

Linked Discourses

Bhikkhu Sujato

LINKED DISCOURSES

A plain translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya



translated and introduced by

BHIKKHU SUJATO

VOLUME 3

SN 22–34

THE GROUP OF LINKED DISCOURSES
BEGINNING WITH THE AGGREGATES

KHANDHAVAGGASĀMYUTTA



SUTTACENTRAL

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The Group of Linked Discourses Beginning With the Aggregates

LINKED DISCOURSES ON THE AGGREGATES

THE FIRST FIFTY

The Chapter on Nakula's Father

SN 22.1

Nakula's Father

Nakulapitusutta

- 1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD.¹ At one time the Buddha was staying in the land of the Bhaggas at Crocodile's Bellow, in the deer park at Bhesakaḷā's Wood.²
- 1.3 Then the householder Nakula's father went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:³

1. For a general survey of the topic of the five aggregates, see my Introduction to the Linked Discourses. The main terms are mostly the same as in dependent origination, for which see my notes to SN 12.1 and SN 12.2. The exception is *saññā*, which I discuss in the next Sutta (SN 22.2:7.8).

2. The Bhaggas were an isolated republican clan, sandwiched between the Vacchas south of the Yamuna and the Kosalans north of the Ganges. By the time of the Buddha they were evidently subject to the Vacchas. | "Crocodile's Bellow" (*susumāragira*) was their capital. The commentary says it was so-named because a crocodile bellowed in a nearby lake during the founding of the city.

3. Nakula's parents were an ideal married couple (AN 1.257, AN 1.266) who wanted to be together in this life and the next (AN 4.55). The father recovered from a previous illness with the help of his wife (AN 6.16). Each features independently in Suttas as well (SN 22.1, SN 35.131, AN 8.48). Nothing is known of their son Nakula himself, nor are their personal names recorded.

"Sir, I'm an old man, elderly and senior. I'm advanced in years 2.1
and have reached the final stage of life. My body is ailing and I'm
constantly unwell. I hardly ever get to see the esteemed mendicants.⁴
May the Buddha please advise me and instruct me. It will be for my
lasting welfare and happiness."

"That's so true, householder! That's so true, householder! For 3.1
this body is ailing, swaddled in its shell.⁵ If anyone dragging around
this body claimed to be healthy even for an hour, what is that but
foolishness?

So you should train like this: 'Though my body is ailing, my mind 3.4
will be healthy.' That's how you should train."⁶

And then the householder Nakula's father approved and agreed 4.1
with what the Buddha said. He got up from his seat, bowed and
respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right. Then he
went up to Venerable Sāriputta, bowed, and sat down to one side.
Sāriputta said to him:

"Householder, your faculties are so very clear, and your complex- 4.2
ion is pure and bright. Did you get to hear a Dhamma talk in the
Buddha's presence today?"

"What else, sir, could it be? Just now the Buddha anointed me 5.1
with the deathless ambrosia of a Dhamma talk."⁷

4. *Aniccadassavī* is literally "not a regular seer" where *nicca* has the sense, "regular, routine".

5. The application of the vivid idiom "swaddled in its shell" is found in AN 8.11:12.1: "in this population lost in ignorance, swaddled in their shells, I alone have broken open the egg of ignorance and realized the supreme perfect awakening." See too the simile of the chook hatching eggs at SN 22.101:3.1.

6. This brief teaching exemplifies the Buddha's method. First he affirms Nakula's father's complaint, not dismissing it or trying to make him look at the positive. He is genuinely suffering, he accepts that, and so does the Buddha. Then the Buddha offers encouragement, not false hope, but giving a meaningful reflection. Contrast this with modern gurus who claim physical ailments can be cured by the mind.

7. *Soma*, a ritual drink of milky color with psychotropic effects, was described as "immortal" (*amṛta*) in the Rig Veda (RV 9.84.2), since it was stolen from heaven by a falcon (RV 4.26, 4.27), and since it confers immortality (RV 8.48.3). By

- 5.3 “But with what kind of ambrosial Dhamma talk did the Buddha anoint you?”
- 5.4 So Nakula’s father told Sāriputta all that had happened, and said, “That’s the ambrosial Dhamma talk with which I was anointed by the Buddha.”
- 7.1 “But didn’t you feel the need to ask the Buddha the further question: ‘Sir, how do you define someone ailing in body and ailing in mind, and someone ailing in body and healthy in mind?’”
- 7.3 “Sir, we would travel a long way to learn the meaning of this statement in the presence of Venerable Sāriputta. May Venerable Sāriputta himself please clarify the meaning of this.”
- 8.1 “Well then, householder, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.”
- 8.2 “Yes, sir,” replied Nakula’s father. Sāriputta said this:
- 9.1 “And how is one ailing in body and ailing in mind? It’s when an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the qualities of a noble one. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the qualities of a true person.⁸ They regard form as self, self as having form, form

the time of the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa the drug itself was called “ambrosia”. That the *soma* is alluded to here as the “deathless ambrosia” (*amata*; Sanskrit *amṛta*) is shown by the use of the verb *abhisitta* (“anointed”, literally “sprinkled”). This is typically used for royal consecration, which is fitting as *soma* is often styled “king”. ŚB 9.4.4.8 describes how the sacrificer, with divine authority, is “anointed with deathless ambrosia” (*amṛtābhiṣikto*) by drinking King Soma. It is here used idiomatically.

8. This section is similar to MN 1:3.1. | An “unlearned ordinary person”, who has not realized any of the stages of the noble path, is contrasted with one who has entered the path. | “Noble one” (*ariya*) loosely conveys the sense “cultured” or “civilized”; it is a term for the inheritors of the Aryan culture that originated among the proto-Indo-European peoples of the Pontic–Caspian steppe. | “True person” (*sappurisa*) indicates one who is authentic and genuine in their realization of the truth, and hence is virtuous and good. Both “noble one” and “true person” are technical terms referring to any person who has at least entered the path to stream-entry.

in self, or self in form.⁹ They're obsessed with the thought: 'I am form, form is mine!'¹⁰ But that form of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

They regard feeling as self, self as having feeling, feeling in self, or self in feeling. They're obsessed with the thought: 'I am feeling, feeling is mine!' But that feeling of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. 10.1

They regard perception as self, self as having perception, perception in self, or self in perception. They're obsessed with the thought: 'I am perception, perception is mine!' But that perception of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. 11.1

They regard choices as self, self as having choices, choices in self, or self in choices. They're obsessed with the thought: 'I am choices, choices are mine!' But those choices of theirs decay and perish, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. 12.1

They regard consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. They're obsessed with the thought: 'I am consciousness, consciousness is mine!' But 13.1

9. Each of these phrases expresses a particular mode of conceiving the self; I give a few examples. | "Form as self" (ablative): form is the same as self, or seen from the viewpoint of self, or in terms of self; this can include all the others. It might also be "self derived from form", for example a person who identifies with their mind, which they believe is created by the brain. | "Self as having form" (possessive): the self owns form like a possession, as a soul might possess a body. Or else form is an attribute of self, as a person in the human realm is endowed with a body. | "Form in self" (locative): form is a part of self, as a body is only part of what makes a person. Or else it could be "form in reference to self", such as a narcissist who believes their body is the epitome of beauty. | "Self in form" (locative): self is a part of form, such as the heart or brain. Or else "self in reference to form", such as a person who defines their self through race.

10. Compare Kaivalya Upaniṣad 20: "I am the form of Śiva" (*aham śivarūpam asmi*). | Form may be internal or external, so the form that is owned as "mine" may be the body, or else one's possessions, totems, family, or any other material thing to which one is attached.

that consciousness of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

13.5 That's how one is ailing in body and ailing in mind.

14.1 And how is one ailing in body and healthy in mind? It's when a learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don't regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They're not obsessed with the thought: 'I am form, form is mine!' So when that form of theirs decays and perishes, it doesn't give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

15.1 They don't regard feeling as self, self as having feeling, feeling in self, or self in feeling. They're not obsessed with the thought: 'I am feeling, feeling is mine!' So when that feeling of theirs decays and perishes, it doesn't give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

16.1 They don't regard perception as self, self as having perception, perception in self, or self in perception. They're not obsessed with the thought: 'I am perception, perception is mine!' So when that perception of theirs decays and perishes, it doesn't give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

17.1 They don't regard choices as self, self as having choices, choices in self, or self in choices. They're not obsessed with the thought: 'I am choices, choices are mine!' So when those choices of theirs decay and perish, it doesn't give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

18.1 They don't regard consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. They're not obsessed with the thought: 'I am consciousness, consciousness is mine!' So when that consciousness of theirs decays and perishes, it doesn't give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

18.5 That's how an individual is ailing in body and healthy in mind."

19.1 That is what Venerable Sāriputta said. Satisfied, Nakula's father approved what Sāriputta said.

SN 22.2

At Devadaha

Devadahasutta

SO I HAVE HEARD.¹¹ At one time the Buddha was staying in the 1.1
land of the Sakyans, where they have a town named Devadaha.¹²

Then several mendicants who were heading for the west went up 1.3
to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him, “Sir,
we wish to go to a western land to take up residence there.”¹³

“But mendicants, have you taken leave of Sāriputta?” 2.1

“No, sir, we haven’t.” 2.2

“You should take leave of Sāriputta. He’s astute, and supports his 2.3
spiritual companions, the mendicants.”

“Yes, sir,” they replied. 2.5

11. This discourse contains Sāriputta’s advice for Buddhists teaching Dhamma in a strange land. He shows a method of giving a small amount of knowledge at a time, enough to digest and to stimulate further questioning. Indeed, he takes it for granted that the process is led by the student’s curiosity, rather than by missionary zeal for conversion.

12. Devadaha also appears in MN 101 and SN 35.134. The name is explained in the commentary as “royal lake”, taking *deva-* as a term for kings, and *-daha* as equivalent to the Sanskrit *hrada*, “lake”. However it is spelled *devadrśa* in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (San Mu Kd 17:16). *Drśa* means “sight, appearance”, thus occupying a completely different semantic space than “lake”. It is a Vedic term that commonly describes Agni’s fiery gleam (Rig Veda 3.17.4, 6.10.4, 7.1.1, etc.). This suggests a Pali derivation from *√dah*, “to burn”. This in turn recalls Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 1.4.1.14, which allegorically depicts the spread of Aryan culture eastward as Agni “burning” (*dadāha*) the lands, i.e. introducing the civilized practice of Vedic fire worship. I think the meaning of *devadaha* is, therefore, “burned by the god”, or “place of the god’s flame”. It became famous in later Buddhism as the birthplace of the sisters Māyā and Mahāpajāpatī of the Koliyan clan, the Buddha’s birth mother and foster mother. These details are not mentioned in early texts, however, where the town is said to be Sakyan rather than Koliyan. It is identified with Devdaha in the Rupandehi District of Nepal.

13. The “western land” (*pacchābhūma*) is not identified, but presumably lay to the west of Verāṇjā (MN 42:2.1) or Kuru. See SN 42.6:2.1 and note for the “brahmins of the western land”.

- 3.1 Now at that time Venerable Sāriputta was sitting not far from the Buddha in a clump of golden shower trees.¹⁴ And then those mendicants approved and agreed with what the Buddha said. They got up from their seat, bowed and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on their right. Then they went up to Venerable Sāriputta, and exchanged greetings with him.
- 3.3 When the greetings and polite conversation were over, they sat down to one side and said to him, “Reverend Sāriputta, we wish to go to a western land to take up residence there. We have taken leave of the Teacher.”
- 4.1 “Reverends, there are those who question a mendicant who has gone abroad—¹⁵ astute aristocrats, brahmins, householders, and ascetics—for astute people are inquisitive: ‘But what does the venerables’ Teacher teach? What does he explain?’ I trust the venerables have properly heard, learned, applied the mind, and remembered the teachings, and penetrated them with wisdom. That way, when answering you will repeat what the Buddha has said and not misrepresent him with an untruth. You will explain in line with the teaching, with no legitimate grounds for rebuttal and criticism.”
- 5.1 “Reverend, we would travel a long way to learn the meaning of this statement in the presence of Venerable Sāriputta. May Venerable Sāriputta himself please clarify the meaning of this.”
- 5.3 “Well then, reverends, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.”
- 5.4 “Yes, reverend,” they replied. Sāriputta said this:
- 6.1 “Reverends, there are those who question a mendicant who has gone abroad—astute aristocrats, brahmins, householders, and ascetics—for astute people are inquisitive: ‘But what does the venerables’ Teacher teach? What does he explain?’ When questioned

14. *Elaḡalā* is sometimes identified with *cassia tora*, but that is an introduced shrub. Perhaps it is *cassia fistula* (Sanskrit *āragvadha*), a smallish tree, native to India, with a glorious crown of golden flowers. It is the national tree of Thailand and frequently adorns temples in Sri Lanka.

15. “Abroad” is *nānāverajja*, “dominion of a different king”.

like this, reverends, you should answer: ‘Reverend, our Teacher explained the removal of desire and lust.’

When you answer like this, such astute people may inquire further: ‘But regarding what does the venerables’ teacher explain the removal of desire and lust?’ When questioned like this, reverends, you should answer: ‘Our teacher explains the removal of desire and lust for form,¹⁶ feeling, perception,¹⁷ choices, and consciousness.’ 7.1

When you answer like this, such astute people may inquire further: ‘But what drawback has he seen that he teaches the removal of desire and lust for form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness?’ When questioned like this, reverends, you should answer: ‘If you’re not free of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for form, when that form decays and perishes it gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. If you’re not free of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, when that consciousness decays and perishes it gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. This is the drawback our Teacher has seen that he teaches 8.1

16. The aggregates are presented under the assumption that someone knowing nothing about Buddhism would understand them.

17. Sanskrit *saṃjñā* came to be used in a wide variety of senses, but the pre-Buddhist usage is quite restricted. The basic meaning is “agreement, concord, mutual understanding” (Rig Veda 10.19.4, Atharva Veda 7.52.1, Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 1.1.4.5), from which we have the causative sense in Pali, “persuade, reach an agreement with” (DN 29:18.8, Ud 2.8:13.1, Bu NP 10:1.1.14). This becomes an unsettling euphemism in the Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa, where the sacrificial beast is “persuaded” or “made to consent”, for “when they make the victim consent, they kill it” (ŚB 13.2.8.2). There seems no real precedent for the Buddhist sense of “perception” until Yājñavalkya at Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 2.4.12 and 4.5.13, to which DN 9 appears as a direct response. That passage contrasts the “limited” knowing of *saṃjñā* with the “infinite” knowing of *viññāna*. *Viññāna* likewise has little precedent; previously, it just meant knowing or understanding. Most likely both terms were established as an artificial pair by Yājñavalkya due to their contrasting prefixes. This led to the Buddhist idea of “perception” as a limited, conventional mode of knowing or recognizing, a usage also found in the Jain Tattvārthasūtra 1.13.

the removal of desire and lust for form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.’

9.1 When you answer like this, such astute people may inquire further: ‘But what benefit has he seen that he teaches the removal of desire and lust for form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness?’ When questioned like this, reverends, you should answer: ‘If you are rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for form, when that form decays and perishes it doesn’t give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. If you are rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, when that consciousness decays and perishes it doesn’t give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. This is the benefit our Teacher has seen that he teaches the removal of desire and lust for form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.’

10.1 If those who acquired and kept unskillful qualities were to live happily in the present life, free of distress, anguish, and fever; and if, when their body breaks up, after death, they could expect to go to a good place, the Buddha would not praise giving up unskillful qualities.¹⁸ But since those who acquire and keep unskillful qualities live unhappily in the present life, full of distress, anguish, and fever; and since, when their body breaks up, after death, they can expect to go to a bad place, the Buddha praises giving up unskillful qualities.

11.1 If those who embraced and kept skillful qualities were to live unhappily in the present life, full of distress, anguish, and fever; and if, when their body breaks up, after death, they could expect to go to a bad place, the Buddha would not praise embracing skillful qualities. But since those who embrace and keep skillful qualities live happily in the present life, free of distress, anguish, and fever; and since, when their body breaks up, after death, they can expect to go to a good place, the Buddha praises embracing skillful qualities.”

18. Good and evil are consequential, not absolute.

That is what Venerable Sāriputta said. Satisfied, the mendicants 12.1
approved what Sāriputta said.

SN 22.3

With Hāliddikāni

Hāliddikānisutta

SO I HAVE HEARD. At one time Venerable Mahākaccāna was staying 1.1
in the land of the Avantis near Kuraraghara on Steep Mountain.¹⁹

Then the householder Hāliddikāni went up to Venerable Mahāka- 1.3
ccāna, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him,²⁰ “Sir, this was
said by the Buddha in the Chapter of the Eights, in ‘The Questions
of Māgandiya’:²¹

‘After leaving their bastion to migrate without abode,²² 2.1
a sage doesn’t get close to anyone in town.
Rid of sensual pleasures, not expecting,
they wouldn’t get in arguments with people.’

19. Mahākaccāna was one of the great disciples, whose teachings specially emphasized the incisive analysis of consciousness through the lens of the six senses. He was said to be the most skilled at given detailed explanations of brief teachings (AN 1.197), a skill he displayed also at MN 133, MN 138, and AN 10.172. He settled to the southwest in Avanti, where he established the Dhamma in the region; see SN 35.132 and notes.

20. Hāliddikāni was a learned lay student of Mahākaccāna in Avanti (SN 22.4, SN 35.130). | From this point, the discourse is quoted in full at Mnd 9:70.1 as a commentary on the verse. This underscores the fact that even within the Suttas themselves, there are many passages that can be considered commentaries on earlier discourses.

21. Snp 4.9:10.1.

22. This line works perfectly well at the literal level, the life of a homeless renunciate. But Mahākaccāna reveals a metaphorical dimension, which pivots on the fact that the suffix *sārī* (“migrate”) has the same root as *saṃsāra* (“transmigration”). | *Oka* is an old Vedic word for “home” (Rig Veda 5.76.4) for people, gods, or even cows (RV 6.41.1) with connotations of safety and refuge from which one might be driven out by a foe (RV 7.5.6).

3.1 How should we see the detailed meaning of the Buddha’s brief statement?”

4.1 “Householder, the form element is a bastion for consciousness.²³ One whose consciousness is shackled by greed for the form element is called a migrant going from bastion to bastion.²⁴ The feeling element is a bastion for consciousness. One whose consciousness is shackled to greed for the feeling element is called a migrant going from bastion to bastion. The perception element is a bastion for consciousness. One whose consciousness is shackled to greed for the perception element is called a migrant going from bastion to bastion. The choices element is a bastion for consciousness. One whose consciousness is shackled to greed for the choices element is called a migrant going from bastion to bastion. That’s how one is a migrant going from bastion to bastion.

5.1 And how is one a migrant with no bastion? The Realized One has given up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for the form element; any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies. He has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump, obliterated it, so it’s unable to arise in the future. That’s why the Realized One is called a migrant with no bastion. The Realized One has given up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for the feeling element ... the perception element ... the choices element ... the consciousness element; any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies. He has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump, obliterated it, so it’s unable to arise in the future. That’s why the Realized One is called a migrant with no bastion. That’s how one is a migrant with no bastion.

23. Note the use of *dhātu* (“element”) instead of *khandha* (“aggregate”). Also at SN 22.4, SN 22.45, SN 22.53–5.

24. They wander from life to life, like “people entering and leaving a house, walking along the streets and paths, and sitting at the central square” (DN 2:96.1, MN 39:20.3). As in dependent origination, “consciousness” is key to transmigration as the link from one life to the next (SN 12.38–40).

And how is one a migrant going from abode to abode?²⁵ Shackled 6.1
to chasing the abodes that are the features of sights, one is called
a migrant going from abode to abode.²⁶ Shackled to chasing the
abodes that are the features of sounds ... smells ... tastes ... touches
... thoughts, one is called a migrant going from abode to abode.
That's how one is a migrant going from abode to abode.

And how is one a migrant without abode? The Realized One has 7.1
given up being shackled to chasing the abodes that are the features
of sights. He has cut it off at the root, made it like a palm stump,
obliterated it, so it's unable to arise in the future. That's why the Re-
alized One is called a migrant without abode. The Realized One has
given up being shackled to chasing the abodes that are the features
of sounds ... smells ... tastes ... touches ... ideas. He has cut it off
at the root, made it like a palm stump, obliterated it, so it's unable to
arise in the future. That's why the Realized One is called a migrant
without abode. That's how one is a migrant without abode.

And how does one get close to people in town? It's when some- 8.1
one mixes closely with laypeople, sharing their joys and sorrows—
happy when they're happy and sad when they're sad—and getting
themselves involved in their business. That's how one gets close to
people in town.

And how does one not get close to people in town? It's when a 9.1
mendicant doesn't mix closely with laypeople, not sharing their joys
and sorrows—not happy when they're happy or sad when they're
sad—and not getting themselves involved in their business. That's
how one doesn't get close to people in town.

25. The commentary explains the difference between “bastion” (*oka*) and “abode” (*niketa*) as one of degree. A bastion is a place where one is established in comfort and safety and is thus tightly attached as to the aggregates. An abode is any old place one might stay, so attachment is slight, like the passing parade of sense experiences.

26. Pali *visāra* seems unique (at DN 13:36.2 read *visāda*). Here it is clearly connected to *sārī* in the sense of “migrant”, as well as *anusārī* in the phrase *rūpanimittānusārī* (“follows after the features of that sight”, MN 138:10.2). I take it as an intensive form of “follow”, i.e. “chase”.

- 10.1 And how is one not rid of sensual pleasures? It's when someone isn't rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for sensual pleasures. That's how one is not rid of sensual pleasures.
- 11.1 And how is one rid of sensual pleasures? It's when someone is rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for sensual pleasures. That's how one is rid of sensual pleasures.
- 12.1 And how is one expecting? It's when someone thinks: 'In the future, may I be of such form, such feeling, such perception, such choices, and such consciousness!' That's how one is expecting.
- 13.1 And how is one not expecting? It's when someone doesn't think: 'In the future, may I be of such form, such feeling, such perception, such choices, and such consciousness!' That's how one is not expecting.
- 14.1 And how does one argue with people? It's when someone takes part in this sort of discussion: 'You don't understand this teaching and training. I understand this teaching and training. What, you understand this teaching and training? You're practicing wrong. I'm practicing right. You said last what you should have said first. You said first what you should have said last. I stay on topic, you don't. What you've thought so much about has been disproved. Your doctrine is refuted. Go on, save your doctrine! You're trapped; get yourself out of this—if you can!'²⁷ That's how one argues with people.
- 15.1 And how does one not argue with people? It's when a mendicant doesn't take part in this sort of discussion: 'You don't understand this teaching and training ... get yourself out of this—if you can!' That's how one doesn't argue with people.
- 16.1 So, householder, that's how to understand the detailed meaning of what the Buddha said in brief in the Chapter of the Eights, in 'The Questions of Māgandiya':

27. *Sahita* ("on topic") appears routinely as a quality of a good Dhamma talk (eg. AN 4.139:3.2, AN 8.16:1.3). It has the basic sense of "collected, bundled" (like firewood, DN 23:21.49), in which sense it appears in Sanskrit as *samhita*, the name of the "bundled" collection of Vedic scripture.

‘After leaving their bastion to migrate without abode, 17.1
 a sage doesn’t get close to anyone in town.
 Rid of sensual pleasures, not expecting,
 they wouldn’t get in arguments with people.’”

SN 22.4

Hāliddikāni (2nd)

Dutiyahāliddikānisutta

SO I HAVE HEARD. At one time Venerable Mahākaccāna was staying 1.1
 in the land of the Avantis near Kuraraghara on Steep Mountain.

Then the householder Hāliddikāni went up to Venerable Mahā- 1.3
 kaccāna ... and asked him, “Sir, this was said by the Buddha in ‘The
 Questions of Sakka’:²⁸ ‘Those ascetics and brahmins who are freed
 due to the ending of craving have reached the ultimate goal, the ulti-
 mate sanctuary from the yoke, the ultimate spiritual life, the ultimate
 end, and are best among gods and humans.’

How should we see the detailed meaning of the Buddha’s brief 2.1
 statement?”

“Householder, consider any desire, greed, relishing, and craving 3.1
 for the form element; any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, in-
 sistence, and underlying tendencies. With the ending, fading away,
 cessation, giving away, and letting go of that, the mind is said to be
 ‘well freed’.²⁹

Consider any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for the feeling 4.1
 element ... the perception element ... the choices element ... the
 consciousness element; any attraction, grasping, mental fixation,

28. Once again Hāliddikāni names and quotes an abstruse passage (see DN 21:2.6.12 and note).

29. The set of defilements here express a gradual process: from being attracted to something, to picking it up, solidifying a sense of ownership in one’s mind, then insisting on clinging to it, until finally it becomes an inherent part of you. See SN 12.15:2.4 and note.

insistence, and underlying tendencies. With the ending, fading away, cessation, giving away, and letting go of that, the mind is said to be ‘well freed’.

- 5.1 So, householder, that’s how to understand the detailed meaning of what the Buddha said in brief in ‘The Questions of Sakka’: ‘Those ascetics and brahmins who are freed due to the ending of craving have reached the ultimate goal, the ultimate sanctuary from the yoke, the ultimate spiritual life, the ultimate end, and are best among gods and humans.’”

SN 22.5

Development of Immersion

Samādhisutta

- 1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD. At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.4 “Mendicants, develop immersion.³⁰ A mendicant who has immersion truly understands. What do they truly understand? The origin and ending of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.
- 2.1 And what is the origin of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness? It’s when a mendicant approves, welcomes, and keeps clinging.
- 3.1 What do they approve, welcome, and keep clinging to? They approve, welcome, and keep clinging to form. This gives rise to relishing.³¹ Relishing forms is grasping. Their grasping is a requirement for continued existence. Continued existence is a requirement for rebirth. Rebirth is a requirement for old age and death, sorrow,

30. Mendicants are similarly enjoined to develop immersion (*samādhi*) in order to understand the six senses (SN 35.99, SN 35.160) and the four noble truths (SN 56.1).

31. “Relishing” (*nandī*) is a synonym of “craving” (*taṇhā*). Here it serves to show how the five aggregates participate in the process of generating one life after the next as depicted in dependent origination. Normally, craving in dependent origination is stimulated by the six senses.

lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress to come to be. That is how this entire mass of suffering originates.

They approve, welcome, and keep clinging to feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness. This gives rise to relishing. Relishing consciousness is grasping. Their grasping is a requirement for continued existence. Continued existence is a requirement for rebirth. Rebirth is a condition that gives rise to old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. That is how this entire mass of suffering originates.

This is the origin of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.

And what is the ending of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness?

It's when a mendicant doesn't approve, welcome, or keep clinging.

What don't they approve, welcome, or keep clinging to? They don't approve, welcome, or keep clinging to form. As a result, relishing of form ceases. When that relishing ceases, grasping ceases. When grasping ceases, continued existence ceases. ... That is how this entire mass of suffering ceases.

They don't approve, welcome, or keep clinging to feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness. As a result, relishing of consciousness ceases. When that relishing ceases, grasping ceases. ... That is how this entire mass of suffering ceases.

This is the ending of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness."

SN 22.6

Retreat

Paṭisallāṇasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

- 1.2 “Mendicants, meditate in retreat.³² A mendicant in retreat truly understands. What do they truly understand? The origin and disappearance of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. ...”

(Tell in full as in the previous discourse.)

SN 22.7

Anxiety Because of Grasping

Upādāparitassanāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you how grasping leads to anxiety, and how not grasping leads to freedom from anxiety. Listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.”
- 1.4 “Yes, sir,” they replied. The Buddha said this:
- 2.1 “And how does grasping lead to anxiety?³³ It’s when an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons. They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. But that form of theirs decays and perishes, and consciousness latches on to the perishing of form.³⁴ Anxieties occupy their mind, born of latching on to the perishing of form, and

32. Mendicants should “meditate in retreat” (*paṭisallāṇe yogamāpajjatha*) in order to understand the six senses (SN 35.100, SN 35.161) and the four noble truths (SN 56.2). | Pali *yoga* (“yoke”) can mean “effort”, as in *yogaṃ āpajjati*, “engage in effort (regarding that)”, which I render “get involved (in that)” (AN 7.28:1.7). Compare the English expression “harness energy”. The related expression *yogamāpajjatha* is literally “engage in effort in retreat”. This means primarily to meditate, and indeed Pali *yoga* shades into the sense “meditation, immersion” (Dhp 282:1), a sense that anticipates Patañjali’s definition of *yoga* as “the cessation of transformations of mind” (Yogasūtra 1.2).

33. Also at MN 138:20.1; for the erroneous reading there, see note.

34. “Latches on to” (*anuparivatti*), literally, “runs around after”.

originating in accordance with natural principles. So they become frightened, worried, concerned, and anxious because of grasping.

They regard feeling as self ... 3.1

They regard perception as self ... 4.1

They regard choices as self ... 4.2

They regard consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, 5.1
consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. But that consciousness of theirs decays and perishes, and consciousness latches on to the perishing of consciousness. Anxieties occupy their mind, born of latching on to the perishing of consciousness, and originating in accordance with natural principles. So they become frightened, worried, concerned, and anxious because of grasping. That's how grasping leads to anxiety.

And how does not grasping lead to freedom from anxiety? It's 6.1
when a learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don't regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. When that form of theirs decays and perishes, consciousness doesn't latch on to the perishing of form. Anxieties—born of latching on to the perishing of form and originating in accordance with natural principles—don't occupy their mind. So they don't become frightened, worried, concerned, or anxious because of grasping.

They don't regard feeling as self ... 7.1

They don't regard perception as self ... 8.1

They don't regard choices as self ... 8.2

They don't regard consciousness as self ... When that conscious- 9.1
ness of theirs decays and perishes, consciousness doesn't latch on to the perishing of consciousness. Anxieties—born of latching on to the perishing of consciousness and originating in accordance with natural principles—don't occupy their mind. So they don't become frightened, worried, concerned, or anxious because of grasping. That's how not grasping leads to freedom from anxiety."

Anxiety Because of Grasping (2nd)

Dutiyaupādāparitassanāsutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you how grasping leads to anxiety, and how not grasping leads to freedom from anxiety. Listen and apply your mind well, I will speak. And how does grasping lead to anxiety? It’s when an unlearned ordinary person regards form like this: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self.’³⁵ But that form of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness like this: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self.’ But that consciousness of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. That’s how grasping leads to anxiety.

2.1 And how does not grasping lead to freedom from anxiety? It’s when a learned noble disciple regards form like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ When that form of theirs decays and perishes, it doesn’t give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ When that consciousness of theirs decays and perishes, it

35. This directly rejects all forms of self, especially the conceptions of self as expressed in the Upaniṣads. | *Etam mama* occurs as *mamedam* (“this is mine”, Maitrī Upaniṣad 3.2), which in context is a limited view of self. An illegitimate king betrays his country with the thought, “It is not mine” (*na etan mama*, Arthaśāstra 8.2.08). | *Eso’hamasmi* is Yājñavalkya’s *so’hamasmi* (“I am that”, Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.1; BU 5.15.1 = Īśā Upaniṣad 16; Chāndogya Upaniṣad 4.11.1, 4.12.1, 4.13.1; Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka 3.6), which Uddālaka’s *tattvamasi* puts in second person (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.8.7). | The same passage also parallels *eso me attā* with *sa ātmā* (“that is the self”), for which we also find *eṣa ma ātmā* (CU 3.14.3), and in the optative mood, *ma idaṁ syād ātman* (BU 1.2.7).

doesn't give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. That's how not grasping leads to freedom from anxiety."

SN 22.9

Impermanence in the Three Times

Kālattayaaniccasutta

- At Sāvattthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, form of the past and future is impermanent, let alone the present. 1.2
- Seeing this, a learned noble disciple is not concerned with past form, doesn't look forward to enjoying future form,³⁶ and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present form. 1.4
- Feeling ... 1.7
- Perception ... 1.8
- Choices ... 1.9
- Consciousness of the past and future is impermanent, let alone the present. 1.11
- Seeing this, a learned noble disciple is not concerned with past consciousness, doesn't look forward to enjoying future consciousness, and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present consciousness.” 1.16

36. In similar contexts, *anapekkha* (“concern”) and *abhinandati* are regularly oriented toward the past and future respectively. *Nanda* and its variants straddle the meanings of “take pleasure” and “crave”. Here the prefix *abhi-* conveys the sense of “facing toward” in the sense “look forward to enjoying”.

SN 22.10

Suffering in the Three Times

Kālattayadukkhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, form of the past and future is suffering, let alone the present.
- 1.4 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple is not concerned with past form, doesn’t look forward to enjoying future form, and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present form.
- 1.7 Feeling ...
- 1.8 Perception ...
- 1.9 Choices ...
- 1.10 Consciousness of the past and future is suffering, let alone the present.
- 1.12 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple is not concerned with past consciousness, doesn’t look forward to enjoying future consciousness, and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present consciousness.”

SN 22.11

Not-Self in the Three Times

Kālattayaanattasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, form of the past and future is not-self, let alone the present.
- 1.4 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple is not concerned with past form, doesn’t look forward to enjoying future form, and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present form.
- 1.7 Feeling ...

Perception ...	1.8
Choices ...	1.9
Consciousness of the past and future is not-self, let alone the present.	1.10
Seeing this, a learned noble disciple is not concerned with past consciousness, doesn't look forward to enjoying future consciousness, and they practice for the disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present consciousness."	1.12

The Chapter on Impermanence

SN 22.12

Impermanence

Aniccāsutta

1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD. At Sāvattḥī.

1.4 “Mendicants, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are impermanent.

1.5 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed.

1.7 They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.13

Suffering

Dukkhasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

“Mendicants, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are suffering. 1.2

Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’” 1.3

SN 22.14

Not-Self

Anattasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are not-self. 1.2

Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed. 1.3

They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’” 1.5

SN 22.15

That Which is Impermanent

Yadanikkasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, form is impermanent. What’s impermanent is suffering. What’s suffering is not-self. And what’s not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’³⁷ 1.2

Feeling is impermanent ... 1.6

Perception is impermanent ... 1.10

37. See note on this phrase at SN 22.15:1.5.

- 1.11 Choices are impermanent ...
- 1.12 Consciousness is impermanent. What's impermanent is suffering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.'
- 1.16 Seeing this ... They understand: '... there is nothing further for this place.'

SN 22.16

That Which is Suffering

Yamdukkhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 "Mendicants, form is suffering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.'
- 1.5 Feeling is suffering ...
- 1.6 Perception is suffering ...
- 1.7 Choices are suffering ...
- 1.8 Consciousness is suffering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.'
- 1.11 Seeing this ... They understand: '... there is nothing further for this place.'

SN 22.17

That Which is Not-Self

Yadanattāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.

“Mendicants, form is not-self. And what’s not-self should be truly
seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not
this, this is not my self.’ 1.2

Feeling is not-self ... 1.4

Perception is not-self ... 1.5

Choices are not-self ... 1.6

Consciousness is not-self. And what’s not-self should be truly
seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not
this, this is not my self.’ 1.7

Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for
this place.’” 1.9

SN 22.18

Impermanence With Its Cause

Sahetuaniccasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, form is impermanent. The cause and reason that
gives rise to form is also impermanent. Since form is produced by
what is impermanent, how could it be permanent? 1.2

Feeling is impermanent ... 1.5

Perception is impermanent ... 1.8

Choices are impermanent ... 1.9

Consciousness is impermanent. The cause and reason that gives
rise to consciousness is also impermanent. Since consciousness is
produced by what is impermanent, how could it be permanent? 1.12

Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for
this place.’” 1.15

SN 22.19

Suffering With Its Cause

Sahetudukkhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, form is suffering. The cause and reason that gives rise to form is also suffering. Since form is produced by what is suffering, how could it be happiness?
- 1.5 Feeling is suffering ...
- 1.6 Perception is suffering ...
- 1.7 Choices are suffering ...
- 1.8 Consciousness is suffering. The cause and reason that gives rise to consciousness is also suffering. Since consciousness is produced by what is suffering, how could it be happiness?
- 1.11 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.20

Not-Self With Its Cause

Sahetuanattasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, form is not-self. The cause and reason that gives rise to form is also not-self. Since form is produced by what is not-self, how could it be self?
- 1.5 Feeling is not-self ...
- 1.6 Perception is not-self ...
- 1.7 Choices are not-self ...
- 1.8 Consciousness is not-self. The cause and reason that gives rise to consciousness is also not-self. Since consciousness is produced by what is not-self, how could it be self?
- 1.11 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

With Ānanda

Ānandasutta

- At Sāvattthī. 1.1
- Then Venerable Ānanda went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down 1.2
to one side, and said to him:
- “Sir, they speak of ‘cessation’. The cessation of what things does 1.3
this refer to?”
- “Ānanda, form is impermanent, conditioned, dependently orig- 1.5
inated, liable to end, vanish, fade away, and cease. Its cessation is
what ‘cessation’ refers to.
- Feeling ... 1.7
- Perception ... 1.9
- Choices ... 1.10
- Consciousness is impermanent, conditioned, dependently orig- 1.12
inated, liable to end, vanish, fade away, and cease. Its cessation is
what ‘cessation’ refers to.
- When they speak of ‘cessation’, its the cessation of these things 1.14
that this refers to.”

The Chapter on the Burden

SN 22.22

The Burden of Responsibility

Bhārasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.³⁸

1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you the burden, the bearer of the burden, the taking up of the burden, and the putting down of the burden.³⁹ Listen ...

38. This discourse is much-quoted in later texts of both Pali and Sanskrit Buddhism, especially in discussing what the Buddha meant by “individual” (*puggala*). One school of Buddhism, the Pudgalavādins, argued that the “individual” was ultimately real but not defined, being neither identical with nor separate from the aggregates. This position was rejected by other schools, including the Theravada (Kv 1.1). The text itself, however, is about spiritual responsibility, not the nature of personal identity.

39. Pali *bhāra*, like English “burden”, has the dual senses of “load” and “responsibility”. The opening phrase clearly indicates three of the four noble truths (the burden = suffering, picking up = origin, putting down = cessation), leaving the status of the “bearer of the burden” unclear. I propose that the sequence of the truths has been altered for rhetorical purposes, and the “bearer of the burden” is one who has undertaken the path. Compare AN 2.98–99, where the fool is the one who improperly “carries the burden” (i.e. “shoulders responsibility”), while the astute carry the burden properly.

And what is the burden? The five grasping aggregates, it should be said.⁴⁰ What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. This is called the burden.⁴¹ 1.4

40. Vedic *skandha* has no technical use, being simply the “trunk” of a tree (Rig Veda 1.32.5, Atharva Veda 10.7.38) or a person (plural = “shoulders”, Atharva Veda 6.25.2, 6.135.1, etc.). The Buddhist use shares more in common with the Jains, for whom the *skandha* was a type of matter (*pudgala*) consisting of two or more combined “atoms” (*aṇu*), namely a “molecule” (Tattvārthasūtra 5.5). Thus the aggregates themselves can be considered what “shoulders” the burden (like buffaloes, Arthaśāstra 2.29.8).

41. The aggregates are a “load” in the sense of being hard to bear and therefore suffering. But they are also a “responsibility”, like a wound that must be cared for if one is to heal (MN 105:19.1).

- 2.1 And who is the bearer of the burden?⁴² The individual, it should be said;⁴³ the venerable of such name and such clan.⁴⁴ This is called the bearer of the burden.⁴⁵

42. *Bhārahāra* is attested almost entirely in discussion of this discourse. However, we do find an unrelated idiomatic use in the commentary to AN 3.91, where it means “one who takes responsibility” (for looking after a monastery). Also, Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka 14.2 speaks of a student who repeats the Veda without understanding, like a pillar that merely “bears the burden” (*bhārahāra*), thus also referring to a person who has undertaken a responsibility.

43. *Puggala* (Sanskrit *puḍgala*) is a Buddhist and Jain term, being absent from pre-Buddhist texts and rare later. Abruptly, the Suttas then use it some 3000 times for descriptions of “individuals” and their characteristics, especially in the Aṅguttara Nikāya, and collected in the Abhidhamma book Puggalapaññatti. Pali is rich in terms for “person”, so why did *puggala* become so characteristic? The Jain meaning of *puḍgala* is “particulate matter” (Tattvārthasūtra 5.5, Isibhāsiyam 1.31, Uttarādhyayanasūtra 28.12). They say “substantial reality” (*astikāya* = *sakkāya*) includes “matter” (*puḍgala*), which is comprised of “atoms” (*anu*) and “molecules” (*skandha*). *Puḍgala* is also used for an individual “article” (of gold) by Kauṭilya (Arthaśāstra 2.14.7, 2.14.43). Further, we find the notion that beings are *puḍgalāśrayāḥ* (“comprised of a composite mass”, Viṣṇu Purāṇa 5.30.13) related to a criticism of those who assert not-self, i.e. Buddhists. Rarely, later Sanskrit references the meaning “body”. Thus *puggala* approaches the same semantic field as *khandha* (“aggregate”) and *kāya* (“body”, from the root *ci*, “heap”), which gives us *sakkāya* (“substantial reality”, SN 22.105 and notes), all three of which are technical terms in Buddhism and Jainism but not Vedism. Our findings support Paul Tedesco’s proposed derivation from *prthak* (“Sanskrit *puḍgala*—‘body, soul’”, Journal of the American Oriental Society 67, 1947, 172–7). Given that Pali *puṭhu* combines the senses of Sanskrit *prthu* (“expansive, manifold”) and *prthak* (“separate, individual”), the original sense was probably “composite individual” (cf. English “organism”). Perhaps the Buddha favored *puggala* because it avoided Vedic terminology, while at the same time suggesting a connection with the *khandha* doctrine that the “individual” comprised a “mass” of components.

44. The commentary says this refers to any person from the time of birth. However, the same phrase is used at SN 22.106:1.16 and SN 23.4:2.13, both cases referring to the arahant specifically, which is why they are referred to as “venerable”. Thus the one who “bears the burden” is not someone who is reborn and has to suffer the aggregates, but someone who has fully accepted the responsibility of spiritual practice in regard to the aggregates.

45. To sum up, I argue that the “bearer of the burden” is the one who “undertakes responsibility” for practicing the path on four grounds: (1) the pattern

And what is the taking up of the burden? It's the craving that leads 3.1
to future lives, mixed up with relishing and greed, taking pleasure
there wherever it alights. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, crav-
ing for continued existence, and craving for nonexistence. This is
called the taking up of the burden.

And what is the putting down of the burden? It's the fading away 4.1
and cessation of that very same craving no residue left behind; giving
it away, letting it go, releasing it, and not clinging to it. This is called
the putting down of the burden."

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, 5.1
went on to say:

"The five aggregates are indeed burdens, 6.1
and the individual is the bearer of the burden.
Taking up the burden is suffering in the world,
and putting the burden down is happiness.

When the heavy burden is put down 7.1
without taking up another,
one who has plucked out craving, root and all,
is hungerless, quenched."

SN 22.23

Complete Understanding

Pariññasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

"Mendicants, I will teach you the things that should be completely 1.2
understood, and complete understanding. Listen ...

of the teaching (four noble truths); (2) idiomatic meaning; (3) similarity to
AN 2.98–99; and (4) the fact that the "venerable" phrase elsewhere refers to an
arahant.

- 1.4 And what things should be completely understood? Form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. These are called the things that should be completely understood.
- 1.7 And what is complete understanding? The ending of greed, hate, and delusion.⁴⁶ This is called complete understanding.”

SN 22.24

Directly Knowing

Abhijānasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, without directly knowing and completely understanding form, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering.
- 1.3 Without directly knowing and completely understanding feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, without dispassion for it and giving it up, you can’t end suffering.
- 1.7 By directly knowing and completely understanding form, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.
- 1.8 By directly knowing and completely understanding feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, having dispassion for it and giving it up, you can end suffering.”

SN 22.25

Desire and Greed

Chandarāgasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, give up desire and greed for form. Thus that form will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.

