [non-arising] of this whole mass of suffering.

## Conclusion

41 Bhikshus, remember this freedom through the destruction of craving given in brief by me. But remember, too, the monk Sāti, [271] the fisherman's son, as one caught in a great net of craving, in the tangle of craving."<sup>132</sup>

The Blessed One said this. Satisfied, the monks rejoiced<sup>133</sup> in the Blessed One's word.

— evaṃ —

## Bibliography

Bucknell, Roderick S

1999 "Conditioned Arising Evolves: Variation and change in textual accounts of the *Paṭicca-samuppāda* doctrine." *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 22,2 1999:311-342.

Gombrich, Richard F

1996 *How Buddhism Began: The conditioned genesis of the early teachings*. Jordan Lectures in Comparative Religion XVII. London & Atlantic Heights, NJ: Athlone, 1996.

Harvey, [Brian] Peter (1951- )

1995 *The Selfless Mind: Personality, consciousness and Nirvana in early Buddhism*. Richmond: Curzon Press, 1995:95 f (§6.13) & 155-160 (ch 10).

Johansson, Rune E.A.

<sup>132</sup> "Caught in ... the tangle of craving," *taṇhā,saṅghāta,paṭimukka*. Cf M 1:383.

<sup>133</sup> "Joyfully approved," *attamanā...abhinandurū*.

- 1965 "Citta, mano, viññāṇa—a psychosemantic investigation." *University of Ceylon Review* 23,1-2 1965: 165-215.
- Kearney, Patrick  
2002 "Mahātaṇhāsankhaya Sutta." Week 3, *Evaṃ me suttaṃ: This is how I heard it*. Australia. 16 April 2002.
- Norman, K R  
1990 "Aspects of Early Buddhism." In David Seyfort Ruegg & Lambert Schmithausen (edd), *Earliest Buddhism and Madhyamaka*, Leiden: EJ Brill, 1990:24-35.] In K R Norman, *Collected Papers* vol 4, Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1993:124-138.
- 1991a "Death and the Tathāgata." In *Studies in Buddhism and Culture* (in honour of Prof Dr Egaku Mayeda), Tokyo, 1991:1-11= 1993:251-263.
- 1993 *Collected Papers Volume IV*. Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1993.
- 1993 See 1990.
- Robinson, R H (1926- )  
1970 *The Buddhist Religion*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed Belmont, CA: Dickenson, 1970. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1982.
- Nyanaponika Thera  
1967 *The Four Nutriments of Life*. Wheel no 105/106. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1967.
- Shrader, F Otto  
1904-05 "On the problem of Nirvāṇa." *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 1904-05:157-170. [In *Journal of the Pali Text Society* vol 5 fascimile repr, London: PTS & Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981.]
- Shults, Brett  
2014 "On the Buddha's use of some Brahmanical motifs in Pali texts." *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 6, 2014:106-140. Download from:  
<http://jocbs.org/index.php/jocbs/article/view/76/96>.
- Sujato, Ajahn  
2003 "When life begins." In *Eastern Horizon* 12, Dec 2003:4-9.  
<http://www.santiforestmonastery.com/writings/When%20Life%20Begins.pdf>.
- Wijesekera, O H de A  
1945 "Vedic *gandharva* and Pali *gandhabba*." *Ceylon University Review* 3,1 Apr 1945.
- Wynne, Alexander  
2018 "Sāti's encounter with the Buddha." *Journal of the Oxford Centre of Buddhist Studies* 14, May 2018. <http://jocbs.org/index.php/jocbs/article/view/182>.

050224 rev061214 070523 081127 090414CT 100924 110927 121001 131205 141226 150923 160424  
170723 181231 190318 210621 211125