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Santuṭṭhi Sutta The Discourse on Contentment | A 4.27 Sulabha Sutta The Discourse on the Easily Obtained | It 101

Ce Catur-anavajja Sutta The Discourse on the 4 Blameless (Things)

Theme: True renunciants live very simple lives

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2016, 2021

1 Sutta summaries and significance

1.1 SUTTA SUMMARIES AND VINAYA

1.1.1 The Santuṭṭhi Sutta (A 4.27), on contentment—like its close parallel, **the Sulabha Sutta** (It 101), on the easily obtained—lists the 4 basic supports (*catu, paccaya*) of the early monks, that is, the rag-robe, almsmeal of scraps, a tree-foot dwelling, and fermented cow's urine as ointment. These supports are said to be “**a trifle, easily gained and blameless**,” meaning that they are personally sufficient for a renunciant, obtained without trouble either by him or to others, and they pose no moral issues (no precept is broken by gaining, having or using them).

1.1.2 The closing verses of both the Suttas (A 4.27 + It 101) have the same message: the renunciant who lives contented with these supports will be “**undistressed**” (*na vighāto*), wandering and living freely wherever he likes. Moreover, this simple life, which burdens neither the renunciant nor his supporters, nor anyone who gives him alms, is that of a true trainee heading for the path of awakening.

In other words, a monastic who lives such a simple life, diligent in his spiritual practice, is a worthy recluse (*samaṇa*), a true renunciant (*pabbajita*). He does not fall under the power of craving, which fuels rebirth.¹ He easily reaches the path even in this life itself, and in no long time attains awakening, liberated from rebirth and suffering.²

1.1.3 Vinaya allowances

The Buddha's allowance for the usage of **the 4 supports** by renunciants is recorded in **the Mahā, vagga** of the Vinaya, thus:

“I allow you, bhikshus, when you are ordaining, to explain 4 supports³:

(1) that going-forth is on account of **almsmeal of scraps** [morsels];
in this regard, you must be diligent for life.

The extra allowances are: a sangha meal, a designated (individual) meal, an invitation meal, ticket-meal, (meal offering) on a day of the waxing fortnight or the waning fortnight, on an observance day, or the day after an observance day.⁴

(2) That going-forth is on account of **rag-rob**es;
in this regard, you must be diligent for life.

The extra allowances are: (robes made of) linen, cotton, silk, wool, coarse hemp, canvas.⁵

¹ DA 2:526,30 f; AA 4:19,23 f.

² Similar nn at SD 55.11 (3.5.2.3).

³ *Nissaya* (cf V 1:96) is something that one depends on, a source of supply. It should not be confused with the formal act, also called *nissaya* (V 1:49; V:H 4:66), which is an act placing a novice monk under guidance, giving him tutelage (also called *nissaya*) on the monastic way of life.

⁴ On the last 4, see V:H 2:313 f + nn.

(3) That going-forth is on account of a **tree-foot lodging**;
 in this regard, you must be diligent for life.

The extra allowances are: a dwelling place,⁶ a curved house,⁷ a long house,⁸ a mansion,⁹ a cave.¹⁰

(4) That going-forth is on account of **fermented cow-urine** as medicine;
 in this regard you must be diligent for life.

The extra allowances are: ghee, fresh butter, oil, honey, molasses.”¹¹

Mv 1.30.4 (V 1:58)

1.1.4 Commentaries on the 4 supports

1.1.4.1 RAG-ROBES (*paṃsukūla cīvara*)

Dhammapāla, in his Iti,vuttaka Commentary, explains the rag-robe (*paṃsukūlaṃ*) as a robe of rag-pieces, given the name of “dust-heap (rag-robe),” meaning that it was made into a robe by gleaning pieces (of them) from the dirt-piles, on whose tops they are placed, here and there on road-tracks, cemeteries, rubbish heaps, and so on. They (Monks) go “to the dust-heap” in quest (*ulati*) of them, having gathered them, they are made into robes.¹²

Both Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla used a wordplay to give a quasi-etymology, such as *paṃsu viya kucchita,bhāvaṃ ulatī ti paṃsu,kūlaṃ* (Buddhaghosa, Vism 2.4/60) and *paṃsu viya kucchita,bhāvaṃ ulatī gacchatī ti paṃsukūlaṃ* (Dhammapāla, UA 1:252,28 f). Both sentences mean: “It is *paṃsukūla* because one goes in quest for it, as it were, in its worthless state like dust.” The verb *ulati* is rare, but is attested in the traditional grammars and exegeses with these senses: “to seek” (*gavesati*), according to

⁵ These 6 kinds of materials are allowed for robes at V 1:281; but referred to as “extra allowances” at V 1:58, 96. “6 kinds of robes” are also mentioned at Nis 5 (V 3:210), Nis 6 (V 3:213).

