

Kamma

SKILLFULNESS

§ 1. [The Buddha:] “What do you think, Rāhula: What is a mirror for?”

[Rāhula, his son, who was seven at the time]: “For reflection, sir.”

“In the same way, Rāhula, bodily actions, verbal actions, & mental actions are to be done with repeated reflection.

“Whenever you want to perform a bodily action, you should reflect on it: ‘This bodily action I want to perform—would it lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful bodily action, with painful consequences, painful results?’ If, on reflection, you know that it would lead to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it would be an unskillful bodily action with painful consequences, painful results, then any bodily action of that sort is absolutely unfit for you to do. But if on reflection you know that it would not cause affliction... it would be a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then any bodily action of that sort is fit for you to do. [Similarly with verbal actions & mental actions.]

“While you are performing a bodily action, you should reflect on it: ‘This bodily action I am doing—is it leading to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both? Is it an unskillful bodily action, with painful consequences, painful results?’ If, on reflection, you know that it is leading to self-affliction, to affliction of others, or both... you should give it up. But if on reflection you know that it is not... you may continue with it. [Similarly with verbal actions & mental actions.]

“Having performed a bodily action, you should reflect on it.... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful bodily action with painful consequences, painful results, then you should confess it, reveal it, lay it open to the Teacher or to a knowledgeable companion in the holy life. Having confessed it... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful bodily action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities. [Similarly with verbal actions.]

“Having performed a mental action, you should reflect on it.... If, on reflection, you know that it led to self-affliction, to the affliction of others, or to both; it was an unskillful mental action with painful consequences, painful results, then you should feel horrified, humiliated, & disgusted with it. Feeling horrified... you should exercise restraint in the future. But if on reflection you know that it did not lead to affliction... it was a skillful mental action with happy consequences, happy results, then you should stay mentally refreshed & joyful, training day & night in skillful mental qualities.

“Rāhula, all the contemplatives & brahmans in the course of the past who purified their bodily actions, verbal actions, & mental actions, did it through

repeated reflection on their bodily actions, verbal actions, & mental actions in just this way.

“All the contemplatives & brahmans in the course of the future.... All the contemplatives & brahmans at present who purify their bodily actions, verbal actions, & mental actions, do it through repeated reflection on their bodily actions, verbal actions, & mental actions in just this way.

“So, Rāhula, you should train yourself: ‘I will purify my bodily actions... my verbal actions... my mental actions through repeated reflection.’ That’s how you should train yourself.”

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, Ven. Rāhula delighted in the Blessed One’s words. — *MN 61*

§ 2. “Abandon what is unskillful, monks. It is possible to abandon what is unskillful. If it were not possible to abandon what is unskillful, I would not say to you, ‘Abandon what is unskillful.’ But because it is possible to abandon what is unskillful, I say to you, ‘Abandon what is unskillful.’ If this abandoning of what is unskillful were conducive to harm and pain, I would not say to you, ‘Abandon what is unskillful.’ But because this abandoning of what is unskillful is conducive to benefit and pleasure, I say to you, ‘Abandon what is unskillful.’

“Develop what is skillful, monks. It is possible to develop what is skillful. If it were not possible to develop what is skillful, I would not say to you, ‘Develop what is skillful.’ But because it is possible to develop what is skillful, I say to you, ‘Develop what is skillful.’ If this development of what is skillful were conducive to harm and pain, I would not say to you, ‘Develop what is skillful.’ But because this development of what is skillful is conducive to benefit and pleasure, I say to you, ‘Develop what is skillful.’” — *AN 2:19*

§ 3. Then Ven. Ānanda went to the Blessed One and, on arrival, having bowed down to him, sat to one side. As he was sitting there, the Blessed One said to him, “I say categorically, Ānanda, that bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct should not be done.”

“Given that the Blessed One has declared, lord, that bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct should not be done, what drawbacks can one expect when doing what should not be done?”

“Given that I have declared, Ānanda, that bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct should not be done, these are the drawbacks one can expect when doing what should not be done: One can fault oneself; observant people, on close examination, criticize one; one’s bad reputation gets spread about; one dies confused; and—on the break-up of the body, after death—one reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. Given that I have declared, Ānanda, that bodily misconduct, verbal misconduct, & mental misconduct should not be done, these are the drawbacks one can expect when doing what should not be done.

“I say categorically, Ānanda, that good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct should be done.”

“Given that the Blessed One has declared, lord, that good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct should be done, what rewards can one expect when doing what should be done?”

“Given that I have declared, Ānanda, that good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct should be done, these are the rewards one can expect when doing what should be done: One doesn’t fault oneself; observant people, on close examination, praise one; one’s good reputation gets spread about; one dies unconfused; and—on the break-up of the body, after death—one reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world. Given that I have declared, Ānanda, that good bodily conduct, good verbal conduct, & good mental conduct should be done, these are the rewards one can expect when doing what should be done.” — *AN 2:18*

§ 4. The Blessed One said: “Householders, there are three sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with the body; four sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with speech; and three sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with the mind.

UNSKILLFUL BODILY ACTION

“And how are there three sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with the body?

“There is the case where a certain person takes life, is brutal, bloody-handed, devoted to killing & slaying, showing no mercy to living beings.

“He takes what is not given. He takes, in the manner of a thief, things in a village or a wilderness that belong to others and have not been given by them.

“He engages in sensual misconduct. He gets sexually involved with those who are protected by their mothers, their fathers, their brothers, their sisters, their relatives, or their Dhamma; those with husbands, those who entail punishments, or even those crowned with flowers by another man.

“This is how there are three sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with the body.

UNSKILLFUL VERBAL ACTION

“And how are there four sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with speech?

“There is the case where a certain person tells lies. When he has been called to a town meeting, a group meeting, a gathering of his relatives, his guild, or of the royalty [i.e., a royal court proceeding], if he is asked as a witness, ‘Come & tell, good man, what you know’: If he doesn’t know, he says, ‘I know.’ If he does know, he says, ‘I don’t know.’ If he hasn’t seen, he says, ‘I have seen.’ If he has seen, he says, ‘I haven’t seen.’ Thus he consciously tells lies for his own sake, for the sake of another, or for the sake of a certain reward.

“He engages in divisive speech. What he has heard here he tells there to break those people apart from these people here. What he has heard there he tells here to break these people apart from those people there. Thus breaking apart those who are united and stirring up strife between those who have broken

apart, he loves factionalism, delights in factionalism, enjoys factionalism, speaks things that create factionalism.

“He engages in abusive speech. He speaks words that are harsh, cutting, bitter to others, abusive of others, provoking anger and destroying concentration.

“He engages in idle chatter. He speaks out of season, speaks what isn’t factual, what isn’t in accordance with the goal, the Dhamma, & the Vinaya, words that are not worth treasuring.

“This is how there are four sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with speech.

UNSKILLFUL MENTAL ACTION

“And how are there three sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with the mind?

“There is the case where a certain person is covetous. He covets the belongings of others, thinking, ‘O, that what belongs to others would be mine!’

“He bears ill will, corrupt in the resolves of his heart: ‘May these beings be killed or cut apart or crushed or destroyed, or may they not exist at all!’

“He has wrong view, is warped in the way he sees things: ‘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 contemplatives or brahmans who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves.’

“This is how there are three sorts of un-Dhamma conduct, dissonant conduct with the mind.

“It’s by reason of this un-Dhamma conduct & dissonant conduct that some beings here, with the break-up of the body, after death, re-appear in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell.

“Householders, there are three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with the body; four sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with speech; and three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with the mind.

SKILLFUL BODILY ACTION

“And how are there three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with the body?

“There is the case where a certain person, abandoning the taking of life, abstains from the taking of life. He dwells with his rod laid down, his knife laid down, scrupulous, merciful, compassionate for the welfare of all living beings.

“Abandoning the taking of what is not given, he abstains from taking what is not given. He doesn’t take, in the manner of a thief, things in a village or a wilderness that belong to others and have not been given by them.

