

# Itivuttaka

*This Was Said by the Buddha*

*a translation by*

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## Abbreviations

References are to texts from  
the Pali Canon:

A	Anguttara Nikaya
Cv	Cullavagga
M	Majjhima Nikaya
S	Samyutta Nikaya

## Introduction

The Itivuttaka, a collection of 112 short discourses, takes its name from the statement at the beginning of each of its discourses: this (*iti*) was said (*vuttam*) by the Blessed One. The collection as a whole is attributed to a laywoman named Khujjuttara, who worked in the palace of King Udena of Kosambi as a servant to one of his queens, Samavati. Because the Queen could not leave the palace to hear the Buddha's discourses, Khujjuttara went in her place, memorized what the Buddha said, and then returned to the palace to teach the Queen and her 500 ladies-in-waiting. For her efforts, the Buddha cited Khujjuttara as the foremost of his laywomen disciples in terms of her learning. She was also an effective teacher: when the inner apartments of the palace later burned down, killing the Queen and her entourage, the Buddha commented (in Udana vii.10) that all of the women had reached at least the first stage of Awakening.

The name of the Itivuttaka is included in the standard early list of the nine divisions of the Buddha's teachings—a list that predates the organization of the Pali Canon as we now know it. It's impossible to determine, though, the extent to which the extant Pali Itivuttaka corresponds to the Itivuttaka mentioned in that list. The Chinese canon contains a translation of an Itivuttaka, attributed to Hsüan-tsang, that strongly resembles the text of the Pali Itivuttaka, the major difference being that parts of the Group of Threes and all of the Group of Fours in the Pali are missing in Hsüan-tsang's translation. Either these parts were later additions to the text that found their way into the Pali but not into the Sanskrit version translated by Hsüan-tsang, or the Sanskrit text was incomplete, or Hsüan-tsang's translation was left unfinished (it dates from the last months of his life).

The early history of the Itivuttaka is made even more complex by the fact that it was originally an oral tradition first written down several centuries after the Buddha's passing away. For a discussion of this issue, see the Historical Notes appended to *Dhammapada: A Translation*.

Whatever the history of the text, though, it has long been one of the favorite collections in the Pali Canon, for it covers a wide range of the Buddha's teachings—from the simplest to the most profound—in a form that is accessible, appealing, and to the point.

However, although the discourses in the Itivuttaka cover many topics, they all relate to a common theme: the consequences of one's actions, or *kamma*. Because this theme is so central to these discourses, and because it is so commonly misunderstood, I would like briefly to explain it here.

The Buddha's teachings on action, or kamma, and his accompanying teachings on rebirth, are often dismissed as unessential to his teaching, something he simply picked up from his Indian environment. Actually, they are central to his teaching, and form one of his most original insights. Although many people assume that the Buddha derived his teachings on kamma from a view of the cosmos as a whole, the line of experiential proof was actually the other way around. After directly observing and analyzing the role of action in shaping his experience of time, he then followed the implications of his observations to confirm his vision of the process of rebirth and the structure of the cosmos that lies under the sway of time.

In the course of his Awakening, the Buddha discovered that the experience of the present moment consists of three factors: results from past actions, present actions, and the results of present actions. This means that kamma acts in feedback loops, with the present moment being shaped both by past and by present actions; while present actions shape not only the present but also the future. This constant opening for present input into the causal processes shaping one's life makes free will possible. In fact, will—or intention—forms the essence of action. Furthermore, the quality of the intention determines the quality of the act and of its results. On the mundane level there are three types of intentions: skillful, leading to pleasant results; unskillful, leading to painful results; and mixed, leading to mixed results, all these results being experienced within the realm of space and time. However, the fact that the experience of space and time requires not only the results of past actions but also the input of present actions means that it is possible to unravel the experience of space and time by bringing the mind to a point of equilibrium where it contributes no intentions or actions to the present moment. The intentions that converge at this equilibrium are thus a fourth type of intention—transcendent skillful intentions—which lead to release from the results of mundane intentions, and ultimately to the ending of all action.

The Buddha's direct perception of the power of intention confirmed for him the process of rebirth: if experience of the present moment requires the influence of past intentions, then there is no way to account for experience at the beginning of life other than through the intentions of a previous lifetime. At the same time, the power of the *quality* of intention provided the framework for Buddha's vision of the cosmos in which the process of rebirth takes place: there are pleasant levels of rebirth—the worlds of the Brahmās and the higher devas; unpleasant levels—hell, the realms of the hungry shades, common animals, and the angry demons; and mixed levels—the human realm and some of the lower deva realms. Even in the pleasant levels of rebirth, however, the pleasure is unstable and impermanent, giving no sure release from suffering and pain. The only secure release comes through transcendent skillful intentions, leading to the experience of *nibbana*, totally beyond the process of rebirth and the constraints of space and time.

Nibbana itself is totally unconditioned and so cannot be analyzed, apart from a distinction in how it is experienced before and after death (see §44). However, the path of practice leading to nibbana can be analyzed. It has eight factors—right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration—and goes through four levels of Awakening. The early texts say very little about the content of these Awakening experiences, but are very specific about how these experiences function in effecting lasting changes in the mind. Stream-entry—in which one enters the “stream” to nibbana, gaining one’s first glimpse of the deathless and cutting through the mental fetters of self-identity views, uncertainty, and grasping a precepts and practices—ensures that one will be reborn at most only seven more times. Once-returning ensures that one will be reborn only once more on the human level. Non-returning—which cuts through the mental fetters of sensual passion and resistance—ensures that one will never be reborn on the human level. If one goes no further in this life, one will be reborn in one of the five Brahma realms called the Pure Abodes and attain full Awakening there. Arahantship—which cuts through the mental fetters of passion for form, passion for formlessness, restlessness, conceit, and ignorance—frees one entirely from the suffering caused by craving, and from the cycle of rebirth as a whole.

This, then, is the picture of the cosmos that derives from the Buddha’s insight into the power of intention. And what shapes skillful intention? Two connected qualities: appropriate attention (§16) and right view (§99). Appropriate attention focuses on questions that help foster skillfulness in one’s actions, and avoids questions that get in the way of developing that skill. On the mundane level, right view provides a proper understanding of action and its potential for producing mundane pleasure and pain. On the transcendent level, it reduces experience simply to cause and effect, skillful and unskillful—expressed in terms of the four noble truths—without focusing on whether there is anyone performing the action or experiencing the result. This untangles the mind from issues of space and time, and allows it to act in a way that opens to transcendent release. Simply put, appropriate attention asks the right questions; right view provides the right answers. The interplay between these two mental qualities explains the question-and-answer format used in many of the discourses in the Itivuttaka. And, given the role of right view in skillful action, the fact that all of the discourses deal with right view means that they are all aimed—directly or indirectly—at helping the reader reach true happiness by using those views to foster skillful intentions in his or her own life.

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March, 2001

## The Group of Ones

§ 1. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality? Abandon greed as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return.”\*\* This is the meaning of what the Blessed One said. So with regard to this it was said: \**

The greed with which  
beings go to a bad destination,\*\*  
coveting:  
from rightly discerning that greed,  
those who see clearly  
let go.  
Letting go,  
they never come to this world  
again.

*This, too, was the meaning of what was said by the Blessed One, so I have heard.\**

NOTES: \*These two statements are repeated in each discourse. To avoid monotony, they are given here only in the first and last discourses.

\*\*Non-return: The third of the four levels of Awakening. On reaching this level, one will never be reborn in this world. A non-returner who does not go on to attain Arahantship in this lifetime will be reborn in the Brahma worlds called the Pure Abodes and will attain nibbana there.

\*\*\*The bad destinations rebirth in hell, as a hungry shade, as an angry demon, or as a common animal. As with the good destinations—rebirth as a human being, in heaven, or in the Brahma worlds—these states are impermanent and dependent on *kamma*.

§ 2. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality? Abandon aversion as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return.”*

The aversion with which  
beings go to a bad destination,  
upset:  
from rightly discerning that aversion,  
those who see clearly  
let go.  
Letting go,

they never come to this world  
again.

§ 3. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality? Abandon delusion as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return."*

The delusion with which  
beings go to a bad destination,  
confused:  
from rightly discerning that delusion,  
those who see clearly  
let go.  
Letting go,  
they never come to this world  
again.

§ 4. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality? Abandon anger as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return."*

The anger with which  
beings go to a bad destination,  
enraged:  
from rightly discerning that anger,  
those who see clearly  
let go.  
Letting go,  
they never come to this world  
again.

§ 5. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality? Abandon contempt as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return."*

The contempt with which  
beings go to a bad destination,  
disdainful:  
from rightly discerning that contempt,  
those who see clearly  
let go.

Letting go,  
they never come to this world  
again.

§ 6. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Abandon one quality, monks, and I guarantee you non-return. Which one quality? Abandon conceit as the one quality, and I guarantee you non-return."*

The conceit with which  
beings go to a bad destination,  
proud:  
from rightly discerning that conceit,  
those who see clearly  
let go.  
Letting go,  
they never come to this world  
again.

§ 7. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Monks, one who has not fully known & fully understood the All,\* whose mind has not been cleansed of passion for it, has not abandoned it, is incapable of putting an end to stress. But one who has fully known & fully understood the All, whose mind has been cleansed of passion for it, has abandoned it, is capable of putting an end to stress."*

Knowing the All  
from all around,  
not stirred by passion  
for anything at all:  
he, having comprehended  
the All,  
has gone beyond  
all stress.

\*NOTE: "The All" = the six senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, & ideation) and their respective objects. This covers every aspect of experience that can be described, but does not include *nibbana*. For a full discussion of this point, see *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*, pp. 30-32.

§ 8. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Monks, one who has not fully known & fully understood conceit, whose mind has not*

been cleansed of it, has not abandoned it, is incapable of putting an end to stress. But one who has fully known & fully understood conceit, whose mind has been cleansed of it, has abandoned it, is capable of putting an end to stress."

People are  
    possessed by conceit  
    tied up with conceit  
    delighted with becoming.  
Not comprehending conceit,  
they come to becoming again.  
But those who, letting go of conceit,  
are, in its destruction, released,  
conquering the bond of conceit,  
    go beyond  
all bonds.

§ 9. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "Monks, one who has not fully known & fully understood greed, who has not detached his mind from it and let go of it, is incapable of putting an end to stress. But one who has fully known & fully understood greed, who has detached his mind from it and let go of it, is capable of putting an end to stress."

The greed with which  
beings go to a bad destination,  
    coveting:  
from rightly discerning that greed,  
those who see clearly  
    let go.  
    Letting go,  
they never come to this world  
    again.

§ 10-13. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "Monks, one who has not fully known & fully understood aversion ... delusion ... anger ... contempt, who has not detached his mind from it and let go of it, is incapable of putting an end to stress. But one who has fully known & fully understood aversion ... delusion ... anger ... contempt, who has detached his mind from it and let go of it, is capable of putting an end to stress."

[The verses for these discourses = those for discourses 2-5.]

§14. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, I don’t envision even one other obstruction—obstructed by which people go wandering & transmigrating on for a long, long time—like the obstruction of ignorance. Obstructed with the obstruction of ignorance, people go wandering & transmigrating on for a long, long time.”*

No one other thing  
so obstructs people  
that they wander on, day & night,  
as when they’re ensnared  
with delusion.  
But those who, letting go of delusion,  
shatter the mass of darkness,  
wander no further.  
Their cause isn’t found.

§15. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, I don’t envision even one other fetter—fettered by which beings conjoined go wandering & transmigrating on for a long, long time—like the fetter of craving. Fettered with the fetter of craving, beings conjoined go wandering & transmigrating on for a long, long time.”*

With craving his companion, a man  
wanders on a long, long time.  
Neither in this state here  
nor anywhere else  
does he go beyond  
the wandering- on.  
Knowing this drawback—  
that craving brings stress into play—  
free from craving,  
devoid of clinging,  
mindful, the monk  
lives the mendicant life.

*See also: SN XXI.10; SN XXXV.63; Dhp 353; Iti 105; Sn I.3*

§16. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “With regard to internal factors, I don’t envision any other single factor like appropriate attention\* as doing so much for a monk in training,\* who has not attained the heart’s goal but remains intent on the unsurpassed safety from bondage.\*\* A monk who attends appropriately abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful.*

Appropriate attention  
as a quality  
of a monk in training:  
nothing else  
does so much  
for attaining the superlative goal.  
A monk, striving appropriately,  
attains the ending of stress.

NOTES: \* Appropriate attention (*yoniso manasikara*) is the ability to focus attention on questions that lead to the end of suffering. M.2 lists the following questions as not fit for attention: “Was I in the past? Was I not in the past? What was I in the past? How was I in the past? ....Shall I be in the future? Shall I not be in the future? What shall I be in the future? How shall I be in the future? .... Am I? Am I not? What am I? How am I? Where has this being come from? Where is it bound?” The discourse also lists the following issues as fit for attention: “This is stress. This is the origination of stress. This is the cessation of stress. This is the way leading to the cessation of stress.”

\*\*A person “in training” is one who has attained at least the first level of Awakening, but not yet the final level.

\*\*\*Bondage = the four yokes: sensual passion, becoming, views, & ignorance.

