

SD 63.15**Dasa,bala Sutta 2**or **Dutiya Dasa,bala Sutta** The Second Discourse on the 10 Powers**S 12.22**

Theme: The Buddha's qualities and key teachings, and our quest for awakening

Translated by Piya Tan ©2018, 2025

1 Sutta summary and significance

1.1 The Dasa,bala Sutta 2 (S 12.22) opens—reprising the Dasa,bala Sutta 1 (S 12.21, SD 63.14)—by stating the Buddha's key qualities [§2] as being those of the 10 powers and the 4 kinds of moral courage. With these, he is the most evolved of beings (“the lordly bull”) and a teacher heard by the world by way of his “lion roar.” He thus sets rolling the divine wheel of salvation with which we are able to break the wheel of suffering. The Sutta then lists the 5 aggregates [§3] which are to be understood in terms of dependent arising. Then follows the listing of specific conditionality [§4]—that is. the essence of dependent arising [§5] and dependent ending [§6], each of which are laid out in full. Up to this point [§§1-6], the 2 Suttas are identical.

1.2 The Dasa,bala Sutta 2 then closes with the Buddha's admonishing us to devote ourselves to attain awakening [§§7-11] for the benefit of self, others and the world [§12]. These sections are unique to Dasa,bala Sutta 2.

2 The teacher's teaching and the listeners' quest**2.1 AROUSING EFFORT IN DHARMA [§7 f]****2.1.1 “Plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork” [§7.1]**

2.1.1.1 The Buddha, after a year of spiritual search and 6 difficult years of yogic austerities, realized the liberating truth for himself. After a week's solitary reflection and rest, he taught the Dharma for the benefit of others, and ensured that the Dharma is preserved and transmitted down to our own times and beyond. These teachings, the Buddha declares in **the 2 Dasa,bala Suttas**—the 5 aggregates, dependent arising and dependent ending—are “plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork,” *uttāno vivaṭṭo pakāsito chinna,pilotika*.

2.1.1.2 By **plain** (*uttāna*) is meant that the teaching is “open and clear,” not riddled with some casuistic fiats, devious dogmas and mysterious metaphysics. The Dharma words are usually simple and facilitated with figures and images to touch the hearts and minds of those who listen. The Buddha teaches even those who, for some reason, may be unable or unwilling to accept his teachings. For, having heard the Dharma, it is a matter of time, as the person matures, that the seed of the teaching will sprout and blossom into liberating wisdom.

Thus, to the worldly wanderer, Nigrodha, and his community, the Buddha extends this famous open invitation to religious dialogue. **The Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda Sutta** (D 25) records the Buddha declaring thus:

Indeed, Nigrodha,	
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to win pupils.</u>
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to make you fall from your rules.</u>
I do not speak thus out of desire	<u>to make you fall from your livelihood.</u>

I do not speak thus out of desire to establish you in teachings considered unwholesome.
 I do not speak thus out of desire to separate you from teachings considered wholesome.
 There are, Nigrodha, **unwholesome things**, not yet abandoned, defiled,
 conducive to becoming again, fearful, fruiting in future suffering,
 connected with birth, decay and death.
 If you practise accordingly, **these defiled states will be abandoned**,
 the states that **purify** will increase, and *by your direct knowledge*,
you will realize, here and now, the bounty of the accomplishment of wisdom.¹
 (D 25,23.2/3:57 + Table 2.2), SD 1.4²

2.1.1.3 The Dharma is **open** (*vivaṭa*), which means that it is neither some theology nor prophecy from someone, some unseen “God” or some alleged “divine force.” The Dharma is a well discovered and “well taught” (*svākkhata*) open teaching of natural truth and reality discovered by the Buddha who then invites us to “come and see” (*ehi,passika*) it through self-effort to be “self-realized” (*sandiṭṭhika*). This self-understanding “leads one onward” (*opanayika*) to the path of self-awakening. In this way, we become wise with a joyful heart and open mind of Dharma that is “personally known by the wise” (*paccattarāṃ veditabbo viññūhi*).³

2.1.1.4 By **openly taught** (*pakāsita*, “made known”) means that there is nothing hidden or elitist about the teaching, such as the silence of “secret teachings” or “the teacher’s fist” (*ācariya,muṭṭhi*) [§2.25]. Anyone who approaches the Buddha or is ready for the teaching will receive some helpful guidance. In **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16), the Buddha declares his openness as a teacher by admonishing us that, having learned Dharma, we should be willing and able to be our own refuge, thus:

I have taught the Dharma, Ānanda, making no distinction between inner and outer: the Tathagata has no ‘teacher’s fist’ in respect of teachings
 Therefore, Ānanda, dwell with yourself as an island, with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.
 (D 16,225.1-227), SD 9; SD 44.1 (1.1.3)

2.1.1.5 The Sutta Commentary explains **patchwork** (*pilotika*) by alluding to an old cloth, cut up and torn, that has been sewn and stitched here and there. If one does not wear this but is clothed in a sheet of uncut cloth, one is said to be “free of patchwork.” The Dharma is similar; for, in no way is it sewn up and stitched together by deceitful means, and so on (MA 2:119,19-34; SA 2:48).

The Subcommentary adds that “patchwork” means substituting assumed attitudes and postures for a non-existing practice of meditation and insight (SAṬ:Be 2:99). The analogy of a piece of new cloth free of patches or stitches refers to the inner consistency of the Buddha’s teaching.⁴

2.1.1.6 This phrase—*plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork* [§7.2]—recurs in **the Alagadd-ūpama Sutta** (M 22) where it lists those who benefit from the teaching, that is, the 4 kinds of noble saints, and those who only have some wisdom and faith in the teaching, thus:

Bhikshus, **the teaching**, well proclaimed by me, is plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork.

¹ On the significance of this whole passage, see SD 19.1 (7.3).

² On the Buddha’s 7 points for interfaith dialogue, see **Table 2.2**.

³ On the terms here, see **Dhajagga S** (S 11.3,13/1:220), SD 15.5; **Dhammānussati**, SD 15.9. Cf SD 63.14 (3.1.2.2).

