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## Sīla Sampanna Sutta

The Discourse on Morally Accomplished | It 104

Theme: An arhat as embodiment of moral virtue; the 6-stage discipleship; the arhat's powers

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2021

### 1 Summary and related suttas

#### 1.1 SUTTA SUMMARY

##### 1.1.1 Sutta contents

§2.1	The 5 Dharma-aggregates	[2.1]
§2.2	The ways of teaching: spiritual friendship	[2.2]
§3	The 6-step lay discipleship	[2.3]
§4	The followers' path progress	[2.4]
§5	The 11 qualities of an arhat: awakened renunciants as instructors	[2.5]
§§6-8	The closing verses on discipleship	[2.6]

**1.1.2 The Sīla Sampanna Sutta** (It 104) is a short statement on **the 5 dharma-aggregates** (*pañca dhamma-k-khandha*) [§2], a pentad comprising the 3 trainings (*sikkhā*), along with their resultant freedom and its review knowledge; or, a pentad, a set of 5 teachings (*dhamma*), to be realized (*sacchikatatta*) [1.2.2.3]. Then, there is a brief mention of seeing the arhats, listening to them, practising the Dharma, and then renouncing in Dharma just as they have themselves done [§3].

**1.1.3 Our progress on the path** is represented as the 5 dharma-aggregates, whereby arhats are the most effective teachers, so that we, too, as their listeners, can reach the noble path by gaining the eye of awakening [§4]. The Sutta closes with 3 verses: the arhats cultivate their minds by way of the Dharma [§6], they themselves become bringers of awakening [§7] and have destroyed rebirth themselves. We can do that, too [§8].

#### 1.2 THE BASIC KEY-WORDS (§2.1)

**1.2.1** Here, says the Commentary, morality (*sīla*)—in *sīla,sampanna*—refers to both the *mundane* and the *supramundane* morality of those who have destroyed the influxes (of sensual pleasures, of existence, of views, of ignorance), that is, the arhats, endowed with this morality (*sīla,sampanna*). The same method applies to concentration (*samādhi*) and to wisdom (*paññā*), the other 2 trainings. (ItA 2:152,7-9)<sup>1</sup>

**1.2.2** As for “**freedom**” (*vimutti*) plays a dual role: it is both freedom and its *result*, that is, the knowledge and vision of freedom, and its review knowledge (*vimutti pana phala,vimutti yeva vimutti,ñāṇa,dassanaṃ pacca-vekkhaṇa,ñāṇam*). In other words, it is both freedom and our awareness that it is freedom: we are free and know that we are free.

The triad (**the 3 trainings**), beginning with morality, are *both mundane and supramundane*: the 3 trainings serve both as our practice (mundane, not on the path yet), and, after reaching the path, as the continuing happy life *on the path* (supramundane). Whereas **freedom** is solely *supramundane* (it is the path itself), but knowledge and vision of freedom is solely *mundane* (we can “see” awakening or nirvana, even when unawak-

<sup>1</sup> See also SA 3:141,34 f. See also Pug 4.23/54 f & its comy, PugA 230; also Pug 3.13/45 & comy PugA 217 f.

ened, like a thirsty man seeing water deep in a well). (ItA 2:152,9-12).<sup>2</sup> Hence, the Puggala Paññatti Commentary defines *vimutti* as “the freedom that is the fruition of arhathood” (*vimutti arahatta,phala,vimutti*, PugA 230,30).

## 2 Commentary on the Sutta teachings<sup>3</sup>

### **2.1 THE 5 DHARMA-AGGREGATES (PAÑCA DHAMMA-K,KHANDHA)**

**2.1.1** The key teaching of **It 104** is that the best Dharma teachers are those who are accomplished (*sampanna*), who have realized or awakened to the path in these ways [1.1.1], that is:

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| (1) accomplished in moral virtue                        | <i>silā,sampanna</i>                 |
| (2) accomplished in concentration                       | <i>samādhi,sampanna</i>              |
| (3) accomplished in wisdom                              | <i>paññā,sampanna</i>                |
| (4) accomplished in freedom                             | <i>vimutti,sampanna</i>              |
| (5) accomplished in the knowledge and vision of freedom | <i>vimutti,ñāṇa,dassana,sampanna</i> |

Hence, these are called the “5 dharma-aggregates,” that is, qualities “to be realized” (*sacchikatābba*) [2.1.3].

**2.1.2** As a standard or stock list, this set of 5 teachings are called **the 5 dharma-aggregates** (*pañca dhamma-k,khandha*), which may be understood as the 5 teaching-aggregates or the 5 essential aggregates. They comprise the following:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (1) moral virtue aggregate                           | <i>sīla khandha</i>                 |
| (2) concentration aggregate                          | <i>samādhi khandha</i>              |
| (3) wisdom aggregate                                 | <i>paññā khandha</i>                |
| (4) freedom aggregate                                | <i>vimutti khandha</i>              |
| (5) aggregate of the knowledge and vision of freedom | <i>vimutti,ñāṇa,dassana khandha</i> |
- (D 33,1.11(25)/3:229)**

### **2.1.3 The 5 dharma-aggregates in the suttas**

**2.1.3.1** This pentad [2.1.2] is well known as **the 5 things to be realized** (*pañca dhammā sacchikatābbā*), as they are called in **the Das’uttara Sutta** (D 34).<sup>4</sup> They are, in fact, an extended list of the 3 trainings, along with their path fruition of “freedom” (*vimutti*), and its review knowledge, “the knowledge and vision of freedom” (*vimutti,ñāṇa,dassana*).

**2.1.3.2** This set of 5 is well known and found in many places in the Pali canon. Their profusion in the Aṅguttara attests to their importance in lay practice: that even the laity should take up the 3 trainings to gain the path (at least streamwinning) in this life itself.

<b>Sīla Sampanna Sutta</b>	It 104/106-109	SD 59.13
<b>Vaccha,gotta Sutta</b>	A 3.57/1:162	
<b>Hita Sutta 1</b>	A 5.17/3:12 f	

<sup>2</sup> See also SA 3:142,1-4.

<sup>3</sup> For Comy nn on terms in §§2+3, see also SA 3:141 f, 223 f.

<sup>4</sup> **D 34,1.6(10)/3:279.**

<b>Hita Sutta 2</b>	A 5.18/3:13		
<b>Hita Sutta 3</b>	A 5.19/3:13 f		
<b>Hita Sutta 4</b>	A 5.20/3:14		
<b>(Pañcaka) Dussīla Sutta</b>	A 5.24/3:19 f	SD 59.14	
<b>Sācchā Sutta 1</b>	A 5.65/3:81 = A 5.163	SD 58.5	spoken by the Buddha
<b>Sājīva Sutta</b>	A 5.66/3:81		
<b>Sampadā Sutta</b>	A 5.92/3:119		
<b>Sīla Sutta</b>	A 5.107/5:134		
<b>Asekha Sutta</b>	A 5.108/3:134		
<b>Sācchā Sutta 2</b>	A 5.163/3:190 = A 5.65	(SD 58.5)	spoken by Sāriputta
<b>Upasampādetabba Sutta</b>	A 5.251/2:271		
<b>Nissaya Sutta</b>	A 5.252/2:271		
<b>Āhuneyya Sutta</b>	A 10.16/5:16		
<b>Kathā,vatthu Sutta 2</b>	A 10.70/5:130 part of 10 topics	SD 103.6	
See also:			
<b>(Bojjhaṅga) Sīla Sutta</b>	S 46.3,2) n	SD 10.15.	

**2.1.4** The short and unique **(Catukka) Sāra Sutta** (A 4.150) simply summarizes teachings as **the 4 “essences”** (*sāra*), thus:

SD 59.13(2.1)

## (Catukka) Sāra Sutta

The (Fours) Discourse on the Essence • **A 4.150/2:141**

**A 4.3.5.10** Aṅguttara Nikāya 4, Tika Nipāta 3, Tatiya Paññāsaka 5, Abhāva Vagga 5

Theme: The fourfold essence of Buddha Dharma

**1** Bhikshus, there are these 4 kinds of essence.  
What are the four?

*sāra*

- (1) The essence that is moral virtue.
- (2) The essence that is mental concentration.
- (3) The essence that is wisdom.
- (4) The essence that is freedom.

*sīla,sāra*  
*samādhi,sāra*  
*paññā,sāra*  
*vimutti,sāra*

These, bhikshus, are the 4 kinds of essence.

*dasamaṃ*

**2.1.5** This set of 4 kinds of essence (*sāra*) [2.1.4] is listed in **the Saṅgīti Sutta** (D 33) as “the 4 dharma-aggregates” (*cattāro dhamma-k,khandhā*), that is, respectively, as the moral virtue aggregate (*sīla-k,khandha*), the concentration aggregate (*samādhi-k,khandha*), the wisdom aggregate (*paññā,khandha*), and the freedom aggregate (*vimutti-k,khandha*).<sup>5</sup> This is an abridged set of all the 5 Dharma-aggregates, including the 5<sup>th</sup>, that of the “knowledge and vision of freedom,” that is subsumed under the 4<sup>th</sup> dharma-aggregate of “freedom,” that is, as its review knowledge.

<sup>5</sup> D 33,1.11(25)/3:229.

As already noted, this pentad is an extended list of the 3 trainings (*ti,sikkhā*) with their fruition in awakening and its review knowledge [2.1.3.1].

## 2.2 THE DIVINE ABODES OF TEACHING

### 2.2.0 Stock phrases on teachers and teaching [§2.2]

**2.2.0.1** Arhats—those accomplished in the 5 dharma-aggregates [2.1]—are also teachers who are said to be “**advisors, counsellors**” (*ovādākā viññāpakā*) and “**instructors, inspirers, rousers, gladdeners, who sufficiently and properly point out the true teaching**” (*sandassakā samādapakā samuttejakā sampahaṃsakā alam,samakkhātāro saddhammassa*) [§2.2]. We will examine each of these terms or phrases as explained in the suttas and Commentaries. Now let us apply the principle of context to what we have been studying.<sup>6</sup>

**2.2.0.2** The epithets, “instructors, inspirers, rousers, gladdeners” (*sandassakā samādapakā samuttejakā sampahaṃsakā*), occur more commonly in the suttas as a string of verbs describing what the Buddha or an arhat teacher does, that is: “**he instructs, inspires, rouses, gladdens** them with a Dharma talk” (*dharmiyā kathāya sandasseti samādapeti samuttejeti sampahaṃseti*), as, for example, in **the Cūḷa Hatthi, padōpama Sutta** (M 17).<sup>7</sup>

This tetrad of teaching terms should be known and practised in terms of **the 4 divine abodes**: loving-kindness, compassion, gladness and equanimity.<sup>8</sup> Significantly, the overarching term in the stock is the very first word itself, “**instructs**” (*san-dasseti*), which can be taken to mean “to show well fully and rightly,” or “to show by our own example”—both occasioned by the prefix **sam**, implying conjunction (joining together), with the senses of “together, complete, self.”<sup>9</sup>

**2.2.0.3** The positive emotion of this gesture (indeed, *the whole of the teaching process*) is that of **equanimity**. We should instruct (*sandasseti*) with a heart of peace and wisdom, before whatever kind of audience, no matter how they respond. We have sown the Dharma seeds, and we just let them grow in their own time and conditions.

To **inspire** (*samādapeti*) someone, we start by accepting him as he is, and seeing his potential, and showing him our appreciation of his being and presence. When the audience feels that they are worthy of the Dharma, they find it worthwhile to linger, listen and learn. This is the nature of **lovingkindness** (*mettā*).

**2.2.0.4** At some time, despite the audience’s inspiration—indeed, *because* of their inspiration—they may see the depth and difficulty of the Dharma. Then, they may feel hampered by various hindrances and difficul-

<sup>6</sup> On the principle of context in sutta study, see SD 53.5 (4.2.3); SD 54.3b (2.3.2.3).