§17. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “With regard to external factors, I don’t envision any other single factor like friendship with admirable people\* as doing so much for a monk in training, who has not attained the heart’s goal but remains intent on the unsurpassed safety from bondage. A monk who is a friend with admirable people abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful.”*

A monk who’s a friend  
to admirable people  
—who’s reverential, respectful,  
doing what his friends advise—  
mindful, alert,

attains step by step  
the ending of all fetters.

\*NOTE: In SN XLV.2 the Buddha says, "Having admirable people (*kalyana-mitta*) as friends, companions, and colleagues is actually the whole of the holy life. When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, and colleagues, he may be expected to develop and pursue the noble eightfold path....It is in dependence on me as an admirable friend that beings subject to birth have gained release from birth...aging...death...sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair."

*See also: AN V.180; AN IX.1; Iti 76; Ud IV.1*

§18. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "One thing, when arising in the world, arises for the detriment of many, for the unhappiness of many, for the detriment & unhappiness of many beings, both human & divine. Which one thing? Schism in the Sangha. When the Sangha is split, there are arguments with one another, there is abuse of one another, ganging up on one another, abandoning of one another. Then those with little confidence [in the teaching] lose all confidence, while some of those who are confident become otherwise."*

Doomed for an aeon  
to deprivation,  
to hell:  
one who has split the Sangha.  
Delighting in factions,  
unjudicious—  
he's barred  
from safety from bondage.  
Having split a Sangha in concord,  
he cooks for an aeon  
in hell.

§19. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "One thing, when arising in the world, arises for the welfare of many, for the happiness of many, for the welfare & happiness of many beings, both human & divine. Which one thing? Concord in the Sangha. When the Sangha is in concord, there are no arguments with one another, no abuse of one another, no ganging up on one another, no abandoning of one another. Then those with little confidence [in the teaching] become confident, while those already confident become even more so."*

Blissful is concord in the Sangha.  
One who assists in concord—  
    delighting in concord,  
    judicious—  
isn't barred from safety from bondage.  
Having brought concord to the Sangha,  
he rejoices for an aeon  
    in heaven.

§20. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There is the case where a certain person is a corrupt-minded. Having encompassed that mind with [my] awareness, I discern, 'If this person were to die at this instant, then as if he were to be carried off, he would thus be placed in hell.' Why is that? Because his mind is corrupt. It's because of corrupt-mindedness that there are cases where beings—at the break-up of the body, after death—reappear in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell."*

Knowing the case  
of a corrupt-minded person,  
the One Awakened explained its meaning  
in the presence of the monks.  
If that person  
were to die at this instant,  
he'd reappear in hell  
because his mind is corrupt—  
    as if he were carried off  
    and placed there.  
It's because of corrupt-mindedness  
that beings go  
to a bad destination.

§21. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There is the case where a certain person is a clear-minded. Having encompassed that mind with [my] awareness, I discern, 'If this person were to die at this instant, then as if he were to be carried off, he would thus be placed in heaven.' Why is that? Because his mind is clear. It's because of clear-mindedness that there are cases where beings—at the break-up of the body, after death—reappear in the heavenly world."*

Knowing the case  
of a clear-minded person,

the One Awakened explained its meaning  
in the presence of the monks.  
If that person  
were to die at this instant,  
he'd reappear in heaven  
because his mind is clear—  
    as if he were carried off  
    and placed there.  
It's because of clear-mindedness  
    that beings go  
    to a good destination.

§22. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Monks, don't be afraid of acts of merit. This is another way of saying what is blissful, desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming—i.e., acts of merit. I am cognizant that, having long performed meritorious deeds, I long experienced desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming results. Having developed a mind of good will for seven years, then for seven aeons of contraction & expansion I didn't return to this world. Whenever the aeon was contracting, I went to the realm of Streaming Radiance. Whenever the aeon was expanding, I reappeared in an empty Brahma-abode. There I was the Great Brahman, the Unconquered Conqueror, All-seeing, & Wielder of Power. Then for thirty-six times I was Sakka, ruler of the gods. For many hundreds of times I was a king, a wheel-turning emperor, a righteous king of Dhamma, conqueror of the four corners of the earth, maintaining stable control over the countryside, endowed with the seven treasures\*—to say nothing of the times I was a local king. The thought occurred to me: 'Of what action of mine is this the fruit, of what action the result, that I now have such great power & might?' Then the thought occurred to me: 'This is the fruit of my three [types of] action, the result of three types of action, that I now have such great power & might: i.e., generosity, self-control, & restraint.'"*

Train in acts of merit  
that bring long-lasting bliss—  
develop generosity,  
    a life in tune,  
    a mind of good-will.  
Developing these  
three things  
that bring about bliss,  
    the wise reappear  
    in a world of bliss  
unalloyed.

\*NOTE: The seven treasures are a divine wheel, an ideal jewel, an ideal elephant, an ideal horse, an ideal wife, an ideal treasurer, an ideal counselor.

*See also SN III.4, 17, 20, 25; Iti 60*

§23. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "This one quality, if developed & pursued, keeps both kinds of benefit secure: benefits in this life & benefits in lives to come. Which one quality? Heedfulness with regard to skillful qualities. This is the one quality that, if developed & pursued, keeps both kinds of benefit secure: benefits in this life & benefits in lives to come."*

They praise heedfulness, the wise,  
in doing acts of merit.  
When heedful, wise,  
you achieve both kinds of benefit:  
    benefits      in this life,  
    & benefits    in lives to come.

By breaking through to your benefit,  
you're called enlightened,  
    wise.

See also: SN III.17; SN XX.6; AN IV.113; AN VI.19-20; AN X.15; DhP 21-32

§24. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "If a single person were to wander & transmigrate on for an aeon, he/she would leave behind a chain of bones, a pile of bones, a heap of bones, as large as this Mount Vepulla, if there were someone to collect them and the collection were not destroyed."*

The accumulation  
of a single person's  
bones for an aeon  
would be a heap  
on a par with the mountain,  
so said the Great Seer.  
    (He declared this to be  
    the great Mount Vepulla  
    to the north of Vulture's Peak  
    in the mountain-ring  
    of the Magadhans.)\*  
But when that person sees

with right discernment  
the four Noble Truths—  
    stress,  
    the cause of stress,  
    the transcending of stress,  
    & the Noble Eightfold Path,  
    the way to the stilling of stress—  
having wandered on  
seven times at most, then,  
    with the ending of all fetters,  
        he puts a stop  
        to stress.

\*NOTE: Magadha was a kingdom in the time of the Buddha, corresponding roughly to the present day state of Bihar. Its capital city, Rajagaha, was surrounded by a ring of five mountains. Vulture's Peak, a secluded rock outcrop in the middle of the ring, was a spot frequented by the Buddha.

*See also: SN XV.3*

§25. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "For the person who transgresses in one thing, I tell you, there is no evil deed that is not to be done. Which one thing? This: telling a deliberate lie."*

The person who lies,  
who transgress in this one thing,  
transcending concern for the world beyond:  
    there's no evil  
        he might not do.

§26. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "If beings knew, as I know, the results of giving & sharing, they would not eat without having given, nor would the stain of selfishness overcome their minds. Even if it were their last bite, their last mouthful, they would not eat without having shared, if there were someone to receive their gift. But because beings do not know, as I know, the results of giving & sharing, they eat without having given. The stain of selfishness overcomes their minds."*

If beings knew  
what the Great Seer said,  
how the result of sharing  
has such great fruit,

then, subduing the stain of selfishness  
with brightened awareness,  
they'd give in season  
    to the noble ones,  
    where a gift bears great fruit.  
Having given food  
    as an offering  
    to those worthy of offerings,  
many donors,  
when they pass away from here,  
    the human state,  
go  
    to heaven.  
They, having gone there  
    to heaven,  
        rejoice,  
    enjoying sensual pleasures.  
Unselfish, they  
partake of the result  
        of sharing.

*See also: SN I.41; AN V.34; AN V.36-37; AN VII.49*

§27. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "All the grounds for making merit leading to spontaneously arising (in heaven) do not equal one-sixteenth of the release of awareness through good will. Good will—surpassing them—shines, blazes, & dazzles.*

*"Just as the radiance of all the stars does not equal one-sixteenth of the radiance of the moon, as the moon—surpassing them—shines, blazes, & dazzles, even so, all the grounds for making merit leading to spontaneously arising in heaven do not equal one-sixteenth of the release of awareness through good will. Good will—surpassing them—shines, blazes, & dazzles.*

*"Just as in the last month of the rains, in autumn, when the sky is clear & cloudless, the sun, on ascending the sky, overpowers the space immersed in darkness, shines, blazes, & dazzles, even so, all the grounds for making merit leading to spontaneously arising in heaven do not equal one-sixteenth of the release of awareness through good will. Good will—surpassing them—shines, blazes, & dazzles.*

*"Just as in the pre-dawn darkness the morning star shines, blazes, & dazzles, even so, all the grounds for making merit leading to spontaneously arising in heaven do not equal one-sixteenth of the release of awareness through good will. Good will—surpassing them—shines, blazes, & dazzles."*

When one develops—mindful—  
good will without limit,  
fetters are worn through,  
on seeing the ending  
of acquisitions.

If with uncorrupted mind  
you feel good will  
    for even      one being,  
you become skilled from that.  
But a Noble One produces  
    a mind of sympathy  
    for            all beings,  
    an abundance of merit.

Kingly seers, who conquered the earth  
    swarming with beings,  
went about making sacrifices:  
    the horse sacrifice, human sacrifice,  
    water rites, soma rites,  
    & the “Unobstructed,”  
but these don’t equal  
one sixteenth  
of a well-developed mind of good will—  
as all the constellations don’t,  
one sixteenth  
of the radiance of the moon.

One who      neither kills  
                nor gets others to kill,  
                neither conquers,  
                nor gets others to conquer,  
with good will for all beings,  
has no hostility with anyone  
                at all.

*See also: SN XLII.8; AN III.66; AN V.27; AN XI.16; Khp 9*

## The Group of Twos

§28. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Endowed with two things, a monk lives in stress in the present life—troubled, distressed, & feverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, a bad destination can be expected. Which two? A lack of guarding of the doors of the sense faculties, and knowing no moderation in food. Endowed with these two things, a monk lives in stress in the present life—troubled, distressed, & feverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, a bad destination can be expected.”

Eye & ear & nose,  
tongue & body & mind:  
when a monk leaves these doors unguarded  
—knowing no moderation in food,  
not restraining his senses—  
he experiences stress:  
stress in body, stress  
in mind.  
Burning in body  
burning in mind,  
whether by day or by night,  
he lives  
in suffering & stress.

§29. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Endowed with two things, a monk lives in ease in the present life—untroubled, undistressed, & unfeverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, a good destination can be expected. Which two? A guarding of the doors of the sense faculties, and knowing moderation in food. Endowed with these two things, a monk lives in ease in the present life—untroubled, undistressed, & unfeverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, a good destination can be expected.”

Eye & ear & nose,  
tongue & body & mind:  
when a monk has these doors well guarded  
—knowing moderation in food,  
restraining his senses—  
he experiences ease:  
ease in body, ease  
in mind.  
Not burning in body,  
not burning in mind,

whether by day or by night,  
he lives  
in ease.

§30. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these two things that cause remorse. Which two? There is the case of the person who has not done what is admirable, has not done what is skillful, has not given protection to those in fear, and instead has done what is evil, savage, & cruel. Thinking, 'I have not done what is admirable,' he feels remorse. Thinking, 'I have done what is evil,' he feels remorse. These are the two things that cause remorse."*

Having engaged  
in bodily misconduct,  
verbal misconduct,  
misconduct of mind,\*  
or whatever else is flawed,  
not having done what is skillful,  
having done much that is not,  
at the break-up of the body,  
the undiscerning one reappears in  
hell.

\*NOTE: A.x.176 defines bodily misconduct as killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct; verbal misconduct as lies, divisive speech, harsh speech, and idle chatter; and mental misconduct as covetousness, ill will, and wrong views (see the note to §32).

*See also: AN IV.184*

§31. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these two things that cause no remorse. Which two? There is the case of the person who has done what is admirable, has done what is skillful, has given protection to those in fear, and has done nothing that is evil, savage, or cruel. Thinking, 'I have done what is admirable,' he feels no remorse. Thinking, 'I have not done what is evil,' he feels no remorse. These are the two things that cause no remorse."*

Having abandoned  
bodily misconduct,  
verbal misconduct,  
misconduct of mind,

& whatever else is flawed,  
not having done what's not skillful,  
having done much that is,  
at the break-up of the body,  
the discerning one reappears  
in heaven.

§32. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Endowed with two things, a person—as if carried off—is thus placed in hell. Which two? Evil habits & evil views. Endowed with these two things, a person—as if carried off—is thus placed in hell."*

Evil habits &  
evil views:\*

a person, undiscerning,  
endowed with these two things,  
at the break-up of the body  
reappears in hell.

\*NOTE: M.117 gives the following example of an evil view: "There is nothing given, nothing offered, nothing sacrificed. There is no fruit or result of good or bad actions. There is no this world, no next world, no mother, no father, no spontaneously reborn beings; no priests or contemplatives who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves."