⁴ **Cīvara S** (S 16.11/2:220,1 + 221,5 f), SD 77.5, has the expression *pata,pilotikānaṃ saṅghāṭi*, “an outer robe of patches.”

In the teaching, well proclaimed by me, plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork,
there is no (more) round of existence for those monks who are **arhats with influxes destroyed**,⁵
who have lived the holy life, done what is to be done, laid down the burden,
reached their own goal,⁶ destroyed the fetters of being,
and are completely freed through final knowledge.

... [there are] those monks who, with the destruction of the 5 lower fetters,⁷
are all spontaneously reborn (in the pure abodes),⁸ and there attain final nirvana,
without ever returning from that world.

... [there] are those monks who, with the destruction of the 3 fetters,⁹
and with the diminishing of lust, hate and delusion, are **once-returners**,
all of them returning only once to this world to make an end of suffering.

... [there] are those monks who, with the destruction of the 3 fetters, are all **streamwinners**,
no longer bound for the lower world, sure of going over to self-awakening.

... [there] are those monks who are **truth-followers** and **faith-followers**, all bound for awakening.¹⁰

... [there] are those monks who have **just a bit of faith, just a bit of love for me**,
all bound for heaven.¹¹ (M 22,42/1:141 f), SD 3.13

⁵ The older suttas list only 3 influxes (*āsava*)—those of sensual lust, of existence and of ignorance: **D 2**,99.1 n (SD 8.10); **M 11**,9 n (SD 7.13). The later canonical list of 4 influxes adds “the influx of views” after “existence”: **Cūḷa Gopālaka S** (M 34,6) n SD 61.3; SD 9 (10.4.2.2) n; SD 70.18 (2.4.1 n). On 3 or 4 influxes? SD 30.3 (1.3.2).

⁶ *Sad-atthā*, may be resolved two ways: (1) *sa-d-atthā*, “one’s own goal,” (2) *sant + atthā*, “the sublime goal,” “the ideal” (DA 3:86; SA 2:49). Most Comys follow the 2nd interpretation. See Dh:N 169 n166. [2.2.2.]

⁷ The 5 lower fetters are those of (1) self-identity view, (2) spiritual doubt, (3) attachment to rituals and vows, (4) sensual lust, and (5) repulsion. These fetters keep one to rebirth in the sense world: SD 63.12 (3.2.3.5). See **Oraṃ, bhāgiya S** (S 45.179) + SD 50.11 (2); SD 10.16 (1.6.7). On the 10 fetters (*dasa saṃyojana*), see SD 10.16 (1.6.6-8); SD 11.1 (5.1.4); SD 3.3 (2); SD 56.1 (4.4).

⁸ *Opapātika*, ie, reborn in the pure abodes (*suddh’āvāsa*), the 5 highest heavens of the form world (*rūpa,loka*) where only non-returners assume their last birth to become arhats and attain nirvana. These worlds are Āviha (“Non-declining”), Ātappa (“Unworried”), Sudassā (“Clearly Visible”), Sudassī (“Clear-visioned”) and Akaṇiṭṭhā (“Highest”) (D 3:237, M 3:103, Vbh 425, Pug 42-46). *Opapātika* as “spontaneously arisen” (a general ref to rebirth without a self or soul), see **Mahā Cattārisaka S** (M 117,5 n) SD 6.10.

⁹ The (first) 3 fetters are those of (1) self-identity view, (2) spiritual doubt, (3) attachment to rituals and vows: see **Abhabba Tayo, dhamma S** (A 10.76,6) SD 2.4; **Emotional independence**, SD 40a.8; SD 3.3 (5).

¹⁰ *Dhammānusārino saddhā’nusārino sabbe te sambodhi, parāyanā*. These are 2 classes of individuals on the path of streamwinning. The truth-followers or dharma-followers (*dhammānusārī*) are disciples in whom the faculty of wisdom (*paññ’indriya*) is predominant and who develop the noble path with wisdom in the lead; their main practice is the contemplation of non-self; when they attain the fruit they are called “right-view attainer” or “vision attainer” (*ditṭhi-p, patta*). The faith-followers (*saddhā’nusārī*) are disciples in whom the faculty of faith (*saddh’indriya*) is predominant and who develop the noble path with faith in the lead; their main practice is the perception of impermanence; when they attain the fruit they are called “faith-freed” (*saddhā, vimutta*). (M 70,20, 21; Pug 15/1:35-36, Vism 21.75). The elders of old (*porāṇaka therā*) call such a spiritually developed person a “lesser streamwinner” (*cūla, sotāpanna*) or “maturing streamwinner” (*bāla, sotāpanna*) (MA 2:120; cf Vism 605/29.27). On the truth-follower and the faith-follower, and the assurance of streamwinning in this life itself, see (**Anicca**) **Cakkhu S** (S 25.1), SD 16.7.

¹¹ “Those who have just bit of faith, just a bit of love for me,” *yesaṃ mayi saddhā, mattaṃ pema, mattaṃ*. This is not a new category but a key quality of the faith-follower [SD 16.7 (1.3)]. The phrase occurs in **Alagaddūpama S** (M 22,47/1:143), **Bhaddāli S** (M 65,27/1:444) and **Kiṭṭā, giri S** (M 70,21/1:479), SD 12.1. Cf **Sarakāni Ss** (S 55.24-25/-4:375-380), where they are said not to be reborn in any subhuman state. Comy explains that this refers to the in-

2.1.2 The bodhisattva's determination [§7.2]

2.1.2.1 When the bodhisattva left the palace to renounce the world, he was determined to find the answer and solution to suffering (that is decay, disease and death). Having lived with palatial luxury and pleasure all his youth, he knew that the body, subject to physical pleasure, was not the answer. Indeed, it seemed to be *the root of our sufferings*. We suffer because of the pain that arises in our body; we suffer after the pleasure we have enjoyed is gone, and when the pleasure we desire cannot be gotten.