⁶ *Vihāra*, which, in early Buddhism, esp in ref to forest monks, is what we today know as a simple hut (*kuṭi*). It may be made of wood and leaves (*paṇṇa,kuṭi*, D 3:94; M 2:155; S 1:226) or some other more durable material.

⁷ *Aḍḍha,yoga*. Comys speak of it as *supaṇṇa,vaṅka,geha* [PED], as *garuḷa,saṅṭhāna,pāsāda* [CPD], and as *suvaṇṇa,vaṅga,geha* [Vinaya Texts 1:173 n1]. It is possible that the curve refers only to the roof, curved upwards perhaps at the ends, like some forms of domestic architecture in present-day India, and this is the reason for the *aḍḍha*, “half”: that in some respect the building is half and not entirely curved. At V 2:172, it is said that repairs may be made to an *aḍḍha,yoga* during a period of 7 or 8 years.

⁸ *Pāsāda*, “a long mansion” (*dīgha,pāsāda*, VA 654). *Pāsāda* often means “palace” (for kings) (eg for Bimbisāra, V 3:250). It prob refers to any large storied roofed building, esp of some durable material, eg, “Migāra’s mother’s mansion (*migāra,mātu pasāda*), SD 14.11 (1). A simpler kind of *pāsāda* is called *hammiya* [foll n].

⁹ *Hammiya*, glossed with *muṇḍa-c-chadana,pāsāda* (VA 654), “bald-roofed mansion,” which seemed to be some kind of “flat-roofed” building. See V:H 2:16 nn4-6.

¹⁰ *Guha* refers to any of 5 kinds of cave abodes (*lenāni*), allowed at V 2:146; allowed as the site for an uposatha-hall (V 1:107); as an “allowable ground” (*kappiya,bhūmi*) (V 1:239), a site for a storing allowables (food and medicine) (V 1:284; esp, a hut for storing allowables (*kappiya,kuṭi*) (4 kinds, VA 5:1098-1100; DEBMT: kappiyabhūmi). In the last 3 cases, the sites are to be agreed upon by the sangha.

¹¹ See Pār 3.4.8 (V 3:77); the 5 kinds of medicine: Nis 23 (V 3:251); also V:H 1:133. These 5 medicines may be used by sick monks: Pāc 39.3.2 (V 4:88); also V:H 2:131, 342. See SD 24.6a (2.3.1.3 (4)).

¹² *Paṃsukūlan ti rathika,susāna,saṅkāra,kūt’ādīsu yattha,katthaci paṃsunam upari thitattā abbhuggata-ṭ,thena paṃsukūlaṃ viyā ti. Paṃsukūlanam paṃsum viya kucchita,bhāvaṃ ulatī gacchatī ti.* [Wordplay on *paṃsu ulati* = *paṃsukūla*. *Ulati* = to seek, *gavesati* (Moggv); to go about, *abhicarati*, SAPT:Be 2:240,17.] *Paṃsukūlan ti evam lad-dha,nāmaṃ rathik’ādīsu patitakāni uccinitvā kata,cīvaram* (ItA 2:147,9-11). *Udāna Comy* similarly says: *saṅkāra,-kūt’ādīsu paṃsunam upari,thitattā abbhuggat’atṭhena paṃsukūlaṃ ivā ti. Atha vā paṃsu viya kucchita,bhāvaṃ ulatī, gacchatī ti paṃsukūlaṃ* (UA 1:252,27-29). Comy refers to the rags in the singular, but tr into plural.

Moggallāna's¹³ Grammar; "to walk" (*jaṅghā*, Sadd 65,1) according to Sadda,nīti;¹⁴ or "to go about (on foot) (*abhicarati*), according to the Saṃyutta Old Subcommentary of the Burmese.¹⁵ Dhammapāla also gives the etymology, *piṇḍ'atthāya ulatī ti piṇḍolo*, "one goes in quest seeking alms; hence, one is an almsman" (UA 252,17).

1.1.4.2 ALMSMEAL OF SCRAPS (*piṇḍāy'ālopa bhojana*)

Dhammapāla explains *piṇḍay'ālopa bhojanānaṃ* as a meal comprising mere scraps (*ālopa, mattaṃ ālopa, mattaṃ*), gained from wandering by the power of one's legs, from this and that house.¹⁶ Buddhaghosa gives similar explanations,¹⁷ also echoed in the Saṃyutta Old Subcommentary (*porāṇa, ṭīkā*), which explains *piṇḍa, pāto* as the scraps "dropped" (*pāta*) as morsels of almsfood, meaning the falling into the bowl of such morsels given by others ... it is such food that one gleans, one seeks, when approaching this or that family.¹⁸