§33. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Endowed with two things, a person—as if carried off—is thus placed in heaven. Which two? Auspicious habits & auspicious views. Endowed with these two things, a person—as if carried off—is thus placed in heaven."*

Auspicious habits &  
auspicious views:

a person, discerning,  
endowed with these two things,  
at the break-up of the body  
reappears in heaven.

§ 34. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "A person without ardor, without concern [for the results of doing evil], is incapable of self-awakening, incapable of Unbinding, incapable of attaining the unsurpassed*

safety from bondage. A person ardent & concerned is capable of self-awakening, capable of Unbinding, capable of attaining the unsurpassed safety from bondage.”

With no ardor, no  
concern,  
lazy, with low persistence,  
full of sloth & drowsiness,  
shameless, without respect:  
he’s incapable,  
a monk like this,  
of touching superlative  
self-awakening.

But whoever is mindful, masterful,  
absorbed in jhana,  
ardent, concerned, & heedful,  
cutting the fetter of birth & aging,  
touches right here  
a self-awakening un-  
surpassed.

§ 35. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, this holy life is lived, not for the sake of deceiving people, not for the sake of inveigling people, not for the sake of the rewards of gain, offerings, & tribute, nor with the thought, ‘Thus may people know me.’ This holy life is lived for the sake of restraint & abandoning.”*

For the sake of restraint,  
for the sake of abandoning,  
he, the Blessed One, taught  
a holy life not handed down,\*  
leading to  
—plunging into—  
Unbinding.

This path is pursued  
by those great in purpose,  
great seers.  
Those who follow it,  
as taught by the One Awakened,  
heeding the Teacher’s message,  
will put an end  
to suffering & stress.

\*NOTE: “Not handed down”: not derived from an ancient tradition, and not dependent on ancient tradition for its authority.

§ 36. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, this holy life is lived, not for the sake of deceiving people, not for the sake of inveigling people, not for the sake of the rewards of gain, offerings, & tribute, nor with the thought, ‘Thus may people know me.’ This holy life is lived for the sake of direct knowledge\* & full comprehension.”*

For the sake of direct knowledge & full  
comprehension,  
he, the Blessed One, taught  
a holy life not handed down,  
leading to  
—plunging into—  
Unbinding.

This path is pursued  
by those great in purpose,  
great seers.  
Those who follow it,  
as taught by the One Awakened,  
heeding the Teacher’s message,  
will put an end  
to suffering & stress.

\*NOTE: Direct knowledge = *abhiññā*. The Canon lists six types of *abhiññā*: psychic powers, clairaudience, the ability to read the minds of others, recollection of past lives, clairvoyance, and—most important of all—knowledge of the ending of the mental fermentations.

§37. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Endowed with two things, a monk lives in ease in the present life and is appropriately aroused for the ending of the fermentations. Which two? A sense of urgency & awe toward things that should inspire urgency & awe\* and, feeling urgency & awe, appropriate exertion. Endowed with two things, a monk lives in ease in the present life and is appropriately aroused for the ending of the fermentations.”*

Feeling urgency, awe,  
toward what should inspire it,  
the wise,

masterful,  
ardent monk  
should investigate  
with discernment.  
One who lives thus ardently,  
not restlessly, at peace,  
committed to awareness-tranquility  
would attain the ending  
of suffering & stress.

\*NOTE: Urgency & awe = *samvega*. Other meanings for this term include shock, dismay, & alienation. In the Pali Canon, this emotion is often accompanied by fear and a sensed need to escape from overwhelming danger. The things that should inspire urgency & awe are the first four of the five reflections listed in A.v.57: "I am subject to aging, have not gone beyond aging. I am subject to illness, have not gone beyond illness. I am subject to death, have not gone beyond death. I will grow different, separate from all that is dear & appealing to me." Appropriate exertion is indicated by the fifth reflection: "I am the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have by actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir."

§38. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Two trains of thought often occur to the Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened: the thought of safety & that of seclusion.*

*"The Tathagata enjoys non-ill will, delights in non-ill will. To him—enjoying non-ill will, delighting in non-ill will—this thought often occurs: 'By this activity I harm no one at all, whether weak or firm.'*

*"The Tathagata enjoys seclusion, delights in seclusion. To him—enjoying seclusion, delighting in seclusion—this thought often occurs: 'Whatever is unskillful is abandoned.'*

*"Thus, monks, you too should live enjoying non-ill will, delighting in non-ill will. To you—enjoying non-ill will, delighting in non-ill will—this thought will often occur: 'By this activity we harm no one at all, whether weak or firm.'*

*"You too should live enjoying seclusion, delighting in seclusion. To you—enjoying seclusion, delighting in seclusion—this thought will often occur: 'What is unskillful? What is not yet abandoned? What are we abandoning?'"*

To the Tathagata,  
awakened,  
who endured what is hard to endure,  
two thoughts occur:  
safety            the first thought mentioned;



you will put an end  
to suffering & stress.

§40. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:*

“Ignorance\* precedes the arrival of unskillful qualities; lack of conscience & lack of concern\*\* follow after. Clear knowing precedes the arrival of skillful qualities; conscience & concern follow after.”

Any bad destinations  
in this world, in the next,  
are rooted in ignorance—all—  
accumulations  
of desire & greed.

And when a person of evil desires  
lacks conscience & respect,  
evil comes from that,  
and by that he goes  
to deprivation.

So cleansing away  
ignorance, desire, & greed,  
a monk giving rise to clear knowing  
would abandon all bad destinations.

NOTES: \*Ignorance (*avijja*) means ignorance of stress, its origination, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation.

\*\* Conscience (*hiri*) means a healthy sense of shame—derived from self-esteem—at the idea of doing evil. Concern (*ottappa*) means fear of the consequences of doing evil.

§41. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Those beings are truly deprived who are deprived of noble discernment. They live in stress in the present life—troubled, distressed, & feverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, a bad destination can be expected.

“Those beings are not deprived who are not deprived of noble discernment. They live in ease in the present life—untroubled, undistressed, & not feverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, a good destination can be expected.

Look at the world  
—including its heavenly beings:  
deprived of discernment,

making an abode in name-&-form,  
it conceives that 'This is the truth.'  
The best discernment in the world  
is what leads  
    to penetration,  
for it rightly discerns  
the total ending of birth & becoming.

Human & heavenly beings  
hold them dear:  
those who are      self-awakened,  
                                  mindful,  
bearing their last bodies  
with joyful discernment.

§42. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "There are these two bright qualities that safeguard the world. Which two? Conscience & concern [for the results of evil actions]. If these two bright qualities did not safeguard the world, there would be no discerning of "mother," "aunt," "uncle's wife," "teacher's wife," or "wife of those deserving respect." The world would fall into promiscuity, like goats, sheep, chickens, pigs, dogs, & jackals. But because these two bright qualities do safeguard the world, there is the discerning of "mother," "aunt," "uncle's wife," "teacher's wife," & "wife of those deserving respect."

Those in whom  
concern & conscience  
are not always found  
    have strayed  
                  from the bright root,  
are headed  
    to birth & death.  
But those in whom  
concern & conscience  
are rightly established always,  
who are mature in the holy life:  
    they are calm,  
    their further becoming  
    ended.

§ 43. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "There is, monks, an unborn—unbecome—unmade—unfabricated. If there were not that





§45. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, live enjoying aloofness, delighting in aloofness, inwardly committed to awareness-tranquility, not neglecting jhana, endowed with clear-seeing insight, and frequenting empty buildings. As you live enjoying aloofness, delighting in aloofness, inwardly committed to awareness-tranquility, not neglecting jhana, endowed with clear-seeing insight, and frequenting empty buildings, then one of two fruits can be expected: either gnosis right in the present life, or—if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance—non-return.”*

Those with calm minds—  
    masterful,  
    mindful,  
    absorbed in jhana—  
clearly see things rightly,  
not intent on sensual pleasures.  
Delighting in heedfulness,  
    calm,  
seeing danger in heedlessness, they  
    —incapable of falling away—  
are right on the verge of Unbinding.

§46. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, live with the trainings [in heightened virtue, heightened mind, & heightened discernment] as your reward, with discernment uppermost, release the essence, & mindfulness the governing principle. As you live with the trainings as your reward, with discernment uppermost, release the essence, & mindfulness the governing principle, then one of two fruits can be expected: either gnosis right in the present life, or—if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance—non-return.”*

Complete in the training,  
not subject to falling away,  
one with discernment  
    uppermost,  
seeing the stopping, the ending of birth:  
    that sage  
bears his last body,  
has shaken off Mara, I tell you,  
has gone beyond aging.  
    So, always  
delighting in jhana,  
    centered,  
    ardent,

seeing the stopping, the ending of birth,  
conquering Mara, along with his host,  
monks,  
be gone-beyond aging & death.

§47. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “A monk should be wakeful: mindful, alert, centered, sensitive, clear, & calm. And there he should, at the appropriate times, see clearly into skillful mental qualities. For a monk who is wakeful—mindful, alert, centered, sensitive, clear, & calm, seeing clearly, at the appropriate times, into skillful mental qualities—one of two fruits can be expected: either gnosis right in the present life, or—if there be any remnant of clinging-sustenance—non-return.”*

Those who are wakeful, listen!  
Those who are sleeping, wake up!  
Wakefulness is better than sleep.  
For those who are wakeful,  
there’s no danger, no fear.  
Whoever is wakeful,  
mindful, alert,  
centered, sensitive,  
calm, & clear,  
rightly exploring the Dhamma  
at appropriate times,  
will—at oneness—  
shatter the darkness.

So be devoted to wakefulness.  
The ardent monk  
—masterful, acquiring jhana,  
cutting the fetter of birth & aging—  
touches right here  
a self-awakening un-  
surpassed.

*See also: SN III.17; AN IV.37; Sn II.10*

§48. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Monks, these two are doomed to deprivation, to hell, for not abandoning their conduct. Which two? One who, not living the celibate life, pretends to be one who lives the celibate life; and one who groundlessly accuses one who lives the celibate life perfectly & purely of uncelibate behavior. These are the two who are doomed to*

deprivation, to hell, for not abandoning their conduct.”

He goes to hell,  
the one who asserts  
what didn't take place,  
as does the one  
who, having done,  
says, 'I didn't.'

Both—low-acting people—  
there become equal:  
after death, in the world beyond.

An ochre robe tied 'round their necks,  
many with evil qualities  
—unrestrained, evil—  
rearise, because of their evil acts,  
in hell.

Better to eat an iron ball  
—glowing, aflame—  
than that, unprincipled &  
unrestrained,  
you should eat the alms of the country.

§ 49. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:*

“Overcome by two viewpoints, some human & divine beings adhere, other human & divine beings slip right past, while those with vision see.

“And how do some adhere? Human & divine beings enjoy becoming, delight in becoming, are satisfied with becoming. When the Dhamma is being taught for the sake of the cessation of becoming, their minds do not take to it, are not calmed by it, do not settle on it or become resolved on it. This is how some adhere.

“And how do some slip right past? Some, feeling horrified, humiliated, & disgusted with that very becoming, relish non-becoming: ‘When this self, at the break-up of the body, after death, perishes & is destroyed, and does not exist after death, that is peaceful, that is exquisite, that is sufficiency!’ This is how some slip right past.

“And how do those with vision see? There is the case where a monk sees what has come into being as come into being. Seeing what has come into being as come into being, he practices for disenchantment with what has come into being, dispassion toward what has come into being, cessation of what has come into being. This is how those with vision see.”\*

Those, having seen  
what's come to be  
    as what's come to be,  
and what's gone beyond  
    what's come to be,  
are released in line  
    with what's come to be,  
through the exhaustion of craving  
    for becoming.

If they've comprehended  
    what's come to be,  
and are free from the craving  
    for becoming & non-,  
    with the non-becoming  
    of what's come to be,  
    monks come  
    to no further becoming.

\*NOTE: This discourse illustrates, in a technical fashion, the function of appropriate attention explained in the note to §16. S.xii.15 presents the same point from a different perspective: "This world takes as its object a polarity, that of existence & non-existence. But when one sees the origination of the world (= the six senses and their objects) as it actually is with right discernment, 'non-existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one. When one sees the cessation of the world as it actually is with right discernment, 'existence' with reference to the world does not occur to one. By & large, this world is in bondage to attachments, clingings, & biases. But one such as this does not get involved with or cling to these attachments, clingings, fixations of awareness, biases, or obsessions; nor is he resolved on 'my self.' He has no uncertainty or doubt that, when there is arising, only stress is arising; and that when there is passing away, only stress is passing away. In this, his knowledge is independent of others."

*See also: MN 106; SN XXII.55; Ud III.10; Sn V.5*

## The Group of Threes

§ 50. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three roots of what is unskillful. Which three? Greed as a root of what is unskillful, aversion as a root of what is unskillful, delusion as a root of what is unskillful. These are the three roots of what is unskillful."*

Greed, aversion, delusion destroy  
the self-same person of evil mind  
from whom they are born,  
    like the fruiting  
of the bamboo.

§51. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three properties. Which three? The property of form, the property of formlessness, & the property of cessation.\* These are the three properties."*

Comprehending the property of form,  
not taking a stance in the formless,  
those released in cessation  
are people who've left death        behind.