Like many yogis of his day, the bodhisattva thought that by getting rid of the body might be the answer that he was looking for. Since *the body* brings suffering, surely the ending to suffering must lie in the mind, he thought. However, the body supports the mind, and the body must prepare itself well to support the mind that seeks to free itself from the body.

The body wholesomely prepares itself “**by personal strength, by personal energy, by personal exertion,**” (*purisa, thāmena purisa, viriyena purisa-k, kamena*)¹² to help free the mind. In this connection, the Buddha describes his determination to gain awakening with these words, reprised in **the Jātaka Nidāna**, thus:

Willingly, I will let only skin, let my body dry up,	sinews and bones remain; and flesh and blood, too. ¹³
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There will be no end in my effort until I have won what can be won by personal strength,
personal effort, personal striving! [§7.2]

The bodhisattva then assumed the “invincible posture” (*aparajita pallaṅka*), that is, the full-lotus posture for deep meditation. Immediately following this determination of the bodhisattva, Māra (the evil one) appeared with his great host of demons and all kinds of fearful weapons and manifestations to thwart the bodhisattva's quest for awakening.¹⁴

2.1.2.2 The polysemic Pali term *sad-attha* occurs in §7 of the Dasa, bala Sutta 2, where it is said of “a lazy person”—one who neither works for personal development nor exerts himself spiritually—“**great is the personal good that he neglects.**” This is one of the senses of *sad-attha*, which may be resolved in two ways:

- (1) *sa-d-atthā*, “personal good, one's own goal” (MA 1:43; SA 2:49; CA 139);
- (2) *sant + atthā*, “the sublime goal,” “the true ideal” (DA 3:86) or arhathood (SA 2:50).

The Commentaries are generally aware of its polysemy, that is, *sadattham* as *sobhanam vā attham sakam vā attham*, “the beautiful good or one's own good” (SA 2:49,29 f; ItA 1:165; J 4:26). Notice that

sight practitioners (*vipassaka puggalā*) who have not attained any supramundane state, not gaining even stream-winning, but who are reborn in heaven. To have “a bit of faith, a bit of love” in the Buddha is to show habitual positive emotion (lovingkindness), which is conducive to rebirth in heaven. Significantly, early Buddhism offers all the good that theistic religion seems to offer, but the Dhamma has much more to offer in terms of salvation: to rise even above and beyond heaven itself, to nirvana. See M:ÑB 2001:1212 n274.

¹² *Purisa* can also mean “man, person”; here the context suggests self-effort, hence “personal.”

¹³ Comy refers to the 4-factored energy (*caturaṅga, samannāgataṃ viriyam*); the 4 factors are to be understood by way of *skin, sinews, bones, and flesh-and-blood*. The vow recurs at the close of **Kiṭṭhā, giri S** (M 70,27/1:481,1-5), SD 11.1, and **Ghaṭṭa S** (S 21.3/2:276,12-16), SD 64.4. **Jātaka Nidāna, kathā** (J 1:71,24-27) records that the bodhisattva makes the same resolve when he takes his seat at the foot of the bodhi tree.

¹⁴ For narrative details on Māra's attack on the bodhisattva that follow, see SD 52.1 (16).

sakam implies self-effort and self-realization. The Sutta context above clearly dictates the first sense, suggesting *personal effort*. Anyway, we can also see a wordplay here, where both senses may apply.¹⁵

2.2 ATTAINING THE FOREMOST BY THE FOREMOST [§9-11f]

2.2.1 “It is not by the inferior that the foremost is attained” [§8]

2.2.1.1 The Dasa,bala Sutta 2 then records the Buddha as going on to say:

But, bhikshus, **the energetic person** dwells happily, secluded from evil unwholesome states, and great is the personal good that he achieves.
*āraddha,viriyo ca kho bhikkhave sukhāṃ viharati pavivitto pāpakehi akusalehi dhamme-
 hi, mahantañ ca sad-atthaṃ paripūreti.* [§8]

The path is said to be “the personal good” (*sad-attha*) in 2 ways: the practical and the spiritual (the further senses of *sad-attha*). The path is **practically good** in the sense that it builds up one’s practice, cultivating the morally good in terms of body and speech (that is, keeping the precepts). The body that is morally good is *well-tamed*, well restrained, preparing itself as the foundation for the 2nd practical sense.

Thus, in a 2nd sense, the path is “the personal good” since it builds us up with what is good mentally, in terms of training and keeping the mind *calm and clear*, that is, a mind that readily sees directly into true reality and gains wisdom, that is, liberating insight. This is the 2nd practical sense of “the personal good.”

2.2.1.2 Finally, **the path** is “the personal good” in the 2nd broad sense of being **spiritually good**. The practical goodness of the path may be said to the “worldly” (*lokiya*) aspect of our training, that is, for one still “in the world” (that is, one who has not yet reached the path). The spiritually good refers to when our moral training and mental development ripen into the path, that is, we attain streamwinning. At this first awakening point, *the practically good* transforms into the spiritually good; we become a “noble disciple” (*ariya,sāvaka*), ready to move further up the path towards awakening.

2.2.2 “It is by the foremost that the foremost is attained” [§9]

2.2.2.1 The Saṃyutta Commentary explains that the Buddha’s knowledge of realization is supra-mundane (*lok’uttara*) (it *has* liberated him); the Buddha’s knowledge of the teaching is mundane (*lokiya*) (it *will* liberate the listener who practises).¹⁶

Based on this understanding, we can surmise that while the path as training (moral discipline, mental development and wisdom attainment) is “mundane” or “worldly” (we practise it as a worldling, an un-awakened person), the path fruition is “supramundane” (with the attaining of streamwinning onwards).

2.2.2.2 “**The personal good**” (*sad-attha*)—meaning here “the path leading to awakening”—is also referred to as “**the foremost**” (*agga*), that is, “the one path and its only supreme goal.” This path is said to be “foremost” (*agga*) in terms of the 5 spiritual faculties (*pañc’indriya*)—*faith, effort [energy], mindfulness, samadhi and wisdom*—that the practitioner has to cultivate to the best of their ability. [2.1.1.6n]

The Commentary reminds us that “inferior faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom” will not bring us the foremost (*agga*), namely, arhathood. The foremost (arhathood), or even stream-

¹⁵ On *sad-attha*, see Dh:N 104 n166 & W Rau, “Bermerkungen und nicht-buddhistische Sanskrit-Parallelen zum Pali-Dhammapada,” Delhi, 1959:169.