46. Understanding is not complete so long as delusion exists.

Give up desire and greed for feeling ... perception ... choices ... 1.4
consciousness. Thus that consciousness will be given up, cut off at
the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in
the future.”

SN 22.26

Gratification

Assādasutta

At Sāvattḥi.⁴⁷ 1.1

“Mendicants, before my awakening—when I was still unawak- 1.2
ened but intent on awakening—I thought: ‘What’s the gratification,
the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form ... feeling ...
perception ... choices ... and consciousness?’

Then it occurred to me: ‘The pleasure and happiness that arise 1.8
from form: this is its gratification. That form is impermanent, suffer-
ing, and perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving up
desire and greed for form: this is its escape. The pleasure and happi-
ness that arise from feeling ... perception ... choices ... conscious-
ness: this is its gratification. That consciousness is impermanent,
suffering, and perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving
up desire and greed for consciousness: this is its escape.’

As long as I didn’t truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ 2.1
gratification, drawback, and escape in this way for what they are, I
didn’t announce my supreme perfect awakening in this world with
its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and
brahmins, its gods and humans.

But when I did truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ 2.2
gratification, drawback, and escape in this way for what they are,
I announced my supreme perfect awakening in this world with its

47. The next three discourses parallel SN 14.31–33.

gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans.

- 2.4 Knowledge and vision arose in me: ‘My freedom is unshakable; this is my last rebirth; now there’ll be no more future lives.’”

SN 22.27

Gratification (2nd)

Dutiyaassādasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.

- 1.2 “Mendicants, I went in search of form’s gratification,⁴⁸ and I found it. I’ve seen clearly with wisdom the full extent of form’s gratification. I went in search of form’s drawback, and I found it. I’ve seen clearly with wisdom the full extent of form’s drawback. I went in search of form’s escape, and I found it. I’ve seen clearly with wisdom the full extent of form’s escape.

- 1.11 I went in search of the gratification of feeling ... perception ... choices ... and consciousness, and I found it. I’ve seen clearly with wisdom the full extent of consciousness’s gratification. I went in search of consciousness’s drawback, and I found it. I’ve seen clearly with wisdom the full extent of consciousness’s drawback. I went in search of consciousness’s escape, and I found it. I’ve seen clearly with wisdom the full extent of consciousness’s escape.

- 1.23 As long as I didn’t truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape for what they are, I didn’t announce my supreme perfect awakening ... But when I did truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape for what they are, I announced my supreme perfect awakening ...

- 1.25 Knowledge and vision arose in me: ‘My freedom is unshakable; this is my last rebirth; now there’ll be no more future lives.’”

48. Said also of the world (AN 3.104), the elements (SN 14.32), and the senses (SN 35.15, 16).

Gratification (3rd)

Tatiyaassādasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, if there were no gratification in form, sentient beings 1.2
 wouldn’t be aroused by it. But since there is gratification in form,
 sentient beings are aroused by it. If form had no drawback, sentient
 beings wouldn’t grow disillusioned with it. But since form has a
 drawback, sentient beings do grow disillusioned with it. If there
 were no escape from form, sentient beings wouldn’t escape from it.
 But since there is an escape from form, sentient beings do escape
 from it.

If there were no gratification in feeling ... perception ... choices 1.8
 ... consciousness, sentient beings wouldn’t be aroused by it. But
 since there is gratification in consciousness, sentient beings are
 aroused by it. If consciousness had no drawback, sentient beings
 wouldn’t grow disillusioned with it. But since consciousness has
 a drawback, sentient beings do grow disillusioned with it. If there
 were no escape from consciousness, sentient beings wouldn’t escape
 from it. But since there is an escape from consciousness, sentient
 beings do escape from it.

As long as sentient beings don’t truly understand these five grasping 2.1
 aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape for what they are,
 they haven’t escaped from this world—with its gods, Māras, and
 divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods
 and humans—and they don’t live detached, liberated, with mind
 free of limits.

But when sentient beings truly understand these five grasping 2.3
 aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape for what they are,
 they’ve escaped from this world—with its gods, Māras, and divini-
 ties, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and

humans—and they live detached, liberated, with mind free of limits.”

SN 22.29

Taking Pleasure

Abhinandanasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, if you take pleasure in form, you take pleasure in suffering.⁴⁹ If you take pleasure in suffering, you’re not free from suffering, I say.
- 1.4 If you take pleasure in feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you take pleasure in suffering. If you take pleasure in suffering, you’re not free from suffering, I say.
- 1.9 If you don’t take pleasure in form, you don’t take pleasure in suffering. If you don’t take pleasure in suffering, you’re free from suffering, I say.
- 1.11 If you don’t take pleasure in feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you don’t take pleasure in suffering. If you don’t take pleasure in suffering, you’re free from suffering, I say.”

SN 22.30

Arising

Uppādasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, the arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of form is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death.
- 1.3 The arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is the arising of

49. This discourse and the next parallel SN 14.35–6.

suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death.

The cessation, settling, and disappearance of form is the cessation 1.7
of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age
and death.

The cessation, settling, and disappearance of feeling ... perception 1.8
... choices ... consciousness is the cessation of suffering, the settling
of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death.”

SN 22.31

The Root of Gloom

Aghamūlasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, I will teach you gloom and the root of gloom.⁵⁰ 1.2
Listen ...

And what is gloom? Form, feeling, perception, choices, and con- 1.4
sciousness are gloom. This is called gloom.

And what is the root of gloom? It’s the craving that leads to fu- 1.7
ture lives, mixed up with relishing and greed, taking pleasure there
wherever it alights. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for
continued existence, and craving for nonexistence. This is called the
root of gloom.”

50. “Gloom” (*agha*) seems to have originally had the sense of “darkness, void”, a name for the black, starless reaches of space (MN 123:7.4; cf. Rig Veda 10.85.13, for which read “blacknesses”). Legend depicts Agha as a vast serpent of foul-smelling, cave-like maw who devours the innocent. Hence the black evil of *agha* is driven away by the blazing fire (Rig Veda 1.97). But whereas the Vedic usage associates *agha* with evil, malignant deeds—and hence the second noble truth, that which perpetuates suffering—in Buddhism it is associated with the first noble truth, suffering itself.

SN 22.32

Brittle

Pabhaṅgusutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you what is brittle and what is not brittle.⁵¹ Listen ...
- 1.4 And what is brittle? What is not brittle? Form is brittle, but its cessation, settling, and disappearance is not brittle.
- 1.7 Feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is brittle, but its cessation, settling, and disappearance is not brittle.”

51. “Brittle” (*pabhaṅgu*) like gold corrupted by impurities and hence unworkable (SN 46.33:1.8).

The Chapter on Not Yours

SN 22.33

It's Not Yours

Natumhākasutta

At Sāvatthī.	1.1
“Mendicants, give up what’s not yours. ⁵² Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness. And what isn’t yours? Form isn’t yours: give it up. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness.	1.2
Feeling ...	1.7
Perception ...	1.9
Choices ...	1.10
Consciousness isn’t yours: give it up. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness.	1.12
Suppose a person was to carry off the grass, sticks, branches, and leaves in this Jeta’s Grove, or burn them, or do what they want with them. Would you think: ‘This person is carrying us off, burning us, or doing what they want with us’?”	2.1
“No, sir. Why is that? Because to us that’s neither self nor belonging to self.”	2.4
“In the same way, mendicants, form isn’t yours: give it up. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness.	2.7
Feeling ...	2.9
Perception ...	2.11

52. This trope is also found at MN 22:40.1, SN 35.101:1.1, etc.

- 2.12 Choices ...
- 2.13 Consciousness isn't yours: give it up. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness."

SN 22.34

It's Not Yours (2nd)

Dutiyanatumhākasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 "Mendicants, give up what's not yours. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness. And what isn't yours?
- 1.5 Form isn't yours: give it up. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness.
- 1.7 Feeling ...
- 1.8 Perception ...
- 1.9 Choices ...
- 1.10 Consciousness isn't yours: give it up. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness.
- 1.12 Give up what's not yours. Giving it up will be for your welfare and happiness."

SN 22.35

A Mendicant

Aññatarabhikkhusutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him, "Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."⁵³

53. The idea of a "retreat" as understood today was popularized in the 20th century. In early times, it seems, when an individual monastic felt they were

“Mendicant, you’re reckoned by what you have an underlying tendency for.⁵⁴ You’re not reckoned by what you have no underlying tendency for.” 1.5

“Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!” 1.7

“But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?” 2.1

“If you have an underlying tendency for form, you’re reckoned by that. If you have an underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re reckoned by that. 2.2

If you have no underlying tendency for form, you’re not reckoned by that. If you have no underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re not reckoned by that. 2.7

That’s how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha’s brief statement.” 2.12

“Good, good, mendicant! It’s good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I’ve said in brief like this. 3.1

If you have an underlying tendency for form, you’re reckoned by that. If you have an underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re reckoned by that. 3.3

If you have no underlying tendency for form, you’re not reckoned by that. If you have no underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re not reckoned by that. 3.8

This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief.” 3.13

And then that mendicant approved and agreed with what the Buddha said. He got up from his seat, bowed and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before leaving. 4.1

Then that mendicant, living alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute, soon realized the supreme culmination of the spiritual path in this very life. He lived having achieved with his own insight 5.1

ready, they would approach the teacher seeking advice before entering seclusion for an extended period of meditation.

54. *Saṅkhā* is a calculation or measurement or “reckoning”. The idea is that we define and limit ourselves by our attachments. | The “underlying tendencies” or “inherent compulsions” are classically numbered as seven (SN 45.175), or else may be a general term for fundamental defilements (SN 36.3).

the goal for which gentlemen rightly go forth from the lay life to homelessness.

- 5.2 He understood: “Rebirth is ended; the spiritual journey has been completed; what had to be done has been done; there is nothing further for this place.” And that mendicant became one of the perfected.

SN 22.36

A Mendicant (2nd)

Dutiyaaññātarabhikkhusutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, “Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I’ve heard it, I’ll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute.”
- 1.4 “Mendicant, you’re measured against what you have an underlying tendency for, and you’re reckoned by what you’re measured against. You’re not measured against what you have no underlying tendency for, and you’re not reckoned by what you’re not measured against.”
- 1.8 “Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!”
- 2.1 “But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?”
- 2.2 “If you have an underlying tendency for form, you’re measured against that, and you’re reckoned by what you’re measured against. If you have an underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re measured against that, and you’re reckoned by what you’re measured against.
- 2.9 If you have no underlying tendency for form, you’re not measured against that, and you’re not reckoned by what you’re not measured against. If you have no underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re not measured against that, and you’re not reckoned by what you’re not measured against.
- 2.16 That’s how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha’s brief statement.”

“Good, good, mendicant! It’s good that you understand the de- 3.1
tailed meaning of what I’ve said in brief like this.

If you have an underlying tendency for form, you’re measured 3.3
against that, and you’re reckoned by what you’re measured against.
If you have an underlying tendency for feeling ... perception ...
choices ... consciousness, you’re measured against that, and you’re
reckoned by what you’re measured against.

If you have no underlying tendency for form, you’re not measured 3.10
against that, and you’re not reckoned by what you’re not measured
against. If you have no underlying tendency for feeling ... perception
... choices ... consciousness, you’re not measured against that, and
you’re not reckoned by what you’re not measured against.

This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief” ... 3.17
And that mendicant became one of the perfected. 3.18

SN 22.37

With Ānanda

Ānandasutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

And then Venerable Ānanda ... sitting to one side, the Buddha 1.2
said to him:

“Ānanda, suppose they were to ask you: ‘Reverend Ānanda, what 2.1
are the things for which arising is evident, vanishing is evident, and
change while persisting is evident?’⁵⁵ How would you answer?”

55. At AN 3.47:1.3 these are called “three characteristics of the conditioned”, for which this Sutta can be seen as a further analysis. These characteristics apply equally on the scale of a moment, the unfolding of an experience, a lifetime, or a cosmic eon. | This apparently innocuous formulation became the subject of controversy between the different Abhidhamma schools as they tried to specify their theory of momentariness. Some, such as the Theravada of the Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka, defined these as sub-moments of a single moment. The Sarvāstivādins added a fourth sub-moment (decaying), while the Sautrāntikas

- 2.4 “Sir, suppose they were to ask me: ‘What are the things for which arising is evident, vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident?’ I’d answer like this:
- 2.7 ‘Reverend, the arising of form is evident, its vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident.⁵⁶ The arising of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is evident, its vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident. These are the things for which arising is evident, vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident.’
- 2.13 That’s how I’d answer such a question.”
- 3.1 “Good, good, Ānanda. The arising of form is evident, its vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident. The arising of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is evident, its vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident. These are the things for which arising is evident, vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident.
- 3.8 That’s how you should answer such a question.”

SN 22.38

With Ānanda (2nd)

Dutiyaānandasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Sitting to one side, the Buddha said to Ānanda:
- 2.1 “Ānanda, suppose they were to ask you: ‘Reverend Ānanda, what are the things for which arising, vanishing, and change while persisting were evident? What are the things for which arising, vanishing, and change while persisting will be evident? What are the things for

had just arising and ceasing. These explanations are not relevant for the Suttas, which have no theory of momentariness.

56. See SN 12.61:3.3: “This body is seen to last for ... a hundred years, or even longer.”

which arising, vanishing, and change while persisting are evident?’
How would you answer?”

“Sir, suppose they were to ask me: ‘Reverend Ānanda, what are 2.6
the things for which arising, vanishing, and change while persisting
were evident? What are the things for which arising, vanishing, and
change while persisting will be evident? What are the things for
which arising, vanishing, and change while persisting are evident?’
I’d answer like this:

‘Whatever form has passed, ceased, and perished, its arising, van- 2.11
ishing, and change while persisting were evident. Whatever feeling
... perception ... choices ... consciousness has passed, ceased, and
perished, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting were ev-
ident. These are the things for which arising, vanishing, and change
while persisting were evident.

Whatever form is not yet born, and has not yet appeared, its arising, 3.1
vanishing, and change while persisting will be evident. Whatever
feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is not yet born,
and has not yet appeared, its arising, vanishing, and change while
persisting will be evident. These are the things for which arising,
vanishing, and change while persisting will be evident.

Whatever form has been born, and has appeared, its arising, van- 4.1
ishing, and change while persisting is evident. Whatever feeling
... perception ... choices ... consciousness has been born, and has
appeared, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting are ev-
ident. These are the things for which arising is evident, vanishing
is evident, and change while persisting is evident.’ That’s how I’d
answer such a question.”

“Good, good, Ānanda. Whatever form has passed, ceased, and 5.1
perished, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting were ev-
ident. Whatever feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness
has passed, ceased, and perished, its arising, vanishing, and change
while persisting were evident. These are the things for which arising,
vanishing, and change while persisting were evident.

- 6.1 Whatever form is not yet born, and has not yet appeared, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting will be evident. Whatever feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is not yet born, and has not yet appeared, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting will be evident. These are the things for which arising, vanishing, and change while persisting will be evident.
- 7.1 Whatever form has been born, and has appeared, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting are evident. Whatever feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness has been born, and has appeared, its arising, vanishing, and change while persisting are evident. These are the things for which arising is evident, vanishing is evident, and change while persisting is evident.
- 7.9 That's how you should answer such a question."

SN 22.39

In Line With the Teaching

Anudhammasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 "Mendicants, when a mendicant is practicing in line with the teaching, this is what's in line with the teaching.⁵⁷
- 1.3 They should live full of disillusionment for form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.⁵⁸ Living in this way, they completely understand form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Completely understanding form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness, they're freed from these things. They're freed from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They're freed from suffering, I say."

57. See AN 4.97:2.2 and note there.

58. "Disillusionment" (*nibbidā*) is the turning away in disappointment upon realizing that one cannot get what one wants (MN 50:31.15, SN 35.240:1.8).

SN 22.40

In Line With the Teaching (2nd)

Dutiyaanudhammasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when a mendicant is practicing in line with the teaching, this is what’s in line with the teaching. They should meditate observing impermanence in form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. ... They’re freed from suffering, I say.” 1.2

SN 22.41

In Line With the Teaching (3rd)

Tatiyaanudhammasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when a mendicant is practicing in line with the teaching, this is what’s in line with the teaching. They should meditate observing suffering in form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. ... They’re freed from suffering, I say.” 1.2

SN 22.42

In Line With the Teaching (4th)

Catutthaanudhammasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when a mendicant is practicing in line with the teaching, this is what’s in line with the teaching. They should meditate observing not-self in form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. ... 1.2

They’re freed from suffering, I say.”

1.3

The Chapter on Be Your Own Island

SN 22.43

Be Your Own Island

Attadīpasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, be your own island, your own refuge, with no other refuge. Let the teaching be your island and your refuge, with no other refuge.”⁵⁹

1.3 When you live like this, you should examine rationally: ‘From what are sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress born and produced?’⁶⁰

2.1 And, mendicants, from what are sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress born and produced? It’s when an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons. They regard form as self, self as having form, form in

59. This was famously one of the last teachings of the Buddha (DN 16:2.26.1).

60. Compare the Bodhisatta’s reflection at SN 12.10. | Readings vary, but surely for *yonī upaparikkhitabbā* we should accept the variant *yoniso* (“rationally”; literally “by way of source”), as also found at SN 22.95:2.1.

self, or self in form.⁶¹ But that form of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress.

They regard feeling as self ... 2.6

They regard perception as self ... 2.9

They regard choices as self ... 2.10

They regard consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. But that consciousness of theirs decays and perishes, which gives rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. 2.11

Sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress are given up when you understand the impermanence of form—its perishing, fading away, and cessation—and you truly see with right understanding that all form, whether past or present, is impermanent, suffering, and perishable. When these things are given up there's no anxiety. Without anxiety you live happily. A mendicant who lives happily is said to be quenched in that respect.⁶² 3.1

Sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress are given up when you understand the impermanence of feeling ... 3.3

perception ... 3.5

choices ... 3.6

consciousness—its perishing, fading away, and cessation—and you truly see with right understanding that all consciousness, whether past or present, is impermanent, suffering, and perishable. When these things are given up there's no anxiety. Without anxiety you live happily. A mendicant who lives happily is said to be quenched in that respect.” 3.8

61. See note on SN 22.1:9.3.

62. For “quenched in that respect” (*tadaṅganibbuta*) see AN 9.33 and AN 9.50.

SN 22.44

Practice

Paṭipadāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥi.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you the practice that leads to the origin of substantial reality and the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality.⁶³ Listen ...
- 1.4 And what is the practice that leads to the origin of substantial reality? It’s when an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons.
- 1.6 They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form.
- 1.7 They regard feeling as self ...
- 1.8 They regard perception as self ...
- 1.9 They regard choices as self ...
- 1.10 They regard consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness.
- 1.11 This is called the practice that leads to the origin of substantial reality. And that’s why it’s called a way of regarding things that leads to the origin of suffering.
- 2.1 And what is the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality? It’s when a learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons.
- 2.3 They don’t regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form.

63. The “substantial reality” is the aggregates themselves, mistakenly believed to be substantive and therefore a suitable candidate for a self. For discussion, see SN 22.105.

- They don't regard feeling as self ... 2.4
 They don't regard perception as self ... 2.5
 They don't regard choices as self ... 2.6
 They don't regard consciousness as self, self as having conscious- 2.7
 ness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness.
 This is called the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial 2.8
 reality. And that's why it's called a way of regarding things that leads
 to the cessation of suffering."

SN 22.45

Impermanence

Aniccasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 "Mendicants, form is impermanent. What's impermanent is suf- 1.2
 fering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be
 truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am
 not this, this is not my self.' Seeing truly with right understanding like
 this, the mind becomes dispassionate and freed from defilements by
 not grasping.
 Feeling is impermanent ... 1.7
 Perception ... 1.8
 Choices ... 1.9
 Consciousness is impermanent. What's impermanent is suffering. 1.10
 What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be truly seen
 with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this,
 this is not my self.' Seeing truly with right understanding like this,
 the mind becomes dispassionate and freed from defilements by not
 grasping.
 If a mendicant's mind is dispassionate toward the form element, 1.15
 the feeling element, the perception element, the choices element,
 and the consciousness element, it's freed from defilements by not
 grasping.

- 1.19 Being free, it's stable. Being stable, it's content. Being content, they're not anxious. Not being anxious, they personally become extinguished.
- 1.20 They understand: 'Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.'

SN 22.46

Impermanence (2nd)

Dutiyaaniccassutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 "Mendicants, form is impermanent. What's impermanent is suffering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.'
- 1.6 Feeling is impermanent ...
- 1.7 Perception is impermanent ...
- 1.8 Choices are impermanent ...
- 1.9 Consciousness is impermanent. What's impermanent is suffering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.'
- 2.1 Seeing truly with right understanding like this, they have no theories about the first beginning.⁶⁴ Not having theories about the first beginning, they have no theories about the final end. Not having theories about the final end, they don't obstinately stick to them. Not misapprehending, the mind becomes dispassionate toward form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness; it's freed from defilements by not grasping.

64. The theories of the past and the future are detailed at DN 1 and MN 102.

Being free, it's stable. Being stable, it's content. Being content, 2.9
they're not anxious. Not being anxious, they personally become
extinguished.

They understand: 'Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has 2.10
been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing
further for this place.'

SN 22.47

Ways of Regarding

Samanupassanāsutta

At Sāvattḥi. 1.1

"Mendicants, whatever ascetics and brahmins regard various 1.2
kinds of things as self, all regard the five grasping aggregates, or
one of them.

What five? It's when an unlearned ordinary person has not seen 1.3
the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching
of the noble ones. They've not seen true persons, and are neither
skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons.

They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in 1.5
form. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness
as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in
consciousness.

So they're not rid of this way of regarding things, and the conceit 2.1
'I am'.⁶⁵ As long as they're not rid of the conceit 'I am', the five fac-
ulties are conceived—⁶⁶ the eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body. The
mind, ideas, and the element of ignorance are all present.⁶⁷ Struck

65. Read *avigatam* ("not rid") here and SN 22.89:5.9; cf. AN 6.13:6.2, DN 33:2.2.106, DN 34:1.7.63.

66. From here the discourse alludes to dependent origination. The sense facul-
ties are "conceived", i.e. "take rebirth", like name and form (SN 12.39:1.4) or
consciousness (SN 12.59:1.2) or an embryo (MN 93:18.61).

67. The "mind" (*mano*) in the presence of "ignorance" makes choices that drive
the cycle (SN 12.25:10.3). Here *mano*, as usual, signifies the active volitional

by feelings born of contact with ignorance, an unlearned ordinary person thinks ‘I am’,⁶⁸ ‘I am this’,⁶⁹ ‘I will be’, ‘I will not be’, ‘I will have form’, ‘I will be formless’, ‘I will be percipient’, ‘I will not be percipient’, ‘I will be neither percipient nor non-percipient’.

- 3.1 The five faculties stay right where they are.⁷⁰ But a learned noble disciple gives up ignorance about them and gives rise to knowledge. With the fading away of ignorance and the arising of knowledge, they don’t think ‘I am’, ‘I am this’, ‘I will be’, ‘I will not be’, ‘I will have form’, ‘I will be formless’, ‘I will be percipient’, ‘I will be non-percipient’, ‘I will be neither percipient nor non-percipient.’”

SN 22.48

Aggregates

Khandhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.

- 1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you the five aggregates and the five grasping aggregates.⁷¹ Listen ...

- 1.4 And what are the five aggregates?⁷²

dimension of mind, while ignorance is shown to be not self-existent, but part of the complex of mental activity.

68. Through “contact” and “feeling” there arises the “grasping” of views of self.

69. See Uddālaka’s, “I am that, I indeed am that” (*iyam aham asmīyam aham asmīti*, Chāndogya Upaniṣad 6.10.1) and “I am” (*ahamasmi*) at Sāman Veda 594.

70. This is the one who ends the cycle.

71. “Grasping” is so central to the concept of the five aggregates that we rarely find the “bare” aggregates mentioned as here. To head off a misunderstanding, the purpose of this discourse is not to establish that an arahant has aggregates free of grasping, since this is not brought up at all. Rather, it is to clarify the nature of grasping in relation to the aggregates.

72. The five aggregates are the five “masses” or “conglomerates” or “categories” consisting of all instance of that type of phenomena. So far as I can tell, it was not a Vedic technical term. However, the Jains know *khandha* as a clump of more than one atom, namely a “molecule” (Tattvārthasūtra 5.5). It seems that, along with other terms of similar meaning (*sakkāya* and *puggala*; see notes to

Any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: this is called the aggregate of form.	1.5
Any kind of feeling at all ...	1.6
Any kind of perception at all ...	1.7
Any kind of choices at all ...	1.8
Any kind of consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: this is called the aggregate of consciousness.	1.9
These are called the five aggregates.	1.10
And what are the five grasping aggregates? ⁷³	2.1
Any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near, which is accompanied by defilements and fuels grasping: this is called the grasping aggregate of form. ⁷⁴	2.2
Any kind of feeling at all ...	2.3
Any kind of perception at all ...	2.4
Any kind of choices at all ...	2.5

SN 22.22 and SN 22.105), it was vocabulary shared with the Jains, though used in different senses. I have not discovered anywhere where the five are grouped together as such, although in the Suttas people who are not Buddhists seem familiar with them.

73. The five aggregates are not presented as a catch-all category that encompasses all of reality, but rather five types of phenomena that provoke attachment, forming the basis of what we take to be “self”. Desire is what drives the formation of attachment, but it requires all the aggregates to function. Thus the “grasping” aggregates are numbered “five” after the hand that grasps.

74. The text illustrates the noun “grasping” (*upādāna*) with the future passive participle “graspable” (*upādāniya*). I render it “fuels grasping” to capture the secondary sense of “fuel” for the fire (SN 12.52:1.2). This is the aspect of the aggregates that stimulate or provoke desire and attachment. The “grasping” itself is the desire and lust for the aggregates (SN 22.121). But desire only functions as part of a system involving all the aggregates, hence the aggregates are neither identical to nor separate from the grasping (SN 22.82:4.3). Elsewhere we find the past participle “grasped” (*upādinna*) as that which has been “appropriated” or “taken up” at birth (MN 28:6.4).

- 2.6 Any kind of consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near, which is accompanied by defilements and fuels grasping: this is called the grasping aggregate of consciousness.
- 2.7 These are called the five grasping aggregates.”

SN 22.49

With Soṇa

Soṇasutta

- 1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD. At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels’ feeding ground.
- 1.3 Then the householder Soṇa went up to the Buddha ...⁷⁵ The Buddha said to him:
- 2.1 “Soṇa, there are ascetics and brahmins who—based on form, which is impermanent, suffering, and perishable—regard themselves thus: ‘I’m better’, or ‘I’m equal’, or ‘I’m worse’. What is that but a failure to see truly? Based on feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, which is impermanent, suffering, and perishable, they regard themselves thus: ‘I’m better’, or ‘I’m equal’, or ‘I’m worse’. What is that but a failure to see truly?
- 3.1 There are ascetics and brahmins who—based on form, which is impermanent, suffering, and perishable—don’t regard themselves thus: ‘I’m better’, or ‘I’m equal’, or ‘I’m worse’. What is that but seeing truly? Based on feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, which is impermanent, suffering, and perishable, they don’t regard themselves thus: ‘I’m better’, or ‘I’m equal’, or ‘I’m worse’. What is that but seeing truly?
- 4.1 What do you think, Soṇa? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 4.3 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 4.4 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”

75. The householder Soṇa appears here, in the next Sutta, and in SN 35.128.

- “Suffering, sir.” 4.5
- “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?” 4.6
- “No, sir.” 4.8
- “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?” 4.9
- “Impermanent, sir.” 4.14
- “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 4.15
- “Suffering, sir.” 4.16
- “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?” 4.17
- “No, sir.” 4.19
- “So, Sona, you should truly see any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ 5.1
- You should truly see any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ 6.1
- Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed. 7.1
- They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’” 7.3

SN 22.50

With Soṇa (2nd)

Dutiyaṣoṇasutta

- 1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD. At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground.
- 1.3 Then the householder Soṇa went up to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to him:
- 2.1 “Soṇa, there are ascetics and brahmins who don't understand form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. They don't understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. I don't deem them as true ascetics and brahmins. Those venerables don't realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and don't live having realized it with their own insight in this very life.
- 3.1 There are ascetics and brahmins who do understand form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. They do understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. I deem them as true ascetics and brahmins. Those venerables realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and live having realized it with their own insight.”

SN 22.51

The End of Relishing

Nandikkhayasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, form really is impermanent. A mendicant sees that it is impermanent: that's their right view. Seeing rightly, they grow disillusioned. When relishing ends, greed ends. When greed ends,

relishing ends.⁷⁶ When relishing and greed end, the mind is freed, and is said to be well freed.

Feeling ...	1.6
Perception ...	1.10
Choices ...	1.11

Consciousness really is impermanent. A mendicant sees that it is impermanent: that's their right view. Seeing rightly, they grow disillusioned. When relishing ends, greed ends. When greed ends, relishing ends. When relishing and greed end, the mind is freed, and is said to be well freed."

SN 22.52

The End of Relishing (2nd)

Dutiyanandikkhayasutta

At Sāvattḥi. 1.1

"Mendicants, rationally apply the mind to form. Truly see the impermanence of form. When a mendicant does this, they grow disillusioned with form. When relishing ends, greed ends. When greed ends, relishing ends. When relishing and greed end, the mind is freed, and is said to be well freed. 1.2

Rationally apply the mind to feeling ...	1.6
perception ...	1.10
choices ...	1.11

consciousness. Truly see the impermanence of consciousness. 1.15
When a mendicant does this, they grow disillusioned with consciousness. When relishing ends, greed ends. When greed ends, relishing ends. When relishing and greed end, the mind is freed, and is said to be well freed."

76. "Relishing" (*nandi*) and "greed" (or "lust", *rāga*) are similar in meaning, but with distinct stresses: "relishing" enjoys the object of desire, while "greed" is inflamed by passion for it.

THE MIDDLE FIFTY

The Chapter on Involvement

SN 22.53

Involvement

Upayasutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, if you get involved, you’re not free. If you’re not involved, you’re free. 1.2

Should consciousness involved with form, supported by form, established on form continue to remain, with a sprinkling of relishing it would grow, increase, and mature.⁷⁷ 1.3

Or should consciousness involved with feeling remain ... 1.4

Or should consciousness involved with perception remain ... 1.5

Or should consciousness involved with choices, supported by choices, established on choices continue to remain, with a sprinkling of relishing it would grow, increase, and mature. 1.6

Mendicants, suppose you say: ‘Apart from form, feeling, perception, and choices, I will describe the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and reappearing, its growth, increase, and maturity.’ That is not possible.⁷⁸ 2.1

77. This is the consciousness that “continues” in transmigration (DN 33:1.11.122, SN 22.54:1.11, SN 12.38–40). It is described in organic terms, as something that grows like a plant.

78. The process of rebirth is often described in terms of consciousness, as in dependent origination or, say, the “stream of consciousness” (DN 28:7.13). However, consciousness never exists by itself, but only in relation to the other

- 3.1 If a mendicant has given up greed for the form element, the support is cut off, and there is no establishment of consciousness.
- 3.3 If a mendicant has given up greed for the feeling element ...
- 3.4 perception element ...
- 3.5 choices element ...
- 3.6 consciousness element, the support is cut off, and there is no establishment of consciousness. Since that consciousness does not become established and does not grow, not making choices, it is freed.
- 3.9 Being free, it's stable. Being stable, it's content. Being content, they're not anxious. Not being anxious, they personally become extinguished.⁷⁹
- 3.10 They understand: 'Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.'

SN 22.54

Seeds of Plants

Bījasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥi.

aggregates. The case of the formless realm might seem an exception, yet even formless rebirth is dependent on form of the past, since the four "form" absorptions are the basis for the formless attainments. Thus while the formless realms can be described without reference to *present* form they cannot be described without reference to form at all.

79. In this passage, the pronouns have disappeared, in a syntactic mirroring of the vanishing of the delusion of self. Literally: "Because freed, stabilized. Because stabilized, contented. Because contented, is not anxious. Not being anxious, personally extinguish."

“Mendicants, there are five kinds of plants.⁸⁰ What five? Plants 1.2
propagated from roots, trunks, cuttings, or joints; and those from
regular seeds are the fifth.⁸¹

Suppose these five kinds of plants were intact, unspoiled, not 1.5
weather-damaged, fertile, and well-kept. But there’s no earth or
water.⁸² Then would these five kinds of plants reach growth, increase,
and maturity?”

“No, sir.” 1.7

“Suppose these five kinds of plants were intact, unspoiled, not 1.8
weather-damaged, fertile, and well-kept. And there is earth and
water. Then would these five kinds of plants reach growth, increase,
and maturity?”

“Yes, sir.” 1.10

“The four establishing of consciousness should be seen as like 1.11
the earth element.⁸³ Relishing and greed should be seen as like the
water element. Consciousness with its fuel should be seen as like
the five kinds of plants.⁸⁴

80. These terms are defined in detail in Bu Pc 11:2.1.1. *Bijajāta* are not “kinds of seeds” but “that which is born from a seed” i.e. “plants” (*bhūtagāmo nāma pañca bijajātāni*).

81. “Plants propagated from roots” (*mūlabija*, literally “that which has a root for a seed”) include ginger and turmeric; from “trunks” (*khandhabija*) are parasitic stranglers such as the Bodhi tree and the banyan tree, which take root in the trunk of another tree (SN 46.39); from “cuttings” (*aggabija*) basil and hemp; from “joints” (*phalubija*) sugarcane and bamboo; and from “regular seeds” (*bijabija*), grains and vegetables.

82. *Sukhasayita* is sometimes understood as “well planted”, but how can it be planted when there is no soil? It is explained by the commentary as “well-kept”, literally “well laid by”.

83. Pali uses the same word *viññāṇaṭṭhiti* for the seven “planes of consciousness” (realms of rebirth, AN 7.44, DN 15:33.1) as for the four “grounds for consciousness”, the other four aggregates on which consciousness is based.

84. See too AN 3.76:2.3: “deeds are the field, consciousness is the seed, and craving is the moisture”.

- 2.1 Should consciousness involved with form, supported by form, established on form continue to remain, with a sprinkling of relishing it would grow, increase, and mature.
- 2.2 Or should consciousness involved with feeling remain ...
- 2.3 Or should consciousness involved with perception remain ...
- 2.4 Or should consciousness involved with choices, supported by choices, established on choices continue to remain, with a sprinkling of relishing it would grow, increase, and mature.
- 3.1 Mendicants, suppose you say: 'Apart from form, feeling, perception, and choices, I will describe the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and reappearing, its growth, increase, and maturity.' That is not possible.
- 4.1 If a mendicant has given up greed for the form element, the support is cut off, and there is no establishment of consciousness.⁸⁵
- 4.3 If a mendicant has given up greed for the feeling element ...
- 4.4 perception element ...
- 4.5 choices element ...
- 4.6 consciousness element, the support is cut off, and there is no establishment of consciousness. Since that consciousness does not become established and does not grow, not making choices, it is freed.
- 4.9 Being free, it's stable. Being stable, it's content. Being content, they're not anxious. Not being anxious, they personally become extinguished.
- 4.10 They understand: 'Rebirth is ended ... there is nothing further for this place.'

85. For the "establishment of consciousness", namely the rebirth of consciousness in a new life, see too SN 12.64.

SN 22.55

An Inspired Saying

Udānasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

There the Buddha expressed this heartfelt sentiment: “It might not be, and it might not be mine. It will not be, and it will not be mine.”⁸⁶ A mendicant who makes such a resolution can cut off the lower fetters.” 1.2

When he said this, one of the mendicants said to the Buddha, “But sir, how can a mendicant who makes such a resolution cut off the lower fetters?” 1.5

“Mendicant, take an unlearned ordinary person who has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in their teaching. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in their teaching. 2.1

They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. 2.2

They don’t truly understand form—which is impermanent—as impermanent. They don’t truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is impermanent—as impermanent. 3.1

They don’t truly understand form—which is suffering—as suffering. They don’t truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is suffering—as suffering. 4.1

86. I follow the interpretation established by Bhikkhu Bodhi, for which see his note 75 on this discourse in *Connected Discourses*. When using first person pronouns, the formula epitomizes the annihilationist view: “I might not be” (SN 22.81:11.9, SN 24.4:1.3, SN 22.153:1.3, AN 10.29:19.1). The Buddha reformed it with the impersonal third person pronoun: “It might not be”.

- 5.1 They don't truly understand form—which is not-self—as not-self. They don't truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is not-self—as not-self.
- 6.1 They don't truly understand form—which is conditioned—as conditioned. They don't truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is conditioned—as conditioned.
- 6.6 They don't truly understand that form will vanish. They don't truly understand that feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness will vanish.
- 7.1 But a learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don't regard form as self ... They don't regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self.
- 8.1 They truly understand form—which is impermanent—as impermanent. They truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is impermanent—as impermanent.
- 8.6 They truly understand form ... feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is suffering—as suffering.
- 8.7 They truly understand form ... feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is not-self—as not-self.
- 8.8 They truly understand form ... feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is conditioned—as conditioned.
- 8.9 They truly understand that form will vanish.⁸⁷ They truly understand that feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness will vanish.
- 9.1 It's because of the vanishing of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness that a mendicant who makes such a resolution—

87. "Will vanish" is *vibhavissati*, literally "will cease to be", the verbal form of the word "nonexistence" (*vibhava*) in the second noble truth. It's used throughout Snp 4.11 and, in a meditation context, in AN 11.9:7.1. At Iti 49:7.3 it refers to the ending of continued existence for an arahant.

‘It might not be, and it might not be mine. It will not be, and it will not be mine’—can cut off the lower fetters.”⁸⁸

“Sir, you say that a mendicant who makes such a resolution can cut off the lower fetters.”⁸⁹

But how are they to know and see in order to end the defilements without delay?”⁹⁰

“Mendicant, an unlearned ordinary person worries about things that aren’t a worry. For an unlearned ordinary person worries: ‘It might not be, and it might not be mine. It will not be, and it will not be mine.’

A learned noble disciple doesn’t worry about things that aren’t a worry. For a learned noble disciple doesn’t worry: ‘It might not be, and it might not be mine. It will not be, and it will not be mine.’

Should consciousness involved with form, supported by form, established on form continue to remain, with a sprinkling of relishing it would grow, increase, and mature.

Or should consciousness involved with feeling remain ... 11.5

Or should consciousness involved with perception remain ... 11.6

Or should consciousness involved with choices, supported by choices, established on choices continue to remain, with a sprinkling of relishing it would grow, increase, and mature.

Suppose, mendicant, you were to say: ‘Apart from form, feeling, perception, and choices, I will describe the coming and going of consciousness, its passing away and reappearing, its growth, increase, and maturity.’ That is not possible.

If a mendicant has given up greed for the form element, the support is cut off, and there is no establishment of consciousness.

If a mendicant has given up greed for the feeling element ... 13.2

perception element ... 13.3

choices element ... 13.4

88. Thus becoming a non-returner.

89. Here the monk quotes the Buddha, as indicated by the close *-ti* in the text.

90. This question is also at SN 22.81:4.4. “Without delay” means “in this very life”.

- 13.5 consciousness element, the support is cut off, and there is no establishment of consciousness. Since that consciousness does not become established and does not grow, not making choices, it is freed.
- 13.7 Being free, it's stable. Being stable, it's content. Being content, they're not anxious. Not being anxious, they personally become extinguished.
- 13.8 They understand: 'Rebirth is ended ... there is nothing further for this place.'
- 13.9 The ending of the defilements without delay is for one who knows and sees this."

SN 22.56

Rounds of the Grasping Aggregates

Upādānāparipavattasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.⁹¹
- 1.2 "Mendicants, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.
- 1.5 As long as I didn't truly understand these five grasping aggregates in four rounds, I didn't announce my supreme perfect awakening in this world with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans.⁹²
- 1.6 But when I did truly understand these five grasping aggregates in four rounds, I announced my supreme perfect awakening in this world with its gods, Māras, and divinities, this population with its ascetics and brahmins, its gods and humans.

91. The aggregates lack a formal "analysis" discourse. This discourse and the next, however, fill that gap by defining the aggregates. The definitions of form, feeling, and consciousness are shared with dependent origination (SN 12.2).

92. Compare the "three rounds" of SN 56.11:9.1 and the "eight rounds" of AN 8.64:10.1.

And how are there four rounds? I directly knew form, its origin, 2.1
its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. I directly
knew feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, its origin,
its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation.

And what is form? The four principal states, and form derived 3.1
from the four principal states.⁹³ This is called form. Form originates
from fuel.⁹⁴ When fuel ceases, form ceases. The practice that leads
to the cessation of form is simply this noble eightfold path, that is:
right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood,
right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion.

Whatever ascetics and brahmins have directly known form in 4.1
this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads
to its cessation—and are practicing for disillusionment, dispassion,
and cessation regarding form: they are practicing well. Those who
practice well have a footing in this teaching and training.⁹⁵

Those ascetics and brahmins who have directly known form in 5.1
this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to
its cessation—and due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation
regarding form, are freed by not grasping: they are well freed. Those
who are well freed are consummate ones.⁹⁶ For consummate ones,
there is no cycle of rebirths to be found.

93. The “principal states” (*mahābhūtā*) are earth, water, fire, and air, corresponding to the states of matter, namely solid, liquid, plasma, and gas. For the history of this term, see note on MN 28:4.2. | “Derived” (*upādāya*) form is not explained in the suttas, but one passage indicates it includes “space” (MN 28:26.1). The Abhidhamma traditions explain it as including the objects of the senses, the subtle matter that receives sense impressions, and various other material phenomena.

94. For the topic of “fuel” (*āhāra*), here primarily meaning “food”, see SN 12.11, SN 12.63, MN 9:10.2, SN 47.42.

95. Those who “have a footing” (*gādhanti*) are the noble individuals who are trainees. A *gādha* is a “ford” across a river (Rig Veda 7.60.7, 7.97.8, 10.106.9; Gopatha Brāhmaṇa 1.5.2a), a safe path on which one has a “footing” to cross the water.

96. *Kevala* has the root meaning of “entire”, “exclusive”. For the Jains, *kevali* came to mean “one whose knowledge is entire”, i.e. an omniscient one. The Buddha used it to indicate one who has consummated the entire path.

- 6.1 And what is feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of contact through the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind. This is called feeling. Feeling originates from contact. When contact ceases, feeling ceases. The practice that leads to the cessation of feelings is simply this noble eightfold path ...
- 9.1 And what is perception? There are these six classes of perception: perceptions of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and ideas. This is called perception. Perception originates from contact. When contact ceases, perception ceases. The practice that leads to the cessation of perceptions is simply this noble eightfold path ...
- 10.1 And what are choices?⁹⁷ There are these six classes of intention: intention regarding sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and ideas. These are called choices. Choices originate from contact. When contact ceases, choices cease. The practice that leads to the cessation of choices is simply this noble eightfold path ...
- 13.1 And what is consciousness? There are these six classes of consciousness: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind consciousness. This is called consciousness. Consciousness originates from name and form. When name and form cease, consciousness ceases. The practice that leads to the cessation of consciousness is simply this noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion.

97. Here “choices” (*saṅkhārā*) are explicitly defined as “intentions” (*sañcetanā*), a meaning that is consistent in this context and reflected in the common idiom “choices and intentions” (eg. SN 12.37:1.3). See notes on SN 12.2:13.3 and SN 12.51:9.1. | This was maintained in the early Abhidhamma Vibhaṅga (Vb 1), but in the later systematization of the Dhammasaṅgaṇī, the *saṅkhārākhandha* was extended to include all mental factors except feeling, perception, and consciousness (Ds 2.1.1:75.1). As an umbrella category it was then fully defined in the commentarial list of fifty mental factors, of which intention is only one (see Visuddhimagga 14.131). The aim of the Abhidhamma project is to be fully inclusive and systematic, but the role of this aggregate in the Suttas is not to be inclusive, but rather to highlight the significance of intention, will, or volition in creating and maintaining our sense of self.

