

# 9

## The Abhisanda Suttas

The Discourses on the Overflowing

Translated & annotated by Piya Tan ©2010, 2021

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**S 5.11.4.1** Saṃyutta 5, Mahāvagga 11, Sotāpatti Saṃyutta 4, Puññābhisanda Vagga 1  
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## 1 Introduction to the Abhisanda Collection

### 1.1 SUMMARIES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ABHISANDA SUTTAS

#### 1.1.1 The Abhisanda Collection: Summaries

Very simply, the 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection can be summarized as follows [2.0.2.1]:

Suttas 3-8 + 10 (7x)	the 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself	SD 59.9 a b c d e f h
Suttas 9 + 11 (2x)	respectively, the 4 and 5 joys of the awakened renunciant	SD 59.9 g i
Sutta 12 (1x)	the joy of the 3 jewels and the 5 gifts	SD 59.9 j

The names of these 10 suttas and their respective themes of **joy** are as follows [9.0]:

[3] (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1 (S 55.31) [SD 56.9a]	} the 4 joys of the streamwinner
[4] (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2 (S 55.32) [SD 56.9b]	
[5] (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 3 (S 55.33) [SD 56.9c]	
[6] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1* (S 55.41) [SD 56.9d]	
[7] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2* (S 55.42) [SD 56.9e]	
[8] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3 (S 55.43) [SD 56.9f]	
[10] <sup>1</sup> (Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2 (A 4.52) [SD 56.9h]	
[9] (Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1* (A 4.51) [SD 56.9g]	the 4 joys of the renunciant and giving
[11] (Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta* (A 5.45) [SD 56.9i]	the 5 joys of the renunciant and giving
[12] (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta (A 8.39) [SD 56.9j]	the joy of the 3 jewels and the 5 gifts

The asterisk (\*) following a sutta above means that it *includes* the joy of giving by the lay practitioner, as affirmed both in the closing passages (especially the closing verses) [6, 7, 9, 11].

#### 1.1.2 Significance of the Suttas

**1.1.2.1** We can see that *most* (three-quarters) of the suttas in the Collection deal with happiness in this life itself from the highest attainment to our own Dharma practice [1.1.1]. *Two* of the suttas deal with the simple joys of the foremost of monastic renunciants, that is, the arhat. The *last*—indeed, the most beautiful of them—speaks of the joy of the 3 jewels (the Buddha, the Dharma and the sangha of noble disciples), and the joy of the 5 kinds of giving, that is, keeping the 5 precepts.

**The joy of the 3 jewels** is most often (in the first 7 suttas) *implicitly* referred to as the 1<sup>st</sup> 3 of **the 4 limbs of the streamwinner** [2.2.1.2] the “refuges” (*saraṇa*), and *explicitly* mentioned in the 10<sup>th</sup> and last sutta (A 8.39) [12]. It is a great joy to know that we *can* be and still *are* guided by the one and only true teacher of gods and humans, the Buddha himself, his teaching that is the path to awakening, and the 4 kinds of noble saints to emulate. In terms of the path training, the Buddha represents the wisdom training, the Dharma the concentration training, and the noble sangha the moral virtue training. [12.2]

**1.1.2.2 The joy of keeping the 5 precepts**—abstaining from destroying life, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech and intoxication—constitutes the foundation for the path practice as an expression of our **compassion** for the world. In other words, neither the refuge-going nor the precept-keeping are

<sup>1</sup> The sutta sequence for [9-10] are reversed here on account of their respective themes.

Buddhist “rituals or vows” (*sīla-b,bata*) but acts of wisdom and compassion as an integral part of our journey towards the path of awakening.

Hence, when we keep the 5 precepts, we are *giving* others “fearlessness, non-hatred, non-affliction” (*abhayaṃ deti averaṃ deti avyapajjhaṃ deti*), which is the spirit of **right intention** (those of renunciation, non-ill will and non-violence) inspiring all our actions and speech (moral virtue). In doing so, declares **the (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta**, we, in turn, “enjoy boundless freedom from fear, from hatred, from affliction” [A 8.39,2(14) etc]. [12.3]

## 1.2 Significance of *abhisanda*

**1.2.1 *Abhisanda*** is the keyword of the 10 Suttas [1.1.1.1] that describes the great abundance of goodness in our lives as Dharma-spirited Buddhists. The Pali dictionaries define ***abhi-sanda*** (m) (BHS *abhi-syanda*, Mvst 2:276; √SYAND or √SYAD, to move on) [1.1.3.2] as: “**flood, overflow; flow, increase; issue, yield, result.**” Notice that the register of definitions is grouped into 3 sets, each separated by a semi-colon: [1.2.2].

### 1.2.2 *Puñña, kusala, sukha*

**1.2.2.1** The 1<sup>st</sup> definition—“**flood, overflow**” [1.2.1]—refers to the **abundance** of water, here used figuratively in a positive sense, referring to “having done good in the past” (*pubbe ca kata,puññatā*),<sup>2</sup> which now presents itself in plenty so that we have the best, even ideal, conditions for practising the Dharma. They are the fruits of our past good karma (one of the senses of *abhisanda*).

Historically, ***puñña*** reminds us of the old pre-Buddhist idea of “merits,” that is, blessings we purportedly get from “right action” (Skt *karma*), the proper observance of rules, rituals and vows, especially performing the “right” kinds of religious rituals through the “right” kind of specialists, namely, the brahmins. In short, this is **priestcraft** or Brahminism (especially in the Buddha’s time).<sup>3</sup>

By way of natural adaptation,<sup>4</sup> the Buddha has adopted the term *puñña*, freed it from its “attachment to ritual and vows” (*sīla-b,bata,parāmāsa*), and adapted it as **the natural goodness** that arises from our own intentions of non-greed, non-hate, non-delusion. **Evil** (*pāpā*), then, is neither wrong ritual action nor “wrong” acts against those “born pure” in an elitist caste system, but any act rooted in the unwholesome roots of greed, hate, delusion.<sup>5</sup>

In other words, *puñña*, “(the) good,” is here synonymous with *kusala*, “the wholesome.” It reminds us of our dark past, the karmic mud from which the lotus of spiritual growth rises through the samsaric waters into the light and space of awakening. Hence, declares the Buddha:

Fear not merit(s), bhikshus! It is, bhikshus, another name for happiness, which is pleasing, dearly loved, and delightful, that is to say, merits.<sup>6</sup> (It 3.2/14 f; cf Dh 116)

It is not to be feared because it is our past good karma.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> **Maṅgala S** (Khp 5 = Sn 2.5), SD 67.

<sup>3</sup> Ironically, in our own times, these “brahminical” rituals, predominates most of Buddhism, esp ethnic Buddhism, where the monk has devolved into the roles of professional priest and superstitious magician, performing rites and rituals, and paid for in cash and goods. In doing so, the laity have forsaken their spiritual freedom of self-reliance to become devotees and clients of the ethnic priests and chief high priests.

<sup>4</sup> On natural adaptation, see SD 1.8 (1.5+1.6); SD 39.3 (3.3.4).

<sup>5</sup> On the 3 unwholesome roots (*akusala mūla*), see **Mūla S** (A 3.69), SD 18.2; SD 4.14 (1.5); SD 50.20 (3.1.3).

<sup>6</sup> *Mā bhikkhave puññānaṃ bhāyitṭha, sukhaṃ etaṃ bhikkhave adhivacanāṃ itthassa kantassa piyassa manāpasā, yad idaṃ puññāni.*

**1.2.2.2** The 2<sup>nd</sup> definition of *abhisanda*—“**flow, increase**” [1.2.1]—refers to our present wholesome conditions, characterized by “**an overflowing of wholesome (karma)**” (*kusalâbhisanda*). This is our dedication to the 3 jewels, diligence in making the 5 gifts of moral virtue—as stated in **the (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta** (A 8.39), SD 59.9j—as the foundation for our cultivation of the path to awakening. In immediate practical terms, we work to accomplish “wisdom directed to the rising and falling (of phenomena)” (*uday’attha,gaminiyā paññāya samannāgato*), as stated in **the (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3** (S 55.43), SD 59.9f. This is what is **wholesome** (*kusala*) in our lives even now.

This present “overflowing of the wholesome” for us is in the presence of the true teachings of the Buddha. In **the suttas**, we can still examine and experience the nature of awakening of the Buddha and the early arhats. These are not grand but empty theological statements of religious philosophy and casuistry, of superstitions, rituals and vows. These suttas are well preserved records of the Buddha’s life and experiences that will guide us in our daily lives, bringing us to the path in this life itself.

This wholesome karma will free us from being stuck in religion (from fear or for power), mere study (for status), blind faith (in a guru), routine chanting (reinforcing self-views), frivolous rituals (seeking answers outside) and the rut of superstition. The positive operative word here is “**movement**” [note the root √SYAND, 1.2.1], that is, our actions and aspirations *bring* us to the path in this life itself. The Buddha assures us of awakening to the path here and now.<sup>8</sup> In the meantime, we happily *move* in the Dharma of moral virtue, concentration and wisdom.<sup>9</sup>

**1.2.2.3** The 3<sup>rd</sup> definition—“**issue, yield, result**”—is “the food for happiness” in the phrase “overflowing abundance of merits, the wholesome, the food for happiness” (*puññâbhisandā kusalâbhisandā sukhas’āhārā*) [1.2.1]. In this positive sense of abundance, it is found suffixed (*in fini compositi*) as *kammâbhisanda*, “a fruition of (good) karma” (Miln 276,30).

The word **āhāra**, “food,”<sup>10</sup> simply means “that which feeds,” that is, continuing good karma. This continues to nourish our present happiness. In simple terms, we feel **joy** in “the truth that is the Dharma” (*dhamma,veda*), understanding its meaning, and understanding its purpose (*attha,veda*).<sup>11</sup> This is our constant and direct experience of the truth and beauty of the Dharma.<sup>12</sup>

**Sukha** (in *sukhas’āhārā*) has a broad sense of happiness, past, present and future, both worldly and spiritual. In other words, on account of the past *puñña* and present *kusala*, we live happily despite any challenges, and our Dharma-spirited lives continue *to overflow with merits* that will bring future happiness by way of spiritual awakening. This 3<sup>rd</sup> phrase, *sukhas’āhārā*, thus embodies both the 2 previous qualities, but are only functional and meaningful working along with them.

<sup>7</sup> On *puñña*, see SD 18.7 (6.3).

<sup>8</sup> See **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S25.1), SD 16.7, or any of the other 9 suttas of **Okkanta Saṃyutta** (S 25).

<sup>9</sup> On *kusala*, see SD 18.7 (6.2).

<sup>10</sup> For *āhāra* as tt, as the 4 kinds of food, see SD 20.6 (2).

<sup>11</sup> See **(Agata,phala) Mahā-nāma S** (A 6.10,2.3) + SD 15.3 (4); SD 10.16 (3.4.3.2); SD 16.7 (2).

<sup>12</sup> On “truth and beauty” of the Dharma, see SD 40a.1 (8.1.2); SD 50.16 (1.1.1.18). See DEB: beauty and truth.

## 2 The sutta themes

### 2.0 The *abhisanda* stock phrases

#### 2.0.1 The sutta refrains

**2.0.1.1 The common theme** in all the 10 suttas in the Abhisanda Collection is that of “overflowing (abundance)” (*abhisanda*) [1.2]. Interestingly, the first 6 suttas—S 55.31+32+33, S 55.41+42+43—all from **the Sotāpatti Saṃyutta** (S 55), have the same short stock passage that runs thus:

“... these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing with the wholesome, food for happiness”  
(*cattāro’me ... puññābhisandā kusalābhisandā sukhaśāhāra*)

This stock passage—we shall call it **the “main (or short) *abhisanda* phrase**—has 3 short phrases or compounds, the first 2 of which are formed around the keyword *abhisanda* (“overflowing”),<sup>13</sup> except for the 3<sup>rd</sup> phrase, thus:

“overflowing streams of merits”	<i>puññābhisanda</i>
“overflowing with the wholesome”	<i>kusalābhisanda</i>
“food for happiness”	<i>sukhaśāhāra</i>

**2.0.1.2** The short *abhisanda* phrase is found in all the 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1]. The word *abhisanda*, however, is used in one of 2 ways in each of the 10 Suttas, thus:

			<b>SD 59.9</b>
<i>abhisanda</i>	“overflowing”	S 55.41 + 42 + 43, A 8.39	a b c j
<i>puññābhisanda</i>	“overflowing with merits”	S 55.31 + 32 + 33, A 4.51 + 52, 5.45	d e f g h i

We can see here that while 4 of the suttas [SD 59.9abcj] have each only **the short *abhisanda* phrase**, 6 of them [SD 59.9defghi] have each **the long *puññābhisanda* phrase**, as their sutta refrains. The latter phrase runs thus:

(1) <i>puññābhisanda kusalābhisanda sukhaśāhāra</i>	“overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness
(2) <i>sovaggikā sukha, vipākā</i>	heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven
<i>sagga, saṃvattanikā iṭṭhāya kantāya</i>	conducing to what is wished for, what is desired,
<i>manāpāya hitāya sukhāya saṃvattanti</i>	what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness”

#### 2.0.2 The sutta themes

**2.0.2.1** Both **the short *abhisanda* phrase** (line 1) and **the long *abhisanda* phrase** (lines 1+2) apply to the following themes in terms of attainment and practice:

(1) The joy of arhathood	A 4.51 5.45	SD 59.9 g i
(2) The joy of the streamwinner	S 55.31 + 32 + 33 + 41 + 42 + 43, A 4.52	SD 59.9 a b c d e f h
(3) The joy of lay practice	A 8.29	SD 59.9 j

<sup>13</sup> Technically, these are bahuvrihis (relative compounds) (P *bahubbīhi*): SD 18.8 (2.1).

- (1) **The joy of arhathood** is described in 2 suttas: **the (Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 1** (A 4.51) [9] and **the (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45) [11], highlighting the simple but profound joys of an awakened renunciant, the arhat [2.1].
- (2) **The joy of the streamwinner** is the theme of most of the suttas in the Collection: **the (Sotāpatti) Puññâbhisanda Suttas 1-3** (S 55.31-33) [1-3], **the (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1-3** (S 55.41-43) [6-8] and **the (Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 2** (A 4.52) [10]. The suttas list various qualities of the streamwinner [2.2].
- (3) **The joy of lay practice** is the theme of the last sutta in the Collection and is the most inspiring of them in terms of lay practice: **the (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta** (A 8.39) [12]. The sutta presents the 3 refuges and the 5 precepts as the proactive joy of the lay practitioner [2.3].