<sup>7</sup> M 27,4.3 (SD 40a.5). Even more common is this stock phrase in its absolute form: “having instructed, inspired roused, gladdened them with a Dharma talk” (*dharmiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā*), such as in **Cela, pattikā V** (Cv 5.21.3, §27), SD 55.3. See V 1:18; D 1:126, 149, 2:86, 98, 109, 110, 127, 3:27, 209; M 1:209, 354, 2:139, 3:155; S 2:215, 3:95, 4:183, 5:155; A 3:380, 4:67, 118, 307×2, 5:122, 125; U 39, 82, 87. On the stages of teaching, see **Mahā Suññata S** (M 122), SD 11.4 (4.3).

<sup>8</sup> On the 4 divine abodes (*brahma, vihāra*), see **Brahma, vihāra**, SD 38.5.

<sup>9</sup> Comys explain **sam** by **sammā** (right) (SnA 151; KhpA 209), as in *sam-akkhātāro* (one who points out rightly), or *sam-antā* (all around, altogether) (SnA 152, 154); **sutthū** (well), as in *santusita* (well joyful, contented); or **sakena** (self), as in *sambodhi* (self-awakening); **santena** (there is) as in *sakkāya* (this body that is); or **samena**, equally, as in *sam-aggā* (“all in common,” consensus) (cf KhpA 240). **Sam** (together), as in *saññā* (Skt *saṃ-jñā*, to know by connecting together). When combined with *y*, we find *saṃy-* (*saṃyutta*, connected) and *saññ-* (**saññoga** = *saṃyoga*, yoke). Before *r*, it is contracted into *sa-* (*sa,rūpa*, of the same form).

ties, especially their own weaknesses and defilements. We should then remind them that the Bodhisattva himself took 6 long years<sup>10</sup> to overcome his own defilements and physical limitations.

It's natural for us to take a longer time to understand the teachings, and even longer to realize the path. Yet, the Dharma does not discriminate anyone who makes an effort to reach it. Hence, we **rouse** (*samuttejeti*) him with **compassion** (*karuṇā*): we may feel that we are never good enough for the Dharma, but the Dharma accepts us all the same.

**2.2.0.5** By this time, there is enough **joy** to sustain us for a while. This joy further reduces, even overcomes, our negative tendencies and defilements. By seeing and understanding the Dharma as the truth, we are further empowered with faith and joy. By feeling the beauty of our Dharma experience, we cultivate calm and focus. In this way, the teacher, rejoicing in the diligence of the students, then **gladdens** (*sampahamseti*) them further, to move on further.

This is how, following the principle of context [2.2.0.1], we apply the teaching of the 4 divine abodes to that of *the 4 levels of teaching*.

### **2.2.1 Ovādaka**

**2.2.1.1** Arhats are “**advisors**” or admonitors (*ovādaka*): the term is a secondary derivation from *ovāda*, “advice, instruction”; hence, **ovādaka** derives from either *ud* or *ā*, + *vād* + *ka*, since they (the arhats) exhort, instruct others, as is proper, on what should be learned and practised here [the present], benefitting from their fruits hereafter, and our continuous efforts to reach the final goal (*diṭṭha.dhammika,samparāyika,param’atthe yathārahaṃ pare ovadanti anusāsanti ti ovādakā*, ItA 2:152,13 f).

In **the Ratha,vinīta Sutta** (M 24), an *ovādaka* is said to be one who has himself attained the knowledge and vision of freedom, and admonishes other monks with talk on the knowledge and vision of freedom. In other words, he is one who speaks from experience, and so enables others to gain the liberating experience, too. Hence, he is also called a “facilitator” (*viññāpaka*), one who knows and causes others to know (so that they are free, too)<sup>11</sup> [2.2.2].

The Majjhima Commentary goes on to explain that such a teacher admonishes others on the 10 kinds of talk (*dasa kathā,vatthu*),<sup>12</sup> that is, talk on having few wishes, on being content, secluded, not socializing, intent on effort; accomplished in moral virtue, in concentration, in wisdom, in freedom, and in the knowledge and vision of freedom.

**2.2.1.2** *Diṭṭha,dhammika,samparāyika (attha)* [2.2.1.1] also refers to “present, this-worldly, material benefits (*attha*),” and “future, other-worldly, spiritual benefits.” This phrase is used, for example, in **the Dīgha,jānu Sutta** (A 8.54,2-7 + 10-15), where the latter implies the attaining of streamwinning in this life itself (SD 5.10).

In this way, our Dharma practice covers all **the 3 periods of time**: the past, the present and the future. We learn from the past (the Buddha); we practise in the present (the Dharma); and seeing the truth, we renounce the wrong ways, even go forth to expedite our awakening (the noble sangha), our future of true freedom.

<sup>10</sup> See SD SD 36.5 (1.1.3); SD 49.19 (2.4) ; but cf SD 1.11 (2.1.2) n on “self-mortification.”

<sup>11</sup> *Vimutti,ñāṇa,dassana,sapmanno vimutti,ḥāṇa,dassana,sampadā,kathañ ca bhikkhūnaṃ* (M 24,2.3/1:145,31 + 2.5/-1:146,4), SD 28.3.

<sup>12</sup> MA 2:147,15.

## 2.2.2 Viññāpaka

**2.2.2.1** The term, “**counsellors**” (*viññāpaka*) derives as follows: the prefix *vi-* (a prefix showing the variety of analysis) + √*JÑĀ*, to know, + causative infix *-pa-* (causing growth: up, well, forth) + suffix *-ka* (showing an agent or doer); hence, he is also a facilitator, one who knows and causes others to know, too. Broadly speaking, a *viññāpaka* is a healing and facilitating communicator, one who conveys the Dharma to others so that they rise above their weaknesses and wrongs to understand themselves better, or at least accept themselves, so that they practise the Dharma and realize awakening.

**2.2.2.2** The Iti,vuttaka Commentary glosses “counsellors” or *viññāpaka* with “one who communicates (the meaning of) deeds and the fruits of deeds (that is, karma and its fruition)” (*kammāni kamma, phalāni ca viññāpakā*, ItA 2:152,15). The Commentary then adds:

“Therein, they are those who, in various ways, cause one to know, cause one to realize, such states in terms of their classification as being unwholesome and so on, thus: ‘These states are wholesome, these states are unwholesome, these are blameworthy, these are blameless,’<sup>13</sup> and so on, in terms of their classification into aggregates, and so on, in terms of their own characteristics, (and) in terms of their general [universal] characteristics [ie, being impermanent, suffering, nonself].” (ItA 2:152)<sup>14</sup>

**2.2.2.3** The **Saṃyutta Commentary on the (Sāriputta) Cunda Sutta** (S 47.13/5:162) [3.1.2] explains that “counsellors” (*viññāpaka*) are those who, on the occasion of giving a Dharma talk, cause others to understand meanings and causes (of states afflicting them) (*viññāpako ti dhamma, kathā, kale atthañ ca kāraṇaṇ ca viññāpetā*, SA 3:224,3 f). Hence, a counsellor is a teacher who brings out the sense of Dharma-related things and teachings in us, so that we are able to understand ourself better, and thus facilitate our Dharma practice and realization.

**2.2.2.4** The Commentary on the **(Kassapa) Ovāda Sutta 2** (S 16.7) [3.1.3] says that such an educator (*anusāsaka*) is a spiritual friend (*kalyāṇa, mitta*) who ensures that we do not fail in the spiritual training.<sup>15</sup> This means that such a teacher does not merely teach theoretical facts, but is one who admonishes us on **all the 3 aspects of Dharma training**, that is, in moral virtue, mental concentration and insight wisdom. He admonishes us in the restraint of our body and speech so that we are right and ready for meditation to cultivate our minds. Both these are for the sake of seeing directly into true reality so that we gain the wisdom of awakening, that is, spiritual freedom.

## 2.2.3 Sandassakā

**2.2.3.1** “**Instructors**” (*sandassaka*), says the Iti,vuttaka Commentary, are those who indicate (or instil) these (same) states in others so that they understand it as if experiencing it for themselves (first-hand), like (the teacher) seizing by the hand.<sup>16</sup> We imagine such a teacher as one who draws our attention to what we are already familiar with, showing us how this relates to the teaching and truth at hand; and from what we already know to see a bigger and clearer picture from that perspective.

<sup>13</sup> Untraced, but cf **Bhaddiya S** (A 4.193/2:191), where the Buddha asks Bhaddiya, “Are these states unwholesome or unwholesome? Are they blameworthy or blameless?” (*ime dhammā akusalā vā akusalā vā ti ... sāvajjā vā anavajjā vā ti*), SD 45.8.

<sup>14</sup> *Tattha ca, “ime dhammā kusalā, ime dhammā akusala, ime sāvajjā, ime anavajjā ti ādinā kusalā” ādi, vibhāgato khand’ādi, vibhāgato sa, lakkaṇato sāmāñña, lakkaṇato vividhehi nayehi dhammānaṃ ñapakā avabodhakā*, ItA 2:152,16-19).

<sup>15</sup> SA 2:174,4 ad **S 16.7/2:206,22** (SD 88.4).

<sup>16</sup> *Sandassakā ti te yeva dhamme hatthena gahetvā viya parassa paccakkhato dassetāro* (ItA 2:152,20 f).

**2.2.3.2 The Saṃyutta Commentary** explains an “instructor” (*sandassaka*) as one who clarifies those states, that is, the 5 aggregates, the 4 elements and the 6 sense-bases.<sup>17</sup> These key teachings are explained to us in terms of our personal daily experiences, so that we easily and truly relate to them. Our task now is to observe their impermanence, how there is change, how every change become other, as they rise and fall as natural events, both in physical things and our own mental states.

### **2.2.4 Samādapakā**

**2.2.4.1 “Inspirers”** (*samādapakā*), explains the Commentary, are those who cause others to take up such things as moral conduct and so on, that has not yet been undertaken by them, those who cause this to be established in them.<sup>18</sup> They present the teachings in an interesting manner, especially by their deep attention and lively friendliness, so that we are inspired to take them up ourselves as our own practice.

**2.2.4.2 The Saṃyutta Commentary** explains *samādapaka* as one who has grasped the teaching and truth, and proactively induces us, “Take this up, take that up!”<sup>19</sup> The idea here clearly is that this kind of teacher not only shows us related and specific teachings that we need and want to know, but also inspires us to take them up as personal practice for our own spiritual progress. Hence, it is an interactively wholesome teaching and learning process.

### **2.2.5 Samuttejakā**

**2.2.5.1** The Commentary says that the “rousers” (*samuttejakā*) are those teachers who, having established their listeners in wholesome states, go on to rightly rouse (*sammā uttejakā*) them, inducing them to further devote themselves to the higher mind. The meaning is that they are cleansers (*vodapakā*) (of the mind) by way of careful attention to the gaining of distinction (streamwinning etc).<sup>20</sup>

We should understand “cleansers” (*vodapakā*) here refers to purifying ourselves in terms of the first 2 trainings. First, we diligently keep the precepts, cultivating moral virtue, as the basis for mental cultivation. Secondly, we clear our mind of the mental hindrances<sup>21</sup> so as to attain samadhi, even dhyana. The purpose of this is to have a clear mind to directly see into true reality for the sake of attaining distinction (that is, the path), as mentioned.

**2.2.5.2** The Saṃyutta Commentary only glosses *samuttejakā* with “one with effort or energy” (*sa, ussahako*, SA 3:224,7). This effort involves stimulating the audience mentally and rightly (*cittassa sammā uttejakā*) in the manner already described [2.2.5.1].