Whatever ascetics and brahmins have directly known consciousness in this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation—and are practicing for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness: they are practicing well. Those who practice well have a footing in this teaching and training. 14.1

Those ascetics and brahmins who have directly known consciousness in this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation—and due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness, are freed by not grasping: they are well freed. Those who are well freed are consummate ones. For consummate ones, there is no cycle of rebirths to be found.”⁹⁸ 15.1

SN 22.57

Seven Cases

Sattaṭṭhānasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, in this teaching and training a mendicant who is skilled in seven cases and who examines in three ways is called consummate, accomplished, a supreme person. 1.2

And how is a mendicant skilled in seven cases?⁹⁹ It’s when a mendicant understands form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. They understand form’s gratification, drawback, and escape. They understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. They understand consciousness’s gratification, drawback, and escape. 1.3

98. For the phrase “no cycle of rebirths to be found” (*vaṭṭam tesam natthi paññāpanāya*), compare DN 15:22.6.

99. The “seven” are the four noble truths from the previous discourse, plus the “gratification” triad from SN 22.26.

- 2.1 And what is form? The four principal states, and form derived from the four principal states. This is called form. Form originates from fuel. When fuel ceases, form ceases. The practice that leads to the cessation of form is simply this noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion.
- 3.1 The pleasure and happiness that arise from form: this is its gratification. That form is impermanent, suffering, and perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving up desire and greed for form: this is its escape.
- 4.1 Those ascetics and brahmins who have directly known form in this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation; its gratification, drawback, and escape—and are practicing for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form: they are practicing well. Those who practice well have a footing in this teaching and training.
- 5.1 Those ascetics and brahmins who have directly known form in this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation; its gratification, drawback, and escape—and due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, are freed by not grasping: they are well freed. Those who are well freed are consummate ones. For consummate ones, there is no cycle of rebirths to be found.
- 6.1 And what is feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye contact ... feeling born of mind contact. This is called feeling. Feeling originates from contact. When contact ceases, feeling ceases. The practice that leads to the cessation of feelings is simply this noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion.
- 7.1 The pleasure and happiness that arise from feeling: this is its gratification. That feeling is impermanent, suffering, and perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving up desire and greed for feeling: this is its escape. ...

And what is perception? There are these six classes of perception: 10.1
 perceptions of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and ideas. This
 is called perception. Perception originates from contact. When
 contact ceases, perception ceases. The practice that leads to the
 cessation of perceptions is simply this noble eightfold path ...

And what are choices? There are these six classes of intention: 11.1
 intention regarding sights ... intention regarding ideas. These are
 called choices. Choices originate from contact. When contact
 ceases, choices cease. The practice that leads to the cessation of
 choices is simply this noble eightfold path ...

And what is consciousness? There are these six classes of con- 14.1
 sciousness: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind consciousness.
 This is called consciousness. Consciousness originates from name
 and form. When name and form cease, consciousness ceases. The
 practice that leads to the cessation of consciousness is simply this
 noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech,
 right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and
 right immersion.

The pleasure and happiness that arise from consciousness: this is 15.1
 its gratification. That consciousness is impermanent, suffering, and
 perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving up desire and
 greed for consciousness: this is its escape.

Those ascetics and brahmins who have directly known conscious- 16.1
 ness in this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice
 that leads to its cessation; its gratification, drawback, and escape—
 and are practicing for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation re-
 garding consciousness: they are practicing well. Those who practice
 well have a footing in this teaching and training.

Those ascetics and brahmins who have directly known conscious- 17.1
 ness in this way—and its origin, its cessation, and the practice that
 leads to its cessation; its gratification, drawback, and escape—and
 due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding con-
 sciousness, are freed by not grasping: they are well freed. Those who
 are well freed are consummate ones. For consummate ones, there is

no cycle of rebirths to be found. That's how a mendicant is skilled in seven cases.

18.1 And how does a mendicant examine in three ways?¹⁰⁰ It's when a mendicant examines by way of the elements, sense fields, and dependent origination.¹⁰¹ That's how a mendicant examines in three ways.

18.4 In this teaching and training, a mendicant who is skilled in seven cases and who examines in three ways is called consummate, accomplished, a supreme person.”

SN 22.58

The Fully Awakened Buddha

Sammāsambuddhasutta

1.1 At Sāvathī.

1.2 “Mendicants, a Realized One, a perfected one, a fully awakened Buddha is freed by not grasping, due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form. They're called a fully awakened Buddha. A mendicant freed by wisdom is also freed by not grasping, due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form. They're called a mendicant freed by wisdom.¹⁰²

2.1 A Realized One, a perfected one, a fully awakened Buddha is freed by not grasping, due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding feeling ...

3.1 perception ...

100. The verb “examine” (*upaparikkhati*) is frequently used for someone who has learned the teachings, then internally reflects on their meaning.

101. These three, along with the aggregates, are the major wisdom topics, mentioned together also at MN 115:3.3. More commonly, the aggregates, sense fields, and elements are mentioned as a summary of the Buddha's wisdom teachings (SN 8.12:3.2, SN 35.31:1.21, Thig 5.8:2.2, etc.).

102. The mendicant “freed by wisdom” is an arahant. Here it means any arahant, but sometimes it distinguishes one who has prioritized wisdom in their development (eg. MN 70:16.2).

choices ... 3.2

consciousness. They're called a fully awakened Buddha. A mendicant freed by wisdom is also freed by not grasping, due to disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness. They're called a mendicant freed by wisdom. 3.3

What, then, is the difference between a Realized One, a perfected one, a fully awakened Buddha, and a mendicant freed by wisdom? 4.1

"Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. He is our guide and our refuge. Sir, may the Buddha himself please clarify the meaning of this. The mendicants will listen and remember it." 4.2

"Well then, mendicants, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak." 4.3

"Yes, sir," they replied. The Buddha said this: 4.4

"The Realized One, the perfected one, the fully awakened Buddha gave rise to the unarisen path, gave birth to the unborn path, and explained the unexplained path. He is the knower of the path, the discoverer of the path, the expert on the path. And now the disciples live following the path; they acquire it later. 5.1

This is the difference between a Realized One, a perfected one, a fully awakened Buddha, and a mendicant freed by wisdom." 5.3

SN 22.59

The Characteristic of Not-Self

Anattalakkhaṇasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana.¹⁰³ There the Buddha addressed the group of five mendicants: 1.1

103. This is the famous "second discourse", the story of which is told in the Vinaya (Kd 1:6.32.1). At the conclusion of the Dhammacakkappavattanasutta (SN 56.11), when Koṇḍañña became a stream-enterer, the Buddha continued to teach the five ascetics over several days. Eventually, all five realized stream-entry and went forth officially as Buddhist mendicants. Knowing they were ready, he taught them about not-self. In the first discourse, the Buddha referred to the

- 1.3 “Mendicants!”
- 1.4 “Venerable sir,” they replied. The Buddha said this:
- 2.1 “Mendicants, form is not-self.¹⁰⁴ For if form were self, it wouldn’t lead to affliction. And you could compel form:¹⁰⁵ ‘May my form be like this! May it not be like that!’¹⁰⁶ But because form is not-self, it leads to affliction. And you can’t compel form: ‘May my form be like this! May it not be like that!’
- 3.1 Feeling is not-self ...
- 4.1 Perception is not-self ...
- 4.2 Choices are not-self ...
- 5.1 Consciousness is not-self. For if consciousness were self, it wouldn’t lead to affliction. And you could compel consciousness: ‘May my consciousness be like this! May it not be like that!’ But because consciousness is not-self, it leads to affliction. And you can’t compel consciousness: ‘May my consciousness be like this! May it not be like that!’

five aggregates “in brief”, and now he draws that teaching out in more detail. Thus the second discourse is a commentary on a line in the first discourse.

104. The “self” (*attā*, Sanskrit *ātman*) is the cardinal doctrine of the Upaniṣads, whereas the five ascetics were likely Jains, or at least from a similar group. The Jains typically used *jīva* (“soul”) to indicate the radiant essence purified by austerities, which remains eternal as an individual, separate entity. This contrasts with the Upaniṣadic self, which merged into union with the divine Brahma. These terms, however, are not used exclusively, nor are their definitions consistent. The Buddha is casting a wide net, beginning with “form” to capture the most basic conceptions of self, and moving through successively more refined conceptions of self, culminating with the most subtle conception of the Upaniṣads, the identification of self with consciousness.

105. This conditional argument against the “self” is found only here in this form, although the same manner of argument is also at MN 35:13.4. See too the Buddha’s discussion with Potṭhapāda on various kinds of “self” (DN 9:21.4).

106. This responds to the “inner controller” (*antaryāmin*) of Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.7. Uddālaka, having learned this from the centaur Kabandha in Madra (near modern Islamabad), challenges Yājñavalkya, who explains it as the self who lives in the midst of all things, unknown but knowing, controlling all from within.

What do you think, mendicants? ¹⁰⁷ Is form permanent or imper-	6.1
manent?"	
"Impermanent, sir."	6.3
"But if it's impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?"	6.4
"Suffering, sir."	6.5
"But if it's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be	6.6
regarded thus: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self'?"	
"No, sir." ¹⁰⁸	6.8
"Is feeling permanent or impermanent?" ...	6.9
"Is perception permanent or impermanent?" ...	6.10
"Are choices permanent or impermanent?" ...	6.11
"Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?"	6.12
"Impermanent, sir."	6.13
"But if it's impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?"	6.14
"Suffering, sir."	6.15
"But if it's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be	6.16
regarded thus: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self'?"	
"No, sir."	6.18

107. While the first passage is unique, the remainder of the discourse is repeated countless times throughout the discourses. The Buddha engages his audience in question and answer, stimulating reflection and giving encouragement.

108. To understand this argument, we must bear in mind that the "self" was a metaphysical theory of an abiding, eternal reality that is one's truest essence, from which we have become alienated due to defiling influences. Salvation from the travails of the world lies in realizing this essential truth. It follows that what is impermanent cannot be the self, because when it disappears the self would also disappear (DN 15:29.4). And what is suffering cannot be the self, because our true essence is free of impurities and thus essentially blissful, radiant, and all-knowing. This salvific self cannot be identified with something that brings only pain (SN 22.60:5.1). | This metaphysical "self" has only a contingent relationship with the empirical "self" of psychology or popular usage. The psychological self grows and changes, and must develop emotional wholeness and coherence for a person to become a healthy individual. If someone with a fractured psychological self latches on to the Buddhist teaching of no metaphysical self, they can easily mistake one for the other, leading to further disintegration of the psyche. That is why contemplation of not-self is recommended for those who have practiced *samādhī*, a state of deep emotional integration.

- 7.1 “So you should truly see any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
- 8.1 Any kind of feeling at all . . .
- 9.1 Any kind of perception at all . . .
- 9.2 Any kind of choices at all . . .
- 10.1 You should truly see any kind of consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
- 11.1 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed.
- 11.3 They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’”
- 12.1 That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, the group of five mendicants approved what the Buddha said. And while this discourse was being spoken, the minds of the group of five mendicants were freed from defilements by not grasping.

SN 22.60

With Mahāli

Mahālisutta

- 1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD. At one time the Buddha was staying near Vesālī, at the Great Wood, in the hall with the peaked roof.
- 1.3 Then Mahāli the Licchavi went up to the Buddha . . . and said to him:

“Sir, Pūraṇa Kassapa says this: ‘There is no cause or reason for the corruption of sentient beings.’¹⁰⁹ Sentient beings are corrupted without cause or reason. There’s no cause or reason for the purification of sentient beings. Sentient beings are purified without cause or reason.’ What does the Buddha say about this?” 2.1

“Mahāli, there is a cause and reason for the corruption of sentient beings. Sentient beings are corrupted with cause and reason. There is a cause and reason for the purification of sentient beings. Sentient beings are purified with cause and reason.” 3.1

“But sir, what is the cause and reason for the corruption of sentient beings? How are sentient beings corrupted with cause and reason?” 4.1

“Mahāli, if form were absolutely painful—soaked and steeped in pain and not steeped in pleasure—sentient beings wouldn’t be aroused by it.¹¹⁰ But because form is pleasurable—soaked and steeped in pleasure and not steeped in pain—sentient beings are aroused by it. Since they are aroused by it, they’re caught up in it, and so they become corrupted. This is a cause and reason for the corruption of sentient beings. This is how sentient beings are corrupted with cause and reason. 5.1

If feeling ... 6.1

perception ... 7.1

choices ... 7.2

consciousness were absolutely painful—soaked and steeped in pain and not steeped in pleasure—sentient beings wouldn’t be aroused by it. But because consciousness is pleasurable—soaked and steeped in pleasure and not steeped in pain—sentient beings are aroused by it. Since they are aroused by it, they’re caught up in it, and so they become corrupted. This is a cause and reason for 8.1

109. This view is attributed to the Bamboo-staffed Ascetic Gosāla, founder of the Ājīvakas, at DN 2:20.2. There, Pūraṇa Kassapa advocates the inefficacy of action (DN 2:16.1), while at SN 46.56 he is said to teach that there is no cause for knowledge.

110. This section parallels SN 14.34.

the corruption of sentient beings. This is how sentient beings are corrupted with cause and reason.”

9.1 “But sir, what is the cause and reason for the purification of sentient beings? How are sentient beings purified with cause and reason?”

9.3 “Mahāli, if form was absolutely pleasurable—soaked and steeped in pleasure and not steeped in pain—sentient beings wouldn’t grow disillusioned with it. But because form is painful—soaked and steeped in pain and not steeped in pleasure—sentient beings do grow disillusioned with it. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they are purified. This is a cause and reason for the purification of sentient beings. This is how sentient beings are purified with cause and reason.

10.1 If feeling ...

10.2 perception ...

10.3 choices ...

10.4 consciousness was absolutely pleasurable—soaked and steeped in pleasure and not steeped in pain—sentient beings wouldn’t grow disillusioned with it. But because consciousness is painful—soaked and steeped in pain and not steeped in pleasure—sentient beings do grow disillusioned with it. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they are purified. This is a cause and reason for the purification of sentient beings. This is how sentient beings are purified with cause and reason.”

SN 22.61

Burning

Ādittasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

“Mendicants, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are burning.”¹¹¹ 1.2

Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed. 1.3

They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’” 1.5

SN 22.62

The Scope of Definition

Niruttipathasutta

At Sāvattḥī. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these three scopes of definition, labeling, and description. They’re uncorrupted, as they have been since the beginning. They’re not being corrupted now, nor will they be. Sensible ascetics and brahmins don’t look down on them.¹¹² What three? When form has passed, ceased, and perished, its designation, label, and description is ‘was’. It’s not ‘is’ or ‘will be’.”¹¹³ 1.2

When feeling ... 2.1

111. The third discourse famously taught that the six senses are “burning” (SN 35.28), and here the Buddha applies the same metaphor to the aggregates.

112. The three “scopes” or “ranges” (*patha*) are the past, present, and future, each of which is indicated by the appropriate grammatical tense. | *Nirutti* means the “clear expression” or “definition” of a word. In the pre-Buddhist literature, that which is “undefined” is the mystical truth to be muttered under the breath, whereas that which is “defined” is clearly expressed in language. A list of such definitions is a *nirukti*, a glossary or dictionary. See DN 15:32.11, MN 139:13.55, and AN 5.169:3.6.

113. The purpose of this argument is to rebut the idea that “being” or “existence” is eternal, and change an illusion. The Buddha points out that ordinary usage describes things that exist as impermanent, and thus the eternalist thesis contradicts the commonly-agreed truth. This passage is cited in Kv 1.7 against the

- 3.1 perception ...
- 3.2 choices ...
- 4.1 consciousness has passed, ceased, and perished, its designation, label, and description is 'was'. It's not 'is' or 'will be'.
- 5.1 When form is not yet born, and has not yet appeared, its designation, label, and description is 'will be'. It's not 'is' or 'was'.
- 6.1 When feeling ...
- 7.1 perception ...
- 7.2 choices ...
- 8.1 consciousness is not yet born, and has not yet appeared, its designation, label, and description is 'will be'. It's not 'is' or 'was'.
- 9.1 When form has been born, and has appeared, its designation, label, and description is 'is'. It's not 'was' or 'will be'.
- 10.1 When feeling ...
- 11.1 perception ...
- 11.2 choices ...
- 12.1 consciousness has been born, and has appeared, its designation, label, and description is 'is'. It's not 'was' or 'will be'.
- 13.1 These are the three scopes of definition, labeling, and description. They're uncorrupted, as they have been since the beginning. They're not being corrupted now, nor will they be. Sensible ascetics and brahmins don't look down on them.
- 13.2 Even those who were loud and bold advocates of the doctrines of no-cause, inaction, and nihilism, didn't imagine that these three

Sarvāstivādin thesis that all phenomena of past, present, and future, exist (also discussed at Kv 1.6 and Kv 1.8).

scopes of definition should be criticized or rejected.¹¹⁴ Why is that? For fear of being blamed, attacked, provoked, and faulted.”

114. The phrase *ukkalā vassabhañña* occurs regarding different teachings at MN 117:38.1 and SN 22.62:13.2. The commentary says it refers to two individuals named Vassa and Bhañña from a distant land on the Bay of Bengal, Ukkalā (Sanskrit *oḍra*, modern Odisha). But this seems quite unlikely. Ukkalā was distant and largely unknown, mentioned only once elsewhere in the Pali canon (Kd 1:4.2.1). These teachers with their odd names (“Rain” and “Speak”) appear nowhere else, yet the phrase *yepi te ahesum* suggests they were well known; it is elsewhere used only of “those who were” Buddhas of the past. There seems no reason the Buddha should abruptly allude to such obscure figures as if they were an authority. Read *ukkalā* from root *kal* (“to sound”) with prefix *ud* (“up”), “with raised voice” (cf. Sanskrit *kalabhāṣin*, “with pleasing voice”). Then *vassa* from *vṛṣa* (“bull, chief”), for which compare the expression, *uḷārā āsabhi vācā bhāsita*, “spoke a lofty bull’s word”, i.e. made a proud and bold statement. *Bhañña* is used elsewhere of speaking “out of faith” (*pasādabhañña*, Bu Pj 4:8.11.8) or of the intoned recitation used for Buddhist texts (*sarabhañña*, Ud 5.6:18.2 = Kd 15:3.2.1, Kd 15:3.2.1, Kd 22:1.10.5). Thus the sense would be, “those who loudly and boldly assert”.

The Chapter on the Perfected Ones

SN 22.63

When You Grasp

Upādiyamānasutta

- 1.1 SO I HAVE HEARD. At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattḥi in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery.
- 1.3 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him, "Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."
- 1.5 "When you grasp, mendicant, you're bound by Māra. Not grasping, you're free from the Wicked One."
- 1.7 "Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!"
- 2.1 "But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?"
- 2.2 "Sir, when you grasp form you're bound by Māra. Not grasping, you're free from the Wicked One. When you grasp feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you're bound by Māra. Not grasping, you're free from the Wicked One."
- 2.10 That's how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha's brief statement."
- 3.1 "Good, good, mendicant! It's good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I've said in brief like this."

When you grasp form you're bound by Māra. Not grasping, you're 3.3
free from the Wicked One. When you grasp feeling ... perception
... choices ... consciousness, you're bound by Māra. Not grasping,
you're free from the Wicked One.

This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief." 3.10

And then that mendicant approved and agreed with what the 4.1
Buddha said. He got up from his seat, bowed and respectfully circled
the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before leaving.

Then that mendicant, living alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, 4.2
and resolute, soon realized the supreme culmination of the spiritual
path in this very life. He lived having achieved with his own insight
the goal for which gentlemen rightly go forth from the lay life to
homelessness.

He understood: "Rebirth is ended; the spiritual journey has been 4.3
completed; what had to be done has been done; there is nothing
further for this place." And that mendicant became one of the per-
fected.

SN 22.64

Conceiving

Maññamānasutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, "Sir, 1.2
may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard
it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."

- 1.4 “When you conceive, mendicant, you’re bound by Māra.¹¹⁵ Not conceiving, you’re free from the Wicked One.”
- 1.6 “Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!”
- 2.1 “But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?”
- 2.2 “Sir, when you conceive form you’re bound by Māra. Not conceiving, you’re free from the Wicked One. When you conceive feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re bound by Māra. Not conceiving, you’re free from the Wicked One.
- 2.9 That’s how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha’s brief statement.”
- 3.1 “Good, good, mendicant! It’s good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I’ve said in brief like this.
- 3.3 When you conceive form you’re bound by Māra. Not conceiving, you’re free from the Wicked One. When you conceive feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, you’re bound by Māra. Not conceiving, you’re free from the Wicked One.
- 3.10 This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief.” ...
- 3.11 And that mendicant became one of the perfected.

SN 22.65

When You Take Pleasure

Abhinandamānasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattṭhī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, “Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I’ve heard it, I’ll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute.”

115. To “conceive” or “imagine” (*maññati*) is, according to the commentary, to think in terms of a “self”, proliferating experience through craving, conceit, or views until it is constructed *for me*. This usage draws upon such passages as Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.3.20, where due to ignorance, a person “imagines” in a dream the fearful things they saw when awake, or at the highest level, “imagines I am this all” (*ahamevedam sarvo’smīti manyate*). See MN 1:3.3.

“When you take pleasure, mendicant, you’re bound by Māra. Not taking pleasure, you’re free from the Wicked One.” 1.4

“Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!” 1.6

“But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?” 2.1

“Sir, when you take pleasure in form you’re bound by Māra. Not taking pleasure, you’re free from the Wicked One. When you take pleasure in feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness you’re bound by Māra. Not taking pleasure, you’re free from the Wicked One.” 2.2

That’s how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha’s brief statement.” 2.9

“Good, good, mendicant! It’s good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I’ve said in brief like this.” 3.1

When you take pleasure in form you’re bound by Māra. Not taking pleasure, you’re free from the Wicked One. When you take pleasure in feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness you’re bound by Māra. Not taking pleasure, you’re free from the Wicked One.” 3.3

This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief.” ... 3.10

And that mendicant became one of the perfected. 3.11

SN 22.66

Impermanence

Aniccasutta

At Sāvathī. 1.1

Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, “Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I’ve heard it, I’ll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute.” 1.2

“Mendicant, give up desire for whatever’s impermanent.” 1.4

“Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!” 1.5

“But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?” 2.1

“Sir, form is impermanent; I should give up desire for it.” 2.2

- 2.3 Feeling ...
- 2.4 Perception ...
- 2.5 Choices ...
- 2.6 Consciousness is impermanent; I should give up desire for it.
- 2.7 That's how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha's brief statement."
- 3.1 "Good, good, mendicant! It's good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I've said in brief like this.
- 3.3 Form is impermanent; you should give up desire for it.
- 3.4 Feeling ...
- 3.5 Perception ...
- 3.6 Choices ...
- 3.7 Consciousness is impermanent; you should give up desire for it.
- 3.8 This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief." ...
- 3.9 And that mendicant became one of the perfected.

SN 22.67

Suffering

Dukkhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, "Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."
- 1.4 "Mendicant, give up desire for whatever's suffering."
- 1.5 "Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!"
- 2.1 "But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?"
- 2.2 "Sir, form is suffering; I should give up desire for it.
- 2.3 Feeling ...
- 2.4 Perception ...
- 2.5 Choices ...
- 2.6 Consciousness is suffering; I should give up desire for it.

That's how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha's brief statement." 2.7

"Good, good, mendicant! It's good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I've said in brief like this. 3.1

Form is suffering; you should give up desire for it. 3.3

Feeling ... 3.4

Perception ... 3.5

Choices ... 3.6

Consciousness is suffering; you should give up desire for it. 3.7

This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief." ... 3.8

And that mendicant became one of the perfected. 3.9

SN 22.68

Not-Self

Anattasutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, "Sir, 1.2
may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard
it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."

"Mendicant, give up desire for what is not-self." 1.4

"Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!" 1.5

"But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?" 2.1

"Sir, form is not-self; I should give up desire for it. 2.2

Feeling ... 2.3

Perception ... 2.4

Choices ... 2.5

Consciousness is not-self; I should give up desire for it. 2.6

That's how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha's brief statement." 2.7

"Good, good, mendicant! It's good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I've said in brief like this. 3.1

Form is not-self; you should give up desire for it. 3.3

- 3.4 Feeling ...
- 3.5 Perception ...
- 3.6 Choices ...
- 3.7 Consciousness is not-self; you should give up desire for it.
- 3.8 This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief." ...
- 3.9 And that mendicant became one of the perfected.

SN 22.69

Not Belonging to Self

Anattaniyasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, "Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."
- 1.4 "Mendicant, give up desire for whatever doesn't belong to self."
- 1.5 "Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!"
- 2.1 "But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?"
- 2.2 "Sir, form doesn't belong to self; I should give up desire for it.
- 2.3 Feeling ...
- 2.4 Perception ...
- 2.5 Choices ...
- 2.6 Consciousness doesn't belong to self; I should give up desire for it.
- 2.7 That's how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha's brief statement."
- 3.1 "Good, good, mendicant! It's good that you understand the detailed meaning of what I've said in brief like this.
- 3.3 Form doesn't belong to self; you should give up desire for it.
- 3.4 Feeling ...
- 3.5 Perception ...
- 3.6 Choices ...

Consciousness doesn't belong to self; you should give up desire 3.7
for it.

This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief." ... 3.8

And that mendicant became one of the perfected. 3.9

SN 22.70

Definitely Arousing

Rajanīyasaṇṭhitasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, "Sir, 1.2
may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I've heard
it, I'll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute."

"Mendicant, give up desire for whatever is shaped by arousal."¹¹⁶ 1.4

"Understood, Blessed One! Understood, Holy One!" 1.5

"But how do you see the detailed meaning of my brief statement?" 2.1

"Sir, form is shaped by arousal; I should give up desire for it. 2.2

Feeling ... 2.3

Perception ... 2.4

Choices ... 2.5

Consciousness is shaped by arousal; I should give up desire for it. 2.6

That's how I understand the detailed meaning of the Buddha's 2.7
brief statement."

"Good, good, mendicant! It's good that you understand the de- 3.1
tailed meaning of what I've said in brief like this.

Form is shaped by arousal; you should give up desire for it. 3.3

Feeling ... 3.4

Perception ... 3.5

Choices ... 3.6

Consciousness is shaped by arousal; you should give up desire for 3.7
it.

116. Commentary says, "shaped by the conditioned nature of desire".

- 3.8 This is how to see the detailed meaning of what I said in brief.” ...
 3.9 And that mendicant became one of the perfected.

SN 22.71

With Rādhā

Rādhāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
 1.2 Then Venerable Rādhā went up to the Buddha ... and asked him,¹¹⁷ “Sir, how does one know and see so that there’s no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs?”¹¹⁸
 1.4 “Rādhā, one truly sees any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
 1.5 One truly sees any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
 1.9 That’s how to know and see so that there’s no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs.” ...
 1.10 And Venerable Rādhā became one of the perfected.

117. The next Saṃyutta, starting with SN 23.1, features Rādhā throughout. Because he was such a persistent questioner, he was said to be the foremost of those who inspire eloquent teachings (AN 1.233). This discourse is also found at SN 18.21 and SN 22.91.

118. See SN 18.21:1.3 and note.

SN 22.72

With Surādha

Surādhassutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

Then Venerable Surādha said to the Buddha:¹¹⁹

1.2

“Sir, how does one know and see so that the heart is rid of I-making, mine-making, and conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs; and going beyond discrimination, it’s peaceful and well freed?”

“Surādha, one is freed by not grasping having truly seen any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’

1.4

One is freed by not grasping having truly seen any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’¹²⁰

1.5

That’s how to know and see so that the heart is rid of I-making, mine-making, and conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs; and going beyond discrimination, it’s peaceful and well freed.” ...

1.12

And Venerable Surādha became one of the perfected.

1.13

119. Surādha’s verses are at Thag 2.8. This discourse is also at SN 18.22 and SN 22.92.

120. The handling of abbreviations is corrupted here in the Burmese editions.

The Chapter on Itchy

SN 22.73

Gratification

Assādasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly understand the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. A learned noble disciple does truly understand the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.”

SN 22.74

Origin

Samudayasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly understand the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. A learned noble disciple does truly understand the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback, and

the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.”

SN 22.75

Origin (2nd)

Dutiyasamudayasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, a learned noble disciple truly understands the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.” 1.2

SN 22.76

The Perfected Ones

Arahantasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, form is impermanent. What’s impermanent is suffering. What’s suffering is not-self. And what’s not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ 1.2

Feeling ...

1.6

Perception ...

1.7

Choices ...

1.8

Consciousness is impermanent. What’s impermanent is suffering. What’s suffering is not-self. And what’s not-self should be truly seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ 1.9

Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, 2.1

desire fades away. When desire fades away they're freed. When they're freed, they know they're freed.

- 2.3 They understand: 'Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.' As far as there are abodes of sentient beings, even up until the pinnacle of existence, the perfected ones are the foremost and the best."¹²¹

- 3.1 That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say:

- 4.1 "Oh! How happy are the perfected ones!
Craving is not found in them,
the conceit 'I am' is cut off,
and the net of delusion is shattered.

- 5.1 They've attained imperturbability,
their minds are unclouded,
nothing in the world clings to them,
manifesting divinity, undefiled.

- 6.1 Completely understanding the five aggregates,
their domain is the seven good qualities.¹²²
Those true persons are praiseworthy,
the Buddha's bosom sons.

- 7.1 Endowed with the seven gems,¹²³
and trained in the three trainings,
the great heroes live on,
with fear and dread given up.

121. The nine "abodes of sentient beings" (*sattāvāsā*) are listed at (AN 9.24. The "pinnacle of existence" (*bhavagga*), also mentioned in passing at AN 4.75:1.3, is the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception (Vb 18:209.3, Kv 3.12:22.4).

122. Listed at AN 7.94.

123. The seven factors of awakening (SN 46.42).

- Endowed with ten factors,¹²⁴ 8.1
 those giants are immersed in samādhi.
 They are the best in the world,
 craving is not found in them.
- The adept's knowledge has arisen: 9.1
 'This bag of bones is my last.'
 They are independent of others
 in the core of the spiritual path.
- They do not waver due to the discriminations,¹²⁵ 10.1
 they're freed from future lives.
 They've reached the level of the tamed,
 in the world, they're the winners.
- Above, below, all round, 11.1
 relishing is not found in them.
 They roar their lion's roar:
 'The awakened are supreme in the world!'"

SN 22.77

The Perfected Ones (2nd)

Dutiyaarahantasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 "Mendicants, form is impermanent.¹²⁶ What's impermanent is 1.2
 suffering. What's suffering is not-self. And what's not-self should be
 truly seen with right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am
 not this, this is not my self.'

124. The "ten qualities of an adept" are the eight path factors plus right knowledge and right freedom (AN 10.112).

125. *Vikampati* is also used in the context of the threefold conceit at SN 1.20:23.3 = Snp 4.9:8.3 and in the verses of Mahākassapa at Thag 18.1:26.4.

126. This is the same as the previous, except lacking verses.

- 2.1 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they're freed. When they're freed, they know they're freed.
- 2.3 They understand: 'Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.'
- 2.4 As far as there are abodes of sentient beings, even up until the pinnacle of existence, the perfected ones are the foremost and the best."

SN 22.78

The Lion

Sīhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 "Mendicants, toward evening the lion, king of beasts, emerges from his den, yawns, surveys the four quarters, and roars his lion's roar three times. Then he sets out on the hunt. And whatever animals hear the roar of the lion, king of beasts, are typically filled with fear, awe, and terror. They return to their lairs, be they in a hole, the water, or a wood; and the birds take to the air. Even the royal elephants, bound with strong harnesses in the villages, towns, and capital cities, break apart their bonds, and urinate and defecate in terror as they flee here and there. That's how powerful is the lion, king of beasts, over animals, how illustrious and mighty.
- 2.1 In the same way, when a Realized One arises in the world—perfected, a fully awakened Buddha, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, holy, knower of the world, supreme guide for those fit for training, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed—he teaches the Dhamma: 'Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form. Such is feeling . . . Such is perception

... Such are choices ... Such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.’

Now, there are gods who are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy, 2.7
lasting long in their divine palaces. When they hear this teaching by
the Realized One, they’re typically filled with fear, awe, and terror.
‘Oh no! It turns out we’re impermanent, though we thought we were
permanent! It turns out we don’t last, though we thought we were
everlasting! It turns out we’re transient, though we thought we were
eternal! It turns out that we’re impermanent, not lasting, transient,
and included within substantial reality.’¹²⁷ That’s how powerful is the
Realized One in the world with its gods, how illustrious and mighty.”

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, 2.13
went on to say:

“The Buddha, the unrivaled Teacher 3.1
in all the world with its gods,
rolls forth the Wheel of Dhamma
from his own insight:

substantial reality, its cessation, 4.1
the origin of substantial reality,
and the noble eightfold path
that leads to the stilling of suffering.

And then the long-lived gods, 5.1
so beautiful and glorious,
are afraid and full of terror,
like the other beasts when they hear a lion.

‘We haven’t passed beyond substantial reality! 6.1
It turns out we’re impermanent!’

127. When the same parable is told at AN 4.33, it is in response to the Buddha’s teaching on “substantial reality”, lending the discourse greater coherence. Since the aggregates are elsewhere said to be “substantial reality”, perhaps the parable was adapted in this form.

So they say when they hear the word
of the perfected one, free and unaffected.”

SN 22.79

Bitable

Khajjanīyasutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, whatever ascetics and brahmins recollect many kinds of past lives, all recollect the five grasping aggregates, or one of them.¹²⁸ What five? ‘I had such form in the past.’¹²⁹ Recollecting thus, it’s only form that they recollect. ‘I had such feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness in the past.’ Recollecting thus, it’s only consciousness that they recollect.

2.1 And why do you call it form? It’s deformed; that’s why it’s called ‘form’. Deformed by what? Deformed by cold, heat, hunger, and thirst, and deformed by the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, and reptiles. It’s deformed; that’s why it’s called ‘form’.¹³⁰

3.1 And why do you call it feeling? It feels; that’s why it’s called ‘feeling’. And what does it feel? It feels pleasure, pain, and neutral.¹³¹ It feels; that’s why it’s called ‘feeling’.

128. Compare the stock description of such recollection: “There, I was named this, my clan was that, I looked like this, and that was my food. This was how I felt pleasure and pain, and that was how my life ended” (eg. SN 16.9:13.1). Also see the different ways the self is conceived as being reborn in states described as “percipient”, “formed”, and so on in DN 1.

129. MN 131:4.2.

130. For the other aggregates, the noun is illustrated with the verb, but *rūpa* has no verbal form. Instead, the text puns with the unrelated verb *ruppati*. *Ruppati* would be better translated as “inflict”, but I use “deform” to maintain the play on words. The actual etymology of *rūpa* is unclear (see note on SN 12.2:11.5).

131. For these definitions, see MN 43:8.5.

And why do you call it perception? It perceives; that's why it's 4.1
called 'perception'. And what does it perceive? It perceives blue, yellow, red, and white.¹³² It perceives; that's why it's called 'perception'.

And why do you call them choices? Choices produce conditioned 5.1
phenomena; that's why they're called 'choices'.¹³³ And what are the conditioned phenomena that they produce? Form is a conditioned phenomenon; choices are what make it into form. Feeling is a conditioned phenomenon; choices are what make it into feeling. Perception is a conditioned phenomenon; choices are what make it into perception. Choices are conditioned phenomena; choices are what make them into choices. Consciousness is a conditioned phenomenon; choices are what make it into consciousness.¹³⁴ Choices produce conditioned phenomena; that's why they're called 'choices'.¹³⁵

And why do you call it consciousness? It cognizes; that's why it's 6.1
called 'consciousness'. And what does it cognize? It cognizes sour, bitter, pungent, sweet, hot, mild, salty, and bland.¹³⁶ It cognizes; that's why it's called 'consciousness'.

A learned noble disciple reflects on this: 'Currently I'm bitten 7.1
by form.'¹³⁷ In the past I was also bitten by form just like now. If I

132. "Color" is a more sophisticated and less universal aspect of awareness than "feeling", reflecting the fact that "perception" relates to higher-order functions like recognition and interpretation, which are involved in concept formation.

133. The text uses three forms of the same word. A literal rendering might be: "They activate the activated; that's why they're called activators."

134. Literally, "they make conditioned form into the state of being form".

135. The aggregates in this life were generated by the kammic choices in past lives, and continue to be shaped by choices in this life. Unless kammically potent choices are relinquished, they will go on to generate future lives as well.

136. It seems that taste was a common way of illustrating consciousness. Aitareya Upaniṣad 3.1 describes the Self as that by which one sees, hears, smells, tastes, speaks, and "cognizes sweet and sour" (*svādu cāsvādu ca vijānāti*). Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.2.4 says "one cognizes tastes with the tongue". The explanation at MN 43:4.5 differs, as there it is talking about meditation, not rebirth.

137. The verb "bite" is used as a vivid image for the way the aggregates constantly afflict or "itch". Compare the Vedic image of Indra as the "dragon-biter" (Rig

were to look forward to enjoying form in the future, I'd be bitten by form in the future just as I am today.' Reflecting like this they are not concerned with past form, they don't look forward to enjoying future form, and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present form.

- 8.1 'Currently I'm bitten by feeling ...
 9.1 perception ...
 9.2 choices ...
 10.1 consciousness. In the past I was also bitten by consciousness just like now. If I were to look forward to enjoying consciousness in the future, I'd be bitten by consciousness in the future just as I am today.' Reflecting like this they are not concerned with past consciousness, they don't look forward to enjoying future consciousness, and they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding present consciousness.
- 11.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?"
- 11.3 "Impermanent, sir."
- 11.4 "But if it's impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?"
- 11.5 "Suffering, sir."
- 11.6 "But if it's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self'?"
- 11.8 "No, sir."
- 11.9 "Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?"
- 11.13 "Impermanent, sir."
- 11.14 "But if it's impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?"
- 11.15 "Suffering, sir."
- 11.16 "But if it's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self'?"
- 11.18 "No, sir."

Veda 3.45.2). Here it can also be seen as continuing the idea of consciousness as the taster.

“So you should truly see any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; near or far: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ You should truly see any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ 11.19

This is called a noble disciple who gets rid of and doesn’t accumulate; who gives up and doesn’t grasp; who unmeshes and doesn’t enmesh;¹³⁸ who dissipates and doesn’t get clouded.¹³⁹ 12.1

And what things do they get rid of and not accumulate? They get rid of form and don’t accumulate it. They get rid of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness and don’t accumulate it. 12.5

And what things do they give up and not grasp? They give up form and don’t grasp it. They give up feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness and don’t grasp it. 12.11

And what things do they unmesh and not enmesh? They unmesh form and don’t enmesh it. They unmesh feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness and don’t enmesh it. 12.17

And what things do they dissipate and not get clouded by? They dissipate form and don’t get clouded by it. They dissipate feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness and don’t get clouded by it. 12.23

Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed. 13.1

They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’ 13.3

138. The verbs *visineti* and *ussineti*, unique to this passage, are from the root *si*, “bind”.

139. *Vidhūpeti*, literally “clears the smoke”.

- 14.1 This is called a mendicant who neither gets rid of nor accumulates, but remains after getting rid. They neither give up nor grasp, but remain after giving up. They neither unmesh nor enmesh, but remain after unmeshing. They neither dissipate nor get clouded, but remain after dissipating.¹⁴⁰
- 14.2 And what things do they neither get rid of nor accumulate, but remain after getting rid of them? They neither get rid of nor accumulate form, but remain after getting rid of it. They neither get rid of nor accumulate feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, but remain after getting rid of it.
- 14.8 And what things do they neither give up nor grasp, but remain after giving them up? They neither give up nor grasp form, but remain after giving it up. They neither give up nor grasp feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, but remain after giving it up.
- 14.14 And what things do they neither discard nor amass, but remain after discarding them? They neither unmesh nor enmesh form, but remain after unmeshing it. They neither unmesh nor enmesh feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, but remain after unmeshing it.
- 14.20 And what things do they neither dissipate nor get clouded by, but remain after dissipating them? They neither dissipate nor get clouded by form, but remain after dissipating it. They neither dissipate nor get clouded by feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, but remain after dissipating it.
- 14.26 When a mendicant's mind is freed like this, the gods together with Indra, the Divinity, and the Progenitor worship them from afar:
- 15.1 'Homage to you, O thoroughbred!
Homage to you, supreme among men!
We don't understand

140. "Remain" (*thita*) means "live on". This passage concerns the arahant before his final passing. This passage recalls the one who "neither picks up nor puts down" in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* (eg. Snp 4.3:8.3).

the basis of your absorption.’”¹⁴¹

SN 22.80

Beggars

Piṇḍolyasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying in the land of the Sakyans, near 1.1
Kapilavatthu in the Banyan Tree Monastery.

Then the Buddha, having dismissed the mendicant Saṅgha for 1.2
some reason, robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and
robe, entered Kapilavatthu for alms.¹⁴² He wandered for alms in
Kapilavatthu. After the meal, on his return from almsround, he went
to the Great Wood for the day’s meditation, plunged deep into it,
and sat at the root of a young wood-apple tree to meditate.

Then as he was in private retreat this thought came to his mind, 2.1
“I have purged the mendicant Saṅgha.¹⁴³ But there are mendicants
here who are junior, recently gone forth, newly come to this teaching
and training. Not seeing me they may change and fall apart. If a
young calf doesn’t see its mother it may change and fall apart. ... Or
if young seedlings don’t get water they may change and fall apart.
In the same way, there are mendicants here who are junior, recently
gone forth, newly come to this teaching and training. Not seeing me
they may change and fall apart. Why don’t I support the mendicant
Saṅgha now as I did in the past?”

Then the divinity Sahampati knew the Buddha’s train of thought. 3.1
As easily as a strong person would extend or contract their arm, he

141. Elsewhere, this verse expresses the mystic wonder of these deities at the depth of an arahant’s meditation and that upon which it is based (AN 11.9, Thag 18.1:34.4). Here it seems less pertinent, as there has been no mention of meditation and its basis.

142. Elsewhere, the reason is that the monks are too noisy (MN 67:4.6, Ud 3.3:4.1).

143. *Pabāḷha* (“purged”) is unique in this context. Compare Sanskrit *pravāhana*, “driving out, evacuation”.

vanished from the realm of divinity and reappeared in front of the Buddha. He arranged his robe over one shoulder, raised his cupped palms toward the Buddha, and said: “That’s so true, Blessed One! That’s so true, Holy One! The Buddha has purged the mendicant Saṅgha. But there are mendicants who are junior, recently gone forth, newly come to this teaching and training. ... May the Buddha be happy with the mendicant Saṅgha! May the Buddha welcome the mendicant Saṅgha! May the Buddha support the mendicant Saṅgha now as he did in the past!”

4.1 The Buddha consented with silence. Then the divinity Sahampati, knowing that the Buddha had consented, bowed and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on his right, before vanishing right there.

5.1 Then in the late afternoon, the Buddha came out of retreat and went to the Banyan Tree Monastery, where he sat down on the seat spread out. Then he used his psychic power to will that the mendicants would come to him timidly, alone or in pairs. Those mendicants approached the Buddha timidly, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to them:

6.1 “This is the last of lifestyles, mendicants, namely relying on alms.¹⁴⁴ The world curses you: ‘You beggar, walking bowl in hand!’ Yet earnest gentlemen take it up for a good reason.¹⁴⁵ Not to escape a summons by a king or a summons for a bandit, or because you were in debt or in fear, or in order to make a living.¹⁴⁶ But because they’re

144. The unusual use of *anta* here is, I believe, a play on words. Per the commentary, it suggests the “least” of lifestyles, but it is also that which “makes an end” of suffering and future lives, as said just a few sentences below.