¹⁶ SA 2:46,24-25,6. See SD 63.14 (3.1.2.2).

winning itself, will be attained by foremost faith and so forth.¹⁷ In other words, we should neither water down nor corrupt the Dharma.

Knowing merely the word of Dharma without reflecting on it and understanding it is like merely keeping bottles of medicine prescribed for us, only occasionally reading the labels but never taking the medicine as prescribed.

Mere book-knowledge of Dharma for intellectual discourse will only leave us at that level.

Mixing up the Dharma with outside teachings will only leave us mixed up and lost, neither here nor there, falling in between.

Awakening is not about merely *knowing* “the Dharma,” which is like a mirror we look into or a lens we examine things with. What do we see in the mirror? What do we see through the lens?

We progress to the Dharma path by seeing the impermanence (*aniccā*) of the image and the object that we experience, that they are all *mind-made* and *conditioned*; hence, unsatisfactory (*dukkha*). We should not make “anything” (*kiñcana*) of these images and objects. These events happen in the moment and then slip into the past, becoming memories or are simply forgotten.

These memories are like faded photos in old flimsy albums into which we glance in the half-light of our emotions (greed, hatred, delusion and fear). Just as our present experiences are *mind-made*, our memories, too, are constructed depending on our present biases, wishes and hopes. They are all with **neither essence nor reality**; they are but passing images flashing across our mind and in our dreams.¹⁸

2.3 “THIS HOLY LIFE IS A CREAM-DRINK WHILE THE TEACHER IS PRESENT” [§10]

2.3.1 A cream-drink

2.3.1.1 In §10 of the Dasa,bala Sutta 2, the Buddha is reported as saying:

“Bhikshus, this holy life is a **cream-drink** while the Teacher is present.”
*Maṇḍa,peyyam*¹⁹ *idaṃ bhikkhave brahma,cariyaṃ, satthā sammukhī,bhūto.*

Paraphrased, this sentence means: While the Buddha lives as teacher, this Dharma training and community of noble disciples contains the best of humanity, beings and spirituality. There are the teaching and training, the communities of laity, of renunciants and of noble ones, and the path to awakening.

2.3.1.2 With the Buddha as **the living teacher**, he ensures that his teaching and training are properly understood and practised with wholesome results. The Buddha himself serves as the exemplar of the Dharma, its living manifestation. The Buddha “instructs, inspires, rouses and gladdens (others) with a

¹⁷ *Hīnena aggassā ti hīnāya saddhāya hīnena vīriyena hīnāya satiyā hīnena samādhinā hīnāya paññāya agga,sañ-khātassa arahattassa patti nāma na hoti. Aggena ca kho ti aggehi saddhādīhi aggassa arahattassa patti hoti.* (SA 2:50,24-27)

¹⁸ On dreams and dreaming, see SD 63.13 esp (1.3, 3).

¹⁹ *Maṇḍa,peyyam*. Comy resolves *maṇḍa,peyya* as **maṇḍa**, “clear” (*pasanna*) + **peyya**, “what is to be drunk” (*pā-tabba*) (SA 2:50,27-51,16); Comy qu Pm ch 10 [2.3.2.3]. Lit, *maṇḍa* is the best part of milk or butter, ie, “the cream” —as in English this signifies the essence or finest part of anything. At S 34.1, etc, we find *sappi,maṇḍa*, “cream of ghee,” the finest of dairy products.

Dharma-talk.”²⁰ [2.3.3]. When the listener or audience is right and ready, he teaches them the 4 noble truths, so that, by their own effort, they attain awakening, the cream of spiritual life.²¹

This is the “cream” (*maṇḍa*) “that is drunk” (*peyya*); it is like ambrosia (*ojā*) which gives the gods profoundly long and beautiful lives. The ambrosia that is the Dharma brings the peace of nirvana that is beyond space and time. This is the “cream” in the sense that it is the highest and best happiness (*nibbānam paramam sukham*, Dh 204),²² human and beyond.

2.3.1.3 The Dharma is well taught by the Blessed One (*svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo*); it means that Buddha Dharma reaches to all levels of society and all kinds of beings. “**Truly the Dharma protects the Dharmafarer**” (*dhammo have rakkhati dhamma, cāriṃ*); the Dharma well practised brings happiness (Tha 303).²³ The Thera, gātha Commentary explains **dhamma** as referring to the good conduct arising on account of worldly teachings (as practised by those who have not reached the path) or from the supra-mundane path (for becoming noble individuals, heading for awakening).²⁴

“**Protects**” (*rakkhati*) means that those with spiritual basis in Dharma are protected by way of turning away from the suffering of subhuman states and the suffering on account of samsara itself.²⁵

“**Dharmafarer**” (*dharma, cāri*) is one who practises the Dharma by living it.²⁶

The Dharmafarer’s happiness arises from a body that is free of unwholesome actions and speech, and the mind that is calm and clear, that sees directly into reality and enjoys the peace of the path or of awakening itself.

2.3.2 The holy life

2.3.2.1 The Dharma training is called **brahma, cariya**, where *brahma* (adj) means “divine, perfect,” and *cariya* (n), “conduct, life”; hence, it is the divine life of spiritual perfection. Those who truly live by the Dharma, joyful in moral virtue and peacefully clear in mind, will surely attain streamwinning in this life itself, and even go on to attain arhathood, like the Buddha himself.

The Dharma-spirited life is the perfect life—like that of the brahmas themselves, joyful and contented, liberated from the physical body—a life of moral virtue and celibacy. Unlike the brahmas, these **noble individuals** (*ariya, puggala*) will not fall from their happy state because such negative karma have been forestalled by their overcoming the various “fetters” (*saṃyojana*) of being. This means that they will never be reborn in any subhuman state (preta, animal, asura, or hell-being), and will arise in some happy state conducive to Dharma practice.