1.1.4.3 A TREE-FOOT DWELLING (*rukkha, mūla senāsana*)

The phrase *rukkha, mūlaṃ senāsanaṃ* comprises 2 phrases: *rukkha, mūla*, "(literally) tree root; the foot of a tree," and *senāsana* (*sayana*, bed, + *āsana*, seat), meaning, "lodging." Hence, the whole phrase means "a tree-foot dwelling." Dhammapāla defines *rukkha, mūla* as the vicinity of some tree conducive to solitude.¹⁹

Dhammapāla, in his commentary on the *Piṇḍola Sutta* (U 4.6), helpfully notes "remote lodging means a dwelling that is free from any clashing (with others) (*pantañ ca sayan'āsanaṃ ti vivittaṃ saṅghaṭṭana, virahitaṃ senāsanaṃ*, UA 1:154,1 f). This clearly points to the habit of the forest monk in being devoted to the "higher mind" (*adhicitta ca āyogo*, id), that is, cultivating mental concentration for attaining dhyana.

1.1.4.4 FERMENTED COW-URINE AS MEDICINE (*pūti, mutta bhesajja*)

According to Dhammapāla, *pūti, mutta* refers to any kind of cow-urine; but just as even a golden-coloured body is still a putrid body, so, too, even fresh urine becomes putrid urine. Here, some say that it is cow-urine (steeped) with pieces of yellow myrobalan (*haritakī*). Others say that *pūti, mutta* is any ownerless medicine, that, on account of its fermented or putrid nature, has been discarded from a store, and so on.²⁰

¹³ Moggallāna or Moggallāyana of Anurādhapura (Sri Lanka, 12th cent). His grammar is also known as Sadda, lakhaṇa. He wrote an autocommentary called Moggallāyana Pañcīkā. See K R Norman, *Pāli Literature*, 1983b:165.

¹⁴ Sadda, nīti was written by Aggavaṃsa of Arimaddana (Burma), in 1154. On the whole it follows the Kaccāyana, but also uses Pāṇini. See Norman 1983b:164.

¹⁵ SAPT:Be 2:240,17. It is said to be compiled by one Dhammapāla. See Norman 1983b:149.

¹⁶ *Piṇḍiy'ālopo ti jaṅgha, piṇḍiyā balena caritvā ghare ghare ālopa, mattaṃ ālopa, mattaṃ katvā laddha, bhojanaṃ*, ItA 2:147,14 f; *piṇḍiy'ālopa, bhojanan ti jaṅgha, piṇḍiya, balena caritvā ālopa, mattaṃ laddhaṃ bhojanaṃ*, AA 3:43,18 f).

¹⁷ Vism 1.89/31, 2.4-7/60.

¹⁸ *Parehi dinnānaṃ piṇḍānaṃ patte nipatanan ti attho ... piṇḍapātaṃ uñchatī, taṃ taṃ kulaṃ upasaṅkamanto gavesatī ti piṇḍapātiko* (UA 1:252,21-26). Cf foll ref.

¹⁹ *Vivekānurūpaṃ yaṃ kiñci, rukkha, samīpaṃ* (ItA 2:147,16).

²⁰ *Pūti, muttan ti yaṃ kiñci go, muttaṃ. Yathā hi suvaṇṇa, vaṇṇo pi kayo pūti, kayo va, evaṃ abhinavam pi muttaṃ pūti, muttam eva. Tattha keci go, mutta, bhāvitāṃ haritakī, khaṇḍaṃ pūti, muttan ti vadanti. Pūti, bhāvena āpaṇ'ādito visaṭṭhaṃ chaḍḍitaṃ apariggahitaṃ yaṃ kiñci bhesajjaṃ pūti, muttan ti adhippetan ti apare.* (ItA 2:147,18-22). Buddhaghosa echoes Dhammapāla, but more briefly, that it is any kind of urine: *Pūti, muttan ti yaṃ kiñci muttaṃ; yathā hi suvaṇṇa, vaṇṇo pi kayo pūti, kayo ti vuccatī, evaṃ abhinavam pi muttaṃ pūti, muttam eva* (AA 3:43,20-23)

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SUTTAS

1.2.1 Reflective use

These 4 supports are to be properly used without being attached to them. Monastics are expected to use them in a reflective manner, mindful of their real purpose—that of supporting the task of practising for awakening in this life itself. To this effect, in **the Sabb’āsava Sutta** (M 2), the Buddha teaches monastics how to abandon mental fetters by way of the 4 reflections on each of the 4 supports.²¹

1.2.2 Ascetic practices

Buddhaghosa, in his *Visuddhi, magga* (the path of purity), explains the benefits of living with the 4 supports as ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*), as follows:

1.2.2.1 These are the benefits.

- (1) He practises in conformity with proper dependence (*nissaya*) on account of the words, “the going-forth that is dependent on taking scraps of almsfood” (*piṇḍiy’ālopa, bhojanam nissāya pabbajjā*, V 1:58, 96).
- (2) Secondly, he is established in the noble lineages (*ariya, varṃsa*):²² “he lives independent of others” (*apar’āyatta, vuttitā*). [1.3.1]
- (3) They are supports recommended by the Blessed One as being “**a trifle, easily obtained, blameless**” (*appāni c’eva sulabhāni ca tāni anavajjāni*) [§1].
- (4) Idleness is subdued; livelihood is purified; the practice of the minor training-rules (of the Pātimokkha) is fulfilled.
- (5) He is not maintained by another; he benefits others; conceit is abandoned; craving for tastes is prevented.
- (6) He does not contravene the training-rules regarding commensal eating (as a group), taking a meal in place of another,²³ and good conduct (in terms of the Vinaya).
- (7) He lives keeping to the fewness of wishes; he cultivates the right way; he has compassion for posterity. (Vism 2.29/67)

1.2.2.2 For, he is of such a nature:

<i>Piṇḍiy’ālopa, santuṭṭho</i>	Content with almsmeal of scraps,
<i>apar’āyatta, jīvito</i>	he lives independent of others,
<i>pahīn’āhāra, loluppo</i>	one whose greed for food has been abandoned,
<i>hoti cātu-d, diso yati</i>	he moves in the 4 quarters.
<i>Vinodayati kosajjam</i>	He drives away indolence,
<i>ājīv’assa visujjhati</i>	his livelihood is purified.

²¹ See **M 2**, 13-17/1:10 (SD 30.3); see also SD 24.6a (2.3.1.2 (2)).

²² *Dutiye ariya, varṃse patiṭṭhānam*. See **A 4.28**/2:27-29 (noble practices) [1.2.2]; D 3:224,23-225,26 ≈ MA 1:236,35 (cf Nm 2:106,26, A 3:146,1, S 2:194,1 f). Comy on the term: AA 3:44,17 f = DA (3) 1009,3 f (the noble lineages, ie, those of the buddhas, the pratyeka-buddhas and the buddha’s disciples); the 4 noble lineages, UA 335,24; pl, *cattāri āni* (in a list of teachings), Pm 1:84,20; gen sg, *catutthassa bhāvanārāmatā, saṅkhātassa āssa*, Vism 59,12; loc sg, *porāṇe aggaññe e thito*, A 2:27,28 = D 3:225,26 = Nm 1:497,22 (= *ariyānam varṃse patiṭṭhito*, NmA); *dutiye e patiṭṭhānam*, Vism 67,6; instr, pl *ehi*, A 2:28,25; Vism 2.29/67. *Ariya, varṃsa, paṭipadā* (the way taught in A 4.28); *pacaya, santosa, dīpakam am kathesi*, J 3:332,11; DhA 2:169,12; AA 1:192, 2:249,19; Vism 93,7.

²³ Nis 33 (V 4:75-78).

*tasmā hi nâtimaññeyya
bhikkhā, cariyam sumedhaso*

Therefore, one should not look down
upon the wise who lives on alms.

(Vism 2.30/67)

1.3 RELATED SUTTAS

1.3.1 Ariya, varṇsa Sutta (the noble lineage, A 4.28/2:27-29), SD 71.1

The Buddha speaks of the 4 noble lineages, which he defines in terms of **the first 3 supports**, and **the 4th lineage** as the purpose of the 3 supports, thus (summarized):

Here, a monk is content with any kind of **robe**, any kind of **almsfood**, any kind of **lodging**, and **de-lights in cultivating** (*bhāvanārama*) (the body, the mind and wisdom).

He speaks in praise of contentment with such a support.

He does not engage in a wrong quest, in what is improper, for any of these supports.

If he does not obtain any of these supports, he is not agitated.

When he does get any of these, he uses it without being attached to it, uninfatuated with it, not blindly absorbed in it, but seeing its danger, understanding the escape from it.

He neither extols himself nor disparages others because of this.

A monk who is skillful in this, diligent, fully knowing, ever mindful, is said to be standing in this ancient, primal noble lineage.²⁴

Wherever he dwells, he overcomes discontent; discontent does not overcome him. Since he has discarded all karma, he is faultless like a coin of refined gold; even the devas and Brahma, too, praise him. (For, he is an arhat.)

1.3.2 Mahā Sakul'udāyi Sutta (M 77,18-25/2:6-8), SD 49.5a

The wanderer, Sakul'udāyi, disappointed with the frivolous worldly conduct of his fellow wanderers, is impressed with the mindful conduct of the Buddha's disciples, and how respectful they are towards the Buddha. When the Buddha visits the wanderers' park where Sakul'udāyi lives with his followers, Sakul'udāyi declares his admiration for the Buddha's disciples.

When the Buddha asks Sakul'udāyi for the reasons for his admiration, the latter replies that there are 5 reasons, that is, the Buddha:

- (1) practises moderation in food;
- (2) he is contented with robes;
- (3) he is contented with almsfood;
- (4) he is contented with any lodging; and
- (5) he practises solitude and speaks in praise of it.