“Abandoning sensual misconduct, he abstains from sensual misconduct. He doesn’t get sexually involved with those who are protected by their mothers, their fathers, their brothers, their sisters, their relatives, or their Dhamma; those

with husbands, those who entail punishments, or even those crowned with flowers by another man.

"This is how there are three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with the body.

SKILLFUL VERBAL ACTION

"And how are there three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with speech?

"There is the case where a certain person, abandoning the telling of lies, abstains from telling lies. When he has been called to a town meeting, a group meeting, a gathering of his relatives, his guild, or of the royalty, if he is asked as a witness, 'Come & tell, good man, what you know': If he doesn't know, he says, 'I don't know.' If he does know, he says, 'I know.' If he hasn't seen, he says, 'I haven't seen.' If he has seen, he says, 'I have seen.' Thus he doesn't consciously tell a lie for his own sake, for the sake of another, or for the sake of any reward.

"Abandoning divisive speech he abstains from divisive speech. What he has heard here he doesn't tell there to break those people apart from these people here. What he has heard there he doesn't tell here to break these people apart from those people there. Thus reconciling those who have broken apart or cementing those who are united, he loves concord, delights in concord, enjoys concord, speaks things that create concord.

"Abandoning abusive speech, he abstains from abusive speech. He speaks words that are soothing to the ear, that are affectionate, that go to the heart, that are polite, appealing & pleasing to people at large.

"Abandoning idle chatter, he abstains from idle chatter. He speaks in season, speaks what is factual, what is in accordance with the goal, the Dhamma, & the Vinaya. He speaks words worth treasuring, seasonable, reasonable, circumscribed, connected with the goal.

"This is how there are four sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with speech.

SKILLFUL MENTAL ACTION

"And how are there three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with the mind?

"There is the case where a certain person is not covetous. He doesn't covet the belongings of others, thinking, 'O, that what belongs to others would be mine!'

"He bears no ill will and is not corrupt in the resolves of his heart. (He thinks,) 'May these beings be free from animosity, free from oppression, free from trouble, and may they look after themselves with ease!'

"He has right view and is not warped in the way he sees things: 'There is what is given, what is offered, what is sacrificed. There are fruits & results of good & bad actions. There is this world & the next world. There is mother & father. There are spontaneously reborn beings; there are contemplatives & brahmins who, faring rightly & practicing rightly, proclaim this world & the next after having directly known & realized it for themselves.'

“This is how there are three sorts of Dhamma conduct, harmonious conduct with the mind.

“It’s by reason of this Dhamma conduct & harmonious conduct that some beings here, with the break-up of the body, after death, re-appear in a good destination, a heavenly world.” — *MN 41*

§ 5. “Monks, there are these three roots of what is unskillful. Which three? Greed is a root of what is unskillful, aversion is a root of what is unskillful, delusion is a root of what is unskillful.

“Greed itself is unskillful. Whatever a greedy person fabricates by means of body, speech, or intellect, that too is unskillful. Whatever suffering a greedy person—his mind overcome with greed, his mind consumed—wrongly inflicts on another person through beating or imprisonment or confiscation or placing blame or banishment, (with the thought,) ‘I have power. I want power,’ that too is unskillful. Thus it is that many evil, unskillful qualities/events—born of greed, caused by greed, originated through greed, conditioned by greed—come into play.

[Similarly with aversion & delusion.]

“And a person like this is called one who speaks at the wrong time, speaks what is unfactual, speaks what is irrelevant, speaks contrary to the Dhamma, speaks contrary to the Vinaya. Why...? Because of having wrongly inflicted suffering on another person through beating or imprisonment or confiscation or placing blame or banishment, (with the thought,) ‘I have power. I want power.’ When told what is factual, he denies it and doesn’t acknowledge it. When told what is unfactual, he doesn’t make an ardent effort to untangle it (to see), ‘This is unfactual. This is baseless.’ That’s why a person like this is called one who speaks at the wrong time, speaks what is unfactual, speaks what is irrelevant, speaks contrary to the Dhamma, speaks contrary to the Vinaya.

“A person like this—his mind overcome with evil, unskillful qualities born of greed... born of aversion... born of delusion, his mind consumed—dwells in suffering right in the here & now—feeling threatened, turbulent, feverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, can expect a bad destination.

“Just as a Sal tree, a birch, or an aspen, when smothered & surrounded by three parasitic vines, falls into misfortune, falls into disaster, falls into misfortune & disaster, in the same way, a person like this—his mind overcome with evil, unskillful qualities born of greed... born of aversion... born of delusion, his mind consumed—dwells in suffering right in the here & now—feeling threatened, turbulent, feverish—and at the break-up of the body, after death, can expect a bad destination.

“These are the three roots of what is unskillful.” — *AN 3:70*

§ 6. “Just as the footprints of all legged animals are encompassed by the footprint of the elephant, and the elephant’s footprint is reckoned the foremost among them in terms of size; in the same way, all skillful qualities are rooted in heedfulness, converge in heedfulness, and heedfulness is reckoned the foremost among them.” — *AN 10:15*

§ 7. “Now, based on what line of reasoning should one often reflect... that ‘I am the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator. Whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir’? There are beings who conduct themselves in a bad way in body... in speech... and in mind. But when they often reflect on that fact, that bad conduct in body, speech, & mind will either be entirely abandoned or grow weaker....

“A disciple of the noble ones considers this: ‘I am not the only one who is the owner of my actions, heir to my actions, born of my actions, related through my actions, and have my actions as my arbitrator; who—whatever I do, for good or for evil, to that will I fall heir. To the extent that there are beings—past & future, passing away & re-arising—all beings are the owners of their actions, heir to their actions, born of their actions, related through their actions, and have their actions as their arbitrator. Whatever they do, for good or for evil, to that will they fall heir.’ When he/she often reflects on this, the [factors of the] path take birth. He/she sticks with that path, develops it, cultivates it. As he/she sticks with that path, develops it, & cultivates it, the fetters are abandoned, the obsessions destroyed.” — AN 5:57

KAMMA & CAUSALITY

§ 8. “When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of recollecting my past lives*. I recollected my manifold past lives, i.e., one birth, two... five, ten... fifty, a hundred, a thousand, a hundred thousand, many eons of cosmic contraction, many eons of cosmic expansion, many eons 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-rose 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-rose here.’ Thus I recollected my manifold past lives in their modes & details.

“This was the first knowledge I attained in the first watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

“When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the passing away & reappearance of beings*. I saw—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 kamma: ‘These beings—who were endowed with bad conduct of body, speech & mind, who reviled noble ones, held wrong views and undertook actions under the influence of wrong views—with the breakup of the body, after death, have reappeared in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. But these beings—who were

endowed with good conduct of body, speech, & mind, who did not revile noble ones, who held right views and undertook actions under the influence of right views—with the break-up of the body, after death, have re-appeared in a good destination, a heavenly world.’ Thus—by means of the divine eye, purified & surpassing the human—I saw beings passing away & re-appearing, and I discerned how they are inferior & superior, beautiful & ugly, fortunate & unfortunate in accordance with their kamma.

“This was the second knowledge I attained in the second watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.

“When the mind was thus concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of defilement, pliant, malleable, steady, & attained to imperturbability, I directed it to the *knowledge of the ending of effluents*. I discerned, as it had come to be, that ‘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... These are effluents... This is the origination of effluents... This is the cessation of effluents... This is the way leading to the cessation of effluents.’ My heart, thus knowing, thus seeing, was released from the effluent of sensuality, released from the effluent of becoming, released from the effluent of ignorance. With release, there was the knowledge, ‘Released.’ I discerned that ‘Birth is ended, the holy life fulfilled, the task done. There is nothing further for this world.’

“This was the third knowledge I attained in the third watch of the night. Ignorance was destroyed; knowledge arose; darkness was destroyed; light arose—as happens in one who is heedful, ardent, & resolute.” — MN 4

§ 9. “Kamma should be known. The cause by which kamma comes into play should be known. The diversity in kamma should be known. The result of kamma should be known. The cessation of kamma should be known. The path of practice for the cessation of kamma should be known.’ Thus it has been said. In reference to what was it said?