### **2.2.6 Sampahamsaka**

**2.2.6.1** These **gladdeners** (*sampahamsakā*) are those who rightly evoke joy in others: they make their hearts rightly brighten with joy (*pahamsakā*), their continued gains (in progress towards the path). They well

<sup>17</sup> *Sandassako ti khandha, dhatu, āyatana, vasena tesam tesam dhammanam dasseta* (SA 3:224,4 f). On the 5 aggregates (*pañca-k, khandha*), see SD 17; the 4 elements (*mahā, bhūta*), (M 11,8-11, with §12 on “space”), SD 3.11; the 6 sense-bases (*sa-āyatana*), **Sa-āyatana Vibhaṅga S** (M 137) + SD 29.5 (1.2).

<sup>18</sup> *Yaṃ sīl’ādi yehi asamādinnaṃ, tassa samādapetāro, tattha te patitṭhapetāro* (ItA 2:152,22 f).

<sup>19</sup> *Samādapako ti idaṃ c’idaṃ ca gaṇhathā ti, evaṃ gaṇhāpako* (SA 3:224,6).

<sup>20</sup> *Samuttejakā ti kusala, dhammesu patitṭhitānaṃ upari adhiccittānuyoge niyojana, vasena cittassa sammā uttejakā, yathā visesādhigamo hoti, evaṃ nisāmana, vasena vodapakā* (ItA 2:152,24-26).

<sup>21</sup> The 5 mental hindrances (*pañca, nīvarana*) are (1) sensual desire; (2) ill will; (3) restless and worry; (4) sloth and torpor; (5) doubt: **Nīvaraṇa**, SD 32.1.

delight them (*suṭṭhu tosakā*) on account of gaining distinctive virtues (*guṇa, visesa*) (that is, streamwinning, etc).<sup>22</sup> The stress here is on **the joy of Dharma-learning**, on account of freeing our mind, at least temporarily, of unwholesome states.

**2.2.6.2 The Saṃyutta Commentary** simply states that a “gladdener” [2.2.6.1] brightens up with joy on account of the virtues he has gained.<sup>23</sup> However, we have a passage in **the (Sāriputta) Cunda Sutta** (S 47.13), where the arhat Sāriputta himself is described as such an ideal teacher. [3.1.2]

Stories of arhat teachers, far from telling us that only arhats should teach, are simply showing us how these great teachers, including the Buddha, teach. They serve as our models so that we are ourself *instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened* to learn, master and teach the Dharma for the benefit of others, too. Even as we learn, we will teach; even as we teach, we will learn. We will aspire for the path in this life itself, which is the true goal of all this learning and teaching,

### **2.2.7 Alam samakkhātāro**

**2.2.7.1 Alam sam-akkhātāro** are those who point out, sufficiently well and properly, the true teaching, intent on helping others. They are those who, being fully capable, rightly point out the teaching without ever losing heart.<sup>24</sup> The drift of this phrase is clear enough: an arhat teacher teaches *sufficiently well enough* to benefit his audience. He speaks from his own experience, as one who has won the path and the freedom of awakening.

**2.2.7.2 The (Sāriputta) Cunda Sutta** (S 47.13) describes Sāriputta as “a dedicated<sup>25</sup> advisor, counsellor, instructor, inspirer, rouser, gladdener, who teaches Dharma untiringly, for the good of fellow celibates” (*ovādako ahosi otiṇṇo viññāpako sandassako samādapako samuttejako sampahaṃsako, akilāsu dhamma, -desanāya, anuggāhako sabrahmacārīnaṃ*, S 5:162,26-28). This passage—with only the omission of the phrase, *alam samakkhatāro*—is identical to that above [2.2.7.1]. In fact, we can read the two passages as describing the same qualities of an arhat teacher, one who teaches the Dharma untiringly (*akilāsu dhamma, -desanāya*). [2.2.7.3]

**2.2.7.3** The Commentary explains *akilāsu dhamma, desanāya* [2.2.7.2] as follows:

“He springs up with the speed of a lion, once or twice, thinking, ‘I’m neither sickened in the head, nor heart, nor belly, nor back,’ without any hint or sign of falling back, without fatigue, but confident in taking up teaching Dharma” (SA 3:224).<sup>26</sup>

The imagery here presents the early arhats as proactive teachers inspired by the Buddha Dharma, and inspiring others with it. As Dharma teachers, they are here compared to the Buddha, **the man-lion** (*nara, sīha*) or a lion amongst man himself.<sup>27</sup> The Buddha’s teaching is often said to be a “**lion’s roar**” (*siha, nāda*)—when the lion roars, all the other animals cower or flee to hide—the truth of the teaching speaks louder and clearer than any other doctrine, dogma or lesson.

<sup>22</sup> *Sampahaṃsakā* ti tesam yathā, laddhehi upari laddhabbehi ca guṇa, visesehi cittassa sammā pahaṃsakā laddh’-assāda, vasena suṭṭhu tosakā (ItA 2:152,27-29).

<sup>23</sup> *Sampahaṃsako* ti paṭiladdha, guṇehi modāpako jotāpako (SA 3:224,7).

<sup>24</sup> *Alam samakkhātāro* ti alam pariyattaṃ yathā, vuttaṃ aparihāpetvā samma-d-eva anuggahādhippāyena akkhātāro (ItA 2:152,30 f). [2.2.7]

<sup>25</sup> “Dedicated,” *otiṇṇo*, usu means “descended (into),” etc (CPD, DP). Found only in Be Ee.

<sup>26</sup> *Akilāsu dhamma, desanāyā* ti dhamma, desanaṃ ārabhitvā “sīsam va me rujati, hadayaṃ vā kucchi vā piṭṭhi vā ti evaṃ osakkanākāra, virahito, nikkilāsu visārado ekassa pi dvinnam pi sīha, vegen’eva pakkhandati (SA 3:224,8-11).

<sup>27</sup> On *nara, sīha*, see SD 49.2 (0.1.1.2).

A **lion-roar** (*sīha,nāda*) is a universally true, irrefutable statement of faith and truth by the Buddha himself,<sup>28</sup> or a disciple, of his faith with experience of the teaching itself.<sup>29</sup> It is also called “a (great) thunder-roar” (*gajjita*),<sup>30</sup> but this term is more commonly used for a follower (not yet on the path), especially a layman, who makes such a public declaration of faith.<sup>31</sup>

### 2.3 THE 6-STEP LAY DISCIPLESHIP [§3]

**2.3.0** The Sutta is about **Dharma teaching** and the resultant discipleship of the laity through listening to the Dharma taught competently by those who have themselves self-awakened to the path, the arhats. In fact, the Sutta presents a **6-step discipleship**, thus:

(1) <u>seeing</u> the awakened renunciants	<i>dassana</i>
(2) <u>listening</u> to them	<i>savana</i>
(3) <u>approaching</u> them	<i>upasaṅkamana</i>
(4) <u>closely attending</u> to them as teachers, to well hear them	<i>payirupāsana</i>
(5) <u>recollecting</u> the teaching we have heard	<i>anussaraṇa</i>
(6) <u>renouncing</u> after them	<i>anupabbajjā</i>

#### 2.3.1 dassana

**2.3.1.1** Now, there are 2 kinds of **seeing** (*dassana*): by way of the eye (*cakkhu*) and by way of knowledge (*ñāṇa*). The seeing by way of the eye arises through seeing *the noble ones* with the bright eye of faith (*pasannehi cakkhuhi*). The seeing by knowledge is that of *attainment* itself, that is, those conditions themselves that bring about the noble state, that is, the gaining of insight, path and fruition. In this case, however, the visual seeing of the noble ones is meant. For, that kind of seeing is also of great benefit to beings.<sup>32</sup>

**2.3.1.2** A famous case of **faith arising upon our seeing a renunciant** is that of the wanderer Sāriputta upon first seeing the arhat Assaji.<sup>33</sup> Upon Sāriputta’s respectfully requesting for a teaching, Assaji recites this famous quatrain to him, thus:

Whatever states that arise from a cause,      their cause the Tathagata [thus-come] has told,  
and their ending, too—                              thus spoke the great recluse.

(Mv 1.23.5+10)<sup>34</sup>

<sup>28</sup> On the lion-roar by the Buddha himself, see **Mahā Sīha,nāda S** (M 12,22-28), SD 49.1; D 25,24.3 (SD 1.4); SD 1.4 (2.2).

<sup>29</sup> On the lion-roar by the Buddha’s disciples, see **Cūḷa Sīha,nāda S** (M 11) + SD 49.2 (0.1.1); M 140,33 f (SD 4.17) Pukku-sāti; M 124 (SD 3.15) Bakkula; A 4.197,7-18 (SD 39.10) Mallikā; A 6.16,2 (SD 5.1) Nakula,mātā. The foremost of lion-roarers is the arhat Piṇḍola Bhāra,dvāja: SD 27.6a (2.1).

<sup>30</sup> On the *mahā,gajjita*, see Ap 45,1, 304,10; DA 395,26.

<sup>31</sup> On *gajjita*, see M 85,61 header n (SD 55.2); A 4.102 (SD 73.16). One who “walks his talk” is said to both “thunder and then rain” (A 4.101), SD 73.15.

<sup>32</sup> **Dassanaṃ.** *Tam pan’etaṃ cakkhu,dassanaṃ, ñāṇa,dassanaṃ ti duvidhaṃ. Tattha pasannehi cakkhuhi ariyānaṃ olokanam cakkhu,dassanaṃ nāma. Ariya,bhava,karānaṃ pana dhammānaṃ ariya,bhāvassa ca vipassana,magga,phalehi adhigamo ñāṇa,dassanaṃ nāma. Imasmim pan’at the cakkhu,dassanaṃ adhippetam. Ariyānaṃ hi pasannehi cakkhūhi olokanam pi sattānaṃ bahu,pakāram eva.* (ItA 2:153,8-15; SA 3:142,5-12)

<sup>33</sup> On the wanderer Sāriputta first seeing the arhat Assaji, see SD 58.1 (1.2.2.2).

<sup>34</sup> Mv 1.23.5+10 @ V 1:40,28\*+41,35\* (VA 5:975) = Ap 1.146/1:25 (ApA 231) = Peṭk 10 = ThaA 3:95. See also SD 49.20 (1.2.2.2); SD 56.4 (3.6.3.2).

Upon hearing just the first 2 lines, Sāriputta attains streamwinning. Later, when he repeats this quatrain to his companion, Moggallāna, he, too, attains streamwinning. They both, then, approach the Buddha and renounce the world as monks to become his 2 chief disciples (*agga, sāvaka*).<sup>35</sup>

### **2.3.2 savana**

**2.3.2.1** One may hear about a noble renunciant from others, thus: “Such and such a one who has destroyed the influxes [2.5] is residing in such and such a kingdom, country, a village, a market-town, a residence, a cave.” This kind of hearsay, too, is of great benefit,<sup>36</sup> which leads to our making an aspiration to meet such a person so that we may learn more about true happiness.

Even if we do not meet such a person, we know that such persons have existed, and do exist. However, only in respecting the teaching above the teacher—as taught in **the Sīla Sampanna Sutta**—will we one day meet such a teacher. This means that we do not merely adore a teacher, but practise his teachings to see how well we can progress.

**2.3.2.2** A famous example of this is **Pukkusāti**, erstwhile king of Takkasilā, who renounces upon hearing (reading) the Buddha’s name from a letter (written on gold foil) to him from king Bimbisāra of Magadha.<sup>37</sup> Renouncing by himself, Pukkusāti leaves his kingdom to seek the Buddha, but misses him at Rājagaha. At once heading for Sāvattihī, where the Buddha is, he rests midway in a potter’s shed for the night, and just where the Buddha himself decides to rest, too.<sup>38</sup>

The Buddha, impressed by Pukkusāti’s demeanour, speaks to him. Learning of his real intention, but not pursuing it, the Buddha simply teaches him the Dharma (on the analysis of the elements). Halfway through the teaching, Pukkusāti realizes that it is the Buddha himself, his own teacher, and apologizes when the Buddha concludes his teaching. His beautiful story is recorded in **the Dhātu Vibhaṅga S** (M 140).<sup>39</sup>

### **2.3.3 upasaṅkamana**

**2.3.3.1** Having heard about a noble renunciant, or having heard Dharma from him, or having seen him, we feel joy in our heart, the wish for **approaching** (*upasaṅkamana*) him. We say, in our heart, or to others, “I will give alms; or, I will ask a question; or, I will hear Dharma; or, I will pay respects.”<sup>40</sup> We are moved to learn and live the Dharma.