145. At Pvr 14:3.1, someone who is *atthavasika* is acting from the earnest intention for a god outcome.

146. The terms here follow the same sequence as in the Vinaya account of ordination. Generally, ordination should not be given in such cases, but if it is given, those performing it incur an offense of wrong-doing. | Soldiers joined the Saṅgha to escape military service, so the Buddha said one should not ordain those in service to a king (Kd 1:40.1.1). | Several rules regarding ordination of criminals were passed, the thrust of which is that wanted outlaws should not be

swamped by rebirth, old age, and death; by sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They're swamped by suffering, mired in suffering. And they think, 'Hopefully I can make an end to this entire mass of suffering.'

That's how this gentleman has gone forth. Yet they covet sensual pleasures; they're infatuated, full of ill will and malicious intent. They are unmindful, lacking situational awareness and immersion, with straying mind and undisciplined faculties. Suppose there was a firebrand for lighting a funeral pyre, burning at both ends, and smeared with dung in the middle. It couldn't be used as timber either in the village or the wilderness. I say that individual is just like this. They've missed out on the pleasures of the lay life, and haven't fulfilled the goal of the ascetic life. 7.1

There are these three unskillful thoughts. Sensual, malicious, and cruel thoughts. And where do these three unskillful thoughts cease without remainder? In those who meditate with their mind firmly established in the four kinds of mindfulness meditation; or who develop signless immersion.¹⁴⁷ This is quite enough motivation to develop signless immersion. When signless immersion is developed and cultivated it is very fruitful and beneficial. 8.1

ordained (Kd 1:41.1.1). | Another man ordained to escape debt (Kd 1:46.1.1). | Seventeen boys ordained as novices to get a nice livelihood (Kd 1:49.1.1). | The only item that does not straightforwardly correspond is "in fear" (*bhayaṭṭa*). In the Vinaya sequence, the ordination of slaves appears at this point (Kd 1:47.1.1). The connection is suggested by the verses of the water-carrier Puṇṇikā, who speaks of living "in fear" of her masters' abuse and beatings (Thig 12.1:1.1).

147. The "signless" (*animitta*) meditation is described in the canon simply as, "not focusing on any signs, one enters and remains in the signless immersion of the heart" (SN 41.7:5.2, MN 43:27.2). The current passage distinguishes it from the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, which are called the "bases of immersion", namely, the things on which you focus in order to achieve absorption (*samādhinimitta*, MN 44:12.3, cf. AN 4.14:4.2). Apparently the "signless" (or "baseless" or "featureless") meditation proceeds without any such meditation topic. At its deepest level, it focuses on the absence of the signs of greed, hatred, and delusion (SN 41.7:6.10). Compare the "undirected" meditation of SN 47.10.

- 9.1 There are these two views. Views favoring existence and views favoring nonexistence.¹⁴⁸ A learned noble disciple reflects on this: ‘Is there anything in the world that I could grasp without fault?’ They understand: ‘There’s nothing in the world that I could grasp without fault. For in grasping I would grasp only at form, feeling, perception, choices, or consciousness. That grasping of mine would be a condition for continued existence.¹⁴⁹ Continued existence is a requirement for rebirth. Rebirth is a requirement for old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress to come to be. That is how this entire mass of suffering originates.’
- 10.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 10.3 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 10.4 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 10.5 “Suffering, sir.”
- 10.6 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 10.8 “No, sir.”
- 10.9 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?” ...
- 10.13 “So you should truly see ...
- 10.14 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

148. That is, eternalism and annihilationism.

149. Here the text integrates the aggregates with dependent origination. The aggregates are grasped by way of desire, but they also form the basis of theories of self, which is central to dependent origination (see SN 12.2:6.3 and note).

At Pārileyyaka

Pārileyyasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Kosambī in Ghosita’s 1.1
monastery.

Then the Buddha robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl 1.2
and robe, entered Kosambī for alms. After the meal, on his return
from almsround, he set his lodgings in order himself. Taking his
bowl and robe, without informing his supporters or taking leave of
the mendicant Saṅgha, he set out to go wandering alone, with no
companion.¹⁵⁰

Then, not long after the Buddha had left, one of the mendicants 2.1
went to Venerable Ānanda and told him what had happened. Ānanda
said, “Reverend, when the Buddha leaves like this it means he wants
to stay alone. At this time no one should follow him.”

Then the Buddha, traveling stage by stage, arrived at Pārileyyaka, 3.1
where he stayed at the root of a sacred sal tree.¹⁵¹ Then several
mendicants went up to Venerable Ānanda and exchanged greetings
with him.

When the greetings and polite conversation were over, they sat 3.4
down to one side and said to him, “Reverend, it’s been a long time
since we’ve heard a Dhamma talk from the Buddha. We wish to hear
a Dhamma talk from the Buddha.”

150. This story is expanded at Ud 4.5, where the Buddha reflects on how crowded he is with people all around. But the full story is told in the Vinaya at Kd 10. The local Saṅgha at Kosambī had fallen into dispute over a trivial matter. They would not settle it even at the Buddha’s urging, so he left.

151. Linguistically, *pārileyyaka* means “the place of the son of Parila”. However, the commentary tells at length of how an elephant living in this “protected forest grove” (Ud 4.5:2.4) attended on the Buddha with his friend, the monkey Madhuda, bringing the Buddha food and caring for his every need. The elephant was named Pārileyya (Ja 488:24.1), and the forest Pārileyyaka after him.

- 4.1 Then Venerable Ānanda together with those mendicants went to Pārileyyaka to see the Buddha. They bowed and sat down to one side, and the Buddha educated, encouraged, fired up, and inspired them with a Dhamma talk.
- 4.3 Now at that time one of the monks had the thought, “How do you know and see in order to end the defilements without delay?”¹⁵²
- 4.5 Then the Buddha, knowing that monk’s train of thought, addressed the mendicants:
- 4.6 “Mendicants, I’ve taught the Dhamma analytically. I’ve analytically taught the four kinds of mindfulness meditation, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven awakening factors, and the noble eightfold path. That’s how I’ve taught the Dhamma analytically. Though I’ve taught the Dhamma analytically, still a certain mendicant present here has this thought: ‘How do you know and see in order to end the defilements without delay?’
- 5.1 And how, mendicants, do you know and see in order to end the defilements without delay? Take an unlearned ordinary person who has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons.
- 5.3 They regard form as self. But that regarding is just a conditioned phenomenon. And what’s the source, origin, birthplace, and inception of that conditioned phenomenon? When an unlearned ordinary person is struck by feelings born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That conditioned phenomenon is born from that. So that conditioned phenomenon is impermanent, conditioned, and dependently originated. And that craving, that feeling, that contact, and that ignorance are also impermanent, conditioned, and dependently originated. That’s how you should know and see in order to end the defilements without delay.

152. *Anantara* is a synonym for *akālika*, *sanditṭhika*, and *diṭṭheva dhamme*, all of which mean “in the present life, without delay or interim”.

Perhaps they don't regard form as self, but they still regard self 6.1
as possessing form. But that regarding is just a conditioned phe-
nomenon. ...

Perhaps they don't regard form as self, or self as possessing form, 7.1
but they still regard form in self. But that regarding is just a condi-
tioned phenomenon. ...

Perhaps they don't regard form as self, or self as possessing form, 8.1
or form in self, but they still regard self in form. But that regarding is
just a conditioned phenomenon. ...

Perhaps they don't regard form as self, or self as possessing form, 9.1
or form in self, or self in form. But they regard feeling as self ...
perception as self ... choices as self ... consciousness as self ...
But that regarding is just a conditioned phenomenon. And what's
the source of that conditioned phenomenon? When an unlearned
ordinary person is struck by feelings born of contact with ignorance,
craving arises. That conditioned phenomenon is born from that.
So that conditioned phenomenon is impermanent, conditioned,
and dependently originated. And that craving, that feeling, that
contact, and that ignorance are also impermanent, conditioned, and
dependently originated. That's how you should know and see in
order to end the defilements without delay.

Perhaps they don't regard form or feeling or perception or choices 10.1
or consciousness as self. Still, they have such a view: "The self and the
cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent,
everlasting, eternal, and imperishable."¹⁵³ But that eternalist view
is just a conditioned phenomenon. And what's the source of that

153. The repeated demonstrative pronouns in the Pali *so loko so attā* (literally, "This is the cosmos, this is the self") affirm an emphatic and absolute identity: "The cosmos and the self are one and the same". As the central thesis of the Upaniṣads, it has a lexical parallel at Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.4.22, which argues for the renunciate life: "What can descendants do for those for whom the self and the cosmos are one and the same?" (*ayamātmāyaṁ loka*). Similarly, BU 1.2.7 says of the sacrificial fire as the sun, "these worlds are its self" (*tasyeme lokā ātmānaḥ*), and BU 1.4.15 says one should "worship the cosmos as the self" (*ātmānam eva lokam upāsita*). See also the last words of a father to his son

conditioned phenomenon? ... That's how you should know and see in order to end the defilements without delay.

- 11.1 Perhaps they don't regard form or feeling or perception or choices or consciousness as self. Nor do they have such a view: 'The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable.' Still, they have such a view: 'I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine.' But that annihilationist view is just a conditioned phenomenon. And what's the source of that conditioned phenomenon? ... That's how you should know and see in order to end the defilements without delay.

- 12.1 Perhaps they don't regard form or feeling or perception or choices or consciousness as self. Nor do they have such a view: 'The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable.' Nor do they have such a view: 'I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine.' Still, they have doubts and uncertainties. They're undecided about the true teaching. That doubt and uncertainty, the indecision about the true teaching, is just a conditioned phenomenon. And what's the source of that conditioned phenomenon? When an unlearned ordinary person is struck by feelings born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That conditioned phenomenon is born from that. So that conditioned phenomenon is impermanent, conditioned, and dependently originated. And that craving, that feeling, that contact, and that ignorance are also impermanent, conditioned, and dependently originated. That's how you should know and see in order to end the defilements without delay."

at 1.5.17: "You are divinity, you are the sacrifice, you are the cosmos" (*tvaṃ brahma tvaṃ yajñas tvaṃ loka*).

SN 22.82

A Full Moon Night

Puṇṇamasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattṥi in the stilt long- 1.1
house of Migāra’s mother in the Eastern Monastery, together with a
large Saṅgha of monks.¹⁵⁴ Now, at that time it was the sabbath—the
full moon on the fifteenth day—and the Buddha was sitting in the
open surrounded by the Saṅgha of monks.

Then one of the monks rose from his seat, arranged his robe over 2.1
one shoulder, raised his cupped palms toward the Buddha, and said:

“Sir, I’d like to ask the Buddha about a certain point, if you’d take 2.2
the time to answer.”¹⁵⁵

“Well then, monk, take your own seat and ask what you wish.” 2.3

“Yes, sir,” replied that monk. He took his seat and said to the 2.4
Buddha:

“Sir, are these the five grasping aggregates, that is: form, feeling, 2.5
perception, choices, and consciousness?”

“Yes, they are,” replied the Buddha. 3.1

Saying “Good, sir,” that monk approved and agreed with what the 3.3
Buddha said. Then he asked another question:

“But sir, what is the root of these five grasping aggregates?” 4.1

“These five grasping aggregates are rooted in desire.” ...¹⁵⁶ “But sir, 4.2
is that grasping the exact same thing as the five grasping aggregates?
Or is grasping one thing and the five grasping aggregates another?”¹⁵⁷

154. This discourse is also found at MN 109.

155. The commentary says that he asked these questions in order to educate his students. This seems probable in view of the fact that the sequence of questions is structured in a way that is clearly purposeful.

156. “Desire” (*chanda*) is the fundamental driving force underlying all manifestations of the aggregates. It is the same as “craving” (*taṇhā*).

157. It looks like the monk’s “good, sir!” response has been elided here by mistake, as it is included subsequently. In the parallel at MN 109, all such responses are omitted after the first.

- 4.4 “Neither. Rather, the desire and greed for them is the grasping there.”¹⁵⁸
- 4.5 Saying “Good, sir”, that monk asked another question:
- 5.1 “But sir, can there be disparity in desire and greed for the five grasping aggregates?”
- 5.2 “There can,” said the Buddha.
- 5.3 “It’s when someone thinks: ‘In the future, may I be of such form, such feeling, such perception, such choices, and such consciousness!’¹⁵⁹ That’s how there can be disparity in desire and greed for the five grasping aggregates.”
- 5.6 Saying “Good, sir”, that monk asked another question:
- 6.1 “Sir, what is the scope of the term ‘aggregates’ as applied to the aggregates?”¹⁶⁰
- 6.2 “Any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: this is called the aggregate of form. Any kind of feeling at all ... Any kind of perception at all ... Any kind of choices at all ... Any kind of consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: this is called the aggregate of consciousness. That’s the scope of the term ‘aggregates’ as applied to the aggregates.”¹⁶¹
- 6.8 Saying “Good, sir”, that monk asked another question:
- 7.1 “What is the cause, sir, what is the reason why the aggregate of form is found?¹⁶² What is the cause, what is the reason why the aggregate of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is found?”

158. See MN 44:6.3 and note there.

159. This assumes the persistence of a “self” through time.

160. The question is whether there is anything outside the aggregates.

161. That is to say, the term “aggregate” (*khandha*) is a collective term for all instances of this kind of phenomenon.

162. While the “root” of all aggregates is desire, the question now is the immediate basis of each particular aggregate.

“The four principal states are the reason why the aggregate of form is found. Contact is the reason why the aggregates of feeling,¹⁶³ perception,¹⁶⁴ and choices are found.¹⁶⁵ Name and form are the reasons why the aggregate of consciousness is found.”¹⁶⁶ 7.6

Saying “Good, sir”, that monk asked another question: 7.11

“Sir, how does substantialist view come about?”¹⁶⁷ 8.1

“It’s when an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons. They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. That’s how substantialist view comes about.”¹⁶⁸ 8.2

163. In dependent origination, “contact” (*phassa*) is the immediate condition for “feeling” (*vedanā*). But contact can also be regarded as the immediate condition for all three: feeling, perception, and choices (eg. SN 35.93:1.14). These things are always active in consciousness, so they can be treated as simultaneous, as arising in sequence, or as mutually conditioning.

164. Feeling and “perception” (*saññā*) are closely connected, since how we feel conditions how we recognize and interpret. While contact directly underlies feeling, perception works so quickly that it can be included as a direct consequence as well.

165. Likewise with “choices” (*saṅkhārā*), which are also part of the complex of reactivity that normally take effect immediately. For example, suppose we try eating a berry in the forest. “Contact” with its bitter taste “feels” unpleasant, so we “perceive” it as poisonous, and “choose” to spit it out.

166. Normally in dependent origination, it is consciousness that is a condition for name and form. The presentation here assumes their mutual conditioning, as spelled out at DN 15:22.1. Name and form are the embryo that supports consciousness in the process of rebirth, while the physical body with its senses, and the psychological functions included under “name” continue to evolve and grow with consciousness through life.

167. As at MN 44:7.1. See SN 22.105 for a discussion of “substantial reality” (*sakkāya*).

168. That is to say, the “substantialist” view takes the aggregates, or one of them, to be a “substantial reality” that is identified with the self. Such views are created each time we think or attach to the aggregates as a self.

- 8.9 Saying “Good, sir”, that monk ... asked another question:
- 9.1 “But sir, how does substantialist view not come about?”
- 9.2 “It’s when a learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don’t regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They don’t regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. That’s how substantialist view does not come about.”¹⁶⁹
- 9.9 Saying “Good, sir”, that monk ... asked another question:
- 10.1 “Sir, what’s the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form,¹⁷⁰ feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness?”
- 10.6 “The pleasure and happiness that arise from form: this is its gratification. That form is impermanent, suffering, and perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving up desire and greed for form: this is its escape. The pleasure and happiness that arise from feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness: this is its gratification. That consciousness is impermanent, suffering, and perishable: this is its drawback. Removing and giving up desire and greed for consciousness: this is its escape.”
- 10.15 Saying “Good, sir”, that monk approved and agreed with what the Buddha said. Then he asked another question:
- 11.1 “Sir, how does one know and see so that there’s no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs?”¹⁷¹

169. Since substantialist view is itself a conditioned phenomenon, it can only continue to exist if it is continually reinforced. Without it, like a fire without a constant supply of fuel, it falters and goes out.

170. We have met these questions before at SN 22.26:1.3. Here they build on the previous section by showing a strategy for how to stop identifying them as the substantial reality underlying the self. This can be used as the basis for a contemplative insight meditation.

171. From meditative contemplation, the question now turns to realization. The Buddha’s response makes it clear he is now speaking of the penetrative

“One truly sees any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; 11.2
internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near:
all form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this,
this is not my self.’ One truly sees any kind of feeling ... perception
... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal
or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all*
consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am
not this, this is not my self.’ That’s how to know and see so that there’s
no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for
this conscious body and externally for all signs.”

Now at that time one of the monks had the thought: 12.1

“So it seems, worthy sir, that form, feeling, perception, choices, 12.2
and consciousness are not-self.¹⁷² Then how will the deeds done by
not-self affect the self?”¹⁷³

Then the Buddha, knowing that monk’s train of thought, ad- 12.4
dressed the monks:

“It’s possible that some futile person here—unknowing and igno- 13.1
rant, his mind dominated by craving—thinks he can overstep the
Teacher’s instructions. He thinks: ‘So it seems, worthy sir, that form,

understanding of the aggregates that arises at stream-entry at least. The “un-
derlying tendency to conceit”, however, is only fully overcome by the arahant.
| “I-making” (*ahaṅkāra*) emphasizes the active role of the mind in creating a
sense of self through its thoughts, habits, and desires. This is in contrast with the
English notion of “ego”, which presents self as a given construct. | “Mine-making”
(*mamaṅkāra*) is the propensity of the mind to appropriate things as possessions.
| “All signs” (*sabbanimitta*) are the “features” (also *nimitta*) that characterize
sensory stimulation (eg. MN 112:15.1).

172. In his mind, the monk addresses the Buddha with “worthy sir” (*bho*),
which is a signature of the brahmins (MN 98:11.3). Small wonder he still
assumes a self.

173. This monk, missing the point, thinks not-self means he can escape moral
responsibility. A theory of self assumes a continuous entity, so that deeds done
at one time will affect the same entity at another time. The Buddhist concept, on
the other hand, is of a flow, so that, for example, pollution dumped in a stream
will affect the river and the sea below, even though they are not materially the
“same”.

feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are not-self. Then how will the deeds done by not-self affect the self?’ Now, monks, you have been educated by me in questioning with regard to all these things in all such cases.¹⁷⁴

14.1 What do you think, monks? Is form permanent or impermanent?”

14.3 “Impermanent, sir.”

14.4 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

14.8 “Impermanent, sir.”

14.9 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”

14.10 “Suffering, sir.”

14.11 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”

14.13 “No, sir.”

14.14 “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

15.1 “Two on the aggregates; exactly the same;
and can there be;¹⁷⁵
on the term; and on the cause;
two questions on substantial reality;
gratification; and that with consciousness:
these are the ten questions
the monk came to ask.”

174. The Buddha does not just state doctrine for his students, he has “educated” (*vinīta*) them in the methods for learning. Active questioning breaks up long discourses and encourages reflection and articulation.

175. This is very unusual, a summary verse for the discourse (*sutta-uddana*). The parallel at MN 109:18.4 has a completely different closing passage. Generally speaking, such passages were added at a later date to wrap up the teaching portion, and there is considerable variation within the Pali texts, let alone Chinese and other parallels.

The Chapter on Senior Mendicants

SN 22.83

With Ānanda

Ānandasutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

There Ānanda addressed the mendicants: “Reverends, mendicants!”

1.2

“Reverend,” they replied. Ānanda said this:

1.4

“Reverends, the venerable named Puṇṇa son of Mantāṇī was very helpful to me when I was just ordained.¹⁷⁶ He gave me this advice: ‘Reverend Ānanda, the thought “I am” occurs because of grasping, not without grasping.¹⁷⁷ Grasping what? The thought “I am” occurs because of grasping form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness, not without grasping.

2.1

Suppose there was a woman or man who was young, youthful, and fond of adornments, and they check their own reflection in a clean bright mirror or a clear bowl of water. They’d look because of

3.1

176. Puṇṇa son of Mantāṇī was most famous for his conversation with Sāriputta in MN 24, on the strength of which he was said to be the best Dhamma speaker (AN 1.196). His verse is at Thag 1.4:1.7. For his mother’s name, see note on MN 86:12.12.

177. “Because of grasping” (*upādāya*) rather than the commentary’s “derived from”, which takes an object in genitive.

grasping, not without grasping. In the same way, the thought “I am” occurs because of grasping form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness, not without grasping.

- 4.1 What do you think, Reverend Ānanda? Is form permanent or impermanent?’
- 4.3 ‘Impermanent, reverend.’¹⁷⁸
- 4.4 ‘Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?’
- 4.8 ‘Impermanent, reverend.’ ...
- 4.9 ‘So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: “... there is nothing further for this place.”’
- 4.12 Reverends, the venerable named Puṇṇa son of Mantāṇī was very helpful to me when I was just ordained. He gave me this advice. And when I heard this teaching from Venerable Puṇṇa son of Mantāṇī, I comprehended the teaching.”

SN 22.84

With Tissa

Tissasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Now at that time Venerable Tissa—the Buddha’s cousin on his father’s side—informed several mendicants:¹⁷⁹
- 1.3 “Reverends, my body feels like it’s drugged. I’m disorientated, the teachings don’t spring to mind, and dullness and drowsiness fill my mind. I lead the spiritual life dissatisfied, and have doubts about the teachings.”
- 2.1 Then several mendicants went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and told him what had happened.

178. Note the equality in terms of address: a newly ordained monk and their teacher refer to each other as “reverend” (*āvuso*; see DN 16:6.2.1).

179. Tissa’s further struggles are at SN 21.9.

So the Buddha addressed one of the monks, “Please, monk, in my name tell the mendicant Tissa that the Teacher summons him.”¹⁸⁰ 3.1

“Yes, sir,” that monk replied. He went to Tissa and said to him, “Reverend Tissa, the Teacher summons you.” 3.3

“Yes, reverend,” Tissa replied. He went to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to him: 3.5

“Is it really true, Tissa, that you informed several mendicants that your body feels like it’s drugged ... and you have doubts about the teachings?” 3.6

“Yes, sir.” 3.8

“What do you think, Tissa? If you’re not rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for form, when that form decays and perishes, will it give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress?” 3.9

“Yes, sir.” 3.11

“Good, good, Tissa!¹⁸¹ That’s how it is, Tissa, when you’re not rid of greed for form. 4.1

If you’re not rid of greed for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, when that consciousness decays and perishes, will it give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress?” 4.4

“Yes, sir.” 5.4

“Good, good, Tissa! That’s how it is, Tissa, when you’re not rid of greed for consciousness. 6.1

What do you think, Tissa? If you are rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for form, when that form decays and perishes, will it give rise to sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress?” 6.4

“No, sir.” 6.6

“Good, good, Tissa! That’s how it is, Tissa, when you are rid of greed for form ... feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness. 7.1

180. The expected phrase “the Teacher summons him” is absent in *Mahāsaṅgīti*, but present in *PTS*.

181. The Buddha’s incredible skill in teaching. His encouragement is not mere platitudes; he first draws out Tissa’s actual wisdom, then he praises that.

- 8.4 What do you think, Tissa? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 8.6 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 8.7 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 8.11 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 8.12 “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’
- 9.1 Suppose, Tissa, there were two individuals. One was not skilled in the path, the other was. The one not skilled in the path would question the one skilled in the path, who would reply: ‘Come, my man, this is the path. Go down it an hour,¹⁸² and you’ll see a fork in the road. Ignore the left, and take the right-hand path. Go an hour more, and you’ll see a dense forest grove. Go an hour more, and you’ll see an expanse of low-lying marshes. Go an hour more, and you’ll see a large, steep cliff. Go an hour more, and you’ll see level, cleared parkland.’
- 10.1 I’ve made up this simile to make a point. And this is what it means.
- 10.3 ‘A person who is not skilled in the path’ is a term for an ordinary unlearned person.
- 10.4 ‘A person who is skilled in the path’ is a term for the Realized One, the perfected one, the fully awakened Buddha.
- 10.5 ‘A fork in the road’ is a term for doubt.
- 10.6 ‘The left-hand path’ is a term for the wrong eightfold path, that is, wrong view ... wrong immersion.
- 10.8 ‘The right-hand path’ is a term for the noble eightfold path, that is, right view ... right immersion.
- 10.10 ‘A dense forest grove’ is a term for ignorance.
- 10.11 ‘An expanse of low-lying marshes’ is a term for sensual pleasures.
- 10.12 ‘A large, steep cliff’ is a term for anger and distress.
- 10.13 ‘Level, cleared parkland’ is a term for extinguishment.

182. Kauṭilya says there are fifteen *muhuttas* (Sanskrit *muhūrta*) per day, and fifteen per night, making 48 minutes (Arthaśāstra 2.20.37).

Rejoice, Tissa, rejoice! I am here with advice, with support, with instruction.”¹⁸³ 10.14

That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, Venerable Tissa approved what the Buddha said. 11.1

SN 22.85

With Yamaka

Yamakasutta

At one time Venerable Sāriputta was staying near Sāvattthī in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. 1.1

Now at that time a mendicant named Yamaka had the following harmful misconception: “As I understand the Buddha’s teaching, a mendicant who has ended the defilements is annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and doesn’t exist after death.”¹⁸⁴ 1.2

Several mendicants heard this rumour. They went to Yamaka and exchanged greetings with him. 2.1

When the greetings and polite conversation were over, they sat down to one side and said to him, “Is it really true, Reverend Yamaka, that you have such a harmful misconception: ‘As I understand the Buddha’s teaching, a mendicant who has ended the defilements is annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and doesn’t exist after death?’” 2.4

“Yes, reverends, that’s how I understand the Buddha’s teaching.” 3.3

“Don’t say that, Yamaka! Don’t misrepresent the Buddha, for misrepresentation of the Buddha is not good. And the Buddha would not say that.” But even though admonished by those mendicants, 4.1

183. This sentence lacks a verb, so we assume *homi*, “I am”.

184. He equates the Buddha’s teaching of cessation with annihilation. Not all annihilationists believe that there is only one lifetime. Some, for example, believed that there is an allotted course of lives, perhaps predetermined, at the end of which all beings come to an end, as “transmigration is limited” (*pariyan-takate saṃsāre*, DN 2:20.9, SN 24.8:1.13). Such was the doctrine taught by the Bamboo-staffed Ascetic Gosāla to the Ājīvakas.

Yamaka obstinately stuck to that misconception and insisted on stating it.

- 5.1 When those mendicants were unable to dissuade Yamaka from that misconception, they rose from their seats and went to see Venerable Sāriputta. They told him what had happened, and said, “May Venerable Sāriputta please go to the mendicant Yamaka out of sympathy.” Sāriputta consented with silence.
- 5.6 Then in the late afternoon, Venerable Sāriputta came out of retreat, went to Venerable Yamaka and exchanged greetings with him. Seated to one side he said to Yamaka:
- 6.1 “Is it really true, Reverend Yamaka, that you have such a harmful misconception: ‘As I understand the Buddha’s teaching, a mendicant who has ended the defilements is annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and doesn’t exist after death?’”
- 6.3 “Yes, reverend, that’s how I understand the Buddha’s teaching.”
- 7.1 “What do you think, Yamaka? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 7.3 “Impermanent, reverend.”
- 7.4 “Is feeling ...” ... “... perception ...” ... “... choices ...” ... “... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 7.8 “Impermanent, reverend.”
- 7.9 “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’
- 8.1 What do you think, Reverend Yamaka? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to form?”¹⁸⁵
- 8.3 “No, reverend.”
- 8.4 “Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to feeling?” ... “... perception?” ... “... choices?” ... “... consciousness?”

185. “Realized one” (*tathāgata*) commonly refers to the Buddha himself, but it may also refer to any arahant. In this and similar passages, the nature of the arahant is discussed, and it does not directly bear on the Buddha specifically, so I take it as referring to any arahant. | This passage relies on the label usage of the nominative, as indicated by the particle *-ti*. It is a tricky passage to render consistently and coherently, so I make the syntax explicit.

- “No, reverend.” 8.9
- “What do you think, Reverend Yamaka? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies in relation to form?” 9.1
- “No, reverend.” 9.3
- “Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies apart from form?” 9.4
- “No, reverend.” 9.5
- “Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies in relation to feeling?” ... “... apart from feeling?” ... “... in relation to perception?” ... “... apart from perception?” ... “... in relation to choices?” ... “... apart from choices?” ... “... in relation to consciousness?” ... “... apart from consciousness?” 9.14
- “No, reverend.” 9.15
- “What do you think, Yamaka? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to one who has form?” ... “... feeling?” ... “... perception?” ... “... choices?” ... “... consciousness?”¹⁸⁶ 10.1
- “No, reverend.” 10.3

186. This passage occurs also at SN 22.86:10.2 and SN 44.2:17.5. As it stands in the MS edition, it appears to repeat the first set of propositions (*rūpaṃ ta-thāgatoti samanupassasi*). The commentary reads all as nominative, and says it means lumping all the aggregates together, which is followed by most modern translations. However, Pali editions mostly punctuate as if these were individual items, and this is supported by the parallel at SA 104. Pali readings vary widely, but in most cases, the negative passage just below uses the possessive forms, whereas the current phrase (apart from a few variants) does not use the possessive forms. This leaves a gap in the analysis, since possession is one of the standard relationships with the aggregates. I propose that the passage is corrupt, and read as individual items implying possession. This suggestion claims a little support in that the possessive *rupi* is found in the Thai Royal edition (vol. 17, p. 99), although the remaining items differ.

- 11.1 “What do you think, Yamaka? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to that one who is without form?” ... “... feeling?” ... “... perception?” ... “... choices?” ... “... consciousness?”¹⁸⁷
- 11.3 “No, reverend.”
- 11.4 “In that case, Reverend Yamaka, since a realized one is not found by you as a genuine fact in this very life, is it cogent for you to declare: ‘As I understand the Buddha’s teaching, a mendicant who has ended the defilements is annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and doesn’t exist after death?’”
- 12.1 “Reverend Sāriputta, in my ignorance, I used to have that misconception. But now that I’ve heard the teaching from Venerable Sāriputta, I’ve given up that misconception, and I’ve comprehended the teaching.”
- 13.1 “Reverend Yamaka, suppose they were to ask you: ‘When their body breaks up, after death, what happens to a perfected one, who has ended the defilements?’ How would you answer?”
- 13.4 “Reverend, if they were to ask this, I’d answer like this: ‘Reverend, form is impermanent. What’s impermanent is suffering. What’s suffering has ceased and disappeared.
- 13.10 Feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness is impermanent. What’s impermanent is suffering. What’s suffering has ceased and disappeared.’ That’s how I’d answer such a question.”
- 14.1 “Good, good, Reverend Yamaka! Well then, I shall give you a simile to make the meaning even clearer. Suppose there was a householder or householder’s son who was rich, with a lot of money and great wealth, and a bodyguard for protection. Then along comes a person who wants to harm, injure, and threaten him, and take his life. They’d think: ‘This householder or householder’s son is rich, with a lot of money and great wealth, and a bodyguard for protection. It won’t be easy to take his life by force. Why don’t I get close to

187. The construction *ayam so* (“that one”) specifies an aforementioned individual (SN 1.20:7.3, AN 6.16:5.5, Kd 1:42.2.2). Here, this must be the subject of the previous passage, i.e. the one who was formerly considered “with form” and now “without form”.

him, then take his life?’ So he goes up to that householder or householder’s son and says: ‘Sir, I would serve you.’ They would serve that householder or householder’s son. They’d get up before him and go to bed after him, and be obliging, behaving nicely and speaking politely. The householder or householder’s son would consider them as a friend and companion, and come to trust them. But when that person realizes that they’ve gained the trust of the householder or householder’s son, then, when they know he’s alone, they’d take his life with a sharp knife.

What do you think, Yamaka? When that person went to the householder or householder’s son and offered to serve him, weren’t they a killer then, though he didn’t know that this was his killer? And when they got up before him and went to bed after him, being obliging, behaving nicely and speaking politely, weren’t they a killer then, though he didn’t know that this was his killer? And when, knowing he was alone, they took his life with a sharp knife, weren’t they a killer then, though he didn’t know that this was his killer?”

“Yes, reverend.” 15.12

“In the same way, an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons. They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... They regard consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. 15.13

They don’t truly understand form—which is impermanent—as impermanent.¹⁸⁸ They don’t truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is impermanent—as impermanent. 16.1

188. Also at SN 22.55:3.1.

- 17.1 They don't truly understand form—which is suffering—as suffering. They don't truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is suffering—as suffering.
- 18.1 They don't truly understand form—which is not-self—as not-self. They don't truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is not-self—as not-self.
- 19.1 They don't truly understand form—which is conditioned—as conditioned. They don't truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is conditioned—as conditioned.
- 20.1 They don't truly understand form—which is a killer—as a killer. They don't truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is a killer—as a killer.
- 21.1 They're attracted to form, grasp it, and fixate on the thought, 'my self'.¹⁸⁹ They're attracted to feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, grasp it, and fixate on the thought, 'my self'. And when you've gotten involved with and grasped these five grasping aggregates, they lead to your lasting harm and suffering.
- 22.1 A learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don't regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They don't regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness.
- 23.1 They truly understand form—which is impermanent—as impermanent. They truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is impermanent—as impermanent.
- 24.1 They truly understand form—which is suffering—as suffering. They truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness—which is suffering—as suffering.

189. This phrase is also at SN 12.15:2.5 = SN 22.90:9.6.

They truly understand form—which is not-self—as not-self. They 25.1
truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... conscious-
ness—which is not-self—as not-self.

They truly understand form—which is conditioned—as condi- 26.1
tioned. They truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ...
consciousness—which is conditioned—as conditioned.

They truly understand form—which is a killer—as a killer. They 27.1
truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... conscious-
ness—which is a killer—as a killer.

When it comes to form, they are not attracted, do not grasp, and 28.1
do not fixate on the thought, ‘my self’.¹⁹⁰ When it comes to feeling
... When it comes to perception ... When it comes to choices ...
When it comes to consciousness, they are not attracted, do not grasp,
and do not fixate on the thought, ‘my self’. And when you’re not
attracted to and don’t grasp these five grasping aggregates, they lead
to your lasting welfare and happiness.”

“Reverend Sāriputta, this is how it is when you have such ven- 28.7
erables as spiritual companions to advise and instruct you out of
kindness and sympathy. And after hearing this teaching by Venerable
Sāriputta, my mind is freed from the defilements by not grasping.”¹⁹¹

SN 22.86

With Anurādhā

Anurādhāsutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Vesālī, at the Great Wood, 1.1
in the hall with the peaked roof.¹⁹² Now at that time Venerable Anu-
rādhā was staying not far from the Buddha in a wilderness hut. Then

190. Read this line in parallel with SN 12.15:2.5, taking both as “accusative of relation”.

191. Some editions add an extra sentence indicating that Yamaka rejoiced in Sāriputta’s teaching.

192. This discourse is also found at SN 44.2.

several wanderers of other religions went up to Venerable Anurādhā and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, they sat down to one side and said to him:

1.5 “Reverend Anurādhā, when a Realized One is describing a realized one—a supreme person, highest of people, who has reached the highest point—they describe them in these four ways:¹⁹³ After death, a realized one still exists, or no longer exists, or both still exists and no longer exists, or neither still exists nor no longer exists.”

2.1 When they said this, Venerable Anurādhā said to those wanderers:

2.2 “Reverends, when a Realized One is describing a realized one—a supreme person, highest of people, who has reached the highest point—they describe them other than these four ways: After death, a realized one still exists, or no longer exists, or both still exists and no longer exists, or neither still exists nor no longer exists.” When he said this, the wanderers said to him:

2.5 “This mendicant must be junior, recently gone forth, or else a foolish, incompetent senior mendicant.” Then, after rebuking Venerable Anurādhā by calling him “junior” and “foolish”, the wanderers rose from their seats and left.

3.1 Soon after they had left, Anurādhā thought:

3.2 “If those wanderers were to inquire further, how should I answer them so as to repeat what the Buddha has said, and not misrepresent him with an untruth? How should I explain in line with his teaching, so that there would be no legitimate grounds for rebuttal and criticism?”

4.1 Then Venerable Anurādhā went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and told him all that had happened.

7.1 “What do you think, Anurādhā? Is form permanent or impermanent?”

7.3 “Impermanent, sir.”

7.4 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”

193. This makes it clear that in this context, “realized one” cannot be just any sentient being. See note on SN 16.12:1.4.

- “Suffering, sir.” 7.5
- “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?” 7.6
- “No, sir.” 7.8
- “Is feeling ...” ... “... perception ...” ... “... choices ...” ... “Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?” 7.9
- “Impermanent, sir.” ... “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’ 7.13
- What do you think, Anurādhā? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to form?” 8.1
- “No, sir.” 8.3
- “Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to feeling?” 8.4
- ... “... perception?” ... “... choices?” ... “... consciousness?”
- “No, sir.” 8.8
- “What do you think, Anurādhā? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies in relation to form?” 9.1
- “No, sir.” 9.3
- “Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies apart from form?” 9.4
- “No, sir.” 9.5
- “Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies in relation to feeling?” ... “... apart from feeling?” ... “... in relation to perception?” ... “... apart from perception?” ... “... in relation to choices?” ... “... apart from choices?” ... “... in relation to consciousness?” ... “... apart from consciousness?”
- “No, sir.” 9.14
- “What do you think, Anurādhā? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to one who has form?” ... “... feeling?” ... “... perception?” ... “... choices?” ... “... consciousness?” 10.1
- “No, sir.” 10.3
- “What do you think, Anurādhā? Do you consider that the label ‘realized one’ applies to that one who is without form?” ... “... feeling?” ... “... perception?” ... “... choices?” ... “... consciousness?” 11.1
- “No, sir.” 11.3

- 12.1 “In that case, Anurādha, since a realized one is not found by you as a genuine fact in this very life, is it cogent for you to declare: ‘Reverends, when a Realized One is describing a realized one—a supreme person, highest of people, who has reached the highest point—they describe them other than these four ways: After death, a realized one still exists, or no longer exists, or both still exists and no longer exists, or neither still exists nor no longer exists?’”
- 12.4 “No, sir.”
- 13.1 “Good, good, Anurādha! In the past, as today, what I describe is suffering and the cessation of suffering.”¹⁹⁴

SN 22.87

With Vakkali

Vakkalisutta

- 1.1 At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels’ feeding ground.
- 1.2 Now at that time Venerable Vakkali was staying in a potter’s shed, and he was sick, suffering, gravely ill.¹⁹⁵
- 1.3 Then he addressed his carers, “Please, reverends, go to the Buddha, and in my name bow with your head to his feet. Say to him: ‘Sir, the mendicant Vakkali is sick, suffering, gravely ill. He bows with his head to your feet.’ And then say: ‘Sir, please go to the mendicant Vakkali out of sympathy.’”

194. The particle *c’eva* here has its normal role of slight emphasis in conjunctions, and so this phrase does not mean, “I *only* teach suffering and the end of suffering”. The point, rather, is that when he speaks of cessation, it is the cessation of suffering, not the cessation of an “existing being”. This saying is also at MN 75:16.1 and SN 44.2:17.13.

195. Vakkali’s verses describe his perseverance in the face of illness (Thag 5.8), for which he was said to be the foremost in commitment to faith (AN 1.208, Snp 5.19:16.1). | Text has *nivesana*, normally “house”, as also at Kd 10:2.3.11. MN 140:3.2 has the expected *āvesana*, “workshop”.

“Yes, reverend,” those monks replied. They did as he asked. The 1.8
Buddha consented with silence.

Then the Buddha robed up and, taking his bowl and robes, went 2.1
to Venerable Vakkali. Venerable Vakkali saw the Buddha coming off
in the distance and stirred in his cot.

But the Buddha said to him, “It’s all right, Vakkali, don’t get up. 2.3
There are some seats spread out, I will sit there.”

He sat down on the seat spread out and said to Vakkali, “I hope 2.6
you’re keeping well, Vakkali; I hope you’re all right. I hope your pain
is fading, not growing; that its fading is evident, not its growing.”

“Sir, I’m not keeping well, I’m not getting by. My pain is terrible 2.8
and growing, not fading; its growing is evident, not its fading.”

“I hope you don’t have any remorse or regret?” 2.9

“Indeed, sir, I have no little remorse and regret.” 2.10

“I hope you have no reason to blame yourself when it comes to 2.11
ethical conduct?”¹⁹⁶

“No sir, I have no reason to blame myself when it comes to ethical 2.12
conduct.”

“In that case, Vakkali, why do you have remorse and regret?” 2.13

“For a long time I’ve wanted to go and see the Buddha, but I was 2.14
physically too weak.”

“Enough, Vakkali! Why would you want to see this rotting 3.1
body?¹⁹⁷ One who sees the teaching sees me.¹⁹⁸ One who sees
me sees the teaching. Seeing the teaching, you see me. Seeing me,
you see the teaching.

196. Normally “remorse” (*kukkucca*), as one of the five hindrances, is said to arise from a breach of ethics. This passage shows that it can be broader than that.

197. The body is both a nest of disease and decay, as well as the site of pleasure and mindfulness in meditation. The Buddha did not look away from the foul aspects of the body, nor was he shy about depicting his own body in the same terms.

198. Compare MN 28:28.5, “one who sees dependent origination sees the teaching”. If you understand the Dhamma you will understand the true nature of the Buddha, which is not his physical form (cf. the *dhammakāya* at DN 27:9.6).

- 4.1 What do you think, Vakkali? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 4.3 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 4.4 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 4.5 “Suffering, sir.”
- 4.6 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 4.8 “No, sir.”
- 4.9 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 4.13 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 4.16 “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”
- 5.1 And then, after giving Venerable Vakkali this advice, the Buddha rose from his seat and went to the Vulture’s Peak Mountain.
- 5.2 Then Venerable Vakkali addressed his carers, “Come on, reverends, lift my cot and take me to the Black Rock on the slopes of Isigili. For how on earth could one such as I imagine dying in an inhabited area!”¹⁹⁹
- 5.5 “Yes, reverend,” replied those mendicants, and did as he asked. Meanwhile, the Buddha spent the rest of that night and day on Vulture’s Peak Mountain.
- 5.7 Then, late at night, two glorious deities, lighting up the entire Vulture’s Peak, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side.
- 5.8 One deity said to him, “Sir, the mendicant Vakkali is intent on liberation!”
- 5.10 And another deity said to him, “He’ll definitely be well freed!”
- 5.12 This is what those deities said. Then they bowed and respectfully circled the Buddha, keeping him on their right side, before vanishing right there.

199. Remember, he was staying in a potter’s shed, perhaps for access to medical care. But his heart was in the wilderness.