“Intention, I tell you, is kamma. Intending, one does kamma by way of body, speech, & intellect.

“And what is the cause by which kamma comes into play? Contact is the cause by which kamma comes into play.

“And what is the diversity in kamma? There is kamma to be experienced in hell, kamma to be experienced in the realm of common animals, kamma to be experienced in the realm of the hungry ghosts, kamma to be experienced in the human world, kamma to be experienced in the world of the devas. This is called the diversity in kamma.

“And what is the result of kamma? The result of kamma is of three sorts, I tell you: that which arises right here & now, that which arises later (in this lifetime), and that which arises following that. This is called the result of kamma.

“And what is the cessation of kamma? From the cessation of contact is the cessation of kamma; and just this noble eightfold path—right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration—is the way leading to the cessation of kamma.” — AN 6:63

§ 10. “Just as when seeds are not broken, not rotten, not damaged by wind & heat, capable of sprouting, well-buried, planted in well-prepared soil, and the rain-god would offer good streams of rain: Those seeds would thus come to growth, increase, & abundance. In the same way, any action performed with greed... performed with aversion... performed with delusion—born of delusion, caused by delusion, originating from delusion: Wherever one’s selfhood turns up, there that action will ripen. Where that action ripens, there one will experience its fruit, either in this very life that has arisen or further along in the sequence.” — AN 3:34

§ 11. “There are contemplatives & brahmans who hold this teaching, hold this view: *‘Whatever a person experiences—pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful—is all caused by what was done in the past.’* There are contemplatives & brahmans who hold this teaching, hold this view: *‘Whatever a person experiences—pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful—is all caused by a supreme being’s act of creation.’* There are contemplatives & brahmans who hold this teaching, hold this view: *‘Whatever a person experiences—pleasant, painful, or neither pleasant nor painful—is all without cause & without condition.’*

“Having approached the contemplatives & brahmans who hold that... ‘Whatever a person experiences... is all caused by what was done in the past,’ I said to them: ‘Is it true that you hold that... whatever a person experiences... is all caused by what was done in the past?’ Thus asked by me, they admitted, ‘Yes.’ Then I said to them, ‘Then in that case, a person is a killer of living beings because of what was done in the past. A person is a thief... uncelibate... a liar... a divisive speaker... a harsh speaker... an idle chatterer... greedy... malicious... a holder of wrong views because of what was done in the past.’ When one falls back on what was done in the past as being essential, monks, there is no desire, no effort (at the thought), ‘This should be done. This shouldn’t be done.’ When one can’t pin down as a truth or reality what should & shouldn’t be done, one dwells bewildered & unprotected. One cannot righteously refer to oneself as a contemplative. This was my first righteous refutation of those contemplatives & brahmans who hold to such teachings, such views.

[The Buddha then refutes the other two views with the same argument.]

“These are the three sectarian guilds that—when cross-examined, pressed for reasons, & rebuked by wise people—even though they may explain otherwise, remain stuck in inaction.” — AN 3:62

§ 12. “What is old kamma? The eye is to be seen as old kamma, fabricated & willed, capable of being felt. The ear... The nose... The tongue... The body... The intellect is to be seen as old kamma, fabricated & willed, capable of being felt. This is called old kamma.

“And what is new kamma? Whatever kamma one does now with the body, with speech, or with the intellect. This is called new kamma.

“And what is the cessation of kamma? Whoever touches the release that comes from the cessation of bodily kamma, verbal kamma, & mental kamma. That is called the cessation of kamma.

“And what is the path of practice leading to the cessation of kamma? Just this noble eightfold path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This is called the path of practice leading to the cessation of kamma.” — SN 35:145

§ 13. [Moliyasivaka the wanderer:] “Master Gotama, there are some contemplatives & brahmins who are of this doctrine, this view: Whatever an individual feels—pleasure, pain, neither-pleasure-nor-pain—is entirely caused by what was done before. Now what does Master Gotama say to that?”

[The Buddha:] “There are cases where some feelings arise based on bile [i.e., diseases and pains that come from a malfunction of the gall bladder]. You yourself should know how some feelings arise based on bile. Even the world is agreed on how some feelings arise based on bile. So any contemplatives & brahmins who are of the doctrine & view that whatever an individual feels—pleasure, pain, neither-pleasure-nor-pain—is entirely caused by what was done before—slip past what they themselves know, slip past what is agreed on by the world. Therefore I say that those contemplatives & brahmins are wrong.”

“There are cases where some feelings arise based on phlegm... based on internal winds... based on a combination of bodily humors... from the change of the seasons... from uneven [‘out-of-tune’] care of the body... from harsh treatment... from the result of kamma. You yourself should know how some feelings arise from the result of kamma. Even the world is agreed on how some feelings arise from the result of kamma. So any contemplatives & brahmins who are of the doctrine & view that whatever an individual feels—pleasure, pain, neither pleasure-nor-pain—is entirely caused by what was done before—slip past what they themselves know, slip past what is agreed on by the world. Therefore I say that those contemplatives & brahmins are wrong.” — SN 36:21

§ 14. Phenomena are preceded by the heart,
 ruled by the heart,
 made of the heart.

If you speak or act
with a corrupted heart,
then suffering follows you—
as the wheel of the cart,
 the track of the ox
 that pulls it.

Phenomena are preceded by the heart,
 ruled by the heart,
 made of the heart.

If you speak or act
with a calm, bright heart,

then happiness follows you,
like a shadow
that never leaves. — *Dhp 1-2*

§ 15. "There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones notices:

"When this is, that is.

"From the arising of this comes the arising of that.

"When this isn't, that isn't.

"From the cessation of this comes the cessation of that.

"In other words:

"From ignorance as a requisite condition come fabrications.

"From fabrications as a requisite condition comes consciousness.

"From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-&-form.

"From name-&-form as a requisite condition come the six sense media.

"From the six sense media as a requisite condition comes contact.

"From contact as a requisite condition comes feeling.

"From feeling as a requisite condition comes craving.

"From craving as a requisite condition comes clinging/sustenance.

"From clinging/sustenance as a requisite condition comes becoming.

"From becoming as a requisite condition comes birth.

"From birth as a requisite condition, then aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair come into play. Such is the origination of this entire mass of stress & suffering.

"Now from the remainderless fading & cessation of that very ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications. From the cessation of fabrications comes the cessation of consciousness. From the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of name-&-form. From the cessation of name-&-form comes the cessation of the six sense media. From the cessation of the six sense media comes the cessation of contact. From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling. From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving. From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance. From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming. From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth. From the cessation of birth, then aging & death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair all cease. Such is the cessation of this entire mass of stress & suffering." — *AN 10:92*

§ 16. "And which *name-&-form*? Feeling, perception, intention, contact, & attention: This is called name. The four great elements, and the form dependent on the four great elements: This is called form. This name & this form are called name-&-form.

"And which *consciousness*? These six are classes of consciousness: eye-consciousness, ear-consciousness, nose-consciousness, tongue-consciousness, body-consciousness, intellect-consciousness. This is called consciousness.

"And which *fabrications*? These three are fabrications: bodily fabrications, verbal fabrications, mental fabrications. These are called fabrications.

“And which *ignorance*? Not knowing stress, not knowing the origination of stress, not knowing the cessation of stress, not knowing the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress: This is called ignorance.” — *SN 12:2*

§ 17. [Sister Dhammadinnā:] “In-&-out breaths are bodily; these are things tied up with the body. That’s why in-&-out breaths are bodily fabrications. Having first directed one’s thoughts and made an evaluation, one then breaks out into speech. That’s why directed thought & evaluation are verbal fabrications. Perceptions & feelings are mental; these are things tied up with the mind. That’s why perceptions & feelings are mental fabrications.” — *MN 44*

§ 18. “And what are fabrications? These six bodies of intention—intention with regard to form, intention with regard to sound, intention with regard to smell, intention with regard to taste, intention with regard to tactile sensation, intention with regard to ideas: These are called fabrications.” — *SN 22:56*

§ 19. “Monks, for anyone who says, ‘In whatever way a person makes kamma, that is how it is experienced,’ there is no living of the holy life, there is no opportunity for the right ending of stress. But for anyone who says, ‘When a person makes kamma to be felt in such & such a way, that is how its result is experienced,’ there is the living of the holy life, there is the opportunity for the right ending of stress.