The first 4 points are those concerning the first 3 supports, while the 5th relates to the Buddha himself, but it is also true of the arhats.

1.3.3 Santuṭṭha Sutta (the contented, S 16.1/2:194 f), SD 69.13

The Buddha holds up the case of the elder **Mahā Kassapa** as one who is well contented (*santuṭṭha*) in the 4 supports; he speaks in praise of contentment with any kind of support. He does not go in any wrong quest, doing anything improper, for the sake of any support. If he does not gain any support, he is not troubled; when he does get a support, he uses it without being attached to it.

He is neither infatuated nor overwhelmed with it, seeing its danger, and understanding the escape. These last 2 phrases mean that we depend on these supports so long as we have a human body, but with final nirvana, there is no more need for any of them.

²⁴ Bhikkhu porāṇe aggaññe ariya, varṇse ṭhito.

A 4.1.3.7 Aṅguttaranikāya 4, Catukka Nipāta 1, Paṭhama Paṇṇāsaka 3, Uruvelā Vagga 7
It 4.1.2 (Khuddakanikāya 4) Itivuttaka 4, Catukka Nipāta 1, Brāhmaṇa Dhamma Yāga Vagga 2

The Sutta closes with the Buddha admonishing the monks to follow the example of Mahā Kassapa, living wisely with the 4 supports as Mahā Kassapa has done.

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1.3.4 Vapakāsa Sutta (on living apart, A 5.127)

SD 59.16(1.3.4)

Vapakāsa Sutta

The Discourse on Living Apart • A 5.127/3:145 f

A 5.3.3.7 Aṅguttara Nikāya 5, Pañcaka Nipāta 3, Tatiya Paṇṇāsaka 3, Gilāna Vagga 7

Theme: Monks who are still dependent, and those who are truly independent

1 Bhikshus, possessing 5 qualities, a monk is **not fit to live apart from the sangha**.²⁵

2 What are the five?

- (1) He is not content with any kind of robe;
- (2) he is not content with any kind of almsfood;
- (3) he is not content with any kind of lodging;
- (4) he is not content with any kind of medicine and support for the sick;
- (5) but dwells flooded with thoughts of sensuality.

Possessing these 5 qualities, bhikshus, a monk is *not* fit to live apart from the sangha.

3 Bhikshus, possessing 5 qualities, a monk is **fit to live apart from the sangha**.

4 What are the five?

- (1) He is content with any kind of robe;
- (2) he is content with any kind of almsfood;
- (3) he is content with any kind of lodging;
- (4) he is content with any kind of medicine and support for the sick;
- (5) and he dwells abundantly in thoughts of renunciation. *nekkhamma,saṅkappa,bahulo viharati*

Possessing these 5 qualities, bhikshus, a monk is *fit* to live apart from the sangha.

sattamaṃ

— — —

²⁵ *Pañcahi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato bhikkhu nalaṃ saṅghamhā,vapakāsituṃ*. The inf **vapakāsituṃ** is resolved as *vi* (“apart”) + *apa* (“away from, outside of”) + *kasituṃ* (prob inf of √kr, to do). Cf “He lives apart from [leaves] the teacher; he lives apart from [leaves] co-celibates (fellows in the holy life) in the position of a teacher (so *vapakassat’eva satthārā vapakassati garu-ṭ,thāniyehi sabrahmacārihihi*, A 3:393,13 f).

1.3.5 Samana,sukha Sutta (on the recluse's happiness, A 5.128)

SD 59.16(1.3.5)

Samaṇa,sukha Sutta

The Discourse on the Recluse's Happiness • A 5.128/3:146
A 5.3.3.8 Aṅguttara Nikāya 5, Pañcaka Nipāta 3, Tatiya Paṇṇāsaka 3, Gilāna Vagga 8
Theme: The 5 kinds of recluse's suffering; the 5 kinds of recluse's happiness

1 Bhikshus, there are these **5 kinds of suffering for a recluse**.

2 What are the five?

- (1) Here, a monk is not content with any kind of robe;
- (2) he is not content with any kind of almsfood;
- (3) he is not content with any kind of lodging;
- (4) he is not content with any kind of medicine and support for the sick;
- (5) and lives the holy life without satisfaction.

These, bhikshus, are the 5 kinds of suffering for a recluse.

2 Bhikshus, there are these **5 kinds of happiness for a recluse**.

4 What are the five?

- (1) Here, a monk is content with any kind of robe;
- (2) he is content with any kind of almsfood;
- (3) he is content with any kind of lodging;
- (4) he is content with any kind of medicine and support for the sick;
- (5) and lives the holy life with great joy.

abhirato ca brahma,cariyaṃ carati

3 These, bhikshus, are the 5 kinds of happiness for a recluse.

aṭṭhamam

— — —

1.3.6 The 4 noble lineages (*cattāro ariya,vaṃsa*) (D 33)

The 4 noble lineages.