2.3.2.2 “Celibacy” is here included in the definition of *brahma, cariya* since it entails deepening levels of renunciation (*nekkhamma*) in the spiritual sense.

By attaining **streamwinning** or attaining **once-returning**, one frees oneself from falling into the sub-human states.

²⁰ *Dhammiyā kathāya sandasseti samādapeti samuttejeti sampahaṃseti* (M 1:176). Also “having instructed, ... etc,” *sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā*. For explanations of key words, see SD 59.13 (2.2). For occurrences of this stock: V 1:18, 2:128 f; D 1:126, 149, 2:86, 98, 109, 110, 127, 3:27, 209; M 1:209, 354, 2:139, 3:155; S 2:215, 3:95, 4:183, 5:155; A 3:380, 4:67, 118, 307 (x2), 5:122, 125; U 39, 82, 87. On the stages of teachings, see SD 11.4 (4.3).

²¹ On the progressive talk (*ānupubbī, katha*), see SD 63.14 (2.1.5.3).

²² Also at Dh:Patna 76 (5.12), Uv 26.6, Dh:Gāndhārī 162 (11.1).

²³ Also at Uv 30.6+7; Mvst 2:81.

²⁴ *Dhammo ti lokiya, lok’uttaro sucarita, dhammo* (ThaA 2:128, 15).

²⁵ *Rakkhatī ti apāya, dukkhato rakkhati, saṃsāra, dukkhato ca vivaṭṭūpanissaya, bhūto rakkhati yeva* (ThaA 2:128, 15-17).

²⁶ *Dhamma, cārin ti taṃ dhammam carantam paṭipajantam* (ThaA 2:128, 17 f).

By attaining **nonreturning**, one frees oneself from “returning” to be reborn in the sense-world.

By attaining **arhathood**, one fully frees oneself from being imprisoned in the cyclic world, since one is freed from all rebirth.

All the noble disciples are free from sensual lust, which means that they are naturally free from any desire for sexual pleasure. The reason for this is simply because they have tasted a pleasure that is much greater than sensual pleasure, “**that has nothing to do with sensual desires and unwholesome states** (*yaṃ taṃ sukhaṃ aññatr’eva kāmehi aññatra akusalehi dhammehi ti*).”²⁷ Hence, they are all happily celibate. Even in this life itself they live like the gods; after death, they arise in happy states, even the heavens, if not nirvana itself.²⁸

2.3.2.3 The whole sentence, “**Bhikshus, this holy life is a cream-drink while the teacher is present**” (*maṇḍa,peyyam idaṃ bhikkhave brahma,cariyaṃ, satthā sammukhī,bhūto*) [§10] serves as the heading for the Maha,vagga Maṇḍapeyya,kathā of the **Paṭisambhidā** (Pm 10/2:86-91), the 12th book of the Khuddaka Nikāya. It uses this cream metaphor to explain all the training-limbs of the path. Since the teacher is present, one, having made energetic effort, will partake of this cream-drink. [2.3.3]

The Paṭisambhidā,magga and its Commentary explain that there are 3 types of cream.²⁹

(1) the cream that is the teachings (*desana,maṇḍa*), that is, the 4 noble truths and the 37 limbs of awakening (Pm 10.3);³⁰

(2) the cream that is the recipients (*paṭiggaha,maṇḍa*), that is, disciples capable of understanding those teachings (Pm 10.4); and

(3) the cream that is the holy life (*brahmacariya,maṇḍa*), that is, the noble eightfold path (Pm 10.5).
(Pm 2:86; PmA 3:581,18-20)

2.3.3 “While the teacher is present” [§10]

2.3.3.1 The above phrase is the closing half of the sentence,
“**This holy life is a cream-drink while the teacher is present**” [§10].

“While the teacher is present” (*satthā sammukhī,bhūto*) literally means “being before or face-to-face with the teacher.” Clearly this reading refers to the time when the Buddha was still living. While the Buddha still lives and is approachable, we should make every effort to practise the best of the Dharma-Vinaya, that is, to attain awakening.

2.3.3.2 In the **Kiṭṭā,giri Sutta** (M 70), the Buddha describes Dharma training, that is, “**by gradual training, ... gradual practice, ... gradual progress,**” one gains final knowledge, that is, arhathood. This is called the 12-step “progressive training” (*anupubba,sikkhā*) as follows:

Here, monks,

(1) he who has faith (in a teacher) approaches him.

²⁷ *Na kho ahaṃ tassa sukhasa bhāyāmi, yaṃ taṃ sukhaṃ aññatt’eva kāmehi aññatra akusalehi dhammehi* (M:Ee 1:247,3; M:Ce 1: 584,4 and M:Se 1:458,5: *yantaṃ*, after which Se continues directly with *aññatr’eva*, omitting *sukhaṃ*). On the 2 kinds of pleasures—sensual pleasure and the joy of renunciation—see **Mahā Saccaka S** (M 36,32.2), SD 49.4; **Laṭukikōpama S** (M 66,21/1:455), SD 28.11; **Araṇa Vibhaṅga S** (M 139,9.3/3:233), SD 7.8. On pleasure felt by the awakened mind, see **Uṇṇābha S** (S 51.15), SD 10.10.

²⁸ On streamwinners being celibate but enjoying sensual pleasures, see SD 63.12 (3.2.2.2).

²⁹ For tr, see Pm:Ñ 282.

³⁰ On the 4 noble truths, see **Dhamma,cakka Pavattana S** (S 56.11,9-12) + SD 1.1 (5.1.5); on the 37 limbs of awakening (*bodhi,pakkhiya,dhamma*), see **Bodhi.pakkhiya,dhamma**, SD 10.1, SD 56.13a(2) (2.1).