**2.0.2.2 The sequence of the suttas** is worth noting:

Suttas 3-8 + 10	(7x) the 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself	SD 59.9 a b c d e f h
Suttas 9 + 11	(2x) respectively, the 4 and 5 joys of the awakened renunciant	SD 59.9 g i
Sutta 12	(1x) the joy of the 3 jewels and the 5 gifts	SD 59.9 j

The first 6 suttas and the 3<sup>rd</sup> last one [1.1.1]—a total of 7 suttas—deal with **streamwinning**, clearly highlighting its importance [2.2]. Two of the suttas describe the profound joy of the simple life of an arhat [2.1]. Significantly, the last of the 10 suttas in the Collection describes the lay disciple who has gone for refuge and keeps to the 5 precepts: this hints at how we begin to progress to attain streamwinning, and even arhathood itself. [2.3]. We will now look into each of these 3 categories in some detail.

## 2.1 THE JOY OF THE AWAKENED RENUNCIANT [9, 11]

### 2.1.1 The arhat as a true renunciant

**2.1.1.1** Two suttas in the Abhisanda Collection describe the arhat and how his conduct benefits the laity who supports him: **the (Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 1** (A 4.51) [9] and **the (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45) [11]. Both suttas mention the same 2 reasons for the arhat as the source of boundless merits that is immeasurable as the waters of the oceans [A 4.51,3 = A 5.45,8], or as the waters of India's 5 great rivers. [S 55.42,9 n]

The 1<sup>st</sup> reason is that the arhat attained freedom through deep meditation called the “boundless concentration of mind,” just as the Buddha did when he awakened [2.2.1.2]. Secondly, the arhat lives a very simple and contented life with the basic supports, which allows him to continue to live out his life, by which we benefit by his personal example and as a field of merit to the world.<sup>14</sup> [2.1.2]

**2.1.1.2** Both suttas speak of the arhat as **an arhat** accomplished in the “boundless concentration of mind” (*appamāṇa ceto, samādhi*). This is, in fact, the same kind of fruition (*sama, phala*) attained by the Bodhisattva's samadhi leading to the great awakening, as stated by Dhammapāla, in his Udāna Commentary on **the Cunda Sutta** (U 8.5).<sup>15</sup> In other words, the arhat's awakening is the same as that of the Buddha's, as declared in **the Sambuddha Sutta** (S 22.58).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> On the arhat as “a field of merit for the world” (*puñña-k, khettaṃ lokassa*), see **Aṭṭha Puggala S 1** (A 8.59,3) + SD 15.10a (4)(98) + (5); SD 15.10a (5.3).

<sup>15</sup> UA 405,25-406,3. Further on “fruition” (*phala*), in this connection, see SD 15.10a (1.0.4).

<sup>16</sup> S 22.58/3:65 f (SD 49.10).

## 2.1.2 The arhat as a source of boundless merits

**2.1.2.1** Both the suttas [2.1.1.1] speak of the arhat as an arhat accomplished in the “boundless concentration of mind.” According to the former sutta (A 4.51), such an arhat continues living and practising with the help of the 4 supports: robes, almsfood, lodging and medicines and provisions for the sick, so that the provider of these gain “overflowing streams of merits” and so on [2.0.1.2].

**2.1.2.2** According to **the (Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45), the arhat uses the 4 supports in addition to “a bed and chair” (*mañca, pīṭha*): we may call this the “5 supports.” The arhat, accomplished in meditation, uses these supports with contentment, and the provider of these supports gains merits beyond measure like the waters of the oceans. [2.1.1.1]

## **2.2 THE JOY OF THE STREAMWINNER [3-8, 10]**

### 2.2.1 Predominant theme: The 4 limbs of the streamwinner

**2.2.1.1** Seven out of the 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection, as already noted [1.1.1], centre on **streamwinning**, evincing it as the key theme of the Collection. This is, in fact, the predominant theme in the Collection. None of the 7 suttas specifically mentions streamwinning, but the sutta context is clear. It’s like mentioning the Buddha, the Dharma and the sangha: even without mentioning it, they clearly constitute the “3 jewels” (*ti, saraṇa*).

**2.2.1.2** The 4 qualities that each of these 7 suttas describe are those that define **streamwinning**: they are the 4 limbs of the streamwinner (*catu sotāpanassa aṅga*). The best known of these **4 limbs** are those of *wise faith in the 3 jewels, and moral virtues beloved by the noble ones* [2.2.2], mentioned in 3 of the 7 suttas. Four of the suttas give an alternative 4<sup>th</sup> limb: 2 of them have it as “**wisdom** directed to the rising and falling away (of phenomena),”<sup>17</sup> and 2 have it as **charity**, that is, “a noble dwells at home with **a heart free from the stain of stinginess**, devoted to charity, open-handed, delighting in giving, devoted to alms-giving, delighting to have a share in giving.”<sup>18</sup> [2.2.3]

### 2.2.2 The streamwinner’s limbs and the spiritual faculties

**2.2.2.1** In terms of the spiritual faculties (*indriya*), it should be said that streamwinning (and once-returning) may be attained with a wholesome cultivation of the faculties of wise **faith** and insight **wisdom**, properly balanced, guided by **mindfulness**. Here, the limbs of charity and moral virtue are both rooted in the faith faculty. In other words, such a faith inspires us to practise charity and cultivate moral virtue; and, conversely, wisdom directs these efforts to strengthen our faith in truth and goodness.

Out of wise faith, we cultivate wholesome charity and compassionately keep the precepts as our practice of **renunciation** (*nekkhamma*) to abandon the fetters of *self-identity view, doubt and attachment to rituals and vows* to attain streamwinning in this life itself.<sup>19</sup> We are once again reminded how the various aspects of Dharma work together as one: it is, after all, the same Buddha Dharma. We only talk about it in different ways. Ultimately, all this is only for the purpose of reaching streamwinning in this life itself.

<sup>17</sup> *Uday’attha, gaminiyā paññāya samannāgato.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ariya, sāvako ... vigata, mala, maccherena cetasā agāraṃ ajjhāvasati mutta, cāgo payata, pāṇī vossagga, rato yāca, yogo dāna, saṃvibhāga, rato.*

<sup>19</sup> On breaking the 3 fetters, see **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8.

Here's a table summarizing how we cultivate the mind using our **spiritual faculties** or strengthening them to break the first 3 fetters (to begin with):

<b>mental fetters</b>	<b>spiritual faculties</b>	<b>limbs to cultivate</b>	
(1) self-identity view	wisdom	wisdom	[2.2.4]
(2) doubt	faith	charity	[2.2.5]
(3) attachment to rituals and vows	mindfulness	moral virtue	[2.2.6]

Although these dharmas are given different names, they only refer to a certain quality that predominates in us right now and needs to be addressed. Basically, we need **wisdom** in order to understand how all this works. The wisdom that specifically works to see and break *self-identity view* is that "directed to the rising and falling (of phenomena)" [S 55.33,6]. This very same wisdom builds itself to strengthen the other faculties, too. **Faith**, to be wise, must be tempered with wisdom. Wise faith expresses itself as the limb of charity, we act with the faith that there is goodness in others so that we can inspire them to see it and grow with it.

Wisdom further grows and guides our **mindfulness**, focusing it, directing it rightly, seeing wisely, learning wholesomely. With such a vision, we understand how we are responsible for our own actions: the deeds of our body (the first 3 precepts) and of speech (the 4<sup>th</sup> precept). We now better understand how moral virtue is our gift of *fearlessness, hatelessness, non-conflict* (safety, love, comfort) to others. In other words, none of these dharmas work by itself but interact holistically to empower us to see and remove the fetters.

**2.2.2.2** To progress higher up the path to attain non-returning, even arhathood, we need to exert **effort** and cultivate **samadhi**. Mindfulness is always in the background moderating such efforts so that we awaken further. At this level of the path, we need deep meditation to overcome the fetters of sense-experiences ("the world"), so that the mind frees itself from covetousness and displeasure (*abhijjhā, do-manassa*) to gain dhyana, from which we cultivate the super mindfulness to free the mind and attain nirvana.

### **2.2.3 The 4 limbs of the streamwinner and the 3 fetters**

**2.2.3.1** Since there is practically no explanation in the ancient texts for the specific purposes of the variations in the 4<sup>th</sup> limb, let me attempt to do so from mostly the internal evidence of the 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection.

Why do the first 7 suttas of the Abhisandha Collection give **the 4 limbs of a streamwinner** with 3 variations in the 4<sup>th</sup> limb [Table 2.2.3]? In summary, we have the following distributions of the 4 limbs of the streamwinner amongst the 7 suttas, thus:

(1) S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), A 4.5 (SD 59.9h)	faith in the 3 jewels + moral virtue
(2) S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e)	faith in the 3 jewels + charity
(3) S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f)	faith in the 3 jewels + wisdom

The 4 limbs of the streamwinner → SD 59.9:	wise faith in			4 moral virtue	4 charity	4 wisdom
	1 Buddha	2 Dharma	3 sangha			
a (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda S 1 • S 55.31	all the 7 suttas			a		
b (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda S 2 • S 55.32					b	
c (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda S 3 • S 55.33						c
d (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1 • S 55.41				d		
e (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2 • S 55.42					e	
f (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3 • S 55.43						f
g (Catukka) Puññābhisanda S • A 4.5				g		

**Table 2.2. The 4 limbs of a streamwinner**

Technically, we may call these **3 variations** in the 4 limbs of the streamwinner as follows:

- (1) the limbs of the streamwinner with moral virtues as the 4<sup>th</sup> \**sīla(ni), catukka sotāpanassa āṅga*  
 (2) the limbs of the streamwinner with charity as the 4<sup>th</sup> \**cāga, catukka sotāpanassa āṅga*  
 (3) the limbs of the streamwinner with wisdom as the 4<sup>th</sup> \**paññā, catukka sotāpanassa āṅga*

Since these are **neologisms**, without any occurrences of these names in the suttas or Commentaries, we have prefixed an asterisk (\*) to their respective names.

**2.2.3.2** Once again, we should remind ourself that the variations in the 4<sup>th</sup> and last of the **4 limbs of the streamwinner** [2.2.3.1] have to do with the predominant fetter (*saṃyojana*) to be broken and the spiritual faculty (*indriya*) that should be cultivated for the purpose. Briefly, we can summarize these technicalities in the following table: [2.2.2.1]

<b>fetter to be broken</b>		<b>faculty that must be developed</b>	
(1) self-identity view	( <i>sakkāya, diṭṭhi</i> )	wisdom	( <i>paññ'indriya</i> ) [2.2.4]
(2) doubt	( <i>vicikicchā</i> )	faith	( <i>saddh'indriya</i> ) [2.2.5]
(3) attachment to rituals and vows	( <i>sīla-b, bata parāmāsa</i> )	mindfulness	( <i>sat'indriya</i> ) [2.2.6]

**Table 2.2.3. The 3 fetters and the faculties**

With this understanding in mind, let us now get to know **the first 3 fetters** better. In this way, we bring our enemies into the light of wisdom so that we know them better. That way, we will be well ready and willing to convert them into positive allies who bring us to the path of awakening.

### **2.2.4 Self-identity view (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*)**

**2.2.4.1** The 1<sup>st</sup> fetter preventing our attaining streamwinning is our clinging to a **self-identity view** (*sakkāya, diṭṭhi*). We are then fettered to the view that our body/mind—this “conscious body” (*sa, viññāṇaka, kaya*)<sup>20</sup> of the 5 aggregates<sup>21</sup>—or any of it, is our “self.”<sup>22</sup> On account of this, we tend to be dogma-

<sup>20</sup> On *sa, viññāṇaka, kaya*. See SD 17.8a (12.3); SD 56.1 (4.3.2.2).

<sup>21</sup> On the 5 aggregates (*pañca-k, khandha*). See SD 17, esp 17.1a.

tic in our views and ways, socially narcissistic, and habitually self-centred. On account of our diligence and opportunities, we are likely to enjoy great wealth and success. Yet, this is no antidote to a profound sense of spiritual lack and emotional disappointment that dog us. When we project such a self, we constantly need others, the crowd, to approve of it.

On the other hand, we may be drawn to cling to some idea of an inner essence or higher power, by which we, by rationalizing, see as the cause for whatever that happens to us: then we piously but vainly declare: “Things happen for a reason.” Or, we feel a profound sense of entitlement as a cultish teacher or a tribal leader who should be benefitting from our God-given or karma-blessed gifts. Hence, such a self-view can range from a guru-complex to a God-complex. It tightly leashes us to an **asura** mentality of seeing others merely in terms of how useful or meaningful they are or should be to us.<sup>23</sup>

Under the wrong (or right) conditions, our self-centredness and self-righteousness transmogrify into habitual hellish **violence**. Seeing oneself as an authority unto oneself, answerable only to God, that others are only as what we have projected onto them (our desire, dread and delusion), we feel justified in depriving them of freedom or happiness (we decide their karma), to the extent of harming, punishing, maiming, even killing and decimating them.

Clearly, it is better for us to act now to turn ourselves away from such a tendency before we are compelled to fall headlong into the rut of a hellish misanthrope. We start by seeing self-identity view for what it is, and work the Dharma to dispel this insidious phantom we have been creating for ourselves. Since it is all in our own mind, only we can free ourselves from it all.

**2.2.4.2** We may here turn to **the (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3** (S 55.43) to direct our efforts to the understanding and overcoming of self-identity view and its related symptoms with “wisdom directed to the rising and falling (of phenomena)” (*uday’attha, gaminiyā paññāya samannāgato*) [SD 59.9f]. This effort is further strengthened by opening ourselves up to embrace the 3 jewels—the Buddha, his teaching of true reality, and the examples of the noble disciples—to empower us in seeing the *impermanent* nature of all things, especially our own personality and views: that we *have* changed, we *are* changing, and *will* continue to change. With insight wisdom, such changes become our spiritual evolution towards the path.