Having touched with his body  
the deathless  
property                free  
from acquisitions,  
having realized the relinquishing  
of acquisitions,  
    fermentation-free,  
the Rightly  
Self-awakened One  
teaches the state  
    with    no sorrow,  
    no dust.

\*NOTE: The property of form corresponds to the experience of the form of the body as present in the first four levels of jhana (see Glossary). The property of formlessness corresponds to the formless experiences based on the fourth level of jhana: the sphere of the infinitude of space, the sphere of the infinitude of consciousness, the sphere of nothingness, and the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception. The property of cessation is the experience of the total cessation of stress.

*See also: Iti 72-73*

§ 52. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three feelings. Which three? A feeling of pleasure, a feeling of pain, a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain. These are the three feelings."*

Centered,  
mindful,  
alert,  
the Awakened One's  
disciple  
discerns feelings,  
how feelings come into play,  
where they cease,  
& the path to their ending.

With the ending of feelings, a monk  
free of want  
is totally unbound.

§ 53. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three feelings. Which three? A feeling of pleasure, a feeling of pain, a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain. A feeling of pleasure should be seen as stressful. A feeling of pain should be seen as an arrow. A feeling of neither pleasure nor pain should be seen as inconstant. When a monk has seen a feeling of pleasure as stressful, a feeling of pain as an arrow, and a feeling of neither pleasure nor pain as inconstant, then he is called a monk who is noble, who has seen rightly, who has cut off craving, destroyed the fetters, and who—from the right breaking-through of conceit—has put an end to suffering & stress."*

Whoever sees  
    pleasure as stress,  
sees pain as an arrow,  
sees peaceful neither-pleasure-nor-pain  
    as inconstant:  
he is a monk  
who's seen rightly.  
From that he is there set free.  
    A master of direct knowing,  
        at peace,  
he is a sage

gone beyond bonds.

*See also: MN 44; SN IIIVI.4; SN XXXVI.6*

§ 54. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three searches. Which three? The search for sensuality, the search for becoming, the search for a holy life. These are the three searches.”*

Centered,  
mindful,  
alert,  
the Awakened One’s  
disciple  
discerns searches,  
how searches come into play,  
where they cease,  
& the path to their ending.

With the ending of searches, a monk  
free of want  
is totally unbound.

*See also: MN 36; AN III.39; AN IV.252*

§ 55. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three searches. Which three? The search for sensuality, the search for becoming, the search for a holy life. These are the three searches.”*

Sensual search, becoming-search,  
together with the holy-life search—  
i.e., grasping at truth  
based on an accumulation  
of viewpoints:  
through the relinquishing of searches  
& the abolishing of viewpoints  
of one dispassionate to  
all passion,  
and released in the ending  
of craving,  
through the ending of searches, the monk  
is devoid of perplexity &  
desire.

§ 56. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three fermentations. Which three? The fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. These are the three fermentations."*

Centered,  
mindful,  
alert,  
the Awakened One's disciple  
discerns fermentations,  
how fermentations come into play,  
where they cease,  
& the path to their ending.

With the ending of fermentations, a monk  
free of want  
is totally unbound.

*See also: DN 2; MN 4*

§ 57. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three fermentations. Which three? The fermentation of sensuality, the fermentation of becoming, the fermentation of ignorance. These are the three fermentations."*

His fermentation of sensuality  
ended,  
his ignorance  
washed away,  
his fermentation of becoming  
exhausted:  
one totally released, acquisition-free,  
bears his last body,  
having conquered Mara  
along with his mount.

§ 58. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three cravings. Which three? Craving for sensuality, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming. These are the three cravings."*

Bound with the bondage of craving,

their minds smitten  
with becoming & non-,  
they are bound with the bondage of Mara—  
people with no safety from bondage,  
beings going through the wandering-on,  
headed for birth & death.

While those who've abandoned craving,  
free from the craving for becoming & non-,  
reaching the ending of fermentations,  
though in the world,  
have gone beyond.

§ 59. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Endowed with three qualities a monk has passed beyond Mara’s domain and shines like the sun. Which three? There is the case where a monk is endowed with the aggregate of virtue of one beyond training [i.e., an Arahant], the aggregate of concentration of one beyond training, the aggregate of discernment of one beyond training. Endowed with these three qualities a monk has passed beyond Mara’s domain and shines like the sun.”

Virtue, concentration, discernment:  
one in whom these are well-developed,  
passing beyond Mara’s domain,  
shines, shines  
like the sun.

§ 60. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “There are these three grounds for meritorious activity. Which three? The ground for meritorious activity made of generosity, the ground for meritorious activity made of virtue, and the ground for meritorious activity made of development [meditation]. These are the three grounds for meritorious activity.”

Train in acts of merit  
that bring long-lasting bliss—  
develop generosity,  
a life in tune,  
a mind of good-will.  
Developing these  
three things  
that bring about bliss,  
the wise reappear

in a world of bliss  
unalloyed.

*See also: SN III.4, 17, 20, 25; Iti 22*

§ 61. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three eyes. Which three? The eye of flesh, the divine eye [clairvoyance], & the eye of discernment. These are the three eyes."*

The eye of flesh,  
the eye divine,  
the eye of discernment  
unsurpassed:  
these three eyes were taught  
by the Superlative Person.  
The arising of the eye of flesh  
is the path to the eye divine.  
When knowledge arises,  
the eye of discernment unsurpassed:  
whoever gains this eye  
is—from all suffering & stress—  
set free.

§ 62. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three faculties. Which three? The faculty of 'I am about to know what is not yet finally known,' the faculty of final knowledge, the faculty of one who has finally known.\* These are the three faculties."*

For a learner in training  
along the straight path:  
first, the knowledge of ending;  
then, immediately,  
gnosis;  
then, from the ending  
of the fetter—becoming—  
there's the knowledge,  
the gnosis of one released  
who is Such:\*\*  
'My release is unshaken.'

One consummate in these faculties,  
peaceful,

enjoying the peaceful state,  
bears his last body,  
having conquered Mara  
along with his mount.

NOTES: \*According to the Commentary, the first of these faculties corresponds to the first noble attainment, the path to stream-entry; the second, to the next six attainments, ranging from the fruition of stream-entry to the path to Arahantship; and the third, to the highest attainment, the fruition of Arahantship.

\*\* Such (*tadi*): see the note to §44.

§ 63. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three times. Which three? Past time, future time, & present time. These are the three times."*

Perceiving in terms of signs, beings  
take a stand on signs.  
Not fully comprehending signs, they  
come into the bonds  
of death.  
But fully comprehending signs, one  
doesn't construe a signifier.  
Touching liberation with the heart,  
the state of peace unsurpassed,  
consummate in terms of signs,  
peaceful,  
enjoying the peaceful state,  
judicious,  
an attainer-of wisdom  
makes use of classifications  
but can't be classified.\*

\*NOTE: At first glance, the verses here do not bear much relationship to the prose introduction. However, if they are viewed in the context of M.2 (see the note to §16), their relationship becomes clear: the person who applies appropriate attention to the notion of past, present, and future time does not define him or herself in those terms, and so does not cling to any sense of self in those terms. Without clinging, one is liberated from birth and death.

§ 64. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three kinds of misconduct. Which three? Bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, mental misconduct.\* These are the three kinds of misconduct.”*

Having engaged  
in bodily misconduct,  
verbal misconduct,  
misconduct of mind,  
or whatever else is flawed,  
not having done what is skillful,  
having done much that is not,  
at the break-up of the body,  
the undiscerning one reappears in  
hell.

\*NOTE: See the note to §30.

§ 65. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three kinds of good conduct. Which three? Bodily good conduct, verbal good conduct, mental good conduct. These are the three kinds of good conduct.”*

Having abandoned  
bodily misconduct,  
verbal misconduct,  
misconduct of mind,  
& whatever else is flawed,  
not having done what’s not skillful,  
having done much that is,  
at the break-up of the body,  
the discerning one reappears  
in heaven.

§ 66. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three kinds of cleanliness. Which three? Bodily cleanliness, verbal cleanliness, mental cleanliness. These are the three kinds of cleanliness.”*

Clean in body,  
clean in speech,  
clean in awareness  
—fermentation-free—  
one who is clean,  
consummate in cleanliness,

is said to have abandoned  
the All.

*See also: MN 24*

§ 67. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three forms of sagacity. Which three? Bodily sagacity, verbal sagacity, & mental sagacity. These are the three forms of sagacity."*

A sage in body, a sage in speech,  
a sage in mind, fermentation-free:  
a sage consummate in sagacity  
is said to be bathed of evil.

*See also: AN III.123; Sn I.12*

§ 68. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Anyone whose passion is unabandoned, whose aversion is unabandoned, whose delusion is unabandoned is said to have gone over to Mara's camp, has come under Mara's power. The Evil One can do with that person as he likes. But anyone whose passion is abandoned, whose aversion is abandoned, whose delusion is abandoned is said not to have gone over to Mara's camp, has thrown off Mara's power. With that person, the Evil One cannot do as he likes."*

One whose passion, aversion, & ignorance  
are washed away,  
is said to be  
composed in mind,  
Brahma-become,  
awakened, Tathagata,  
one for whom fear & hostility  
are past,  
one who's abandoned  
the All.

§ 69. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Anyone—monk or nun—in whom passion is unabandoned, aversion is unabandoned, & delusion is unabandoned, is said not to have crossed the ocean with its waves, breakers, & whirlpools, its monsters & demons.\* Anyone—monk or nun—in whom passion is abandoned, aversion is abandoned, & delusion is abandoned, is said to have crossed the ocean with its waves, breakers, &*

whirlpools, its monsters & demons. Having crossed over, having reached the far shore, he/she stands on high ground, a brahman.”

One whose passion, aversion, & ignorance  
are washed away,  
has crossed over this ocean  
with its sharks,  
demons,  
dangerous waves,  
so hard to cross.

Free from acquisitions  
—bonds surmounted,  
death abandoned—  
he has abandoned stress  
with no further becoming.

Having gone to the goal  
he is undefined,\*\*  
has outwitted, I tell you,  
the King of Death.

NOTES: \*See § 109.

\*\* See §63.

§ 70. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “I have seen beings who—endowed with bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct; who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. It is not from having heard this from other priests & contemplatives that I tell you that I have seen beings who—endowed with bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct; who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. It is from having known it myself, seen it myself, realized it myself that I tell you that I have seen beings who—endowed with bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct; who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell.”*

With mind wrongly directed,  
speaking wrong speech,  
doing wrong deeds with the body:  
    a person here  
of little learning,  
a doer of evil  
    here in this life so short,  
at the break-up of the body,  
    undiscerning,  
    reappears in hell.

§ 71. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “I have seen beings who—endowed with bodily good conduct, verbal good conduct, & mental good conduct; who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destination, the heavenly world. It is not from having heard this from other priests & contemplatives that I tell you that I have seen beings who—endowed with bodily good conduct, verbal good conduct, & mental good conduct; who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destination, the heavenly world. It is from having known it myself, seen it myself, realized it myself that I tell you that I have seen beings who—endowed with bodily good conduct, verbal good conduct, & mental good conduct; who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destination, the heavenly world. ”*

With mind rightly directed,  
speaking right speech,  
doing right deeds with the body:  
    a person here  
of much learning,  
a doer of merit  
    here in this life so short,  
at the break-up of the body,  
    discerning,  
    reappears in heaven.

§72. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three properties for escape. Which three? This is the escape from sensuality: renunciation.\* This is the escape from form: formlessness. And as for whatever*

has come into being, is fabricated & dependently co-arisen, the escape from that is cessation. These are the three properties for escape.”

Knowing the escape from sensuality,  
& the overcoming of forms  
—ardent  
always—  
touching the stilling  
of all fabrications:  
                  he is a monk  
who’s seen rightly.

From that he is there set free.  
A master of direct knowing,  
                                  at peace,  
he is a sage  
gone beyond bonds.

\*NOTE: Renunciation here means the first level of jhana, which is attained when one is secluded from sensual passion and unskillful mental qualities. On formlessness and cessation, see the note to §51. See also AN V.200.

§73. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Formless phenomena are more peaceful than forms; cessation, more peaceful than formless phenomena.”*

Those beings headed to forms,  
and those standing in the formless,  
with no knowledge of cessation,  
return to further becoming.  
But, comprehending form,  
not taking a stance in formless things,  
those released in cessation  
are people who’ve left death        behind.

Having touched with his body  
the deathless property        free  
from acquisitions,  
having realized relinquishing  
of acquisitions,  
                  fermentation-free,  
the Rightly Self-awakened One  
teaches the state  
                  with    no sorrow,

no dust.