**2.3.3.2** Even when such arhats lived over 2,500 years ago, their awakening is in no way less true. We know their stories, the truth of which is in their simplicity and reality. We are able to place ourself in their position, and feel their experiences that led them to renounce the world, to go forth into the sangha. We admire their dedication, diligence and wisdom in practising for their awakening.

That last bit, we must work for ourself. It’s like reading the numerous Jātaka stories, epics, fairy tales, even good modern literature, or stories of amazingly good people today. We know that **good** is possible, and

<sup>35</sup> On discipleship through seeing, see SD 58.1 (1.2.2). On Pukkusāti renouncing upon hearing the Buddha’s name, see SD 4.17 (1.2.2).

<sup>36</sup> *Savanan ti asuko nāma khīṇ’āsavo asukasmim nāma raṭṭhe vā janapade vā game vā nigāme vā vihāre vā leṇe vā vasatī ti kathentānaṃ sotena savanaṃ etam pi bahu, pakāram eva.* (ItA 2:153,16-18; SA 3:142,13-15)

<sup>37</sup> SD 4.17 (1.2).

<sup>38</sup> On fellowship through listening, see SD 58.1 (1.2.1).

<sup>39</sup> M 140/3:237-247 (SD 4.17); SD 49.13 (4.3).

<sup>40</sup> *Upasaṅkamanan ti dānaṃ vā dassāmi, pañhaṃ vā pucchissāmi, dhammaṃ vā sossāmi, sakkāraṃ vā karissāmi ti eva, rūpena cittena ariyānaṃ upasaṅkamanānaṃ* (ItA 2:153,19-21; SA 3:142,16-18)

better than doing bad. We understand and accept the teachings of **the 4 self-assurances** (*assāsa*) of renouncing bad, doing good and cultivating the mind, as taught by the Buddha, thus:<sup>41</sup>

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| (1) If karma and rebirth are true,     | we will have a good rebirth.          |
| (2) If karma and rebirth are not true, | we will still be happy right here.    |
| (3) If good and bad are real [exist],  | we face no bad results.               |
| (4) If there is neither good nor bad,  | we remain pure and unaffected anyway. |

### **2.3.4 payirupāsana**

**2.3.4.1 “Closely attending”** (*payirupāsana*) means sitting near to the teachers so as to hear them well without losing attention. The Commentary says that, after having heard about their noble qualities, invited them, or given them alms, or performed some duties or service for them, or simply showing them our respect, we should then sit close by to ask them proper questions, such as “What, bhante, is wholesome?” and so on.<sup>42</sup>

**2.3.4.2** The idea of **discipleship** is that of aspiring for it, to be a disciple (*sāvaka*), which is another word for the noble ones on the path. In short, we are or should be aspiring for at least streamwinning, that is, to be a learner (*sekha*). As such, at this time, we are still “learners-to-be.” This is clearly not a status at all, but merely a *description* of our current state. We want to learn the Dharma.

Hence, we should make every effort to sit up closely and attend to them (*payirupāsati*) by way of learning and service. This is an interesting word derived from: *pari* (a prefix meaning “all around”) + *upa* (near, up close) ≈ √ās, “to sit,” meaning, “to sit up well close.” It has the senses of: “visits; waits upon, attends on, serves (attentively); honours; pays homage.” In the present context of discipleship, it is the dedication of a student to a wise and compassionate teacher, especially an arhat, in terms of learning and emulating his virtues.

**2.3.4.3** In the ordinary sense of the term, we connect proactively and beneficially with a Dharma teacher for the purpose of learning the suttas, and practising the Buddha’s teachings as preserved therein. With such a practice, we go on to cultivate the wisdom to enhance our understanding those very suttas, so that, over time, we master them, to be able to present their meaning and purpose even more clearly and effectively, so that we will gain the path ourself.

However, this aspect shows how well we should connect with the teacher in a Dharma-spirited manner. We should learn whatever we can from him, so that we can master the suttas ourself. This is embodied in the following step of discipleship, when we apply what we have learned to examine the teachings more deeply and broadly, putting more and more pieces of the puzzle together.

### **2.3.5 anussarana**

**2.3.5.1** Here, “**recollection**” (*anussarana*), the Commentary explains, refers to our recalling [reflecting on] into some part of the day or the night when the noble teacher (an arhat) is himself practising his noble routine, such as cultivating a divine abode, and so on. We reflect thus: “The noble one is now spending his time

<sup>41</sup> *Kesa,puttiya S* (A 3.65,16/1:192 f) + SD 35.4a(3) §16.

<sup>42</sup> *Payirupāsanan ti pañhā, payirupāsanaṃ, ariyānaṃ guṇe sutvā te upasaṅkamitvā nimantetvā dānaṃ vā datvā, vattaṃ vā katvā, “kiṃ bhante kusalan ti ādinā nayena pañhā, pucchanaṃ ti attho. Veyyāvaccādhikaraṇaṃ payirūpa-sanaṃ yeva.* (ItA 2:153,22-25; SA 3:142,18-21)

dwelling in dhyana, insight, the path or the fruition in some forest thicket, a cave, or under some shade [awning],” and so forth.

Alternatively, we may reflect by directing our attention to a teaching we have learned before them, such as: “On this occasion, moral virtue was taught; on this occasion, concentration was taught; on this occasion, insight was taught; on this occasion, the path was taught; on this occasion, fruition was taught.”<sup>43</sup>

**2.3.5.2** In our own time, when arhats are difficult to recognize, even rarer to meet, but we are well aware, from the suttas, at least, that they existed in the Buddha’s time, that the Buddha himself was one. This memory is precious to us as our living link through our many lives to the holiness that once walked this earth, and with us, through us, will walk again in time—so long as we keep this memory alive, and live it ourselves in some way.

### **2.3.6 anupabbajjā**

**2.3.6.1 “Renouncing after them”** (*anupabbajjā*) means following the noble example of the arhats, we renounce the world for the path for our happiness here and hereafter, and the happiness of the many. The Commentary explains this renunciation as follows:

With faith in the Dharma, out of respect for the arhats, one leaves home and goes forth in their presence. However, “renouncing after them” means that one renounces out of faith, hoping for instruction and training from the noble ones. It is not that of going forth for the sake of following the ascetics and wanderers (*tāpasa,-paribbājak’ādisu*), adds the Old Subcommentary (SAPṬ 2:419).<sup>44</sup>

For our times, we can say it this way: We renounce, not to follow any other system, no matter how noble. We renounce neither for wealth nor pleasure, nor for science, nor for academic titles, nor for power entitlements, nor for any status whatever.<sup>45</sup> We renounce our defilements, fetters, views: we follow the path of the Buddha and his arhats.

**2.3.6.2** The term “renouncing after them,” then, is highly significant in Dharma practice: it reminds us of the true **renunciation** (*nekkhamma*) of the Buddha himself and those “following the Buddha” (*anubuddha*), that is, the arhats. In the suttas and Vinaya, **anubuddha** broadly means “one who is conscious of, who recollects,”<sup>46</sup> or, specifically, “one who has understood, awakened.”<sup>47</sup> It is the participle of the verb *anubujjhati*, “he understands.”<sup>48</sup>

<sup>43</sup> *Anussaraṇan ti ratti-ṭ, ṭhāna, diva-, ṭ ṭhānesu nisinnassa idāni ariyā gumba, leṇa, maṇḍap’ādīsu jhāna, vipassana, magga, phala, sukhehi vītināmentī ti tesam dibba, vihār’ādi, guṇa, visesārammaṇam anussaraṇam. Yo vā tesam santikā ovādo laddho hoti, tam āvajjitvā imasmim ṭhāne sīlam kathitam, imasmim samādhi, imasmim vipassana, imasmim maggo, imasmim phalanx ti evam anussaraṇam.* (ItA 2:153,26-32; SA 3:142,21-27 lemma *anussatin ti*)

<sup>44</sup> *Anupabbajjan ti ariyesu cittaṃ pasādetvā gharā nikkhamma tesam santike pabbajjam. Ariyesu ca cittaṃ pasādetvā tesam yeva santike pabbajitvā tesam yeva ovādānusāsanim paccāsimsamānassa carato’pi pabbajjā anupabbajjā nāma.* ... (ItA 153,33-154,11; SA 3:142,27-34)

<sup>45</sup> Vinaya forbids renunciants from taking up materialistic (*lokāyata*) or worldly learning (*tiracchāna, vijjā*)—any kind of learning outside of Buddha-Dharma, and not directly related to it—which entails a “bad karmic act” (*dukkaṭā*) (Cv 5.33.2/V 2:139 f).

<sup>46</sup> V 1:231,1; D 2:123,\*8; S 1:137,24\* = Sn 384.

<sup>47</sup> M 1:330,25; Vism 2:202,22.

<sup>48</sup> *Anubujjhati* (pres 3 sg): M 2:171,29; J 3:133,28\*, 387,19\*; Pm 2:115,11. *Anubodhim* (aor 1 sg) S 1:126,16\*; A 5:46,25\*.

The term *buddhānubuddha* does occur in the suttas, but not so often.<sup>49</sup> However, over time, in the after-centuries, as sectarianism grew rife, the ancient teachers (such as the Commentators) highlighted a vital historical necessity and urgency of keeping in the footsteps of the Buddha and his immediate arhat disciples (*buddhānubuddha*).<sup>50</sup> The Saṃyutta Commentary, for example, defines *buddhānubuddha* as “the Teacher who first awakened to the 4 truths, and the elders after him” (SA 1:282).

**2.3.6.3** We have already noted that the wanderer **Sāriputta** renounced after Assaji [2.3.1.2]. Then, there is the inspiring account of **Mahā Kassapa**’s renunciation. As a rich young heir, Kassapa,<sup>51</sup> very reluctantly married an equally reluctant Bhaddā Kāpilānī of Sāgala, but they happily remained celibate. One day, a synchronous realization came to the couple.

Pippali saw how his fields were ploughed, and birds flocked to devour the uncovered worms and bugs. When asked whose fault this was, his workers replied, it was the owner’s (that was him). Bhaddā had a similar epiphany watching crows eating the bugs that scampered about the sesame being dried out in the sun. When she asked, the workwomen told her that it was hers.

Surreptitiously, they both left home as renunciants, seeking suitable teachers. Almost at once they were recognized, when they freed their slaves and gave away their wealth. In due course, Pippali saw the Buddha meditating, enveloped in an aura of rainbow lights. He at once recognized the Buddha as his teacher. After listening to the Dharma from the Buddha, Kassapa (as he was now known) joined the Buddha’s sangha and became an arhat.<sup>52</sup>

**2.3.6.4** The renunciation of the great arhat elders, direct disciples of the Buddha himself, is possible as a result of having spent many lives before past buddhas and practising on their own, building up their spiritual readiness.<sup>53</sup> With the advent of the buddha Gotama, the great elders are also reborn, like the Buddha himself, for the last time, attaining the same awakening, never to be reborn in samsara, the cycle of rebirths and redeaths.

Hence, renouncing the world for the celibate monastic life, striving for awakening is as natural as those clearly aware that the house they are in is wildly ablaze, so that they would at once flee from the dangerous building. For those of us who still lack the readiness for renunciation, we should at least appreciate the depth of spirituality this is humanly possible, despite our present state of lack.

**2.3.6.5 Renunciation** (*nekkhamma*) is the most vital living process of early Buddhism, that is its spiritual life of learning and growth towards awakening. On the highest level, there is the attainment of **arhathood**, by which we step into the same noble path of awakening as the Buddha himself. Even though this may seem difficult and distant for us at the moment, we *can* still, indeed, we *must*, even as lay followers, aspire to attain streamwinning, the very first real step on the path of awakening.