“There is the case where a trifling evil deed done by a certain individual takes him to hell. There is the case where the very same sort of trifling deed done by another individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.

“Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual takes him to hell? There is the case where a certain individual is undeveloped in body [*MN 36*: pleasure can invade his mind and remain], undeveloped in virtue, undeveloped in mind [*MN 36*: pain can invade his mind and remain]: restricted, small-hearted, dwelling with suffering. A trifling evil deed done by this sort of individual takes him to hell.

“Now, a trifling evil deed done by what sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment? There is the case where a certain individual is developed in body, developed in virtue, developed in mind, developed in discernment: unrestricted, large-hearted, dwelling with the immeasurable [sublime attitudes]. A trifling evil deed done by this sort of individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment.

“Suppose that a man were to drop a salt crystal into a small amount of water in a cup. What do you think? Would the water in the cup become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink?”

“Yes, lord. Why is that? There being only a small amount of water in the cup, it would become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink.”

"Now suppose that a man were to drop a salt crystal into the River Ganges. What do you think? Would the water in the River Ganges become salty because of the salt crystal, and unfit to drink?"

"No, lord. Why is that? There being a great mass of water in the River Ganges, it would not become salty because of the salt crystal or unfit to drink."

"In the same way, there is the case where a trifling evil deed done by one individual (the first) takes him to hell; and there is the case where the very same sort of trifling deed done by the other individual is experienced in the here & now, and for the most part barely appears for a moment." — *AN 3:101*

§ 20. "The [precise working out of the] results of kamma are an inconceivable that is not to be conjectured about, that would bring madness & vexation to anyone who conjectured about it." — *AN 4:77*

MERIT

§ 21. "Monks, don't be afraid of acts of merit. This is a synonym for what is blissful, desirable, pleasing, endearing, charming—i.e., acts of merit. I directly know 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 eons of contraction & expansion I didn't return to this world. Whenever the eon was contracting, I entered the [realm of] Radiance. Whenever the eon was expanding, I reappeared in an empty Brahma-abode. There I was Brahma, the Great Brahmā, the Unconquered Conqueror, Total Seer, 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 actions, the result of three actions, that I now have such great power & might: i.e., generosity, self-control, & restraint.'"

Train in acts of merit
that yield the foremost profit of 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.

— *Iti 22*

Generosity

§ 22. “These five are a person of integrity’s gifts. Which five? A person of integrity gives a gift with a sense of conviction. A person of integrity gives a gift attentively. A person of integrity gives a gift in season. A person of integrity gives a gift with an empathetic heart. A person of integrity gives a gift without adversely affecting himself or others.

“Having given a gift with a sense of conviction, he—wherever the result of that gift ripens—is rich, with much wealth, with many possessions. And he is well-built, handsome, extremely inspiring, endowed with a lotus-like complexion.

“Having given a gift attentively, he—wherever the result of that gift ripens—is rich, with much wealth, with many possessions. And his children, wives, slaves, servants, and workers listen carefully to him, lend him their ears, and serve him with understanding hearts.

“Having given a gift in season, he—wherever the result of that gift ripens—is rich, with much wealth, with many possessions. And his goals are fulfilled in season.

“Having given a gift with an empathetic heart, he—wherever the result of that gift ripens—is rich, with much wealth, with many possessions. And his mind inclines to the enjoyment of the five strings of lavish sensuality.

“Having given a gift without adversely affecting himself or others, he—wherever the result of that gift ripens—is rich, with much wealth, with many possessions. And not from anywhere does destruction come to his property—whether from fire, from water, from kings, from thieves, or from hateful heirs.

“These five are a person of integrity’s gifts.” — AN 5:148

§ 23. [Ven. Sāriputta:] “Lord, what is the cause, what is the reason, why a person gives a gift of a certain sort and it does not bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort and it bears great fruit and great benefit?”

“Sāriputta, there is the case where a person gives a gift seeking his own profit, with a mind attached (to the reward), seeking to store up for himself (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death.’ He gives his gift—food, drink, clothing, a vehicle; a garland, perfume, & ointment; bedding, shelter, & a lamp—to a contemplative or a brahman. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might a person give such a gift as this?”

“Yes, lord.”

“Having given this gift seeking his own profit—with a mind attached (to the reward), seeking to store up for himself, (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death’—on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Four Great Kings. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

“Then there is the case of a person who gives a gift not seeking his own profit, not with a mind attached (to the reward), not seeking to store up for himself, nor (with the thought), ‘I’ll enjoy this after death.’ Instead, he gives a gift with the

thought, 'Giving is good.' He gives his gift—food, drink, clothing, a vehicle; a garland, perfume, & ointment; bedding, shelter, & a lamp—to a contemplative or a brahman. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might a person give such a gift as this?"

"Yes, lord."

"Having given this gift with the thought, 'Giving is good,' on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the devas of the Thirty-three. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

"Or, instead of thinking, 'Giving is good,' he gives a gift with the thought, 'This was given in the past, done in the past, by my father & grandfather. It would not be right for me to let this old family custom be discontinued' ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the devas of the Hours. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

"Or, instead... he gives a gift with the thought, 'I am well-off. These are not well-off. It would not be right for me, being well-off, not to give a gift to those who are not well-off' ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the Contented devas. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

"Or, instead... he gives a gift with the thought, 'Just as there were the great sacrifices of the sages of the past—Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamadaggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, & Bhagu—in the same way will this be my distribution of gifts' ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the devas who delight in creation. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

"Or, instead... he gives a gift with the thought, 'When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise' ... on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of the devas [Muses?] who wield power over the creations of others. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a returner, coming back to this world.

"Or, instead of thinking, 'When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise,' he gives a gift with the thought, 'This is an ornament for the mind, a support for the mind.' He gives his gift—food, drink, clothing, a vehicle; a garland, perfume, & ointment; bedding, shelter, & a lamp—to a contemplative or a brahman. What do you think, Sāriputta? Might a person give such a gift as this?"

"Yes, lord."

"Having given this, not seeking his own profit, not with a mind attached (to the reward), not seeking to store up for himself, nor (with the thought), 'I'll enjoy this after death,'

—nor with the thought, 'Giving is good,'

—nor with the thought, 'This was given in the past, done in the past, by my father & grandfather. It would not be right for me to let this old family custom be discontinued,'

—nor with the thought, ‘I am well-off. These are not well-off. It would not be right for me, being well-off, not to give a gift to those who are not well-off,’

—nor with the thought, ‘Just as there were the great sacrifices of the sages of the past—Aṭṭhaka, Vāmaka, Vāmadeva, Vessāmitta, Yamadaggi, Aṅgīrasa, Bhāradvāja, Vāseṭṭha, Kassapa, & Bhagu—in the same way this will be my distribution of gifts,’

—nor with the thought, ‘When this gift of mine is given, it makes the mind serene. Gratification & joy arise,’

—but with the thought, ‘This is an ornament for the mind, a support for the mind’—on the break-up of the body, after death, he reappears in the company of Brahmā’s Retinue. Then, having exhausted that action, that power, that status, that sovereignty, he is a non-returner. He does not come back to this world.

“This, Sāriputta, is the cause, this is the reason, why a person gives a gift of a certain sort and it does not bear great fruit or great benefit, whereas another person gives a gift of the same sort and it bears great fruit and great benefit.” — AN 7:49

§ 24. As he was sitting to one side, King Pasenadi Kosala said to the Blessed One: “Where, lord, should a gift be given?”