§74. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three types of sons & daughters existing in the world. Which three? One of heightened birth, one of similar birth, one of lowered birth.*

*"And how is a son or daughter of heightened birth? There is the case where a son or daughter's parents have not gone to the Buddha for refuge, have not gone to the Dhamma for refuge, have not gone to the Sangha for refuge. They do not abstain from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. They are unprincipled & evil by nature. However, their son or daughter has gone to the Buddha for refuge, has gone to the Dhamma for refuge, has gone to the Sangha for refuge. He/she abstains from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. He/she is principled & admirable by nature. This is called a son or daughter of heightened birth.*

*"And how is a son or daughter of similar birth? There is the case where a son or daughter's parents have gone to the Buddha for refuge, have gone to the Dhamma for refuge, have gone to the Sangha for refuge. They abstain from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. They are principled & admirable by nature. Their son or daughter has also gone to the Buddha for refuge, has gone to the Dhamma for refuge, has gone to the Sangha for refuge. He/she abstains from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. He/she is principled & admirable by nature. This is called a son or daughter of similar birth.*

*"And how is a son or daughter of lowered birth? There is the case where a son or daughter's parents have gone to the Buddha for refuge, have gone to the Dhamma for refuge, have gone to the Sangha for refuge. They abstain from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. They are principled & admirable by nature. However, their son or daughter has not gone to the Buddha for refuge, has not gone to the Dhamma for refuge, has not gone to the Sangha for refuge. He/she does not abstain from taking life, from stealing, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, from fermented & distilled liquors that cause heedlessness. He/she is unprincipled & evil by nature. This is called a son or daughter of lowered birth."*

The wise hope for a child  
of heightened or similar birth,  
not for one  
of lowered birth,

a disgrace to the family.  
These children in the world,  
lay followers,  
consummate in virtue, conviction;  
generous, free from stinginess,  
shine forth in any gathering  
like the moon  
when freed from a cloud.

§ 75. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "These three types of persons can be found existing in the world. Which three? One like a cloud without rain, one who rains locally, and one who rains everywhere.*

*"And how is a person like a cloud without rain? There is the case where a person is not a giver of food, drink, clothing, vehicles, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, or lights to any priests or contemplatives, to any of the miserable, the homeless, or beggars. This is how a person is like a cloud without rain.*

*"And how is a person one who rains locally? There is the case where a person is a giver of food, drink, clothing, vehicles, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, & lights to some priests & contemplatives, to some of the miserable, the homeless, & beggars, and not to others. This is how a person one who rains locally.*

*"And how is a person one who rains everywhere? There is the case where a person gives food, drink, clothing, vehicles, garlands, scents, ointments, beds, dwellings, & lights to all priests & contemplatives, to all of the miserable, the homeless, & beggars. This is how a person one who rains everywhere.*

*"These are the three types of persons who can be found existing in the world."*

Not to contemplatives,  
to priests,  
to the miserable,  
nor to the homeless  
does he share what he's gained:  
food,  
drinks,  
nourishment.  
He, that lowest of people,  
is called a cloud with no rain.

To some he gives,  
to others he doesn't:  
the intelligent call him  
one who rains locally.

A person responsive to requests,  
sympathetic to all beings,  
delighting in distributing alms:

“Give to them!

Give!”

he says.

As a cloud—resounding, thundering—rains,  
filling with water, drenching  
the plateaus & gullies:

a person like this

is like that.

Having rightly amassed  
wealth attained through initiative,  
he satisfies fully with food & drink  
those fallen into  
the homeless state.

§ 76. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Aspiring to these three forms of bliss, a wise person should guard his virtue. Which three? [Thinking,] ‘May praise come to me,’ a wise person should guard his virtue. [Thinking,] ‘May wealth come to me,’ a wise person should guard his virtue. [Thinking,] ‘At the break-up of the body, after death, may I reappear in a good destination, in heaven,’ a wise person should guard his virtue. Aspiring to these three forms of bliss, a wise person should guard his virtue.”*

Intelligent,  
you should guard your virtue,  
aspiring to three forms of bliss:  
praise;  
the obtaining of wealth;  
and, after death, rejoicing  
in heaven.

Even if you do no evil  
but seek out one who does,  
you’re suspected of evil.

Your bad reputation

grows.

The sort of person you make a friend,  
the sort you seek out,  
that’s the sort you yourself become—  
for your living together is of

that sort.

The one associated with,  
the one who associates,  
the one who's touched,  
the one who touches another  
—like an arrow smeared with poison—  
contaminates the quiver.  
So, fearing contamination, the enlightened  
should not be comrades  
with evil people.

A man who wraps rotting fish  
in a blade of kusa grass  
makes the grass smelly:  
so it is  
if you seek out fools.  
But a man who wraps powdered incense  
in the leaf of a tree  
makes the leaf fragrant:  
so it is  
if you seek out  
the enlightened.

So,  
knowing your own outcome  
as like the leaf-wrapper's,  
you shouldn't seek out  
those who aren't good.  
The wise would associate  
with those who are.  
Those who aren't good  
lead you to hell.  
The good help you reach  
a good destination.

*See also: AN VIII.54; AN IX.1; Ud IV.1*

§77. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "This body falls apart; consciousness is subject to fading; all acquisitions are inconstant, stressful, subject to change."*

Knowing the body                      as falling apart,

& consciousness                    as dissolving away,  
seeing the danger                in acquisitions,  
    you've gone beyond  
    birth & death.  
Having reached the foremost peace,  
    you bide your time,  
    composed.

§78. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "It is in accordance with their properties that beings come together & associate with one another. Beings of low dispositions come together & associate with beings of low dispositions. Beings of admirable dispositions come together & associate with beings of admirable dispositions. In the past, it was in accordance with their properties that beings came together & associated with one another .... In the future, it will be in accordance with their properties that beings will come together & associate with one another .... And now at present, it is in accordance with their properties that beings come together & associate with one another. Beings of low dispositions come together & associate with beings of low dispositions. Beings of admirable dispositions come together & associate with beings of admirable dispositions."*

The underbrush born  
of association  
is cut away  
by non-association.  
Just as one riding  
a small wooden plank  
    would sink  
in the great sea,  
so does even one of right living  
    sink,  
associating with the lazy.

So avoid the lazy,  
those with low persistence.  
Live with the noble ones—  
secluded, resolute, absorbed in jhana,  
their persistence constantly aroused  
    : the wise.

*See also: SN XLV.2*

§ 79. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “These three things lead to the falling away of a monk in training. Which three? There is the case where a monk in training enjoys activity,\* delights in activity, is intent on his enjoyment of activity. He enjoys chatter, delights in chatter, is intent on his enjoyment of chatter. He enjoys sleep, delights in sleep, is intent on his enjoyment of sleep. These are the three things that lead to the falling away of a monk in training.

“These three things lead to the non-falling away of a monk in training. Which three? There is the case where a monk in training doesn’t enjoy activity, doesn’t delight in activity, isn’t intent on his enjoyment of activity. He doesn’t enjoy chatter, doesn’t delight in chatter, isn’t intent on his enjoyment of chatter. He doesn’t enjoy sleep, doesn’t delight in sleep, isn’t intent on his enjoyment of sleep. These are the three things that lead to the non-falling away of a monk in training.”

Enjoying activity,  
delighting in chatter,  
enjoying sleep,  
& restless:  
    he’s incapable  
    —a monk like this—  
    of touching superlative  
self-awakening.  
So he should be a man of few duties,  
of little sloth,  
not restless.  
    He’s capable  
    —a monk like this—  
    of touching superlative  
self-awakening.

\*NOTE: Activity = work of various sorts, such as construction work, robe-making, etc.

§ 80. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “There are these three kinds of unskillful thinking. Which three? Thinking concerned with not wanting to be despised; thinking concerned with gains, offerings, & tribute; thinking concerned with an empathy for others.\* There are three kinds of unskillful thinking.”

Fettered  
to not wanting to be despised;  
to gains, offerings, respect;

to delight in companions:  
    you're far from the ending of fetters.  
But whoever here,  
having abandoned  
    sons,  
    cattle,  
    marriage,  
    intimates:  
        he's capable  
        —a monk like this—  
    of touching superlative  
self-awakening.

\*NOTE: According to the Commentary, this refers to a monk's tendency to be overly intimate with lay people, overly susceptible to the rises and falls in their fortunes, "happy when they are happy, sad when they are sad, busying himself with their affairs."

*See also: SN XVII.5; SN XVII.8; Thig V.6*

§ 81. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "I have seen beings conquered by receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. I have seen beings conquered by not receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. I have seen beings conquered both by receiving offerings & by not receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell.

"It's not through having heard it from other priests or contemplatives that I say, 'I have seen beings conquered by receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. I have seen beings conquered by not receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. I have seen beings conquered both by receiving offerings & by not receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell.'

"Instead, it's from having known it myself, seen it myself, observed it myself that I say, 'I have seen beings conquered by receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane

of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. I have seen beings conquered by not receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. I have seen beings conquered both by receiving offerings & by not receiving offerings—their minds overwhelmed—at the break-up of the body, after death, reappearing in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell.”

Both when receiving offerings  
& not:  
his concentration  
won't waver,  
he remains  
heedful:  
he—continually absorbed in jhana,  
subtle in view & clear-seeing,  
enjoying the ending of clinging—  
is called a man  
of integrity.

§ 82. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “These three divine sounds sound forth among the devas on appropriate occasions. Which three? When a disciple of the noble ones, shaving off his hair & beard, clothing himself in the ochre robe, makes up his mind to go forth from the home life into homelessness, on that occasion the divine sound sounds forth among the devas: ‘This disciple of the noble ones has made up his mind to do battle with Mara.’ This is the first divine sound that sounds forth among the devas on appropriate occasions.

“When a disciple of the noble ones lives devoted to developing the seven [sets of] qualities that are wings to Awakening,\* on that occasion the divine sound sounds forth among the devas: ‘This disciple of the noble ones is doing battle with Mara.’ This is the second divine sound that sounds forth among the devas on appropriate occasions.

“When a disciple of the noble ones, through the ending of fermentations dwells in the release of awareness & release of discernment that are free from fermentation, having known & made them manifest for himself right in the present life, on that occasion the divine sound sounds forth among the devas: ‘This disciple of the noble ones has won the battle. Having been in the front lines of the battle, he now dwells victorious.’ This is the third divine sound that sounds forth among the devas on appropriate occasions.

“These are the three divine sounds that sound forth among the devas on appropriate occasions.”



‘Go from here,  
honorably sir,  
to a good destination,  
to companionship  
with human beings.  
On becoming a human being,  
acquire a conviction  
unsurpassed  
in True Dhamma.  
That conviction of yours  
in True Dhamma, well-taught,  
should be settled,  
rooted,  
established,  
—undestroyed  
as long as you live.  
Having abandoned  
bodily misconduct,  
verbal misconduct,  
mental misconduct,  
and whatever else is flawed;  
having done with the body what’s skillful,  
and much that is skillful with speech,  
having done what’s skillful  
with a heart without limit,  
with no acquisitions,  
then—having made much  
of that basis of merit  
through generosity—  
establish other mortals  
in True Dhamma &  
the holy life.’

With this sympathy, the devas—  
when they know a deva is passing away—  
encourage him:

‘Come back, deva,  
again & again.’



among beings divine & human,  
giving light, proclaiming the Dhamma,  
    throw open the door to the Deathless,  
    release many from bondage.  
Those who follow the path,  
well-taught by the Caravan Leader  
    unsurpassed,  
will put an end to stress  
    right here—  
those heeding the message  
of the One Well-gone.

§ 85. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Remain focused, monks, on the foulness of the body. Have mindfulness of in-&-out breathing well established to the fore within you. Remain focused on the inconstancy of all fabrications. For one who remains focused on the foulness of the body, the obsession with passion for the property of beauty is abandoned. For one who has mindfulness of in-&-out breathing well established to the fore within oneself, annoying external thoughts & inclinations don’t exist. For one who remains focused on the inconstancy of all fabrications, ignorance is abandoned, clear knowing arises.”*

Focusing on foulness  
    in the body,  
mindful  
    of in & out breathing,  
seeing  
    the stilling of all fabrications  
    —ardent  
        always:  
    he is a monk  
who’s seen rightly.

From that he is there set free.  
    A master of direct knowing,  
    at peace,  
        he is a sage  
        gone beyond bonds.

*See also: DN 22; SN VIII.4*

§86. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "With reference to a monk who practices the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma, it is this way of according with the Dhamma that he should be described as practicing the Dhamma in accordance with the Dhamma. When speaking, he speaks Dhamma and not non-Dhamma. When thinking, he thinks about Dhamma and not about non-Dhamma. Avoiding both these things, he stays equanimous, mindful, alert."*

Dhamma his dwelling,  
Dhamma his delight,  
a monk pondering Dhamma,  
    calling Dhamma to mind,  
doesn't fall away  
from true Dhamma.

Whether      walking,  
                 standing,  
                 sitting, or  
                 lying down  
—his mind inwardly restrained—  
    he arrives  
    right at peace.