<sup>49</sup> In the suttas, *buddhānubuddha* occurs only in Saṃyutta: **Koṇḍañña S** (S 8.9/1:194,18\*), SD 92.13, **Jiṇṇa S** (S 16.5/-2:203,7), SD 96.10, (SA 1:282); and Thera.gāthā: **Añña Koṇḍañña Tha** (Tha 679), **Vaṅḡisa Tha** (Tha 1246); and Vinaya **Verañja,kaṇḍa**: Pār 1.3.2 (V 3:8,10+18 9,7+17). These are apparently ancient sections of the canon. Sv DP 3:592b.

<sup>50</sup> In Comys, *buddhānubuddha*: DA 1:1,13, 2:555,6; MA 1:1,13; SA 1:1,11 282,28+29 3:251,32; AA 4:149,18; KhpA 238,-16; UA 234,4; SnA 1:193 = KhpA 238,16; ThaA 3:5,8+14 170,2 196,27+29; ThīA (Pruitt) 73,27; BA 132,10; CA 318,22; VA 1:187,23.

<sup>51</sup> Kassapa is his gotra or clan name; Pippali is his personal name (Ap 2:583/56\*). *Pippali* is the long pepper, *Piper longum* L, which may have been his family trade (amongst other things).

<sup>52</sup> SD 50.7 (2.1.1). On the Buddha and Kassapa exchanging robes: **Civara S** (S 16.11), SD 77. **Bhaddā**, it is said, dwelled as a celibate in a wanderers’ park for 5 years, until the nuns’ order was formed. She then joined the sangha, and in due course became an arhat, declared foremost of those nuns who can recall their past lives (A 1:25); Thī 63-66; SA 2:191-196; AA 1:174-182; ThaA 3:129-134; ApA 256-264. See DPPN: Mahā Kassapa; Bhaddā Kāpilānī.

<sup>53</sup> The earliest elders are known as “the 80 great elders” (*asīti mahā,thera*): SD 15.10a (7).

The aspiration to streamwinning primes us with the diligence to renounce **self-identity view** (seeing any part of our being as an abiding self), **doubt** (inability or unwillingness to make self-effort in personal growth), and **attachment to rituals and vows** (allowing oneself to fall into the subhuman states of superstition and dependence of others and things for meaning and purpose in life). In short, this is the renunciation of selfishness, in its various human forms.

If, for any reason, we still hesitate from aspiring to streamwinning, either out of ignorance or from our desire for a worldly life, we should at least understand and accept the practice of **moral renunciation**, that is, of giving up the 5 dehumanizing acts of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying and intoxication, and cultivate the 1<sup>st</sup> humanizing acts of love, compassion, gladness and equanimity, so that we may here and now be living happily. This should also give us an opportunity to learn, to gain the wisdom and courage to turn away from our subhuman tendencies, and to turn towards the Buddha’s noble path of freedom in this life itself.

[We will next examine **the 8 stages of discipleship** [2.4], comparing them to the 6 stages of this Sutta.]

## 2.4 THE FOLLOWERS’ PATH PROGRESS

### 2.4.1 The 8 stages of discipleship (*sāvakatta*)<sup>54</sup>

2.4.1.1 There are 3 descriptive formulas for **the stages of discipleship** (*sāvakatta*) found in the suttas,<sup>55</sup> that is:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| (1) <u>the “full discipleship,”</u> leading up to arhathood          | <b>Caṅkī Sutta</b> (M 95); <b>Kīṭā,giri Sutta</b> (M 70) <sup>56</sup> |
| (2) <u>the disciple teacher</u> (one who is at least a streamwinner) | <b>(Dasaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta</b> (A 10.83) <sup>57</sup>                  |
| (3) <u>the path disciple</u> (a streamwinner upwards)                | <b>(Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta</b> (A 8.82)                                |

The last in the list—that of **the (Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta** (A 8.82)—is collated with that of the 6 stages of discipleship (identical items in **bold**) [§3], as follows:

#### **(Aṭṭhaka) Puṇṇiya Sutta (A 8.82)**

- (1) he has faith (*saddho*)
- (2) **approaches** (the Tathagata) (*upasaṅkamitā*)
- (3) **closely attends** (on him) (*payirupāsītā*)
- (4) questions him (*paripucchitā*)
- (5) **listens** to the Dharma attentively (*ohita,soto dhammaṃ suṇāti*)
- (6) holds the Dharma in mind (*sutvā ca dhammaṃ dhāreti*)
- (7) remembers the Dharma, examines its teachings (*dhammānaṃ atthaṃ upaparikkhati*)
- (8) understands both the Dharma and its meaning, and practises in accordance with the Dharma<sup>58</sup> (*attham aññāya dhammam aññāya dhammānudhamma,paṭipanno hoti*)

(A 8.82), SD 57.22 (1.2.1.1)

#### **Sīla Sampanna Sutta (It 104)**

- (1) seeing the monks
- (3) **approaches them**
- (4) **attends** well to them
- (2) **listens** to them
- (5) **recollects** them
- (6) going forth following them

(It 104,3/4.1.5/107 (SD 59.13)

<sup>54</sup> This section on the 8 stages of discipleship is also at SD 58.1 (1.2.1.3).

<sup>55</sup> *Sāvakatta* (*sāvaka* + *-tta*), the state of a true disciple: **Upāli S** (M 56/1:375 passim, 379, 380-382 passim), SD 27.1; **(Licchavī) Sīha S** (A 8.12/4:185), SD 71.5; Ap \*1.13; V 1:236.

<sup>56</sup> **Caṅkī S** (M 95,20), SD 21.15; **Kīṭā.giri S** (M 70,23 etc), SD 11.1.

<sup>57</sup> **(Dasaka) Puṇṇiya S** (A 10.83,19), SD 57.23.

<sup>58</sup> *Attha* and *dhamma* are the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 components of the 4 analytic skills [5.4.2.13].

**2.4.1.2** There is overall agreement in the components of the 2 sets, except for the start and ending of the list. While **A 8.82** starts with **faith** arising in the disciple-to-be, with **It 104**, he begins with **seeing** the monks. Clearly, it is understood that in A 8.82, the person mentioned must have *heard or seen* an arhat so that **faith** arises in him towards the Dharma.

As the title of It 104 suggests, it is about one who is “**accomplished in moral virtue**” (*sīla, sampanna*), without any mention of wisdom (which is implied). Here, the emphasis is on the arhat’s demeanour and speech: our 1<sup>st</sup> vision of an awakened person, like Sāriputta’s first sight of the arhat Assaji.<sup>59</sup> From this seeing of an awakened body, **faith** arises in one who is ready to be a student. The wouldbe student then engages himself wholesomely with the monk or teacher to become a worthy disciple.

**2.4.1.3** The **A 8.82** list gives more details. For example, both lists mention that after approaching the monk, the disciple-to-be **closely attends** to him, that is, he stays respectfully close to the arhat, being attentive to him for teachings, and ready to serve him should he have any needs or duties to be done. In either case, this is done early in his engagement with the arhat or teacher, and, understandably, this is the student’s on-going attitude so long as the living teacher is in his presence.

**2.4.1.4** Another difference between the 2 lists is that while in **A 8.82**, the student (4) **questions** the teacher, and then (5) **listens** to him teaching the Dharma, **It 104** only mentions that he (4) **listens** to the teacher. The 1<sup>st</sup> list gives more details, which are implied in the briefer 2<sup>nd</sup> list, and the same process of learning—**questioning**, listening, counterquestion, and so on—occurs, followed the student **holding** (makes an effort to remember) the Dharma, and remembering or recollecting it on occasions, so that he **recollects** the arhats (including their teachings).

These last 3 processes—*questioning, listening, recollecting*—are all subsumed under **listens** in the briefer It 104 list. They are closely interconnected processes of interactive teacher-pupil learning, especially in the traditional oral tradition of early Buddhism. Once again, we should remember that **It 104** centres on the arhat’s moral virtue, and his spiritual demeanour to the ready Dharma student.

**2.4.1.5** The **It 104** list closes with the student **going forth following them** (*anupabbajjā*): he follows the noble example of his arhat teacher. Although this last stage is not mentioned in **A 8.82**, we can easily see how such a student, having understood the Dharma and practising it from an arhat teacher, would naturally renounce the world and join the monastic order, following the example of his arhat teacher.

**2.4.1.6** Finally, a note on **the sequence** of the stages of discipleship in the 2 lists. There is actually only *one* noticeable difference: while **A 8.82** places “listens” as (5), **It 104** has it as (2). Despite this apparent difference in the sequence, in both lists, *listening* is placed within the 1<sup>st</sup> 5 stages, that is, as part of the initial activities of the candidate for discipleship. In those stages, *listening* will naturally form a vital aspect of the student’s learning process. It is only in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the discipleship process that the student, when by himself, would be recalling or reflecting what he has heard or learned as part of his Dharma practice.

## 2.5 THE 11 EPITHETS OF THE ARHAT [§5]

The Sutta declares that these **arhats**, as awakened teachers, are “of such nature” (*eva, rūpa*) that they are called thus [§5], (explained both by the traditional Commentaries and modern commentary):

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<sup>59</sup> See SD 58.1 (1.2.2.2).

### **2.5 (1) teachers (*sattharo*)**

These monks who are “teachers” (*satthā*) are those monks who, having attained virtues mentioned, such as the destruction of all defilements, instruct others by way of encouraging beings in gaining good for themselves here and now.<sup>60</sup> They are here held up as examples for us.

Following the examples of these arhats, we should at least be diligent in our own wholesome commitment to the Dharma and our practice, and then teach it to others by our own example, thus reminding them that even they, too, as unawakened lay followers are capable of such practice, and need to commit themselves to it for their own sakes.

### **2.5 (2) caravan leaders [trainers of others] (*sattha,vāhā*)**

The “caravan leaders” are awakened teachers who, by the Buddha Dharma, guide us out of the wilderness of birth and so on.<sup>61</sup> This epithet reminds us of the Buddha as the trainer of those who can and need to be trained, who would otherwise sink down into their unwholesome ways again.

Seeing the truth and beauty of the Dharma, practising it, we, too, can inspire others to see likewise, and, by their own efforts and vision, head for the path of moral virtue in this life itself.

### **2.5 (3) conflict-forsakers [abiders in peaceful solitude] (*raṇāñ,jahā*)**

The “conflict forsakers” are those arhat teachers who have given up conflict by way of lust and so on, who show us how to do the same.<sup>62</sup> In **the Araṇa Vibhaṅga Sutta** (M 139), for example, the Buddha teaches on such conflicts (*araṇa*) and how to overcome them.<sup>63</sup>

We learn from our own experience of the unwholesomeness of conflict situations, how they can be resolved and avoided. Using such experiences, in the spirit of the Dharma, such as the teachings of M 139, we educate and inspire others to learn and happily live conflict-free.

### **2.5 (4) darkness-dispellers (*tamo,nudā*)**

The arhats are “darkness-dispellers” in that they have dispelled the darkness of ignorance, and they now instruct us on how to do this for ourselves.<sup>64</sup> Following the Buddha, they teach us the 4 noble truths as a learning and problem-solving tools. We are taught to recognize **ignorance** as suffering; ignorance makes us compare ourself with others, thinking that they have worthwhile things or more things: we feel we lack in those things, and so we **crave** for them. This is how suffering arises.

Next, we learn how to **cut down**, even cut off, this craving, by simplifying and beautifying our bodily actions and speech, so that we are happy, and we make others happy, too. This is the kind of ambience that allows our **minds** to settle in peace and grow in wisdom, leading us to the path of freedom.