“Wherever the mind feels confidence, great king.”¹

“But a gift given where, lord, bears great fruit?”

“This (question) is one thing, great king—‘Where should a gift be given?’—while this—‘A gift given where bears great fruit?’—is something else entirely. What is given to a virtuous person—rather than to an unvirtuous one—bears great fruit....

When someone has gone forth from the home life into homelessness—no matter from what clan—and he has abandoned five factors and is endowed with five, what is given to him bears great fruit.

“And which five factors has he abandoned? He has abandoned sensual desire... ill will... sloth & drowsiness... restlessness & anxiety... uncertainty. These are the five factors he has abandoned. And with which five factors is he endowed? He is endowed with the aggregate of virtue of one beyond training... the aggregate of concentration of one beyond training... the aggregate of discernment of one beyond training... the aggregate of release of one beyond training... the aggregate of knowledge & vision of release of one beyond training. These are the five factors with which he is endowed.

“What is given to one who has abandoned five factors and is endowed with five factors in this way bears great fruit.” — AN 3:24

§ 25. “And how is a donation endowed with six factors? There is the case where there are the three factors of the donor, the three factors of the recipients.

“And which are the three factors of the donor? There is the case where the donor, before giving, is glad; while giving, his/her mind is bright & clear; and after giving is gratified. These are the three factors of the donor.

“And which are the three factors of the recipients? There is the case where the recipients are free of passion or are practicing for the subduing of passion; free of

aversion or practicing for the subduing of aversion; and free of delusion or practicing for the subduing of delusion. These are the three factors of the recipients.

“Such are the three factors of the donor, the three factors of the recipients. And this is how a donation is endowed with six factors.

“And it’s not easy to take the measure of the merit of a donation thus endowed with six factors as ‘just this much a bonanza of merit, a bonanza of what is skillful—a nutriment of bliss, heavenly, resulting in bliss, leading to heaven—that leads to what is desirable, pleasing, charming, beneficial, pleasant.’ It is simply reckoned as a great mass of merit, incalculable, immeasurable.

“Just as it’s not easy to take the measure of the great ocean as ‘just this many buckets of water, just this many hundreds of buckets of water, just this many thousands of buckets of water, or just this many hundreds of thousands of buckets of water.’ It’s simply reckoned as a great mass of water, incalculable, immeasurable. In the same way, it’s not easy to take the measure of the merit of a donation thus endowed with six factors as ‘just this much a bonanza of merit, a bonanza of what is skillful—a nutriment of bliss, heavenly, resulting in bliss, leading to heaven—that leads to what is desirable, pleasing, charming, beneficial, pleasant.’ It is simply reckoned as a great mass of merit, incalculable, immeasurable.” — AN 6:37

§ 26. “Without abandoning these five qualities, one is incapable of entering & remaining in the first jhāna... second jhāna... the third jhāna... the fourth jhāna; incapable of realizing the fruit of stream-entry... the fruit of once-returning... the fruit of non-returning... arahantship. Which five? Stinginess as to one’s monastery (lodgings)... one’s family (of supporters)... one’s gains... one’s status, and ingratitude....

“With the abandoning of these five qualities, one is capable of entering & remaining in the second jhāna... the third jhāna... the fourth jhāna; capable of realizing the fruit of stream-entry... the fruit of once-returning... the fruit of non-returning... arahantship.” — AN 5:258–259

Virtue

§ 27. “Householders, there are these five rewards coming from a virtuous person’s consummation in virtue. Which five?

“There is the case where a virtuous person, consummate in virtue, by reason of heedfulness acquires a great mass of wealth....

“And further, the fine reputation of the virtuous person, consummate in virtue, gets spread about....

“And further, whatever assembly the virtuous person, consummate in virtue, approaches—whether of noble warriors, brahmans, householders, or contemplatives—he/she does so with confidence & unabashed....

“And further, the virtuous person, consummate in virtue, dies unconfused....

“And further, the virtuous person, consummate in virtue—on the break-up of the body, after death—reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world....

"These, householders, are the five rewards coming from a virtuous person's consummation in virtue." — *DN 16*

§ 28. "Monks, the taking of life—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from the taking of life is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to a short life span.

"Stealing—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from stealing is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to the loss of one's wealth.

"Illicit sex—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from illicit sex is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to rivalry & revenge.

"Telling lies—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from telling lies is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to being falsely accused.

"Divisive speech—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from divisive speech is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to the breaking of one's friendships.

"Harsh speech—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from harsh speech is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to unappealing sounds.

"Idle chatter—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from idle chatter is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to words that aren't worth taking to heart.

"The drinking of fermented & distilled liquors—when indulged in, developed, & pursued—is something that leads to hell, leads to rebirth as a common animal, leads to the realm of the hungry ghosts. The slightest of all the results coming from drinking fermented & distilled liquors is that, when one becomes a human being, it leads to mental derangement." — *AN 8:40*

§ 29. "Monks, these four types of individuals are to be found existing in the world. Which four? The one who practices neither for his/her own benefit nor for that of others. The one who practices for the benefit of others but not for his/her own. The one who practices for his/her own benefit but not for that of others. The one who practices for his/her own benefit and for that of others.

"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 the individual who practices neither for his/her own benefit nor for that of others. The individual who practices for

the benefit of others but not for his/her own is the higher & more refined of these two. The individual who practices for his/her own benefit but not for that of others is the highest & most refined of these three. The individual who practices for his/her own benefit and for that of others is, of these four, the foremost, the chief, the most outstanding, the highest, & supreme. Just as from a cow comes milk; from milk, curds; from curds, butter; from butter, ghee; from ghee, the skimmings of ghee; and of these, the skimmings of ghee are reckoned the foremost—in the same way, of these four, the individual who practices for his/her own benefit and for that of others is the foremost, the chief, the most outstanding, the highest, & supreme. ...

“And how is one an individual who practices for his own benefit and for that of others? There is the case where a certain individual himself abstains from the taking of life and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from the taking of life. He himself abstains from stealing and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from stealing. He himself abstains from sexual misconduct and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from sexual misconduct. He himself abstains from lying and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from lying. He himself abstains from intoxicants that cause heedlessness and encourages others in undertaking abstinence from intoxicants that cause heedlessness. Such is the individual who practices for his own benefit and for that of others.” — AN 4:96, 4:99

§ 30. “There are, headman, some contemplatives & brahmins who hold a doctrine & view like this: ‘All those who kill living beings experience pain & distress in the here-&-now. All those who take what is not given... who engage in illicit sex... who tell lies experience pain & distress in the here-&-now.’

“Now there is the case where a certain person is seen garlanded & adorned, freshly bathed & groomed, with hair & beard trimmed, enjoying the sensualities of women as if he were a king. They ask about him: ‘My good man, what has this man done that he has been garlanded & adorned... as if he were a king?’ They answer: ‘My good man, this man attacked the king’s enemy and took his life. The king, gratified with him, rewarded him. That is why he is garlanded & adorned... as if he were a king.’

“Then there is the case where a certain person is seen bound with a stout rope with his arms pinned tightly against his back, his head shaved bald, marched to a harsh-sounding drum from street to street, crossroads to crossroads, evicted through the south gate, and beheaded to the south of the city. They ask about him: ‘My good man, what has this man done that he is bound with a stout rope... and beheaded to the south of the city?’ They answer: ‘My good man, this man, an enemy of the king, has taken the life of a man or a woman. That is why the rulers, having had him seized, inflicted such a punishment upon him.’

[The Buddha then cites similar cases where some people are rewarded for stealing, engaging in illicit sex, and lying, whereas other people are punished.]

“Now, what do you think, headman: Have you ever seen or heard of such a case?”

“I have seen this, lord, have heard of it, and will hear of it [again in the future].”

“So, headman, when those contemplatives & brahmans who hold a doctrine & view like this say: ‘All those who kill living beings [etc.] experience pain & distress in the here-&now,’ do they speak truthfully or falsely?”

“Falsely, lord.”

“And those who babble empty falsehood: Are they moral or immoral?”