- (2) Approaching him, he draws near to him.
- (3) Drawing near [attending] to him, he lends his ear [listens attentively] to him.
- (4) He who lends his ear, listens to the Dharma.
- (5) Having listened to the Dharma, he remembers [memorizes] it.
- (6) Having remembered the teachings, he investigates their meaning.
- (7) Having investigated their meaning, he reflectively accepts the teachings.
- (8) Having reflectively accepted the teachings, desire [will-power] arises in him.
- (9) When desire [will-power] has arisen in him, he exerts himself [he applies his will].
- (10) Having exerted himself [Having applied his will], he weighs [harmonizes³¹ his practice].
- (11) Having weighed [harmonized his practice], he is resolute [strives on].
- (12) Being resolute, he realizes the ultimate truth with his own body and sees it by penetrating it with wisdom. (M 70,22 f/1:479 f), SD 11.1³²

The 12-step progressive training is a sort of re-enactment of the bodhisattva's **renunciation**, when he left home and the world to discover personally for himself the true reality of life that would bring him full awakening, that is, becoming liberated as the wisest of humans, and so become a world teacher. In this progressive training, one leaves behind the comfort zone of a self-centred child on a journey of self-discovery with the Buddha or a Dharma teacher. At the end of the journey, one matures into a **true individual** (*sappurisa*), here a synonym for a noble disciple, such as a streamwinner and so on.

2.3.3.3 The bodhisattva's great renunciation progressed and matured into **the great awakening**. He lived for 45 years teaching Dharma himself, converting numerous great disciples, who themselves were great teachers, and benefitting many others, even to this very day. In his **teachings**, the Buddha neither claimed omniscience (knowing everything at the same time) or that he was immortal (which is impossible for any living being).

The Buddha's **final passing away**—as recorded in **the Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta** (D 16)—stamped the final seal of authentication of his teaching. That final universal truth is simple enough:

“Formations, by nature, pass away! Strive on diligently!”³³

The final message from the Buddha means that all that exists must pass away. Knowing this universal reality, we can and must each work out our own salvation. Impermanence and death are universal; if things were eternal, and there were no death, life and reality would be meaningless. Since everything is impermanent and all that live must die, we give **meaning** to life.

2.3.3.4 When the meaning of such true reality is grasped, we also see a profound universal reality; it gives **purpose** to our lives. **“Strive on diligently!”** declares the Buddha.

Therefore, Ānanda, dwell with yourself as an island, **with yourself as refuge, with no other refuge**—dwell with the Dharma as an island, with the Dharma as refuge, with no other refuge.³⁴
(D 16,2.26/2:100), SD 9

³¹ Or, “balances” (the 5 spiritual faculties).

³² See also **M 94**,20-33 (SD 21.15).

³³ *Vaya, dhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādettha* (D 16,3.51/2:120), SD 9. Cf SD 60.1d (6.2.3.4).

³⁴ *Tasmā-t-ih’Ānanda atta, dīpā viharatha atta, saraṇā anañña, saraṇā, dhamma, dīpā dhamma, saraṇā anañña, -saraṇā* (D 16,2.26/2:100 = 26.1/3:58, 26.27/77; S 22.43/3:42, 47.9/5:154, 47.13/5:163, 47.14/5:164): many of them at different venues and to different interlocutors. On the tr of *dīpa* here as “island” or as “lamp” & discussion, see **Intro (6.1)** above.

While the Buddha lives, he teaches, transforms lives and ensures that the Dharma is transmitted to posterity, that is, so that we today will know and benefit from it, too. This is called **the Buddha's dispensation** (*buddha,sāsana*). This is the Buddha's teaching of self-reliance and self-salvation. His authentic teachings are still with us and still accessible. We should thus exert ourselves in Dharma and drink the cream-drink for our own spiritual health.³⁵

2.4 SPIRITUAL EXCHANGE AND CHANGE [§11]

2.4.1 Growing Dharmawise [§§10.2, 11]

2.4.1.1 Near the close of the Dasa,bala Sutta 2, the Buddha advises the monks, thus:

10.2 Therefore, bhikshus, arouse your energy for **attaining the unattained**, for **realizing the unrealized**, [thinking]:

11 "In this way this going forth of ours will not be barren, but be fertile and fruitful; and when we use the robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicinal requisites [offered to us by others], these actions (of giving the supports) will be of great fruit and benefit to them." (§§10.2, 11)

In §10.2 the Buddha admonishes us³⁶ as practitioners to keep up our practice. Even when we spend just a bit of time occasionally listening to the Dharma or studying a sutta, time and impermanence are on our side. The teachings begin to fall together as we go through life; indeed, as we age, we discover that the Buddha is all along talking about our own experiences of change, lack, losses and knowing ourselves better.

By **attaining the unattained** (*appattassa pattiyā*) means that we notice that we have reached a new level of self-understanding and wisdom about ourself and people of significance to us.

By **realizing the unrealized** (*anadhigatassa adhigamāya*) means that we discover some deeper aspects of true reality about life and others, especially that nothing else matters other than our own health and happiness.

2.4.1.2 In §11.2, the Buddha makes a profound statement regarding our own self-view and how we should see ourselves no matter what people think of us. When we have "attained the unattained," or "realized the unrealized," even to a small personal degree, it is like the clouds around the mountain-top clearing up briefly and we are able to see the beautiful majestic peak.

"In this way **this going forth** of ours will not be barren, but be fertile and fruitful; and when we use *the robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicinal requisites* [offered to us by others], these actions (of giving the supports) will be of great fruit and benefit to them."

[§11.2]

For monastics, this means that, looking back at their own lives as renunciants, they joyfully know that they have tried their best to keep to the Vinaya and understand the Dharma in terms of true reality. They have worthily received the support of the laity, and the laity, too, have benefitted from associating with them as renunciants.

³⁵ On self as refuge and self-reliance, see **The one true refuge**, SD 3.1 (3.2); SD 27.3 (3.1.1).

³⁶ The vocative "bhikshus" (*bhikkhave*) refers to all present during the teaching or to those who practise the Dharma: SD 4.9 (5.3); SD 13.1 (3.1.1).

2.4.1.3 The above passage [2.4.1.2] is related to a similar passage in **the Alagaddûpama Sutta** (M 22) where the Buddha is reflecting that, whether others respect him deeply or abuse him for any reason; he is not concerned, reflecting thus:

It is towards **this** [mind-body of 5 aggregates] that was earlier fully comprehended that they perform such acts.³⁷

yaṃ kho idaṃ pubbe pariññātaṃ tattha me (no) evarūpā kārā kariyanti.