### **2.2.5 Doubt (vicikicchā)**

**2.2.5.1** Like a person drowned in self-identity view, the one with **doubt** (*vicikicchā*) is the victim of his own views, too. In the case of the latter, he is likely to have numerous views, or is easily moved and shaken by them. As a result, he is unable to hold on to any idea, no matter how wholesome, for long. His attention span is likely to be short, he is easily distracted, and lacks self-confidence. He may either know so little that any idea may sound as convincing as the next, or that he knows so much that he wonders if they are of any use, lost in a clamouring crowd of **brutish** cacophony, none of which makes any sense.

He is the proverbial deer caught blind before the oncoming, ongoing headlights of the heavy traffic of teachers and teachings: a clueless brute who knows not that he knows not. Hence, he moves habitually on in circles searching for greener pastures, new watering holes. He is a serpent, the uroboros,<sup>24</sup> in perpetual pain and feverish fear devouring its own tail, wondering why he is suffering.

**2.2.5.2** When we are infected with narcissism of an asura, we are often prone to **brutish** violence. Exploitation of others often goes with the hard hand of violence, even when gloved in velvet. This habit-

<sup>22</sup> On self-identity view, see SD 40a.8 (3); SD 40a.12 (3.2.4); SD 56.1 (4.4.1.1).

<sup>23</sup> On the asura complex, see SD 39.2 (1.3); SD 40a.1 (11.2.2).

<sup>24</sup> On the uroboros, see SD 23.3 (1); SD 49.2 (4.3.2.3).

ual violence is deeply rooted in **ignorance**, so that we simply doubt any goodness in self or in others, whom we perceive to be personally and socially weaker, less “entitled,” than we are. This purblind vision, happily, can still recognize darkly the goodness of the Buddha Dharma, especially of those with wise faith.

The truth of the Buddha being fully self-awakened and free from suffering is clearly appealing to any intelligent being, even those incarnated as asuras and narcissists. When we, in our asura form, notice how others fear and loathe us, we cannot but admire the radiant personality of the Buddha, with his wisdom and compassion. Hence, we are drawn to the light of Buddha Dharma. For this reason, to help such beings, we need to see and shine the Buddha’s light, or at least be familiar with the suttas.

When we ourselves see the truth and beauty of the Buddha Dharma, our **faith** is more likely to warmly touch and uplift these hapless beings so that they grow to seek the path and follow it. This liberating vision becomes clearer and realer, inspired by the lives of the arhats who have awakened just like the Buddha [2.2.1.2]. This is, in fact, our **spiritual friendship** that reaches out to others to see their own goodness, with which they are then able to rejoice in the goodness of others. This is how we break the fetter of doubt that holds us back from the path of awakening.

### **2.2.6 Attachment to rituals and vows (sīla-b, bata parāmāsa)**

**2.2.6.1** We may neither be exploitative of others, nor violent to them, but being unawakened, we still grope around in blind animal ignorance. Unable to see any capability for goodness within ourselves, we are driven to seek succour outside of ourselves, in others, in things, even in nature. We run after pleasure, seeing pleasure in looks and bodies; we run after power, seeing power in the crowd and crowd-pullers; we see holiness in the inexplicable and miraculous. We believe in prayer without a heart and without having to work for it. In short, we are superstitious. The sutta term for this is **attachment to rituals and vows**.

We are **the pretas**, the ever-hungry ghosts lurking in society’s undergrowth and the wilderness we have created for ourselves. We see everything, people and things, states and situations, as being measurable and consumable. We delude ourselves thinking that to have is to be: we are driven to appropriate whatever we see as desirable, but we lack the capacity to enjoy any of them. Hence, we are caught in an endless loop of wanting, seeking, having, clinging, losing.

As pretas, we exist by the idea that we are what we have. The more we have, the more we vaguely feel better, which only drives us to seek more, to have more, to cling to more. Since we are unable to really enjoy anything to which we cling (by the very reason of the clinging), we have lost what we thought we had. When we lose what we have, we feel we are left with nothing. Hence, we are always spurred on with seeking, having, clinging; yet, each time we get something, we are left feeling that we really have nothing at all. It is as if we only enjoy the seeking and the clinging. This is the essence of an addictive life.

**2.2.6.2** The preta existence is one of constant suffering with the delusion that “having is happiness.” Yet, we could never get enough of anything at all. The reason for this vicious cycle of wanting, having, clinging, losing, wanting ... is due to the delusion that whatever we *see, hear, smell, taste, touch* are worth having. Delusion is “seeing” one thing for another; taking what it *is* for what it is *not*.

All these sense-based objects—even when they look attractive, sound beautiful, smell fragrant, taste delicious, or feel so delightful—are not out there, but are really how we experience them in our own mind. Hence, we need **mindfulness**—seeing rightly with the mind—that they are mind-made, conditioned: they rise and fall away; they are all impermanent. Once we understand this, we learn to enjoy them just as they each rise and fall away in the present moment, without seeking any of them further. This is called “seeing (or living) the moment.”<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> See eg **Bhadd’eka,ratta S** (M 131), SD 8.9.

By being mindful in this manner, we realize our preta-state: this is the kind of knowing that frees us from what we think we know. It frees us from our preta-state: we break the cycle of being a serpent painfully devouring its own tail [2.2.3.2(2)]. We become truly human, so that we are now ready to cultivate our own mind to be free of the limits of our senses, to enjoy pure mental bliss or dhyana (*jhāna*), when the conditions are right. Even without deep meditation, we are able to live happily with the wisdom of the here and now.

**2.2.6.3** With this kind of wisdom comes great compassion. Just as we have suffered as pretas, we understand how others have suffered so, and are suffering so now, and will suffer so. We are moved by our understanding that the Buddha Dharma helps those who are suffering now, that they, too, will learn from their past, and will not repeat it. This feeling of accepting others as they are, even when (especially when) we do not have to do so, is called unconditional love or lovingkindness (*mettā*).

When we move to act in that spirit to benefit others even when (especially when) they do not seem to deserve it, it is called compassion (*karuṇā*), When we share with them what they need—and we do so in that same spirit—it is called **charity** (*cāga*). We may act in this manner alone, but we rejoice in doing this with others, too; indeed, we encourage others to do this, too. This rejoicing in the goodness of others is called loving joy (*muditā*). No matter what the outcome of such love, ruth or joy, we remain joyfully at peace: this is equanimity (*upekkhā*). These are the qualities of **the divine abodes**: these are the virtues that make us divine, even brahma-like; for, they are the qualities of Great Brahmā himself.<sup>26</sup>

## 2.3 THE JOY OF GROWING WITH DHARMA [12]

### 2.3.0 The remaining 3 suttas

We have already discussed 7 of the 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection. Only 3 more suttas remain for us to examine, that is, the following:

[9] <b>(Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1*</b>	(A 4.51)	[SD 56.9g]	the 4 joys of the renunciant and giving
[11] <b>(Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta*</b>	(A 5.45)	[SD 56.9i]	the 5 joys of the renunciant and giving
[12] <b>(Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta</b>	(A 8.39)	[SD 56.9j]	the joy of the 3 jewels and the 5 gifts

We have already noted the change in the sequence numbering [1.1.1]: why **the (Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1** (A 4.51) is listed as (9) and not as (10), while **the (Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45) is (11). Both **A 4.51** and **A 5.45** deal with the arhat, the self-awakened, just like the Buddha [2.2.1.2].

### 2.3.1 The arhat and his basic supports

**2.3.1.1** As already mentioned, **the (Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1** (A 4.51) [SD 59.9g] and **the (Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45) [SD 59.9i] speak of the self-awakened, the arhat. Both suttas speak of him as having attained and dwelling in the boundless concentration of mind, affirming his state as a full-fledged arhat. Hence, according to the former sutta (A 4.51), he lives the simplest of life with **the 4 supports** of *robes, almsfood, lodging, and medical supplies*, all donated out of faith by the laity. These 4 kinds of giving are each a source of immeasurable merits, like the waters of the ocean.

The latter Sutta (A 5.45) mentions **5 kinds of supports**, that is, the 4 supports plus “bed and chair,” also donated by the laity out of faith. The simple bed provides good rest for the renunciant, and the chair (or seat) gives comfort while he meditates or sits for his meal. Giving these 5 supports yields merits boundless like the waters of the great ocean.

<sup>26</sup> On the 4 divine abodes, see *Brahma, vihāra*, SD 38.5.

### 2.3.2 The lay practice

**2.3.2.1** Of the 10 suttas of the Abhisandha Collection [1.1.1], 7 give teachings on streamwinning, and 2 on the arhat. Significantly, the last of this decad of suttas describes the practice of **the lay follower** (*upāsaka*), that is, **the (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta** (A 8.39). As the Sutta title suggests, it highlights 8 items in 2 sets of teachings, that is, on the 3 jewels (the Buddha, the Dharma and the sangha), and the joy of the 5 supreme gifts, that is, the keeping of the 5 precepts.

**2.3.2.2** The (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta, thus, highlights the main components of **lay practice**: taking refuge in the 3 jewels, and the cultivation of moral virtue by keeping the 5 precepts. In terms of the spiritual faculties (*indriya*), **the 3 refuges** (*ti,saraṇa*) serve as the sources of faith and wisdom for our own journey towards the path.

**Faith** in the Buddha as the one true teacher keeps our mind open to learning; our faith in the Buddha Dharma keeps this learning focused on cultivation of the mind (mental concentration), the examples of the noble sangha of arhats and other saints inspire us to cultivate the body (moral virtue). In this sense, we keep a healthy mind in a healthy body.

**Wisdom** arises partly through our study of the teachings rooted in the 3 jewels: how the Buddha himself fully awakens to true reality; his personal experiences and teachings on self-awakening that have been handed down to us in the Dharma; and how the noble disciples have followed the Buddha’s path and awakened in the same way as he has [2.2.1.2]. We, too, following the noble eightfold path, will reach that very same awakening and freedom.

**2.3.2.3** The (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta (A 8.39) speaks of **the going for refuge** in the 3 jewels as “an overflowing streams of merits” and great happiness because we emulate their wonderful qualities as our own, and are thus blessed with great happiness here and now. The Sutta then speaks of **keeping the 5 precepts**—not killing, not stealing, not committing sexual misconduct, not lying, and not being intoxicated—as “5 great gifts” we give to others, that is, the gifts of fearlessness, hatelessness and non-affliction.

On account of giving others this joy of freedom from fear, from hatred, from affliction, we too, enjoy this very same happiness of fearlessness, hatelessness and non-affliction. This is the foundation of the good society, a wholesome community that is conducive to personal development, mental cultivation, human growth and social progress. This is the essence of an ideal society.

## 2.4 THE SUTTA REFRAINS AND PARABLES

### 2.4.1 THE “STREAMS OF MERITS” REFRAIN

#### 2.4.1.1 REFRAIN 1

A **refrain** is a repetitive passage that reminds us of the key benefit or essence of the teachings just mentioned.

**Refrain 1**—of which there is the shorter [1a] and the longer [1b]—follows (closes) the teaching set of each sutta. The refrains 1ab are listed here:

#### Refrain 1a. The shorter refrain

“These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.”

*Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññābhisandā  
kusalābhisandā sukhaśāhārā*

The shorter refrain (1a) follows the sutta teachings on **the streamwinner**, highlighting his happiness here and now. (But see Refrain 1b, of which one version refers to the streamwinner, too.) The shorter refrain 1a appears in the following suttas:

[a] S 55.31,7; [b] S 55.32,7; [c] S 55.33,7+; [d] S 55.41,7+; [e] S 55.42,7+ (followed by another parable + Refrain 2); [f] S 55.43,7 (followed by “immeasurable merits” refrain).

The plus (+) sign means that the Shorter Refrain 1 is followed by Refrain 2 (and then a parable + closing verse).

### **Refrain 1b. The longer refrain**

“These, bhikkhus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness— heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven— conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.”

*Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññābhisandā  
kusalābhisandā sukhaśāhārā  
sovaggikā sukha, vipākā sagga, saṁ-  
vattanikā itthāya kantāya  
manāpāya hitāya saṁvattanti*

The longer refrain appears in the following suttas:

[g] A 4.51,2, [h] A 4.52,2, [i] A 5.45,2, [j] A 8.39,3.

### **2.4.1.2 REFRAIN 2**

<sup>27</sup>“When, bhikkhus, a noble disciple possesses these **( 4 | 5 ) overflowing streams of merits**, overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to take the measure of his merits, thus:

‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.’

Rather, it is reckoned as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.”

Refrain 2 refers to the streamwinner (defh)<sup>28</sup> and the arhat (i). Like Refrain 1ab, it also refers to the happiness of the streamwinner and the arhat, but here it highlights the “immeasurability” of this happiness. Refrain 2 appears in the following suttas in these connections:

	<u>refrain 1</u>	<u>refrain 2</u>	<u>parable</u>	
[6] <b>(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1</b>	shorter	S 55.41,8	the great ocean waters	SD 59.9d
[7] <b>(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2</b>	shorter	S 55.42,8+10	the 5 great rivers	SD 59.9e
[8] <b>(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3</b>	shorter	S 55.43,8	none (closing verse)	SD 59.9f
[9] <b>(Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2</b>	longer	A 4.51,2	the great ocean	SD 59.9g
[11] <b>(Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta</b>	longer	S 5.45,7	the great ocean	SD 59.9i

### **2.4.3 The ocean water parable (pails of water)**

**2.4.3.1** The ocean water parable augments the refrains [2.4.1], highlighting the immeasurability of the merits of the streamwinner and the arhat, and those who support them through faith. The merits of

<sup>27</sup> *Imehi kho bhikkhave catūhi puññābhisandehi kusalābhisandehi samanngatassa ariya, sāvakassa na sukaram puññassa pamāṇañ gaṇeturū* “*ettako puññābhisando kusalābhisando sukhaśāhāro’ti. Atha kho asaṅkhyeyyo ap-pameyyo mahā, puñña-k, khandho tv-eva saṅkhyam gacchati.*

<sup>28</sup> “defh” refers to SD 59.9d, SD 59.9e, SD 59.9f, SD 59.9h respectively. The following “i” refers to SD 59.9i.

these saints and their supporters are impossible to measure, such as trying to measure the number of pails of water that the ocean holds. This parable evokes the sense of boundless joy of being liberated as well as knowing that we are heading for the path of liberating, and also the joy of giving through faith.

#### 2.4.3.2 The ocean water parable runs thus:

Bhikshus, just as it is not easy to measure the water in **the great ocean**, thus:

‘There are so many pails of water,’<sup>29</sup> or

‘There are so many hundreds of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many thousands of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many hundreds of thousands of pails of water.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of water.