### **2.5 (5) light-makers (*āloka,karā*)**

The arhat teachers are “light-makers” on account of their bringing into being the light that is **wisdom**, the radiance that is wisdom, the lamp that is wisdom for their own lives and those of others, that is, in the continuity (*santana*) of our own consciousness (so that we are free from suffering even here and now).<sup>65</sup>

<sup>60</sup> *Ye yathā,vutta,guṇa,samannāgamena eva,rūpā edisā bhinna,sabba,kilesā bhikkhu, te diṭṭha,dhammikādhi,hitesu sattānaṃ niyojana,vasena anusāsanto satthāro ti.* (ItA 2:155,6-9)

<sup>61</sup> *Jāti,kantārādi,nittharaṇato sattha,vāhā ti.* (ItA 2:155,9 f)

<sup>62</sup> *Rāgādi,raṇānaṃ jahanato jahāpanato ca ranañjahā ti.* (ItA 2:155,10 f)

<sup>63</sup> M 139/3:230-236 (SD 7.8).

<sup>64</sup> *Avijjā,tamassa vinodanato vinodāpanato ca tamonudā ti.* (ItA 2:155,11 f)

<sup>65</sup> *Sa,para,santānesu paññā.āloka,paññā.obhāsa,paññā.pajjotānaṃ karaṇena nibbattanena ālokādi,kārā ti.* (ItA 2:155,12 f); *Anandha,kāra,karo* (Nc:Be 83; Nc:Ee 92).

Wisdom (*paññā*) may arise from analysing facts and knowledge, but it fully comes from our own experience of good and bad, wholesome and unwholesome, and knowing how and which to choose. It is a direct understanding of causes and effects, revealing the true nature of reality. Seeing this, we see the nature of self, craving, hate and delusion. The more we renounce these, the closer we approach the path of freedom in this life itself.

### **2.5 (6) radiance-makers (*obhāsa, karā*)**

The arhat teachers bring to us the radiance of the inner light.<sup>66</sup> This is the mental calm and clarity with which we know, shape and free our mind. This is the kind of light that shows us how our senses (the body) define and limit our knowledge and growth. When we shine this light inwards to examine our own mind, we learn to free it from its hindrances [2.2.5.1].

Even when our mind is limited by our senses, we can still rise above such limitations through mindfulness (*sati*) and full knowing (*sampajañña*). Such mindfulness helps us overcome selfishness that feeds narcissism and self-identity view, doubt and superstition. When we overcome these **3 fetters**, we attain streamwinning [2.3.6.5]. When we further free our mind from the limits of the senses, and attain dhyana, we will then be able to attain non-returning, even arhathood.<sup>67</sup>

### **2.5 (7) lamp-makers (*pajjota, karā*)**

The **lamp** is a popular sutta simile for wisdom and Dharma practice to gain that wisdom of seeing directly into true reality. The words *pajjota*, *dīpa*, *padīpa*, *ujjota* (not listed in It 104 or its Commentary), all mean “lamp.” Hence, they each have the sense of the light that is the Dharma, that helps us to truly see ourselves as we really are, and to free our mind from greed, hate and delusion.<sup>68</sup>

However, the Pali word *dīpa* is polysemous: it has more than one sense, and does *not* always mean “lamp.” This is especially so in the famous phrase in the Buddha’s last advice—*atta, dīpā viharatha*—which is sometimes misinterpreted and mistranslated as “lamp.” The context here, is that of self-reliance through mental cultivation, especially satipatthana.<sup>69</sup>

The simile of an **island** fits the meditation context better: when we meditate, we become “an island” unto ourself in the sense of letting go of the physical senses (the world), so that we can fully cultivate the mind. When the mind is well cultivated, the flood waters of the hindrances and defilements are, at least temporarily, drained away and we see the other islands as *mountains*!

Even more convincing is evidence from the usage of its Sanskrit form, *dvīpa*,<sup>70</sup> in the phrase, *āmta, dvīpa ... viharatha* (Mvst 1:334), in the Mahāvastu. This sentence can only be translated one way: “Be an island unto yourself.” Hence, in this case, *dīpa* means “island,” not *lamp*, although we can append this latter sense by way of augmenting it to our explanation of the benefits of good meditation practice.

### **2.5 (8) torch-bearers (*ukkā, dhārā*)**

The arhats are “torch-bearers,” in the sense of bringing into our lives the torch and the light that is spiritual knowledge (*ñāṇa*); because of holding up for us the radiance of the true teaching.<sup>71</sup> This imagery of light

<sup>66</sup> *Obhāsa, karā* ti *obhāsa, jotim karotī ti obhāso, kāro* (Nc:Be 83; Nc:Ee 92).

<sup>67</sup> See **Samatha & vipassana**, SD 41.1 (2.2.2.4); **Bhāvanā**, SD 15.1 (13); **Samadhi**, SD 33.1a (2.2-2.5); **The layman and dhyana**, SD 8.5 (9).

<sup>68</sup> *Pajjota, karā* ti. Synonyms: *Dīpa, sadisaṃ ālokaṃ karotī ti dīpaṇ, karo* (lamp-maker). *Padīpa, sadisaṃ ālokaṃ karotī ti padīpa, karo* (light-maker). *Ujjota, karo* ti *patāpa, karo* (torch-maker) (Nc:Be 83; Nc:Ee 92)

<sup>69</sup> See eg **Mahā, parinibbāna S** (D 16,26), SD 9; esp SD 3.1 (3.3).

<sup>70</sup> Etymologically, *dvīpa* (and *dīpa*) derive from *dvi*, “two,” + *ap*, “water,” meaning “water on both sides (all around),” “an island” (Paṇinī 5.4.74, 4.3.97; SED sv).

<sup>71</sup> *Tathā ñāṇ’ukkā, ñāṇa-p, pabhā, dhamm’ukkā, dhamma-p, pabhānaṃ dhāraṇena karaṇena ca ukkā, dharā ti pi pabh-aṅkarā ti pi* (ItA 2:155,14 f)

(the Buddha’s teaching) and seeing (our self-reliance) is highlighted in the refuge-going pericope where it says: “Just as if, bhante, one ... were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes can see forms.”<sup>72</sup>

### 2.5 (9) light-givers (*pabhañ, karā*)

The *Cūḷa Niddesa* explains “light-givers” with the term *teja*, which refers to both light and also fire, that is, the heat that burns away the bad and the unwholesome. Its sense overlaps with that of *anubhāva*, power in all its secular and spiritual forms.<sup>73</sup> In an act of truth, we may say, for example, “by the power of the Buddha, the Dharma, the sangha” (*buddhānubhāvena dhammānubhāvena saṅghānubhāvena*) may such and such a good or true state happens or shows itself.<sup>74</sup>

### 2.5 (10) noble ones (*ariyā*)

In the Pali canon, the term *ariya*, “noble,” refers to the 4 kinds of saints (the streamwinners, the once-returns, the non-returns and the arhats, including the Buddha). He also refers to their teachings, especially the noble eightfold path, which is the only way to attain this nobility (*ariyatta*), that is, through awakening. This popular term is specifically used by the Buddha to counter and negate the exploitative brahminical notion that social purity or superiority comes with birth, and that the brahmins are of the highest class. The Buddha declares that *nobility* (both spiritual purity and social dignity) comes from neither birth nor rituals, but from our own wholesome actions. We become the good and the bad that we do.

The compiler of the Iti,vuttaka Commentary, *Dhammapāla*, gives these **5 explanations** (quasi-etymologies) for *ariya*, “the noble.”<sup>75</sup> The arhats are noble:

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (1) on account of their <u>remoteness</u> (or aloofness) from defilements  | <i>ārakattā kilesehi</i>            |
| (2) on account of being <u>free from posturing</u> in any kind of misfortune   | <i>anaye na iriyanato</i>           |
| (3) on account of their postures inviting <u>good fortune</u>  | <i>aye iriyānato</i>                |
| (4) on account of their being <u>approachable</u> by the world, with its devas,  | <i>araṇiyato</i>                    |
| (5) on account of their supreme attainment as those with eye, by way of<br><u>the wisdom-eye</u> and <u>the Dharma-eye</u> [2.5(11)] | <i>paññā, cakkhu dhamma, cakkhu</i> |

### 2.5 (11) seeing ones [one with the eyes] (*cakkhumanto*)

(1) We have noted above [25(10)4] that the **arhats** are those with the wisdom-eye (*paññā, cakkhu*) and the Dharma-eye (*dhamma, cakkhu*) as their supreme attainments.<sup>76</sup> In sutta terms, we may understand **the arhat’s wisdom-eye** as his states of *freedom* (what makes one an arhat), and personal practice and habits; and **the Dharma-eye** is his natural understanding of the Buddha’s teachings on true reality as a whole. We will first examine how the idea of “the eye” evolved in terms of spiritual powers, and then close, in subsection (6) here, with a listing of the 10 arhat-powers, which is an elaboration of these 2 “eyes” of the arhat.

The oldest usage of **the “eye”** (*cakkhu*) is probably the one applied to the Buddha’s awakening and teaching. This eye imagery, of course, started with “**the eye**” (*cakkhu*) mentioned, for example, in the 1<sup>st</sup> discourse, **the Dhamma, cakkha Pavattana Sutta** (S 56.11), where it is said of each of the 4 noble truths:

<sup>72</sup> See eg *Kesaputtiya S* (A 3.65,18), SD 35.4a(2).

<sup>73</sup> *Cūḷa Niddesa*: *pabhañkaro ti tejañ, karo* (radiance-maker) (Nc:Be 83; Nc 92). See prec n. (ItA 2:155,15)

<sup>74</sup> On the act of truth (*sacca, kiriya*), see 39.2 (2).

<sup>75</sup> *Ārakattā kilesehi, anaye ‘na iriyanato, aye ca iriyanato pasesaṃ ca tathā, bhāve hetu, bhāvato sa, devakena lokena araṇiyato ariyā ti*. (ItA 2:155,16-18)

<sup>76</sup> *Paññā, cakkhu, dhamma, cakkhūnañ sātisaya, paṭilābhena cakkhumanto ti*. (ItA 2:155,18 f). Comys, however, do not elaborate on these 2 powers, but we can deduce them from the sutta teachings, see seen in (6) below.

“This is the noble truth ... bhikshus, regarding what was unheard before, there arose in me vision [the eye], there arose knowledge, there arose wisdom, there arose insight, there arose light” (*idaṃ ... ariya, saccan ti me bhikkhave pubbe ananussutesu dhammesu cakkhum udapādi ñāṇaṃ udapādi paññā udapādi vijjā udapādi āloko udapādi*). (S 56.11,9/5:422), SD 1.1

**Cakkhu** is used here in the figurative sense to mean “**vision**,” the sight of the inner eye, insight, a direct vision into true reality; the Buddha’s reference to his own awakening.

(2) Based on the idea of the Buddha’s awakening is the “eye”<sup>77</sup> into true reality, it is then natural to speak of the Buddha himself as “**the one with the eye**” (*cakkhumā*), “the seeing one, the one with vision,” and so on. The imagery of the eye and of sight is very significant in terms of self-awakening. The Bodhisattva, in his 1<sup>st</sup> 3 sights, sees for himself *decay, disease, death*, and, in his 4<sup>th</sup> sight, the happy renunciant.<sup>78</sup>

Then, the Buddha, through his own meditation, gains awakening, when he sees for himself, with his “**wisdom eye**” of meditation, the true nature of *suffering, its arising, its ending and the way to its ending*, as we have just noted. This is his liberating spiritual vision, which we, too, can and must, see for ourself.