(1) Here, avuso, a monk is contented with any kind of **robe**, speaks in praise of being content in any robe, and does not go in a wrong quest, in any improper way, on account of a robe.

When he does not get a robe, he is not agitated. When he gets a robe, he uses it without being attached to it, uninfatuated with it, not overwhelmed by it, seeing the danger in it, understanding the escape. [1.3.3]

Neither is he conceited about his being contented with any robe, nor does he disparage others (regarding their conduct towards robes).

Avuso, this one who is thus skilled, not lax, fully knowing, mindful, is called “**a monk who stands in the ancient, primal noble lineage**” (*bhikkhu porāṇe aggaññe ariyavaṃse ṭhito*).

(2) Furthermore, avuso, a monk is contented with any kind of **almsfood**, speaks in praise of being content in any almsfood, and does not go in a wrong quest, in any improper way, on account of almsfood.

When he does not get any almsfood, he is not agitated. When he gets almsfood, he uses it without being attached to it, uninfatuated with it, not overwhelmed by it, seeing the danger in it, understanding the escape. [1.3.3]

Neither is he conceited about his being contented with any almsfood, nor does he disparage others (regarding their conduct towards almsfood).

Avuso, this one who is thus skilled, not lax, fully knowing, mindful, is called “**a monk who stands in the ancient, primal noble lineage.**”

(3) Furthermore, avuso, a monk is contented with any kind of **lodging**, speaks in praise of being content in any lodging, and does not go in a wrong quest, in any improper way, on account of a lodging.

When he does not get a lodging, he is not agitated. When he gets a lodging, he uses it without being attached to it, uninfatuated with it, not overwhelmed by it, seeing the danger in it, understanding the escape. [1.3.3]

Neither is he conceited about his being contented with any lodging, nor does he disparage others (regarding their conduct towards lodgings).

Avuso, this one who is thus skilled, not lax, fully knowing, mindful, is called “**a monk who stands in the ancient, primal noble lineage**”

(4) Furthermore, avuso, a monk is contented with any kind of **medicine and support for the sick**, speaks in praise of being content in any medicine and support for the sick, and does not go in a wrong quest, in any improper way, on account of medicine and support for the sick.

When he does not get medicine and support for the sick, he is not agitated. When he gets medicine and support for the sick, he uses it without being attached to it, uninfatuated with it, not overwhelmed by it, seeing the danger in it, understanding the escape. [1.3.3]

Neither is he conceited about his being contented with any medicine and support for the sick, nor does he disparage others (regarding their conduct towards medicines and supports for the sick).

Avuso, this one who is thus skilled, not lax, fully knowing, mindful, is called “**a monk who stands in the ancient, primal noble lineage.**”

(D 33,1.11(9)/3:224)

2 Giving in faith [SD 22.10b (3.1)]

2.1 Small gifts of great significance

2.1.1 The spirit of giving

As Buddhism grew more popular and gained greater material support from the public, and as one Buddhist sect had to compete for scarce resources with other Buddhist and non-Buddhist sects (as is often the case today), we see each sect constructing amazing stories of faith and magic to attract the patronage of the faithful. A well-known example of such a story is that of “the incomparable giving” (*asadisa, dāna vatthu*, DhA 13.10). This is a giving that is so great and so royal that no one else is able to outdo, or dares to, except perhaps to echo it in some profitable way.²⁶

²⁶ *Asadisa, dāna Vatthu*, DhA 13.10/3:182-192 (SD 22.10b).

2.1.2 Giving with faith

2.1.2.1 Despite such pious extravagances and legendary postures, there is always some teaching that brings us down to earth again, reminding us that it is not how much we give, but how well we give. The introduction to the Vimāṇa, vatthu Commentary, for example, relates how people discussed amongst themselves whether the fruit of giving was greater by its greatness or by one's own means. In other words, is the merit of giving an elaborate offering greater than that of a simple personal one? The Buddha is recorded as giving this response:

Bhikṣus, it is not due merely to the excellence of giving that the fruit is the greater, but it is also on account of the excellence of a faithful heart and the excellence of the field (the recipient). Therefore, even *a mere handful of rice-bran, a mere rag, a mere spread of grass or leaves, or even a mere gallnut in fermented cattle urine* will, when established with bright faith in a person worthy of gifts, prove to be of greater fruit, of great brightness, of great pervasiveness.