Then, when the night had passed, the Buddha addressed the mendicants: 6.1

“Come, mendicants, go to the mendicant Vakkali and tell him: 6.2

‘Vakkali, hear the word of the Buddha and two deities. 7.1

Late last night, two glorious deities, lighting up the entire Vulture’s Peak, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side. 7.2

One deity said to him, “Sir, the mendicant Vakkali is intent on liberation!” 7.3

The other deity said to him, “He’ll definitely be well freed!” 7.5

And the Buddha said, “Do not fear, Vakkali, do not fear! Your death will not be a bad one; your passing will not be a bad one.”” 7.7

“Yes, sir,” those monks replied. They went to Vakkali and said to him: 7.11

“Vakkali, hear the word of the Buddha and two deities.” 7.12

Then Vakkali addressed his carers, “Please, reverends, help me off my cot. For how on earth could one such as I presume to listen to the Buddha’s instructions sitting on a high seat?” 8.1

“Yes, reverend,” replied those mendicants, and helped him off his cot. They repeated what the Buddha had said. 8.4

Vakkali said, “Well then, reverends, in my name bow with your head to the Buddha’s feet. Say to him: ‘Sir, the mendicant Vakkali is sick, suffering, gravely ill. He bows with his head to your feet.’ And then say: ‘Form is impermanent. I have no doubt of that. I’m certain that what is impermanent is suffering. And I’m certain that I have no desire or greed or fondness for what is impermanent, suffering, and perishable. 8.14

Feeling is impermanent ... 8.22

Perception is impermanent ... 8.26

Choices are impermanent ... 8.27

Consciousness is impermanent. I have no doubt of that. I’m certain that what is impermanent is suffering. And I’m certain that I have no desire or greed or fondness for what is impermanent, suffering, and perishable.” 8.31

- 8.35 “Yes, reverend,” those monks replied, and left. And then, not long after those mendicants had left, Venerable Vakkali committed suicide.²⁰⁰
- 9.1 Then those mendicants went up to the Buddha and told him Vakkali’s message.
- 10.1 Then the Buddha said to the mendicants, “Come, mendicants, let’s go to the Black Rock on the slopes of Isigili, where Vakkali, the gentleman, committed suicide.”
- 10.4 “Yes, sir,” they replied.
- 10.5 Then the Buddha together with several mendicants went to the Black Rock on the slopes of Isigili. The Buddha saw Vakkali off in the distance on his cot, lying with aggregates cast off.²⁰¹
- 11.1 Now at that time a cloud of black smoke was moving east, west, north, south, above, below, and in-between.
- 11.2 The Buddha said to the mendicants, “Mendicants, do you see that cloud of black smoke moving east, west, north, south, above, below, and in-between?”
- 11.4 “Yes, sir.”
- 11.5 “That’s Māra the Wicked searching for Vakkali’s consciousness, wondering: ‘Where is Vakkali’s consciousness established?’ But since his consciousness is not established, Vakkali is quenched.”

SN 22.88

With Assaji

Assajisutta

- 1.1 At one time the Buddha was staying near Rājagaha in the Bamboo Grove, the squirrels’ feeding ground. Now at that time Venerable

200. Compare Godhika at SN 4.23:2.3, Channa at MN 144:13.11 = SN 35.87, and notes at MN 145:5.32 and Bu Pj 3:2.49.1 = SN 54.9.

201. *Vivatta* (or *vivaṭṭa*) often means “cast off”, as in “the fetters” (*vivattayī saṃyojanam*) or the “veil” (*vivaṭṭacchada*). Here it describes the dead monk’s body after attaining final Nibbāna.

Assaji was staying in a monastery built by a Kassapa, and he was sick, suffering, gravely ill.²⁰² Then he addressed his carers:

“Please, reverends, go to the Buddha, and in my name bow with your head to his feet. Say to him: ‘Sir, the mendicant Assaji is sick, suffering, gravely ill. He bows with his head to your feet.’ And then say: ‘Sir, please go to the mendicant Assaji out of sympathy.’” 1.4

“Yes, reverend,” those monks replied. They did as he asked. The Buddha consented with silence. 1.9

Then in the late afternoon, the Buddha came out of retreat and went to Venerable Assaji. Venerable Assaji saw the Buddha coming off in the distance, and stirred in his cot. 2.1

But the Buddha said to him, “It’s all right, Assaji, don’t get up. There are some seats spread out, I will sit there.” 2.4

He sat down on the seat spread out and said, “I hope you’re keeping well, Assaji; I hope you’re all right. I hope your pain is fading, not growing; that its fading is evident, not its growing.” 2.7

“Sir, I’m not keeping well, I’m not getting by. My pain is terrible and growing, not fading; its growing is evident, not its fading.” 3.1

“I hope you don’t have any remorse or regret?” 3.2

“Indeed, sir, I have no little remorse and regret.” 3.3

“I hope you have no reason to blame yourself when it comes to ethical conduct?” 3.4

“No sir, I have no reason to blame myself when it comes to ethical conduct.” 3.5

“In that case, Assaji, why do you have remorse and regret?” 3.6

“Sir, before my time of illness I meditated having completely stilled the physical process. But now I can’t get immersion. Since I can’t get immersion, I think: ‘May I not decline!’” 3.7

202. Not to be confused with the shameless Assaji of MN 70:4.1, this is probably the early disciple of that name (MN 35:3.1). Assaji was one the group of five mendicants who received the Buddha’s first discourse (Kd 1:6.36.1). Shortly afterwards he inspired Sāriputta with a classic epitome of the teaching (Kd 1:23.2.1).

- 3.10 “There are, Assaji, ascetics and brahmins for whom *samādhi* is the essence, equating immersion with the ascetic life. They think:²⁰³ ‘May we not decline!’²⁰⁴
- 4.1 What do you think, Assaji? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 4.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 4.4 “Is consciousness permanent or impermanent?” ...
- 4.5 “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’
- 4.8 If they feel a pleasant feeling, they understand that it’s impermanent, that they’re not attached to it, and that they don’t relish it. If they feel a painful feeling, they understand that it’s impermanent, that they’re not attached to it, and that they don’t relish it. If they feel a neutral feeling, they understand that it’s impermanent, that they’re not attached to it, and that they don’t relish it. If they feel a pleasant feeling, they feel it detached. If they feel a painful feeling, they feel it detached. If they feel a neutral feeling, they feel it detached. Feeling the end of the body draw close, they understand: ‘I feel the end of the body draw close.’ Feeling the end of life draw close, they understand: ‘I feel the end of life draw close.’ They understand: ‘When my body breaks up and my life is over, everything that’s felt, being no longer relished, will become cool right here.’
- 5.1 Suppose an oil lamp depended on oil and a wick to burn. As the oil and the wick are used up, it would be extinguished due to not being fed.
- 5.3 In the same way, feeling the end of the body draw close, they understand: ‘I feel the end of the body draw close.’ Feeling the end of life draw close, they understand: ‘I feel the end of life draw close.’

203. This is possibly in reference to Godhika, who likewise was distressed by his inability to keep up his meditation (SN 4.23:1.4). States of *samādhi* are conditioned and dependent on a healthy body, which is why the Bodhisatta needed to eat before he became enlightened (MN 36:33.2). The Buddha urges final Nibbāna, which is not a state of consciousness, but freedom from attachment.

204. The notion that even an arahant can decline is discussed and rejected at Kv 1.2.

They understand: ‘When my body breaks up and my life is over, everything that’s felt, being no longer relished, will become cool right here.’”

SN 22.89

With Khemaka

Khemakasutta

At one time several senior mendicants were staying near Kosambī 1.1
in Ghosita’s monastery. Now at that time Venerable Khemaka was
staying in the Jujube Tree Monastery, and he was sick, suffering,
gravely ill.²⁰⁵

In the late afternoon those senior mendicants came out of retreat 1.3
and addressed Venerable Dāsaka,²⁰⁶ “Please, Reverend Dāsaka, go
to the mendicant Khemaka and say to him: ‘Reverend Khemaka, the
seniors hope you’re keeping well; they hope you’re all right. They
hope your pain is fading, not growing; that its fading is evident, not
its growing.’”

“Yes, reverends,” replied Dāsaka. He went to Khemaka and said 1.7
to him:

“Reverend Khemaka, the seniors hope you’re keeping well; they 1.8
hope you’re all right. They hope your pain is fading, not growing;
that its fading is evident, not its growing.”

“Reverend, I’m not keeping well, I’m not getting by. My pain 1.10
is terrible and growing, not fading; its growing is evident, not its
fading.”

Then Dāsaka went to those senior mendicants and told them what 2.1
had happened. They said,

“Please, Reverend Dāsaka, go to the mendicant Khemaka and say 2.4
to him: ‘Reverend Khemaka, the seniors say that these five grasping
aggregates have been taught by the Buddha, that is: the grasping

205. Khemaka is otherwise unknown.

206. Dāsaka has a verse at Thag 1.17.

aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Do you regard anything among these five grasping aggregates as self or as belonging to self?”

- 3.1 “Yes, reverends,” replied Dāsaka. He relayed the message to Khemaka, who replied:
- 3.6 “These five grasping aggregates have been taught by the Buddha, that is: the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. I do not regard anything among these five grasping aggregates as self or as belonging to self.”
- 4.1 Then Dāsaka went to those senior mendicants and told them what had happened. They said:
- 4.6 “Please, Reverend Dāsaka, go to the mendicant Khemaka and say to him: ‘Reverend Khemaka, the seniors say that these five grasping aggregates have been taught by the Buddha, that is: the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. If, as it seems, Venerable Khemaka does not regard anything among these five grasping aggregates as self or as belonging to self, then he is a perfected one, with defilements ended.’”²⁰⁷
- 5.1 “Yes, reverends,” replied Dāsaka. He relayed the message to Khemaka, who replied:
- 5.6 “These five grasping aggregates have been taught by the Buddha, that is: the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. I do not regard anything among these five grasping aggregates as self or as belonging to self, yet I am not a perfected one, with defilements ended. For when it comes to the five grasping aggregates I’m not rid of the conceit ‘I am’. But I don’t regard anything as ‘I am this.’”²⁰⁸

207. They were mistaken, as will be made clear later. Even a stream-enterer does not regard the aggregates as self, in the sense that they cannot form a view to that effect.

208. The key difference here is between “I am” (*asmi*), the intuitive sense of being someone, and “I am that” (*ayamahamasmi*), the identification of that someone with something in particular, namely the aggregates (see MN 47:13.4 and note). | Read *avigatam* per SN 22.47:2.1.

Then Dāsaka went to those senior mendicants and told them what 6.1
had happened. They said:

“Please, Reverend Dāsaka, go to the mendicant Khemaka and say 7.1
to him: ‘Reverend Khemaka, the seniors ask, when you say “I am”,
what is it that you’re talking about? Is it form or apart from form? Is
it feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, or apart from
consciousness? When you say “I am”, what is it that you’re talking
about?”

“Yes, reverends,” replied Dāsaka. He relayed the message to Khe- 8.1
maka, who replied:

“Enough, Reverend Dāsaka! What’s the point in running back 8.10
and forth?²⁰⁹ Bring my staff, I’ll go to see the senior mendicants
myself.”

Then Venerable Khemaka, leaning on a staff, went to those senior 9.1
mendicants and exchanged greetings with them. When the greetings
and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side. They
said to him:

“Reverend Khemaka, when you say ‘I am’, what is it that you’re 9.3
talking about? Is it form or apart from form? Is it feeling ... per-
ception ... choices ... consciousness, or apart from consciousness?
When you say ‘I am’, what is it that you’re talking about?”

“Reverends, I don’t say ‘I am’ with reference to form, or apart from 9.10
form. I don’t say ‘I am’ with reference to feeling ... perception ...
choices ... consciousness, or apart from consciousness. For when
it comes to the five grasping aggregates I’m not rid of the conceit ‘I
am’. But I don’t regard anything as ‘I am this’.

It’s like the scent of a blue water lily, or a pink or white lotus. 10.1
Would it be right to say that the scent belongs to the petals or the
stalk or the pistil?”²¹⁰

“No, reverend.” 10.3

209. The reason for the extended back and forth is not exactly clear. Perhaps the senior monks initially sent a messenger so as to not overburden the sick monk with many visitors, and got caught up in an unintended discussion.

210. Prefer *vaṇṭa* (“stalk”) over *vaṇṇa* (“color”), though both are possible.

- 10.4 “Then, reverends, how should it be said?”
- 10.5 “It would be right to say that the scent belongs to the flower.”
- 10.6 “In the same way, reverends, I don’t say ‘I am’ with reference to form, or apart from form. I don’t say ‘I am’ with reference to feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, or apart from consciousness. For when it comes to the five grasping aggregates I’m not rid of the conceit ‘I am’. But I don’t regard anything as ‘I am this.’
- 11.1 Although a noble disciple has given up the five lower fetters, they still have a lingering residue of the conceit ‘I am’, the desire ‘I am’, and the underlying tendency ‘I am’ which has not been eradicated. After some time they meditate observing rise and fall in the five grasping aggregates. ‘Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form. Such is feeling ... Such is perception ... Such are choices ... Such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.’ As they do so, that lingering residue is eradicated.
- 12.1 Suppose there was a cloth that was dirty and soiled, so the owners give it to a launderer. The launderer kneads it thoroughly with salt, lye, and cow dung, and rinses it in clear water. Although that cloth is clean and bright, it still has a lingering scent of salt, lye, or cow dung that had not been eradicated. The launderer returns it to its owners, who store it in a fragrant casket. And that lingering scent would be eradicated.
- 12.6 In the same way, although a noble disciple has given up the five lower fetters, they still have a lingering residue of the conceit ‘I am’, the desire ‘I am’, and the underlying tendency ‘I am’ which has not been eradicated. After some time they meditate observing rise and fall in the five grasping aggregates. ‘Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form. Such is feeling ... Such is perception ... Such are choices ... Such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.’ As they do so, that lingering residue is eradicated.”
- 13.1 When he said this, the senior mendicants said to Venerable Khemaka, “We didn’t want to trouble Venerable Khemaka with our ques-

tions. But you're capable of explaining, teaching, asserting, establishing, clarifying, analyzing, and revealing the Buddha's instructions in detail. And that's just what you've done."

That is what Venerable Khemaka said. Satisfied, the senior mendicants approved what Khemaka said. And while this discourse was being spoken, the minds of sixty senior mendicants and of Venerable Khemaka were freed from defilements by not grasping. 14.1

SN 22.90

With Channa

Channasutta

At one time several senior mendicants were staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana. 1.1

Then in the late afternoon, Venerable Channa came out of retreat. Taking a latchkey, he went from dwelling to dwelling, going up to the senior mendicants and saying,²¹¹ "May the venerable senior mendicants advise me and instruct me! May they give me a Dhamma talk so that I can see the teaching!"²¹² 1.2

When he said this, the senior mendicants said to Venerable Channa: 2.1

"Reverend Channa, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are impermanent. Form, feeling, perception, choices, 2.2

211. This is not the arahant Channa of MN 144:13.11 = SN 35.87.

212. These events follow the Buddha's passing, where he asked the Saṅgha to not advise Channa or instruct him (DN 16:6.4.1. Channa features often in the Vinaya as a monk who refuses correction and acts disrespectfully. The Saṅgha had already imposed an act of "ejection" (*ukkhepanīyakamma*) on him due to his persistent bad behavior, but that was still not enough (Kd 1:25.1.1). The *brahmadāṇḍa* was imposed at the First Council (Kd 1:1.12.1), upon which Channa finally saw the error of his ways.

and consciousness are not-self. All conditions are impermanent. All things are not-self.”²¹³

- 3.1 Then Venerable Channa thought, “I too think in this way. ... And yet my mind does not leap forth, gain confidence, settle down, and become decided about the stilling of all activities, the letting go of all attachments, the ending of craving, fading away, cessation, extinguishment. Because of anxiety, grasping arises and keeps turning back to the thought:”²¹⁴ ‘So who then is my self?’²¹⁵ But that doesn’t happen for someone who sees the teaching. Who can teach me the Dhamma so that I can see the teaching?”
- 4.1 Then Venerable Channa thought, “Venerable Ānanda is staying near Kosambi in Ghosita’s monastery. He’s praised by the Buddha and esteemed by his sensible spiritual companions. He’s quite capable of teaching me the Dhamma so that I can see the teaching. Since I have so much trust in Venerable Ānanda, why don’t I go to see him?”
- 4.5 Then Channa set his lodgings in order and, taking his bowl and robe, set out for Kosambī. He went to see Ānanda in Ghosita’s monastery, exchanged greetings with him, and told him what had happened. Then he said,
- 7.1 “May Venerable Ānanda advise me and instruct me! May he give me a Dhamma talk so that I can see the teaching!”
- 8.1 “I’m already delighted with Venerable Channa. Hopefully you’ve opened yourself up and severed your hard-heartedness.”²¹⁶ Listen well, Channa. You are capable of understanding the teaching.”
- 8.4 Then right away Channa was filled with lofty rapture and joy, “It seems I’m capable of understanding the teaching!”

213. This teaching, which omits “suffering”, is found at only one other place, where, as here, it was unsuccessful. The point is that trying to soft-pedal the Dhamma by omitting suffering is not going to work. See MN 35:4.6 and note.

214. *Mānasam* is accusative in the sense, “a thought”.

215. The idiom *atha ko carahi* is consequential, “so who then ...”

216. Channa has given up resentment toward his fellow monks, as described in the five kinds of hard-heartedness (MN 16:3.1).

“Reverend Channa, I heard and learned in the presence of the 9.1
Buddha his advice to the mendicant Kaccānagotta:²¹⁷

‘Kaccāna, this world mostly relies on the duality of existence and 9.2
non-existence.

But for one who truly sees the origin of the world with right un- 9.3
derstanding, the concept of non-existence regarding the world does
not occur. And for one who truly sees the cessation of the world with
right understanding, the concept of existence regarding the world
does not occur.

This world is for the most part shackled by getting involved, grasp- 9.5
ing, and insisting.

But if—for all that getting involved and grasping, mental fixation, 9.6
and insistence and underlying tendency—they do not get attracted,
grasp, and fixate on the thought, ‘my self’, they’ll have no doubt or
uncertainty that what arises is just suffering arising, and what ceases
is just suffering ceasing.²¹⁸ Their knowledge of this is independent
of others.

This is how right view is defined. 9.9

“All exists”: this is one extreme. 9.10

“All does not exist”: this is the second extreme. 9.11

Avoiding these two extremes, the Realized One teaches by the 9.12
middle way:

“Ignorance is a requirement for choices. Choices are a require- 9.13
ment for consciousness. ... That is how this entire mass of suffering
originates.

When ignorance fades away and ceases with no residue left be- 9.16
hind, choices cease. ... That is how this entire mass of suffering
ceases.””

“Reverend Ānanda, this is how it is when you have such venerables 10.1
as spiritual companions to advise and instruct you out of kindness

217. Ānanda is referring to SN 12.15. See there for notes.

218. As at MN 35:21.2, the inadequate teaching that omits suffering is corrected
by a teaching that specially emphasizes it.

and sympathy. And now that I’ve heard this teaching from Venerable Ānanda, I’ve comprehended the teaching.”

SN 22.91

Rāhula

Rāhulasutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.²¹⁹

1.2 Then Venerable Rāhula went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:

1.3 “Sir, how does one know and see so that there’s no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs?”

2.1 “Rāhula, one truly sees any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’

2.2 One truly sees any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’

2.7 That’s how to know and see so that there’s no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs.”

219. This discourse is also found at SN 18.21 and SN 22.71.

Rāhula (2nd)

Dutiyarāhulasutta

At Sāvattthī.²²⁰

1.1

Seated to one side, Rāhula said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, how does one know and see so that the heart is rid of I-making, mine-making, and conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs; and going beyond discrimination, it’s peaceful and well freed?”

1.3

“Rāhula, one truly sees any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self,’ one is freed by not grasping.

2.1

One truly sees any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ...

2.2

One truly sees any kind of consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self,’ one is freed by not grasping.

That’s how to know and see so that the heart is rid of I-making, mine-making, and conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs; and going beyond discrimination, it’s peaceful and well freed.”

2.6

220. This discourse is also found at SN 18.22 and SN 22.72.

The Chapter on Flowers

SN 22.93

A River

Nadīsutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.

1.2 “Suppose, mendicants, there was a mountain river that flowed swiftly, going far, carrying all before it. If wild sugarcane, kusa grass, reeds, vetiver, or trees grew on either bank, they’d overhang the river. And if a person who was being swept along by the current grabbed the wild sugarcane, kusa grass, reeds, vetiver, or trees, it’d fall apart, and they’d come to ruin because of that.”²²¹

1.3 In the same way, an unlearned ordinary person has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons.

1.4 They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. But their form falls apart,²²² and they come to ruin because of that. They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. But their consciousness falls apart, and they come to ruin because of that.

221. A similar use of *palujjati* is at Bhāgavata Purāṇa 8.2.20.

222. The root *luj* (Sanskrit *ruj*) is used early to mean “fracture, break, smash”, as at Rīg Veda 10.152.3, “fracture the jaws of Vṛtra”. See SN 35.82:2.3 and note.

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?" 1.13

"Impermanent, sir." ... 1.15

"Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?" 1.17

"Impermanent, sir." 1.21

"So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: '... there is nothing further for this place.'" 1.22

SN 22.94

Flowers

Pupphasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

"Mendicants, I do not dispute with the world; it is the world that disputes with me.²²³ When your speech is in line with the teaching you do not dispute with anyone in the world. What the astute deem as not existing, I too say does not exist. What the astute deem as existing, I too say exists.²²⁴" 1.2

And what do the astute deem as not existing, which I too say does not exist? Form that is permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable. 2.1

Feeling ... 2.3

Perception ... 2.4

Choices ... 2.5

Consciousness that is permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable. This is what the astute deem as not existing, which I too say does not exist. 2.6

223. Compare Snp 4.12:17.2, MN 18:4.1.

224. The Buddha rejects the metaphysical views of absolute, eternal existence and annihilation (SN 12.15:3.1, SN 12.48:2.2), but he asserts the reality of that which is conditioned and impermanent, namely the aggregates. The Buddha was neither a substantialist nor an idealist; he was a relational phenomenologist.

- 3.1 And what do the astute deem as existing, which I too say exists?
Form that is impermanent, suffering, and perishable.
- 3.3 Feeling ... Perception ... Choices ...
- 3.4 Consciousness that is impermanent, suffering, and perishable.
This is what the astute deem as existing, which I too say exists.
- 4.1 There is a worldly phenomenon in the world that the Realized One understands and comprehends.²²⁵ Then he explains, teaches, asserts, establishes, clarifies, analyzes, and discloses it.
- 5.1 And what is that worldly phenomenon in the world? Form is a worldly phenomenon in the world that the Realized One understands and comprehends. Then he explains, teaches, asserts, establishes, clarifies, analyzes, and discloses it.
- 6.1 This being so, what can I do about a foolish ordinary person, blind and sightless, who does not know or see?
- 6.2 Feeling ...
- 6.3 Perception ...
- 6.4 Choices ...
- 6.5 Consciousness is a worldly phenomenon in the world that the Realized One understands and comprehends. Then he explains, teaches, asserts, establishes, clarifies, analyzes, and discloses it.
- 7.1 This being so, what can I do about a foolish ordinary person, blind and sightless, who does not know or see?
- 8.1 Suppose there was a blue water lily, or a pink or white lotus. Though it sprouted and grew in the water, it would rise up above the water and stand with no water clinging to it. In the same way, though I was born and grew up in the world, I live having mastered the world, unsullied by the world.”

225. The Pali is *loke lokadhammo*. It seems useful to keep the overly-literal rendering “worldly phenomenon in the world” to maintain the pattern of the discourse. Here it alludes to the idea that it is the world because it “wears away” (SN 35.82:2.3).

SN 22.95

A Lump of Foam

Phenapiṇḍūpamasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Ayodhya on the bank of the 1.1
Ganges River.²²⁶ There the Buddha addressed the mendicants:²²⁷

“Mendicants, suppose this Ganges River was carrying along a 2.1
big lump of foam. And a person with clear eyes would see it and
contemplate it, examining it rationally. And it would appear to them
as completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence
could there be in a lump of foam?

In the same way, a mendicant sees and contemplates any kind of 2.2
form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or
subtle; inferior or superior; far or near—examining it rationally. And
it appears to them completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial.
For what essence could there be in form?

Suppose it was autumn, when the heavens rain heavily, and a 3.1
bubble on the water forms and pops right away. And a person with
clear eyes would see it and contemplate it, examining it rationally.
And it would appear to them as completely vacuous, hollow, and
insubstantial. For what essence could there be in a water bubble?

226. Pali *ayujjhā* is apparently the city known as Ayodhya in Sanskrit, believed to be the legendary seat of the Okkāka (Sanskrit *ikṣvāku*) dynasty from which hailed many leading royal lineages in ancient India, including the Buddha's. Ayodhya is identified with Sāketa, which is however on the Sarabhū (Sanskrit *sarayu*) river, not the Ganges (see note on SN 2.18:1.2). Perhaps the text here is mistaken (compare SN 35.241:1.1).

227. This much-cited discourse establishes that it is not merely the supposed self that is empty and lacks a substantial core, but that each of the five aggregates is in itself empty. This does not contradict the preceding discourse, which has already established that the aggregates do, in fact, exist as impermanent and conditioned phenomena (SN 22.94:1.5). Each of the things to which the aggregates are compared do exist, they just appear as something other than they are. A lump of foam is perfectly real as a lump of foam, it is just not a solid mass.

- 3.2 In the same way, a mendicant sees and contemplates any kind of feeling at all ... examining it rationally. And it appears to them completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence could there be in feeling?
- 4.1 Suppose that in the last month of summer, at noon, a shimmering mirage appears. And a person with clear eyes would see it and contemplate it, examining it rationally. And it would appear to them as completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence could there be in a mirage?
- 4.2 In the same way, a mendicant sees and contemplates any kind of perception at all ... examining it carefully. And it appears to them completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what substance could there be in perception?
- 5.1 Suppose there was a person in need of heartwood. Wandering in search of heartwood, they'd take a sharp axe and enter a forest. There they'd see a big banana trunk, straight and young and grown unskewed. They'd cut it down at the base, cut off the top, and unroll the coiled sheaths. But they wouldn't even find sapwood, much less heartwood. And a person with clear eyes would see it and contemplate it, examining it rationally. And it would appear to them as completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence could there be in a banana trunk?²²⁸
- 5.2 In the same way, a mendicant sees and contemplates any kind of choices at all ... examining them rationally. And they appear to them as completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence could there be in choices?
- 6.1 Suppose an illusionist or their apprentice was to demonstrate an illusion at the crossroads. And a person with clear eyes would see

228. This simile highlights a secondary sense of *sāra*, for which the basic meaning is “essence”, “substance”, “core”. It also means “value”, “worth”, as the banana trunk is “worthless” to someone seeking “heartwood” (*sāra*). | There are multiple readings for *akukkuccakajāta* in parallels of this passage. Regardless of the exact form, the root appears to be *kuñc* (“skew”). The word applies to both a banana plant (as here) and a sal tree (AN 4.196:4.2).

it and contemplate it, examining it rationally. And it would appear to them as completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence could there be in an illusion?²²⁹

In the same way, a mendicant sees and contemplates any kind of consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near—examining it rationally. And it appears to them completely vacuous, hollow, and insubstantial. For what essence could there be in consciousness? 6.2

Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they're freed. When they're freed, they know they're freed. They understand: '... there is nothing further for this place.' 7.1

That is what the Buddha said. Then the Holy One, the Teacher, went on to say: 8.1

“Form is like a lump of foam;
feeling is like a bubble;
perception seems like a mirage;
choices like a banana plant;
and consciousness like an illusion:
so taught the Kinsman of the Sun. 9.1

However you contemplate them,
examining them rationally,
they're vacuous and hollow
when you look at them closely. 10.1

Concerning this body,
he of vast wisdom has taught 11.1

229. “Illusionist” (*māyākāra*) is unique in early Pali; normally we have *māyāvī* (“deceitful one, trickster”). *Māyā* in early Buddhism is not raised to a high philosophical sense as in the “illusion” of Vedānta; nor it is used in the sense of literal “magic”. Normally it means “deceit, trick, con”, and here it refers to some kind of visual illusion created by professional performers.

that when three things are given up,
you'll see this form discarded.

- 12.1 When vitality, warmth, and consciousness²³⁰
leave this body,
it lies dumped there,²³¹
food for others, insentient.
- 13.1 Such is this continuity,²³²
this illusion, this lament of fools.²³³
It's said to be a killer,
for no core is found here.
- 14.1 An energetic mendicant
should examine the aggregates like this,
with situational awareness and mindfulness
whether by day or by night.
- 15.1 They should give up all fetters,
and make a refuge for themselves.
They should live as though their head was on fire,
aspiring to the state that does not pass.”

SN 22.96

A Lump of Cow Dung

Gomayapiṇḍasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

230. Compare MN 43:24.2, Dhṛp 41.

231. For *apaviddha* (“dumped”) see Snp 1.11:8.3.

232. *Santāna* became a major technical term in the Abhidhamma for the uninterrupted “continuity” of mind moments. This is a rare appearance in the early texts.

233. That *lāpinī* appears directly following the death of the body suggests the sense “lament”, which is attested in Sanskrit.

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:²³⁴ 1.2

“Sir, is there any form at all that’s permanent, everlasting, eternal, 1.3
imperishable, and will last forever and ever? Is there any feeling
... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all that’s permanent,
everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever?”

“Mendicant, there is no form at all that’s permanent, everlasting, 1.8
eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever. There’s no feeling
... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all that’s permanent,
everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever.”

Then the Buddha, picking up a lump of cow dung, said to the 2.1
mendicant:

“There’s not even this much of any incarnation that’s permanent, 2.2
everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever. If
there were, this living of the spiritual life for the complete ending of
suffering would not be found. But since there isn’t, this living of the
spiritual life for the complete ending of suffering is found.

Once upon a time I was an anointed aristocratic king.²³⁵ I had 3.1
84,000 cities, with the capital Kusāvati the foremost. I had 84,000
palaces, with the Palace of Principle the foremost.²³⁶ I had 84,000
chambers, with the Chamber of the Grand Tower the foremost.²³⁷
I had 84,000 couches made of ivory or heartwood or gold or sil-
ver, spread with woolen covers—shag-piled or embroidered with
flowers—and spread with a fine deer hide, with a canopy above and
red pillows at both ends.²³⁸ I had 84,000 bull elephants with gold

234. “That” (*so*) refers back to an introductory passage that has been elided.

235. These details are greatly expanded in DN 17, where the Buddha names himself Mahāsudassana.

236. “Palace” is *pāsāda*, literally “stilt longhouse”.

237. “Chamber” is *kūṭāgāra*, literally “building with peaked roof”. Normally this means “bungalow”, but in a similar description at MN 37:8.9 we hear of a “palace” with a hundred “towers” (*niyyūha*), each of which has seven hundred “chambers”. Thus the *kūṭāgāra* must be a structure many of which can belong to a palace, namely “chamber”, while *byūha* (spelled *viyūha* at DN 17:2.5.3) must have the same meaning as *niyyūha*, i.e. “tower”.

238. “Silver” is omitted by mistake in Mahāsaṅgīti edition.

adornments and banners, covered with snow gold netting, with the royal bull elephant named Sabbath the foremost.²³⁹ I had 84,000 horses with gold adornments and banners, covered with snow gold netting, with the royal steed named Thundercloud the foremost.²⁴⁰ I had 84,000 chariots with gold adornments and banners, covered with snow gold netting, with the chariot named Triumph the foremost.²⁴¹ I had 84,000 jewels, with the jewel-treasure the foremost. I had 84,000 women, with Queen Subhaddā the foremost. I had 84,000 aristocrat vassals, with the commander-treasure the foremost. I had 84,000 milk cows with muslin halter and bronze pails.²⁴² I had 8,400,000,000 cloths of delicate linen, cotton, silk, and wool. I had 84,000 servings of food, which were presented to me as offerings at daybreak and dusk.

- 4.1 Of those 84,000 cities, I only stayed in one, the capital Kusāvati. Of those 84,000 palaces, I only dwelt in one, the Palace of Principle. Of those 84,000 chambers, I only dwelt in one, the Chamber of the Grand Tower. Of those 84,000 couches, I only used one, made of ivory or heartwood or gold or silver. Of those 84,000 bull elephants, I only rode one, the royal bull elephant named Sabbath. Of those 84,000 horses, I only rode one, the royal horse named Thundercloud. Of those 84,000 chariots, I only rode one, the chariot named Triumph. Of those 84,000 women, I was only served by one, an aristocrat maiden or a coquette.²⁴³ Of those 8,400,000,000 cloths,

239. *Hema* (“snow gold”) evokes the golden radiance of a snowy mountain in the dawn light, a blessing of the gods that, it may easily be imagined, leaves its traces in the gold found in abundance in its streams.

240. See note on DN 17:1.13.2.

241. Not the British car of the same name. The chariot is the source of victory in battle.

242. *Dukūla* (“muslin”) is a delicate cloth produced from the inner bark of a tree. | *Sandāna* is a tether or “halter” for cows or horses (Rig Veda 1.162.8) or even for binding foes (Atharva Veda 6.103).

243. Readings here and at DN 17:2.15.8 are confused, and further complicated at Tha Ap 411:4.1. I read *velāsikā* due to the passage’s similarity to DN 23:15.4, where a “coquette” (literally, “party girl”) is also serving a royal. I believe the variant *velāmikā* is a ghost word contaminated from AN 9.20:4.1.

I only wore one pair, made of delicate linen, cotton, silk, and wool. Of those 84,000 servings of food, I only had one, eating at most a cup of rice with suitable sauce.

And so all those conditioned phenomena have passed, ceased, and perished. So impermanent are conditions, so unstable are conditions, so unreliable are conditions. This is quite enough for you to become disillusioned, dispassionate, and freed regarding all conditions.” 4.11

SN 22.97

A Fingernail

Nakhasikhāsutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha: 1.2

“Sir, is there any form at all that’s permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever? Is there any feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all that’s permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever?” 1.3

“Mendicant, there is no form at all that’s permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever. There’s no feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all that’s permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever.” 1.8

Then the Buddha, picking up a little bit of dirt on his fingernail, said to that mendicant: 2.1

“There’s not even this much of any form that’s permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever. If there were, this living of the spiritual life for the complete ending of suffering would not be found. But since there isn’t, this living of the spiritual life for the complete ending of suffering is found. 2.2

There’s not even this much of any feeling ... 3.1

perception ... 4.1

choices ... 4.2

- 5.1 consciousness that's permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever. If there were, this living of the spiritual life for the complete ending of suffering would not be found. But since there isn't, this living of the spiritual life for the complete ending of suffering is found.
- 6.1 What do you think, mendicant? Is form permanent or impermanent?"
- 6.3 "Impermanent, sir."
- 6.4 "Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?"
- 6.8 "Impermanent, sir." ...
- 6.9 "So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: '... there is nothing further for this place.'"

SN 22.98

Plain Version

Suddhikasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattṇī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 "Sir, is there any form at all that's permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever? Is there any feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all that's permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever?"
- 1.8 "Mendicant, there is no form at all that's permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever. There's no feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all that's permanent, everlasting, eternal, imperishable, and will last forever and ever."

SN 22.99

A Leash

Gaddulabaddhasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, this transmigration has no known beginning.²⁴⁴ No 1.2
first point is found of sentient beings roaming and transmigrating,
shrouded by ignorance and fettered by craving.

There comes a time when the ocean dries up and evaporates and 1.4
is no more. But in any case, there is no making an end of suffering for
sentient beings roaming and transmigrating, shrouded by ignorance
and fettered by craving, I say.

There comes a time when Sineru the king of mountains is burned 1.6
up and destroyed, and is no more. But in any case, there is no making
an end of suffering for sentient beings roaming and transmigrating,
shrouded by ignorance and fettered by craving, I say.

There comes a time when the great earth is burned up and de- 1.8
stroyed, and is no more. But in any case, there is no making an end of
suffering for sentient beings roaming and transmigrating, shrouded
by ignorance and fettered by craving, I say.

Suppose a hound on a leash was tethered to a strong post or pillar. 2.1
It would just keep running and circling around that post or pillar.²⁴⁵

In the same way, take an unlearned ordinary person who has 2.2
not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in their
teaching. They’ve not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor
trained in their teaching. They regard form ... feeling ... perception
... choices ... consciousness as self, self as having consciousness,
consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. They just keep run-
ning and circling around form, feeling, perception, choices, and

244. See SN 15.1:1.7 and note.

245. *Sā* (Sanskrit *śvan*) is a short form for “dog” from the same root as *soṇa* and *sunakha*, all of which are distantly related to English “hound”. This simile is also at MN 102:12.7.

consciousness. Doing so, they're not freed from form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. They're not freed from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They're not freed from suffering, I say.

- 3.1 A learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don't regard form ... feeling ... perception ... choices ... or consciousness as self, self as having consciousness, consciousness in self, or self in consciousness. They don't keep running and circling around form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. By not doing so, they're freed from form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. They're freed from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They're freed from suffering, I say."

SN 22.100

A Leash (2nd)

Dutiyaḡaddulabaddhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 "Mendicants, this transmigration has no known beginning. No first point is found of sentient beings roaming and transmigrating, shrouded by ignorance and fettered by craving. Suppose a mutt on a leash was tethered to a strong post or pillar. Whether walking, standing, sitting, or lying down, it stays right beside that post or pillar.
- 1.5 In the same way, an unlearned ordinary person regards form like this: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self.' They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness like this: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self.' When walking, they walk right beside the five grasping aggregates. When standing ... sitting ... lying down, they lie down right beside the five grasping aggregates.

So you should regularly check your own mind: ‘For a long time 1.14
this mind has been corrupted by greed, hate, and delusion.’ Sentient
beings are corrupted because the mind is corrupted. Sentient beings
are purified because the mind is purified.

Mendicants, have you seen the painting named ‘Conduct’?”²⁴⁶ 2.1

“Yes, sir.” 2.2

“That painting was devised by the mind, but the mind is even 2.3
more diverse than that.”²⁴⁷

So you should regularly check your own mind: ‘For a long time 2.4
this mind has been corrupted by greed, hate, and delusion.’ Sentient
beings are corrupted because the mind is corrupted. Sentient beings
are purified because the mind is purified.

I don’t see any other order of beings as elaborate as the animal 3.1
realm. The creatures in the animal realm were devised by the mind,
but the mind is even more diverse than that.

So you should regularly check your own mind: ‘For a long time 3.3
this mind has been corrupted by greed, hate, and delusion.’ Sentient
beings are corrupted because the mind is corrupted. Sentient beings
are purified because the mind is purified.

Suppose an artist or painter had some dye, red lac, turmeric, in- 4.1
digo, or rose madder. And on a polished plank or a wall or a canvas
they’d create the form of a woman or a man, whole in its major and
minor limbs.²⁴⁸

In the same way, when an unlearned ordinary person generates a 4.2
future life, all they generate is form, feeling, perception, choices, and
consciousness.

246. Said by the commentary to be a large painting taken from place to place
by certain brahmin heretics in their “wanderings” and exhibited to illustrate
kamma and its results. This suggests the sense of “conduct” (*carana*), although
the commentary does not make this connection. Perhaps, too, there is a pun on
the idea of “wandering mind”. | The commentary says the brahmins were of the
Sāṃkhya school, but this is anachronistic as that school arose much later.

247. The text plays on three meanings of *citta*: “mind”, “painting”, and “di-
versity”, as well as the past participle *cittita*, “thought up”, “devised”.

248. This simile is also at SN 12.64:4.1.

- 4.3 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 4.5 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 4.6 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?” ...
- 4.10 “So you should truly see ... Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.101

The Adze

Vāsijaṭasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, I say that the ending of defilements is for one who knows and sees, not for one who does not know or see. For one who knows and sees what? ‘Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form. Such is feeling ... Such is perception ... Such are choices ... Such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.’ The ending of the defilements is for one who knows and sees this.
- 2.1 When a mendicant is not committed to development, they might wish:²⁴⁹ ‘If only my mind were freed from the defilements by not grasping!’ Even so, their mind is not freed from defilements by not grasping. Why is that? You should say: ‘It’s because they’re undeveloped.’ Undeveloped in what? Undeveloped in the four kinds of mindfulness meditation, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven awakening factors, and the noble eightfold path.²⁵⁰
- 3.1 Suppose there was a chicken with eight or ten or twelve eggs.²⁵¹ But she had not properly sat on them to keep them warm and incu-

249. Compare MN 126.

250. This passage is nearly identical with AN 7.71:1.7.

251. Related similes are also found at MN 53:19.2, AN 8.11:11.1, MN 16:27.2.

bated. That chicken might wish: 'If only my chicks could break out of the eggshell with their claws and beak and hatch safely!' But they can't break out and hatch safely. Why is that? Because that chicken with eight or ten or twelve eggs has not properly sat on them to keep them warm and incubated.

In the same way, when a mendicant is not committed to development, they might wish: 'If only my mind were freed from the defilements by not grasping!' Even so, their mind is not freed from defilements by not grasping. Why is that? You should say: 'It's because they're undeveloped.' Undeveloped in what? Undeveloped in the four kinds of mindfulness meditation, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven awakening factors, and the noble eightfold path. 3.9

When a mendicant is committed to development, they might not wish: 'If only my mind were freed from the defilements by not grasping!' Even so, their mind is freed from defilements by not grasping. Why is that? You should say: 'It's because they are developed.' Developed in what? Developed in the four kinds of mindfulness meditation, the four right efforts, the four bases of psychic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven awakening factors, and the noble eightfold path. 4.1

Suppose there was a chicken with eight or ten or twelve eggs. And she properly sat on them to keep them warm and incubated. That chicken might not wish: 'If only my chicks could break out of the eggshell with their claws and beak and hatch safely!' But still they can break out and hatch safely. Why is that? Because that chicken with eight or ten or twelve eggs properly sat on them to keep them warm and incubated. 5.1

In the same way, when a mendicant is committed to development, they might not wish: 'If only my mind were freed from the defilements by not grasping!' Even so, their mind is freed from defilements by not grasping. Why is that? You should say: 'It's because they are developed.' Developed in what? Developed in the four kinds of mindfulness meditation, the four right efforts, the four bases of psy- 5.9

chic power, the five faculties, the five powers, the seven awakening factors, and the noble eightfold path.

- 6.1 Suppose a mason or their apprentice sees the marks of his fingers and thumb on the handle of his adze. They don't know how much of the handle was worn away today, how much yesterday, and how much previously. They just know what has been worn away.
- 6.5 In the same way, when a mendicant is committed to development, they don't know how much of the defilements were worn away today, how much yesterday, and how much previously. They just know what has been worn away. Suppose there was a sea-faring ship bound together with ropes. For six months they deteriorated in the water. Then in the cold season it was hauled up on dry land, where the ropes were weathered by wind and sun. When the monsoon clouds soaked it with rain, the ropes would readily collapse and rot away.²⁵² In the same way, when a mendicant is committed to development their fetters readily collapse and rot away.”

SN 22.102

The Perception of Impermanence

Aniccasaññāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when the perception of impermanence is developed and cultivated it eliminates all desire for sensual pleasures, for rebirth in the realm of luminous form, and for rebirth in a future life. It eliminates all ignorance and eradicates all conceit ‘I am’.²⁵³
- 2.1 In the autumn, a farmer ploughing with a large plough shears through all the root networks. In the same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed ... it eradicates all conceit ‘I am’.

252. For MS *vassamāsāni* read *cha māsāni* (“six months”) per parallels at AN 7.71:6.1 and SN 45.158:1.1.

253. The appearance here of both *rūparāga* and *bhavarāga* is unusual. Normally we would expect *rūparāga* and *arūparāga*, both of which are forms of *bhavarāga*.

A reed-cutter, having cut the reeds, grabs them at the top and 3.1
shakes them down, shakes them about, and flails them about.²⁵⁴ In
the same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed
... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

When the stalk of a bunch of mangoes is cut, all the mangoes 4.1
attached to the stalk will follow along.²⁵⁵ In the same way, when the
perception of impermanence is developed ... it eradicates all conceit
'I am'.

The rafters of a bungalow all lean to the peak, slope to the peak, 5.1
and meet at the peak, so the peak is said to be the topmost of them
all.²⁵⁶ In the same way, when the perception of impermanence is
developed ... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

Of all kinds of fragrant root, spikenard is said to be the best. In 6.1
the same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed
... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

Of all kinds of fragrant heartwood, red sandalwood is said to be 7.1
the best. In the same way, when the perception of impermanence is
developed ... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

Of all kinds of fragrant flower, jasmine is said to be the best. In 8.1
the same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed
... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

All lesser kings are vassals of a wheel-turning monarch, so the 9.1
wheel-turning monarch is said to be the foremost of them all. In the
same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed ... it
eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

The radiance of all the stars is not worth a sixteenth part of the 10.1
moon's radiance, so the moon's radiance is said to be the best of

254. For *nicchoṭeti* ("flail about") see Sanskrit *kṣud* ("shake, flail"), from which Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit *chorayati* ("clear away, cast off"). This, along with several other of these similes, is in AN 6.53.