This parable occurs in the following places:

[6] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1	S 55.41,9	SD 59.9d	the great ocean waters
[7] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2	S 55.42,9	SD 59.9e	the waters of the 5 great rivers
[11] (Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta	A 5.45,9	SD 59.9i	the water in the great ocean

#### 2.4.4 THE 5 GREAT RIVERS PARABLE

The “5 great rivers” parable occurs only once in the Abhisanda Collection, that is, in this Sutta:

[7] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2	S 55.42,9	SD 59.9e
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The parable of the 5 great rivers is a well known one.<sup>30</sup> It inspires us to imagine all the waters of north India’s 5 great rivers—the Ganges, the Yamuna, the Aciravati, the Sarabhu and the Mahi—flowing into the great ocean, and that it is impossible to measure the volume of this watery mass. Hence, it is a version of the ocean water parable [2.4.3].

### 2.5 THE CLOSING VERSES OF THE ABHISANDA COLLECTION

#### 2.5.1 The mahôdadhiṃ (“great mass of water”) verses

2.5.1.1 These verses which open with the phrase *mahôdadhiṃ* “the great mass of water,” occurs as the closing of 4 of the 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection, thus:

[6] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1	S 55.41,10 f	SD 59.9d, where see nn
[7] (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2	S 55.42,12 f	SD 59.9e
[9] (Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1	A 4.51,5 f	SD 59.9g
[11] (Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda Sutta	A 5.45,10 f	SD 59.9i

<sup>29</sup> *Ettakāni udakālhakāni* (*udaka*, “water” + *ālhaka* [Skt *āḍhaka*], “pail(s)”): S 44.1/4:376,13 = 55.41/5:400,9 [SD 59.9d] = A 4.51/2:55,20 [SD 59.9g] = 5.45/3:52,17 = 6.37/3:337,1, qu VvA 155,13. An *ālhaka* is a fluid and dry measure: Abhp 482 f: 16 *pasata* = 4 *pattha* = 1 *ālhaka* =  $\frac{1}{4}$  *doṇa* =  $\frac{1}{16}$  *māṇikā* =  $\frac{1}{64}$  *khāri*, and 20 *khāri* = 1 *vāha*; also *o n’itthiyam tumbo*, Abhp 484; expl at SA 1:218,28 = AA 5:62,1 = SnA 476,25 *tena* (*kosala, raṭṭhe*) *patthena cattāro patthā ~am* etc, cf VA 702,22 f ad V 3:243,27 *aḍḍhā*.

<sup>30</sup> For refs, see S 55.42,9 n (SD 59.9e).

**2.5.1.2** These *mahôdadhiṃ* verses run thus:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>1</b> <i>mahôdadhiṃ aparimitaṃ mahā,saraṃ<br/>bahu,bheravaṃ ratana,gaṇanam-ālayaṃ<br/>najjo yathā nara,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā<br/>puthū savantī upayanti sāgaraṃ</i></p>   | <p>Just as a stream, used by crowds and multitudes,<br/>flowing downstream, reaches the sea,<br/>the great mass of water, the boundless ocean,<br/>the fearsome abode of countless gems,</p> |
| <p><b>2</b> <i>evaṃ naraṃ anna,da,pāna,vattha,dam<br/>seyyā,nisajj'attharaṇassa dāyakaṃ<br/>puñṇassa dhārā upayanti paṇḍitaṃ<br/>najjo yathā vāri,vahā'va sāgaran'ti</i></p> | <p>even so, the streams of merits reach the wise,<br/>a giver of food, drink and cloth,<br/>a giver of beds, seats and covers,<br/>like rivers carrying their waters to the ocean.</p>       |

The key imagery of these verses is that water naturally finds its own level flowing from a higher level downwards.<sup>31</sup> The wholesome good that we do, especially wise giving through faith, fills our lives with boundless blessings here and now, and hereafter. Like the force of flowing water, such merits fill us with the joy and energy to keep up our Dharma practice and progress closer to the path. Like water finding its own level, our practice will naturally uplift us to the appropriate level of the path, especially that of streamwinning in this life itself. [12.2.1 n]

### **2.5.2 (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3 (S 55.43,10), SD 59.9f**

The *yo puñña,kāmo* verse appears in the Abhisanda Collection only in this Sutta:

[8] **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3**                      S 55.43,9                      SD 59.9f

The verse runs thus:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><i>yo puñña,kāmo kusale patitthito<br/>bhāveti maggaṃ amatassa pattiyā<br/>so dhamma,sārādhigamo khaye rato<br/>na vedhati maccu,rājagamissatīti</i></p> | <p>One who desires merits, established in the wholesome,<br/>cultivates the path to attain the death-free.<br/>Who has gained Dharma's heart, delights in destruction:<br/>he trembles not, thinking, "The king of death will come!"</p> |
|---|--|

The verse has 2 parts equally divided as 2 lines each. **Lines ab** refer to our cultivating the merits of good karma that prepare us to gain the path of awakening that ends in "the death-free," nirvana. Such merits arise from any kind of wholesome act of body, speech and mind, such as supporting others, especially those already on the path (streamwinners and so on).

**Lines cd** speak of those who have "gained Dharma's heart" (*dhamma,sārādhigamo*), that one who "delights in destruction" (*khaye rato*), specifically referring to the arhat, the one "with the influxes destroyed" (*khīṇ'āsava*), that is, destroyed the defilements of sensual desire, existence, views and ignorance, which keep us bound to samsara. Broadly, this can also refer to the streamwinner who is assured of awakening within 7 lives.

<sup>31</sup> This reminds us of the verse at Pv 1.5,8: "Just as the swollen rivers | fill the ocean full, | even so, what is given here | accrues to the departed ones," *yathā vāri,vahā pūrā | paripūrenti sāgaraṃ | evam eva ito dinnarāṃ | petānarāṃ upakappati* ||: **Tiro,kuḍḍa S** (Khp 7/6 = Pv 1.5/4), SD 2.7.

### 2.5.3 The *yassa saddhā* (“when one has faith”) verse

**2.5.3.1** This is another verse that occurs only once in the Abhisanda Collection, and it is found in:

[10] **(Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2** A 4.52,3-5 SD 59.9h

These closing verses are important enough to be found elsewhere in the suttas, that is, in **the Dalidda Sutta** (S 11.14/1:232), **the Anātha,piṇḍika Sutta 1** (S 55.26/5:384), SD 23.2a, and **the Sagāthaka Sutta** (S 55.51/5:405)—all in the context of attaining streamwinning. This verse of 3 stanzas is also the longest of all the verses in the Abhisanda Collection.

**2.5.3.2** The verse runs thus:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>1</b> <i>yassa saddhā tathāgate<br/>acalā supatiṭṭhitā<br/>sīlañ ca yassa kalyāṇaṃ<br/>ariya,kantaṃ pasaṃsitaṃ</i></p>       | <p>When one has faith in the Tathagata,<br/>unshakable, well-established,<br/>and whose moral conduct is good,<br/>praised, loved by the noble ones;</p>  |
| <p><b>2</b> <i>saṅghe pasādo yass’atthi<br/>uju,bhūtañ ca dassanaṃ<br/>adaliddo’ti āhu<br/>amoghaṃ tassa jīvitaṃ</i></p>           | <p>when one has faith in the sangha and<br/>one’s vision has been straightened out:<br/>one is not poor, it is said,<br/>one’s life is not in vain.</p>   |
| <p><b>3</b> <i>tasmā saddhañ ca sīlañ ca<br/>pasādaṃ dhamma,dassanaṃ<br/>anuyuñjetha medhāvī<br/>saraṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ’ti</i></p> | <p>Therefore, one who is wise,<br/>recalling the buddhas’ teaching,<br/>should be yoked to faith and virtue,<br/>confidence and vision of the Dhamma.</p> |

Verse 1 speaks of wise faith in the Buddha [lines ab *of the translation*], and moral virtue dear to the noble ones [lines cd]. Verse 2 refers to wise faith in the sangha [line a], and the benefits of right view [lines bcd]. Verse 3 is about wise faith in the Dharma [line cd], recollecting the Buddha’s teaching, strengthening one’s spiritual faculties of faith [line cd], effort [“yoked” in line c], mindfulness [verse 2, line b], concentration [verse 1, line b] and wisdom [verse 3, line d].

— — —

[The large figures “9a” refers to “SD 59.9a” (the unique sutta number). The smaller number “3”—fully read as “SD 59.9 (3)” —that follows, refers to the running numbers to [the commentary notes](#) on the 10 suttas beginning with the Introductory Notes above.

# 9a

## (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1

Paṭhama (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta

The 1<sup>st</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | S 55.31

Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

### 3 (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1 (S 55.31), SD 59.9a

#### 3.1 THE PUÑÑĀBHISANDA TRIAD

[3] (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1 (S 55.31) [SD 56.9a]

[4] (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2 (S 55.32) [SD 56.9b]

[5] (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 3 (S 55.33) [SD 56.9c]

**3.1.1** The first 3 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection—S 55.31-33 [SD 59.9abc]—have the same word, *puññābhisanda*, in their title, and they share the same theme. Hence, we can conveniently call them “**the Puññābhisanda triad.**” Their common theme is that of **the 4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*), presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1].

**The (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 1** (S 55.31) is a short sutta that presents the 4 limbs of the streamwinner: (1-3) faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the sangha, and (4) moral virtues dear to the noble ones (*ariya, kantāni sīlāni*) [§6]. One with these 4 limbs—the streamwinner—is said to enjoy “4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.” This is a refrain repeated in almost every verse of the Sutta [SD 59.9a].

**3.1.2** Like S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), the other 2 suttas of the Puññābhisanda triad—S 55.32 and S 55.33—have the same theme of the 4 limbs of the streamwinner [3.1.1]. S 55.32 [SD 59.9b], however, has charity as its 4<sup>th</sup> limb, while S 55.33 [SD 59.9c] has wisdom as its 4<sup>th</sup> limb. This variation, as mentioned [3.1.1] is connected with the kind of spiritual faculty that predominates the practitioner.

Each of these 3 suttas states the same benefit for one with these 4 limbs: the streamwinner. He is said to enjoy “4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness,” the refrain found in almost every verse of each sutta. Hence, their common purpose is clearly the same: to inspire us to work for streamwinning in this life itself.

# (Sotāpatti) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 1

## The 1<sup>st</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

S 55.31

- 1 Originating in Sāvattḥī.  
 2 “Bhikshus, there are these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.<sup>32</sup>  
 What are the four?<sup>33</sup>

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (SOTĀPANASSA AṄGA)<sup>34</sup>

- 3 (1) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>35</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>36</sup>  
 ‘So too, is he the Blessed One:<sup>37</sup>  
 for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
 knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans,  
 awakened, blessed.’  
 This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

- 4 (2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in the Dharma, thus:<sup>38</sup>  
 ‘Well taught<sup>39</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,  
 immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
 accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.’  
 This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

- 5 (3) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in the sangha, thus:  
 ‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised];  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight [direct] way;  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way;  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.’

<sup>32</sup> *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññâbhisandā kusalâbhisandā sukhaṣṣāhārā.*

<sup>33</sup> The foll 3 passages are the same as those in S 55.32 (SD 59.9b) and S 55.33 (SD 59.9c).

<sup>34</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see (**Tad-ah’**) **Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.-41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The 7 suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4,52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

<sup>35</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p.pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p.pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>36</sup> The foll form the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>37</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see **Bud-dhānussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

<sup>38</sup> For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>39</sup> Here begins the 6 qualities of the Dharma (*cha dhamma,guṇa*) (M 1:37; A 3:285). The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at *Vism* 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:

*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is

worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
a supreme field of merit for the world.’

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**6** (4) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses **moral virtues dear to the noble ones**,<sup>40</sup>  
unbroken, untorn; unmixed, spotless; liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished,<sup>41</sup>  
giving rise to mental concentration.<sup>42</sup>

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 1A [2.4.1]

**7** These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.”

*paṭhamam*

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<sup>40</sup> “Moral virtue dear to the noble ones,” *ariya,kantāni sīlāni*. The noble one’s moral virtue is explained at Vism 7.101-106/221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts because this virtue is dear to them (SA 2:74).

<sup>41</sup> *Aparāmaṭṭhehi*, “untarnished,” ie, unsmirched by craving and wrong view (DA 537); alt tr, “unattached to” on account of craving or wrong view.

<sup>42</sup> *Akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññūpasatṭhehi aparāmaṭṭhehi samādhi,samvattana-kehi*. Found in 7 of the 10 suttas in **Veḷu,dvāra Vagga** (S 55.1-5, 7-8, ie, except nos 6, 9 ad 10); **Cundī Rāja,kumārī S** (A 5.32/3:36), SD 66.4; **(Agata,phala) Mahānāma S** (A 6.10/3:286), SD 15.3. Details at Vism 1.143-161/51-58, 7.101-106/221 f. See also **Virtue ethics**, SD 18.11 (2.2).

# 9b

## (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2

Dutiya (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta

The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | S 55.32

Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

### 4 (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2 (S 55.32), SD 59.9b

#### 4.1 THE PUÑÑĀBHISANDA TRIAD

**4.1.1** The first 3 suttas [S 55.31-33] of the Abhisanda Collection have the same theme—the **4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*)—presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1]. **The (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2** (S 55.32) is a short sutta that presents the 4 limbs of the streamwinner: (1-3) faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the sangha, and (4) “a heart free from the stain of stinginess ... ,” that is, charity (*cāga*) [S6].

One with these 4 limbs—the streamwinner—is said to enjoy “4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.” This is a refrain repeated in almost every verse of the Sutta [SD 59.9b].

**4.1.2** Like **S 55.32** (SD 59.9b), the other 2 suttas of the Puññābhisanda triad—S 55.31 and S 55.33—have the same theme of the 4 limbs of the streamwinner [3.1.1]. Each of these suttas states the same benefit for one with these 4 limbs—the streamwinner—is said to be enjoy “4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness,” the refrain found in almost every verse of each sutta. Hence, their common purpose is clearly the same: to inspire us to work for streamwinning in this life itself.