(VvA 5)

2.1.2.2 Sakra, the king of the devas, then utters this famous verse:

<i>N'atthi citte pasannamhi,</i>	When the heart brightens with faith,
<i>appikā nāma dakkhiṇā</i>	there is no giving too small
<i>tathāgate vā sambuddhe</i>	for the Tathagata, the self-awakened one,
<i>atha vā tassa sāvake'ti.</i>	or for his disciple. (VvA 5 = J 1:228 = 3:409)

2.1.2.3 The essence of this teaching on **right giving** is this: we should give what we can out of faith in the 3 jewels, to those who are exemplary of their virtues, that is, to the disciples of the path, if not, those who diligently work towards that path. We should give with faith to the deserving. **The deserving**, of course, includes the needy, the less capable, and those who will benefit from such giving; even feeding and caring for helpless animals.²⁷

2.1.3 The extra allowances [SD 24.6a (2.3.1.3)]

As Buddhism becomes more widely known, people have a greater opportunity of hearing teachings from true practitioners, especially diligent teachers and wise renunciants. Although the goodness of giving is brightened by the faith in which it is done, it does not mean that we should not give more when we can afford it, or when the giftworthy needs such support. The wealthy and the faithful, too, need to be educated in giving wisely so that they are not feeding or working for a wrong cause, such as personality cults, that would work against the common good. [1.1.3]

— — —

²⁷ On an hierarchy of goodness in giving (the 14 kinds of *patipuggalika dakkhiṇa*), see **Dakkhiṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 142,5/3:254), SD 1.9.

SD 59.16a

Santuṭṭhi Sutta

The Discourse on the Contented

A 4.27 (≈ It 101)

The 4 supports

1 “Bhikshus, there are these 4 trifles, that are easily obtained and blameless.²⁸

What are the four?

- | | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| (1) A rag-robe, ²⁹ | bhikshus, | is a trifle; [A 2:27] it is easily obtained and blameless. |
| (2) An almsmeal of scraps, ³⁰ | bhikshus, | <i>is a trifle; it is easily obtained and blameless.</i> |
| (3) A tree-foot dwelling, ³¹ [It 103] | bhikshus, | <i>is a trifle it is easily obtained and blameless.</i> |
| (4) Fermented urine, ³² | bhikshus, | <i>is a trifle it is easily obtained and blameless.</i> |

These, bhikshus, are the 4 trifles, that are easily obtained and blameless.

2 When, bhikshus, a monk is satisfied with what is trifling and easily gained, I say that it is a certain part of his recluseship.³³

Closing verses

3 The Blessed One said this matter [meaning]³⁴; therein [of that matter] he says this:³⁵

- | | |
|--|---|
| 4 <i>anavajjena tuṭṭhassa</i> | For one satisfied with the blameless, |
| <i>appena sulabhena ca</i> | the trifling and easily obtained, |
| [³⁶] <i>senāsanañ ca ārabha</i> | regarding lodging, |
| <i>cīvaram pāna, bhojanam</i> | robes, food or drink, |
| <i>vighāto hoti cittassa</i> | whose mind is undistressed, |
| <i>disā na-p, paṭihaññanti</i> ³⁷ | one is unhindered in any quarter. ³⁸ |

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 5 <i>ye c’assa</i> ³⁹ <i>dharmā akkhātā</i> | These qualities, rightly said, |
| <i>sāmaññassānulomikā</i> | conducting to recluseship, |

²⁸ *Cattar’imāni bhikkhave appāni c’eva sulabhāni ca tāni ca anavajjāni.*

²⁹ *Paṃsukūlaṃ cīvarānaṃ.* For def, see 59.16b ad loc.

³⁰ *Piṇḍayā, lopo bhojanānaṃ.* Def similar as 59.16b ad loc.

³¹ *Rukkha, mūlaṃ senāsānaṃ.* For def, see 59.16b ad loc.

³² *Pūti, muttam bhesajjānaṃ.* For def, see 59., 16b ad loc.

³³ *Yato ca kho bhikkhave bhikkhu appena ca tuṭṭho hoti sulabhena ca idaṃ assāhaṃ aññataraṃ sāmaññaṃ ti vad-āmī ti.* Cf It 101 ad loc (SD 59.16b).

³⁴ *Attha* is polysemic: we can take “matter” as referring to the preceding, and “meaning” as given in the foll.

³⁵ *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 1st 2 noble truths; the latter is its purpose (*attha*). This line is found only in Be Ce, but omitted from Ee Se.

³⁶ A:Ee omits *na*: cf It 101, 5c ad loc.

³⁷ All MSS + Comy so, except Ee *paṭihaññanti* (pl), with *disā*: unmetrical. It is prob influenced by Sn 42, which Comy quotes: “The 4 quarters are not hostile [The 4 quarters hinder ones not], and | (one is) contented with anything whatsoever” (*cātu-d, diso appaṭigho ca hoti | santussamāno itarītarena ti*, Sn 42/7). See foll n.

³⁸ *Disā na-p, paṭihaññati*, lit, “(His) quarter is unhindered.” *Disā* here is prob a truncated instrumental, with *paṭihaññati* (sg) modifying the monk, “unhindered by any quarter”; tr here is idiomatic. Cf It 101, 5f ad loc (SD 59.16b).