§87. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "There are these three kinds of unskillful thinking that produce blindness, produce lack of vision, produce lack of knowledge, lead to the cessation of discernment, side with vexation, and are not conducive to Unbinding. Which three? Thinking imbued with sensuality .... Thinking imbued with ill-will .... Thinking imbued with harmfulness produces blindness, produces lack of vision, produces lack of knowledge, leads to the cessation of discernment, sides with vexation, and is not conducive to Unbinding. These are the three kinds of unskillful thinking that produce blindness, produce lack of vision, produce lack of knowledge, lead to the cessation of discernment, side with vexation, and are not conducive to Unbinding.*

*"There are these three kinds of skillful thinking that produce non-blindness, produce vision, produce knowledge, foster discernment, side with non-vexation, and are conducive to Unbinding. Which three? Thinking imbued with renunciation .... Thinking imbued with non-ill-will .... Thinking imbued with harmlessness produces non-blindness, produces vision, produces knowledge, fosters discernment, sides with non-vexation, and is conducive to Unbinding. These are the three kinds of skillful thinking that produce non-blindness, produce vision, produce knowledge, foster discernment, side with non-vexation, and are conducive to Unbinding."*

Three skillful thoughts  
should be thought,  
three unskillful thoughts  
rejected.  
Whoever stills sustained thoughts  
—as rain would, a cloud of dust—  
through an awareness with thinking stilled,  
attains right here  
the state  
of peace.

*See also: MN 19; MN 20; Iti 110*

§88. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three inside stains, inside enemies, inside foes, inside murderers, inside adversaries. Which three? Greed is an inside stain, inside enemy, inside foe, inside murderer, inside adversary. Aversion is an inside stain .... Delusion is an inside stain, inside enemy, inside foe, inside murderer, inside adversary. These are the three inside stains, inside enemies, inside foes, inside murderers, inside adversaries.”*

Greed causes harm.  
Greed provokes the mind.  
People don't realize it  
as a danger born from within.  
A person, when greedy,  
doesn't know his own welfare;  
when greedy,  
doesn't see Dhamma.  
Overcome with greed,  
he's in the dark, blind.  
But when one, abandoning greed,  
feels no greed  
for what would merit greed,  
greed gets shed from him—  
like a drop of water  
off a lotus leaf.

Aversion causes harm.  
Aversion provokes the mind.  
People don't realize it  
as a danger born from within.

A person, when aversive,  
doesn't know his own welfare;  
    when aversive,  
doesn't see Dhamma.  
Overcome with aversion  
he's in the dark, blind.  
But when one, abandoning aversion,  
feels no aversion  
for what would merit aversion,  
aversion drops away from him—  
    like a palm leaf from its stem.

Delusion causes harm.  
Delusion provokes the mind.  
People don't realize it  
as a danger born from within.  
A person, when deluded,  
doesn't know his own welfare;  
    when deluded,  
doesn't see Dhamma.  
Overcome with delusion  
he's in the dark, blind.  
But when one, abandoning delusion,  
feels no delusion  
for what would merit delusion,  
he disperses all delusion—  
    as the rising of the sun, the dark.

§ 89. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:*  
"Conquered by three forms of false Dhamma—his mind overwhelmed—  
Devadatta\* is incurably doomed to deprivation, to hell, for an aeon. Which three?  
Conquered by evil desires—his mind overwhelmed—Devadatta is incurably  
doomed to deprivation, to hell, for the duration of an aeon. Conquered by  
friendship with evil people—his mind overwhelmed— Devadatta is incurably  
doomed to deprivation, to hell, for the duration of an aeon. And, there being  
something further to be done, he nevertheless stopped halfway with a lower  
modicum of distinctive attainment. Conquered by these three forms of false  
Dhamma—his mind overwhelmed—Devadatta is incurably doomed to  
deprivation, to hell, for an aeon."

May no one in the world  
ever be reborn  
with evil desire.

Know that,  
through that  
evil desire,  
his destination's that  
of all who have evil desires.

I've heard how Devadatta,  
—regarded as wise, composed,  
incandescent with honor—  
in the thrall of heedlessness  
assaulted the Tathagata  
and fell to the four-gated, fearful place:  
Avici, unmitigated hell.

Whoever plots against  
one free of corruption  
who's done no evil deed:  
that evil touches him himself,  
corrupted in mind,  
disrespectful.

Whoever might think  
of polluting the ocean  
with a pot of poison,  
couldn't succeed,  
for the mass of water is great.  
So it is  
when anyone attacks with abuse  
the Tathagata  
—rightly-gone,  
of peaceful mind—  
for abuse doesn't grow on him.  
A wise person should make friends,  
should associate,  
with a person like him—  
whose path a monk can pursue  
and reach the ending  
of suffering & stress.

\*NOTE: Devadatta, one of the Buddha's cousins, plotted to take over the Sangha, and ended up causing a schism. His story is told in Cv VII. See also §18.] His "lower modicum of distinctive attainment" was his mastery of psychic powers.

§ 90. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three supreme objects of confidence. Which three?*

*“Among whatever beings there may be—footless, two-footed, four-footed, many footed; with form or formless; percipient, non-percipient, neither percipient nor non-percipient—the Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened, is considered supreme. Those who have confidence in the Awakened One have confidence in what is supreme; and for those with confidence in the supreme, supreme is the result.*

*“Among whatever qualities there may be, fabricated or unfabricated, the quality of dispassion—the subduing of intoxication, the elimination of thirst, the uprooting of attachment, the breaking of the round, the destruction of craving, dispassion, cessation, the realization of Unbinding—is considered supreme. Those who have confidence in the quality of dispassion have confidence in what is supreme; and for those with confidence in the supreme, supreme is the result.*

*“Among whatever fabricated qualities there may be, the Noble Eightfold Path—right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration—is considered supreme. Those who have confidence in the Noble Eightfold Path have confidence in what is supreme; and for those with confidence in the supreme, supreme is the result.*

*“Among whatever communities or groups there may be, the Sangha of the Tathagata’s disciples is considered supreme—i.e., the four [groups of noble disciples] when taken as pairs, the eight when taken as persons.\* Those who have confidence in the Sangha have confidence in what is supreme; and for those with confidence in the supreme, supreme will be the result.*

*“These, monks, are the three supreme objects of confidence.”*

With  
confidence,  
    realizing the supreme Dhamma  
    to be supreme,  
confidence in the supreme Buddha,  
    unsurpassed  
    in deserving offerings;  
confidence in the supreme Dhamma,  
    the stilling of dispassion,  
    bliss;  
confidence in the supreme Sangha,  
    unsurpassed  
    as a field of merit;  
having given gifts to the supreme,  
    one develops supreme merit,  
    supreme long life & beauty,  
    status, honor,  
bliss, & strength.

Having given to the supreme,  
the wise person, centered  
in supreme Dhamma,  
whether becoming a divine or human being,  
rejoices,  
having attained the supreme.

\*NOTE: The four groups of noble disciples when taken as pairs are those who have attained (1) the path to stream-entry and the fruition of stream-entry; (2) the path to once-returning and the fruition of once-returning; (3) the path to non-returning and the fruition of non-returning; and (4) the path to Arahantship and the fruition of Arahantship. Taking each attainment singly gives eight "individuals."

*See also: SN VI.2; SN XI.3; AN VII.56; AN X.92; Khp 6; DhP 188-192*

§ 91. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "This is a lowly means of livelihood, alms gathering. It's a form of abuse in the world [to say], 'You go around as an alms gatherer with a bowl in your hand!' Yet sensible young men of good families have taken it up for a compelling reason. They have not been forced into it by kings or robbers, nor through debt, through fear, nor through the loss of their livelihood, but through the thought: 'We are beset by birth, aging, & death, by sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs, beset by stress, overcome with stress. O, that the end of this entire mass of suffering & stress might be known!' But this young man of good family, having gone forth in this way, may be greedy for sensual pleasures, strong in his passions, malevolent in mind, corrupt in his resolves, his mindfulness muddled, unalert, uncentered, his mind scattered, & his faculties uncontrolled. Just as a firebrand from a funeral pyre—burning at both ends, covered with excrement in the middle—is used as fuel neither in a village nor in the wilderness: I tell you that this is a simile for this person. He has missed out on the householder's enjoyments and does not fulfill the purpose of the contemplative life."*

He's missed out  
on the householder's enjoyment  
& the purpose of the contemplative life  
—unfortunate man!  
Ruining it, he throws it away,  
perishes  
like a firebrand used at a funeral.  
Better to eat an iron ball  
—glowing, aflame—

than that, unprincipled &  
unrestrained,  
he should eat the alms of the country.

§92. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Even if a monk, taking hold of my outer cloak, were to follow right behind me, placing his feet in my footsteps, yet if he were to be greedy for sensual pleasures, strong in his passions, malevolent in mind, corrupt in his resolves, his mindfulness muddled, unalert, uncentered, his mind scattered, & his faculties uncontrolled, then he would be far from me, and I from him. Why is that? Because he does not see the Dhamma. Not seeing the Dhamma, he does not see me.

“But even if a monk were to live one hundred leagues away, yet if he were to have no greed for sensual objects, were not strong in his passions, not malevolent in mind, uncorrupt in his resolves, his mindfulness established, alert, centered, his mind at singleness, & his faculties well-restrained, then he would be near to me, and I to him. Why is that? Because he sees the Dhamma. Seeing the Dhamma, he sees me.”

Though following right behind,  
full of desire, vexation:  
see how far he is!—  
the perturbed  
from the unperturbed,  
the bound  
from the Unbound,  
the greedy one  
from the one with no greed.

But the wise person who, through  
direct knowledge of Dhamma,  
gnosis of Dhamma,  
grows still & unperturbed  
like a lake unruffled by wind:  
see how close he is!—  
the unperturbed to the unperturbed,  
the Unbound to the Unbound,  
the greedless one  
to the one with no greed.

§ 93. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Monks, there are these three fires. Which three? The fire of passion, the fire of aversion, the fire of delusion. These, monks, are the three fires.”

The fire of passion burns in a mortal  
excited, smitten  
with sensual desires;  
the fire of aversion, in a malevolent person  
taking life;  
the fire of delusion, in a bewildered person  
ignorant  
of the noble teaching.  
Not understanding these fires, people  
—fond of self-identity—  
unreleased from Mara's shackles,  
swell the ranks of hell,  
the wombs of common animals, demons,  
the realm of the hungry shades.

While those who, day & night,  
are devoted  
to the teachings  
of the rightly self-awakened,  
put out the fire of passion,  
constantly perceiving the foul.  
They, superlative people,  
put out the fire of aversion  
with good will,  
and the fire of delusion  
with the discernment leading  
to penetration.  
They, the masterful, by night & day,  
having put out [the fires],  
having, without remainder,  
comprehended stress,  
are, without remainder,  
totally unbound.  
They, the wise, with an attainer-of-wisdom's  
noble vision,  
right gnosis,  
directly knowing  
the ending of birth,  
come to no further becoming.

*See also: SN XXXV.28; Ud III.10*

§94. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “A monk should investigate in such a way that—his consciousness neither externally scattered & diffused, nor internally fixated—he is, from lack of clinging/sustenance, unagitated, and there is no seed for the origination of future birth, aging, death, or stress.”*

For a monk who has abandoned  
seven attachments  
and cut the guide:\*

the wandering-on in birth  
is finished,  
there is  
no further becoming.

\*NOTE: The “seven attachments” are passion, aversion, delusion, views, conceit, defilement, & misconduct. The “guide” is craving, which leads to becoming.

§ 95. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these three ways of obtaining sensual pleasures. Which three? Those whose sensual pleasures are already provided, those who delight in creating, those with control over what is created by others.\* These are the three ways of obtaining sensual pleasures.”*

Devas whose pleasures are already provided,  
those with control,  
those who delight in creation,  
and any others enjoying sensual pleasures  
in this state here  
or anywhere else,  
don't go beyond  
the wandering-on.

Knowing this drawback  
in sensual pleasures, the wise  
should abandon all sensual desires,  
whether human  
or divine.

Having cut the flow of greed  
for lovely, alluring forms  
so hard to transcend,  
having, without remainder,  
comprehended stress,  
they are, without remainder,

totally unbound.  
They, the wise, with an attainer-of-wisdom's  
noble vision,  
right gnosis,  
directly knowing the ending of birth,  
come to no further becoming.

\*NOTE: As the verse makes clear, these three categories denote three levels of devas in the heavens of sensual pleasure. "Those in control" are at the highest of these levels.

§ 96. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Tied by the yoke of sensuality & the yoke of becoming, one is a returner, returning to this state. Untied from the yoke of sensuality but tied by the yoke of becoming, one is a non-returner, not returning to this state. Untied from [both] the yoke of sensuality & from the yoke of becoming, one is an Arahant whose fermentations are ended."*

Tied by both  
the yoke of sensuality  
& the yoke of becoming,  
beings go to the wandering-on  
leading to birth  
& death.

Those who've abandoned the sensual  
without reaching the ending of fermentations,  
are tied by the yoke of becoming,  
are said to be Non-returners.

While those who've cut off doubt  
have no more conceit  
or further becoming.

They who have reached  
the ending of fermentations,  
while in the world  
have gone  
beyond.

§ 97. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "A monk who has admirable virtue, admirable qualities, & admirable discernment is called, in this Dhamma-&-Vinaya, one who is complete, fulfilled, a superlative person.*

*"And how is a monk a person with admirable virtue? There is the case where*

a monk is virtuous. He dwells restrained in accordance with the Patimokkha, consummate in his behavior & sphere of activity. He trains himself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults. In this way a monk is a person with admirable virtue. Thus he is of admirable virtue.

“And how is a monk a person with admirable qualities? There is the case where a monk lives devoted to developing the seven [sets of] qualities that are wings to Awakening.\* In this way a monk is a person with admirable qualities. Thus he is of admirable virtue & admirable qualities.