## (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

S 55.32

- 1 Originating in Sāvattihī.
- 2 “Bhikshus, there are these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.  
What are the four?<sup>43</sup>

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (SOTĀPANASSA AṅGA)<sup>44</sup>

- 3 (1) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>45</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>46</sup>

<sup>43</sup> The foll 3 passages are the same as those in S 55.31 (SD 59.9a) and S 55.33 (SD 59.9c).

<sup>44</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see (**Tad-ah’**) **Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.-41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The 7 suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4,52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

“So too, is he the Blessed One:<sup>47</sup>

for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, [392]  
awakened, blessed.”

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**4** (2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the Dharma**, thus:

‘Well-taught<sup>48</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,  
immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.’

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**5** (3) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the sangha**, thus:

‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples	keeps to the good way [is well-practised];
the Blessed One’s community of disciples	keeps to the straight [direct] way;
the Blessed One’s community of disciples	keeps to the right way;
the Blessed One’s community of disciples	keeps to the proper way.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:

*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is  
worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
a supreme field of merit for the world.’

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**6** (4) Again, bhikkhus, a noble disciple dwells at home

with **a heart free from the stain of stinginess**, devoted to charity, open-handed,  
delighting in giving, devoted to alms-giving,  
delighting to have a share in giving.<sup>49</sup>

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 1A [2.4.1]

**7** These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.”

*dutiyaṃ*

<sup>45</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of stream-winner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>46</sup> The foll form the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>47</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see **Bud-dhānussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

<sup>48</sup> Here begins the 6 qualities of the Dharma (*cha dhamma,guṇa*) (M 7,6/1:37), SD 28.12; (A 6.10/3:285), SD 15.3. The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at Vism 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>49</sup> (*Ariya,sāvako*) *vigata,mala.maccherena cetasā agāraṃ ajjhāvasati mutta,cāgo payata,pāṇī vossagga,rato yāca,yogo dāna,sarṃvibhāga,rato*: also in (**Sotāpatti**) **Abhisanda S 2** (S 55.42,6), SD 59.9e. This whole passage is stock, found in eg **Dhana S** (A 7.6/4:6), **Nakula,māta S** (A 8.48/4:268 f), SD 5.3; cf **Vata,pada S** (S 11.11/1:228). See **Sappurisa Dāna S** (A 5.148), SD 22.15 2 & **Cāgānussati**, SD 15.12. At **Dīgha,jānu S** (A 8.54.14/4:284 @ SD 5.10), this serves as the def for “the accomplishment in charity” (*cāga,sampadā*), as in **Thapati S** (S 55.6), where it is the 4<sup>th</sup> of the 4 qualities (*catu dhammā*) of a streamwinner (S 55.6,24(4)/5:351), SD 42.7. For details on “delighting in having a share in giving,” *dāna,sarṃvibhāga,rata*, see SD 42.7 (3.2). Detailed comy at Vism 7.101-106.

# 9c

## (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 3

Tatiya (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta

The 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | S 55.33

Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

### 5 (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 3 (S 55.33), SD 59.9c

#### 5.1 THE PUÑÑĀBHISANDA TRIAD

**5.1.1** The first 3 suttas [S 55.31-33] of the Abhisanda Collection have the same theme—the **4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*)—presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1]. **The (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 3** (S 55.33) is a short sutta that presents the 4 limbs of the streamwinner: (1-3) faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the sangha, and (4) “wise” (*paññavā*), that is, he practises the perception of impermanence, watching the rising and falling away of phenomena [§6].

One with these 4 limbs—the streamwinner—is said to enjoy “4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.” This is a refrain repeated in almost every verse of the Sutta [SD 59.9c].

**5.1.2** Like **S 55.33** (SD 59.9c), the other 2 suttas of the Puññābhisanda triad—S 55.31 and S 55.32—have the same theme of the 4 limbs of the streamwinner [3.1.1]. Each of these suttas states the same benefit for one with these 4 limbs—the streamwinner—is said to be enjoy “4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness,” the refrain found in almost every verse of each sutta. Hence, their common purpose is clearly the same: to inspire us to work for streamwinning in this life itself.

## (Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda Sutta 3

### The 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

S 55.33

- 1 Originating in Sāvattḥī.
- 2 “Bhikkhus, there are these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.<sup>50</sup>  
What are the four?<sup>51</sup>

<sup>50</sup> *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññābhisandā kusalābhisandā sukhaṃ’āhārā.*

<sup>51</sup> The foll 3 passages are the same as those in S 55.31 (SD 59.9a) and S 55.32 (SD 59.9b).

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (*SOTĀPANASSA AṄGA*)<sup>52</sup>

**3** (1) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>53</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>54</sup>  
‘So too, is he the Blessed One:<sup>55</sup>

for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans,  
awakened, blessed.’

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**4** (2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>56</sup> in **the Dharma**, thus:<sup>57</sup>  
‘Well-taught<sup>58</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,

immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.’

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**5** (3) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the sangha**, thus:  
‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised];  
the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight [direct] way;  
the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way;  
the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:

*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is

worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
a supreme field of merit(s) for the world.’

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

<sup>52</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see (**Tad-ah’**) **Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.-41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4,52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

<sup>53</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>54</sup> The foll form the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>55</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ... ” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

<sup>56</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>57</sup> For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>58</sup> Here begins the 6 qualities of **the Dharma** (*cha dhamma,guṇa*) (M 7,6/1:37), SD 28.12; (A 6.10/3:285), SD 15.3. The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at *Vism* 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

**6** (4) Again, bhikkhus, a noble disciple is **wise**,<sup>59</sup>  
 he possesses wisdom directed<sup>60</sup> to the rising and falling away (of phenomena)<sup>61</sup>  
 that is noble and penetrative,  
 leading to the complete destruction of suffering.<sup>62</sup>  
 This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 1A [2.4.1.1]

**7** These, bhikkhus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.”

*tatīyaṃ*

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<sup>59</sup> This whole section: *Puna c’aparam bhikkhave ariya,sāvako paññavā hoti, uday’atthagāminiyā paññāya samannāgato ariyāya nibbedhikāya sammā,dukkha-k,khaya,gāminiyā*. This section recurs as “the accomplishment of wisdom” (*paññā,sampadā*) in **Dīgha,jānu S** (A 8.54,15.1), SD 5.10.

<sup>60</sup> On directed cultivation, see further **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10/5:154-157), SD 24.2 (1.2).

<sup>61</sup> *Paññavā hoti, uday’attha,gāminiyā paññāya samannāgato*: D 3:237,17; M 1:356,19; S 5:197,19; A 3:2,26; Nm 40,2 etc. On watching the rising and falling of feeling, see **(Aññathatta) Ānanda S 1** (S 22.37/3:37 f), SD 33.11.

<sup>62</sup> For its significance, see **(Sotāpanna) Nandiya S** (S 55.40), esp SD 47.1 (1.1.3.3).

## 9d

**(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1**

Paṭhama (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta

The 1<sup>st</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | S 55.41

Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

**6 (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1 (S 55.41), SD 59.9d****6.1 THE ABHISANDA TETRAD**

- [6] **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1\*** (S 55.41) [SD 56.9d]  
 [7] **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2\*** (S 55.42) [SD 56.9e]  
 [8] **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3** (S 55.43) [SD 56.9f]  
 [10] **(Catukka) Puññābhisanda Sutta 2** (A 4.52)<sup>63</sup> [SD 56.9h] Note the title here has *puññābhisanda*.

**6.1.1** Suttas 6-8 and 10 of the Abhisanda Collection—**S 55.41-43 + A 4.52** [SD 59.9defh]—that is, the 4 suttas beginning with this one, **the (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1** (S 55.41), SD 59.9d, have the same word, *abhisanda*, in their title (except for A 4.52),<sup>64</sup> and they share the same theme. Hence, we can conveniently call them “**the Abhisanda triad.**” A 4<sup>th</sup> parallel sutta (from the Aṅguttara) with the same word in its title and a parallel theme is **A 4.52**. Hence, we can conveniently call these 4 suttas “**the Abhisanda tetrad.**”

**6.1.2** The common theme of this tetrad is that of **the 4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*), presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1]. The teachings **S 55.41** and **A 4.52** are, in fact, identical; their only difference is in their closing.

Further, the teaching structure of the Abhisanda tetrad, **S 55.41/A 4.52**, **S 55.42 + S 55.43**, are identical to those of the Puññābhisanda triad, **S 55.31-33**, respectively [3.1]. As mentioned, they present 3 variations in the 4<sup>th</sup> limb, depending what spiritual faculty is predominant in the practitioner [3.1.2].

**6.2 THE ABHISANDA TETRAD SUTTA CLOSING****6.2.1 Sutta structure**

The suttas of the Abhisanda tetrad [6.1.1] parallel each other in laying out the 4 limbs of the streamwinner [§§]. They vary in how each suttas defines the 4<sup>th</sup> limb of the streamwinner, and differs significantly in their closing, thus:

	<u>The 4 limbs of the streamwinner</u>	<u>parable</u>	<u>closing verse</u>
[6] S 55.41 [SD 56.9d]	(1-3) faith in the 3 jewels; (4) moral virtue	ocean waters	<i>mah’odadhim ...</i> <sup>65</sup>
[7] S 55.42 [SD 56.9e]	- do - (4) charity	the 5 rivers	- do -
[8] S 55.43 [SD 56.9f]	- do - (4) wisdom	the 4 streams	<i>yo puñña, kāmo ...</i>
[10] A 4.52 <sup>66</sup> [SD 56.9h]	- do - (4) moral virtue	- nil -	<i>yassa saddhā ...</i>

<sup>63</sup> The sutta sequence for [9-10] is reversed here on account of their respective themes.

<sup>64</sup> Technically, A 4.52 does have *abhisanda* in its title, but it is part of a longer cpd, *puññābhisanda*.

<sup>65</sup> These 2 verses recur in the “awakening” suttas: A 4.51 + A 5.45 [9.1.1]

<sup>66</sup> The sutta sequence for [9-10] is reversed here on account of their respective themes.

**6.2.2** The Abhisanda tetrad are clearly elaborations on the Puññābhisanda triad. The tetrad have the same teachings as the triad, but with additional passages on the water parables and mention of the overflowing streams of merits. These are suttas on the limbs of the streamwinner to motivate us to aspire for streamwinning in this life itself.

## (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 1

### The 1<sup>st</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

S 55.41

**2** “Bhikshus, there are these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.<sup>67</sup>  
What are the four?<sup>68</sup>

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (SOTĀPANASSA AṄGA)<sup>69</sup>

**3** (1) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>70</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>71</sup>  
‘So too, is he the Blessed One:<sup>72</sup>

for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans,  
awakened, blessed.’

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**4** (2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the Dharma**, thus:<sup>73</sup>  
‘Well-taught<sup>74</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,

immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.’

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

<sup>67</sup> *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññābhisandā kusalābhisandā sukhaṃs’āhārā.*

<sup>68</sup> The foll 3 passages are the same as those in S 55.31 (SD 59.9ab) and S 55.32 (SD 59.9b).

<sup>69</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see (**Tad-ah’**) **Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.-41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4,52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

<sup>70</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>71</sup> The foll verse forms the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>72</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ... “ On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see **Buddhānussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

<sup>73</sup> For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>74</sup> Here begins the 6 qualities of the Dharma (*cha dhamma,guṇa*) (M 1:37; A 3:285). The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at *Vism* 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

5 (3) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the sangha**, thus:

'The Blessed One's community of disciples	keeps to the good way [is well-practised];
the Blessed One's community of disciples	keeps to the straight [direct] way;
the Blessed One's community of disciples	keeps to the right way;
the Blessed One's community of disciples	keeps to the proper way.

These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:

*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is

worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
a supreme field of merits for the world.'

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

6 (4) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses **moral virtues dear to the noble ones**,<sup>75</sup>  
unbroken, untorn; unmixed, spotless; liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished,<sup>76</sup>  
giving rise to mental concentration.<sup>77</sup>

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 1A [2.4.1.1]

7 These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness. [400]

REFRAIN 2 [2.4.1.2]

8 When, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses these **4 streams of merits**,  
streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to take the measure of his merits, thus:

'Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.'

Rather, it is reckoned as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.

PARABLE: IMMEASURABLE AS THE OCEAN WATERS

9 Bhikshus, just as it is not easy to measure the water in **the great ocean**, thus:

'There are so many pails of water,'<sup>78</sup> or

'There are so many hundreds of pails of water,' or

<sup>75</sup> "Moral virtue dear to the noble ones," *ariya,kantāni sīlāni*. The noble one's moral virtue is explained at Vism 7.101-106/221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts because this virtue is dear to them (SA 2:74).

<sup>76</sup> *Aparāmaṭṭhehi*, "untarnished," ie, unsmirched by craving and wrong view (DA 537); alt tr, "unattached to" on account of craving or wrong view.

<sup>77</sup> *Akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññūpasatṭhehi aparāmaṭṭhehi samādhi,samvattana-kehi*. Found in 7 of the 10 suttas in **Veḷu,dvāra Vagga** (S 55.1-5, 7-8, ie, except nos 6, 9 ad 10); **Cundī Rāja,kumārī S** (A 5.32/3:36), SD 66.4; (**Agata,phala**) **Mahānāma S** (A 6.10/3:286), SD 15.3. Details at Vism 1.143-161/51-58, 7.101-106/221 f. See also **Virtue ethics**, SD 18.11 (2.2).

<sup>78</sup> *Ettakāni udakāḷhakāni* (*udaka*, "water" + *āḷhaka* [Skt *āḷhaka*], "pail(s)"): **S 44.1/4:376,13 = 55.41/5:400,9** [SD 59.9d] = **A 4.51/2:55,20** [SD 59.9g] = **5.45/3:52,17 = 6.37/3:337,1**, qu VvA 155,13. An *āḷhaka* is a fluid and dry measure: Abhp 482 f: 16 *pasata* = 4 *pattha* = 1 *āḷhaka* =  $\frac{1}{4}$  *doṇa* =  $\frac{1}{16}$  *māṇikā* =  $\frac{1}{64}$  *khāri*, and 20 *khāri* = 1 *vāha*; also ~o *n'itthiyam tumbo*, Abhp 484; expl at SA 1:218,28 = AA 5:62,1 = SnA 476,25 *tena* (*kosala,raṭṭhe*) *patthena cattāro patthā ~am* etc, cf VA 702,22 f ad V 3:243,27 *aḍḍhā*.