255. Also at DN 1:3.73.4 and AN 6.53:7.1, this metaphor is found at Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.3.36, where it refers to the separation of the self from the body at death.

256. These seven similes are applied differently at SN 41.141–47.

them all. In the same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed ... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

11.1 In the autumn, the heavens are sunny and cloudless. And as the sun is rising to the firmament, having dispelled all the darkness of space, it shines and glows and radiates. In the same way, when the perception of impermanence is developed and cultivated it eliminates all desire for sensual pleasures, for rebirth in the realm of luminous form, and for rebirth in a future life. It eliminates all ignorance and eradicates all conceit 'I am'.

12.1 And how is the perception of impermanence developed and cultivated so that ... it eradicates all conceit 'I am'? 'Such is form, such is the origin of form, such is the disappearance of form. Such is feeling ... Such is perception ... Such are choices ... Such is consciousness, such is the origin of consciousness, such is the disappearance of consciousness.'

12.7 That's how the perception of impermanence is developed and cultivated so that it eliminates all desire for sensual pleasures, for rebirth in the realm of luminous form, and for rebirth in a future life. That's how it eliminates all ignorance and eradicates all conceit 'I am'."

THE FINAL FIFTY

The Chapter on Sides

SN 22.103

Ends

Antasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four ends. What four? The end that is substantial reality, the end that is the origin of substantial reality, the end that is the cessation of substantial reality, and the end that is the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality.²⁵⁷ And what is the end that is substantial reality? It should be said: the five grasping aggregates. What five? That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. This is called the end that is substantial reality.

2.1 And what is the end that is the origin of substantial reality? It’s the craving that leads to future lives, mixed up with relishing and greed, taking pleasure there wherever it alights. That is, craving for sensual

257. Usually (eg. SN 22.105), these four are presented without being suffixed with *-anta* (“end”), the contextual meaning of which is not entirely clear. The commentary says *anta* here means “portion”, but this is poorly attested. In philosophical contexts, *anta* means “extreme”, but this could not be used for the four noble truths. Perhaps the obvious meaning is the correct one: *anta* means “end”, which in the case of suffering and its origin means death, and in the case of the path and the end of suffering means Nibbāna. The teaching would then be that all you are attached to will end in any case, but Nibbāna is the end free of suffering.

pleasures, craving for existence, and craving for nonexistence. This is called the end that is the origin of substantial reality.

And what is the end that is the cessation of substantial reality? It's the fading away and cessation of that very same craving no residue left behind; giving it away, letting it go, releasing it, and not clinging to it. This is called the end that is the cessation of substantial reality. 3.1

And what is the end that is the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality? It is simply this noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion. This is called the end that is the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality. These are the four ends." 4.1

SN 22.104

Suffering

Dukkhasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

"Mendicants, I will teach you suffering, the origin of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering. Listen ... 1.2

And what is suffering? It should be said: the five grasping aggregates. What five? That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. This is called suffering. 1.4

And what is the origin of suffering? It's the craving that leads to future lives, mixed up with relishing and greed, taking pleasure there wherever it alights. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for continued existence, and craving for nonexistence. This is called the origin of suffering. 1.9

And what is the cessation of suffering? It's the fading away and cessation of that very same craving with no residue left behind; giving it away, letting it go, releasing it, and not clinging to it. This is called the cessation of suffering. 1.12

- 1.15 And what is the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering? It is simply this noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion. This is called the practice that leads to the cessation of suffering.”

SN 22.105

Substantial Reality

Sakkāyasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you substantial reality, the origin of substantial reality, the cessation of substantial reality, and the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality. Listen . . .
- 1.4 And what is substantial reality?²⁵⁸ It should be said: the five grasping aggregates.²⁵⁹ What five? That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. This is called substantial reality.

258. *Sakkāya* (“substantial reality”) is often rendered as “identity” or “personality” based on the false etymology that the initial element is *sa-* (“one’s own”). But it is in fact from *sat* (“real”) and *kāya* (“substance”). The Jain form is *astikāya*, which refers to the fundamental substances (or ontological categories). Like the aggregates, there are five: the medium of motion (*dharma*), the medium of rest (*adharma*), space (*ākāśa*), soul (*jīva*), and matter (*pudgala*; Bhagavatisūtra 1.10, Sarvadarśanasamgraha ch. 3). Note that the Suttas use *kāya* in the sense of “substance” or “mass” as a key doctrinal term for ascetic movements associated with Jainism (eg. DN 2:23.3, DN 2:26.2), whereas *kāya* appears to have had no philosophical importance in pre-Buddhist Vedic texts. The commentaries define *sakkāya* as “the three planes of cyclic existence”, i.e. all that exists. Thus *sakkāya* is the “substantial reality” that is mistakenly assumed to be a “self”.

259. Buddhism and Jainism, but not Hinduisim, share three technical terms, all having the sense “mass”. For the Jains, “substantial reality” (*astikāya*) includes “mass” or “matter” (*pudgala*), a molecule of which is an aggregate (*skandha*). For Buddhists, “substantial reality” (*sakkāya*) is comprised of the “aggregates” (*khandha*), which make up the “individual” (*puggala*, see SN 22.22).

And what is the origin of substantial reality? It's the craving that 1.9
leads to future lives, mixed up with relishing and greed, taking pleasure there wherever it alights. That is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for continued existence, and craving for nonexistence. This is called the origin of substantial reality.

And what is the cessation of substantial reality? It's the fading 1.12
away and cessation of that very same craving no residue left behind; giving it away, letting it go, releasing it, and not clinging to it. This is called the cessation of substantial reality.

And what is the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial 1.15
reality? It is simply this noble eightfold path, that is: right view, right purpose, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right immersion. This is called the practice that leads to the cessation of substantial reality."

SN 22.106

Should Be Completely Understood

Pariññeyyasutta

At Sāvathī. 1.1

"Mendicants, I will teach you the things that should be completely 1.2
understood, complete understanding, and the individual who has completely understood. Listen ...

And what things should be completely understood? Form, feel- 1.4
ing, perception, choices, and consciousness. These are called the things that should be completely understood.

And what is complete understanding? The ending of greed, hate, 1.11
and delusion. This is called complete understanding.

And who is the individual who has completely understood? It 1.14
should be said: a perfected one, the venerable of such name and such clan. This is called the individual who has completely understood."

SN 22.107

Ascetics (1st)

Samañasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.

1.5 There are ascetics and brahmins who don’t truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape ...

1.6 There are ascetics and brahmins who do truly understand ...”

SN 22.108

Ascetics (2nd)

Dutiyasamañasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.

1.5 There are ascetics and brahmins who don’t truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ origin, disappearance, gratification, drawback, and escape ... Those venerables don’t realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin ...

1.6 There are ascetics and brahmins who do truly understand ... Those venerables realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and live having realized it with their own insight.”

SN 22.109

A Stream-Enterer

Sotāpannasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? 1.2

That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. A noble disciple comes to truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ origin, disappearance, gratification, drawback, and escape. Such a noble disciple is called a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 22.110

A Perfected One

Arahantasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? 1.2

That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. A mendicant comes to be freed by not grasping after truly understanding these five grasping aggregates’ origin, disappearance, gratification, drawback, and escape.²⁶⁰ Such a mendicant is called a perfected one, with defilements ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done what had to be done, laid

260. The stream-enterer (as in the previous discourse) and the perfected one (*arahant*) share the same understanding of the aggregates as they truly are, but the arahant has fully let go of all grasping. Note too that the stream-enterer is said to be a “noble disciple”, which includes lay people, but the arahant is a “mendicant”. The discourses do not say that formal ordination is a requirement for arahantship, but they consistently treat the arahant as one who lives the renunciate life of a mendicant.

down the burden, achieved their heart's goal, utterly ended the fetter of continued existence, and is rightly freed through enlightenment."

SN 22.111

Giving Up Desire

Chandappahānasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 "Mendicants, you should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for form. Thus that form will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.

1.4 You should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness. Thus that consciousness will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future."

SN 22.112

Giving Up Desire (2nd)

Dutiyachandappahānasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 "Mendicants, you should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for form; and any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies. Thus that form will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.

1.4 You should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness; and any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies. Thus that consciousness will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future."

The Chapter on a Dhamma Speaker

SN 22.113

Ignorance

Avijjāsutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha and said to him: 1.2
- “Sir, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’. What is ignorance? 1.4
- And how is an ignoramus defined?”
- “Mendicant, it’s when an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t un- 1.7
- derstand form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads
- to its cessation. They don’t understand feeling ... perception ...
- choices ... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice
- that leads to its cessation.
- This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.” 1.12

SN 22.114

Knowledge

Vijjāsutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha: 1.2

- 1.3 “Sir, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’. What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?”
- 1.6 “Mendicant, it’s when a learned noble disciple understands form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. They understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation.
- 1.11 This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is defined.”

SN 22.115

A Dhamma speaker

Dhammakathikasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattṭhi.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, they speak of a ‘Dhamma speaker’. How is a Dhamma speaker defined?”²⁶¹
- 1.5 “Mendicant, if a mendicant teaches Dhamma for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, they’re qualified to be called ‘a mendicant who speaks on Dhamma’.
- 1.6 If they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, they’re qualified to be called ‘a mendicant who practices in line with the teaching’.
- 1.7 If they’re freed by not grasping by disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, they’re qualified to be called ‘a mendicant who has attained extinguishment in this very life’.
- 1.8 If a mendicant teaches Dhamma for disillusionment with feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, for its fading away and cessation, they’re qualified to be called ‘a mendicant who speaks on Dhamma’.

261. Applied to the senses at SN 35.155:1.2 and dependent origination at SN 12.16:1.3.

If they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who practices in line with the teaching'. 1.12

If they're freed by not grasping by disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who has attained extinguishment in this very life.' 1.13

SN 22.116

A Dhamma speaker (2nd)

Dutiyadhammakathikasutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha: 1.2

"Sir, they speak of a 'Dhamma speaker'. How is a Dhamma speaker defined? How is a mendicant who practices in line with the teaching defined? And how is a mendicant who has attained extinguishment in this very life defined?" 1.3

"Mendicant, if a mendicant teaches Dhamma for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who speaks on Dhamma'. 1.6

If they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who practices in line with the teaching'. 1.7

If they're freed by not grasping by disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding form, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who has attained extinguishment in this very life'. 1.8

If a mendicant teaches Dhamma for disillusionment with feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, for its fading away and cessation, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who speaks on Dhamma'. 1.9

If they practice for disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who practices in line with the teaching'. 1.13

- 1.14 If they're freed by not grasping by disillusionment, dispassion, and cessation regarding consciousness, they're qualified to be called 'a mendicant who has attained extinguishment in this very life.'"

SN 22.117

Shackles

Bandhanasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

1.2 "Mendicants, take an unlearned ordinary person who has not seen the noble ones, and is neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've not seen true persons, and are neither skilled nor trained in the teaching of the true persons. They regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They're called an unlearned ordinary person who is bound to form, inside and out. They see neither the near shore nor the far shore. They're born in bonds and die in bonds, and in bonds they go from this world to the next.²⁶²

1.5 They regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness as self. They're called an unlearned ordinary person who is bound to consciousness, inside and out. They see neither the near shore nor the far shore. They're born in bonds and die in bonds, and in bonds they go from this world to the next.

2.1 A learned noble disciple has seen the noble ones, and is skilled and trained in the teaching of the noble ones. They've seen true persons, and are skilled and trained in the teaching of the true persons. They don't regard form as self, self as having form, form in self, or self in form. They're called a learned noble disciple who is not bound to form, inside or out. They see the near shore and the far shore. They're free from suffering, I say.

262. Accept variant *jāyati* ("is born"), which is supported by the parallel at SA 74 (以縛生).

They don't regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... conscious- 2.4
ness as self. They're called a learned noble disciple who is not bound
to consciousness, inside or out. They see the near shore and the far
shore. They're free from suffering, I say."

SN 22.118

Questioning

Paripucchitasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

"What do you think, mendicants? Do you regard form like this: 1.2
'This is mine, I am this, this is my self'?"

"No, sir." 1.4

"Good, mendicants! Form should be truly seen with right under- 1.5
standing like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.'
Do you regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness
like this: 'This is mine, I am this, this is my self'?"

"No, sir." 1.11

"Good, mendicants! Consciousness should be truly seen with 1.12
right understanding like this: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is
not my self.'

Seeing this ... They understand: '... there is nothing further for 1.14
this place.'"

SN 22.119

Questioning (2nd)

Dutiya-paripucchitasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

"What do you think, mendicants? Do you regard form like this: 1.2
'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self'?"

"Yes, sir." 1.4

- 1.5 “Good, mendicants! Form should be truly seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ Do you regard feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self?’”
- 1.11 “Yes, sir.”
- 1.12 “Good, mendicants! Consciousness should be truly seen with right understanding like this: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
- 1.14 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.120

Things That Tighten Fetters

Samyojanīyasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattṭhī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you the things that tighten the fetters, and the fetter. Listen ...
- 1.4 What are the things that tighten the fetters? And what is the fetter?
- 1.5 Form is something that tightens the fetters. The desire and greed for it is the fetter.
- 1.7 Feeling ...
- 1.8 Perception ...
- 1.9 Choices ...
- 1.10 Consciousness is something that tightens the fetters. The desire and greed for it is the fetter.
- 1.12 These are called the things that tighten the fetters, and this is the fetter.”

SN 22.121

Things That Fuel Grasping

Upādānīyasutta

- At Sāvattthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, I will teach you the things that fuel grasping, and 1.2
the grasping.²⁶³ Listen ...
- What are the things that fuel grasping? And what is the grasping? 1.4
- Form is something that fuels grasping. The desire and greed for it 1.5
is the grasping.
- Feeling ... 1.7
- Perception ... 1.8
- Choices ... 1.9
- Consciousness is something that fuels grasping. The desire and 1.10
greed for it is the grasping.
- These are called the things that fuel grasping, and this is the grasp- 1.12
ing.”

SN 22.122

An Ethical Mendicant

Sīlavantasutta

- At one time Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita were 1.1
staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana. Then in the late
afternoon, Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita came out of retreat, went to Ven-
erable Sāriputta, and said:
- “Reverend Sāriputta, what things should an ethical mendicant 1.3
rationally apply the mind to?”
- “Reverend Koṭṭhita, an ethical mendicant should rationally apply 1.4
the mind to the five grasping aggregates as impermanent, as suffering,
as diseased, as a boil, as a dart, as gloom, as an affliction, as alien, as

263. See SN 22.48 and notes.

breaking apart, as empty, as not-self. What five? That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. An ethical mendicant should rationally apply the mind to these five grasping aggregates as impermanent, as suffering, as diseased, as a boil, as a dart, as gloom, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking apart, as empty, as not-self. It's possible that an ethical mendicant who rationally applies the mind to the five grasping aggregates will realize the fruit of stream-entry."

- 2.1 "But Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a mendicant stream-enterer rationally apply the mind to?"
- 2.2 "A mendicant stream-enterer should also rationally apply the mind to these five grasping aggregates as impermanent ... as not-self. It's possible that a mendicant stream-enterer who rationally applies the mind to the five grasping aggregates will realize the fruit of once-return."
- 3.1 "But Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a mendicant once-returner rationally apply the mind to?"
- 3.2 "A mendicant once-returner should also rationally apply the mind to these five grasping aggregates as impermanent ... as not-self. It's possible that a mendicant once-returner who rationally applies the mind to the five grasping aggregates will realize the fruit of non-return."
- 4.1 "But Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a mendicant non-returner rationally apply the mind to?"
- 4.2 "A mendicant non-returner should also rationally apply the mind to these five grasping aggregates as impermanent ... as not-self. It's possible that a mendicant non-returner who rationally applies the mind to the five grasping aggregates will realize perfection."
- 5.1 "But Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a perfected one rationally apply the mind to?"
- 5.2 "Reverend Koṭṭhita, a perfected one should also rationally apply the mind to the five grasping aggregates as impermanent, as suffering, as diseased, as a boil, as a dart, as gloom, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking apart, as empty, as not-self. A perfected one has nothing

more to do, and nothing that needs improvement. Still, these things, when developed and cultivated, lead to blissful meditation in this life, and also to mindfulness and situational awareness.”

SN 22.123

Learned

Sutavantasutta

At one time Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita were 1.1
staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana. Then in the late
afternoon, Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita came out of retreat, went to Ven-
erable Sāriputta, bowed, sat down to one side, and said:

“Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a learned mendicant 2.1
rationally apply the mind to?”

“A learned mendicant should rationally apply the mind to these 2.2
five grasping aggregates as impermanent ... as not-self. What five?
That is, the grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices,
and consciousness. A learned mendicant should rationally apply the
mind to these five grasping aggregates as impermanent ... as not-self.
It’s possible that a learned mendicant who rationally applies the mind
to the five grasping aggregates will realize the fruit of stream-entry.”

“But Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a mendicant stream- 3.1
enterer rationally apply the mind to?”

“A mendicant stream-enterer should also rationally apply the mind 3.2
to these five grasping aggregates as impermanent ... as not-self. It’s
possible that a mendicant stream-enterer who rationally applies the
mind to the five grasping aggregates will realize the fruit of once-
return.” ... “It’s possible that a mendicant once-returner who ratio-
nally applies the mind to the five grasping aggregates will realize the
fruit of non-return.” ... “It’s possible that a mendicant non-returner
who rationally applies the mind to the five grasping aggregates will
realize the fruit of perfection.”

- 4.1 “But Reverend Sāriputta, what things should a perfected one rationally apply the mind to?”
- 4.2 “Reverend Koṭṭhita, a perfected one should rationally apply the mind to the five grasping aggregates as impermanent, as suffering, as diseased, as a boil, as a dart, as gloom, as an affliction, as alien, as breaking apart, as empty, as not-self. A perfected one has nothing more to do, and nothing that needs improvement. Still, these things, when developed and cultivated, lead to blissful meditation in this life, and also to mindfulness and situational awareness.”

SN 22.124

With Kappa

Kappasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 Then Venerable Kappa went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:²⁶⁴
- 1.3 “Sir, how does one know and see so that there’s no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs?”
- 2.1 “Kappa, one truly sees any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
- 2.2 One truly sees any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’

264. Appearing in this discourse and the next, this may be the same Kappa whose verses are at Thag 10.5.

That's how to know and see so that there's no I-making, mine-making, or underlying tendency to conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs." 2.6

SN 22.125

With Kappa (2nd)

Dutiyakappasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, Venerable Kappa said to the Buddha:

1.2

"Sir, how does one know and see so that the heart is rid of I-making, mine-making, and conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs; and going beyond discrimination, it's peaceful and well freed?" 1.3

"Kappa, one is freed by not grasping having truly seen any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.' 2.1

One is freed by not grasping having truly seen any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: 'This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.' 2.2

That's how to know and see so that the heart is rid of I-making, mine-making, and conceit for this conscious body and externally for all signs; and going beyond discrimination, it's peaceful and well freed." 2.6

The Chapter on Ignorance

SN 22.126

Liabile to Originate

Samudayadhammasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:
- 1.3 “Sir, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’. What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?”
- 2.1 “Mendicant, it’s when an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly understand form, which is liable to originate, as form which is liable to originate. They don’t truly understand form, which is liable to vanish, as form which is liable to vanish. They don’t truly understand form, which is liable to originate and vanish, as form which is liable to originate and vanish.
- 2.4 They don’t truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, which is liable to originate, as consciousness which is liable to originate. They don’t truly understand consciousness, which is liable to vanish, as consciousness which is liable to vanish. They don’t truly understand consciousness, which is liable to originate and vanish, as consciousness which is liable to originate and vanish.
- 2.14 This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.”
- 3.1 When he said this, the mendicant said to the Buddha:

“Sir, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’. What is knowl- 3.2
edge? And how is a knowing one defined?”

“Mendicant, it’s when a learned noble disciple truly understands 4.1
form, which is liable to originate, as form which is liable to originate.
They truly understand form, which is liable to vanish, as form which
is liable to vanish. They truly understand form, which is liable to
originate and vanish, as form which is liable to originate and vanish.

They truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... con- 4.4
sciousness, which is liable to originate, as consciousness which is
liable to originate. They truly understand consciousness, which is
liable to vanish, as consciousness which is liable to vanish. They truly
understand consciousness, which is liable to originate and vanish, as
consciousness which is liable to originate and vanish.

This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is de- 4.14
fined.”

SN 22.127

Liable to Originate (2nd)

Dutiyasamudayadhammasutta

At one time Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahākoṭṭhita were 1.1
staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana. ...

Mahākoṭṭhita said to Sāriputta: 1.2

“Reverend Sāriputta, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’. 1.3
What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?”

“Reverend, it’s when an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly 2.1
understand form, which is liable to originate ... liable to vanish ...
liable to originate and vanish, as form which is liable to originate and
vanish.

They don’t truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... 2.2
consciousness, which is liable to originate ... liable to vanish ...
liable to originate and vanish, as consciousness which is liable to
originate and vanish.

- 2.6 This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.”

SN 22.128

Liabie to Originate (3rd)

Tatīyasamudayaḍhammasutta

- 1.1 At one time Venerable Sāriputta and Venerable Mahākotṭhita were staying near Varanasi in the deer park at Isipatana. ...
- 1.2 Mahākotṭhita said to Sāriputta:
- 1.3 “Reverend Sāriputta, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’. What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?”
- 2.1 “Reverend, it’s when a learned noble disciple truly understands form, which is liable to originate ... liable to vanish ... liable to originate and vanish, as form which is liable to originate and vanish.
- 2.2 They truly understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, which is liable to originate ... liable to vanish ... liable to originate and vanish, as consciousness which is liable to originate and vanish.
- 2.6 This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is defined.”

SN 22.129

Gratification

Assāḍasutta

- 1.1 At Varanasi. Mahākotṭhita said to Sāriputta:
- 1.3 “Reverend Sāriputta, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’. What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?”
- 2.1 “Reverend, an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly understand the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.
- 2.6 This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.”

SN 22.130

Gratification (2nd)

Dutiyaassādasutta

At Varanasi.

1.1

“Reverend Sāriputta, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’.
What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?” 1.2

“Reverend, a learned noble disciple truly understands the gratifi- 2.1
cation, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling,
perception, choices, and consciousness.

This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is de- 2.6
fined.”

SN 22.131

Origin

Samudayasutta

At Varanasi.

1.1

“Reverend Sāriputta, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’.
What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?” 1.2

“Reverend, an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly under- 2.1
stand the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback,
and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices,
and consciousness.

This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.” 2.6

SN 22.132

Origin (2nd)

Dutiyasamudayasutta

At Varanasi. Mahākotṭhita said to Sāriputta:

1.1

- 1.3 “Reverend Sāriputta, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’. What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?”
- 2.1 “Reverend, a learned noble disciple truly understands the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.
- 2.6 This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is defined.”

SN 22.133

With Koṭṭhita

Koṭṭhikasutta

- 1.1 At Varanasi. Sāriputta said to Mahākoṭṭhita:
- 1.4 “Reverend Koṭṭhita, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’. What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?”
- 2.1 “Reverend, an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly understand the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.
- 2.6 This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.”
- 3.1 When he said this, Venerable Sāriputta said to him:
- 3.2 “Reverend Koṭṭhita, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’. What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?”
- 4.1 “Reverend, a learned noble disciple truly understands the gratification, the drawback, and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.
- 4.6 This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is defined.”

SN 22.134

With Koṭṭhita (2nd)

Dutiyakoṭṭhikasutta

At Varanasi.

1.1

“Reverend Koṭṭhita, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’.
What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?” 1.2

“Reverend, an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t truly under- 2.1
stand the origin, the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback,
and the escape when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices,
and consciousness.

This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.” 2.6

When he said this, Venerable Sāriputta said to him: 3.1

“Reverend Koṭṭhita, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’.
What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?” 3.2

“Reverend, a learned noble disciple truly understands the origin, 4.1
the disappearance, the gratification, the drawback, and the escape
when it comes to form, feeling, perception, choices, and conscious-
ness.

This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is de- 4.6
fined.”

SN 22.135

With Koṭṭhita (3rd)

Tatīyakōṭṭhikasutta

The same setting. Sāriputta said to Mahākōṭṭhita:

1.1

“Reverend Koṭṭhita, they speak of this thing called ‘ignorance’.
What is ignorance? And how is an ignoramus defined?” 1.3

“Reverend, it’s when an unlearned ordinary person doesn’t under- 2.1
stand form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its
cessation. They don’t understand feeling ... perception ... choices

... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation.

2.6 This is called ignorance. And this is how an ignoramus is defined.”

3.1 When he said this, Venerable Sāriputta said to him:

3.2 “Reverend Koṭṭhita, they speak of this thing called ‘knowledge’. What is knowledge? And how is a knowing one defined?”

4.1 “Reverend, it’s when a learned noble disciple understands form, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation. They understand feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation.

4.6 This is called knowledge. And this is how a knowing one is defined.”

The Chapter on Burning Chaff

SN 22.136

Burning Chaff

Kukkuḷasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are burning chaff.”²⁶⁵

1.2

Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed.

1.3

They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’”

1.5

265. “Burning chaff” (*kukkūla*) is the name of a hell (MN 130:21.1). Some later Buddhists argued that this description meant that all conditioned things were nothing but scorching pain with no pleasure at all, against which the Theravadins cited a series of Sutta texts (Kv 2.8). Compare SN 22.60.

SN 22.137

Impermanence

Aniccasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, you should give up desire for what is impermanent.
- 1.3 And what is impermanent? Form is impermanent; you should give up desire for it.
- 1.5 Feeling ...
- 1.6 Perception ...
- 1.7 Choices ...
- 1.8 Consciousness is impermanent; you should give up desire for it.
- 1.9 You should give up desire for what is impermanent.”

SN 22.138

Impermanence (2nd)

Dutiyaaniccasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, you should give up greed for what is impermanent.
- And what is impermanent?
- 1.4 Form is impermanent; you should give up greed for it.
- 1.5 Feeling ...
- 1.6 Perception ...
- 1.7 Choices ...
- 1.8 Consciousness is impermanent; you should give up greed for it.
- 1.9 You should give up greed for what is impermanent.”

SN 22.139

Impermanence (3rd)

Tatiyaaniccassutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, you should give up desire and greed for what is 1.2
impermanent. And what is impermanent?
- Form is impermanent; you should give up desire and greed for it. 1.4
- Feeling ... 1.5
- Perception ... 1.6
- Choices ... 1.7
- Consciousness is impermanent; you should give up desire and 1.8
greed for it.
- You should give up desire and greed for what is impermanent.” 1.9

SN 22.140

Suffering

Dukkhasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, you should give up desire for what is suffering. ...” 1.2

SN 22.141

Suffering (2nd)

Dutiya-dukkhasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, you should give up greed for what is suffering. ...” 1.2

SN 22.142

Suffering (3rd)

Tatiyadukkhassutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, you should give up desire and greed for what is suffering. ...”

SN 22.143

Not-Self

Anattassutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, you should give up desire for what is not-self. ...”

SN 22.144

Not-Self (2nd)

Dutiyaanattassutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, you should give up greed for what is not-self. ...”

SN 22.145

Not-Self (3rd)

Tatiyaanattassutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, you should give up desire and greed for what is not-self. ...”

SN 22.146

Full of Disillusionment

Nibbidābahulasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when a gentleman has gone forth out of faith, this 1.2
 is what’s in line with the teaching. They should live full of disillusionment for form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Living in this way, they completely understand form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Completely understanding form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness, they’re freed from these things. They’re freed from rebirth, old age, and death, from sorrow, lamentation, pain, sadness, and distress. They’re freed from suffering, I say.”

SN 22.147

Observing Impermanence

*Aniccānupassīsutta*At Sāvatthī.²⁶⁶

1.1

“Mendicants, when a gentleman has gone forth out of faith, this 1.2
 is what’s in line with the teaching. They should meditate observing impermanence in form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. . . . They’re freed from suffering, I say.”

266. This corresponds to SN 22.40.

SN 22.148

Observing Suffering

Dukkhānupassīutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.²⁶⁷

1.2 “Mendicants, when a gentleman has gone forth out of faith, this is what’s in line with the teaching. They should meditate observing suffering in form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. ... They’re freed from suffering, I say.”

SN 22.149

Observing Not-Self

Anattānupassīutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.²⁶⁸

1.2 “Mendicants, when a gentleman has gone forth out of faith, this is what’s in line with the teaching. They should meditate observing not-self in form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. ... They’re freed from suffering, I say.”

267. This corresponds to SN 22.41. | The PTS edition omitted the text of this discourse, apparently by oversight. This means that the numbers of the subsequent discourses in this Saṃyutta are short by one.

268. This corresponds to SN 22.42.

The Chapter on Views

SN 22.150

In Oneself

Ajjhattasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what, do pleasure and pain arise in oneself?” 1.2
- “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.3
- “When form exists, because of grasping form, pleasure and pain arise in oneself. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness, pleasure and pain arise in oneself. 1.4
- What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?” 1.9
- “Impermanent, sir.” 1.11
- “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 1.12
- “Suffering, sir.” 1.13
- “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would pleasure and pain arise in oneself?” 1.14
- “No, sir.” 1.15
- “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?” 1.16
- “Impermanent, sir.” 1.20
- “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 1.21

- 1.22 “Suffering, sir.”
 1.23 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would pleasure and pain arise in oneself?”
 1.24 “No, sir.”
 1.25 “Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.151

This is Mine

Etammamasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what,²⁶⁹ does someone regard things like this: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’”
 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
 1.5 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form ...²⁷⁰ When consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, someone regards it like this: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self.’”
 1.8 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
 1.10 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
 1.11 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would you regard it like this: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’”
 1.12 “No, sir.”

269. *Kim upādāya* might be rendered as “derived from what”, but the fact that it is parallel with *abhinivissa* (“insist”) shows that the sense “grasping” is prominent. Grasping is the “taking up” of the view of self, which hardens into “insistence”.

270. This is another context that emphasizes the “existence” of the aggregates (see SN 22.94:1.5 and note).

“Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent 1.13
or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, sir.” ... 1.17

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perish- 1.18
able, would you regard it like this: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my
self’?”

“No, sir.” 1.19

“Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for 1.20
this place.’”

SN 22.152

This is My Self

Soattāsutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and 1.2
insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The self and the cosmos are
one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting,
eternal, and imperishable?’”²⁷¹

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.4

“When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on 1.5
form, the view arises: ‘The self and the cosmos are one and the
same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal,
and imperishable.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... con-
sciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on
consciousness, the view arises: ‘The self and the cosmos are one and
the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal,
and imperishable.’

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or imper- 2.1
manent?”

“Impermanent, sir.” 2.3

271. This is eternalism.

- 2.4 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 2.5 “Suffering, sir.”
- 2.6 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable?’”
- 2.8 “No, sir.”
- 2.9 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 2.13 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 2.14 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 2.15 “Suffering, sir.”
- 2.16 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable?’”
- 2.18 “No, sir.”
- 2.19 “Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.153

It Might Not Be Mine

Nocamesiyāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine’?”²⁷²
- 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 1.5 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I

272. This is annihilationism.

will not be, and it will not be mine.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine.’

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?” 1.12

“Impermanent, sir.” 1.14

“But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 1.15

“Suffering, sir.” 1.16

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine?’” 1.17

“No, sir.” 1.19

“Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?” 1.20

“Impermanent, sir.” 1.24

“But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 1.25

“Suffering, sir.” 1.26

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine?’” 1.27

“No, sir.” 1.29

“Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’” 1.30

SN 22.154

Wrong View

Micchāditṭhisutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does wrong view arise?” 1.2

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.3

- 1.4 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, wrong view arises. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, wrong view arises.
- 1.9 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 1.11 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 1.12 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would wrong view arise?”
- 1.14 “No, sir.”
- 1.15 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 1.19 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 1.20 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 1.21 “Suffering, sir.”
- 1.22 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would wrong view arise?”
- 1.23 “No, sir.”
- 1.24 “Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.155

Substantialist View

Sakkāyadiṭṭhisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does substantialist view arise?”
- 1.3 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 1.4 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, substantialist view arises. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, substantialist view arises.

- What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?" 1.9
- "Impermanent, sir." ... 1.11
- "But by not grasping what's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would substantialist view arise?" 1.12
- "No, sir." 1.14
- "Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?" 1.15
- "Impermanent, sir." ... 1.19
- "But by not grasping what's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would substantialist view arise?" 1.20
- "No, sir." 1.22
- "Seeing this ... They understand: '... there is nothing further for this place.'" 1.23

SN 22.156

Theory of Self

Attānudiṭṭhisutta

- At Sāvattḥi. 1.1
- "Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does theory of self arise?"²⁷³ 1.2
- "Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ..." 1.3
- "When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, theory of self arises. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, theory of self arises. 1.4
- What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?" 1.9
- "Impermanent, sir." ... 1.11

273. "Theory of self" (*attānudiṭṭhi*) is not a defined technical term. *Anudiṭṭhi* is used for developed "theories" (eg. DN 1 throughout), and this holds true for "theory of self" (DN 15:24.12), especially the Upaniṣadic view (Snp 5.16:4.3).

- 1.12 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would theory of self arise?”
- 1.14 “No, sir.”
- 1.15 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 1.19 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 1.20 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would theory of self arise?”
- 1.22 “No, sir.”
- 1.23 “Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.157

Insistence

Abhinivesasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥi.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, do fetters, insistence, and shackles arise?”
- 1.3 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 1.4 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, fetters, insistence, and shackles arise. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, fetters, insistence, and shackles arise.
- 1.9 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 1.11 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 1.12 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would fetters, insistence, and shackles arise?”
- 1.14 “No, sir.” ...
- 1.15 “Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 22.158

Insistence (2nd)

Dutiyaabhinivesasutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, do fetters, insistence, shackles, and attachments arise?” 1.2

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”

1.3

“When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, fetters, insistence, shackles, and attachments arise. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, fetters, insistence, shackles, and attachments arise. 1.4

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?” 1.9

“Impermanent, sir.” ...

1.11

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would fetters, insistence, shackles, and attachments arise?” 1.12

“No, sir.”

1.14

“Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’” 1.15

SN 22.159

With Ānanda

Ānandasutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

Then Venerable Ānanda went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him: 1.2

“Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I’ve heard it, I’ll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute.” 1.3

- 2.1 “What do you think, Ānanda? Is form permanent or impermanent?”²⁷⁴
- 2.3 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 2.4 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 2.5 “Suffering, sir.”
- 2.6 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 2.8 “No, sir.”
- 2.9 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 2.13 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 2.14 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 2.15 “Suffering, sir.”
- 2.16 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 2.18 “No, sir.” ...
- 2.19 “Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

The Linked Discourses on the aggregates are complete.

274. In giving this teaching, the Buddha is, of course, not teaching Ānanda anything new. Rather, he is indicating the manner of meditation he recommends Ānanda focus on in his retreat.

LINKED DISCOURSES WITH RĀDHA

First Chapter About Māra

SN 23.1

About Māra

Mārasutta

1.1 At Sāvattṥi.

1.2 Then Venerable Rādhā went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:²⁷⁵

2.1 “Sir, they speak of this thing called ‘Māra.’²⁷⁶ How is Māra defined?”

2.3 “When there is form, Rādhā, there would be Māra, or the murderer, or the murdered.²⁷⁷ So you should see form as Māra, the murderer, the murdered, the diseased, the boil, the dart, the gloom, the gloominess. Those who see it like this see rightly. When there is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, there may be Māra, or the murderer, or the murdered. So you should see consciousness as Māra, the murderer, the murdered, the diseased, the boil, the dart, the gloom, the gloominess. Those who see it like this see rightly.”

3.1 “But sir, what’s the purpose of seeing rightly?”

275. Rādhā was introduced in SN 22.71:1.2.

276. For Māra’s mythic history, see SN 4.1:2.1. Early Buddhist texts present Māra as both a deity of ill intent, and as a metaphor for the death, desire, and entrapment in the world of transmigration. This discourse highlights the literal meaning of his name: Death.

277. Here we could translate Māra as “murder”.

“Disillusionment is the purpose of seeing rightly.”	3.2
“But what’s the purpose of disillusionment?”	3.3
“Dispassion is the purpose of disillusionment.”	3.4
“But what’s the purpose of dispassion?”	3.5
“Freedom is the purpose of dispassion.”	3.6
“But what’s the purpose of freedom?”	3.7
“Extinguishment is the purpose of freedom.”	3.8
“But sir, what is the purpose of extinguishment?”	3.9
“Your question goes too far, Rādhā. You weren’t able to grasp the limit of questioning. ²⁷⁸ For extinguishment is the objective, destination, and culmination of the spiritual life.” ²⁷⁹	3.10

SN 23.2

Sentient Beings

Sattasutta

At Sāvattthī.	1.1
Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:	1.2
“Sir, they speak of this thing called a ‘sentient being’. How is a sentient being defined?”	1.3
“Rādhā, when you cling, strongly cling, to desire, greed, relishing, and craving for form, then a being is spoken of. ²⁸⁰ When you cling, strongly cling, to desire, greed, relishing, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, then a being is spoken of.	1.5

278. Also at MN 44:29.14 and SN 48.42:4.8. | At Chāndogya Upaniṣad 1.8.5 the inquirer is warned not to overstep the goal of heaven.

279. *Ogādhā* (see *gādhā* at SN 22.56:4.2) is the “firm footing”, reaching which is the “objective” of fording a river (Ud 6.5:24.4). It inhabits the same metaphorical sphere as the “far shore” (*pāra*) which one safely reaches (MN 34:9.2), and about which the final chapter of the Sutta Nipāta was sung (Snp 5.18:1.4), or the “solid ground” on which the brahmin stands (SN 35.228:2.10). The “far shore”, meanwhile, may also be the *parāyana* or “destination”.

280. Here the Buddha puns on *satta* from *sajjati* (“to cling”) with *satta* from *√as* (“to be”). To be is to cling.

- 2.1 Suppose some boys or girls were playing with sandcastles. As long as they're not rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for those sandcastles, they cling to them, dally with them, treasure them, and treat them as their own.²⁸¹ But when they are rid of greed, desire, fondness, thirst, passion, and craving for those sandcastles, they scatter, smash, and destroy them with their hands and feet, making them unplayable.
- 2.4 In the same way, you should scatter, smash, and destroy form, making it unplayable. And you should practice for the ending of craving. You should scatter, smash, and destroy feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness, making it unplayable. And you should practice for the ending of craving. For the ending of craving is extinguishment."

SN 23.3

The Leash to Existence

Bhavanettisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 "Sir, they speak of this thing called 'the cessation of the leash to existence.'²⁸² What is the leash to existence? And what is the cessation of the leash to existence?"
- 1.5 "Rādhā, any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for form; and any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying

281. The rare verb *keḷāyanti* ("dally") is from $\sqrt{kīl}$ ("play").

282. The *bhavanetti* is "that which leads to continued existence". Early Sanskrit *netrī* always retains the expected grammatical sense, a noun from the root "to lead", i.e. a "leader" (Rig Veda 1.113.4, 4.56.2, 5.50.2, 7.76.6, 7.77.2). Compare the English concept of the psychopomp or ferryman who leads you to the afterlife. Here, the commentary explains, "It is a name for craving. For by it beings are bound in their heart and lead on to life after life, like an ox tethered by the throat." This suggests the sense of "lead" as in "leash".

tendencies—this is called the leash to existence. Their cessation is the cessation of the leash to existence.

Any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness; and any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies—this is called the leash to existence. Their cessation is the cessation of the leash to existence.” 1.8

SN 23.4

Should Be Completely Understood

Pariññeyyasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

Venerable Rādhā went up to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to him:²⁸³ 1.2

“Rādhā, I will teach you the things that should be completely understood, complete understanding, and the individual who has completely understood. Listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.” 2.1

“Yes, sir,” Rādhā replied. The Buddha said this: 2.3

“And what things should be completely understood? Form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. These are called the things that should be completely understood. 2.5

And what is complete understanding? The ending of greed, hate, and delusion. This is called complete understanding. 2.8

And what is the individual who has completely understood? It should be said: a perfected one, the venerable of such name and such clan. This is called the individual who has completely understood.” 2.11

283. The next seven discourses are the same as SN 22.106–12, but addressed to Rādhā.

SN 23.5

Ascetics and Brahmins

Samañasutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.

1.2 When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him:

1.3 “Rādhā, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.

1.6 There are ascetics and brahmins who don’t truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape. I don’t deem them as true ascetics and brahmins. Those venerables don’t realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and don’t live having realized it with their own insight in this very life.

1.8 There are ascetics and brahmins who do truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ gratification, drawback, and escape. I deem them as true ascetics and brahmins. Those venerables realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and live having realized it with their own insight.”

SN 23.6

Ascetics and Brahmins (2nd)

Dutiyasamañasutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.

1.2 When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him:

1.3 “Rādhā, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness.

1.6 There are ascetics and brahmins who don’t truly understand these five grasping aggregates’ origin, disappearance, gratification, draw-

back, and escape ... Those venerables don't realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin ...

There are ascetics and brahmins who do truly understand ... 1.7
Those venerables realize the goal of life as an ascetic or brahmin, and live having realized it with their own insight."

SN 23.7

A Stream-Enterer

Sotāpannasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him: 1.2

"Rādhā, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. When a noble disciple truly understands these five grasping aggregates' origin, disappearance, gratification, drawback, and escape, they're called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening." 1.3

SN 23.8

A Perfected One

Arahantasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him: 1.2

"Rādhā, there are these five grasping aggregates. What five? The grasping aggregates of form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. A mendicant comes to be freed by not grasping after truly understanding these five grasping aggregates' origin, disappearance, 1.3

gratification, drawback, and escape. Such a mendicant is called a perfected one, with defilements ended, who has completed the spiritual journey, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, achieved their heart's goal, utterly ended the fetter of continued existence, and is rightly freed through enlightenment.”

SN 23.9

Desire and Greed

Chandarāgasutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.

1.2 When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him:

1.3 “Rādhā, you should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for form. Thus that form will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.

1.5 You should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness. Thus that consciousness will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.”

SN 23.10

Desire and Greed (2nd)

Dutiyachandarāgasutta

1.1 At Sāvattthī.

1.2 When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him:

1.3 “Rādhā, you should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for form; and any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies. Thus that form will be given up, cut off

at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.

You should give up any desire, greed, relishing, and craving for feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness; and any attraction, grasping, mental fixation, insistence, and underlying tendencies. Thus that consciousness will be given up, cut off at the root, made like a palm stump, obliterated, and unable to arise in the future.” 1.5

Second Chapter About Māra

SN 23.11

About Māra

Mārasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādha said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, they speak of ‘Māra.’ How is Māra defined?”
- 1.5 “Rādha, form is Māra, feeling is Māra, perception is Māra, choices are Māra, consciousness is Māra.
- 1.6 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed.
- 1.8 They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.12

Subject to Māra

Māradhammasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādha said to the Buddha:

- “Sir, they speak of ‘Māra nature.’²⁸⁴ What is of Māra nature?” 1.3
 “Rādhā, form is of Māra nature. Feeling, perception, choices, and 1.5
 consciousness are of Māra nature.
 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for 1.6
 this place.’”

SN 23.13

Impermanence

Aniccasutta

- At Sāvathī. 1.1
 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha: 1.2
 “Sir, they speak of ‘impermanence.’ What has impermanent na- 1.3
 ture?”
 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are 1.5
 impermanent.
 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for 1.6
 this place.’”