³⁹ A: Ee, It: Be Ce Ee *c’assa*; Se *ye p’assa*.

*adhiggaḥitā tuṭṭhassa
appamattassa sikkhato⁴⁰ ti*

are well gained by the contented
who is heedlessly learning.

— *evaṃ* —

SD 59.16b

Sulabha Sutta

The Discourse on the Easily Obtained

It 101 (≈ A 4.27)

1 This was indeed spoken by the Blessed One, heard by me spoken by the arhat.⁴¹

The 4 supports

2 “Bhikshus, there are these 4 trifles that are easily obtained and blameless.⁴²
What are the four?

- | | | |
|--|-----------|--|
| (1) A rag-robe, ⁴³ | bhikshus, | is a trifle; [A 2:27] it is easily obtained and blameless. |
| (2) An almsmeal of scraps, ⁴⁴ | bhikshus, | is a trifle; it is easily obtained and blameless. |
| (3) A tree-foot dwelling, ⁴⁵ [It 103] | bhikshus, | is a trifle it is easily obtained and blameless. |
| (4) Fermented urine, ⁴⁶ | bhikshus, | is a trifle it is easily obtained and blameless. |

These, bhikshus, are the 4 trifles that are easily obtained and blameless.

3 When, bhikshus, a monk is satisfied with what is trifling and easily gained, I say that it is one or other limb of his recluseship.⁴⁷

Closing verses

4 *anavajjena tuṭṭhassa
appena sulabhena ca
na⁴⁸ senāsanam-ārabbhā
cīvaram pāna, bhojanam
vighāto hoti cittassa
disā na-p, paṭihaññati⁴⁹*

For one satisfied with the blameless,
the trifling and easily obtained,
regarding lodging,
robes, food or drink,
whose mind is undistressed,
one is unhindered in any quarter.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ It: Be *sikkhato*, “one in training”; A: Ee, It: Ce Ee Se *bhikkhuno*. Cf It 4.101,6d ad loc (SD 59.16b).

⁴¹ *Vuttaṃ h’etaṃ bhagavata, vuttam arahatā’ti me sutam*. This is said to be spoken by the laywoman **Khujj’utta-rā**: see SD 57.2 (1.2.2.3); SD 16.14 (1).

⁴² *Cattar’imāni bhikkhave appāni c’eva sulabhāni ca tāni ca anavajjāni*.

⁴³ *Paṃsukūlaṃ cīvarānaṃ*. For comys: [1.1.4.1].

⁴⁴ *Piṇḍayā, lopo bhojanānaṃ*. For comys: [1.1.4.2].

⁴⁵ *Rukkha, mūlaṃ senāsanānaṃ*. For comys: [1.1.4.3].

⁴⁶ *Pūti, muttam bhesajjānaṃ*. For comys: [1.1.4.4].

⁴⁷ *Yato kho bhikkhave bhikkhu appena ca tuṭṭho hoti sulabhena ca imassāhaṃ aññatarāṃ sāmāññ’āṅgan ti vad-āmī ti*. Cf A 4.27,3 ad loc (SD 59.16a).

⁴⁸ *Na* to be read with *vighāto* in line e: so Comy, ItA 1:148,11. Only A:Ee omits *na*, reading *senasanañ ca ...*.

A 4.1.3.7 Aṅguttaranikāya 4, Catukka Nipāta 1, Paṭhama Paṇṇāsaka 3, Uruvelā Vagga 7
It 4.1.2 (Khuddakanikāya 4) Itivuttaka 4, Catukka Nipāta 1, Brāhmaṇa Dhamma Yāga Vagga 2

- 5 *ye c'assa⁵¹ dhammā akkhātā* These qualities, rightly said,
 sāmaññassānulomikā conducting to recluseship,
 adhiggahītā tuṭṭhassa are well gained by the contented
 appamattassa bhikkhuno⁵² ti monk who is heedful.

— duka —

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⁴⁹ All MSS + Comy so, except Ee *paṭihaññanti* (pl) with *disā*, unmetrical. Preferably read as *paṭihaññati* (*bhikkhu*). Comy quotes Sn 42: “The 4 quarters are not hostile [The 4 quarters hinder ones not], and (one is) contented with anything whatsoever” (*cātu-d,diso appaṭigho ca hoti | santussamāno itarītarena ti*, Sn 42/7).

⁵⁰ *Disā na-p,paṭihaññati*, lit, “(His) quarter is unhindered.” *Disā* here is prob a truncated instrumental, with *paṭihaññati* (sg) modifying the monk, “unhindered by any quarter”; tr here is idiomatic.

⁵¹ A: Ee, It: Be Ce Ee *c'assa*; Se *ye p'assa*.

⁵² It: Be *sikkhato*, “one in training”; A: Ee, It: Ce Ee Se *bhikkhuno*. Cf A 4.27,5 ad loc (SD 59.16a).