‘There are so many thousands of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many hundreds of thousands of pails of water.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of water.<sup>79</sup>

CLOSING VERSE<sup>80</sup>

The Blessed One said this. Having said this, the Welcome One (*sugata*), the teacher, further said this:

**10** *mahôdadhiṃ aparimitaṃ mahā,saraṃ  
bahu,bheravaṃ ratana,gaṇanam-ālayaṃ  
najjo yathā nara,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā  
puthū savantī upayanti sāgaraṃ*

Just as a stream, used by crowds and multitudes,<sup>81</sup>  
flowing downstream, reach the sea,  
the great mass of water, the boundless ocean,  
the fearsome abode of countless gems,

**11** *evaṃ naraṃ anna,da,pāna,vattha,dam<sup>82</sup>  
seyyā,nisajj’attharaṇassa<sup>83</sup> dāyakaṃ  
puññaṃ dhārā upayanti paṇḍitaṃ  
najjo yathā vāri,vahā va sāgaraṃ’ti*

even so the streams of merits reach the wise,  
a giver of food, drink and cloth,  
a giver of beds, seats and covers,  
like rivers carrying their waters to the ocean. [401]

*paṭhamam*

<sup>79</sup> For another water parable—that of river waters filling the ocean—see ((**Sotāpatti**) **Abhisanda S 2** (S 55.42,9), SD 59.9e.

<sup>80</sup> These verses recur at closing of S 55.42,10 f (SD 59.9e), A 4.51,5 f (SD 59.9g), A 5.45,10 f (SD 59.9i). [2.4.1]

<sup>81</sup> See n at line c here.

<sup>82</sup> Be Ee Se *anna,pāna,vattha,dadam*, Ce so.

<sup>83</sup> Be Se *seyyāni paccattharaṇassa*, “beds and covers”; Ce Ee so.

## 9e

**(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2**

**Dutiya (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta** The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits  
or **Sayhaka Sutta** The Discourse on the Possible | **S 55.42**  
Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

7 (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2 (S 55.42), SD 59.9e**7.1 THE ABHISANDA TETRAD**

The **Abhisanda tetrad** comprise 4 suttas—**S 55.41-43 + A 4.52** [SD 59.9defh]—of which this is 2<sup>nd</sup>, that is, **the (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2** (S 55.42), SD 59.9e [6.1]. The tetrad’s common theme is that of **the 4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*), presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1]. The suttas of the tetrad significantly differ in their respective closings. [6.2]

## (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 2

### The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

S 55.42

2 “Bhikshus, there are these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.<sup>84</sup>  
What are the four?<sup>85</sup>

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (*SOTĀPANASSA AṅGA*)<sup>86</sup>

3 (1) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>87</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>88</sup>  
‘So too, is he the Blessed One.<sup>89</sup>

for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans,  
awakened, blessed.’

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

<sup>84</sup> *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññābhisandā kusalābhisandā sukhaṃ’āhārā.*

<sup>85</sup> The foll 3 passages are the same as those in S 55.32 (SD 59.9b) and S 55.33 (SD 59.9c).

<sup>86</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see **(Tad-ah’) Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.-41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The 7 suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4,52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

<sup>87</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>88</sup> The foll form the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>89</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see **Bud-dhānussati**, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

**4** (2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>90</sup> in **the Dharma**, thus:<sup>91</sup>  
 ‘Well-taught<sup>92</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,  
 immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
 accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.’  
 This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**5** (3) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the sangha**, thus:  
 ‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised];  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight [direct] way;  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way;  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.  
 These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:  
*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is  
 worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
 a supreme field of merit for the world.’  
 This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

**6** (4) Again, bhikshus,<sup>93</sup> a noble disciple dwells at home  
 with **a heart free from the stain of stinginess**, devoted to charity, open-handed,  
 delighting in giving, devoted to alms-giving,  
 delighting to have a share in giving.  
 This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 1A [2.4.1.1]

**7** These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 2 [2.4.1.2]

**8** When, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses these 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to take the measure of his merits thus:  
 ‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.’  
 Rather, it is reckoned as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>90</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p.pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of stream-winner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p.pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>91</sup> For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>92</sup> Here begin the 6 qualities of the Dharma (*cha dhamma,guṇa*) (M 1:37; A 3:285). The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at *Vism* 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>93</sup> This passage recurs ad loc in **(Sotāpatti) Puññābhisanda S 2** (S 55.32,6), SD 59.9b, where see nn.

<sup>94</sup> Cf **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda S 1** (S 55.41,3), SD 59.9d, for another parable (of measuring the ocean water).

PARABLE: IMMEASURABLE AS THE WATERS OF THE 5 GREAT RIVERS

**9** Bhikshus, just as where these great rivers<sup>95</sup>--the Ganges, the Yamuna, the Aciravati, the Sarabhu, the Mahi—converge, meet (in the great ocean),

it is not easy to measure the amount of the water there, thus:

‘There are so many pails of **water**,’<sup>96</sup> or

‘There are so many hundreds of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many thousands of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many hundreds of thousands of pails of water.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of water.<sup>97</sup>

[Refrain 2] [2.4.1.2]

**10** Even so, bhikshus, when a noble disciple possesses these 4 overflowing streams of **merits** overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to measure his merits thus:

‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,

overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—

heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—conducting to what is wished for,

what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.’

**11** The Blessed One said this. Having said this, the Welcome One (*sugata*), the teacher, further said this:

CLOSING VERSE<sup>98</sup>

**12** *mahôdadhiṃ aparimitaṃ mahā,saraṃ  
bahu,bheravaṃ ratana,gaṇanam-ālayaṃ  
najjo yathā nara,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā<sup>100</sup>  
puthū savantī<sup>101</sup> upayanti sāgaraṃ*

Just as a stream, used by crowds and multitudes,<sup>99</sup>  
flowing downstream, reaches the sea,  
the great mass of water, the boundless ocean,  
the fearsome abode of countless gems,

**13** *evaṃ naraṃ anna,da,pāna,vattha,daṃ  
seyyā,nisajj’attharaṇassa dāyakaṃ  
puññassa dhārā upayanti paṇḍitaṃ  
najjo yathā vāri,vahā’va sāgaran’ti*

even so, the streams of merits reach the wise,  
a giver of food, drink and cloth,  
a giver of beds, seats and covers,  
like rivers carrying their waters to the ocean.

*dutiyaṃ*

<sup>95</sup> This 5-great-river parable occurs *only here* in the Abhisanda Collection; but is well known: S 13.3/2:135, 13.4/2:135, 45.92-96/5:39-40, 45.97-102/5:40, 45.103-126/5:40 f, 56.53-54/5:460 f; A 7.66/4:101, 8.19/4:198-202 x3, 10.15/5:22; U 5.5/53x2 55; Cv 9.1.3 (V 2:237). The parable of trying to measure ocean waters by the “pail”: [2.4.4].

<sup>96</sup> *Ettakāni udakāḷhakāni* (*udaka*, “water” + *āḷhaka* [Skt *āḷhaka*], “pail(s)”): S 44.1/4:376,13 = 55.41/5:400,9 [SD 59.9d] = A 4.51/2:55,20 [SD 59.9g] = 5.45/3:52,17 = 6.37/3:337,1, qu VvA 155,13. An *āḷhaka* is a fluid and dry measure: Abhp 482 f: 16 *pasata* = 4 *pattha* = 1 *āḷhaka* =  $\frac{1}{4}$  *doṇa* =  $\frac{1}{16}$  *māṇikā* =  $\frac{1}{64}$  *khāri*, and 20 *khāri* = 1 *vāha*; also ~o *n’itthiyaṃ tumbo*, Abhp 484; expl at SA 1:218,28 = AA 5:62,1 = SnA 476,25 *tena* (*kosala,raṭṭhe*) *patthena cattāro patthā ~am* etc, cf VA 702,22 f ad V 3:243,27 *aḍḍhā*°.

<sup>97</sup> This passage recurs in (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda S 1 (S 55.41,9), SD 59.9d.

<sup>98</sup> These verses recur at the closing of S 55.41,10 f (SD 59.9d, where see nn); S 55.42,12 f (SD 59.9e); A 4.51,5 f (SD 59.9g); A 5.45,10 f (SD 59.9i). [2.5.1]

<sup>99</sup> See n at line c here.

<sup>100</sup> A 5.45 [SD 59.9i]: Be Ce so. Only Ee Se *maccha,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā*, “by the multitudes of fish.”

<sup>101</sup> A 5.45 (SD 59.9i): Only Se *savantī*.

## 9f

**(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3**

**Tatiya (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta** The 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits  
| S 55.43

Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

**8 (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3 (S 55.43), SD 59.9f****8.1 THE ABHISANDA TETRAD**

The **Abhisanda tetrad** comprises 4 suttas—**S 55.41-43 + A 4.52** [SD 59.9defh]—of which this is 3<sup>rd</sup>, that is, **the (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3** (S 55.43), SD 59.9f [6.1]. The tetrad’s common theme is that of **the 4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*), presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1]. The suttas of the tetrad significantly differ in their respective closings. [6.2]

## (Sotāpatti) Abhisanda Sutta 3

### The 3<sup>rd</sup> (Sotāpatti) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

S 55.43

**2** “Bhikkhus, there are these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.<sup>102</sup>  
What are the four?<sup>103</sup>

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (*SOTĀPANASSA AṅGA*)<sup>104</sup>

**3** (1) Here, bhikkhus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>105</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>106</sup>  
‘So too, is he the Blessed One.<sup>107</sup>

for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans,  
awakened, blessed.’

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

<sup>102</sup> *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññābhisandā kusalābhisandā sukhass’āhārā.*

<sup>103</sup> The foll 3 passages are the same as those in S 55.32 (SD 59.9b) and S 55.33 (SD 59.9c).

<sup>104</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see **(Tad-ah’) Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4,52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

<sup>105</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>106</sup> The foll form the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>107</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see *Bud-dhānussati*, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

4 (2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>108</sup> in **the Dharma**, thus:<sup>109</sup>  
 ‘Well-taught<sup>110</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,  
 immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
 accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.’  
 This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

5 (3) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the sangha**, thus:  
 ‘The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised];  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight [direct] way;  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way;  
 the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.  
 These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:  
*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is  
 worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
 a supreme field of merit for the world.’  
 This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

6 (4) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple is **wise**,  
 he possesses wisdom directed<sup>111</sup> to the rising and falling away (of phenomena)<sup>112</sup>  
 that is noble and penetrative,  
 leading to the complete destruction of suffering.<sup>113</sup>  
 This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits, overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 1A

7 These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness.

REFRAIN 2

8 When, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses these 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to measure his merits, thus:  
 ‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—conducting to what is wished for,  
 what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness,’  
 Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.”

<sup>108</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of stream-winner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>109</sup> For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>110</sup> Here begins the 6 qualities of the Dharma (*cha dhamma,guṇa*) (M 7,6/1:37), SD 28.12; (A 6.10/3:285), SD 15.3. The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at *Vism* 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>111</sup> On directed cultivation, see further **Bhikkhuṇī Vāsaka S** (S 47.10/5:154-157), SD 24.2 (1.2).

<sup>112</sup> *Paññavā hoti, uday’attha,gāminiyā paññāya samannāgato*: D 3:237,17; M 1:356,19; S 5:197,19; A 3:2,26; Nm 40,2 etc. On watching the rising and falling of feeling, see **(Aññathatta) Ānanda S 1** (S 22.37/3:37 f), SD 33.11.

<sup>113</sup> For its significance, see **(Sotāpanna) Nandiya S** (S 55.40), esp SD 47.1 (1.1.3.3).

## CLOSING VERSE

9 The Blessed One said this. Having said this, the Welcome One (*sugata*), the teacher, further said this: [2.5.2]

10 *yo puñña, kāmo kusale patitthito  
bhāveti maggāṃ amatassa pattiyaṃ  
so dhamma, sārādhigamo khaye rato  
na vedhati maccu, rājāgamissatī*<sup>115</sup>

One who desires merits, established in the wholesome,  
cultivates the path to attain the deathless.  
Who has gained Dharma's heart, delights in destruction:<sup>114</sup>  
he trembles not, thinking, "The king of death will come!"

*tatiyaṃ*

<sup>114</sup> Comy glosses "the heart of Dharma" (*dhamma, sāra*) as the noble fruition, and "destruction" (*khaya*) as the destruction of defilements.

<sup>115</sup> Be *maccu, rājāgamanasmim*; Ce Ee *maccu, rājā gamissati*; Se *maccu, rāj'āgamissati* (preferred).

## 9g

**(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 1**

The 1<sup>st</sup> (Fours) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | **A 4.51**  
 or **Paṭhama Puññâbhisanda Sutta** The 1<sup>st</sup> Discourse on Overflowing With Merits  
 Theme: The 4 simple joys of the renunciant and the giver

**9 (Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 1 (A 4.51), SD 59.9g****9.1 THE PUÑÑÂBHISANDA DUAD: THE AWAKENING SUTTAS<sup>116</sup>**

**9.1.1** Two of 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection—the **(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta** (A 4.51) [SD 59.9g] and **the (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45) [SD 59.9i]—open by mentioning a monk (that is, a meditator)<sup>117</sup> entering and dwelling in “a boundless concentration of mind” (*appamāṇam ceto,samā-dhim*). The Commentary explains this as “the concentration of the fruition of arhathood” (*arahatta,-phala,samādhi*, AA 3:93,14). This is, in fact, the same kind of samadhi that the Buddha experienced during his own great awakening. [2.1.1]

**9.1.2** Both these Suttas then describe and arhat’s simple life, and the boundless merits we gain from supporting such a person, who has attained the highest awakening [2.1]. The key ideas of the 2 suttas are as follows:

- [9] **(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta**     the 4 supports: robe, almsfood, lodging, medical supplies  
 [11] **(Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta**     the 5 supports: robes, almsfood, lodging, bed + chair, medicines

Note that the only difference between these 2 suttas is that [9] mentions “the 4 supports,” while [10] mentions “the 5 supports.”