“And how is a monk a person with admirable discernment? There is the case where a monk, through the ending of fermentations, dwells in the release of awareness & release of discernment that are free from fermentation, having known & made them manifest for himself right in the present life. In this way a monk is a person with admirable discernment. Thus he is of admirable virtue, admirable qualities, admirable discernment. In this Dhamma-&-Vinaya he is called one who is complete, fulfilled, a superlative person.”

Devoid of wrong-doing  
in thought, word, or deed,  
he’s called a person of admirable virtue:  
the monk conscientious.  
Well-developed in the qualities  
that go to the attainment of self-awakening,  
he’s called a person of admirable qualities:  
the monk unassuming.  
Discerning right here for himself,  
in himself,  
the ending of stress  
he’s called a person of admirable discernment:  
the monk with no fermentation.  
Consummate in  
these things,  
untroubled, with doubt cut away,  
unattached in all the world,  
he’s said to have abandoned  
the All.

\*NOTE: See the note to §82.

§98. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these two kinds of gifts: a gift of material things & a gift of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: a gift of the Dhamma. There are these two kinds of sharing: sharing of material things & sharing of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: sharing of the Dhamma. There are these two kinds of assistance: assistance with material things & assistance with the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: help with the Dhamma.”*

The gift he describes  
as foremost & unsurpassed,  
the sharing the Blessed One has extolled:  
who—confident in the supreme field of merit,  
wise, discerning—  
wouldn't give it at appropriate times?  
Both for those who proclaim it  
and those who listen,  
confident in the message of the One Well-gone:  
it purifies their foremost benefit—  
those heeding the message  
of the One Well-gone.

§ 99. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “It's on the strength of Dhamma that I describe [a person as] a brahman with threefold knowledge, and not another as measured by citing & reciting. And how is it on the strength of Dhamma that I describe [a person as] a brahman with threefold knowledge, and not another as measured by citing & reciting?*

*“There is the case where a monk recollects his manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two ... five, ten ... fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many aeons of cosmic contraction, many aeons of cosmic expansion, many aeons of cosmic contraction & expansion: ‘There I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose there. There too I had such a name, belonged to such a clan, had such an appearance. Such was my food, such my experience of pleasure & pain, such the end of my life. Passing away from that state, I re-arose here.’ Thus he recollects his manifold past lives in their modes & details.*

*“This is the first knowledge he has attained. Ignorance has been destroyed; knowledge has arisen; darkness has been destroyed; light has arisen—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.*

*“Then again, the monk sees—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their actions: ‘These beings—who were endowed with bodily*

misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct; who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the plane of deprivation, the bad destination, the lower realms, in hell. But these beings—who were endowed with bodily good conduct, verbal good conduct, & mental good conduct; who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—at the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in the good destinations, in the heavenly world.’ Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—he sees beings passing away & re-appearing, and discerns how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their actions.

“This is the second knowledge he has attained. Ignorance has been destroyed; knowledge has arisen; darkness has been destroyed; light has arisen—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

“Then again, the monk—with the ending of fermentations—remains in the fermentation-free release of awareness & release of discernment, having directly known and made it manifest for himself right in the present life.

“This is the third knowledge he has attained. Ignorance has been destroyed; knowledge has arisen; darkness has been destroyed; light has arisen—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

“It’s in this way that, on the strength of Dhamma, I describe [a person as] a brahman with threefold knowledge, and not another as measured by citing & reciting.”

He knows his former lives.  
He sees heavens & states of woe,  
has attained the ending of birth,  
is a sage who has mastered full-knowing.

By means of these three knowledges  
he becomes a three-knowledge brahman.\*  
He’s what I call a three-knowledge man—  
not another,  
citing, reciting.

\*NOTE: In the brahmanical religion, a “three-knowledge man” was one who had memorized the three Vedas. This verse takes the brahmanical term and gives it a new, Buddhist meaning.

*See also: MN 4; Thag IV.8; Thig V.11; Thig V.12; Thig XII; Thig XIII.2*

## The Group of Fours

§ 100. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “I am a brahman, responsive to requests, open-handed, bearing my last body, an unsurpassed doctor & surgeon. You are my children, my sons, born from my mouth, born of the Dhamma, created by the Dhamma, heirs to the Dhamma, not heirs in material things.

“There are these two kinds of gifts: a gift of material things & a gift of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: a gift of the Dhamma.

“There are these two kinds of sharing: sharing of material things & sharing of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: sharing of the Dhamma.

“There are these two kinds of assistance: assistance with material things & assistance with the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: help with the Dhamma.

“There are these two kinds of mass-donations: a mass-donation of material things & a mass-donation of the Dhamma. Of the two, this is supreme: a mass-donation of the Dhamma.”

He who, unstinting,  
made the mass-donation of Dhamma,  
the Tathagata,  
sympathetic to all beings:  
to one of that sort  
—the best of beings, human & divine—  
living beings pay homage—  
to one gone  
to the beyond  
of becoming.

§ 101. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “These four things are next to nothing, both easy to gain & blameless. Which four? Cast-off cloth is next to nothing, both easy to gain & blameless. Alms food is next to nothing, both easy to gain & blameless. The root of a tree as a dwelling place is next to nothing, both easy to gain & blameless. Medicine made of smelly urine\* is next to nothing, both easy to gain & blameless. These are the four things that are next to nothing, both easy to gain & blameless. When a monk is content with what is next to nothing, easy to gain & blameless, then I say that he has one of the component factors of the contemplative life.”

Content with what’s blameless,  
next-to-nothing,  
easy to gain,  
his mind not vexed

over lodging, clothing,  
food, or drink:  
the four directions offer him  
no obstruction.  
These things are declared  
congenial for the contemplative life,  
possessed by the monk  
heedful, content.

\*NOTE: This is one of a monk's basic requisites. There is some disagreement as to whether it refers to medicine pickled in urine, or to the use of urine as a medicine (as is still practiced in parts of Asia today).

§ 102. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "For one knowing & seeing, I tell you, there is the ending of fermentations, not for one not knowing & seeing. For one knowing what & seeing what is there the ending of fermentations? For one knowing & seeing, 'This is stress,' there is the ending of fermentations. For one knowing & seeing, 'This is the origination of stress,' there is the ending of fermentations. For one knowing & seeing, 'This is the cessation of stress,' there is the ending of fermentations. For one knowing & seeing, 'This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress,' there is the ending of fermentations. For one knowing in this way and seeing in this way is there the ending of fermentations."

For a learner in training  
along the straight path, there arises:  
first, the knowledge of ending;  
then, the gnosis unsurpassed;  
then, the gnosis of one released—  
release-knowledge, superlative,  
the knowledge of ending:  
'The fetters are ended.'  
Certainly not by the lazy fool  
uncomprehending,  
is there attained  
Unbinding,  
the loosing of all ties.

§103. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "Any priests or contemplatives who do not discern, as it actually is present, that 'This is stress,' ... that 'This is the origination of stress,' ... that 'This is the cessation of stress,' who do not discern, as it actually is present, that 'This is the path of

practice leading to the cessation of stress': to me these priests & contemplatives do not count as priests among priests or as contemplatives among contemplatives. Furthermore, they do not enter & remain in the goal of the priestly life or the goal of the contemplative life, having directly known & made it manifest for themselves right in the present life.

"But any priests or contemplatives who discern, as it actually is present, that 'This is stress,' ... that 'This is the origination of stress,' ... that 'This is the cessation of stress,' who discern, as it actually is present, that 'This is the path of practice leading to the cessation of stress': to me these priests & contemplatives count as priests among priests and as contemplatives among contemplatives. Furthermore, they enter & remain in the goal of the priestly life & the goal of the contemplative life, having directly known & made it manifest for themselves right in the present life."

Those who don't discern stress,  
its cause,  
& where it totally stops,  
    without trace,  
who don't know the path,  
the way to the stilling of stress:  
    lowly  
in their release of awareness  
& release of discernment,  
    incapable  
of making an end,  
    they're headed  
    to birth & aging.

But those who discern stress,  
its cause,  
& where it totally stops,  
    without trace,  
who discern the path,  
the way to the stilling of stress:  
    consummate  
in their release of awareness  
& release of discernment,  
    capable  
of making an end,  
    they are not headed  
    to birth & aging.

§ 104. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: "Those*

monks who are consummate in virtue, consummate in concentration, consummate in discernment, consummate in release, consummate in the knowledge & vision of release; who exhort, demonstrate, instruct, urge, rouse & encourage; who are competent rightly to point out the true Dhamma: seeing them, I tell you, accomplishes a great deal; listening to them, approaching them, attending to them, recollecting them, following them in going forth accomplishes a great deal. Why is that?

“By associating with monks of this sort, sharing with them, attending on them, the as-yet-unculminated aggregate of virtue goes to the culmination of its development, the as-yet-unculminated aggregate of concentration goes to the culmination of its development, the as-yet-unculminated aggregate of discernment goes to the culmination of its development, the as-yet-unculminated aggregate of release goes to the culmination of its development, the as-yet-unculminated aggregate of knowledge & vision of release goes to the culmination of its development. Monks of this sort are said to be teachers, leaders, abandoners of harm, dispellers of darkness, makers of light, makers of radiance, makers of brightness, makers of brilliance, bringers of illumination, noble ones, endowed with eyes that see.”

This is a condition  
creating joy  
for those who know:  
living the Dhamma  
of the noble ones,  
    composed,  
who brighten the true Dhamma,  
illumine it, shining brilliantly,  
who are makers of light,  
    enlightened,  
    abandoners of harm,  
who have eyes  
that see.  
Having heard their message  
with right gnosis, the wise  
directly knowing  
the ending of birth,  
    come to no further becoming.

*See also: SN XLV.2; AN IX.1*

§ 105. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “There are these four birthplaces of craving where a monk’s craving, when taking birth, takes birth. Which four? Either for the sake of cloth a monk’s craving, when taking birth, takes birth. Or for the sake of alms food a monk’s craving, when taking birth, takes birth. Or for the sake of lodging a monk’s craving, when taking birth, takes birth. Or for the sake of becoming or not becoming this or that a monk’s craving, when taking birth, takes birth. These are the four birthplaces of craving where a monk’s craving, when taking birth, takes birth.”*

With craving his companion, a man  
wanders on a long, long time.  
Neither in this state here  
nor anywhere else  
does he go beyond  
the wandering- on.  
Knowing this drawback—  
that craving brings stress into play—  
free from craving,  
devoid of clinging,  
mindful, the monk  
lives the mendicant life.

*See also: SN XXI.10; SN XXXV.63; AN IV.28; DhP 353; Sn I.3*

§ 106. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Living with Brahma are those families where, in the home, mother & father are revered by the children. Living with the first devas are those families where, in the home, mother & father are revered by the children. Living with the first teachers are those families where, in the home, mother & father are revered by the children. Living with those worthy of gifts are those families where, in the home, mother & father are revered by the children. ‘Brahma’ is a designation for mother & father. ‘The first devas’ is a designation for mother & father. ‘The first teachers’ is a designation for mother & father. ‘Those worthy of gifts’ is a designation for mother & father. Why is that? Mother & father do much for their children. They care for them, nourish them, introduce them to this world.”*

Mother & father,  
compassionate to their family,  
are called  
Brahma,  
first teachers,  
those worthy of gifts  
from their children.



§ 108. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Any monks who are deceitful, stubborn, talkers, frauds, arrogant, & uncentered are not followers of mine. They have turned away from this Dhamma-&Vinaya. They attain, in terms of this Dhamma-&Vinaya, no growth, increase, or abundance.

“But any monks who are not deceitful, not talkers, who are enlightened, pliant, & well-centered: they are followers of mine. They have not turned away from this Dhamma-&Vinaya. They attain, in terms of this Dhamma-&Vinaya, growth, increase, & abundance.

Deceitful, stubborn, talkers, frauds,  
arrogant, uncentered:  
they don't grow in the Dhamma  
taught by the Rightly  
Self-awakened One.

Not deceitful, not talkers,  
enlightened, pliant,  
well-centered:  
they grow in the Dhamma  
taught by the One  
Rightly  
Self-awakened.

§ 109. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “Suppose a man was being carried along by the flow of a river, lovely & alluring. And then another man with good eyesight, standing on the bank, on seeing him would say: ‘My good man, even though you are being carried along by the flow of a river, lovely & alluring, further down from here is a pool with waves & whirlpools, with monsters & demons. On reaching that pool you will suffer death or death-like pain.’ Then the first man, on hearing the words of the second man, would make an effort with his hands & feet to go against the flow.

“I have given you this simile to illustrate a meaning. The meaning is this: the flow of the river stands for craving. Lovely & alluring stands for the six internal sense-media. The pool further down stands for the five lower fetters.\* The waves stand for anger & distress. The whirlpools stand for the five strands of sensuality. The monsters & demons stand for the opposite sex. Against the flow stands for renunciation. Making an effort with hands & feet stands for the arousing of persistence. The man with good eyesight standing on the bank stands for the Tathagata, worthy & rightly self-awakened.”

Even if it's with pain,  
you should abandon  
sensual desires  
if you aspire  
to future safety from bondage.

Alert,  
with a mind well-released,  
touch release now here,  
now there.