“Immoral, lord.”

“And those who are immoral and of evil character: Are they practicing wrongly or rightly?”

“Wrongly, lord.”

“And those who are practicing wrongly: Do they hold wrong view or right view?”

“Wrong view, lord.”

“And is it proper to place confidence in those who hold wrong view?”

“No, lord.” — *SN 42:13*

§ 31. The Blessed One said, “Ānanda, there are four kinds of person to be found in the world. Which four? There is the case where a certain person is one who takes life, takes what is not given, engages in illicit sex, lies, speaks divisively, speaks abusively, engages in idle chatter; is covetous, malevolent, & holds wrong view. With the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell.

“But there is also the case where a certain person is one who takes life, takes what is not given, engages in illicit sex, lies, speaks divisively, speaks abusively, engages in idle chatter; is covetous, malevolent, & holds wrong view, (yet) with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world.

“And there is the case where a certain person is one who abstains from taking life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from illicit sex, abstains from lying, abstains from speaking divisively, abstains from speaking abusively, abstains from idle chatter, is not covetous, not malevolent, & holds right view. With the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world.

“But there is also the case where a certain person is one who abstains from taking life, abstains from taking what is not given, abstains from illicit sex, abstains from lying, abstains from speaking divisively, abstains from speaking abusively, abstains from idle chatter, is not covetous, not malevolent, & holds right view, (yet) with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell....

“Now, Ānanda, in the case of the person who takes life... & holds wrong view and, with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell: Either earlier he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or later he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out wrong view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. And as for the results

of taking life... holding wrong view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.

“In the case of the person who takes life... & holds wrong view (yet), with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world: Either earlier he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or later he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out right view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world. But as for the results of taking life... holding wrong view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.

“In the case of the person who abstains from taking life... & holds right view and, with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world: either earlier he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or later he performed fine action that is to be felt as pleasant, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out right view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a good destination, a heavenly world. And as for the results of abstaining from taking life... holding right view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.”

“In the case of the person who abstains from taking life... & holds right view (yet) with the breakup of the body, after death, reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell: Either earlier he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or later he performed evil action that is to be felt as painful, or at the time of death he adopted & carried out wrong view. Because of that, with the breakup of the body, after death, he reappears in a plane of deprivation, a bad destination, a lower realm, hell. But as for the results of abstaining from taking life... holding right view, he will feel them either right here & now, or in the next (lifetime), or following that.” — *MN 136*

§ 32. “There’s the case, headman, where a certain teacher holds this doctrine, holds this view: ‘All those who take life are destined for the plane of deprivation, are destined for hell. All those who steal.... All those who indulge in illicit sex.... All those who tell lies are destined for the plane of deprivation, are destined for hell.’ A disciple has faith in that teacher, and the thought occurs to him, ‘Our teacher holds this doctrine, holds this view: “All those who take life are destined for the plane of deprivation, are destined for hell.” There are living beings that I have killed. I, too, am destined for the plane of deprivation, am destined for hell.’ He fastens onto that view. If he doesn’t abandon that doctrine, doesn’t abandon that state of mind, doesn’t relinquish that view, then as if he were to be carried off, he would thus be placed in hell.

“[The thought occurs to him,] ‘Our teacher holds this doctrine, holds this view: ‘All those who steal.... All those who indulge in illicit sex.... All those who tell lies are destined for the plane of deprivation, are destined for hell.’ There are lies that I have told. I, too, am destined for the plane of deprivation, am destined for hell.’ He fastens onto that view. If he doesn’t abandon that doctrine, doesn’t

abandon that state of mind, doesn't relinquish that view, then as if he were to be carried off, he would thus be placed in hell.

"There is the case, headman, where a Tathāgata appears in the world, worthy & rightly self-awakened, consummate in clear knowing & conduct, well-gone, a knower of the cosmos, unexcelled trainer of those to be tamed, teacher of human & divine beings, awakened, blessed. He, in various ways, criticizes & censures the taking of life, and says, 'Abstain from taking life.' He criticizes & censures stealing, and says, 'Abstain from stealing.' He criticizes & censures indulging in illicit sex, and says, 'Abstain from indulging in illicit sex.' He criticizes & censures the telling of lies, and says, 'Abstain from the telling of lies.'

"A disciple has faith in that teacher and reflects: 'The Blessed One in a variety of ways criticizes & censures the taking of life, and says, "Abstain from taking life." There are living beings that I have killed, to a greater or lesser extent. That was not right. That was not good. But if I become remorseful for that reason, that evil deed of mine will not be undone.' So, reflecting thus, he abandons right then the taking of life, and in the future refrains from taking life. This is how there comes to be the abandoning of that evil deed. This is how there comes to be the transcending of that evil deed.

"[He reflects:] 'The Blessed One in a variety of ways criticizes & censures stealing... indulging in illicit sex... the telling of lies, and says, "Abstain from the telling of lies." There are lies I have told, to a greater or lesser extent. That was not right. That was not good. But if I become remorseful for that reason, that evil deed of mine will not be undone.' So, reflecting thus, he abandons right then the telling of lies, and in the future refrains from telling lies. This is how there comes to be the abandoning of that evil deed. This is how there comes to be the transcending of that evil deed.

"Having abandoned the taking of life, he refrains from taking life... he refrains from stealing... he refrains from illicit sex... he refrains from lies... he refrains from divisive speech... he refrains from abusive speech... he refrains from idle chatter. Having abandoned covetousness, he becomes uncovetous. Having abandoned malevolence & anger, he becomes one with a mind of no malevolence. Having abandoned wrong views, he becomes one who has right views.

"That disciple of the noble ones, headman—thus devoid of covetousness, devoid of malevolence, unbewildered, alert, mindful—keeps pervading the first direction [the east] with an awareness imbued with good will, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, & all around, everywhere, in its entirety, he keeps pervading the all-encompassing cosmos with an awareness imbued with good will—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, without hostility, without malevolence. Just as a strong conch-trumpet blower can notify the four directions without any difficulty, in the same way, when the release of awareness through good will is thus developed, thus pursued, any deed done to a limited extent no longer remains there, no longer stays there.

"That disciple of the noble ones... keeps pervading the first direction with an awareness imbued with compassion... empathetic joy... equanimity, likewise the second, likewise the third, likewise the fourth. Thus above, below, & all around, everywhere, in its entirety, he keeps pervading the all-encompassing cosmos

with an awareness imbued with equanimity—abundant, expansive, immeasurable, without hostility, without malevolence. Just as a strong conch-trumpet blower can notify the four directions without any difficulty, in the same way, when the release of awareness through equanimity is thus developed, thus pursued, any deed done to a limited extent no longer remains there, no longer stays there.” — *SN 42:8*

Goodwill

§ 33. “Monks, for one whose awareness-release through goodwill is cultivated, developed, pursued, given a means of transport, given a grounding, steadied, consolidated, and well-undertaken, eleven benefits can be expected. Which eleven?”

“One sleeps easily, wakes easily, dreams no evil dreams. One is dear to human beings, dear to non-human beings. The devas protect one. Neither fire, poison, nor weapons can touch one. One’s mind gains concentration quickly. One’s complexion is bright. One dies unconfused and—if penetrating no higher—is headed for a Brahmā world.

“These are the eleven benefits that can be expected for one whose awareness-release through goodwill is cultivated, developed, pursued, handed the reins, taken as a basis, steadied, consolidated, and well-undertaken.” — *AN 11:16*

§ 34. “Then, Ānanda, King Maghadeva... in this very same Maghadeva Mango Grove, shaving off his hair & beard, clothing himself in ochre robes, went forth from the home life into homelessness.

“He kept pervading the first direction [as above] with an awareness imbued with goodwill... compassion... empathetic joy... equanimity... He, having developed the four sublime attitudes—with the break-up of the body, after death—headed to the Brahmā world. ...