SN 23.14

Liable to Impermanence

Aniccadhammasutta

- At Sāvathī. 1.1
 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha: 1.2
 “Sir, they speak of having ‘impermanent nature.’ What is of imper- 1.3
 manent nature?”
 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are 1.5
 of impermanent nature.

284. “Māra nature” is *māradhamma*, glossed by the commentary as “liable to die” (*marañadhamma*). In this Saṃyutta, the suffix *-dhamma*, which normally creates an adjective of the sense “liable to”, is construed as a noun.

- 1.6 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.15

Suffering

Dukkhasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:
1.3 “Sir, they speak of ‘suffering’. What is suffering?”
1.5 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are suffering.
1.6 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.16

Liable to Suffering

Dukkhadhammasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:
1.3 “Sir, they speak of having ‘suffering nature’. What is of a nature to suffer?”
1.5 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are of a nature to suffer.
1.6 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.17

Not-Self

Anattasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, they speak of ‘not-self’. What is not-self?” 1.3
- “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are 1.5
not-self.
- Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for 1.6
this place.’”

SN 23.18

Naturally Not-Self

Anattadhammasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, they speak of having ‘not-self nature’. What has a nature of 1.3
not-self?”
- “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness 1.5
have a nature of not-self.
- Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for 1.6
this place.’”

SN 23.19

Liable to End

Khayadhammasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, they speak of a ‘liability to end’. What has a liability to end?” 1.3

- 1.5 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness have a liability to end.
1.6 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.20

Liable to Fall

Vayadhammasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:
1.3 “Sir, they speak of a ‘liability to fall’. What has a liability to fall?”
1.5 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness have a liability to fall.
1.6 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.21

Liable to Originate

Samudayadhammasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:
1.3 “Sir, they speak of a ‘liability to originate’. What has a liability to originate?”
1.5 “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness have a liability to originate.
1.6 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 23.22

Liab!e to Cease

Nirodhadhammasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, they speak of a ‘liability to cease’. What has a liability to 1.3
cease?”
- “Rādhā, form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness 1.5
have a liability to cease.
- Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for 1.6
this place.’”

The Chapter on Aspiration

SN 23.23–33

Eleven Discourses on Māra, Etc.

Mārādisuttaekādasaka

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I’ve heard it, I’ll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute.”
- 2.1 “Rādhā, you should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is Māra. And what is Māra? Form is Māra. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it.
- 2.4 Feeling ...
- 2.5 Perception ...
- 2.6 Choices ...
- 2.7 Consciousness is Māra. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is Māra.”
- 1.1 “You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is of Māra nature ...”
- 1.1 “... impermanent ...”
- 1.1 “... of impermanent nature ...”
- 1.1 “... suffering ...”
- 1.1 “... of suffering nature ...”
- 1.1 “... not-self ...”

“... of not-self nature ...”	1.1
“... of a nature to end ...”	1.1
“... of a nature to fall ...”	1.1
“... of a nature to originate ...”	1.1

SN 23.34

Liable to Cease

Nirodhadhammasutta

At Sāvattthī.	1.1
Venerable Rādhā said to the Buddha:	1.2
“Sir, may the Buddha please teach me Dhamma in brief. When I’ve heard it, I’ll live alone, withdrawn, diligent, keen, and resolute.”	1.3
“Rādhā, you should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is of a nature to cease. And what is of a nature to cease? Form is of a nature to cease. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it.	2.1
Feeling ...	2.4
Perception ...	2.5
Choices ...	2.6
Consciousness is of a nature to cease. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is of a nature to cease.”	2.7

The Chapter on Sitting Close

SN 23.35–45

Eleven Discourses on Māra, Etc.

Mārādisuttaekādasaka

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him:
- 1.3 “Rādhā, you should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is Māra. And what is Māra? Form is Māra. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it. ...
- 1.6 Consciousness is Māra. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is Māra.”
- 1.1 “You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is subject to Māra ...”
- 1.1 “... impermanent ...”
- 1.1 “... liable to impermanence ...”
- 1.1 “... suffering ...”
- 1.1 “... liable to suffering ...”
- 1.1 “... not-self ...”
- 1.1 “... liable to not-self ...”
- 1.1 “... liable to end ...”
- 1.1 “... liable to fall ...”
- 1.1 “... liable to originate ...”

SN 23.46

LIABLE to Cease

Nirodhadhammasutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

When Venerable Rādhā was seated to one side, the Buddha said to him:

1.2

“Rādhā, you should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is liable to cease. And what is liable to cease? Form is liable to cease. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it.

1.3

Feeling ...

1.6

Perception ...

1.7

Choices ...

1.8

Consciousness is liable to cease. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for it. You should give up any desire, any greed, any desire and greed for whatever is liable to cease.”

1.9

The Linked Discourses with Rādhā are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON VIEWS

The Chapter on Stream-Entry

SN 24.1

Winds

Vātasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove. 1.1
The Buddha said this:

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and 1.3
insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers
don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars
neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar’?”²⁸⁵

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. He is our guide and our 2.1
refuge. Sir, may the Buddha himself please clarify the meaning of
this. The mendicants will listen and remember it.”

285. This doctrine of the illusory nature of change is found in Pali only in this chapter, and I have not been able to trace it elsewhere. We might call it the *niccavāda*, the “doctrine of permanence”. Nonetheless, the expression “standing firm like a pillar” is associated with eternalism generally (DN 1:1.33.11), and here links up with the seven uncreated substances (SN 24.8:1.3, MN 76:16.2, DN 2:26.2). This is attributed to Pakudha Kaccāyana, who is associated with the Ājivakas. Probably this is an expression of the Ājivaka belief that reality is fixed and change an illusion (Basham, *History and Doctrines of the Ājivikas*, p. 236).

- 2.2 “Well then, mendicants, listen and apply your mind well, I will speak.”
- 2.3 “Yes, sir,” they replied. The Buddha said this:
- 3.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’
- 3.8 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.10 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 3.11 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 3.12 “Suffering, sir.”
- 3.13 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar’?”
- 3.15 “No, sir.”
- 4.1 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”²⁸⁶
- 4.5 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 4.6 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 4.7 “Suffering, sir.”
- 4.8 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar’?”

286. In the “six grounds for views” at MN 22:16.6, consciousness is absent, replaced by the “epistemic heptad” (see below). As a ground for views, “consciousness” means especially the states of expanded consciousness realized in deep meditation.

- “No, sir.” 4.10
- “That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?”²⁸⁷ 4.11
- “Impermanent, sir.” 4.12
- “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 4.13
- “Suffering, sir.” 4.14
- “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar’?” 4.15
- “No, sir.” 4.17
- “When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation,²⁸⁸ they’re called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.” 5.1

287. This set of seven appears at first glance to be somewhat arbitrary, as it combines four of the senses with meditation attainments. But it is not a description of sense experience. Rather, it describes how religious or spiritual beliefs come about, which is why smell, taste, and touch are omitted, and why it is introduced in this chapter. The truth, or what is believed to be the truth, is formulated from something “seen” (as a vision, or the sight of a pure being), “heard” (as teaching or scripture), “thought” (as philosophical reasoning), “known” (through understanding or meditation), or “attained, sought, and explored by the mind”, which specifically refer to meditative realization. Thus I propose referring to this set as the “epistemic heptad”. This is an extension of the more common epistemic tetrad, where meditative states are included under the “known” (MN 1:19.1).

288. Six “grounds for views” are taught at MN 22:15.1: the first four aggregates taken as self, plus the epistemic heptad taken as self, plus the eternalist view. By analogy, the “six” here would be the first four aggregates, the epistemic heptad, and the specific view which varies per discourse. This, however, results in seven. We can resolve this by assuming that the Majjhima version is correct. “Consciousness” in this context should be replaced by the epistemic heptad, and only four aggregates are mentioned as such. Presumably the Samyutta redactors normalized the aggregates to the standard five.

SN 24.2

This is Mine

Etāmmamasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.²⁸⁹
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”²⁹⁰
- 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 1.5 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’. When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’.
- 2.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 2.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 2.4 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 2.8 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 2.12 “That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?”
- 2.13 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 2.14 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 2.15 “Suffering, sir.”
- 2.16 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 2.18 “No, sir.”
- 3.1 “When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation,

289. Most of the views mentioned in this Saṃyutta are discussed elsewhere, so I will give references for the relevant notes.

290. This is the basic expression of the self doctrine (*attavāda*) as at SN 22.8:1.5.

and the practice that leads to its cessation, they're called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening."

SN 24.3

This is My Self

Soattāsutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

"Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: 'The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable'?"²⁹¹

1.2

"Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ..."

1.4

"When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: 'The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable.' When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: 'The self and the cosmos are one and the same. After death I will be that, permanent, everlasting, eternal, and imperishable.'"

2.1

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?"

3.1

"Impermanent, sir." ...

3.3

"Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?"

3.8

"Impermanent, sir." ...

3.12

"That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?"

3.17

"Impermanent, sir." ...

3.18

291. This is eternalism (*śassatavāda*), see SN 22.81:10.7, SN 12.17:5.1.

- 3.19 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?”
- 3.21 “No, sir.”
- 4.1 “When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.4

It Might Not Be Mine

Nocamesiyāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine’?”²⁹²
- 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 2.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘I might not be, and it might not be mine. I will not be, and it will not be mine.’
- 3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.7 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.11 “Impermanent, sir.” ...

292. This is a saying of the annihilationists (*ucchedavāda*) at SN 22.55:1.3.

“That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?” 3.15

“Impermanent, sir.” ... 3.16

“But by not grasping what's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?” 3.17

“No, sir.” 3.19

“When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation, they're called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.” 4.1

SN 24.5

There's No Meaning in Giving

Natthidinnasutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘There's no meaning in giving, sacrifice, or offerings. There's no fruit or result of good and bad deeds. There's no afterlife. There's no such thing as mother and father, or beings that are reborn spontaneously. And there's no ascetic or brahmin who is rightly comported and rightly practiced, and who describes the afterlife after realizing it with their own insight.’²⁹³ This person is made up of the four principal states. When they die, the 1.2

293. This nihilist doctrine (*natthikavāda*) is attributed to Ajita of the Hair Blanket at DN 2:23.2. | The denial of “mother and father” is usually interpreted as the denial of moral duty toward one's parents. However, I think it is a doctrine of conception which denies that a child is created by the mother and father. Rather, the child is produced by the four elements, with parents as mere instigators and incubators. | Compare Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 4.3.23 on the liberated Self, “A father is not a father, a mother is not a mother, worlds are not worlds, gods are not gods, and Vedas are not Vedas. Here a thief is not a thief, an abortionist is not an abortionist, an outcaste is not an outcaste, a pariah is not a pariah, a

earth in their body progresses and proceeds to the substance of earth. The water in their body progresses and proceeds to the substance of water. The fire in their body progresses and proceeds to the substance of fire. The air in their body progresses and proceeds to the substance of air. The faculties are transferred to space. Four men with a bier carry away the corpse. Their footprints show the way to the cremation ground. The bones become bleached. Offerings dedicated to the gods end in ashes. Giving is a doctrine of morons.²⁹⁴ When anyone affirms a positive teaching it's just baseless, false nonsense. Both the foolish and the astute are annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and don't exist after death'?"

1.13 "Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ..."

2.1 "When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: 'There's no meaning in giving, sacrifice, or offerings. ... Both the foolish and the astute are annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and don't exist after death.' When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: 'There's no meaning in giving, sacrifice, or offerings. ... Both the foolish and the astute are annihilated and destroyed when their body breaks up, and don't exist after death.'"

3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?"

3.3 "Impermanent, sir." ...

3.8 "Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?"

3.12 "Impermanent, sir." ...

3.17 "That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?"

3.18 "Impermanent, sir." ...

recluse is not a recluse, and an ascetic is not an ascetic. Neither the good nor the bad follows him, for he has now passed beyond all sorrows of the heart."

294. *Dattu* is a rare term for "idiot" or "moron", only spoken by sectarian teachers, so should probably be distinguished from the Buddhist "fool".

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perish- 3.19
able, would such a view arise?”

“No, sir.” 3.23

“When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six 4.1
grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation,
and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disci-
ple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld,
assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.6

Acting

Karotosutta

At Sāvattḥi. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and 1.2
insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The one who acts does noth-
ing wrong when they punish, mutilate, torture, aggrieve, oppress,
intimidate, or when they encourage others to do the same. Nothing
bad is done when they kill, steal, break into houses, plunder wealth,
steal from isolated buildings, commit highway robbery, commit adul-
tery, and lie.’²⁹⁵ If you were to reduce all the living creatures of this
earth to one heap and mass of flesh with a razor-edged chakram, no
evil comes of that, and no outcome of evil. If you were to go along
the south bank of the Ganges killing, mutilating, and torturing, and
encouraging others to do the same, no evil comes of that, and no
outcome of evil. If you were to go along the north bank of the Ganges
giving and sacrificing and encouraging others to do the same, no
merit comes of that, and no outcome of merit. In giving, self-control,
restraint, and truthfulness there is no merit or outcome of merit’?”

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.8

295. The doctrine of inefficacy of action (*akiriyaavāda*), which is attributed to
Pūraṇa Kassapa at DN 2:17.2.

- 2.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘The one who acts does nothing wrong ... there is no merit or outcome of merit.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘The one who acts does nothing wrong ... there is no merit or outcome of merit.’
- 3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.8 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.12 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.17 “That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.18 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.19 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?”
- 3.22 “No, sir.”
- 4.1 “When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.7

Cause

Hetusutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘There is no cause or reason

for the corruption of sentient beings.²⁹⁶ Sentient beings are corrupted without cause or reason. There's no cause or reason for the purification of sentient beings. Sentient beings are purified without cause or reason. There is no power, no energy, no human strength or vigor. All sentient beings, all living creatures, all beings, all souls lack control, power, and energy. Molded by destiny, circumstance, and nature, they experience pleasure and pain in the six classes of rebirth'?"

"Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ..."

"When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: 'There is no cause or reason ... they experience pleasure and pain in the six classes of rebirth.' When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: 'There is no cause or reason ... they experience pleasure and pain in the six classes of rebirth.'

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, sir." ...

"Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, sir." ...

"That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?"

"Impermanent, sir." ...

"But by not grasping what's impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?"

"No, sir."

"When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation, they're called a noble disci-

296. Makkhali Gosāla's doctrine of no-cause (*ahetukavāda*), see SN 22.60:2,2, DN 2:20.2.

ple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.8

The Extensive View

Mahādiṭṭhisutta

1.1 At Sāvattṭhī.²⁹⁷

1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘There are these seven substances that are not made, not derived, not created, without a creator, barren, steady as a mountain peak, standing firm like a pillar.’²⁹⁸ They don’t move or deteriorate or obstruct each other. They’re unable to cause pleasure, pain, or both pleasure and pain to each other. What seven? The substances of earth, water, fire, air; pleasure, pain, and the soul is the seventh. These seven substances are not made, not derived, not created, without a creator, barren, steady as a mountain peak, standing firm like a pillar. They don’t move or deteriorate or obstruct each other. They’re unable to cause pleasure, pain, or both pleasure and pain to each other.’²⁹⁹ If you chop off someone’s head with a sharp sword, you don’t take anyone’s life. The sword simply passes through the gap between the seven substances. There are 1.4 million main wombs, and 6,000, and 600; 500 deeds, and five, and three; deeds and half-deeds; 62 paths of practice, 62 subeons, six classes of rebirth, and eight stages in a person’s life; 4,900 Ājīvaka ascetics, 4,900 wanderers, and 4,900 dragon abodes; 2,000 lordships, 3,000 hells, and 36 realms of dusky sky; seven percipient

297. *Mahā* in the title refers to the length of the view, not to its quality.

298. The doctrine of the seven substances (*sattakāyavāda*) is attributed to Pakudha Kaccāyana at DN 2:26.2; also at MN 76:16.2. It has clear similarities to the *niccavāda* of SN 24.1.

299. Here the versions at DN 2:26.8 and MN 76:16.8 insert another sentence, saying that there is no one who kills or is killed, etc.

embryos, seven non-percipient embryos, seven knotless embryos, seven gods, seven mental heavens, seven goblins, seven streams, seven castoff incarnations and 700 castoff incarnations, seven downfalls and 700 downfalls, seven dreams and 700 dreams, and 8.4 million great eons—through all of which the foolish and the astute transmigrate before making an end of suffering.³⁰⁰ And here there is no such thing as this: “By this precept or observance or fervent austerity or spiritual practice I shall force unripened deeds to bear their fruit, or eliminate old deeds by experiencing their results little by little”—for that cannot be. Pleasure and pain are allotted. Transmigration lasts only for a limited period, so there’s no increase or decrease, no getting better or worse. It’s like how, when you toss a ball of string, it rolls away unraveling. In the same way, after transmigrating the foolish and the astute roll away unraveling as far as pleasure and pain extend’?”³⁰¹

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. . .” 1.16

“When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘There are these seven substances that are not made . . . the foolish and the astute will make an end of suffering.’ When feeling . . . perception . . . choices . . . consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘There are these seven substances that are not made . . . the foolish and the astute will make an end of suffering.’” 2.1

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?” 3.1

“Impermanent, sir.” . . . 3.3

300. At DN 2:20.7 this “doctrine of purification through transmigration” (*sam-sārasuddhivāda*) is taught by Makkhali Gosāla, but at MN 76:16.11 it is attached to the seven substances view, as here. It seems that Pakudha and Makkhali were fellow-travellers for a time, and it is likely that they shared many overlaps, and the schools may even have merged.

301. The reading here (*nibbeṭṭhiyamānā sukhadukkhāṃ palenti*) differs from DN 2:20.11 and MN 76:16.15. *Sukhadukkhāṃ* is the so-called “accusative of extension”, denoting the range to which the verb applies (Wijesekera, *Syntax of the Cases*, §44).

- 3.8 “That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.9 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.10 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?”
- 3.13 “No, sir.”
- 4.1 “When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.9

The Cosmos is Eternal

Sassatadiṭṭhisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvathī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The cosmos is eternal?’³⁰²
- 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 2.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘The cosmos is eternal.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘The cosmos is eternal.’
- 3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.19 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?”
- 3.21 “No, sir.”

302. Thus begins a series on the ten undeclared points (MN 25:10.21). This and the following views are “cosmology” (*lokāyata*), for which see SN 12.48.

“When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six 4.1
grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation,
and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disci-
ple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld,
assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.10

The Cosmos is Not Eternal

Asassatadiṭṭhisutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and 1.2
insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The cosmos is not eternal’?”

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.4

“When form exists ...” ... 2.1

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perish- 2.9
able, would such a view arise?”

“No, sir.” 2.11

“When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six 3.1
grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation,
and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disci-
ple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld,
assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 24.11

The Cosmos is Finite

Antavāsutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and 1.2
insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The cosmos is finite’?” ...

SN 24.12

The Cosmos is Infinite

Anantavāsutta

1.1 At Sāvathī.

1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The cosmos is infinite?’ ...

SN 24.13

The Soul and the Body are One and the Same

Tamjīvaṃtaṃsarīraṃsutta

1.1 At Sāvathī.

1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The soul and the body are one and the same?’ ...

SN 24.14

The Soul is One Thing, the Body Another

Aññāṃjīvaṃhaññāṃsarīraṃsutta

1.1 At Sāvathī.

1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The soul is one thing, the body another?’ ...³⁰³

303. This is a basic view of the Jains.

SN 24.15

A Realized One Still Exists

Hotitathāgatosutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘A realized one still exists after death?’” ...³⁰⁴

SN 24.16

A Realized One No Longer Exists

Nahotitathāgatosutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘A realized one no longer exists after death?’” ...

SN 24.17

A Realized One Both Still Exists and No Longer Exists

Hoticanacahotitathāgatosutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘A realized one both still exists and no longer exists after death?’” ...

304. SN 16.12:1.4.

SN 24.18

A Realized One Neither Still Exists Nor No Longer Exists

Nevahotinananahotitathāgatosutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death?’”
- 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. . . .”
- 2.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death’ . . .
- 3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.3 “Impermanent, sir.” . . . “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death?’”
- 3.6 “No, sir.”
- 3.7 “That which is seen, heard, thought, known, attained, sought, and explored by the mind: is that permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.8 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 3.9 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 3.10 “Suffering, sir.”
- 3.11 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death?’”
- 3.13 “No, sir.”
- 4.1 “When a noble disciple has given up doubt regarding these six grounds, and has given up doubt in suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation, they’re called a noble disciple who is a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

The Chapter on the Second Round

SN 24.19

Winds

Vātasutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar?’”

1.2

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”

1.4

“When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’”

2.1

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”

3.1

“Impermanent, sir.” ...

3.3

- 3.4 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar’?”
- 3.6 “No, sir.”
- 3.7 “And so, when suffering exists, because of grasping suffering and insisting on suffering, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.13 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.14 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?”
- 3.16 “No, sir.”
- 3.17 “And so, when suffering exists, because of grasping suffering and insisting on suffering, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’”

SN 24.20–35

This is Mine, Etc.

Etaṁmamādisutta

(Tell these in full as in discourses 2 through 17 of the previous chapter.)

SN 24.36

Neither Still Exists Nor No Longer Exists

Nevahotinanahotisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death?’” 1.2

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.4

“When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’” 2.1

What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?” 3.1

“Impermanent, sir.” ... 3.3

“And so, when suffering exists, because of grasping suffering and insisting on suffering, the view arises: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’” ... 3.7

“Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?” 3.9

“Impermanent, sir.” ... 3.13

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?” 3.14

“No, sir.” 3.16

“And so, when suffering exists, because of grasping suffering and insisting on suffering, the view arises: ‘A realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists after death.’” 3.17

SN 24.37

The Self is Formed

Rūpīattāsutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The self is formed and is healthy after death?’” ...³⁰⁵

SN 24.38

The Self is Formless

Arūpiattāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.

- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The self is formless and healthy after death?’” ...

SN 24.39

The Self is Formed and Formless

Rūpīcaarūpīcaattāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.

- 1.2 “‘The self is formed and formless, and is healthy after death?’” ...

SN 24.40

The Self is Neither Formed Nor Formless

Nevarūpīnārūpiattāsutta

- 1.1 “‘The self is neither formed nor formless, and is healthy after death?’”
...

305. DN 1:2.38.3

SN 24.41

The Self Is Absolutely Happy

Ekantasukkhīsutta

“The self is absolutely happy, and is free of disease after death’?” ... 1.1

SN 24.42

Absolutely Suffering

Ekantadukkhīsutta

“The self is absolutely suffering, and is free of disease after death’?” 1.1

...

SN 24.43

The Self is Happy and Suffering

Sukhadukkhīsutta

“The self is happy and suffering, and is healthy after death’?” ... 1.1

SN 24.44

The Self is Neither Happy Nor Suffering

Adukkhamasukkhīsutta

“The self is neither happy nor suffering, and is healthy after death’?” 1.1

...

The Chapter on the Third Round

SN 24.45

Winds

Navātasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar?’”
- 1.4 “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”
- 2.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’”
- 3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...

“But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perish- 3.4
able, would the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow;
pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise
nor set, but stand firm like a pillar?’”

“No, sir.” 3.6

“And so, what’s impermanent is suffering. When this exists, grasp- 3.7
ing at this, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow;
pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise
nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ Is feeling ... perception ... choices
... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”

“Impermanent, sir.” ... 3.14

“And so, what’s impermanent is suffering. When this exists, grasp- 3.18
ing at this, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow;
pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise
nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’”

SN 24.46–69

This is Mine, etc.

Etamamamādisutta

(Tell in full as in discourses 20 through 43 of the second chapter.)

SN 24.70

The Self is Neither Happy Nor Suffering

Adukkhamasukhīsutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and 1.2
insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The self is neither happy nor
suffering, and healthy after death?’”

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...” 1.4

- 2.1 “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and is healthy after death.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and healthy after death.’
- 3.1 What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.3 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.7 “And so, what’s impermanent is suffering. When this exists, grasping at this, the view arises: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and is healthy after death.’ Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 3.14 “Impermanent, sir.” ...
- 3.15 “But by not grasping what’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, would such a view arise?”
- 3.17 “No, sir.”
- 3.18 “And so, what’s impermanent is suffering. When this exists, grasping at this, the view arises: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and healthy after death.’”

The Chapter on the Fourth Round

SN 24.71

Winds

Navātasutta

At Sāvattḥī.

1.1

“Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar?’”

1.2

“Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. ...”

1.4

“When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ When feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘Winds don’t blow; rivers don’t flow; pregnant women don’t give birth; the moon and stars neither rise nor set, but stand firm like a pillar.’ What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?”

2.1

“Impermanent, sir.”

2.10

“But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”

2.11

“Suffering, sir.”

2.12

- 2.13 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 2.15 “No, sir.”
- 2.16 “Is feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness permanent or impermanent?”
- 2.20 “Impermanent, sir.”
- 2.21 “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?”
- 2.22 “Suffering, sir.”
- 2.23 “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self’?”
- 2.25 “No, sir.”
- 3.1 “So you should truly see any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ You should truly see any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’
- 4.1 Seeing this ... They understand: ‘... there is nothing further for this place.’”

SN 24.72–95

This is Mine, Etc.

Etaṁmamādisutta

(Tell in full as in the 24 discourses of the second chapter.)

SN 24.96

The Self is Neither Happy Nor Suffering

Adukkhamasukhīsutta

- At Sāvathī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, when what exists, because of grasping what and insisting on what, does the view arise: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and is healthy after death?’” 1.2
- “Our teachings are rooted in the Buddha. . . .” 1.4
- “When form exists, because of grasping form and insisting on form, the view arises: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and healthy after death.’ When feeling . . . perception . . . choices . . . consciousness exists, because of grasping consciousness and insisting on consciousness, the view arises: ‘The self is neither happy nor suffering, and is healthy after death.’” 2.1
- What do you think, mendicants? Is form permanent or impermanent?” 3.1
- “Impermanent, sir.” 3.3
- “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 3.4
- “Suffering, sir.” 3.5
- “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” 3.6
- “No, sir.” 3.8
- “Is feeling . . . perception . . . choices . . . consciousness permanent or impermanent?” 3.9
- “Impermanent, sir.” 3.13
- “But if it’s impermanent, is it suffering or happiness?” 3.14
- “Suffering, sir.” 3.15
- “But if it’s impermanent, suffering, and perishable, is it fit to be regarded thus: ‘This is mine, I am this, this is my self?’” 3.16
- “No, sir.” 3.18
- “So you should truly see any kind of form at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far

or near: *all* form—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’ You should truly see any kind of feeling ... perception ... choices ... consciousness at all—past, future, or present; internal or external; solid or subtle; inferior or superior; far or near: *all* consciousness—with right understanding: ‘This is not mine, I am not this, this is not my self.’

5.1 Seeing this, a learned noble disciple grows disillusioned with form, feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness. Being disillusioned, desire fades away. When desire fades away they’re freed. When they’re freed, they know they’re freed.

5.3 They understand: ‘Rebirth is ended, the spiritual journey has been completed, what had to be done has been done, there is nothing further for this place.’”

The Linked Discourses on views are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON STEPPING INTO

The Chapter on the Eye

SN 25.1

The Eye

Cakkhusutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.³⁰⁶

1.2 “Mendicants, the eye is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. The ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind are impermanent, decaying, and perishing.

1.8 Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. They’ve stepped into the sure path, they’ve stepped into the level of the true person, and they’ve passed beyond the level of the untrue person.³⁰⁷ They can’t do any deed which

306. This chapter is named after the technical term “stepping into” (*okkanti*). Literally, it is to “step down” or “trample”, or in the context of rebirth to descend or “be conceived” in the womb. For the sense here, compare Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 4.4.5.11: the sacrificer is led to a still pool in flowing water, into which he “descends” seeking release from Varuṇa’s snare. Here the commentary glosses *paviṭṭha* (“entered”), which is supported by *praveśa* at Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 4.4.5.11. I use “step into” to disambiguate from “stream-entry” which is a different word (*āpatti*), even though the sense is similar.

307. This chapter offers some of the clearest details on the “follower by faith” (*saddhānusāri*) and “follower of teachings” (*dhammānusāri*), both of whom are “practicing to realize the fruit of stream-entry”. Elsewhere, they are distinguished by the degree of faculties (SN 48.12:1.5). See too MN 22:46.2 and MN 34:10.2; also SN 55.24 and SN 55.25. | *Sammatta* (literally “rightness” or the “right way”) is defined as the noble eightfold path at SN 45.21:1.7. It is frequently

would make them be reborn in hell, the animal realm, or the ghost realm. They can't die without realizing the fruit of stream-entry.³⁰⁸

Someone who accepts these teachings after deliberating them 2.1
with a degree of wisdom is called a follower of teachings. They've stepped into the sure path, they've stepped into the level of the true person, and they've passed beyond the level of the untrue person. They can't do any deed which would make them be reborn in hell, the animal realm, or the ghost realm. They can't die without realizing the fruit of stream-entry.³⁰⁹

Someone who understands and sees these principles is called a 2.4
stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening."³¹⁰

SN 25.2

Sights

Rūpasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

used with *niyāma* ("fixedness, inevitability, surety") to mean "the fixedness of the right way", which I render more idiomatically as "sure path".

308. When the faith-follower realizes stream-entry, they are called "freed by faith" (*saddhāvimutta*, MN 70:19.1).

309. When they realize stream-entry, they are called "attained to view" (*ditṭhi-ppatta*, MN 70:18.1).

310. This makes explicit a distinction that is consistently upheld throughout the Suttas. To "know and see" or to "truly understand" is, in this context, a distinct apperception of the four noble truths with intuitive wisdom that severs certain fetters forever. Those on the path to stream entry have not yet had such a realization, hence they must follow by faith, or by reflecting on the teachings. Though the conditions for realization are present, since they possess the five faculties and are on the path, they have not yet realized the fruit. Compare a mango tree that has been planted with good seeds in fertile soil, watered and sunned and protected from pests. At a certain point the conditions have been fulfilled for the fruit to appear, but it takes time for the conditions to mature.

- 1.2 “Mendicants, sights are impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and ideas are impermanent, decaying, and perishing.
- 1.8 Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. They’ve stepped into the sure path, they’ve stepped into the level of the true person, and they’ve passed beyond the level of the untrue person. They can’t do any deed which would make them be reborn in hell, the animal realm, or the ghost realm. They can’t die without realizing the fruit of stream-entry.
- 2.1 Someone who accepts these teachings after deliberating them with a degree of wisdom is called a follower of teachings. They’ve stepped into the sure path, they’ve stepped into the level of the true person, and they’ve passed beyond the level of the untrue person. They can’t do any deed which would make them be reborn in hell, the animal realm, or the ghost realm. They can’t die without realizing the fruit of stream-entry.
- 2.4 Someone who understands and sees these principles is called a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

SN 25.3

Consciousness

Viññānasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, eye consciousness is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, and mind consciousness are impermanent, decaying, and perishing.
- 1.8 Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. ...”

SN 25.4

Contact

Samphassasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, eye contact is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Ear contact, nose contact, tongue contact, body contact, and mind contact are impermanent, decaying, and perishing. 1.2

Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called 1.8
a follower by faith. ...”

SN 25.5

Feeling

Samphassajasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, feeling born of eye contact is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Feeling born of ear contact, feeling born of nose contact, feeling born of tongue contact, feeling born of body contact, and feeling born of mind contact are impermanent, decaying, and perishing. 1.2

Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called 1.8
a follower by faith. ...”

SN 25.6

Perception

Rūpasaññāsutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, perception of sights is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Perception of sounds, perception of smells, perception 1.2

of tastes, perception of touches, and perception of ideas are impermanent, decaying, and perishing.

- 1.8 Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. ...”

SN 25.7

Intention

Rūpasañcetanāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.

- 1.2 “Mendicants, intention regarding sights is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Intention regarding sounds, intention regarding smells, intention regarding tastes, intention regarding touches, and intentions regarding ideas are impermanent, decaying, and perishing.

- 1.8 Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. ...”

SN 25.8

Craving For Sights

Rūpaṭaṇhāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.

- 1.2 “Mendicants, craving for sights is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Craving for sounds, craving for smells, craving for tastes, craving for touches, and craving for ideas are impermanent, decaying, and perishing.

- 1.8 Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. ...”

SN 25.9

Elements

Pathavīdhātusutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, the earth element is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. The water element, the fire element, the air element, the space element, and the consciousness element are impermanent, decaying, and perishing. 1.2

Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. ...” 1.8

SN 25.10

The Aggregates

Khandhasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, form is impermanent, decaying, and perishing. Feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness are impermanent, decaying, and perishing. 1.2

Someone who has faith and confidence in these teachings is called a follower by faith. They’ve stepped into the sure path, they’ve stepped into the level of the true person, and they’ve passed beyond the level of the untrue person. They can’t do any deed which would make them be reborn in hell, the animal realm, or the ghost realm. They can’t die without realizing the fruit of stream-entry. 1.7

Someone who accepts these teachings after deliberating them with a degree of wisdom is called a follower of teachings. They’ve stepped into the sure path, they’ve stepped into the level of the true person, and they’ve passed beyond the level of the untrue person. They can’t do any deed which would make them be reborn in hell, the animal realm, or the ghost realm. They can’t die without realizing the fruit of stream-entry. 2.1

- 2.4 Someone who understands and sees these principles is called a stream-enterer, not liable to be reborn in the underworld, assured, destined for awakening.”

The Linked Discourses on stepping into are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON ARISING

The Chapter on Arising

SN 26.1

The Eye

Cakkhusutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥi.³¹¹

1.2 “Mendicants, the arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of the eye is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death.³¹² The arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation, settling, and disappearance of the eye is the cessation of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death. The cessation, settling, and disappearance of the ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind is the cessation of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death.”

311. This chapter is built on the same template as the previous.

312. See my note on SN 14.36:1.2.

SN 26.2

Sights

Rūpasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, the arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of sights is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death. The arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and ideas is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation, settling, and disappearance of sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, and ideas is the cessation of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death.”

1.2

SN 26.3

Consciousness

Viññāṇasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, the arising of eye consciousness ... mind consciousness ... is the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation of eye consciousness ... mind consciousness ... is the disappearance of old age and death.”

1.2

SN 26.4

Contact

Samphassasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

- 1.2 “Mendicants, the arising of eye contact ... mind contact ... is the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation of eye contact ... mind contact ... is the disappearance of old age and death.”

SN 26.5

Feeling

Samphassajasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, the arising of feeling born of eye contact ...
- 2.1 the arising of feeling born of mind contact ... is the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation of feeling born of eye contact ... the cessation of feeling born of mind contact ... is the disappearance of old age and death.”

SN 26.6

Perception

Saññāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, the arising of perception of sights ... perception of ideas ... is the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation of perception of sights ... perception of ideas ... is the disappearance of old age and death.”

SN 26.7

Intention

Saṅcetanāsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, the arising of intentions regarding sights ... intentions regarding ideas ... is the manifestation of old age and death.

The cessation of intentions regarding sights ... intentions regarding ideas ... is the disappearance of old age and death.”

SN 26.8

Craving

Taṇhāsutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, the arising of craving for sights ... craving for ideas ... is the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation of craving for sights ... craving for ideas ... is the disappearance of old age and death.” 1.2

SN 26.9

Elements

Dhātusutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, the arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element, the space element,³¹³ and the consciousness element is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation of the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element, the space element, and the consciousness element is the cessation of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death.” 1.2

313. The inclusion of the space and consciousness elements distinguish this from SN 14.36.

SN 26.10

The Aggregates

Khandhasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.³¹⁴

1.2 “Mendicants, the arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of form is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death. The arising, continuation, and manifestation and regeneration of feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness is the arising of suffering, the continuation of diseases, and the manifestation of old age and death. The cessation, settling, and disappearance of form is the cessation of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death. The cessation, settling, and disappearance of feeling, perception, choices, and consciousness is the cessation of suffering, the settling of diseases, and the disappearance of old age and death.”

The Linked Discourses on arising are complete.

314. This discourse is the same as SN 22.30.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON CORRUPTIONS

The Chapter on Corruptions

SN 27.1

The Eye

Cakkhusutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, desire and greed for the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, or mind is a corruption of the mind. When a mendicant has given up mental corruption in these six cases, their mind inclines to renunciation. A mind imbued with renunciation is said to be fit for work regarding anything that can be realized by insight.”³¹⁵

SN 27.2

Sights

Rūpasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, desire and greed for sights, sounds, smells, tastes, touches, or ideas is a corruption of the mind. When a mendicant has given up mental corruption in these six cases, their mind inclines to

315. I take *khāyati* as the passive “is said to be”, like the more common *akkhāyati* (SN 22.102:5.1). | *Kammaniya* (“fit for work, workable”) is similar in sense to *bhabba* (“capable”) at eg. MN 119:29.1.

renunciation. A mind imbued with renunciation is said to be fit for work regarding anything that can be realized by insight.”

SN 27.3

Consciousness

Viññāṇasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, desire and greed for eye consciousness, ear consciousness, nose consciousness, tongue consciousness, body consciousness, or mind consciousness is a corruption of the mind. When a mendicant has given up mental corruption in these six cases, their mind inclines to renunciation. A mind imbued with renunciation is said to be fit for work regarding anything that can be realized by insight.”

1.2

SN 27.4

Contact

Samphassasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, desire and greed for eye contact, ear contact, nose contact, tongue contact, body contact, or mind contact is a corruption of the mind. ...”

1.2

SN 27.5

Feeling

Samphassajasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, desire and greed for feeling born of eye contact, feeling born of ear contact, feeling born of nose contact, feeling born

1.2

of tongue contact, feeling born of body contact, or feeling born of mind contact is a defilement of the mind. ...”

SN 27.6

Perception

Saññāsutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, desire and greed for perception of sights, perception of sounds, perception of smells, perception of tastes, perception of touches, or perception of ideas is a corruption of the mind. ...”

SN 27.7

Intention

Sañcetanāsutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, desire and greed for intention regarding sights, intention regarding sounds, intention regarding smells, intention regarding tastes, intention regarding touches, or intention regarding ideas is a corruption of the mind. ...”

SN 27.8

Craving

Taṇhāsutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Mendicants, desire and greed for craving for sights, craving for sounds, craving for smells, craving for tastes, craving for touches, or craving for ideas is a corruption of the mind. ...”

SN 27.9

Elements

Dhātusutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, desire and greed for the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the air element, the space element, or the consciousness element is a corruption of the mind. ...”

1.2

SN 27.10

The Aggregates

Khandhasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, desire and greed for form, feeling, perception, choices, or consciousness is a corruption of the mind. When a mendicant has given up mental corruption in these five cases, their mind inclines to renunciation. A mind imbued with renunciation is said to be fit for work regarding anything that can be realized by insight.”

1.2

The Linked Discourses on corruptions are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES WITH SĀRIPUTTA

The Chapter with Sāriputta

SN 28.1

Born of Seclusion

Vivekajāsutta

At one time Venerable Sāriputta was staying near Sāvattthī in Jeta’s 1.1
Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery.³¹⁶ Then Venerable Sāriputta
robed up in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, entered
Sāvattthī for alms. He wandered for alms in Sāvattthī. After the meal,
on his return from almsround, he went to the Dark Forest for the

316. Sāriputta, personal name Upatissa (MN 24:17.3), was the foremost in wisdom (AN 1.189), the “general of the Dhamma” (Ud 2.8:16.2) who was like unto the Teacher himself (MN 24:17.5, Snp 3.7:22.4, MN 111:22.2). He was known for his magnificent expositions of fundamental teachings (MN 9, MN 141), his ready conversation on profound matters (MN 24, MN 43), his guidance for fellow monastics (MN 5), his humility (Kd 16:6.1.4), his expertise in meditation (AN 7.41) even to the deepest levels (AN 11.21:1.2), his consolation of those in distress (MN 97:27.1, MN 143, MN 144:3.2), and his personal qualities of gentleness and forgiveness (AN 9.11). His verses are at Thag 17.2. He went forth together with his great friend Moggallāna (Kd 1:23.1.1; see note on MN 74:1.2). Together they were hailed as the Buddha’s “chief disciples” (SN 15.20:5.7). They were leaders of the Saṅgha under the Buddha (MN 67:13.7), entrusted with serious disciplinary matters (Bu Ss 13:1.6.24). Although they were heirs apparent to the Buddha (Kd 17:3.1.12), they both predeceased him (SN 47.14:2.4). | Tradition holds that his mother was named Rūpasārī, his father the brahmin Vaṅganta, and that his younger siblings—Cunda, Upasena, Revata, Cālā, Upacālā, and Sisūpacālā—all joined the Saṅgha.

day’s meditation, plunged deep into it, and sat at the root of a tree to meditate.

- 2.1 Then in the late afternoon, Sāriputta came out of retreat and went to Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. Venerable Ānanda saw him coming off in the distance, and said to him:
- 2.4 “Reverend Sāriputta, your faculties are so very clear, and your complexion is pure and bright.³¹⁷ What meditation were you practicing today?”
- 3.1 “Reverend, quite secluded from sensual pleasures, secluded from unskillful qualities, I entered and remained in the first absorption, which has the rapture and bliss born of seclusion, while placing the mind and keeping it connected. But it didn’t occur to me: ‘I am entering the first absorption’ or ‘I have entered the first absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the first absorption.’”
- 3.4 “That must be because Venerable Sāriputta has long ago totally eradicated I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit. That’s why it didn’t occur to you: ‘I am entering the first absorption’ or ‘I have entered the first absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the first absorption.’”

SN 28.2

Without Placing the Mind

Avitakkasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta and said to him:
- 1.3 “Reverend Sāriputta, your faculties are so very clear, and your complexion is pure and bright. What meditation were you practicing today?”

317. Here “faculties” refers to visible features such as bright eyes. Compare Chāndogya Upaniṣad 4.14.2, where a student’s face is seen as bright and glowing due to their recent insights.

“Reverend, as the placing of the mind and keeping it connected 2.1
were stilled, I entered and remained in the second absorption, which
has the rapture and bliss born of immersion, with internal clarity and
mind at one, without placing the mind and keeping it connected.
But it didn’t occur to me: ‘I am entering the second absorption’ or
‘I have entered the second absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the
second absorption.’”

“That must be because Venerable Sāriputta has long ago totally 2.4
eradicated I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency
to conceit. That’s why it didn’t occur to you: ‘I am entering the
second absorption’ or ‘I have entered the second absorption’ or ‘I
am emerging from the second absorption.’”

SN 28.3

Rapture

Pītisutta

At Sāvattthī. 1.1

Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta and said to him: 1.2

“Reverend Sāriputta, your faculties are so very clear, and your 1.3
complexion is pure and bright. What meditation were you practicing
today?”

“Reverend, with the fading away of rapture, I entered and re- 2.1
mained in the third absorption, where I meditated with equanimity,
mindful and aware, experiencing for themselves the bliss of which
the noble ones declare, ‘Equanimous and mindful, one meditates in
bliss.’ But it didn’t occur to me: ‘I am entering the third absorption’
or ‘I have entered the third absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the
third absorption.’”

“That must be because Venerable Sāriputta has long ago totally 2.4
eradicated I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to
conceit. That’s why it didn’t occur to you: ‘I am entering the third

absorption’ or ‘I have entered the third absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the third absorption.’”

SN 28.4

Equanimity

Upekkhāsutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta and said to him:

1.3 “Reverend Sāriputta, your faculties are so very clear, and your complexion is pure and bright. What meditation were you practicing today?”

2.1 “Reverend, with the giving up of pleasure and pain, and the disappearance of former happiness and sadness, I entered and remained in the fourth absorption, without pleasure or pain, with pure equanimity and mindfulness. But it didn’t occur to me: ‘I am entering the fourth absorption’ or ‘I have entered the fourth absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the fourth absorption.’”

2.4 “That must be because Venerable Sāriputta has long ago totally eradicated I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit. That’s why it didn’t occur to you: ‘I am entering the fourth absorption’ or ‘I have entered the fourth absorption’ or ‘I am emerging from the fourth absorption.’”