(3) In due course, as the nature of the Buddha’s awakening becomes more clearly described and better defined in the suttas, various aspects of his wisdom is highlighted in the teachings and narratives. Two of his well known inherent powers (the first canonical; the latter, late canonical)—which gives him the epithet of “**the one with the buddha-eye**” (*buddha, cakkhunā*)—are the following:<sup>79</sup>

- (1) the knowledge of one’s diversity in the faculties (*indriya, paro, pariyatta, ñāṇa*), that is, his acumen for reading the level of spiritual maturity or readiness by way of the predominant faculties (*indriya*)<sup>80</sup> with which a person is able to grow spiritually or attain the path,<sup>81</sup>
- (2) the knowledge of one’s intentions and dispositions (*āsayānusaya, ñāṇa*), that is, the good that one is capable of, and the negative tendencies that one is likely to fall for.<sup>82</sup>

(4) In due course, these 2 buddha-knowledges,<sup>83</sup> known as **the buddha-eye** (*buddha, cakkhu*), came to be called his **omniscience** (*sabba-ññūtā, ñāṇa*, “the all-knowing knowledge”).<sup>84</sup> The buddha eye (*buddha, cakkhu*) is a name for the knowledge of the degrees of maturity in the faculties of omniscience (or the “knowledge of omniscience”), which is called the universal eye (*samanta, cakkhu*) (S 559d\*).<sup>85</sup> The knowledge of the 3 lower paths (streamwinning etc) is also called **the Dharma eye** or “Dharma vision” (*dhamma, cakkhu*). Together

<sup>77</sup> On “the eye,” as *cakkhu* and *akkhi*, etc, see SD 53.3 (2.2.2).

<sup>78</sup> On the Bodhisattva’s 4 visions (*catu pubba, nimitta*) or 4 sights (*catu nimitta*), see **Mahā’padāna S** (D 14,2.1-2.14) + SD 49.8b (1.0.4.4 f).

<sup>79</sup> **Buddha, cakkhunā ti indriya, paro, pariyatta, ñāṇena ca āsayānusaya, ñāṇena ca.** (DA 2:467; MA 2:179; SA 1:200; NmA 2:383)

<sup>80</sup> These are the 5 faculties: faith, effort, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom; **Pañc’indriya** (SD 10.4).

<sup>81</sup> M 1:70,14 = S 5:305,6 = A 5:34,14+16 = Pm 2:175,20 = Vbh 318,6; MA 2:30,2-8 etc. CPD: indriya-paropariyatta. DP: indriya-pariya.

<sup>82</sup> Ap 28,25, ApA 234,36; Pm 1:133,4+26, 2:158,8; MA 3:13,9.

<sup>83</sup> This attribution of omniscience to the Buddha was prob spurred by influence of the Jains, who claim that their founder, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (Mahāvīra) [SD 27.1 (2.1.2)] is literally omniscient: SD 10.8 (2); SD 53.3 (2).

<sup>84</sup> **Buddha, cakkhunā ti indriya, paro, pariyatta, ñāṇena ca āsayānusaya, ñāṇena ca. Imesañ hi dvinnāṃ ñāṇānaṃ “buddha, cakkhū ti nāmaṃ, sabb’aññuta-ñ, ñāṇassa “samanta, cakkhū ti; tiṇṇaṃ magga, ñāṇānaṃ “dhamma, cakkhū ti. Appa, raj, akkhe ti, ādīsu yesaṃ vutta, nayaṇ’eva paññā, cakkhumhi rāg’ādi, rajaṃ appaṃ, te appa, raj’akkhā.** (DA 2:467; MA 2:179; SA 1:200; NmA 2:383)

<sup>85</sup> See **Kaṇṇaka-t, thala S** (M 90/2:125-133), SD 10.8 (2), & **Sandaka S** (M 76), SD 35.7.

with the divine eye or clairvoyance (*dibba,cakkhu*) (S 6.5 + 12.70) and the physical eye (*maṁsa,cakkhu*), these make up **the “5 eyes”** of the Buddha.<sup>86</sup>

(5) Finally, we have the attribution of **the 10 powers** (*dasā,bala*) to the Buddha, which are essentially, a systematization of the various powers attributed to him in the earlier suttas. **The Mahā Sīha,nāda Sutta** (M 12),<sup>87</sup> for example, calls them **the 10 tathagata-powers** (*tathāgata,bala*), which are paraphrased as the following knowledges:<sup>88</sup>

- (1) the understanding of the possible (*ṭhāna*) and the impossible (*aṭṭhāna*);<sup>89</sup>
- (2) the results of karma undertaken, past, present and future, according to their causes and possibilities;
- (3) the ways leading to all (karmic) destinies (such as subhuman states or happy states);
- (4) the various elements and worlds (the 5 aggregates and the nature of existence);
- (5) the various dispositions of beings (the nature of personal inclinations);
- (6) the spiritual faculties,<sup>90</sup> here and beyond, of other beings, other individuals;
- (7) the defilement, the cleansing, and the emergence regarding the attainments, the liberations, the samadhis and the dhyanas;
- (8) he recollects his manifold past lives;
- (9) by his divine eye, he knows the progress of beings according to their karma;
- (10) by his own direct knowledge he has destroyed all his mental influxes<sup>91</sup> (that is, awakened as an arhat).

(6) Now, parallel to the Buddha’s “10 powers” [above: (5)], we have **the arhat’s 10 powers**, which are found in **the Khīṇāsava Bala Sutta** (A 10.90), where the arhat’s 7 powers are expanded into the following 10 powers of the influx-destroyed (*khīṇ’āsava bala*) possessed by the arhat, and grouped into the twin eyes of the arhat, that is, the wisdom-eye and the Dharma-eye [2.5(11)1], as laid out in Diagram 2.5 (6).<sup>92</sup>

Powers 5, 6, and 8, are identical with those listed in **the Das’uttara Sutta** (D 34), the 7 powers of the influx-destroyed (*khīṇāsava bala*), that is, those of an arhat, which are the qualities to be realized (*satta dhamma sacchikatabbā*).<sup>93</sup>

Powers nos. 4-10—the last 7 powers—in fact, form the famous “7 sets” of the Buddha’s key teachings constituting the 37 limbs of awakening (*bodhi,pakkhiya,dhamma*).<sup>94</sup> The arhat essentially understands all these teachings. However, not all of them have the 4 analytic skills (*paṭisambhidā*) to effectively expound these teachings. Those with **the 4 analytic skills** of meaning (*attha,paṭisambhidā*), truth (*dhamma,paṭisam-*

<sup>86</sup> Nm 354-360; Nc 235; SA 1:200. Comy: *Buddha,cakkhu, dhamma,cakkhu, dibba,cakkhu, paññā,cakkhu, samanta,-cakkhūti pañcahi cakkhūhi cakkhumatā*, (ItA 1:167; cf SA 2:354; BA 33). Also: *Bhāvatthato pana duvidhaṁ cakkhu: maṁsa,cakkhu ca paññā,cakkhu ca. Tesu buddha,cakkhu, samanta,cakkhu, ñāṇa,cakkhu, dibba,cakkhu, dhamma,cakkhu pañca,vidhaṁ paññā,cakkhu* (ItA 1:99; PmA 1:77); DhsA 305). Also: **Miracles**, SD 27.5a (5.5.1); SD 50.20 comy 14-15 (2).

<sup>87</sup> M 12/1:69-73 (SD 49.1): the 10 powers in §§9-21, the 4 intrepidities in §§22-28.

<sup>88</sup> For a more detailed study of these powers, see M 12,9-21 + nn (SD 49.1).

<sup>89</sup> See **Bahu,dhātuka S** (M 115,12-17), SD 29.1a; see also Vbh 400; Dhs 1337. Comy, however, explains it in the Abhidhamma sense, as the knowledge of the correlations btw causes and their results (MA 2:28). See also **Ṭhāna S** (S 52.15/-5:304); (**Chakka**) **Sīha,nāda S** (A 6.64/3:417+419+420); (**Dasaka**) **Sīha,nāda S** (A 10.21/5:33); **Adhivuttipada S** (A 10.22/-5:37); It 123\*; Ap 2:460; Pm 2:174, 175, 176.

<sup>90</sup> That is, how beings fare according to their 5 faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom.

<sup>91</sup> The mental influxes (*āsava*) are those of (1) sense-desire (*kāma’āsava*), (2) (desire for eternal) existence (*bhav’āsava*), (3) ignorance (*avijjāsava*) (D 33,1.10(20)/3:216; M 1:55, 3:41; A 3.59, 67, 6.63). The better known but later set of 4 influxes incl wrong views (*diṭṭh’āsava*), as no. 3 (D 16.2.4, Pm 1.442, 561, Dhs §§1096-1100, Vbh §937).

<sup>92</sup> See SD 51.19 (1.3).

<sup>93</sup> D 34,1.8(10)/3:283; SD 51.19 (1.3.3).

<sup>94</sup> On the 7 sets, see **SD 10.1**; **Pārīleyya S** (S 22.81,11) SD 6.1; SD 9 (10.3); **Saku’udāyī S** (M 77,15-21) SD 6.18.

*bhidā*), language (*nirutti, paṭisambhidā*) and perspicacity [wit] (*paṭibhāna, paṭisambhidā*), like the elder Sāriputta, are adept in presenting any of these teachings:<sup>95</sup>

- |   |   |                                      |
|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) he has well seen <u>all formations</u>, as they really are, with right wisdom, to be impermanent;</li> <li>(2) he has well seen <u>sensual-pleasures</u> (<i>kāma</i>), as they really are, with right wisdom, to be like glowing coal;</li> <li>(3) the mind turns towards <u>solitude</u> (<i>viveka</i>), delighting in renunciation, having brought to an end all the bases for the influxes;<sup>96</sup></li> <li>(4) <u>the 4 focuses of mindfulness</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(5) <u>the 4 right strivings</u><sup>97</sup> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(6) <u>the 4 bases of spiritual success</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(7) <u>the 5 spiritual faculties</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(8) <u>the 5 powers</u><sup>98</sup> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(9) <u>the 7 awakening-factors</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(10) <u>the noble eightfold path</u> has been well cultivated.</li> </ul> | <div style="font-size: 3em; line-height: 1; padding: 0 10px;">}</div> | <p>the arhat's <b>wisdom-eye</b></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(4) <u>the 4 focuses of mindfulness</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(5) <u>the 4 right strivings</u><sup>97</sup> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(6) <u>the 4 bases of spiritual success</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(7) <u>the 5 spiritual faculties</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(8) <u>the 5 powers</u><sup>98</sup> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(9) <u>the 7 awakening-factors</u> have been well cultivated;</li> <li>(10) <u>the noble eightfold path</u> has been well cultivated.</li> </ul>   | <div style="font-size: 3em; line-height: 1; padding: 0 10px;">}</div> | <p>the arhat's <b>Dharma-eye</b></p> |
- (A 10.90/5:174 f), SD 80.22

**Diagram 2.5(6): The arhat's 10 powers**

## 2.6 THE CLOSING VERSES

**2.6.1** [§6] The Sutta closes with the Buddha speaking **3 verses** in praise of the arhat teacher. In the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 3 closing verses, he rejoices in those of us who understand what **the Sīla Sampanna Sutta** is really about: the arhat **who has mastered his own mind**, who lives in keeping with the Dharma-Vinaya. Basically, this verse reminds us of the availability of the Buddha Dharma—hence, the possibility of those virtues mentioned of the arhat teacher—even in our own day. We should rejoice in this.

**2.6.2** [§7] This 2<sup>nd</sup> verse highlights the arhat-teachers as those who remove ignorance for us. Their presence are like **bright lights** lighting up our field of vision so that we can see wherever we need to. The arhats' light comes from their own self-awakening, firmly established in the true teaching. Even when we are unable to meet them, living within memory of them, empowers us with the very same vision they had of the Buddha Dharma. They are like the bright moon shining in the cloudless sky: it was the same moon that shone over the Buddha and the arhats two and a half millennia ago.

**2.6.3** [§8] The 3<sup>rd</sup> and last verse reassuringly declares that when we hear the Dharma from these arhat-teachers, there is no reason why we should not benefit from it, **when we have cultivated the wisdom for it**, and our mind gives proper attention to the teaching. We only need to know that these arhats, before their own awakening, saw the Dharma, took it up, and saw directly into true reality. As a result, they suffer no more rebirth in samsara. We still have that very same Buddha Dharma preserved in the suttas that teaches us to see directly into reality and be free from suffering ourselves. We only need to follow the arhat's example.