“Now, Ānanda, if it should occur to you that, ‘Was it someone else who, at that time, was King Maghadeva, by whom that fine custom was established?’ it should not be seen in that way. I, at that time, was King Maghadeva. I established that fine custom... but that fine custom led—not to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation, stilling, direct knowing, to self-awakening, or to unbinding—but only to the attainment of the Brahmā world. But now a fine custom has been established by me that leads exclusively to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation, stilling, direct knowing, to self-awakening, & to unbinding. And which custom is that...? This very same noble eightfold path.” — *MN 83*

FOUR NOBLE DHAMMAS

§ 35. “It’s through not awakening to or penetrating noble virtue that we have transmigrated and wandered on for such a long time, you & I. It’s through not awakening to or penetrating noble concentration... It’s through not awakening to or penetrating noble discernment... It’s through not awakening to or

penetrating noble release that we have transmigrated and wandered on for such a long time, you & I.

“(But now,) this noble virtue has been awakened to & penetrated, noble concentration has been awakened to & penetrated, noble discernment has been awakened to & penetrated, noble release has been awakened to & penetrated. Craving for becoming has been crushed, the guide to becoming [i.e., clinging] is ended. There now is no further-becoming....

“Concentration nurtured with virtue is of great fruit, great reward. Discernment nurtured with concentration is of great fruit, great reward. The mind nurtured with discernment is rightly released from the effluents, i.e., the effluent of sensuality, the effluent of becoming, the effluent of ignorance.” — *DN 16*

§ 36. “And what is right view? Knowledge in terms of stress, knowledge in terms of the origination of stress, knowledge in terms of the cessation of stress, knowledge in terms of the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress: This is called right view.” — *MN 141*

§ 37. “‘This noble truth of stress is to be comprehended.’ ...

“‘This noble truth of the origination of stress is to be abandoned.’ ...

“‘This noble truth of the cessation of stress is to be realized.’ ...

“‘This noble truth of the way of practice leading to the cessation of stress is to be developed.’” — *SN 56:11*

Virtue

§ 38. Now where do unskillful habits cease without trace? Their cessation has been stated: There is the case where a monk abandons wrong bodily conduct & develops right bodily conduct, abandons wrong verbal conduct & develops right verbal conduct, abandons wrong livelihood & maintains his life with right livelihood....

“Now where do skillful habits cease without trace? Their cessation, too, has been stated: There is the case where a monk is virtuous, but not fashioned of virtue.” — *MN 78*

Concentration

§ 39. “And what is the faculty of mindfulness? There is the case where a monk, a disciple of the noble ones, is mindful, is endowed with excellent proficiency in mindfulness, remembering & able to call to mind even things that were done & said long ago. He remains focused on the body in & of itself—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. He remains focused on feelings in & of themselves... the mind in & of itself... mental qualities in & of themselves—ardent, alert, & mindful—subduing greed & distress with reference to the world. This is called the faculty of mindfulness.” — *SN 48:10*

§ 40. “[1] Breathing in long, he discerns, ‘I am breathing in long’; or breathing out long, he discerns, ‘I am breathing out long.’ [2] Or breathing in short, he discerns, ‘I am breathing in short’; or breathing out short, he discerns, ‘I am breathing out short.’ [3] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out sensitive to the entire body.’ [4] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out calming bodily fabrication.’

“[5] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out sensitive to rapture.’ [6] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out sensitive to pleasure.’ [7] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out sensitive to mental fabrication.’ [8] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out calming mental fabrication.’

“[9] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out sensitive to the mind.’ [10] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out gladdening the mind.’ [11] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out steadying the mind. [12] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out releasing the mind.’

“[13] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out focusing on inconstancy.’ [14] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out focusing on dispassion.’ [15] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out focusing on cessation.’ [16] He trains himself, ‘I will breathe in... out focusing on relinquishment.’” — *MN 118*

§ 41. “Then, monk, I have also taught the step-by-step stilling of fabrications. When one has attained the first jhāna, speech has been stilled. When one has attained the second jhāna, directed thought & evaluation have been stilled. When one has attained the third jhāna, rapture has been stilled. When one has attained the fourth jhāna, in-and-out breathing has been stilled. When one has attained the dimension of the infinitude of space, the perception of forms has been stilled. When one has attained the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness, the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of space has been stilled. When one has attained the dimension of nothingness, the perception of the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness has been stilled. When one has attained the dimension of neither-perception nor non-perception, the perception of the dimension of nothingness has been stilled. When one has attained the cessation of perception & feeling, perception & feeling have been stilled. When a monk’s effluents have ended, passion has been stilled, aversion has been stilled, delusion has been stilled.” — *SN 36:11*

§ 42. “And further, a person of no integrity—secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. He notices, ‘I have gained the attainment of the first jhāna, but these other monks have not gained the attainment of the first jhāna.’ He exalts himself for the attainment of the first jhāna and disparages others. This is the quality of a person of no integrity.

“But a person of integrity notices, ‘The Blessed One has spoken of non-fashioning² even with regard to the attainment of the first jhāna, for by whatever means they suppose it, it becomes otherwise from that.’³ So, giving priority to

non-fashioning, he neither exalts himself for the attainment of the first jhāna nor disparages others. This is the quality of a person of integrity.

“And further, a person of no integrity... enters & remains in the second jhāna... the third jhāna... the fourth jhāna... the dimension of the infinitude of space... the dimension of the infinitude of consciousness... the dimension of nothingness... the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception. He notices, ‘I have gained the attainment of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, but these other monks have not gained the attainment of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception.’ He exalts himself for the attainment of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception and disparages others. This is the quality of a person of no integrity.

“A person of integrity notices, ‘The Blessed One has spoken of non-fashioning even with regard to the attainment of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, for by whatever means they suppose it, it becomes otherwise from that.’ So, giving priority to non-fashioning, he neither exalts himself for the attainment of the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception nor disparages others. This is the quality of a person of integrity.

“A person of integrity, completely transcending the dimension of neither perception nor non-perception, enters & remains in the cessation of perception & feeling. When he sees with discernment, his effluents are ended. This is a monk who does not suppose anything, does not suppose anywhere, does not suppose in any way.” — MN 113

Discernment

§ 43. “The individual who has attained internal tranquility of awareness, but not insight into phenomena through heightened discernment, should approach an individual who has attained insight into phenomena through heightened discernment and ask him: ‘How should fabrications be regarded? How should they be investigated? How should they be seen with insight?’ The other will answer in line with what he has seen & experienced: ‘Fabrications should be regarded in this way. Fabrications should be investigated in this way. Fabrications should be seen in this way with insight.’” — AN 4:94

§ 44. “And why do you call it ‘form’ [*rūpa*]? ‘It is afflicted [*ruppati*],’ thus it is called ‘form.’ Afflicted with what? With cold & heat & hunger & thirst, with the touch of flies, mosquitoes, wind, sun, & reptiles. ‘It is afflicted,’ thus it is called ‘form.’

“And why do you call it ‘feeling’? ‘It feels,’ thus it is called ‘feeling.’ What does it feel? It feels pleasure, it feels pain, it feels neither-pleasure-nor-pain. ‘It feels, it is called ‘feeling.’

“And why do you call it ‘perception’? ‘It perceives,’ thus it is called ‘perception.’ What does it perceive? It perceives blue, it perceives yellow, it perceives red, & it perceives white. ‘It perceives,’ it is called ‘perception.’

“And why do you call them ‘fabrications’? ‘They fabricate fabricated things,’ thus they are called ‘fabrications.’ What do they fabricate as a fabricated thing?