SN 28.5

The Dimension of Infinite Space

Ākāśānañcāyatanasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta ...

1.3 “Reverend, going totally beyond perceptions of form, with the disappearance of perceptions of impingement, not focusing on percep-

tions of diversity, aware that ‘space is infinite’, I entered and remained in the dimension of infinite space. ...” ...

SN 28.6

The Dimension of Infinite Consciousness

Viññāṇaṇcāyatanasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta ...

1.2

“Reverend, going totally beyond the dimension of infinite space, aware that ‘consciousness is infinite’, I entered and remained in the dimension of infinite consciousness. ...” ...

SN 28.7

The Dimension of Nothingness

Ākiñcaññāyatanasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta ...

1.2

“Reverend, going totally beyond the dimension of infinite consciousness, aware that ‘there is nothing at all’, I entered and remained in the dimension of nothingness. ...” ...

SN 28.8

The Dimension of Neither Perception Nor Non-Perception

Nevasaññānāsaññāyatanasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta ...

1.2

- 1.3 “Reverend, going totally beyond the dimension of nothingness, I entered and remained in the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. ...” ...

SN 28.9

The Attainment of Cessation

Nirodhasamāpattisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 Venerable Ānanda saw Venerable Sāriputta ...
- 1.3 “Reverend, going totally beyond the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, I entered and remained in the cessation of perception and feeling.³¹⁸ But it didn’t occur to me: ‘I am entering the cessation of perception and feeling’ or ‘I have entered the cessation of perception and feeling’ or ‘I am emerging from the cessation of perception and feeling.’”
- 1.6 “That must be because Venerable Sāriputta has long ago totally eradicated I-making, mine-making, and the underlying tendency to conceit. That’s why it didn’t occur to you: ‘I am entering the cessation of perception and feeling’ or ‘I have entered the cessation of perception and feeling’ or ‘I am emerging from the cessation of perception and feeling.’”

318. The “cessation of perception and feeling” (*saññāvedayitanirodha*) is a culminating meditation state of supreme subtlety that often leads directly to awakening (but see AN 5.166). The state itself, like all meditation states, is temporary, but afterwards the defilements can be eliminated forever. This liberating insight is the consequence of the balanced development of all eight factors of the path.

SN 28.10

With Sucimukhī

Sucimukhīsutta

At one time Venerable Sāriputta was staying near Rājagaha in the 1.1
Bamboo Grove, the squirrels' feeding ground. Then he robed up
in the morning and, taking his bowl and robe, entered Rājagaha for
alms. After wandering indiscriminately for almsfood in Rājagaha, he
ate his almsfood by a wall.

Then the wanderer Sucimukhī went up to Venerable Sāriputta 1.4
and said to him:³¹⁹

“Ascetic, do you eat facing downwards?”³²⁰ 2.1

“No, sister.” 2.2

“Well then, do you eat facing upwards?” 2.3

“No, sister.” 2.4

“Well then, do you eat facing the cardinal directions?” 2.5

“No, sister.” 2.6

“Well then, do you eat facing the intermediate directions?” 2.7

319. We don't meet Sucimukhī elsewhere. Her name appears to mean “fair-face”, but it may be a misspelling of *sūcimukhī*, “needle-mouth”, used elsewhere of mosquitoes or similar creatures (MN 130:20.3, Atharva Veda 11.10.3). Bold women were a feature of the ascetic communities, as shown by Bhaddā of the Curly Hair (Thig 5.9) or Gārgī Vācaknavī (Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.6.1). Perhaps Sucimukhī was known for poking people with annoying questions.

320. To “eat” (*bhuñjati*) is both to “enjoy” and to “nourish”. Her question is deliberately obscure, a test for the supposedly wise Sāriputta, but from the context it's clear she is asking about right livelihood. The brahmins made sure that they worshiped the god the right way, so as to ensure the bounty of spiritual blessings, monetary fees, and food. | At Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 10.5.5 we find a similar challenge and response. When a certain Kuśri Vājaśravasa built a fire altar, he was quizzed by Suśruvas Kauṣya whether he built it with Agni's face forward (east), backward (west), downward (south) or upwards (north). Suśruvas faults all these methods; for example, in some cases it is like giving food to someone facing the wrong way. Kuśri responds that he has built it in all these ways, for which he supplies symbolic rationales. Sucimukhī may be echoing this very dialogue, or at least, engaging in a similar manner of questioning.

- 2.8 “No, sister.”
- 3.1 “When asked if you eat facing all these directions, you answer ‘no, sister’. How then do you eat, ascetic?”
- 4.2 “Sister, those ascetics and brahmins who earn a living by geomancy—a low lore, a wrong livelihood—are said to eat facing downwards.³²¹
- 4.3 Those ascetics and brahmins who earn a living by astrology—a low lore, a wrong livelihood—are said to eat facing upwards.³²²
- 4.4 Those ascetics and brahmins who earn a living by running errands and messages—a wrong livelihood—are said to eat facing the cardinal directions.³²³
- 4.5 Those ascetics and brahmins who earn a living by limb-reading—a low lore, a wrong livelihood—are said to eat facing the intermediate directions.³²⁴
- 5.1 I don’t earn a living by any of these means. I seek alms in a principled manner, and I eat it in a principled manner.”
- 6.1 Then Sucimukhī the wanderer went around Rājagaha from street to street and from square to square, and announced: “The ascetics who follow the Sakyan eat food in a principled manner! The ascetics who follow the Sakyan eat food blamelessly! Give almsfood to the ascetics who follow the Sakyan!”

321. Where Kuśī responds with obscure allusions to symbolic connections of the ritual, Śāriputta answers the riddle in a way that is simultaneously literal and meaningful. He doesn’t try to out-riddle the riddler, but identifies the ethical responsibility of taking almsfood. | For “geomancy” (*vatthuvijjā*) see DN 1:1.21.2. Varāhamihira details it at *Bṛhatsamhitā* 52, where it involves a detailed architectural plan so a building accords with the divinities and auguries of the place.

322. The technical term “astrology” (*nakkhattavijjā*) is only found here, but it is described at DN 1:1.24.2. Indian astrology is a vast and complex field, intertwined with the origins of mathematics.

323. Described at DN 1:1.19.1. Acting as a go-between for lay business was tempting due to the mendicants’ wandering lifestyle. However, it exposes them to risk if the message is not delivered or if it is bad news.

324. *Bṛhatsamhitā* 50 details the lore of *angavidyā*, “limb-reading”. This involves a close study of a person’s physical features and behaviors.

The Linked Discourses on Sāriputta are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON DRAGONS

The Chapter on Dragons

SN 29.1

Plain Version

Suddhikasutta

At Sāvattthī.³²⁵

1.1

“Mendicants, dragons reproduce in these four ways.³²⁶ What 1.1
four? Dragons are born from eggs, from a womb, from moisture, or 1.2
spontaneously.³²⁷ These are the four ways that dragons reproduce.”

325. Thus begins a series of four Samyuttas on various nonhuman entities.

326. The “dragon” (*nāga*) is a powerful (Bu Pc 51:1.4) serpentine (SN 1.37:7.4, Cp 20:1.2) entity with fiery breath (SN 3.1:8.2), bearing magical gems (Bu Ss 6:1.3.2, Ja 253). They dwell underground (MN 23:2.39), or in the ocean (Ud 5.5:17.1), or in the mountains (SN 46.1:1.2), guarding treasure (Ja 506) that they may have stolen (Kp 8:4.3). They may be man-eaters (SN 6.4:9.2) or protectors (Ud 2.1:2.2), and occasionally had to be engaged in magical combat (Kd 1:15.2.3), Bu Pc 51:1.4). They are color-changers (SN 3.1:8.1, Cp 13:3.1) and shape-shifters who, though they revert when they sleep, can temporarily take human form (Kd 1:63.1.1), even for the purpose of intimate relations (Bu Pj 1:10.14.1). The line between the supernatural entity and organic snakes is as fluid as a serpent’s form; dragons act as the leaders and protectors of all snakes (Kd 6:23.13.5), while poorly behaved dragons may be banished to a snake’s existence (Ja 304). Powerful and feared though they are, they are still no match for the cruelest of predators, man (Ja 524). For a history of the word, see SN 46.1:1.2.

327. These four are defined at MN 12:32.1; see note there for Vedic and Jain sources. | The Dhammic import of this idea is that even such powerful entities are born, and hence are subject to old age and death.

SN 29.2

Better

Paṇitatarasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

1.2 “Mendicants, dragons reproduce in these four ways. What four? Dragons are born from an egg, from a womb, from moisture, or spontaneously. Of these, dragons born from a womb, from moisture, or spontaneously are better than those born from an egg. Dragons born from moisture or spontaneously are better than those born from an egg or from a womb. Dragons born spontaneously are better than those born from an egg, from a womb, or from moisture.³²⁸ These are the four ways that dragons reproduce.”

SN 29.3

Sabbath

Upasathasutta

1.1 At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattḥī in Jeta’s Grove, A-nāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha, sat down to one side, and said to him:

1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why some egg-born dragons keep the sabbath, having transformed their bodies?”³²⁹

2.1 “Mendicant, it’s when some egg-born dragons think: ‘In the past we did both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind.’³³⁰ When the

328. The spontaneous rebirth applies to beings in the heavenly realms, so these dragons would be the powerful lords such as those listed at DN 20:11.1.

329. Dragons who wished to be reborn as a human were encouraged to observe the sabbath (Kd 1:63.4.3, Ja 506), during which they would cast off their serpent form (*vossatṭhakāyā*) and appear human (snakes are experts at skin-shedding). This seems to have been misunderstood in later days to imply that they should literally sacrifice their bodies, a belief unsupported in early Buddhism (Ja 524).

330. “Both kinds of deeds” (*dvayakārino*): both good and bad. Contrast the good deeds for being reborn as a centaur (SN 31.2).

body broke up, after death, we were reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons. If today we do good things by body, speech, and mind, when the body breaks up, after death, we may be reborn in a good place, a heavenly realm. Come, let us do good things by way of body, speech, and mind.’ This is the cause, this is the reason why some egg-born dragons keep the sabbath, having transformed their bodies.”

SN 29.4

Sabbath (2nd)

Dutiyauposathasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha ... and asked him, “Sir, 1.2
what is the cause, what is the reason why some womb-born dragons
keep the sabbath, having transformed their bodies?”

(Tell all in full.)

SN 29.5

Sabbath (3rd)

Tatiyauposathasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why some moisture-born 1.3
dragons keep the sabbath, having transformed their bodies?”

(Tell all in full.)

SN 29.6

Sabbath (4th)

Catutthauposathasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why some spontaneously-born dragons keep the sabbath, having transformed their bodies?”

2.1 “Mendicant, it’s when some spontaneously-born dragons think: ‘In the past we did both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. When the body broke up, after death, we were reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born dragons. If today we do good things by body, speech, and mind, when the body breaks up, after death, we may be reborn in a good place, a heavenly realm. Come, let us do good things by way of body, speech, and mind.’ This is the cause, this is the reason why some spontaneously-born dragons keep the sabbath, having transformed their bodies.”

SN 29.7

They’ve Heard

Sutasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥī.

1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons?”

2.1 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The egg-born dragons are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons!’ When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons. This is the cause,

this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons.”

SN 29.8

They've Heard (2nd)

Dutiyasutasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the womb-born dragons?”

1.3

(Tell all in full.)

SN 29.9

They've Heard (3rd)

Tatīyasutasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the moisture-born dragons?”

1.3

(Tell all in full.)

SN 29.10

They've Heard (4th)

Catutthasutasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born dragons?”
- 2.1 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The spontaneously-born dragons are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born dragons!’ When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born dragons. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born dragons.”

SN 29.11–20

Ten Discourses On How Giving Helps to Become Egg-Born

Aṇḍajadānūpakārasuttadasaka

- 1.1 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.2 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons?”
- 2.1 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The egg-born dragons are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons!’ They give food ... drink ... clothing ... a vehicle ... a garland ... fragrance ... makeup ... a bed ... a house ... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born dragons.”

SN 29.21–50

Thirty Discourses On How Giving Helps to Become Womb-Born, Etc.

Jalābujādidānūpakārasuttattimsaka

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when 1.3
their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the
womb-born dragons ... moisture-born dragons ... spontaneously-
born dragons?”

“Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, 2.1
speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The spontaneously-born
dragons are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If
only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the
company of the spontaneously-born dragons!’ They give food ...
drink ... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re
reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born dragons. This is
the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks
up, after death, is reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born
dragons.”

(Each set of ten discourses of this series should be told in full the same way.)

The Linked Discourses on dragons are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON PHOENIXES

The Chapter on Phoenixes

SN 30.1

Plain Version

Suddhikasutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

“Mendicants, phoenixes reproduce in these four ways.³³¹ What 1.2
four? Phoenixes are born from eggs, from a womb, from moisture, or
spontaneously. These are the four ways that phoenixes reproduce.”

SN 30.2

They Carry Off

Harantisutta

At Sāvattthī.

1.1

331. The *supaṇṇa* (Sanskrit *suparṇa*, “bright-feathered”), later *garuḷa* (Sanskrit *garuḍa*, “devourer”), is to the eagle as the *nāga* is to the cobra. He has been falsely compared with the loathsome harpy; but his golden wings, closeness to the sun (eg. Rig Veda 5.47.3), and role as bearer of the nectar of immortality (RV 4.26.4, 8.100.8) show that he is the Indian phoenix, the golden eagle of the sun. As the brother of Aruṇa the Dawn (Matsya Purāṇa 174.47), his golden wings at sunset “devour” the sun. He disappears in darkness only to be born again the next day, just as the European phoenix combusts itself and is born anew. Thus he is both the older and the younger brother of Aruṇa, for which came first, sunrise or sunset?

- 1.2 “Mendicants, phoenixes reproduce in these four ways. What four? Phoenixes are born from eggs, from a womb, from moisture, or spontaneously. These are the four ways that phoenixes reproduce. Of these, phoenixes born from an egg can only carry off dragons born from an egg, not those born from a womb, from moisture, or spontaneously.³³² Phoenixes born from a womb can carry off dragons born from an egg or from a womb, but not those born from moisture or spontaneously. Phoenixes born from moisture can carry off dragons born from an egg, from a womb, or from moisture, but not those born spontaneously. Phoenixes born spontaneously can carry off dragons born from an egg, from a womb, from moisture, or spontaneously. These are the four ways that phoenixes reproduce.”

SN 30.3

Both Kinds of Deeds

Dvayakārīsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 Then a mendicant went up to the Buddha, bowed, sat down to one side, and said to him:
- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes?”
- 1.4 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The egg-born phoenixes are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of

332. The enmity between snakes and birds is legendary (Ja 518), its origins related in the story of Suparṇa and Kadrū, mother of dragons (Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 3.6.2). It is rooted as much in the common sight of birds attacking snakes as it is in the cosmic opposition between the solar and the chthonic, the forces of light in the sky and darkness beneath the earth. Only the Buddha could reconcile them (DN 20:11.16).

the egg-born phoenixes!’ When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes.”

SN 30.4–6

Both Kinds of Deeds (2nd–4th)

Dutiyādidvayakārīsuttattika

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the womb-born phoenixes ...” “... moisture-born phoenixes ...” “... or spontaneously-born phoenixes?”

1.3

“Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The spontaneously-born phoenixes are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born phoenixes!’ When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born phoenixes. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the spontaneously-born phoenixes.”

1.6

SN 30.7–16

Ten Discourses On How Giving Helps to Become Egg-Born

Aṇḍajadānūpakārasuttadasaka

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes?”
- 1.4 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does both kinds of deeds by body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The egg-born phoenixes are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes!’ They give food ...” “... drink ...” “... clothing ...” “... a vehicle ...” “... a garland ...” “... fragrance ...” “... makeup ...” “... a bed ...” “... a house ...” “... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the egg-born phoenixes.”

SN 30.17–46

How Giving Helps to Become Womb-Born, Etc.

Jalābujadānūpakārasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattthī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the womb-born phoenixes ... moisture-born phoenixes ... or spontaneously-born phoenixes?”
(*Tell all in full.*)

The Linked Discourses on phoenixes are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON CENTAURS

The Chapter on Centaurs

SN 31.1

Plain Version

Suddhikasutta

- 1.1 At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattthī in Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika’s monastery. ... The Buddha said this:
- 1.3 “Mendicants, I will teach you about the gods of the centaur realm.”³³³ Listen ...
- 1.5 And what are the gods of the centaur realm? There are gods who live in fragrant roots,³³⁴ fragrant heartwood, fragrant softwood, fragrant bark, fragrant shoots, fragrant leaves, fragrant flowers, fragrant fruit, fragrant sap, and fragrant scents. These are called the gods of the centaur realm.”

333. The *gandhabba* (Sanskrit *gandharva*) is a complex mythic entity, but I think he sprang ultimately from the awe-inspiring sight of men on horseback, potent, unpredictable, violent, and sexy, from which came both the Greek *kentauros* and Sanskrit *gandharva*, “centaur”. See further discussions at SN 11.4:1.10, DN 20:9.3, DN 21, and MN 93:18.61.

334. Here the centaur shows one of his many secondary characteristics, an association with fragrance (*gandha*), which arose as a pun on the word *gandhabba*. This serves to highlight his sensual and erotic nature.

SN 31.2

Good Conduct

Sucaritasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of the centaur realm?”

1.3

“Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods of the centaur realm are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods of the centaur realm!’ When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of the centaur realm. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of the centaur realm.”

1.4

SN 31.3

A Giver of Fragrant Roots

Mūlagandhadātāsutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots?”

1.3

“Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods who live in fragrant roots are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots!’ They give gifts

1.4

of fragrant roots. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots."

SN 31.4–12

Nine Discourses On Givers of Fragrant Heartwood, Etc.

Sāragandhādidātāsuttanavaka

- 1.1 At Sāvattī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 "Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant heartwood ... softwood ... bark ... sprouts ... leaves ... flowers ... fruit ... sap ... fragrant scents?"
- 1.12 "Mendicant, it's when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they've heard: 'The gods who live in fragrant heartwood ... fragrant scents are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.' They think: 'If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant heartwood ... fragrant scents!' They give gifts of fragrant heartwood ... fragrant scents. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant scents. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live on fragrant scents."

SN 31.13–22

Ten Discourses On How Giving Helps Rebirth in Fragrant Roots

Mūlagandhadānūpakārasuttadasaka

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots?”

1.3

“Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods who live in fragrant roots are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots!’ They give food ... drink ... clothing ... a vehicle ... a garland ... fragrance ... makeup ... a bed ... a house ... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant roots.”

1.4

SN 31.23–112

Ninety Discourses On How Giving Helps Rebirth in Fragrant Heartwood, etc.

Sāragandhādidānūpakārasuttanavutika

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the

1.3

gods who live in fragrant heartwood ... softwood ... bark ... sprouts ... leaves ... flowers ... fruit ... sap ... fragrant scents?”

- 1.12 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods who live in fragrant scents are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant scents!’ They give food ... drink ... clothing ... a vehicle ... a garland ... fragrance ... makeup ... a bed ... a house ... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods who live in fragrant scents. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods who live on fragrant scents.”

The Linked Discourses on the centaur realm are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON CLOUD GODS

The Chapter on Gods of the Clouds

SN 32.1

Plain Version

Suddhikasutta

1.1 At Sāvattḥi.

1.2 “Mendicants, I will teach you about the gods of the thundercloud host.³³⁵ Listen ...

1.4 And what are the gods of the thundercloud host?³³⁶ There are gods of the cool thunderclouds, warm thunderclouds, stormy thun-

335. *Valāhaka* is not explained in any dictionary I have seen, and I have not been able to find it in pre-Buddhist texts. Trace to the root *val* (to “turn” or to “arc”). Appended with *āha* (“sky”) we have *valāhaka*, “one who arcs over the sky” like a constellation (cf. Sanskrit *valana*). This is the name of the horse of the universal monarch (MN 129:37.2), and metaphorically the “thunderclouds” that rumble like horse’s hooves. The link between horses and clouds recalls the Vedic Maruts, boisterous gods of the thunderclouds, who roamed about roaring in their chariot drawn by horses (Rig Veda 1.39.6, 1.87.4, 1.88.1, 5.42.15, etc.) or on horseback (RV 5.61.2), which are compared to the rainy clouds (RV 5.53.7, 8.7.28). Other deities also have horses associated with the thundercloud. The twin Asvīṇins (“horsemen”) have horses that “thunder” (RV 5.73.7). The horses of Parjanya (Pali *pajjuna*) are “rain-bearing messengers” (RV 5.83.3). Bṛhaspati has horses “like a ruddy cloud” (RV 7.97.6). Pegasus, who was said by Hesiod to be the bringer of thunderbolts to Zeus, harks back to the same mytheme.

336. The “host” (*kāya*) is the four types.

derclouds,³³⁷ windy thunderclouds, and rainy thunderclouds. These are called gods of the thundercloud host.”

SN 32.2

Good Conduct

Sucaritasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:

1.2

“Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of the thundercloud host?”

1.3

“Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods of the thundercloud host are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods of the thundercloud host!’ When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of the thundercloud host. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of the thundercloud host.”

1.4

SN 32.3–12

Ten Discourses On How Giving Helps to Become a Cool Thundercloud God

Sītavalāhakadānūpakārasuttadasaka

At Sāvatthī.³³⁸

1.1

337. *Abbha* (“stormy”) by itself just means “cloud”. In the Rīg Veda they’re associated with wind (10.68.5), rain (10.77.1), and lighting (9.76.3), and in the Suttas they are described as “blue” (Thag 1.13:1.1).

338. The numbering in the PTS editions goes awry here.

- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of cool thunderclouds?”
- 1.4 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods of cool thunderclouds are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods of the cool thunderclouds!’ They give food ... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of cool thunderclouds. This is the cause, this is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of cool thunderclouds.”

SN 32.13–52

How Giving Helps to Become a Warm Thundercloud God, Etc.

Uṇhavalāhakadānūpakārasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of warm thunderclouds ... stormy thunderclouds ... windy thunderclouds ... rainy thunderclouds?”
- 1.7 “Mendicant, it’s when someone does good things by way of body, speech, and mind. And they’ve heard: ‘The gods of rainy thunderclouds are long-lived, beautiful, and very happy.’ They think: ‘If only, when my body breaks up, after death, I would be reborn in the company of the gods of rainy thunderclouds!’ They give food ... a lamp. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of rainy thunderclouds. This is the cause, this

is the reason why someone, when their body breaks up, after death, is reborn in the company of the gods of rainy thunderclouds.”

SN 32.53

Gods of the Cool Thunderclouds

Sītavalāhakasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why sometimes it be- 1.3
comes cool?”
- “Mendicant, there are what are called gods of the cool thunder- 1.4
clouds. Sometimes they think: ‘Why don’t we revel in our own kind
of enjoyment?’ Then, in accordance with their wish, it becomes cool.
This is the cause, this is the reason why sometimes it becomes cool.”

SN 32.54

Gods of the Warm Thunderclouds

Uṇhavalāhakasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why sometimes it be- 1.3
comes warm?”
- “Mendicant, there are what are called gods of the warm thunder- 1.4
clouds. Sometimes they think: ‘Why don’t we revel in our own kind
of enjoyment?’ Then, in accordance with their wish, it becomes
warm. This is the cause, this is the reason why sometimes it becomes
warm.”

SN 32.55

Gods of the Stormy Thunderclouds

Abbhavalāhakasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why sometimes it becomes stormy?”
- 1.4 “Mendicant, there are what are called gods of the stormy thunderclouds. Sometimes they think: ‘Why don’t we revel in our own kind of enjoyment?’ Then, in accordance with their wish, it becomes stormy. This is the cause, this is the reason why sometimes it becomes stormy.”

SN 32.56

Gods of the Windy Thunderclouds

Vātavalāhakasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvattḥī.
- 1.2 Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha:
- 1.3 “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why sometimes it becomes windy?”
- 1.4 “Mendicant, there are what are named gods of the windy thunderclouds. Sometimes they think: ‘Why don’t we revel in our own kind of enjoyment?’ Then, in accordance with their wish, it becomes windy. This is the cause, this is the reason why sometimes it becomes windy.”

SN 32.57

Gods of the Rainy Thunderclouds

Vassavalāhakasutta

- At Sāvattthī. 1.1
- Seated to one side, that mendicant said to the Buddha: 1.2
- “Sir, what is the cause, what is the reason why sometimes the 1.3
heavens rain?”
- “Mendicant, there are what are called gods of the rainy thunder- 1.4
clouds. Sometimes they think: ‘Why don’t we revel in our own kind
of enjoyment?’ Then, in accordance with their wish, the heavens
rain down.³³⁹ This is the cause, this is the reason why sometimes the
heavens rain.”

The Linked Discourses on gods of the clouds are complete.

339. The “gods” of the rainy thunderclouds are distinct from the “god” (singular) who sends rain. This is lost in translation, as I use the plural form “heavens” in the latter case. It seems the revels of the gods of the rainy clouds induce Indra to send forth rain.

LINKED DISCOURSES WITH VACCHAGOTTA

The Chapter with Vacchagotta

SN 33.1

Not Knowing Form

Rūpaaññāṇasutta

At one time the Buddha was staying near Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, 1.1
Anāthapiṇḍika's monastery. Then the wanderer Vacchagotta went
up to the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him.³⁴⁰ When the
greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side
and said to the Buddha:

“What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these 1.4
various misconceptions arise in the world? That is: the cosmos is
eternal, or not eternal, or finite, or infinite; the soul and the body
are one and the same, or the soul is one thing, the body another;
after death, a realized one still exists, or no longer exists, or both still
exists and no longer exists, or neither still exists nor no longer exists.”

“Vaccha, it is because of not knowing form, its origin, its cessation, 1.6
and the practice that leads to its cessation that these various miscon-
ceptions arise in the world. This is the cause, this is the reason.”

340. This Saṃyutta can be seen as a supplement to the “Vacchagotta trilogy” (MN 71, MN 72, and MN 73), which depicts Vacchagotta's growth from a curious skeptic to a realized master; see notes there for details. His verse is at Thag 1.112, and he also features in SN 44.7–11 and AN 3.57.

SN 33.2

Not Knowing Feeling

Vedanāaññānasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 Then the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Buddha:

1.3 “What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these various misconceptions arise in the world? That is: the cosmos is eternal, or not eternal ... after death, a realized one neither still exists nor no longer exists.”

1.6 “Vaccha, it is because of not knowing feeling, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation that these various misconceptions arise in the world. This is the cause, this is the reason.”

SN 33.3

Not Knowing Perception

Saññāaññānasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 Then the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Buddha:

1.3 “What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these various misconceptions arise in the world? ...”

1.6 “Vaccha, it is because of not knowing perception, its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation ...”

SN 33.4

Not Knowing Choices

Saṅkhāraaññānasutta

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 Then the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Buddha:

“What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these 1.3
various misconceptions arise in the world? ...”

“Vaccha, it is because of not knowing choices, their origin, their 1.6
cessation, and the practice that leads to their cessation ...”

SN 33.5

Not Knowing Consciousness

Viññāṇaāññāsutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

Then the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Buddha: 1.2

“What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these 1.3
various misconceptions arise in the world? ...”

“Vaccha, it is because of not knowing consciousness, its origin, its 1.6
cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation ...”

SN 33.6–10

Five Discourses on Not Seeing Form, Etc.

Rūpaadassanādisuttapañcaka

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

Then the wanderer Vacchagotta said to the Buddha: 1.2

“What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these 1.3
various misconceptions arise in the world? ...”

“Vaccha, it is because of not seeing form ...”³⁴¹ “... feeling ...” 1.6
“... perception ...” “... choices ...” “... consciousness, its origin, its
cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation ...”

341. From here the discourses are only differentiated by the verb used for understanding.

SN 33.11–15

Five Discourses on Not Comprehending Form, Etc.

Rūpaanabhisamayādisuttapañcaka

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Vaccha, it is because of not comprehending form ...
- 1.1 feeling ...
- 1.1 perception ...
- 1.1 choices ...
- 1.1 consciousness ...”

SN 33.16–20

Five Discourses on Not Understanding Form, Etc.

Rūpaananubodhādisuttapañcaka

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Vaccha, it is because of not understanding form ...
- 1.1 feeling ...
- 1.1 perception ...
- 1.1 choices ...
- 1.1 consciousness ...”

SN 33.21–25

Five Discourses on Not Penetrating Form, Etc.

Rūpaappaṭivedhādisuttapañcaka

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Vaccha, it is because of not penetrating form ...”

SN 33.26–30

Five Discourses on Not Distinguishing Form, Etc.

Rūpaasallakkhaṇādisuttapañcaka

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Vaccha, it is because of not distinguishing form ...”³⁴²

1.2

SN 33.31–35

Five Discourses on Not Detecting Form, Etc.

Rūpaanupalakkhaṇādisuttapañcaka

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Vaccha, it is because of not detecting form ...”

1.2

SN 33.36–40

Five Discourses on Not Differentiating Form, Etc.

Rūpaappaccupalakkhaṇādisuttapañcaka

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Vaccha, it is because of not differentiating form ...”

1.2

342. From here to the end of the Saṃyutta, we find a series of terms for “understanding” that do not appear elsewhere in the early canon. It stretches credulity, even by the repetitive standards of the Suttas, that Vacchagotta would have continued asking the same question dozens of times and the Buddha answer only by changing the verb. Likely the redactors introduced these terms, showing the influence of the Abhidhamma on the Saṃyutta.

SN 33.41–45

Five Discourses on Not Examining Form, Etc.

Rūpaasamapekkhaṇādisuttapañcaka

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Vaccha, it is because of not examining form ...”

SN 33.46–50

Five Discourses on Not Scrutinizing Form, Etc.

Rūpaappaccupekkhaṇādisuttapañcaka

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “Vaccha, it is because of not scrutinizing form ...”

SN 33.51–54

Four Discourses on Not Directly Experiencing Form, Etc.

Rūpaappaccakkhakkammādisuttacatukka

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 Then the wanderer Vacchagotta went up to the Buddha and exchanged greetings with him. When the greetings and polite conversation were over, he sat down to one side, and said to the Buddha:

1.4 “What is the cause, worthy Gotama, what is the reason why these various misconceptions arise in the world? ...”

1.7 “Vaccha, it is because of not directly experiencing form ...³⁴³

1.1 feeling ...

1.1 perception ...

343. This is the only occurrence in the early canon of *paccakkha* (“directly experience”). It went on to become a key term in Buddhist epistemology. The schools recognized that there are two forms of valid knowledge—direct experience and inference (*anumāna*)—and differed in the explanations.

choices ...”

1.1

SN 33.55

Not Directly Experiencing Consciousness

Viññāṇaappaccakkhakammasutta

At Sāvatthī.

1.1

“Vaccha, it is because of not directly experiencing consciousness, 1.2
its origin, its cessation, and the practice that leads to its cessation that
these various misconceptions arise in the world. This is the cause,
this is the reason.”

The Linked Discourses with Vacchagotta are complete.

LINKED DISCOURSES ON ABSORPTION

The Chapter on Absorption

SN 34.1

Entering Immersion

Samādhimūlakasamāpattisutta

- At Sāvatthī.³⁴⁴ 1.1
- “Mendicants, there are these four meditators.³⁴⁵ What four? 1.2
- One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in entering it.³⁴⁶ 1.4
- One meditator is not skilled in immersion but is skilled in entering 1.5
- it.
- One meditator is skilled neither in immersion nor in entering it. 1.6
- One meditator is skilled both in immersion and in entering it. 1.7
- Of these, the meditator skilled in immersion and in entering it is 1.8
- the foremost, best, chief, highest, and finest of the four.

344. The other Jhānasamyutta (SN 53.1) focuses on the meditation states, where here we focus on the process of developing and perfecting meditation. The whole is built up as a systematic “wheel” (*cakka*) of permutations, a form familiar from the Vinaya and Abhidhamma. In such structures, first a set of items is listed, then they are juxtaposed with each other, one pair at a time, until the possibilities are worked out systematically. This *cakka* serves to systematize similar teachings at AN 2.163, AN 6.24, AN 6.72, AN 7.40, AN 7.41, AN 9.36:10.3, and AN 10.84:2.3.

345. “Meditator” is *jhāyī*, “practitioner of *jhāna*”. As usual, in this Samyutta *jhāna* and *samādhi* are synonyms. Various skills in developing refined meditation are itemized.

346. They cannot attain absorption whenever they want (compare DN 15:36.1).

- 1.9 From a cow comes milk, from milk comes curds, from curds come butter, from butter comes ghee, and from ghee comes cream of ghee. And the cream of ghee is said to be the best of these.³⁴⁷
- 1.10 In the same way, the meditator skilled in immersion and entering it is the foremost, best, leading, highest, and finest of the four.”

SN 34.2

Remaining in Immersion

Samādhimūlakaṭhitisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in remaining in it.³⁴⁸
- 1.5 One meditator is skilled in remaining in immersion but is not skilled in immersion.
- 1.6 One meditator is skilled neither in immersion nor in remaining in it.
- 1.7 One meditator is skilled both in immersion and in remaining in it.
- 1.8 Of these, the meditator skilled in immersion and in remaining in it is the foremost, best, leading, highest, and finest of the four.
- 1.9 From a cow comes milk, from milk comes curds, from curds come butter, from butter comes ghee, and from ghee comes cream of ghee. And the cream of ghee is said to be the best of these.
- 1.10 In the same way, the meditator skilled in immersion and remaining in it is the foremost, best, leading, highest, and finest of the four.”

347. Compare Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa 3.3.3.2.

348. They cannot stay long, or determine the length of the absorbed state.

SN 34.3

Emerging From Immersion

Samādhimūlakavuṭṭhānasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
- One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in emerging from 1.4
- it. ...”³⁴⁹

SN 34.4

Gladdening for Immersion

Samādhimūlakakallitasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
- One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in positivity for 1.4
- immersion. ...”³⁵⁰

SN 34.5

Supports For Immersion

Samādhimūlakaārammaṇasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
- “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
- One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in the supports for 1.4
- immersion. ...”³⁵¹

349. They cannot determine the time for emerging from the meditation.

350. *Kallita* means “healthy and happy, well-disposed”, and is explained by the commentary as “gladdening the mind”. Any meditator knows that there are ups and downs in the process, and it is essential to keep the mind balanced, with a positive attitude.

351. “Support” is *ārammaṇa*, namely the different subjects of meditation. This is the only term in this list that does not appear elsewhere in the early canon.

SN 34.6

Territory of Immersion

Samādhimūlakagocarasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?
 1.4 One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in the territory of immersion. ...”³⁵²

SN 34.7

Projecting the Mind Purified by Immersion

Samādhimūlakaabhinihārasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?
 1.4 One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in projecting the mind purified by immersion. ...”³⁵³

It does not mean “object”, which is exclusively a later sense, derived from the (again later) use of the *kaṣiṇa* as a physical “object” or “disk” on which to focus attention (for the Sutta usage, see MN 77:24.11). An “object” is something that has an “objective” reality independent of the observer. But for the Suttas, meditations like the breath, or love, or an inner reflection on mortality are dimensions of living experience that change and grow through and with the course of meditation. The meditation subject is not something *at which* the mind is directed, it is something *with which* the mind grows.

352. A *gocara* (“territory”) is literally the “cowpasture” and figuratively the “proper resort” or “territory”. At SN 47.6, a meditator’s “territory” is said to be the four kinds of mindfulness meditation.

353. They cannot “project” the mind to the various psychic powers and higher knowledges (DN 2:84.6).

SN 34.8

Carefulness in Immersion

Samādhimūlakasakkaccakārīsutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
 One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in practicing care- 1.4
 fully for it. ...”³⁵⁴

SN 34.9

Persistence in Immersion

Samādhimūlakasātaccakārīsutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
 One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in practicing per- 1.4
 sistently for it. ...”³⁵⁵

SN 34.10

Conducive to Immersion

Samādhimūlakasappāyakārīsutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
 One meditator is skilled in immersion but not in doing what’s 1.4
 conducive to it. ...”³⁵⁶

354. They cannot maintain a systematic practice throughout the day (AN 3.19:2.3).

355. The failure of “persistence” in a meditator is often linked with their emotional hard-heartedness and mental shackles (MN 16:3.1). Without a faithful, kind, and wholesome disposition it is difficult to sustain a meditation practice.

356. They do things that are unsuitable, distracting the mind (MN 105:25.8, MN 105:18.5).

SN 34.11

Entering and Remaining

Samāpattimūlakaṭḥitisutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?”
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in remaining in it. ...³⁵⁷

SN 34.12

Entering and Emerging

Samāpattimūlakavuṭṭhānasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?”
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in emerging from it. ...”

SN 34.13

Entering and Gladdening

Samāpattimūlakakallitasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?”
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in positivity for immersion. ...”

357. Now the wheel of permutations starts. The qualities of the first two discourses—entering and remaining—are juxtaposed.

SN 34.14

Entering and Supports

Samāpattimūlakaārammaṇasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in the 1.4
 supports for it. ...”

SN 34.15

Entering and Territory

Samāpattimūlakagocarasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in the 1.4
 territory of immersion. ...”

SN 34.16

Entering and Projecting

Samāpattimūlakaabhinihārasutta

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in project- 1.4
 ing the mind purified by immersion. ...”

SN 34.17

Entering and Carefulness

Samāpattimūlakasakkaccasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in practicing carefully for it. ...”

SN 34.18

Entering and Persistence

Samāpattimūlakasātaccasutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in practicing persistently for it. ...”

SN 34.19

Entering and What’s Conducive

Samāpattimūlakasappāyakārīsutta

- 1.1 At Sāvatthī.
- 1.2 “Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four?
- 1.4 One meditator is skilled in entering immersion but not in doing what’s conducive to it. ...”

SN 34.20–27

Eight on Remaining and Emergence, Etc.

Ṭhitimūlakavuṭṭhānasuttādiatṭhaka

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
“Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
One meditator is skilled in remaining in immersion but not in 1.4
emerging from it. ...”
(*These eight discourses should be told in full as the previous set.*)

SN 34.28–34

Seven on Emergence and Gladdening, Etc.

Vuṭṭhānamūlakakallitasuttādisattaka

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
“Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2
One meditator is skilled in emerging from immersion but not in 1.4
positivity for immersion. ...”
(*These seven discourses should be told in full as the previous set.*)

SN 34.35–40

Six on Gladdening and Support, Etc.

Kallitamūlakaārammaṇasuttādichakka

- At Sāvatthī. 1.1
“One meditator is skilled in positivity for immersion but not in 1.2
the supports for immersion. ...”
(*These six discourses should be told in full as the previous set.*)

SN 34.41–45

Five on Support and Territory, Etc.

Ārammaṇamūlakagocarasuttādipañca

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “One meditator is skilled in the supports for immersion but not in the territory of immersion. ...”

(These five discourses should be told in full as the previous set.)

SN 34.46–49

Four on Territory and Projection, Etc.

Gocaramūlakaabhinīhārasuttādicatukka

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “One meditator is skilled in the territory of immersion but not in projecting the mind purified by immersion. ...”

1.1 “One meditator is skilled in the territory of immersion but not in practicing carefully for it. ...”

(These four discourses should be told in full as the previous set.)

1.1 “One meditator is skilled in the territory of immersion but not in practicing persistently for it. ...”

1.1 “One meditator is skilled in the territory of immersion but not in doing what’s conducive to it. ...”

SN 34.50–52

Three on Projection and Carefulness

Abhinīhāramūlakasakkaccasuttāditika

1.1 At Sāvatthī.

1.2 “One meditator is skilled in projecting the mind purified by immersion but not in practicing carefully for it. ...”

“One meditator is skilled in projecting the mind purified by immersion but not in practicing persistently for it. ...” 1.1

“One meditator is skilled in projecting the mind purified by immersion but not in doing what’s conducive to it. ...” 1.1

SN 34.53–54

Two on Carefulness and Persistence

Sakkaccamūlakasāttaccakārīsuttadukādi

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“One meditator is skilled in practicing carefully for immersion but not in practicing persistently for it. ...” 1.2

“One meditator is skilled in practicing carefully for immersion but not in doing what’s conducive to it. ...” 1.1

SN 34.55

Persistence and What’s Conducive

Sāttaccamūlakasappāyakārīsutta

At Sāvatthī. 1.1

“Mendicants, there are these four meditators. What four? 1.2

One meditator is skilled in practicing persistently for immersion but not in doing what’s conducive to it. 1.4

One meditator is skilled in doing what’s conducive to immersion but not in practicing persistently for it. 1.5

One meditator is skilled neither in practicing persistently for immersion nor in doing what’s conducive to it. 1.6

One meditator is skilled both in practicing persistently for immersion and in doing what’s conducive to it. 1.7

Of these, the meditator skilled both in practicing persistently for immersion and in doing what’s conducive to it is the foremost, best, leading, highest, and finest of the four. 1.8

- 1.9 From a cow comes milk, from milk comes curds, from curds come butter, from butter comes ghee, and from ghee comes cream of ghee. And the cream of ghee is said to be the best of these.
- 1.10 In the same way, the meditator skilled both in practicing persistently for immersion and in doing what's conducive to it is the foremost, best, leading, highest, and finest of the four."
- 1.11 That is what the Buddha said. Satisfied, the mendicants approved what the Buddha said.

(All should be told in full as per the fifty-fifth discourse.)

The Linked Discourses on Absorption are complete.

THE BOOK OF THE AGGREGATES IS FINISHED.

Colophon

The Translator

Bhikkhu Sujato was born as Anthony Aidan Best on 4/11/1966 in Perth, Western Australia. He grew up in the pleasant suburbs of Mt Lawley and Attadale alongside his sister Nicola, who was the good child. His mother, Margaret Lorraine Huntsman née Pinder, said “he’ll either be a priest or a poet”, while his father, Anthony Thomas Best, advised him to “never do anything for money”. He attended Aquinas College, a Catholic school, where he decided to become an atheist. At the University of WA he studied philosophy, aiming to learn what he wanted to do with his life. Finding that what he wanted to do was play guitar, he dropped out. His main band was named Martha’s Vineyard, which achieved modest success in the indie circuit.

A seemingly random encounter with a roadside joey took him to Thailand, where he entered his first meditation retreat at Wat Ram Poeng, Chiang Mai in 1992. Feeling the call to the Buddha’s path, he took full ordination in Wat Pa Nanachat in 1994, where his teachers were Ajahn Pasanno and Ajahn Jayasaro. In 1997 he returned to Perth to study with Ajahn Brahm at Bodhinyana Monastery.

He spent several years practicing in seclusion in Malaysia and Thailand before establishing Santi Forest Monastery in Bundanoon, NSW, in 2003. There he was instrumental in supporting the establishment of the Theravada bhikkhuni order in Australia and advocating for women’s rights. He continues to teach in Australia and globally,

with a special concern for the moral implications of climate change and other forms of environmental destruction. He has published a series of books of original and groundbreaking research on early Buddhism.

In 2005 he founded SuttaCentral together with Rod Bucknell and John Kelly. In 2015, seeing the need for a complete, accurate, plain English translation of the Pali texts, he undertook the task, spending nearly three years in isolation on the isle of Qi Mei off the coast of the nation of Taiwan. He completed the four main Nikāyas in 2018, and the early books of the Khuddaka Nikāya were complete by 2021. All this work is dedicated to the public domain and is entirely free of copyright encumbrance.

In 2019 he returned to Sydney where he established Lokanta Vihara (The Monastery at the End of the World).

Creation Process

Primary source was the digital Mahāsaṅgīti edition of the Pali Tipiṭaka. Translated from the Pali, with reference to several English translations, especially those of Bhikkhu Bodhi.

The Translation

This translation was part of a project to translate the four Pali Nikāyas with the following aims: plain, approachable English; consistent terminology; accurate rendition of the Pali; free of copyright. It was made during 2016–2018 while Bhikkhu Sujato was staying in Qimei, Taiwan.

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