<sup>95</sup> On the 4 analytic skills, see SD 28.4 (4); SD 41.6 (2.2); SD 58.1 (5.4.2.13).

<sup>96</sup> On the influxes (*āsava*), see (1.2.3.1(10)) n.

<sup>97</sup> On the 4 right strivings, see **Catu Padhāna S** (D 33,1.11 = A 4.14), SD 10.2.

<sup>98</sup> On the 5 powers, see **Pañca Bala** (SD 10.5).

### 3 Related suttas

#### 3.1 RELATED SUTTAS

Many of the key terms of **the Sīla Sampanna Sutta** (It 104) are found in the following suttas, where their Commentaries explain them, and which thus apply here, too:

<b>Bojjhaṅga Sīla Sutta</b>	S 46.3/5:67	SD 10.15	[3.1.1]
<b>(Sāriputta) Cunda Sutta</b>	S 47.13/5:16	SD 110.5	[3.1.2]

#### 3.1.1 The Bojjhaṅga Sīla Sutta (S 46.3)

**The Bojjhaṅga Sīla Sutta** (S 46.3), significantly longer than **the Sīla Sampanna Sutta**, has the same passage on the 6-stage discipleship, which is how we should engage with an arhat teacher, or where we find no such arhat, with an experienced Vinaya-spirited Dharma teacher. This spiritual friendship helps us cultivate the 7 awakening-factors, leading us into deep meditation, or at least clear mindfulness. The benefit of this, states **S 46.3**, is that of attaining arhathood, if not, that of non-returning.<sup>99</sup>

#### 3.1.2 The (Sāriputta) Cunda Sutta (S 47.13)

**3.1.2.1 The (Sāriputta) Cunda Sutta** (S 47.13) records the passing of the arhat Sāriputta. When the novice Cunda relays the sad news to Ananda, who, in turn, informs the Buddha, remarking that he is distraught with grief. The Buddha tries to console Ānanda by saying that Sāriputta’s death has not deprived Ānanda of any of his training in terms of **the 5 dharma-aggregates** (*dhama-k,khandha*) [§4]. In other words, Ānanda is still a streamwinner, and has the potential for attaining what Sāriputta has himself attained, that is, arhathood.

Ānanda then says that he recalls Sāriputta’s **kindness** as “an advisor, a counsellor, one who instructed, inspired, roused and gladdened me,” and how untiringly he had taught the Dharma and was helpful to others in the sangha.

**3.1.2.2** The Sutta closes with the Buddha reminding Ānanda to go to only the Dharma as refuge, the Dharma as our island, taking no other refuge.<sup>100</sup> This is the famous call of the Buddha to rely on our own efforts for salvation, and to place the teaching above even the teacher, since only we can free ourselves from suffering, as highlighted in **the Gāraṇa Sutta** (S 6.2 = A 4.21).<sup>101</sup>

#### 3.1.3 The (Kassapa) Ovāda Sutta 2 (S 16.7)

**The (Kassapa) Ovāda Sutta 2** (S 16.7) records the Buddha inviting the elder Mahā Kassapa to give the monks a Dharma-talk. Kassapa, however, declines, claiming that the monks then are “difficult to admonish” because they lack the “5 power of the learner” (*pañca sekha,bala*), that is, *faith, moral shame, moral fear, effort and wisdom*. The “learners” (*sekha*) are those who have gained the path, whether monastic or lay, but have yet to reached arhathood; that is, the streamwinners, the once-returners and the non-returners.

Other than sharing the theme of “learning,” the 2 suttas—S 16.7 and It 104—have nothing in common except for a single term, **ovādaka**, “(spiritual) advisors” [S 16.7,7 = It 104,2.2]. These refer to arhat monks who are capable of giving healing talk to the worldly monks, and facilitate those who wish to practise for reaching the path in this life itself. Mahā Kassapa, in S 16.7, declares the vital importance of the presence and tutelage of such renunciants amongst the monastics so that they do not stray from their training.<sup>102</sup>

— — —

<sup>99</sup> S 46.3/5:67 (SD 10.15).

<sup>100</sup> S 47.13/5:16 (SD 110.5).

<sup>101</sup> S 6.2 = A 4.1 (SD 12.3). See SD 59.15 (2.2.3.2).

<sup>102</sup> S 16.7/2:206), SD 88.4.

## Sīla Sampanna Sutta

### The Discourse on the Morally Accomplished

It 104

1 This was indeed spoken by the Blessed One, heard by me spoken by the Arhat.<sup>103</sup>

#### The 5 dharma-aggregates: the 3 trainings and freedom

2 “Bhikshus, those monks who are:<sup>104</sup>

accomplished in moral virtue,<sup>105</sup> [107]

accomplished in concentration,

accomplished in wisdom,

accomplished in freedom,<sup>106</sup>

accomplished in the knowledge and vision of freedom,

2.2 who are advisors, counsellors,<sup>107</sup>

instructors, inspirers,<sup>108</sup>

rousers, gladdeners,

who sufficiently and properly point out the true teaching<sup>109</sup>—

*sīla,sampanna*

*samādhi,sampanna*

*paññā,sampanna*

*vimutti,sampanna*

*vimutti,ñāṇa,dassana,sampanna*

*ovādakā viññāpakā*

*sandassakā samādapakā*

*samuttejakā sampahaṃsakā*

*alaṃ,samakkhātāro saddhammassa*

3 THE 6 STAGES OF DISCIPLESHIP [2.3]

bhikshus, that even (1) seeing these monks

is of great help, I say;

*dassana*

bhikshus, that even (2) listening to these monks

is of great help, I say;

*savana*

bhikshus, that even (3) approaching these monks

is of great help, I say;

*upasaṅkamana*

bhikshus, that even (4) closely attending to these monks

is of great help, I say;

*payirupāsana*

bhikshus, that even (5) recollecting these monks

is of great help, I say;

*anussaraṇa*

bhikshus, that even (6) going forth following them

is of great help, I say.

*anupabbajjam*

#### Practitioners

4 What is the reason for this?

For one who associates with, resorts to, sits up close to (them),<sup>110</sup>

<sup>103</sup> *Vuttam h’etaṃ bhagavata, vuttam arahatā’ti me sutam*. This is said to be spoken by the laywoman **Khujj’uttarā**: see SD 57.2 (1.2.2.3); SD 16.14 (1).

<sup>104</sup> This 6-stage discipleship recurs in (**Bojjhaṅga**) **Sīla S** (S 46.3), SD 10.15. On the 5 dharma-aggregates [2.1].

<sup>105</sup> Comy: Here, morality (*sīla*)—in *sīla,sampanna*—refers to both the mundane and the supramundane morality of those who have destroyed the influxes (of sensual pleasures, of existence, of views, of ignorance), (the arhats), endowed with this morality. The same method applies to concentration (*samādhi*) and to wisdom (*paññā*) (ItA 2:152,7-9). [1.2.1]

<sup>106</sup> Comy: As for “freedom” (*vimutti*), it is freedom itself that is the fruition, (including) the knowledge and vision of freedom (and) review knowledge (*vimutti pana phala,vimutti yeva vimutti,ñāṇa,dassanaṃ paccavekkhaṇa,ñāṇaṃ*, ItA 2:152,9 f). [1.2.2]

<sup>107</sup> *Ovādakā viññāpakā*. [2.2.1, 2.2.2]

<sup>108</sup> *Sandassakā aamādapakā samuttejakā sampahāmsakā*. [2.2.3-2.2.6]

<sup>109</sup> *Alaṃ,sam’akkhātāro sadhammasa*. [2.2.7]

<sup>110</sup> On how these 5 dharma-aggregates work as proximate conditions (*upanisā*) for progress, see (**Pañcaka**) **Dussīla S** (A 5.24) + SD 59.14 (1.2).

even though one is unfulfilled in	<u>the moral aggregates,</u>	one gains fulfilment in its <u>cultivation</u> ;
even though one is unfulfilled in	<u>the concentration aggregate,</u>	one gains fulfilment in its <u>cultivation</u> ;
even though one is unfulfilled in	<u>the wisdom aggregate, [108]</u>	one gains fulfilment in its <u>cultivation</u> ;
even though one is unfulfilled in	<u>the freedom aggregate,</u>	one gains fulfilment in its <u>cultivation</u> ;
even though one is unfulfilled in	<u>the knowledge and vision of</u>	
	<u>freedom aggregate</u>	one gains fulfilment in its <u>cultivation</u> .

5 And it is these monks, bhikshus, who, being of such a kind, [2.5]

are called	teachers;	<i>sattharo</i>	[2.5 (1)]
are called	caravan leaders [trainers of others];	<i>sattha,vāhā</i>	[2.5 (2)]
are called	conflict-forsakers [abiders in peaceful solitude]	<i>raṇaṅ, jahā</i>	[2.5 (3)]
are called	darkness-dispellers;	<i>tamo,nudā</i>	[2.5 (4)]
are called	light-makers;	<i>āloka,karā</i>	[2.5 (5)]
are called	radiance-makers;	<i>obhāsa,karā</i>	[2.5 (6)]
are called	lamp-makers;	<i>pajjota,karā</i>	[2.5 (7)]
are called	torch-bearers;	<i>ukkā,dhārā</i>	[2.5 (8)]
are called	light-givers;	<i>pabhaṅ,karā</i>	[2.5 (9)]
are called	noble ones;	<i>ariyā</i>	[2.5 (10)]
are called	seeing ones [one with the eyes].	<i>cakkhumanto</i>	[2.5 (11)]

### Closing verses [2.6]

5.2 The Blessed One said this matter [meaning]<sup>111</sup>; therein [of that matter] he says this:<sup>112</sup>

- 6 *pāmojja*<sup>113</sup>, *karaṇaṃ ṭhānaṃ*  
*evaṃ hoti vijānataṃ*  
*yad-idaṃ bhāvit'attānaṃ*  
*ariyānaṃ dhamma,jīvināṃ*
- This occasion is a cause for joy  
for those who understand, thus:  
that is to say, those with self cultivated,  
the noble ones who live in keeping with the Dharma. [2.6.1]
- 7 *te jotayanti saddhammaṃ*  
*bhāsayanti pabhaṅ,karā*  
*ālokā,karaṇā dhārā*  
*cakkhumanto raṇaṅ,jahā*
- The light-bringers brighten up the true teaching,  
they cause it to shine:  
the steadfast who are light-makers,  
the darkness-dispellers who have eyes. [2.6.2]
- 8 *yesaṃ ve*<sup>114</sup> *sāsaṇaṃ sutvā*  
*samma-d-aññāya paṇḍitā*  
*jāti-k,khayam abhiññāya*  
*nāgacchanti puna-b,bhavan'ti*
- Having heard the teaching from them, indeed,  
the wise, on account of rightly knowing,  
have destroyed birth with direct knowledge:  
they come not to being born again. [2.6.3]

<sup>111</sup> *Attha* is polysemic: we can take “matter” as referring to the preceding, and “meaning” as given in the foll.

<sup>112</sup> *Etam atthaṃ bhagavā avoca, tatth'etaṃ iti vuccati*. This may be seen thus: the former phrase refers to the teaching in meaning (*attha*) (true reality), reflecting the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 noble truths; the latter is its purpose (*attha*). This line is found only in Be Ce, but omitted from Ee Se.

<sup>113</sup> Be Ce Se *pāmojja*; Ee *pāmuja*.

<sup>114</sup> Be Ce *ce*; Ee Se *ve*.

**9** This, too, is a matter  
spoken by the Blessed One. Thus it was heard by me.<sup>115</sup>

*pañcamāṇ*

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<sup>115</sup> *Ayam pi atthe vutto bhagavatā. Iti me sutan'ti.* This line is found only in Be Ce, but omitted in Ee Se.