An attainer-of-wisdom,  
having fulfilled the holy life,  
is said to have gone  
to the end of the world, gone  
beyond.

\*NOTE: The five lower fetters are self-identity view, uncertainty, attachment to practices & precepts, sensual passion, & resistance. See also AN VII.48 and AN X.13.

§110. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* "If, while he is walking, there arises in a monk a thought of sensuality, a thought of ill-will, or a thought of harmfulness, and he does not quickly abandon, dispel, demolish, or wipe that thought out of existence, then a monk walking with such a lack of ardency & concern is called continually & continuously lethargic & low in his persistence.

"If, while he is standing ....

"If, while he is sitting ....

"If, while he is lying down, there arises in a monk a thought of sensuality, a thought of ill-will, or a thought of harmfulness, and he does not quickly abandon, dispel, demolish, or wipe that thought out of existence, then a monk lying down with such a lack of ardency & concern is called continually & continuously lethargic & low in his persistence.

"But if, while he is walking, there arises in a monk a thought of sensuality, a thought of ill-will, or a thought of harmfulness, and he quickly abandons, dispels, demolishes, & wipes that thought out of existence, then a monk walking with such ardency & concern is called continually & continuously resolute, one with persistence aroused.

"If, while he is standing ....

"If, while he is sitting ....

“If, while he is lying down, there arises in a monk a thought of sensuality, a thought of ill-will, or a thought of harmfulness, and he quickly abandons, dispels, demolishes, & wipes that thought out of existence, then a monk lying down with such ardency & concern is called continually & continuously resolute, one with persistence aroused.”

Whether walking, standing,  
sitting, or lying down,  
whoever thinks evil thoughts,  
related to the household life,  
is following no path at all,  
smitten  
with delusory things.  
He’s incapable,  
a monk like this,  
of touching superlative  
self-awakening.  
But whoever—  
walking, standing,  
sitting, or lying down—  
overcomes thought,  
delighting in the stilling of thought:  
he’s capable,  
a monk like this,  
of touching superlative  
self-awakening.

*See also: MN 19, MN 20, AN III.102, AN VI.20; AN X.51*

§111. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard: “Be consummate in virtue, monks, and consummate in the Patimokkha. Dwell restrained in accordance with the Patimokkha, consummate in your behavior & sphere of activity. Train yourselves, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults.*

*“When one is consummate in virtue, consummate in the Patimokkha; dwelling restrained in accordance with the Patimokkha, consummate in one’s behavior & sphere of activity; training oneself, having undertaken the training rules, seeing danger in the slightest faults—what more is to be done?”*

“If, while he is walking, any greed in a monk is done away with, any ill will, any sloth & torpor, any restlessness & anxiety, any uncertainty is done away with; if his persistence is aroused and not lax; if his mindfulness is established & unmuddled; if his body is calm & unaroused; if his mind is centered & unified: then a monk walking with such ardency & concern is called continually & continuously resolute, one with persistence aroused.

“If, while he is standing ....

“If, while he is sitting ....

“If, while he is lying down, any greed in a monk is done away with, any ill will, any sloth & torpor, any restlessness & anxiety, any uncertainty is done away with; if his persistence is aroused and not lax; if his mindfulness is established & unmuddled; if his body is calm & unaroused; if his mind is centered & unified: then a monk lying down with such ardency & concern is called continually & continuously resolute, one with persistence aroused.”

Controlled in walking,  
controlled in standing,  
controlled in sitting,  
controlled in lying down,  
controlled in flexing & extending his limbs  
—above, around, & below,  
as far as the worlds extend—  
observing the arising & passing away  
of phenomena,  
of aggregates:  
a monk who dwells thus ardently,  
not restlessly, at peace—  
always  
mindful,  
training in the mastery  
of awareness-tranquility—  
is said to be continually  
resolute.

§ 112. *This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:* “The world\* has been fully awakened to by the Tathagata. From the world, the Tathagata is disjoined. The origination of the world has been fully awakened to by the Tathagata. The origination of the world has, by the Tathagata, been abandoned. The cessation of the world has been fully awakened to by the Tathagata. The cessation of the world has, by the Tathagata, been realized. The path leading to the cessation of the world has been fully awakened to by the Tathagata. The path leading to the cessation of the world has, by the Tathagata, been developed.

“Whatever in this world—with its gods, Maras, & Brahmas, its generations complete with contemplatives & priests, princes & men—is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, attained, sought after, pondered by the intellect, that has been fully awakened to by the Tathagata. Thus he is called the Tathagata.

“From the night the Tathagata fully awakens to the unsurpassed Right Self-awakening to the night he is totally unbound in the Unbinding property with no fuel remaining, whatever the Tathagata has said, spoken, explained is just so (*tatha*) and not otherwise. Thus he is called the Tathagata.

“The Tathagata is one who does in line with (*tatha*) what he teaches, one who teaches in line with what he does. Thus he is called the Tathagata.

“In this world with its gods, Maras, & Brahmas, its generations complete with contemplatives & priests, princes & men, the Tathagata is the unconquered conqueror, all-seeing, the wielder of power.\*\* Thus he is called the Tathagata.”  
*This is the meaning of what the Blessed One said. So with regard to this it was said:*

Directly knowing all the world,  
all the world as is really is,  
from all the world disjoined,  
in all the world unmatched:

Conquering all  
in all ways,  
enlightened,  
released from all bonds,  
he touches the foremost peace—  
Unbinding, free  
from fear.

He is free of fermentation,  
of trouble,  
awakened,  
his doubts cut through;  
has attained the ending of action,  
is released in the destruction of acquisitions.  
He is blessed, awakened,  
a lion, unsurpassed.  
In the world with its devas  
he set the Brahma-wheel going.\*\*\*

Thus divine & human beings  
who have gone to the Buddha for refuge,  
gathering, pay homage  
to the great one, thoroughly mature:

‘Tamed, he’s the best

of those who can be tamed;  
calm, the seer  
of those who can be calmed;  
released, supreme  
among those who can be released;  
crossed, the foremost  
of those who can cross.'

Thus they pay homage  
to the great one, thoroughly mature:  
'In this world with its devas,  
there's no one  
to compare  
with you.'

*This, too, was the meaning of what was said by the Blessed One, so I have heard.*

NOTES: \* S.XXXV.82 defines the "world" as the six sense spheres, their objects, consciousness at those spheres, contact at those spheres, and whatever arises in dependence on that contact, experienced as pleasure, pain, or neither-pleasure-nor-pain.

\*\*These are epithets usually associated with the Great Brahma. See § 22.

\*\*\*The Brahma-wheel = the Dhamma-wheel, the name of the Buddha's first sermon, so called because it contains a "wheel" that lists all twelve permutations of two sets of variables: the four noble truths—stress, its origination, its cessation, and the way leading to its cessation—and the three levels of knowledge appropriate to each truth: knowledge of the truth, knowledge of the task appropriate to the truth, and knowledge that the task has been completed. This wheel constitutes the Buddha's most central teaching.

*See also: MN 72; SN XXII.36; SN XXII.85-86; AN IV.24; AN X.81; Iti 63; Sn V.6*

## Glossary

**Acquisition (upadhi):** The mental “baggage” that the unawakened mind carries around. The Culaniddesa lists ten types of acquisition: craving, views, defilement, action, misconduct, nutriment (physical and mental), resistance, the four physical properties sustained in the body (earth, water, wind, and fire), the six external sense media (forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tactile sensations, and ideas), and the six forms of sensory consciousness (eye-consciousness, ear-, nose-, tongue-, body-, and intellect-consciousness). The state without acquisitions is Unbinding (see below).

**Aggregate (khandha):** Any one of the five bases for clinging to a sense of self: form (physical phenomena, including the body), feelings, perceptions (mental labels), thought-fabrications, consciousness.

**Arahant:** A “worthy one” or “pure one;” a person whose mind is free of defilement and thus is not destined for further rebirth. A title for the Buddha and the highest level of his noble disciples.

**Avici:** The lowest level of hell. Hells in Buddhism are places of temporary, not eternal, torment. A being goes to hell, not because any outside power has sent him/her there, but through the power of his/her own actions. When the results of the actions come to their end, the being is released from hell.

**Becoming (bhava):** States of being that develop first in the mind and allow for birth on any of three levels: the level of sensuality, the level of form, and the level of formlessness.

**Brahma:** An inhabitant of the highest, non-sensual levels of heaven. The Great Brahma is one of the more powerful inhabitants of these heavens. As an adjective, *brahma* means “sublime,” “ideal,” “embodying the best qualities. As such, it is often used to describe the arahant or the highest qualities of the Dhamma.

**Brahman:** The Brahmins of India have long maintained that they, by their birth, are worthy of the highest respect. Buddhists borrowed the term “brahman” to apply to arahants to show that respect is earned not by birth, race, or caste, but by spiritual attainment through following the right path of practice. Some of the passages in the Itivuttaka use the word brahman in this special sense; others in a more ordinary sense. The intended sense should be obvious from the context.

**Deva:** Literally, “shining one.” An inhabitant of the heavenly realms.

**Dhamma:** (1) Event; a phenomenon in and of itself; (2) mental quality; (3)

doctrine, teaching; (4) nibbana. Sanskrit form: *Dharma*.

**Enlightened one (dhira):** Throughout this translation I have rendered *buddha* as “Awakened,” and *dhira* as “enlightened.” As Jan Gonda points out in his book, *The Vision of the Vedic Poets*, the word *dhira* was used in Vedic and Buddhist poetry to mean a person who has the heightened powers of mental vision needed to perceive the “light” of the underlying principles of the cosmos, together with the expertise to implement those principles in the affairs of life and to reveal them to others. A person enlightened in this sense may also be awakened, but is not necessarily so.

**Fabrication (sankhara):** Sankhara literally means “putting together,” and carries connotations of jerry-rigged artificiality. It is applied to physical and to mental processes, as well as to the products of those processes. In some contexts it functions as the fourth of the five aggregates—thought-fabrications; in others, it covers all five.

**Fermentation (asava):** One of four qualities—sensuality, views, becoming, and ignorance—that ferment in the mind and flow out of it, creating the flood of the round of death and rebirth.

**Heart (manas):** The mind in its role as will and intention.

**Jhana:** Meditative absorption. A state of strong concentration, devoid of sensuality or unskillful thoughts, focused on a single physical sensation or mental notion which is then expanded to fill the whole range of one’s awareness. Jhana is synonymous with right concentration, the eighth factor in the noble eightfold path.

**Kamma:** Intentional act, bearing fruit in terms of states of becoming and birth. Sanskrit form: *karma*.

**Mara:** The personification of temptation and death.

**Patimokkha:** The basic code of monastic discipline, composed of 227 rules for monks and 310 for nuns.

**Sakka:** King of the devas in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.

**Samsara:** Transmigration; the “wandering-on”; the round of death and rebirth.

**Sangha:** On the conventional (*sammati*) level, this term denotes the communities of Buddhist monks and nuns; on the ideal (*ariya*) level, it denotes those followers of the Buddha, lay or ordained, who have attained at least stream-entry.

**Stress (dukkha):** Alternative translations for *dukkha* include *suffering*, *burdensomeness*, and *pain*. However—despite the unfortunate connotations it has picked up from programs in “stress-management” and “stress-reduction”—the English word *stress*, in its basic meaning as the reaction to strain on the body or mind, has the advantage of covering much the same range as the Pali word *dukkha*. It applies both to physical and mental phenomena, ranging from the intense stress of acute anguish or pain to the innate burdensomeness of even the most subtle mental or physical fabrications. It also has the advantage of being universally recognized as something directly experienced in all life, and is at the same time a useful tool for cutting through the spiritual pride that keeps people attached to especially refined or sophisticated forms of suffering: once *all* suffering, no matter how noble or refined, is recognized as being nothing more than stress, the mind can abandon the pride that keeps it attached to that suffering, and so gain release from it. Still, in some of the verses of the Itivuttaka, *stress* seems too weak to convey the meaning, so in those verses I have rendered *dukkha* as *pain*, *suffering*, or *suffering & stress*.

**Tathagata:** Literally, “one who has become authentic (*tatha-agata*),” or “one who is really gone (*tatha-gata*),” an epithet used in ancient India for a person who has attained the highest religious goal. (For other etymologies, see §112.) In Buddhism, it usually denotes the Buddha, although occasionally it also denotes any of his arahant disciples.

**Unbinding (nibbana):** Because *nibbana* is used to denote not only the Buddhist goal, but also the extinguishing of a fire, it is usually rendered as “extinguishing” or, even worse, “extinction.” However, a study of ancient Indian views of the workings of fire (see *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*) reveals that people of the Buddha’s time felt that a fire, in going out, did not go out of existence but was simply freed from its agitation, entrapment, and attachment to its fuel. Thus, when applied to the Buddhist goal, the primary connotation of *nibbana* is one of release, along with cooling and peace. Sanskrit form: *nirvana*.

**Vinaya:** The monastic discipline. The Buddha’s name for his own teaching was, “this Dhamma-and Vinaya,” this doctrine and discipline.

Itivuttaka

this was said  
by the buddha

a translation by

Thanissaro Bhikkhu

(Geoffrey DeGraff)

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