(M 22,38.2+39.2/1:140,23 f + 31 f), SD 3.13

One way of reflecting with profound significance on this seemingly simple statement is this: Others only see us as the 5 aggregates, as *form, feeling, perception, formations and consciousness*. Even then, they only see our **form** (*rūpa*), a mental object of our body in their own minds, their own feelings about it (“us” as a body), perceiving it dependent on their own past memories, and forming their own karmic conclusions, and all this becomes their own consciousness (or mind). This is all of *their own doing* (*kārā*). When we understand this, we remain just as we are, happy and peaceful in Dharma.

They have created us in their own image—just as we, too, create others in our own image! Spirituality starts when we understand what it means to stop playing God.

2.4.2 For the good of self, of others, and of both [§12]

2.4.2.1 The Dasa,bala Sutta 2 closes with the Buddha admonishing thus:

Thus, bhikshus, should you train yourselves.

Considering **your own good**, bhikshus, it is enough to diligently strive for the goal.

Considering the good of others, *it is enough to diligently strive for the goal.*

Considering the good of both, *it is enough to diligently strive for the goal.”* [§12]

This passage is reprised in **the Aggi-k,khandhûpama Sutta** (A 7.68)³⁸ preceded by the same passage exhorting that monastics should be worthy of laity’s support [2.4.1.2]. One should diligently strive for the good for one’s own benefit, for the benefit of others, and for the benefit of the whole world, including posterity.

2.4.2.2 The Mahā,parinibbāna Sutta (D 16) preserves the Buddha’s last instruction as follows:

³⁹Then, the Blessed One addressed the monks:

“Now, bhikshus, I exhort you:

Conditioned things are subject to decay—strive on diligently!”⁴⁰

These were the tathāgata’s last words.

(D 16,6.7/2:156), SD 9

³⁷ “Perform such acts,” *eva,rūpā kārā*. On *kāra* as “doing, making,” see DP sv (1:673).

³⁸ **A 7.68**,39/4:135 (SD 52.12).

³⁹ The foll D 16,6.7-10 are at **Parinibbāna S** (S 1:157.34-158,2) but differ as to sentence order.

⁴⁰ *Vaya,dhammā saṅkhārā, appamādena sampādethā ti*. In **Parinibbāna S** (S 6.2), this is reversed: *appamādena sampādetha, vaya,dhammā saṅkhārā ti* (S 6.2/1:158). However, Bh Bodhi appears not to have noticed this, rendering it as in Mahā,parinibbāna S (S:B 251). The Sarvāstivāda ed omits *appamādena sampādetha*. The Chin versions vary, T1 eg gives a more elaborate exhortation here.

As the Buddha's final instruction, it is phrased as in the exhortative mode, *appamādena sampādeṭha*, "Strive on diligently!"⁴¹ Self-reliance means living the Dharma proactively. Act now with diligence, be happy forever.

— — —

Dasa,bala Sutta 2

The Second Discourse on the 10 Powers

S 12.22

1 (The Blessed One was) residing at Savatthī.

2 "Bhikshus, accomplished in the 10 powers⁴² and the 4 kinds of moral courage,⁴³ the Tathagata claims the **place** of the lordly bull,⁴⁴ roars his lion-roar⁴⁵ in assemblies,⁴⁶ and sets rolling the divine wheel⁴⁷ thus:

3 Conditionality of the 5 aggregates⁴⁸

Such is form .	Such is the <u>arising</u> of <i>form</i> .	Such is the <u>ceasing</u> of <i>form</i> .
Such is feeling .	Such is the <u>arising</u> of <i>feeling</i> .	Such is the <u>ceasing</u> of <i>feeling</i> .
Such are formations .	Such is the <u>arising</u> of <i>formations</i> .	Such is the <u>ceasing</u> of <i>formations</i> .
Such is perception .	Such is the <u>arising</u> of <i>perception</i> .	Such is the <u>ceasing</u> of <i>perception</i> .
Such is consciousness .	Such is the <u>arising</u> of <i>consciousness</i> .	Such is the <u>ceasing</u> of <i>consciousness</i> .

4 Specific conditionality (*idap-paccayatā*)⁴⁹

Thus		<i>iti</i>
when this is,	that is;	<i>imasmim̐ sati idam̐ hoti</i>
with this arising,	that arises.	<i>imass'uppādā idam̐ uppajjati</i>
When this is not,	that is not;	<i>imasmim̐ asati idam̐ na hoti</i>
with this ending,	that ends.	<i>imassa nirodhā idam̐ nirujjhati</i>

⁴¹ D 16,3.51+6.5-10/2:120 + 156), SD 9.

⁴² On the Buddha's 10 powers, see SD 63.14 (2.1).

⁴³ On the Buddha's moral courage, see SD 63.14 (2.3).

⁴⁴ On the lordly bull (*āsabha*), see SD 63.14 (2.4.1).

⁴⁵ On the lion-roar, see SD 63.14 (2.4.2).

⁴⁶ On the assemblies, see SD 63.14 (2.4.3).

⁴⁷ On the divine wheel, see SD 63.14 (3.1.2).

⁴⁸ On the 5 aggregates, see SD 63.14 (3.2)

⁴⁹ On specific conditionality, see SD 63.14 (3.3).

5 Dependent arising (*paṭicca,samuppāda*)⁵⁰

With **ignorance** as condition, there are volitional formations;
 with **volitional formations** as condition, there is consciousness;
 with **consciousness** as condition, there is name-and-form;
 with **name-and-form** as condition, there are the 6 sense-bases;
 with **the 6 sense-bases** as condition, there is contact;
 with **contact** as condition, there is feeling;
 with **feeling** as condition, there is craving;
 with **craving** as condition, there is clinging;
 with **clinging** as condition, there is existence;
 with **existence** as condition, there is birth;
 with **birth** as condition there arise **decay-and-death**,
 sorrow, lamentation, physical pain, mental pain and despair.