For the sake of form-ness, they fabricate form as a fabricated thing. For the sake of feeling-ness, they fabricate feeling as a fabricated thing. For the sake of perception-hood... For the sake of fabrication-hood... For the sake of consciousness-hood, they fabricate consciousness as a fabricated thing. ‘They fabricate fabricated things,’ thus they are called ‘fabrications.’¹

“And why do you call it ‘consciousness’? ‘It cognizes,’ thus it is called ‘consciousness.’ What does it cognize? It cognizes sour, it cognizes bitter, it cognizes pungent, it cognizes sweet, it cognizes alkaline, it cognizes non-alkaline, it cognizes salty, & it cognizes unsalty. ‘It cognizes,’ thus it is called ‘consciousness.’” — SN 22:79

§ 45. “Well then—knowing in what way, seeing in what way, *does* one without delay put an end to effluents? There is the case where an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person—who has no regard for noble ones, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma; who has no regard for men of integrity, is not well-versed or disciplined in their Dhamma—assumes form to be the self. That assumption is a fabrication. Now what is the cause, what is the origination, what is the birth, what is the coming-into-existence of that fabrication? To an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person, touched by that which is felt born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That fabrication is born of that. And that fabrication is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. That craving... That feeling... That contact... That ignorance is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. It is by knowing & seeing in this way that one without delay puts an end to effluents.

“Or he doesn’t assume form to be the self, but he assumes the self as possessing form... form as in the self... self as in form... or feeling to be the self... the self as possessing feeling... feeling as in the self... self as in feeling... or perception to be the self... the self as possessing perception... perception as in the self... self as in perception... or fabrications to be the self... the self as possessing fabrications... fabrications as in the self... self as in fabrications... or consciousness to be the self... the self as possessing consciousness... consciousness as in the self... self as in consciousness.

“Now that assumption is a fabrication. What is the cause, what is the origination, what is the birth, what is the coming-into-existence of that fabrication? To an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person, touched by the feeling born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That fabrication is born of that. And that fabrication is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. That craving... That feeling... That contact... That ignorance is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. It is by knowing & seeing in this way that one without delay puts an end to effluents.

“Or he doesn’t assume form to be the self... but he may have a view such as this: ‘This self is the same as the cosmos. This I will be after death, constant, lasting, eternal, not subject to change.’ This eternalist view is a fabrication.... Or... he may have a view such as this: ‘I would not be, neither would there be what is mine. I will not be, neither will there be what is mine.’ This annihilationist view is a fabrication.... Or... he may be doubtful & uncertain,

having come to no conclusion with regard to the true Dhamma. That doubt, uncertainty, & coming-to-no-conclusion is a fabrication.

“What is the cause, what is the origination, what is the birth, what is the coming-into-existence of that fabrication? To an uninstructed, run-of-the-mill person, touched by what is felt born of contact with ignorance, craving arises. That fabrication is born of that. And that fabrication is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. That craving... That feeling... That contact... That ignorance is inconstant, fabricated, dependently co-arisen. It is by knowing & seeing in this way that one without delay puts an end to effluents.” — *SN 22:81*

§ 46. “Suppose that an archer or archer’s apprentice were to practice on a straw man or mound of clay, so that after a while he would become able to shoot long distances, to fire accurate shots in rapid succession, and to pierce great masses. In the same way, there is the case where a monk, quite secluded from sensuality, secluded from unskillful qualities, enters & remains in the first jhāna: rapture & pleasure born of seclusion, accompanied by directed thought & evaluation. He regards whatever phenomena there that are connected with form, feeling, perception, fabrications, & consciousness, as inconstant, stressful, a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction, alien, a disintegration, an emptiness, not-self. He turns his mind away from those phenomena, and having done so, inclines his mind to the property of deathlessness: ‘This is peace, this is exquisite—the resolution of all fabrications; the relinquishment of all acquisitions; the ending of craving; dispassion; cessation; unbinding.’

“Staying right there, he reaches the ending of the effluents. Or, if not, then—through this very Dhamma-passion, this Dhamma-delight, and from the total ending of the five lower fetters [self-identification views, grasping at habits & practices, uncertainty, sensual passion, and irritation]—he is due to arise spontaneously [in the Pure Abodes], there to be totally unbound, never again to return from that world.

“I tell you, the ending of the effluents depends on the first jhāna.’ Thus it was said, and in reference to this was it said.

[Similarly with the second, third, and fourth jhāna.]” — *AN 9:36*

Release

§ 47. Then a certain devatā, in the far extreme of the night, her extreme radiance lighting up the entirety of Jeta’s Grove, went to the Blessed One. On arrival, having bowed down to him, she stood to one side. As she was standing there, she said to him, “Tell me, dear sir, how you crossed over the flood.”

“I crossed over the flood without pushing forward, without staying in place.”

“But how, dear sir, did you cross over the flood without pushing forward, without staying in place?”

“When I pushed forward, I was whirled about. When I stayed in place, I sank. And so I crossed over the flood without pushing forward, without staying in place.” — *SN 1:1*

§ 48. Knowing the ending of fabrications,
brahman,
you know the Unmade. — *Dhp* 383

§ 49. “Just as when seeds are not broken, not rotten, not damaged by wind & heat, capable of sprouting, well-buried, planted in well-prepared soil, and a man would burn them with fire and, burning them with fire, would make them into fine ashes. Having made them into fine ashes, he would winnow them before a high wind or wash them away in a swift-flowing stream. Those seeds would thus be destroyed at the root, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising.

“In the same way, any action performed with non-greed... performed with non-aversion... performed with non-delusion—born of non-delusion, caused by non-delusion, originating from non-delusion: When delusion is gone, that action is thus abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising.” — *AN* 3:34

§ 50. “Suppose a fletcher were to heat & warm an arrow shaft between two flames, making it straight & pliable. Then at a later time he would no longer heat & warm the shaft between two flames, making it straight & pliable. Why is that? Because he has attained the goal for which he was heating & warming the shaft. That is why at a later time he would no longer heat & warm the shaft between two flames, making it straight & pliable.

“In the same way, the monk notices this: ‘When I live according to my pleasure, unskillful qualities increase in me & skillful qualities decline. When I exert myself with stress & pain, though, unskillful qualities decline in me & skillful qualities increase. Why don’t I exert myself with stress & pain?’ So he exerts himself with stress & pain, and while he is exerting himself with stress & pain, unskillful qualities decline in him, & skillful qualities increase. Then at a later time he would no longer exert himself with stress & pain. Why is that? Because he has attained the goal for which he was exerting himself with stress & pain. That is why, at a later time, he would no longer exert himself with stress & pain.

“This is how striving is fruitful, how exertion is fruitful.” — *MN* 101

§ 51. “Even those who are arahants—whose effluents are ended, who have reached fulfillment, done the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, totally destroyed the fetter of becoming, and who are released through right gnosis—even they remain focused on the body in & of itself—being ardent, alert, unified, clear-minded, concentrated, & single-minded, disjoined from the body. They remain focused on feelings in & of themselves... on the mind in & of itself... on mental qualities in & of themselves—being ardent, alert, unified, clear-minded, concentrated, & single-minded, disjoined from mental qualities.” — *SN* 47:4

§ 52. “Those who are arahants, whose effluents are ended, who have reached fulfillment, done the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, totally

destroyed the fetter of becoming, and who are released through right gnosis: When the concentration of mindfulness of breathing is developed & pursued by them, it leads to a pleasant abiding here-&-now and to mindfulness & alertness.”

— *SN 54:11*

§ 53. “One enters & remains in the first jhāna ... the second jhāna ... the third jhāna ... the fourth jhāna: purity of equanimity & mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. Such is my instruction, brahman, to those monks who are in training, who have not attained the heart’s goal but remain intent on the unsurpassed safety from bondage. But as for those monks who are arahants—whose effluents are ended, who have reached fulfillment, done the task, laid down the burden, attained the true goal, totally destroyed the fetter of becoming, and who are released through right gnosis—these dhammas lead both to a pleasant abiding in the here-&-now and to mindfulness & alertness.” — *MN 107*

§ 54. [Ven. Sāriputta:] “An arahant should attend in an appropriate way to these five clinging-aggregates as inconstant, stressful, a disease, a cancer, an arrow, painful, an affliction, alien, a dissolution, an emptiness, not-self. Although, for an arahant, there is nothing further to do, and nothing to add to what has been done, still these things—when developed & pursued—lead both to a pleasant abiding in the here-&-now and to mindfulness & alertness.” — *SN 22:122*