The suttas go on to state that one who gives an arhat such supports, earns **merits** as boundless as the waters in the great oceans. Both Suttas close with the same 2 verses beginning with *mah’odadhim ...*<sup>118</sup> Clearly, these 2 suttas are declaring the attainment of arhathood is the highest goal of the Buddhist path. [2.1.2]

**(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 1****The 1<sup>st</sup> (Fours) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits**

A 4.51

**1** “Bhikshus, there are these **4 overflowing streams of merit**,<sup>119</sup>  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

<sup>116</sup> The notes here [9.1] are identical to those at [11.1].

<sup>117</sup> *Bhikkhu* (*bhikkhavo*, *bhikkhave*, etc): address all attending, SD 4.9 (5.3; SD 13.1 (3.1.1); addresses meditators, **Satipaṭṭhāna S** (M 10,3A) n, SD 13.3.

<sup>118</sup> The same 2 verses occur in the closing of 4 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection [6.2.1].

<sup>119</sup> These 4 lines form the “longer abhisanda phrase”: *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññâbhisandā kusalâbhisandā sukhas’sāhārā | sovaggikā sukha,vipākā | sagga,sarivattanikā iṭṭhāya kantāya manāpāya hitāya sukhāya sarivattanti.*

What are the four?<sup>120</sup>

THE 4 JOYS OF THE RENUNCIANT AND THE GIVER<sup>121</sup>

(1) When a monk enters and dwells in a **boundless concentration of mind**<sup>122</sup> while using a **robe** (that one<sup>123</sup> has gained),

one gains *immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(2) When a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using **almsfood** (that he has received),

one gains *immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

[55]

(3) When, bhikshus, a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using a **lodging** [that he has found],

one gains *immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(4) When, bhikshus, a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using **medicines and provisions for the sick** (that he has gained),

he gains *immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

REFRAIN 1B [2.4.1.1]

**2** These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

<sup>120</sup> Here, the 4 streams of merit are explained in terms of the 4 supports (*paccaya*): robes, almsfood, lodging and medicines. Comy derives *sovaggika* colloquially, from *suṭṭhu aggānam rūpādīnam dāyakā*, apparently to reflect the Sutta's mood. Grammatically, it is derived from *sagga* (Skt *svarga*), heaven. At A 4.61, Comy gives its grammatical derivation: *saggassa hitā'ti tatr'upapatti,jananato sovaggikā* (AA 3:100,14 f).

<sup>121</sup> For a parallel sutta in this Abhisanda Collection, but with 4 joys, see **(Catukka) Puññābhisanda S 1** (A 4.51), SD 59.9g.

<sup>122</sup> *Appamānaṃ ceto,samādhim*, which Comy glosses with “the concentration of the fruition of arhathood” (*arahatta,phala,samādhi*, AA 3:93,14).

<sup>123</sup> Although “one” (implicit in the Pali) here clearly refers to the monastic renunciant, the same refs below may (in terms of mutual merits and joy) refer to both the renunciant who practises and the lay giver (practitioner) who supports such a renunciant. This contextual understanding is confirmed by the closing verses [§5 f].

## REFRAIN 2

3 When, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses these 4 overflowing streams of merits, overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to measure his merits thus:

‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.

## PARABLE: IMMEASURABLE AS THE OCEAN WATERS

4 Bhikshus, just as it is not easy to measure the water in **the great ocean**, thus:

‘There are so many pails of **water**,’<sup>124</sup> or

‘There are so many hundreds of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many thousands of pails of water,’ or

‘There are so many hundreds of thousands of pails of water.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of water.<sup>125</sup>

## REFRAIN 2

5 Even so, bhikshus, when a noble disciple possesses these 4 overflowing streams of **merits**, overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to measure his merits thus:

‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,

overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—

heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—conducting to what is wished for,

what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.’

Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.’

CLOSING VERSE<sup>126</sup>

6 *mahôdadhīm aparimitā mahā,saram  
bahu,bheravaṃ ratan’agaṇanam-ālayam  
najjo yathā nara,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā  
puthū savanti upayanti sāgaram*

Just as a stream, used by crowds and multitudes,  
flowing downstream, reaches the sea,  
the great mass of water, the boundless ocean, [56]  
the fearsome abode of countless gems;

7 *evaṃ naram anna,da,pāna,vattha,dam  
seyyā,nisajj’attharaṇassa dāyakam  
puññassa dhārā upayanti paṇḍitam  
najjo yathā vāri,vahā’va sāgaran’ti*

even so the streams of merits reach the wise,  
a giver of food, drink and cloth,  
a giver of beds, seats and covers,  
like rivers carrying their waters to the ocean.

*paṭhamam*

<sup>124</sup> *Ettakāni udakāḷhakāni (udaka, “water” + āḷhaka [Skt āḷhaka], “pail(s)”): S 44.1/4:376,13 = 55.41/5:400,9 [SD 59.9d] = A 4.51/2:55,20 [SD 59.9g] = 5.45/3:52,17 = 6.37/3:337,1, qu VvA 155,13. An āḷhaka is a fluid and dry measure: Abhp 482 f: 16 pasata = 4 pattha = 1 āḷhaka = 1/4 doṇa = 1/16 māṇikā = 1/64 khāri, and 20 khāri = 1 vāha; also ~o n’itthiyam tumbo, Abhp 484; expl at SA 1:218,28 = AA 5:62,1 = SnA 476,25 tena (kosala,raṭṭhe) patthena cattāro patthā ~am etc, cf VA 702,22 f ad V 3:243,27 aḍḍhā°.*

<sup>125</sup> For another water parable—that of river waters filling the ocean—see ((Sotāpatti) Abhisanda S 2 (S 55.42,9), SD 59.9e.

<sup>126</sup> These verses recur at the closing of S 55.41,10 f (SD 59.9d, where see nn), S 55.42,10 f (SD 59.9e), A 5.45,10 f (SD 59.9i). [2.4.1]

## 9h

**(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 2**The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Fours) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | **A 4.52**

Theme: The 4 joys of the streamwinner in this life itself

**10 (Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 2 (A 4.52), SD 59.9h****10.1 THE ABHISANDA TETRAD**

The **Abhisanda tetrad** comprises 4 suttas—**S 55.41-43 + A 4.52** [SD 59.9defh]—of which this is 4<sup>th</sup>, that is, **the (Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 2** (A 4.52), SD 59.9h [6.1]. In the case of A 4.5a, there is the word *abhisanda* in its title, but it is part of a longer compound (a mere technicality).

The tetrad's common theme is that of **the 4 limbs of a streamwinner** (*sotāpanassa aṅga*), presented in 3 variations, depending on which faculty (*indriya*) is the strongest: faith, mindfulness or wisdom [2.2.3.1]. The suttas of the tetrad significantly differ in their respective closings. [6.2]

**(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta 2**The 2<sup>nd</sup> (Fours) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

A 4.52

**1** Bhikshus, there are these **4 overflowing streams of merits**, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducing to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.  
What are the four?

THE 4 LIMBS OF A STREAMWINNER (*SOTĀPANASSA AṅGA*)<sup>127</sup>

(1) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith<sup>128</sup> in **the Buddha**, thus:<sup>129</sup>  
“So too, is he the Blessed One:<sup>130</sup>

for, he is arhat, fully self-awakened one, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer,  
knower of worlds, peerless guide of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans,  
awakened, blessed.”

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> overflowing stream of merits,  
overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—

<sup>127</sup> On the 4 limbs of a streamwinner, see **(Tad-ah') Uposatha S** (A 3.70,4-7), SD 4.18; **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,10-14) SD 3.3(4.2). The suttas in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1] with this same theme: S 55.31 (SD 59.9a), S 55.32 (SD 59.9b), S 55.33 (SD 59.9c), S 55.41 (SD 59.9d), S 55.42 (SD 59.9e), S 55.43 (SD 59.9f), A 4.52 (SD 59.9h): [1.1.1].

<sup>128</sup> “Wise faith,” *avecca-p,pasāda*: **Pañca Vera Bhaya S 1** (S 12.41,11 n), SD 3.3 (4.2); part of stock def of streamwinner: SD 3.3 (4.1.4). *Avecca* (absol of *aveti*, “understands, knows”), understanding, having penetrated; hence, *avecca-p,pasāda* means “(unshakable) faith through understanding or experience.”

<sup>129</sup> The foll form the recollection on the Buddha (*buddhānussati*) [S 11.3,11 + SD 15.5 (2)], comprising the 9 worthy virtues (*navāraha,guṇa*) [SD 15.7 (3)].

<sup>130</sup> Alt tr: “For the following reasons, too, he is the Blessed One [the Lord] ...” On the meaning of *iti pi so*, see *Bud-dhānussati*, SD 15.7 (2.2) & n.

heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

(2) Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the Dharma**, thus:<sup>131</sup>  
“Well-taught<sup>132</sup> is the Blessed One’s true teaching, seen for oneself,  
immediate [having nothing to do with time], inviting one to come and see,  
accessible [leading up to nirvana], to be personally known by the wise.”  
This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits,  
*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(2) “Again, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses wise faith in **the sangha**, thus:  
“The Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the good way [is well-practised];  
the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the straight [direct] way;  
the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the right way;  
the Blessed One’s community of disciples keeps to the proper way.  
These are the 4 pairs of persons, the 8 individuals:  
*this* community of disciples of the Blessed One is  
worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of salutation with the lotus-palms,  
a supreme field of merit for the world.”  
This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits,  
*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(3) Again,<sup>133</sup> bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses moral virtues dear to the noble ones,<sup>134</sup>  
unbroken, untorn; unmixed, spotless; liberating, praised by the wise, untarnished,<sup>135</sup>  
giving rise to mental concentration.<sup>136</sup>  
This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits,  
*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

<sup>131</sup> For detailed analysis of terms here, see **Dhammânussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>132</sup> Here begins the 6 qualities of the Dharma (*cha dhamma, gūṇa*) (M 7,6/1:37), SD 28.12; (A 6.10/3:285), SD 15.3.  
The 6 virtues of the Dharma, commented on at Vism 7.68-88/213-218. See **Dhammânussati**, SD 15.9.

<sup>133</sup> With this quality, this tetrad here forms the “4 limbs of a streamwinner” (*sotāpannassa aṅga*): **Pañca Vera Bhaya S** (S 12.41,14) SD 3.3(4.2).

<sup>134</sup> “Moral virtue dear to the noble ones,” *ariya, kantāni sīlāni*. The noble one’s moral virtue is explained at Vism 7.101-106/221 f. SA says that the noble ones do not violate the 5 precepts because this virtue is dear to them (SA 2:74).

<sup>135</sup> *Aparāmaṭṭhehi*, “untarnished,” ie, unsmirched by craving and wrong view (DA 537); alt tr, “unattached to” on account of craving or wrong view.

<sup>136</sup> *Akhaṇḍehi acchiddehi asabalehi akammāsehi bhujissehi viññūpasatṭhehi aparāmaṭṭhehi samādhi, saṁvattana-kehi*. Found in 7 of the 10 suttas in **Veḷu, dvāra Vagga** (S 55.1-5, 7-8, ie, except nos 6, 9 ad 10); **Cundī Rāja, kumārī S** (A 5.32/3:36), SD 66.4; **(Agata, phala) Mahānāma S** (A 6.10/3:286), SD 15.3. Details at Vism 1.143-161/51-58, 7.101-106/221 f. See also **Virtue ethics**, SD 18.11 (2.2).

## REFRAIN 1

- 2 These, bhikshus, are the 4 overflowing streams of merits,  
*overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducing to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

CLOSING VERSES<sup>137</sup>

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>3 <i>yassa saddhā tathāgate<br/>       acalā supatiṭṭhitā<br/>       sīlañ ca yassa kalyāṇaṃ<br/>       ariya,kantaṃ pasamsitaṃ</i></p>       | <p>When one has faith in the Tathagata,<br/>       unshakable, well-established,<br/>       and whose moral conduct is good,<br/>       praised, loved by the noble ones;</p>  |
| <p>4 <i>saṅghe pasādo yass’atthi<br/>       uju,bhūtañ ca dassanaṃ<br/>       adaliddo’ti āhu<br/>       amoghaṃ tassa jīvitaṃ</i></p>           | <p>when one has faith in the sangha and<br/>       one's vision has been straightened out:<br/>       one is not poor, it is said,<br/>       one’s life is not in vain.</p>   |
| <p>5 <i>tasmā saddhañ ca sīlañ ca<br/>       pasādaṃ dhamma,dassanaṃ<br/>       anuyuñjetha medhāvī<br/>       saraṃ buddhāna sāsanaṃ’ti</i></p> | <p>Therefore, one who is wise,<br/>       recalling the buddhas’ teaching,<br/>       should be yoked to faith and virtue,<br/>       confidence and vision of the Dhamma.</p> |

*dutiyam*

<sup>137</sup> These closing verses recur at **Dalidda S** (S 11.14/1:232); **Anātha,piṇḍika S 1** (S 55.26/5:384); **Sagāthaka S** (S 55.51/5:405). [2.4.3]

# 9i (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta

The (Fives) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits | A 5.45

Theme: The 5 simple joys of the awakened

## 11 (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta (A 5.45), SD 59.9i

### 11.1 THE PUÑÑÂBHISANDA DUAD: THE AWAKENING SUTTAS<sup>138</sup>

**11.1.1** Two of 10 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection—the **(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta** (A 4.51) [SD 59.9g] and **the (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta** (A 5.45) [SD 59.9i]—open by mentioning a monk (that is, a meditator)<sup>139</sup> entering and dwelling in “**a boundless concentration of mind**” (*appamāṇaṃ ceto,samā-dhīṃ*). The Commentary explains this as “the concentration of the fruition of arhathood” (*arahatta,-phala,samādhī*, AA 3:93,14). This is, in fact, the same kind of samadhi that the Buddha experienced during his own great awakening. [2.1.1]

**11.1.2** Both these Suttas then describe an arhat’s simple life, and the boundless merits we gain from supporting such a person, who has attained the highest awakening [2.1]. The key ideas of the 2 suttas are as follows:

- [9] **(Catukka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta**     the 4 supports: robe, almsfood, lodging, medical supplies  
 [10] **(Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta**     the 5 supports: robes, almsfood, lodging, bed + chair, medicines

Note that the only difference between these 2 suttas is that [9] mentions “the 4 supports,” while [10] mentions “the 5 supports.”