Such is the arising of this whole mass of suffering.

*avijjā,paccayā saṅkhārā
 saṅkhāra,paccayā viññāṇaṃ
 viññāṇa,paccayā nāma,rūpaṃ
 nāma,rūpa,paccayā saḷāyatanaṃ
 saḷāyatana,paccayā phassa
 phassa,paccayā vedanā
 vedanā,paccayā taṇhā
 taṇhā,paccayā upādānaṃ
 upādāna,paccayā bhava
 bhava,paccayā jāti
 jāti,paccayā jarā,marañam
 soka,parideva,dukkha,domanass'-
 upāyasā sambhavanti—
 evam-etassa kevalassa dukkha-k,-
 khandhassa samudayo hoti*

6 Dependent ending (*paṭicca,nirodha*)⁵¹

But with the remainderless fading away
 and ending of **ignorance**, volitional formations end;
 with the ending of **volitional formations**, consciousness ends;
 with the ending of **consciousness**, name-and-form ends;
 with the ending of **name-and-form**, the 6 sense-bases end;
 with the ending of **the 6 sense-bases**, contact ends;
 with the ending of **contact**, feeling ends;
 with the ending of **feeling**, craving ends;
 with the ending of **craving**, clinging ends;
 with the ending of **clinging**, existence ends;
 with the ending of **existence**, birth ends;
 with the ending of **birth**, there end **decay-and-death**,
 sorrow, lamentation, physical pain,
 mental pain and despair.
 —Such is the ending of this whole mass of suffering.”

*avijjāya tveva asesā, virāga, nirodhā
 saṅkhāra, nirodho
 saṅkhāra, nirodhā viññāṇa, nirodho
 viññāṇa, nirodhā nāma, rūpa, nirodho
 nāma, rūpa, nirodhā saḷāyatana, nirodho
 saḷāyatana, nirodhā phassa, nirodho
 phassa, nirodhā vedanā, nirodho
 vedanā, nirodhā taṇhā, nirodho
 taṇhā, nirodhā upādāna, nirodho
 upādāna, nirodhā bhava, nirodho
 bhava, nirodhā jāti, nirodho
 jāti, nirodhā jarā, marañam
 soka parideva, dukkha,-
 domanass'upāyasā nirujjhanti
 evam-etassa kevalassa dukkha-k,-
 khandhassa nirodho hoti ti*

Arousing effort in Dharma

7 Bhikshus, the Dharma has thus been well taught by me, plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork.⁵²

7.2 When, bhikshus, the Dharma has thus been well taught by me, *plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork*, this is enough for a clansman who has gone forth out of faith to arouse his energy thus:

⁵⁰ On dependent arising (*paṭicca,samuppāda*), see SD 63.14 (3.4).

⁵¹ On dependent ending, see SD 63.14 (3.5).

⁵² “Plain, open, openly taught, free from patchwork,” *uttāno vivaṇṇo pakāsito chinna,pilotika*. See [2.1.1].

Willingly, I will let only skin, sinews and bones remain;
let my body dry up, and flesh and blood, too.

There will be no end in my effort until I have won what can be won by personal strength, personal effort, personal striving!⁵³ [29]

8 Bhikshus, **the lazy person** dwells in suffering, soiled by evil unwholesome states, and great is the personal good⁵⁴ that he neglects.

But, bhikshus, **the energetic person** dwells happily, secluded from evil unwholesome states, and great is the personal good that he achieves.

9 It is not by the inferior that the foremost is attained;⁵⁵ rather, **it is by the foremost that the foremost is attained.**⁵⁶

10 Bhikshus, this holy life is a cream-drink⁵⁷ while the Teacher is present.⁵⁸

11 Therefore, bhikshus, arouse your energy for attaining the unattained, for realizing the unrealized, [thinking]:

11.2 ‘In this way this going forth of ours will not be barren, but be fertile and fruitful; and when we use the robes, almsfood, lodgings, and medicine, support and necessities for the sick—such services from others for us—will be of great fruit and benefit to them.’⁵⁹

Striving for universal good

12 Thus, bhikshus, you should train yourselves.

Considering **your own good**, bhikshus, it is enough to diligently strive for the goal.

Considering the good of others, *it is enough to diligently strive for the goal.*

Considering the good of both, *it is enough to diligently strive for the goal.*⁶⁰

—evaṃ—

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⁵³ “By personal strength, by personal energy, by personal exertion,” *purisa, thāmena purisa, viriyena purisa-k, kam-ena*. This is the “bodhisattva’s determination”: see [2.1.2.1]. For details, see SD 52.1 (15.2.2.2).

⁵⁴ “The personal good,” *sad-attham*: see [2.1.2.2].

⁵⁵ See [2.2.1].

⁵⁶ See [2.2.2].

⁵⁷ *Maṇḍa, peyyam*. Comy resolves *maṇḍa, peyya* as **maṇḍa**, “clear” (*pasanna*) + **peyya**, “what is to be drunk” (*pā-tabba*) (SA 2:50,27-51,16): see [2.3.1].

⁵⁸ *Maṇḍa, peyyam idaṃ bhikkhave brahma, cariyam, satthā sammukhī, bhūto*. See [2.3.2].

⁵⁹ Be Ce Se *Tesaṃ te kāra amhesu maha-p, phalā bhavissanti mahānisamsā ti*. Ee reads *tesaṃ vokārā ...*. This is stock: **Mahā Assa, pura S** (M 39,2/1:271), SD 10.13; cf **Ākaṅkheyya S** (M 6,4/1:33), SD 59.1; **Dasabala S 2** (S 12.22/2:29), SD 63.15; **Aggi-k, khandhūpama S** (S 7.68,38/4:134), SD 52.12. Bh Bodhi notes: “The sense of this line has been missed by C A F Rhys Davids at S:RD 2:24, and Walshe follows her at Sāmyutta Anthology 3:20” (S:B 745n65). On *kāra*, see [2.4.1.3].

⁶⁰ *Alam eva appamādena sampādetum*; see [2.4.2].