The suttas go on to state that one who gives an arhat such supports, earns **merits** as boundless as the waters in the great oceans. Both Suttas close with the same 2 verses beginning with *mah’odadhīṃ ...*<sup>140</sup> Clearly, these 2 suttas are declaring the attainment of arhathood is the highest goal of the Buddhist path. [2.1.2]

## (Pañcaka) Puññâbhisanda Sutta

### The (Fives) Discourse on Overflowing With Merits

A 5.45

- 1** “Bhikshus, there are these **5 overflowing streams of merits**,<sup>141</sup>  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.  
 What are the five?”

<sup>138</sup> The notes here [11.1] are identical to those at [9.1].

<sup>139</sup> See n on “meditator” [9.1.1].

<sup>140</sup> The same 2 verses occur in the closing of 4 suttas of the Abhisanda Collection [6.2.1].

<sup>141</sup> These 4 lines: *Cattāro’me bhikkhave puññâbhisandā kusalâbhisandā sukhass’āhārā | sovaḅḅgikā sukha,vipākā | saggā,samvattanikā iṭṭhāya kantāya manāpāya hitāya sukhāya samvattanti.*

THE 5 JOYS OF THE RENUNCIANT AND THE GIVER<sup>142</sup>

**2** (1) When a monk enters and dwells in a **boundless concentration of mind**<sup>143</sup> while using a **robe** (that one<sup>144</sup> has gained),  
 he gains *immeasurably an overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

**3** (2) When a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using **almsfood** (that he has received),  
*he gains immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

**4** (3) When, bhikshus, a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using a **lodging** [that he has found],  
 he gains immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

**5** (4) When, bhikshus, a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using a **bed and chair**<sup>145</sup> (that he has gained),  
 he gains immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

**6** (5) When, bhikshus, a monk enters and dwells in a boundless concentration of mind while using **medicines and provisions for the sick** (that he has gained),  
 he gains immeasurably overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

<sup>142</sup> For a parallel Sutta in this Abhisanda Collection, but with 4 joys, see **(Catukka) Puññabhisanda S 1** (A 4.51), SD 59.9g.

<sup>143</sup> *Appamānaṃ ceto, samādhim*, which Comy glosses with “the concentration of the fruition of arhathood” (*arahatta, phala, samādhi*, AA 3:93,14).

<sup>144</sup> Although “one” (implicit in the Pali) here clearly refers to the monastic renunciant, the same references below may (in terms of mutual merits and joy) refer to both the renunciant who practises and the lay giver (practitioner) who supports such a renunciant. This contextual understanding is confirmed by the closing verses [§§7-9].

<sup>145</sup> *Mañca, piṭṭham* (a dvandva).

## REFRAIN 1

7 These, bhikshus, are the 5 overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

## REFRAIN 2

8 When, bhikshus, a noble disciple possesses **these 5 overflowing streams of merits**,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to measure his merits thus:  
 ‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
 conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.’  
 Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.

## PARABLE: IMMEASURABLE AS THE OCEAN WATERS

9 Bhikshus, just as it is<sup>146</sup> not easy to measure the water in **the great ocean**, thus:  
 ‘There are so many pails of **water**,’ or  
 ‘There are so many hundreds of pails of water,’ or  
 ‘There are so many thousands of pails of water,’<sup>147</sup> or  
 ‘There are so many hundreds of thousands of pails of water.’  
 Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of water.

10 Even so, bhikshus, when a noble disciple possesses these **5 overflowing streams of merits**,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, it is not easy to measure his merits, thus:  
 ‘Just so much is his overflowing streams of merits,  
 overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
 heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—conducting to what is wished for,  
 what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.’  
 Rather, it is reckoned simply as an incalculable, immeasurable, great mass of merits.’

CLOSING VERSE<sup>148</sup>

<p>11 <i>mahôdadhīm aparimitam mahā,saram          bahu,bheravam ratana,gaṇanam-ālayam          najjo yathā nara,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā<sup>150</sup>          puthū savantī<sup>151</sup> upayanti sāgaram</i></p>	<p>Just as a stream, used by crowds and multitudes,<sup>149</sup>          flowing downstream, reaches the sea,          the great mass of water, the boundless ocean,          the fearsome abode of countless gems, [53]</p>
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<sup>146</sup> This whole passage recurs at **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda S 1** (S 55.41,9), SD 59.9d, & **(Sotāpatti) Abhisanda S 2** (S 55.43,9): this latter is preceded with the parable of the waters of the 5 great rivers (SD 59.9e).

<sup>147</sup> *Udak’āḷhaka,sahassāni*, so Be Ee Se. Ce omits by mistake.

<sup>148</sup> These verses recur at the closing of S 55.41,10 f (SD 59.9d, where see nn), S 55.42,10 f (SD 59.9e), A 4.51,5 f (SD 59.9g). [2.4.1]

<sup>149</sup> See n at line c here.

<sup>150</sup> Be Ce so. Only Ee Se *maccha,gaṇa,saṅgha,sevitā*, “by the multitudes of fish.”

**12** *evaṃ naraṃ anna,da,pāna,vattha,dam  
seyyā,nisajj'attharaṇassa dāyakam  
puññassa dhārā upayanti paṇḍitaṃ  
najjo yathā vāri,vahā'va sāgaran'ti*

even so, the streams of merits reach the wise,  
a giver of food, drink and cloth,  
a giver of beds, seats and covers,  
like rivers carrying their waters to the ocean.

*pañcamam*

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<sup>151</sup> Only Se *savantī*.

# 9j

## (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta

The (Eights) Discourse on the Overflowing | A 8.39

Theme: The joy of the 3 jewels and the 5 gifts

### 12 (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta (A 8.39), SD 59.9j

**12.1** The 10<sup>th</sup> and last sutta of the Abhisanda Collection, **the (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta** (A 8.39), is unique. While the first 8 suttas deal with streamwinning [1.1.1], and the 9<sup>th</sup>, with the arhat, this 10<sup>th</sup> sutta deals with neither. Its significance is simply that it gives, in a beautiful nutshell, the essence of the lay practice of refuge-going [12.2] and precept-keeping [12.3].

#### **12.2 REFUGE-GOING**

##### **12.2.1 The 3 jewels**

Refuge-going is joyful because it affirms and celebrates the presence of the 3 jewels (*ti,sarana*) within our living memory so that we truly declare: [1.1.2.1]

- that **the Buddha**, the fully self-awakened, is our one true teacher;
- that **the Dharma**, to which we awakened, is the one and only way to self-awakening;
- that **the sangha** of noble disciples (monastics and laity who are streamwinners, etc) comprises the witnesses and exemplars of this noble path that we can and must ourselves aspire to and attain.

Hence, refuge-going means that we take the Buddha as our ideal of self-awakening, his Dharma as the path to that goal, and that it is a preparation for us to aspire to at least attain **streamwinning** in this life itself.<sup>152</sup> This vital reminder is highlighted by the 7 suttas on streamwinning in the Abhisanda Collection [1.1.1].

##### **12.2.2 Danger of delaying streamwinning**

There are a number of other suttas that similarly remind us that, when we do not attain streamwinning in this life itself, even when we attain heavenly rebirth through great merits, we will still fall into the subhuman states when our good karma ends.<sup>153</sup> The subhuman states not only characterize most of the beings of this world in which we exist: when we fall into any such state, we are painfully prevented from even hearing or understanding the Dharma teachings of true reality. We are caught in cyclic lives of lust, hate and delusion.<sup>154</sup>

#### **12.3 PRECEPT-KEEPING**

##### **12.3.1 Precept-keeping rooted in wisdom**

**The (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta** (A 8.39) records one of the most beautiful statements on the keeping of the 5 precepts. Keeping the precepts is neither a *ritual* of self-purification nor a *vow* of attaining any kind of holy status. We keep the 5 precepts out of the understanding, the **wisdom**, that there is life, that all and every being love their life. It is the wisdom that when we *love* life, we must live it; hence, we

<sup>152</sup> See **(Anicca) Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

<sup>153</sup> On devas being reborn in the subhuman states: **(Catukka) Puggala S 1** (A 4.123), SD 23.8a.

<sup>154</sup> On the difficulty of human and divine births, and certainty of subhuman rebirths, see **Appa,mattaka Vg** (A 1.19), SD 57.8.

have a livelihood to support that life, that we may live. It is the wisdom that to live is to live *well*, that is, to be **free**: to understand what we *were*, to see oneself as we really *are*, to envision what we *can* and must be. All this must be *true*, so that we can really grow out of our subhuman state, to be human, to enjoy the divinity of love, ruth, joy and peace. This means that we must grow beyond the limits of our physical senses: we must know our own minds, see the heart of it, tame it and free it.

### 12.3.2 Precept-keeping as compassion

To live is let live: out of **lovingkindness**, we accept others as they are; hence, we kill no one. To live is to live well: out of **compassion**, we let others live, grow, prosper, by their own efforts and with our generosity and charity; hence, we do not steal, we do not take the not-given. To live well is to live free, that we can be just the way we are or the good that we dream to be. Hence, we should not violate another in any way: with **joy**, we respect, in body and name.

To live, to live well and free, we must live in truth: this is the only way we can learn and grow, and prosper as a family, a society; hence, in **peace**, we communicate with others, abstaining from false speech, from lying. Finally, we do all this out of *love, ruth, joy and peace*, and keep our own mind unclouded in any way, free from any intoxicant. For, the mind is the key to the door of awakening. [1.1.2.2]

## (Aṭṭhaka) Abhisanda Sutta The (Eights) Discourse on the Overflowing

A 8.39

1 “Bhikshus, there are these **8 overflowing streams of merits**, overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.<sup>155</sup>  
What are the eight?

THE JOY OF REFUGE-GOING

(1) Here, a noble disciple has **gone for refuge to the Buddha**.  
This is the 1st overflowing stream of merits,  
overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

(2) Again, a noble disciple has **gone for refuge to the Dharma**.  
This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> overflowing stream of merits,  
*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

<sup>155</sup> Parts of this Sutta overlap with **(Catukka) Puññābhisanda S 1 + 2** (A 4.51+52), SD 59.9gh; **(Pañcaka) Puññābhisanda S** (A 5.45), SD 59.9i.

(3) Again, a noble disciple has gone for refuge to the sangha.

This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> overflowing stream of merits,

*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—*

*heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—*

*conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

[246]

THE JOY OF THE 5 SUPREME GIFTS

2 There are, bhikshus, these **5 gifts**,

great gifts, foremost, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, never before adulterated, not being adulterated, will never be adulterated, unrepudiated by wise recluses and brahmins.<sup>156</sup>

What are the five?

(4) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple, having abandoned **the destruction of life**, abstains from the destruction of life.

By abstaining from the destruction of life,

the noble disciple gives to countless beings

freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction.<sup>157</sup>

Having given *freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction*,

he himself enjoys boundless *freedom from fear [fearlessness], from hatred, from affliction*.

This is **the 1<sup>st</sup> gift**,

a great gift, foremost, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, never before adulterated, not being adulterated, will never be adulterated, unrepudiated by wise recluses and brahmins.

This is the 4<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits,

*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—*

*heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—*

*conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(5) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple, having abandoned **taking the not-given**, abstains from taking the not-given.

By abstaining from taking the not-given,

the noble disciple gives to countless beings

freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction.

Having given *freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction*,

he himself enjoys boundless *freedom from fear [fearlessness], from hatred, from affliction*.

This is **the 2<sup>nd</sup> gift**,

a great gift, foremost, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, never before adulterated, not being adulterated, will never be adulterated, unrepudiated by wise recluses and brahmins.

This is the 5<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits,

*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—*

*heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—*

*conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

<sup>156</sup> *Pañc'imāni bhikkhave dānāni mahā,dānāni aggaññāni rattaññāni vaṃsaññāni porāṇāni asaṅkiṇṇāni asaṅkiṇṇāna,pubbāni na saṅkiyanti na saṅkiyissanti appatikuṭṭhāni samaṇehi brāhmāṇehi viññūhi.* Cf 4 qualities of religionists, **A 4.30/2:29,32-30,3** (SD 82.17); the 3 pathways of language (*nirutti,patha*), **S 22.62/3:71,16-18** (S 68.1).

<sup>157</sup> "Gives ... freedom from fear ... hatred ... affliction," *abhayaṃ deti averaṃ deti avyapajjhaṃ deti.*

(6) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple, having abandoned **sexual misconduct**, abstains from sexual misconduct.

By abstaining from sexual misconduct,

*the noble disciple gives to countless beings*

*freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction.*

*Having given freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction,*

*he himself enjoys boundless freedom from fear [fearlessness], from hatred, from affliction.*

This is **the 3<sup>rd</sup> gift**,

*a great gift, foremost, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, never before adulterated, not being adulterated, will never be adulterated, unrepudiated by wise recluses and brahmins.*

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits,

*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—*

*heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—*

*conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(7) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple, having abandoned **false speech**, abstains from false speech.

By abstaining from false speech,

*the noble disciple gives to countless beings*

*freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction.*

*Having given freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction,*

*he himself enjoys boundless freedom from fear [fearlessness], from hatred, from affliction.*

This is **the 4<sup>th</sup> gift**,

*a great gift, foremost, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, never before adulterated, not being adulterated, will never be adulterated, unrepudiated by wise recluses and brahmins.*

This is the 7<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits,

*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—*

*heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—*

*conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

(8) Here, bhikshus, a noble disciple, having abandoned **strong drinks, brews, intoxicants, the bases for heedlessness**,

abstains from strong drinks, brews, intoxicants, the bases for heedlessness.

By abstaining from strong drinks, brews, intoxicants, the bases for heedlessness,

*the noble disciple gives to countless beings*

*freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction.*

*Having given freedom from fear, freedom from hatred, freedom from affliction,*

*he himself enjoys boundless freedom from fear [fearlessness], from hatred, from affliction.*

This is **the 5<sup>th</sup> gift**,

*a great gift, foremost, of long standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, never before adulterated, not being adulterated, will never be adulterated, unrepudiated by wise recluses and brahmins.*

This is the 8<sup>th</sup> overflowing stream of merits,

*overflowing stream of the wholesome, food for happiness—*

*heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—*

*conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.*

3 These, bhikshus, are the 8 overflowing streams of merits,  
overflowing streams of the wholesome, food for happiness—  
heavenly, fruiting in happiness, conducive to heaven—  
conducting to what is wished for, what is desired, what is agreeable, to goodness and happiness.

*Navamaṃ*

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